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Multi-scriptural and Multilingual Inscriptions in Lan Na

Abstract: ‘Lan Na’ is the name of an ancient kingdom situated in the upper north of present-day Thailand. Founded in the late thirteenth century, it became fully integrated into the modern Thai state only in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The Tai Yuan possess their own distinct language and have developed three sets of scripts: Tham (Dhamma), Fak Kham and Thai Nithet script. These scripts (mainly Fak Kham) were used for inscriptions and manuscripts (mainly Tham and Thai Nithet). In our paper, we analyse how different scripts and languages (such as Burmese, Thai/Siamese, Chinese, Pali and Roman scripts/languages, in addition to the Tai Yuan vernacular language/script) are documented on various kinds of artefacts and what this tells us about the cultural history of the region.

1 Objectives

The epigraphical culture of Lan Na is in particular diverse and richly documented compared to other regions of the Tai world. Moreover, the various Lan Na scripts have also been applied by other (Tai) ethnic groups who have migrated to Lan Na in substantial numbers either voluntarily or as the result of forced resettlements caused by war. The resulting processes of acculturation and integration of these groups into a coherent Lan Na society is also reflected by the use of multiple scripts and languages on the same inscribed object. We pay special attention to the social and cultural contexts which furthered the use of multiple languages and scripts on the same inscribed artefact. We differentiate between the presence of languages and scripts widely used within the larger Lan Na cultural domain and those which were derived either from neighbouring Tai writing cultures (e.g. Thai and Lao) and more distant areas (e.g. Burma, China and Europe).

2 Historical background

The kingdom of Lan Na emerged after the conquest of the Mon polity of Hariphunchai by King Mangrai (1292)¹ and the founding of Chiang Mai (literally, 'New City') as the kingdom's capital (1296). Lan Na, literally meaning '[the land of] a million rice fields', comprises the eight provinces of Thailand's upper north. More than 80% of its population belong to a Tai ethnic group called the (Tai) Yuan. During the reign of King Tilokarat, the ninth king of the Mangrai dynasty (1441–1487), the borders of Lan Na expanded into southern Yunnan (Sipsòng Panna), the eastern part of the Shan region in present-day Burma (Chiang Tung, Müang Nai and Müang Yòng) and north-western Laos.² With the extension of political power to areas further to the north, Theravada Buddhism, which was firmly established in the main Buddhist centres of Chiang Mai, spread throughout the upper and middle Mekong basin, and Lan Na finally became the major centre of Buddhist scholarship in South East Asia for more than half a century.³ Lan Na remained an independent polity until the conquest of Chiang Mai by a Burmese army (1558). By the end of the sixteenth century, Lan Na had ceased to exist as a unitary Burmese vassal state and split into contending polities.⁴

Lan Na was occupied by Burmese forces for more than two and a half centuries and remained under Burmese suzerainty until the late eighteenth century. From 1775 (liberation of Chiang Mai) until 1804 (conquest of Chiang Saen), Lan Na was liberated from Burmese rule by a joint effort of the Tai Yuan elite of Lan Na and the resurgent Siamese kingdom. From that time, Lan Na consisted of five autonomous vassal states: Chiang Mai, Lamphun and Lampang in the western part, all ruled by members of the Kawila dynasty, and Phrae and Nan in the east, each of them staying under Siamese suzerainty. Between 1874 and 1933, the five vassal kingdoms became gradually integrated into the emerging modern nation-state of Thailand.

¹ Unless otherwise stated all dates are CE.

² The political dynamics of the Lan Na kingdom in its early phase is discussed in detail in Sarassawadee Ongsakul 2005, 89–105; Grabowsky 2004, 116–125; Grabowsky 2005, 3–19.

³ The eighth Buddhist Council was held in Wat Chet Yôt or Wat Photharam Maha Wihan in the city of Chiang Mai in 1477.

⁴ For the political developments in Lan Na during the period of Burmese domination, see Sarassawadee Ongsakul 2005, 109–128; Grabowsky 2004, 149–176.



Fig. 1: Map of Lan Na kingdom, c. 1450 CE; © Volker Grabowsky.

The period of Burmese domination shows a significant decline in inscripational activities and the gradual appearance of the Tham script as the dominant one in Lan Na epigraphy.⁵ The post-Burmese period of Lan Na epigraphy is character-

⁵ The dearth of Lan Na (stone) inscriptions during the period of Burmese domination is discussed in Buchmann 2018, 124–127, who also observes: ‘Only four inscriptions from the pre-Burmese period show a combination of Fak Kham and Dhamma-Lanna scripts. This implies

ised by the exclusive use of Tham script and the increased preference of writing material other than stone, such as metal and wood.⁶ The forced resettlement of numerous war captives from Tai Khün and Tai Lü inhabited areas in the eastern Shan areas of Myanmar, north-western Laos and south-western Yunnan to the core areas of the five Lan Na principalities (Chiang Mai, Lamphun, Lampang, Phrae and Nan) in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. This resulted in significant ‘foreign’ Tai communities – making up more than one-third of the total populations – which maintained particular features of their original written cultures.⁷

3 Lan Na scripts

The Tai of Lan Na have their own language which is distinct, and developed three different scripts. These scripts were used separately for two different purposes: one script was used predominantly for the writing of religious texts, another script was used for the writing of secular, or non-religious, texts. A third script, which appeared at a much later stage, mixed elements of the first two scripts. The three types of Lan Na scripts are as follows:

(1) The Tham script (or Dhamma script of Lan Na, Thai: *aksòn tham lan na* อักษรธรรมล้านนา): This script was developed from the old Mon script of the pre-Tai kingdom of Hariphunchai (present-day Lamphun province). In Buddhism, *dhamma* (Skt.: *dharma*) means the cosmic law and order as expressed in the Teachings of the Buddha. Thus, as its name already implies, the Tham script was first used for the writing of Buddhist scriptures; these texts were mostly written in Pali but, in some cases (for instance the commentaries or the popular Jataka tales), also in the Northern Thai vernacular. The earliest evidence of the Tham script is from 1376. It is a bi-scriptural and bilingual inscription combining Sukhothai and Tham scripts, discovered in the early 1980s on a golden leaf in a *cetiya* in Sukhothai, which is situated outside the Lan Na area (see Fig. 11)

that Dhamma-Lanna script was not used in pre-Burmese stone inscriptions’, see Buchmann 2018, 128.

⁶ Lorrillard 2022, 25.

⁷ Up to two-fifths of the Tai-speaking population of Lan Na by the end of the nineteenth century were descendants of war captives who had been deported from the Tai Lü, Tai Khün and Shan inhabited areas of the north and resettled in the southern parts of Lan Na during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, the era of *kep phak sai sa*, *kep kha sai müang* (‘gathering vegetables in baskets, gathering people in the polities’). For details, see Grabowsky 1999.

However, an inscription on the pedestal of a Buddha image from Wat Chiang Man in Chiang Mai city, dated 1465, is the earliest evidence of that script used for the writing of texts in the Tai vernacular and Pali found in Lan Na territory.⁸ At a later period, notably since the late eighteenth century, this script was also used for the writing of secular texts, such as folktales, chronicles, and astrological and medical treatises. Eventually, it became the only script of the country and, thus, it is colloquially called *tua müang* (ตัวเมือง), which means ‘script of the country’.



Fig. 2: Tham (Dhamma) script; inscription 1.2.1.1: Pratu Tha Phae, 2010 BE / 1467 CE; photograph © ALI, CMU.

(2) Fak Kham script (อักษรฝักขาม): The script’s name was chosen because the letters’ curves resemble the shape of a tamarind pod.⁹ The Fak Kham script was developed from the script that had been adopted from Sukhothai, the immediate southern neighbour of Lan Na, in the late thirteenth century. The Sukhothai script is also the prototype of the modern Thai script, which is nowadays used as the only and official script in Thailand. The Fak Kham script was normally used for secular texts written in the vernacular Tai Yuan language, but we also find Pali words or short Pali phrases written in this script. The vast majority of Lan Na stone inscriptions prior to the seventeenth century are written in Fak

⁸ The inscription of Wat Chiang Man has been edited, translated and analysed by Prasert na Nagara and Griswold 1992, 699–732.

⁹ The tamarind is a tropical fruit indigenous to tropical Africa and also naturalised in South East Asia. The tamarind tree produces brown, pod-like fruits which contain a sweet, tangy pulp used in cuisines around the world. The pod-like fruits resemble the shape of the largely square characters of the script named thereafter.

