Written description by Zhou Daguan, a Chinese visitor to Angkor Thom

What does the following source tell us about daily life of the people of the Khmer Empire?

Ordinary families have houses but nothing else by way of tables, chairs, jars, or buckets. They use an earthenware pot to cook rice in, and make sauce with an earthenware saucepan. For a stove they sink three stones into the ground, and for spoons they use coconut husks.

When serving rice they use earthenware or copper dishes from China; sauce comes in a small bowl made from the leaves of a tree, which doesn't leak even when it is full of liquid. They also make spoons from the leaves of the nypa palm, which they spoon liquid into their mouths with, and throw away after using. Even when they are making offerings to the gods and to Buddha, they do things the same way.

They also have an earthenware vessel on one side which they fill with water and dip their hands in. They do this because they eat rice just with their hands, and it sticks to their hands and won't come off without water.

Extract from pages 76-77 of A Record of Cambodia: the Land and its People by Zhou Daguan, translated by Peter Harris, Silkworm Books, Bangkok, 2007, reproduced with permission of Silkworm books.