Kham script.¹⁰ While the famous inscription of Wat Phra Yün, dated 1370, in Lamphun was still written in Sukhothai script,¹¹ the inscription of Wat Suwanna Maha Wihan of 1411 from Phayao province was already written in Fak Kham script. This inscription that records the donation of rice fields and 246 households as temple serfs to support this monastery under royal patronage is, therefore, considered to be the oldest extant Lan Na inscription written in the Northern Thai vernacular and a genuine Lan Na script.¹²

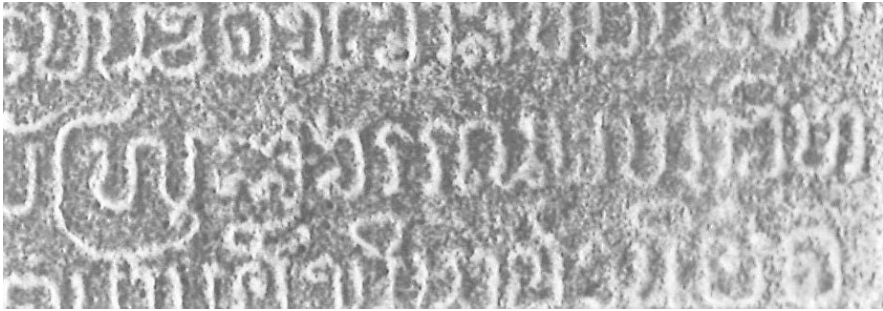


Fig. 3: Fak Kham script; inscription 1.5.1.1: Suwannamahawihan, 1974 BE / 1411 CE; photograph © ALI, CMU.

(3) Thai Nithet script (อักษรไทยนิตเทศ): This script was created by mixing the Dhamma and Fak Kham scripts. Most characters resemble those of the Fak Kham script but, unlike the latter, they have a round shape similar to the Tham script characters. Thai Nithet was used mainly for secular poetry written on palm-leaf manuscripts. However, we also find this script in royal edicts and decrees inscribed on silver plates. The silver plate of Ban Pae in Chòm Thòng district, Chiang Mai province, recording a royal decree of Queen Wisuttha Thewi (r. 1564–1578), the last female ruler of the Mangrai dynasty who ruled over the whole of Lan Na as a Burmese vassal, dated 5 June 1567, is the oldest evidence

¹⁰ For a glossary of these inscriptions, see Buchmann 2011; with a descriptive catalogue (Buchmann 2012) and a grammar (Buchmann 2015) being published separately.

¹¹ The Wat Phra Yün inscription has been edited, translated and analysed by Prasert na Nagra and Griswold 1992, 605–623.

¹² The endowment of land and temple serfs to monasteries is discussed in detail by Penth 2003 and Grabowsky 2004 and 2005. For an edition of the Wat Suwanna Maha Wihan inscription (Lamphun 9), see Sujit Wongthes 1995, 49–57.

of the Thai Nithet script.¹³ The latter also appears on a few other inscriptions. This script was not widely spread. It appeared mainly in manuscripts of the first half of the nineteenth century and not much later disappeared into oblivion. There are only fewer than ten extant palm-leaf manuscripts and inscriptions written in this hybrid script.

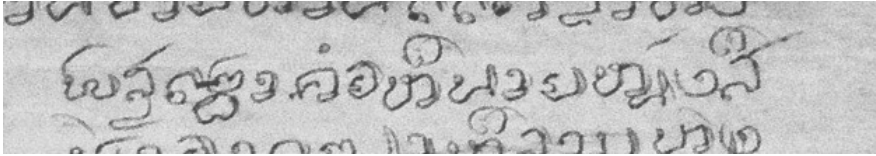


Fig. 4: Thai Nithet script; palm-leaf manuscript entitled *Ongkan chaeng thian* ('Royal command cursing the candle'); Microfilm no. 90.166.03/023-023, Social Research Institute, Chiang Mai University; photograph © ALI, CMU.

4 Multi-scriptural and multilingual inscriptions in Lan Na

Our ongoing survey of Lan Na epigraphic culture brought to light a small but by no means insignificant number of inscriptions which reflect the mixing of scripts and languages in the same inscribed object. For the sake of clarity, we have divided these multi-scriptural and multilingual inscriptions into three categories. The first category consists of inscriptions written in the Northern Thai (Tai Yuan) vernacular – in some cases with occasional Pali phrases interspersed – but with at least two of the three 'indigenous' Lan Na scripts used. The second category includes inscriptions in which scripts and languages from neighbouring writing cultures – such as that of Burma – were integrated into Lan Na inscriptions. The third category pertains to inscriptions after the eighteenth century which reflect the influence of more distant writing cultures, such as Thai (Siamese), Chinese and European.

13 The silver plate of Ban Pae has been translated and analysed by Kraisri Nimmanhaeminda 1967; for a German translation of both the inscription (dated 1567) and a palm-leaf manuscript confirming the contents of the inscription by confirming the villagers' privileged status as temple serfs regarding events that happened in 1632, see Grabowsky 2004, 448–453.

4.1 The mixing of scripts within the Lan Na writing culture

The first example shows the mixing of scripts within the Lan Na written culture. It is an inscription on the pedestal of a Buddha image, dated c. 1490, kept at the National Museum in Nan province close to the border to Lao (1.7.3.2 Museum Nan c. 2030 BE / c. 1490 CE, ALI inventory number).¹⁴ The inscription is written partly in Tham script and partly in Fak Kham script. This example makes the original role of the Tham script to be used for the writing of Pali language very clear and the use of Fak Kham script for writing texts in the local Tai vernacular. The main content of the inscription is a magic spell called *Gathā Paṭhamam*, which was popularly inscribed on Buddha statues made of bronze in Lan Na during the fourteenth to fifteenth centuries.¹⁵

The text starts with the *Gathā* inscribed in Tham script, but then within the *Gāthā*, the scribe inserted the name of the sponsor, พระหัวเมืองซ้ายฟ่อน (Phra Hua Müang Sai Fòn), i.e. the person who initiated the casting of this Buddha statue, in Fak Kham script. The name of the sponsor inscribed in Fak Kham script is framed in red in Fig. 6. The inscription then continues with the *Gāthā*, inscribed in the Tham script again. This text is framed in blue in the figure.

¹⁴ The Bronze Buddha statue has been published in Penth, Phanphen Khrüathai and Silao Ketphrom 2001, 203–214.

¹⁵ Interview with Silao Ketphrom, a specialist of Lan Na inscriptions, on 11 May 2023 by Apiradee Techasiriwan. Yijing or I-tsing was a Chinese Buddhist monk who spread Buddhism from India to China during the Tang dynasty in the seventh century. He recorded that the casting of Buddha statues entailed the enshrining of two types of elements inside the Buddha statues, namely, relics of the Gotama Buddha and/or principles of the Buddha. It is presumed that this idea to insert internal organs inside the Buddha statues and inscribe Buddhist verses on the pedestals of Buddha statues also spread to Lan Na until the belief became popular. In Lan Na, the most popular Buddhist verse inscribed on the pedestal of Buddha statues is *Gathā Phra Buddha Sihing's heart* (คาถาหัวใจพระสิหิงค์) or *Gathā Paṭhamam*, in which the meaning corresponds to the Four Noble Truths. See Surasawadi Suksawadi 2012, 21–22.



Fig. 5: Mixing of Fak Kham script and Tham script on the pedestal of a Buddha image; inscription 1.7.3.2: Museum Nan c. 2030 BE / c. 1490 CE; photograph © ALI, CMU.

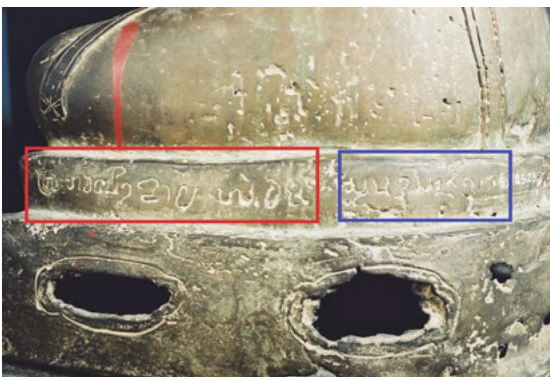


Fig. 6: Detail of the pedestal of a Buddha image (Fig. 5); inscription 1.7.3.2: Museum Nan c. 2030 BE / c. 1490 CE; photograph © ALI, CMU.

The second example is from a much later period; it is an inscription on a wooden board, dated 18 April 1848, which has been kept at Chang Khoeng monastery (วัดช่างเคิ่ง) in Mae Caem district west of Chiang Mai city (1.2.2.1 Wat Chang Khoeng 2391 BE / 1848 CE, ALI inventory number). This inscription runs over seventeen lines. The main content is inscribed in Fak Kham script and Tai Yuan language running over sixteen lines, while the last line is a colophon recording the name of the scribe, Saen Siri (แสนสิริ); this last line is inscribed in Tham script, in a smaller size than the rest of the inscribed text. The inscription highlights the simultaneous use of Fak Kham and Tham scripts in the same inscribed object. It seems evident that the scribe used two different scripts as a tool to separate the main text visually from the colophon. This is frequently the practice in Tai manuscript cultures where the main text could be written in one of the major religious scripts (f.e. Tham or Khôm), while the colophon is in a secular script (f.e. Thai or Lao).¹⁶ Moreover, it might be assumed that using Fak Kham script for the main content of this inscription reflects the fact that this script was commonly used for inscribing Lan Na stone inscriptions from the early fifteenth to the nineteenth centuries, though after the seventeenth century, Tham script had superseded Fak Kham script for the writing of manuscripts.¹⁷

Finally, the last example of the first category is an inscription on a pedestal of a hermit statue made of bronze currently kept at Chiang Saen National Museum, Chiang Rai province (1.4.3.2 Doi Tung 2148 BE / 1605 CE, ALI inventory number).¹⁸ The inscription is dated 1605, thus, it derives from the early period of Burmese rule in that area which had become the main military and administrative centre of Burma in the upper Mekong valley by the end of the century. The inscription is inscribed mainly in Tham script and Tai Yuan language. The text starts with the date and names of sponsors, with the local governor of Chiang Saen and high-ranking monks presiding over the casting of the statue, then the text continues with a chant in Pali, a phrase recited for worshiping Buddha relics and referring to a chronicle of Phrathat Dòi Tung.

¹⁶ As Peter Skilling (2009, 3) aptly remarks, it was a ‘feature of Thai, Lanna Thai, and Isan bilinguals is the use of two (or very rarely three) scripts in the same inscription or text, for example Thai script for Thai language combined with Khom script for Pāli, or Fak Kham for Lanna language and Tham for Pāli’.

¹⁷ Kannika Wimonkasem 1981, 18.

¹⁸ The bronze hermit has been published in Penth, Phanphen Khriathai and Silao Ketphrom 1997, 189–210.



Fig. 7: Wooden board inscription; inscription 1.2.2.1: Wat Chang Khoeng, Chiang Mai, 2391 BE / 1848 CE; photograph © ALI, CMU.

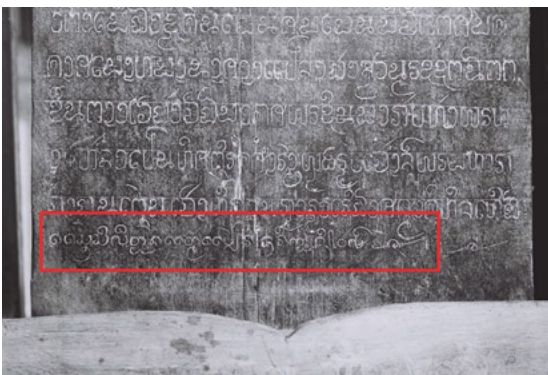


Fig. 8: Detail of inscription 1.2.2.1 (Fig. 7) using Tham script in the last line of the wooden board inscription: Wat Chang Khoeng, Chiang Mai, 2391 BE / 1848 CE; photograph © ALI, CMU.



Fig. 9: A bronze hermit; inscription 1.4.3.2: Dòi Tung, Chiang Rai, 2148 BE / 1605 CE; photograph © ALI, CMU.

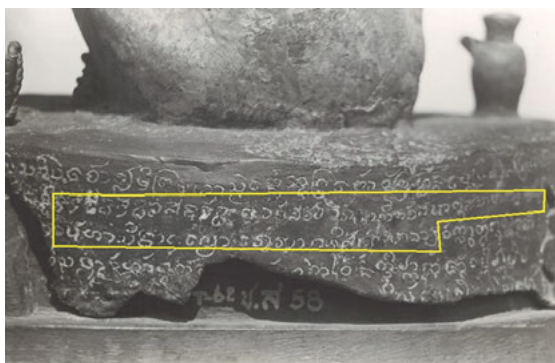


Fig. 10: Tham and Thai Nithet scripts on the bronze hermit, detail of inscription 1.4.3.2 (Fig. 9): Dòi Tung, Chiang Rai, 2148 BE / 1605 CE; photograph © ALI, CMU.

It is worth mentioning that the scribe inserted a short text in Thai Nithet script running from the second half of the second line until the first half of the third line (highlighted in yellow in Fig. 10) for inscribing the Pali phrase, followed by a short text in the Tai Yuan vernacular marking the beginning of the chronicle, then continuing the text in Tham script until the end.

This inscription seems to break the original convention of using Thai Nithet script for the Pali language instead of Tham script. We are tempted to speculate that the scribe might have preferred to use Tham script for inscribing the main text, but, at the same time, also wanted to keep the distinction between the vernacular and Pali languages. To solve this problem, the scribe decided to use the Thai Nithet script for the short Pali phrase. If we consider the year of production of the inscription, 1605, it occurred thirty-eight years after the oldest evidence of Thai Nithet script, which appears on a silver-plate inscription made in 1567 in Chiang Mai, as an order of the last queen of Lan Na's Mangrai dynasty (Queen Wisutthathewi, r. 1564–1578).¹⁹ Therefore, it is likely that Thai Nithet script was still popular to use in the royal court that the ruler of Chiang Saen presided over the casting of this statue.

4.2 Mixing of scripts and languages of neighbouring writing cultures

In the past, Lan Na had maintained close ties with neighbouring kingdoms, such as Ayutthaya and Lan Sang, in several ways: culturally, politically and economically, ties which did not exclude military confrontations from time to time. Therefore, there was a close cultural exchange between the various polities of the Tai world and Tai scripts were arguably borrowed from one another in the writing cultures of neighbouring Tai polities.

The first example of this category is very important because it is considered the oldest evidence of the appearance of the Tham Lan Na script. Interestingly, it was found outside the Lan Na area, in Sukhothai, the older kingdom that had had a close relation with Lan Na since the time of the foundation of the Lan Na golden plate mentioned previously which was produced by a high-ranking monk from Sukhothai in 1376 (สท. 52, Inventory number of the National Library of Thailand). The golden plate is inscribed mainly in Sukhothai script and the Thai language. The inscription is about

¹⁹ For a translation of this inscription and of a palm-leaf manuscript related to it, see Grabowsky 2004, 448–453.

the construction of a temple hall (*vihāra*), Buddha statues and relics being placed in the monastery by the Venerable Cudhāmuṇi. The scribe then separated the content by using a small circle and continued the inscribed text in Tham Lan Na script and the Pali language until the end. However, until now, we cannot find any other evidence to substantiate the hypothesis that the Tham Lan Na script was used for writing Pali texts in the Sukhothai kingdom. However, we can also not exclude the possibility that the high-ranking Sukhothai monk was a native of Lan Na.



Fig. 11: Golden leaf of Maha Thera Cuthamuni (Cudāmuṇi) from 1376; photograph © Apiradee Techasiriwan.

Another example is an inscription on a bronze Buddha image. This inscription is very important because the image was produced by a Burmese ruler during the first years in which Burma occupied Chiang Mai. The Buddha image was cast in Lan Na art, in 1566, and has been sitting in Chai Phra Kiat (ชัยพระเกียรติ) monastery in Chiang Mai town until today (1.2.3.2 Wat Chai Phra Kiat 2108 BE / 1605 CE, ALI inventory number). The text on the pedestal is divided into two parts. The first part is inscribed in Tham Lan Na script, while the second part is written in Burmese script. The two parts contain the contents of the same narrative. However, the text inscribed in Tham Lan Na script and Tai Yuan language provides more details. The inscription text mentions the background of casting the image, stating that the king of Burma appointed a Burmese nobleman as the new ruler of Chiang Mai. The Burmese ruler then asked the last queen of Chiang Mai and the local Tai people to gain merit together by collecting damaged and scattered bronze Buddha images with the intention of melting the bronze for casting a new Buddha statue, and, finally, named the Buddha image Müang Rai Cao (เมืองรายเจ้า), which refers to the name of the founding king of Lan Na, Mangrai (มังราย).²⁰ The use of Lan Na art in casting the Buddha image and combining the two scripts

²⁰ Penth 1976, 98–102.

together in this inscription reflects the relative tolerance the Burmese showed towards the cultural traditions of their Northern Thai vassal state, at least during the early period of Burmese suzerainty which lasted until the early seventeenth century.²¹



Fig. 12: A bronze Buddha image; inscription 1.2.3.2: Wat Chai Phra Kiat, Chiang Mai, 2108 BE / 1605 CE; photograph © ALI, CMU.

²¹ According to Sarassawadee Ongsakul (2005, 111), the period of tolerance lasted from 1558 until c. 1664.



Fig. 13: Detail showing Burmese script on the Buddha image; inscription 1.2.3.2: Wat Chai Phra Kiat, Chiang Mai, 2108 BE / 1605 CE; photograph © ALI, CMU.

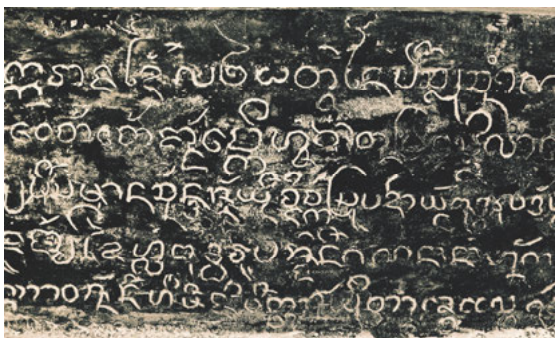


Fig. 14: Detail showing Tham script on the Buddha image; inscription 1.2.3.2: Wat Chai Phra Kiat, Chiang Mai, 2108 BE / 1605 CE; photograph © ALI, CMU.

4.3 Mixing of scripts and languages of distant writing cultures

After the Tai Yuan elite, especially in the south-western parts of Lan Na, accomplished the expulsion of the Burmese from Lan Na through the strategic alliance with and help of King Taksin of Thonburi and King Rama I of Bangkok from 1774 until 1804,²² Lan Na became associated with the Siamese kingdom in the south and was eventually known as ‘Northern Siam’. The economy and society in Lan Na prospered, particularly in Chiang Mai, the largest of the five Northern Thai

²² Sarassawadee Ongsakul 2018, 238–239.

kingdoms. In the course of the nineteenth century, various new technologies entered the area and a number of foreigners – such as Burmese, Chinese, Westerners – came to settle in Chiang Mai, a city known for its multicultural environment.

This characteristic is also reflected in some Lan Na inscriptions, for example, an inscription on a bronze bell at Wat Dòì Suthep in the city of Chiang Mai originally cast in May 1868 CE (1.2.3.1 Wat Phra That Dòì Suthep 2473 BE / 1930 CE, ALI inventory number). More than sixty years later, in 1930, this large bronze bell was recast by a high-ranking monk and Cao Kaeo Nawarat (1910–1939), the then ruler (เจ้าหลวง *cao luang*) of Chiang Mai, joined by a wealthy family of the city, because the old bell was severely damaged. Therefore, the sponsors cooperated to cast the bell and added more bronze, then donated the bell to Suthep Cetiya on Dòì Suthep mountain in Chiang Mai. It is worth mention that the inscription notes Princess Dara Ratsami (1873–1933), daughter of King Inthawichayanon of Chiang Mai and consort of late Siamese King Chulalongkorn (r. 1868–1910), as a royal co-sponsor of the casting of the new bell.

The new bronze bell is inscribed in three scripts and languages. The first part (Part I),²³ written exclusively in the Tham script, presumably recalls the text of an earlier inscription which existed before the recasting of the damaged bell. It is followed by an additional text referring to the reasons for the recasting. This text is written in two almost identical versions, one in Tham script and the vernacular Tai Yuan language (Part II) and the other in modern Thai script and Thai (Siamese) language (Part III). Both parts record the date of casting the new bell, the names of the sponsors, their purpose in recasting the bell, and their wishes for the benefit derived from the deed gaining merit. As for the Chinese characters (Part IV), we assume that they were used to be inscribed on the bell because a wealthy family of Chinese descent who had been living in Chiang Mai were among the group of lay sponsors. The members of that family might have wanted to add a short text recorded the date of casting the bell in Chinese style, accompanied by words of blessing to all Chiang Mai people.

23 This numbering refers to the edition presented in Appendix 3 of this paper.



Fig. 15: A large bronze bell of Dòi Suthep; inscription 1.2.3.1: Wat Phra That Dòi Suthep, 2473 BE / 1930 CE; photograph © ALI, CMU.



Fig. 16: Detail showing Tham script on the bronze bell of Dòi Suthep; inscription 1.2.3.1: Wat Phra That Dòi Suthep, 2473 BE / 1930 CE; photograph © ALI, CMU.



Fig. 17: Detail showing Thai script on the bronze bell of Dòi Suthep; inscription 1.2.3.1: Wat Phra That Dòi Suthep, 2473 BE / 1930 CE; photograph © ALI, CMU.



Fig. 18: Detail showing Chinese characters on the bronze bell of Dòi Suthep; inscription 1.2.3.1: Wat Phra That Dòi Suthep, 2473 BE / 1930 CE; photograph © ALI, CMU.

The last example is an inscription engraved on a cement board, 1964, วัดหมื่นเงินกอง (Mün Ngoen Kòng monastery), Chiang Mai (1.2.4.1 Wat Mün Ngoen Kòng 2507 BE / 1964 CE, ALI inventory number). The content of this inscription is divided into four parts: the first part is inscribed in Tham Lan Na script. It provides the name and the purpose of the principal sponsor, Nai Tha Thipphotha (นายทา ทิพย์โพธา), who donated money to build an Ubosatha hall and dedicated the benefits derived from the meritorious deed to his deceased wife, Nang Lan (นางหลาน); the second part is inscribed in modern Thai script, the contents of which is the same as that of the first part; the third part is inscribed in Roman script, the meaning also corresponds largely with the first and second parts; and in the last part, the scribe turned to using Tham script again to add more details, including the names of the sponsors who initiated the building of the wall surrounding the monastery. Moreover, at the end of this inscription, the name of the abbot of this monastery is inscribed in Thai script. We surmise that it was the monastery's abbot himself who acted as the scribe or at least ordered the engraving of this cement inscription.

However, a connection between the principal sponsor (Nai Tha Thipphotha) and the use of the Roman script is still unclear. However, a modern Thai education had gradually been introduced in the north since the late nineteenth century, but the role of American missionaries of the Presbyterian Mission should be mentioned as well. The teaching of English became popular in the region, opening the opportunity to local people, laity and monks similarly to learn the English language. The abbot and scribe of our inscription might also have acquired some knowledge of English. Moreover, scribe and sponsor might have wished people from several Western nationalities to be able to understand and know the merit they had accumulated, or it exhibits the proficiency of the scribe in a Western foreign language and script.

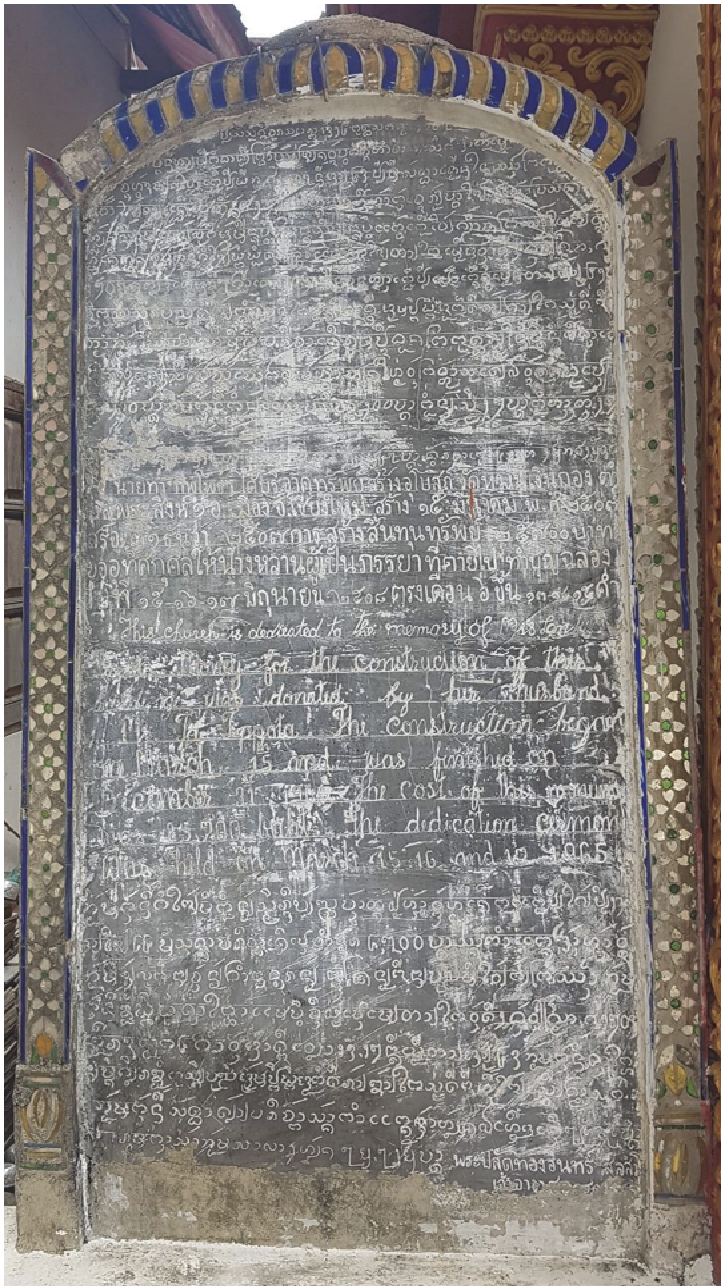


Fig. 19: Cement inscription; inscription 1.2.4.1: Wat Mün Ngoen Kòng 2507 BE / 1964 CE; photograph © Apiradee Techasirawan.

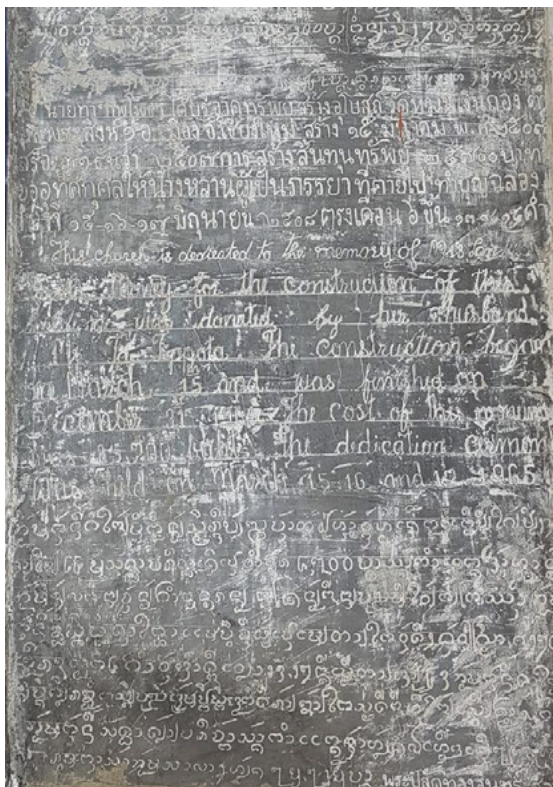


Fig. 20: Detail showing Thai, Roman and Tham scripts of the cement inscription; inscription 1.2.4.1: Wat Mūn Ngoen Kōng 2507 BE / 1964 CE; photograph © Apiradee Techasiriwan.

5 Conclusion

These characteristics mentioned above are not only found in the Lan Na epigraphic culture, but also in other epigraphic and manuscript cultures in South East Asia. Exemplary are the Tai groups in Yunnan, such as the Tai Nüa in the autonomous Tai counties of Moeng Laem and Jinggu who normally use only their locally developed secular Lik To Ngòk (Bamboo Shoot Script). However, some Tai Nüa settlements closer to Chiang Rung in China and Chiang Tung in eastern Burma came under the cultural influence of Lan Na Buddhism and adopted the Tham script which they use alongside the Lik script. Moreover, in the case of the manuscript culture of the Tai Lü in northern Laos, we also observe that Tai Lü scribes often copy the main contents in Tai Lü script following

older extant manuscripts, then use modern Lao script to write colophons.²⁴ Another case are bilingual – Pali and Thai – manuscripts in central Thailand, where scribes normally use Khôm script, which is a variant of Khmer script, for writing Pali, and Thai script to write vernacular texts. Similarly, Burmese script is often used for the writing of Pali language texts in the Shan manuscript culture because Shan consonants are insufficient for the writing of Pali, and Shan orthography does not support the writing of Pali, which has a different way of writing with the vernacular language.²⁵

In conclusion, the use of several scripts and languages in the same inscribed object is testified in Lan Na epigraphy and can be conceptualised by differentiating three categories: firstly, the mixing of scripts widely used within the Lan Na writing culture; secondly, the mixing of scripts and languages of Lan Na with those of neighbouring writing cultures; and thirdly, the mixing of the scripts and languages of Lan Na with more ‘distant’ writing cultures. Multi-scriptism and multilingualism in Lan Na are influenced by, at least, the following four factors: the individual knowledge of scribes; the role of languages and scripts in public spheres; the ethnic background of sponsors and commissioners; and the popularity and social value of scripts at the time when the inscriptions were produced. The multilingual and multiscriptual inscriptions presented in this preliminary study reflect the vicissitudes of Lan Na history and the transformation of the region from an independent Buddhist kingdom to a vassal state of Burma, and later Siam, and its final integration into the modern Thai nation-state.

Abbreviations

ALI = Archive of Lan Na Inscriptions (CMU)

BE = Buddhist Era

CE = Common Era

CMU = Chiang Mai University

CS = Culasakarāja, lunar calendar used in Thailand

²⁴ For colophons in Tai Lü manuscripts in northern Laos, see the catalogue of manuscripts found at Vat Pak Chaek, a Tai Lü village monastery in Luang Prabang province, situated roughly 50 km to the north of Luang Prabang town. See Khamvone Boulyaphonh and Grabowsky 2022.

²⁵ For the round-shaped secular Shan script, also called Lik Tou Moan (literally, ‘circular letters’), see Sai Kam Mong 2004, 119–146.

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Appendix 1: Wooden board inscription of Wat Chang Khoeng, Chiang Mai

1.2.2.1 Wat Chang Khoeng 2391 BE / 1848 CE (All inventory number)

Source: Penth, Silao Ketphrom and Sarawut Sitha 2004, 137–148.

Transcription into modern Thai:

ศุภมัสดุ ศักราชได้ 1209 ตัว ปีมะเมียฉนำ กัมโพชคาม ตามขอมพิสัย เข้ามาในคิมห
จิตรมาส ไทยว่าปีเมืองเม็ต เดือน 7 ออก 15 ค่ำ วันอังคาร ไทย (ว่าวัน) กัดเป้า ฤกษ์ 12
ตัว ชื่ออุตรพลคุณ บุญมี

พระเป็นเจ้าตนชื่อแก้วเมืองมา (พร้อมทั้ง) อรรคชายาชื่อศรีบุญยวง มีจิตประสาทเป็น
ปฐมมหามูลศรัทธาอันยิ่ง จึงมีพระบันฑูรใส่ห้วยนายนาญ จักคน หนภายในมี

- ครุบาลีสลมนี เป็นเค้า และ

- ตู๋หลวงนนทา

- ตู๋หลวงโพธา

- ตู๋หลวงเทพ

หนภายนอก มีแสนสิริเป็นเค้า (พร้อมทั้ง) ฝาเมือง ตงเมือง จักคน เยนศมเยน

มีจิตสมัคกรรมโหมทาน (ที่จะ) สร้างเป่งยังสุวรรณรัชตฉัตร ขึ้นต่างไว้ยัง

จอมเกศพระชินมาร (พร้อม) กับทั้ง (สร้าง) พระหาร 2 หลัง เป็นที่สถิตสำราญ (ของพระ)

พุทธรูปเจ้า และ (ของรูป) พระมหากัจฉายนเถรเจ้า หื้อก้านกุ่ม รุ่งเรือง (แก่) ศาสนา ดีหลี
เตื่อะ

แสนสิริต้องแต้ม แปลจารึกนี้ไว้ แล

Translation:

Be you blessed. In 1209 cs, the year // of the horse, according to the Cambo-
dian tradition, entering the hot season, // a *müang met* year as the Tai say, //
on the fifteenth waxing day of the month of Caitra, the seventh lunar month,
on a Tuesday, a *kat pao* day as the Tai say, at the auspicious moment of 12, //

which was a full-moon day,²⁶ // His Royal Highness Kaeo Müang Ma, along with his queen named Si Bun Yuang, // had the intention to be the royal leading supporter // and, thus, gave the royal order // to all chiefs; among the heads of the Sangha these were Khruba Sinlamani, who takes the lead, // Tu Luang Nantha, Tu Luang Photha, and Tu Luang Thep; // among the heads of the laypersons, these are Saen Siri who takes the lead, as well as Fa Müang // and Tong Müang. They all are delighted unanimously // to sponsor the making of this golden and silver parasol // which is placed above the head of the Phra Chinaman (Braḥ Jinamāra) Buddha statue, // along with the [construction of] two temple halls (*vihāra*) which are the joyful place of Buddha images and images of Phra Maha // Kaccāyana Thera Cao so that the Teachings of the Buddha will prosper surely. // **Saen Siri Tòng Taem (i.e. the royal scribe) translated this inscription.**²⁷

Appendix 2: Golden leaf of Maha Thera Cuthamuni (Cudāmuṇi)

สท. 52 (Inventory number of National Library of Thailand)

Source: Kongkaeo Wirapracak 2014.

Transcription into modern Thai:

- 1) ๐ ศักราชได้ ๗๓๘ โรงเรียนัตร เดินหกแรมคำหนึ่งสุกราพาร ๐ สมเด็จพระมหาเถรจุทามุณีปลุกพิหาร
- 2) นี้ได้เดินสิบห้าวันบริบูรณ์แล้วเมื่อหน้า เดินสิบ แรมสี่คำ พุทธพาร กรรติการิกสจึงปราติสสา
- 3) พระธาตุ และพระพุทธรูประติมาอันท่านกระทำด้วยเงิน ทอง เหล็ก งา ทั้งหลายจึงกระทำ
- 4) พระอการสเหนืออัน ๐ อิมินาบุญญกมุเมน พุทโธ โหมิ อนาคตะ สงุสสาราโมจนุตถาย สพุเพ สตุเต อเสสโตชะชะ

²⁶ This date corresponds to Tuesday, 18 April 1848 (1210 Caitra 15 CS). This day was indeed a *kat pao* day. However, on that day, the solar year had already moved to 1210 CS, a *poek san* year.

²⁷ This last sentence is inscribed in the Tham script and, thus, highlighted in bold letters.

Translation:

In Culasakkarat 738, the year of the dragon, on the first waning day of the sixth [lunar] month, a Friday,²⁸ Somdet Phra Maha Thera Cuthamuni completely built this temple hall (*vihāra*) for a month and fifteen days. // Passing to the tenth [lunar] month, on the fourth waning day, on a Wednesday, the auspicious moment of Karttika²⁹ (...), therefore it establishes // the stupa and the Buddha statue which is made of silver, gold, zinc, ivory. Thus it celebrates // *Phra Atharot (Brah Athārasa). Iminā puññakammena buddho homi anāgate saṃsārāmocanattthāya sabbe satte asesato* ('By virtue of the merit (obtained by) this deed I ask for becoming a Buddha in the future in order to ensure that all sentient beings escape from the cycle of rebirth without any exception').³⁰

Appendix 3: A large bronze bell of Dòì Suthep

1.2.3.1 Wat Phra That Dòì Suthep 2473 BE / 1930 CE (ALI inventory number)

Source: Penth, Silao Ketphrom and Apiradee Techasiriwan 2007, 287–306.

Part I: Tham script**Transcription into modern Thai script:**

สุทินัน วด เม มหาขณโท ทาน มงคลวุฑฒิ สิริสุภมสสตุ
จุลศักราชได้ 1230 ตัว มะโรงฉนำ กัมโพชพิสัย ในคิมกันตฤดู มาสวิสาขา สุกัลปักษ์
ปุลณมี พุทธวารโณ ไทยภาษาวาปีเปกสี เดือน 8 เพ็ญ เม็ง (ว่า)วันพุธ ไทย(ว่าวัน) เต่าสี
ดถี 15 ตัว นาทีดิถี 1 ตัว พระจันทร์จรมยุติเสด็จเข้าเทียวเทียมนกชัตฤกษ์ตัวถ้วน 16
ชื่อวิสาขเทวดา นาทีฤกษ์ 4 ตัว ปรากฏในตุลวโยราศี อติตรพุทธศาสนาคลาล่วงแล้วได้
2412 อนาคตวรพุทธศาสนา(ที่)จักมาภายหน้าบ่น้อยยัง 2588 พระวรรษาเต็มปมีเศษ

²⁸ This date corresponds to Tuesday, 24 February 1377 (738 Phalgunā 16 cs).

²⁹ This date corresponds to Sunday, 6 July 1376 (738 Ashadhā 19 cs).

³⁰ The Pali phrase was translated by Achan Sa-aem Kaeokhlai.

เหตุนี้หมายมี พระเจ้าชีวิตตนเป็นเจ้าแก้รัตนดิงสา อภินวบุรีศรีพิงไชย เจ้ากาวิโลรส
 สุริยวงษ์ เจ้าพระนครเชียงใหม่ เป็นเค้า ซึ่งเป็นกับด้วยอรรคมเหสี และราชบุตร ราชบุตร
 หมายมี เจ้าทิพ(เกสร) และเจ้าอุบลวันณา และราชบุตร ราชบุตร จูตัน จูคน
 ก็ได้สร้างยังมหาฆัณโทแดงหลวงลูกนี้ ถวายไว้ให้เป็นทาน (เพื่อ)ส่วยติบูชา กับพระมหา
 ชินธาตุเจ้าสุเทพที่นี้ トラบ 5000 พระพรรษา น้ำหนักทองมี (1) ล้าน 5 แสนปลาย 2 หมื่น
 ของจงเป็นปัจจัย(แก่)โลกียะ โลกุตระ มรรคะ มีผลนิพพานเป็นยอด แต่
 นิพพาน ปรหม์ สุข

Translation:

Sudinnaṃ vatame mahāghaṇḍo dānaṃ maṅgalavuḍḍhi sirisubhamastu ('The donation of the great bell is given by me. Let there be glorious and auspicious!')

In Culasakarāja 1230, in the year of the dragon in the hot season, on the full moon-day of the month of Visākhā, a Wednesday, [or] as the Tai say, in a *poek si* year, on the eighth [lunar] month, a Wednesday as the Mon say, a *tao si* day as the Tai say, at the *tithi* (auspicious time) of 15 and *nādi tithi* of 1,³¹ when the moon entered the sixteenth *nakkhataṛkṣa*, the zodiacal sign of Li-bra, with 2412 years of the Buddhist Era already elapsed and 2588 years of the Buddhist Era still remaining: the Lord of Life, Protector of the Three Gems, Supreme Ruler over the Great City of the Ping River, King Kawilorot Suriyawong of Chiang Mai, as principal initiator, along with his queen, royal sons and royal daughters, namely Princess Thip[kesòṇ] and Princess Ubong-wanna, and all their sons and daughters, sponsored the making of the Mahā Ghaṇḍo Deng Luang bell and donated it to worship the Phra Mahā Jinadhātu Cao Suthep (statue) so that it will last [until the end of] 5000 years. The weight of its bronze is over one million and five hundred and twenty thousand [units]. May this be a support for the mundane (*lokiya*) and super-mundane (*lokutta*), a path to reach Nibbāna.

Nibbānaṃ paramaṃ sukhaṃ ('Nibbāna is the highest [stage of] happiness').

31 This date corresponds to Wednesday 6 May 1868.

Part II: Tham script; Pali and Tai Yuan languages

Transliteration into modern Thai script:

มณฑลพุมิ สิริสุภมัสต

จุลศักราชได้ 1292 ตัว มะเมียฉนำ กัมโพชพิสัย เข้ามาในคิมหันตฤดู อุดนฤกษ์สตุ สุกละ
ปักข์สัตตมิ ฤดู พุทธาวโรจ ไทยภาษาว่าปักดสะง้า เดือน 10 ขึ้น 7 ค่ำ เม็ง (ว่า) วัน 4
ไทย (ว่าวัน) กำเป้า ดิถี 7 ตัว นาทีดิถี 12 ตัว นาทีฤกษ์ 18 ตัว พระจันทร์จรณยุติโยส
โสเดเสด็จเข้าเที่ยวเทียมเสมียงเมียงม่อ อว่ายหน้าราชรถล้อ พระนักษัตรฤกษ์ตัวถ้วน 12
ชื่ออุตตราผลคุณเทวดา มาปรากฏในการกัญหาไปราศี อติตวรพุทธศาสนา อันคลาล่ง
แล้วได้ 2473 พระวรรษา ธิกาปลาย 1 เดือนกับ 18 วัน อนาคตวชินศาสนาอันจักมา
ภายหน้า ยังมีมากบ่น้อยยังอยู่ 2526 พระวรรษา ธิกาปลาย 10 เดือนกับ 8 วันพิเศษ
เหตุเอามาบวกสมกันก็หากเต็ม 5,000 พระวรรษาพิเศษ

เหตุนั้นหมายมีมหาสมณศรัทธา และมูลศรัทธาทั้ง 2 คณะคนา ทั้งภายในและภายนอก
นอภายใน หมายถึงเจ้าคุณอภัยสารทระ เจ้าคณะจังหวัดเชียงใหม่ และเจ้าคณะแขวงทั้ง
หลายทุกๆ องค์ ก็พร้อมด้วยศิษย์ สาธุศิษย์ทั้งหลาย จู๊ตุน จู๊องค์ (และ) ศรัทธาครูอุปัฏฐาก
จู๊ผู้ จู๊คน ๆ หนายนอกหมายมีพ่อแก้วนารัฐ เจ้าผู้ครองนครเชียงใหม่ ก็พร้อมด้วยอรรค
มเหสี และบุตรา บุตรทั้งหลาย จู๊ผู้ จู๊คน ๆ ถัดเรียงนั้นมาหมายมี พระราชชายาเจ้า
ดรรารัศมี ก็พร้อมด้วยเด็กสาว ขาวแม่นาง ถ้าแก่เรือนหลวงทั้งหลาย จู๊ผู้ จู๊คน ๆ
ถัดเรียงนั้นมาหมายมีหลวงอนุสารสุนทร ก็พร้อมด้วยภริยา (ชื่อ) นางคำเที่ยง และบุตรา
บุตร ทั้งหลาย จู๊ผู้ จู๊คน ๆ

ได้เล็งเห็นเด็จพระหลวงอันเก่านั้น ก็มาชำระตฤตโตรมแตกแหงไปเสีย เสียงต่อยกับดี ดีกับดัง
ไปดังนี้ น้ำหนักเด็จพระหลวงเก่านั้นมีล้าน 5 แสน 2 หมื่นเท่านั้น (จึง) พร้อมด้วยสมณศรัทธา
และมูลศรัทธา ทั้ง 2 ฝ่าย คณะคนา ก็พร้อมเพรียงกันมาปฏิสังขรณ์ซ่อมแซมขึ้นใหม่
เต็มทองใส่แถม 5 แสน รวมน้ำหนักทอง (ของ) เด็งเก่า (และ) ใหม่ มีน้ำหนัก 2 ล้าน 2
หมื่นทอง เท่านั้นแล เดีงหลวงแก่นนี้ถวายเป็นทานไว้กับ พระธาตุเจ้าสุเทพ ตราบอายุเด็ง
นี้เทอญ

ขอให้ศรัทธาผู้เข้าทั้งหลาย ทั้ง 2 ฝ่ายคณะคนา ทั้งภายในและภายนอก ขอให้อไ้ข้าม
พ้นจากโอฆวัฏ สงสาร หือได้ถึงฝั่งกล้าหน้าที่เมืองฟ้านิพพานเจ้านั้น แท้ดีหลี

เชยุดตุภาว เชยุดตุภาว เชยุดมมงคล

Translation:

Maṅgala vuḍḍhi siri subhamastu. In Culasakarāja 1292, the year of the horse, (...) the Tai say a *kot sanga* year, on the seventh waxing day of the tenth [lunar] month, the fourth day of the week as the Mon say, a *ka pao* [day] as the

Tai say,³² at the *tithī* (auspicious time) of 7, and *nāḍī tithī* of 1, the *nāḍīrkṣa* of 18, the moon entering the twelfth *nakkhataṛkṣa*, the zodiacal sign named Uttarā phala guṇa devatā, with 2473 years, one month and twenty-one days of the Buddhist Era already elapsed and 2526 years, ten months and eight days of the Buddhist Era still remaining, adding up to the full 5,000 years of the Buddhist Era: the two leading monastic supporters and all principal supporters (*mūlasaddhā*) of the two groups – the ‘inner group’ led by Cao Khun Aphai Santha, the principal abbot of Chiang Mai province, along with the principal abbots of the ecclesiastical districts and all their disciples and attendants, the ‘outer group’ led by Phò Cao Kaeo Nawarat, the ruler of Chiang Mai, together with his queen, and all his children, joined by the royal consort Princess Dara Ratsami³³ and her daughter, (...) all people in the palace, followed by Luang Anusan Sunthôn and his consort named Nang Kham Thiang, and all their children, saw that the old bell was dilapidated, its sound was bad and not loud.

The original weight was one million five hundred and twenty thousand [units]. Therefore, the leading monastic supporters and principal supporters of the two groups unanimously renovated the bell by adding five hundred thousand [units of] copper. Thus the total weight of the bell – old and new – was two million and twenty thousand [units of] copper. This great bell was donated to the stupa (*phra that*) of Dòì Suthep until [the end of] this bell’s life.

May we all, religious faithful of the two groups, both the inner and the outer group, escape from the cycle of rebirth (*oghavaṭasaṃsāra*) and reach the borders of the celestial city of Nibbāna with certainty.

Jeyyatubhavaṃ jeyyatubhavaṃ jeyyamaṅgalaṃ (‘Let there be victorious and auspicious!’).

³² It is the tenth lunar month of the northern Thai calendar corresponding to the month Ashada. This date corresponds to Wednesday, 2 July 1930 which was indeed a *kap pao* day.

³³ The first part of the inscription states that King Kawilorot of Chiang Mai (r. 1854–1870), along with his queen, presided over the original casting of the bell in 1869.

Part III: Thai script; Thai language

Transliteration into modern Thai script:

มังคลาพุทธนิสิริสุภมัสตุ จุลศักราชได้ 1292 ตัว มะเมียณนำกัมโพชพิสัย เข้ามาในคิม
 หันตฤดู สุกัลปักษ์ สัตตมฤดู พุทธวารโง ไทยภาสาว่าปิกดสะง้า เดือน 8 ขึ้น 7 ค่ำ เมง
 (ว่า)วัน 4 ไทย (ว่า)วัน) ก่าเป้า ดิถี 7 ตัว นาทีดิถี 12 ตัว นาทีฤกษ์ 18 ตัว พระจันทร์
 จรณะยูติโยดโสตเสด็จเข้าเทียวเทียมเสมียงเมียงม่อ อว่ายหนัราราชรล่อพระนักชัตต
 ฤกษ์ตัวถ้วน 12 ชื่ออุตตราผละคุณเทวดา ปรากฏในการกัญญาโปราศิ อติตวรพุทธศาสนา
 อันกลาล่วงแล้วได้ 2473 พระวรธา ธิกาปลาย 1 เดือนกับ 21 วันอนาคตวรชินศาสนา
 อันจักมาภายหน้ายังมีมากคัมบ่น้อยยังอยู่ 2526 พระวรธา ธิกาปลาย 10 เดือนกับ 8
 วันบุ่เศษ เหตุเอามาบวสมกันก็หากเต็มถ้วน 5,000 พระวรธาบุ่เศษ
 เหตุนั้นหมายมีมหาสมณศรัทธา และมูลศรัทธาทั้ง 2 คณะคณะทั้งภายในและภายนอก
 ภายในมีเจ้าคุณอภัยสารทะ เจ้าคณะจังหวัดเชียงใหม่ และเจ้าคณะแขวงทุก ๆ องค์
 พร้อมด้วยศิษย์สาธุศิษย์ทุกองค์ฯ ศรัทธาอุปัฏฐานทุกคนฯ
 หนภายนอกมีพ่อเจ้าแก้วนารัฐ เจ้าผู้ครองนครเชียงใหม่ พร้อมด้วยอรรคมเหสี บุตรา
 บุตรี ทุกคน ๆ ถัดเรียงนั้น มีพระราชชายาเจ้าดารารัศมี ก็พร้อมด้วยเด็กสาว ขาวแม่
 นาง เจ้าแก้วเรือนหลวงทุกคน ๆ ถัดนั้นหลวงอนุสารสุนทร พร้อมภรรยา (ชื่อนาง) คำเที่ยง
 บุตรา บุตรี ทุกๆ คน ได้เล็งเห็นยังเด็จพระอินทนนท์ ชำรุดทนต์ทรมแตกเสียด เสียดต่อยก็
 บัด ดีกัปตั้ง น้ำหนักเด็กเก่า มีล้าน 5 แสน 2 หมื่น เพราะฉะนั้นสมณศรัทธา และ
 มูลศรัทธาทั้ง 2 คณะคณะ พร้อมเพรียงกันปฏิสังขรณ์ซ่อมแซมขึ้นใหม่ เต็มทองใส่แถม
 5 แสน รวม (น้ำหนักของเดิม) ทั้งเก่า (และ) ใหม่ มีน้ำหนัก 2 ล้าน 2 หมื่นทอง เท่านั้น
 เติงหลวงแก่นนี้ถวายเป็นทานไว้กับพระธาตุดอยสุเทพ ทรายอายุเติงนี้เทอญ
 ขอหื้อศรัทธาผู้เข้าทั้งหลาย ได้ถึง นิพพานปัจจุโย โหตุ โนณจุ

Translation:

Maṅgala vuḍḍhi siri subhamastu ('Let there be glorious and auspicious'). In Culasakarāja 1292, the year of the horse, (...) the Tai say a *kot sangā* year, on the seventh waxing day of the eighth [lunar] month, the fourth day of the week as the Mon say, a *ka pao* [day] as the Tai say,³⁴ at the *tithi* (auspicious time) of 7, and *nādi tithi* of 1, the *nādiṛkṣa* of 18, the moon entering the twelfth *nakkhataṛkṣa*, the zodiacal sign named *Uttarā phala guṇa devatā*, with 2473 years, one month and twenty-one days of the Buddhist Era already elapsed and 2526 years, ten months and eight days of the Buddhist Era still

³⁴ It is the eighth lunar month of the central Thai calendar corresponding to the month Ashada. This date corresponds to Wednesday, 2 July 1930 which was indeed a *kap pao* day.

remaining, adding up to the full 5,000 years of the Buddhist Era: the two leading monastic supporters and all principal supporters (*mūlasaddhā*) of the two groups – the ‘inner group’ led by Cao Khun Aphai Saratha, the principal abbot of Chiang Mai province, along with the principal abbots of the ecclesiastical districts and all their disciples and attendants, the ‘outer group’ led by Phò Cao Kaeo Nawarat, the ruler of Chiang Mai, together with his queen, and all his children, joined by the royal consort Princess Dara Ratsami and her daughter, (...) all people in the palace, followed by Luang Anusan Sunthòn and his consort named Nang Kham Thiang, and all their children, saw that the old bell was dilapidated, and its sound bad and not loud.

The original weight was one million five hundred and twenty thousand [units]. Therefore, the leading monastic supporters and principal supporters of the two groups unanimously renovated the bell by adding five hundred thousand [units of] copper. Thus the total weight of the bell – old and new – was two million and twenty thousand [units of] copper. This great bell was donated to the stupa (*phra that*) of Dòì Suthep until [the end of] this bell’s life.

May this be for all of us, religious faithful, a condition to reach Nibbāna with certainty.

Part IV: Chinese script; Chinese language

Transliteration into modern Thai script:

- 1) จง หัว หมิน ก้าว อี้ ลือ
- 2) จี๊ว เหนียน ชุ่ย ชือ เกิง อู่
- 3) ลีว เยว่ ชู ชี ยี เจี้ยน
- 4) ชิง ม่าย เหว เซิง ผิง อาน

Translation:

On the sixth month, the seventh day, in the nineteenth year (after the change of government in China, i.e. 1930 CE), this bell has been cast at noon time.

May the people of Chiang Mai live all in happiness.

Appendix 4: Inscription of Wat Mün Ngoen Kòng

1.2.4.1 Wat Mün Ngoen Kòng 2507 BE / 1964 CE (ALI inventory number)

Source: Unpublished inscription kept at the Archive of Lan Na Inscriptions, Social Research Institute, Chiang Mai University.

Part I: In Tham script

Transcription into modern Thai script:

- 1) ปุสสอศกจรรสกราก 1326 พุทธศกราช 2507
- 2) [วง]นี้หมายมีพ่อธาทิบโพธาบ้านอยู่หลังวัดบวกหงด่าบรกละสิงค์ อำเภอมือง
- 3) จังหวัดเชียงใหม่ เพื่อบิยิย ภ.ศ. 2507 นี้ อายุ 63 ปี มีสัทธาเชื่อในศาสนาพระพุทธ
- 4) เจ้า ได้สละเงินเปนจำนวน 2750034 บาท สองหมื่นห้าพันเจ็ดร้อยบาท ได้สร้างยังอุโบสถ
- 5) หลังนี้ ถ้อมกับด้วยลูกอันมีนางบัว[ช]ม นางสิมอย นางบัวแก้ว เพื่อไว้ค้าบูชาพระศาสนาไว้กับวัด
- 6) หมั้นเงินทอง ถ้อมกันนี้ คิได้ยกยอทานไพหาแม่หลานได้ตายไฟเมื่อวันที่ [3] ธันวาคม ภ.ศ.
- 7) 2505 . กับ 3 [เหนือ]ขึ้น 7 ค่ำ เวลา 20[.20] นาฬิกา วันจัน นางหลานเกิดปีเป่าเป้งจัวเมื่อตายอายุ 62 ปี
- 8) กุศลส่วนบุญที่ได้ทำมานี้ ไพรอดไฟถึงอุ้มปกยกออกที่ร้ายค้ายไฟสุที่ดี
- 9) ตามภูมิที่ตนปากฎ จิมมีผู้บริจากเงินร่วมปีตรองพระพุทธรูปในโบสถ์ มีธำณเจ้า
- 10) ศุรสเทพ เจ้าคณะจังหวัดเชียงใหม่วัดพระธาตุสุเทพ แลวัดทุ่งยูเปน
- 11) เงิน 2[9]0 บาท ถ้อมกันนี้ พ่อน้อยแสนบริจาก 200 บาท พ่อน้อยสม 27 บาท พ่อหนานต . 27
- 12) . . . [เงิน] . . [417] บาท . . . สร้าง . . . 26467 บาทถ้วน ทานเดือน 6 ออก 2[4] ภ,ศ 2408

Translation:

In this year 1326 CS, 2507 BE, // Phò Thathipphotha whose house is situated behind (the monastery of) Wat Buak Hong in Phra Sing sub-district, Müang district, // Chiang Mai province, who is 63 years old in the year 2507 BE, had the faith in the Teachings of the Buddha // spending 25,700 Baht of money to build

this ordination hall (*ubosot*) // along with his daughters Nang Bua Sum, Nang Si Mòi, and Nang Bua Kaeo, with the intention to support the Teachings of the Buddha at Wat // Mün Kòng. At the same time, he makes the donation for his wife Mae Lan who had passed away on 3 December // 2505 BE, [i.e.] on the seventh waxing day of the third [lunar] month of the northern [calendar] at 20 o'clock, on a Monday.³⁵ Nang Lan was born in the year of the cow and died at the age of 62. // This share of merit derived from this donation [shall help] move her from an unpleasant place to a pleasant one // depending on her current situation. The persons donating the money, together with putting golden leaves on the Buddha statue placed in the ordination hall, are Cao // Khunsuthep, the head of the Sangha of Chiang Mai province [residing at] Wat Phrathat Suthep and Wat Thung Yu // amounting at 290 Baht. Besides, Phò Nòi Saen donated 200 Baht, Phò Nòi Som 27 Baht, Phò Nan (...) 27 Baht // (...) 417 Baht. (...) making up a total of 26,467 Baht. This donation was made on the 24th of the sixth month, 2408 BE.

Part II: In Thai (Siamese) script

- 13) นายทา ทิพโพธา ได้บริจาคทรัพย์สร้างอุโบสถวัดหมื่นเงินกอง ตำบล
- 14) บลพระสิงห์ ๑ อ. เมือง จ. เชียงใหม่ สร้าง ๑๕ มีนาคม พ.ศ. ๒๕๐๗
- 15) เสร็จ ๓๑ ธันวาคม ๒๕๐๗ การสร้างสิ้นทุนทรัพย์ ๒๕๗๐๐ บาท
- 16) ขออุทิศกุศลให้นางหลานผู้เป็นภรรยาที่ตายไป ทำบุญฉลอง
- 17) วันที่ ๑๕-๑๖-๑๗ มิถุนายน ๒๕๐๘ ตรงเดือน ๖ ขึ้น ๑๓-๑๔-๑๕ ค่ำ

Translation:

Mr Ta Thippotha donated property for the construction of the ordination hall (*ubosot*) at Wat Mün Ngoen Kòng // in Phra Sing sub-district, Müang district, Chiang Mai province. The construction [started] on 15 March // and finished on 31 December 1964. A capital of 25,700 Baht was spent. // May I dedicate the merit to Nang Lan, my deceased wife. The merit-making is celebrated // on 15–16–17 June 1965 corresponding to the 13th–14th–15th waxing days of the sixth month.

³⁵ This date corresponds to Monday, 8 February 1965 (1326 Magha 7).

Part III: In Roman script

- 18) This church is dedicated to the memory of Mrs Lan
 19) Money for the construction of this
 20) building was donated by her husband
 21) Mr Ta Tippota. The construction began
 22) on 15 March and was finished on
 23) 31 December 1964. The cost of this monument
 24) [w]as 25,700 Baht. The dedication [*cermon*]
 25) was held on 15, 16 and 17 March 1965

Part IV: In Tham script**Transcription into modern Thai script:**

- 26) ก้อมกันนี้คี่ได้มีพ่อน้อยสมริต ปัญจะ บ้านตั้งอยู่หน้าวัดหมื่นเงินกอง เกิดปีได้ ปี 25 . .
 27) อายุได้ 66 มีสัทธาบริจาคเงินเป็นจำนวน 6,700 บาท ส้างกำแพงตันหน้าวัด
 28) ก้อมด้วยลูกนายจัน น้อยคำ นางนวลน้อย นาง[โ]ถน้อยพี่นายบุญมี ไว้กับพระ
 ศาสนาก้อม
 29) กันนี้ ขอยกยอทานไพหาแม่บัวจันผู้เปนเมียตายไผวันที่ 2 ธันวาคม ภ.ศ. 2504
 30) เดือน 3 ออก 6 คำ วันอาทิตย์ เวลา 13.15 นาที เมื่อก่ายอายุ 63 ก้อมกันนี้ทานไพหา
 31) นายมงคล ขอกุศลบุญอุ้มปกยกออกที่ร้ายซ้ายไผสู่ที่พื้นหื้อได้เสวยความสุข .
 32) ก้อมกันนี้ สัทธาทังหลายบริจาคส้างกำแพงด้านหลังแลเหนือ เงิน 7939 บาท
 33) รวมกานส้างก้อมศาลา 2 หลัง 74,724 บาท (ต่อไปเป็นอักษรไทย) พระปลัดทอง
 อินทร์ ลิลสัวโร
 เจ้าอาวาส

Translation:

At the same time, Phò Nòi Somrit Panca whose house is situated in front of Wat Mün Ngoen Kông and who was born in the year 25[...] // and 66 years old, has the religious faith to donate an amount of 6,700 Baht to construct the wall on the front side of the monastery. // [This donation is made] together with his children Nai Can, Nòi Kham, Nang Nòi, Nang Tho Nòi who is elder than Nai Bunmi [in support of] the Teachings of the Buddha. // Besides, I ask that this donation is to the benefit of my wife, Mae Bua Cin, who passed away on 2 December 1961, // on the sixth waxing day of the third [lunar] month, a Sunday, at

13.15 o'clock, at the age of 63. In addition, the donation is also dedicated to // Nai Mongkhon. May this merit help them to move from an unpleasant place to a place where they enjoy happiness. // All religious faithful have donated 7,939 Baht to build the wall on the backside of the monastery. // Together with the construction of the two pavilions (*sala*) this total up to 74,724 Baht.

(followed by a colophon in Thai)

Phra Palat Thong In Sinlasngwaro (Indra Silasamvaro), the abbot.

