

Charles F. Keyes Field Notebooks, Thailand
Written between April 1 and April 30, 1968.

Field notes in this document were primarily written in Amphoe Mae Sariang, Mae Hong Son Province (Changwat Mae Hong Son), Thailand. This document is preceded by field notes written in Mae Sariang in March 1968 and is followed by notes written in Mae Sariang in May 1968.

Mae Sariang

April 7, 1968

Confidence Game in the Hills

On the 1st of April, I received a note from Pete, who was staying in the Karen village of B. Māē Umlong Nôi (Lekôkhi), which asked me to telegraph BPP headquarters in Mae Rim and to talk with the BPP commandant here regarding the appearance of four men in the village who claimed to be Border Patrol Police from Bangkok. These men were, to quote Pete, taking "the names of all men between thirty and forty, supposedly for military registration and are requiring each to pay 40 baht immediately. One claims to be a doctor and offers to sell shots for 20 baht." Pete wanted the BPP to confirm if these men were really bonafide and if not to attempt to apprehend them for impersonating government officials.

The message was carried by a villager from B. Māē Umlong Nôi. He arrived here very early in the morning, having travelled the better part of the night. I took him to the BPP camp where we talked with the commandant. Between my translation of Pete's note and information obtained from interviewing the Karen villager, the commandant decided that the men in the hills were impostors. He ordered five of his men to go up into the hills in search of them.

Today, Pete came down and I learned something of what happened (also added to by Benny and Paul Zinke who were with Pete). The four men had visited several other villages in the hills demanding much the same thing. They requested 40 from men over 30 as a "fine" for not having registered for the draft when they were 17 and they requested ฿25 from men between the ages of 17 and 30. They said that if the villagers didn't pay, the fines would be increased. Apparently, in a few cases they collected identification cards from villagers. According to Benny, villagers in B. Huai Hāk Mai, another Karen village, sent for the civil police who also came up in the hills.

According to Pete, when the real BPP met up with those claiming to be, there was some embarrassment because, reportedly, the four Bangkok-types had credentials proving they were army. All the BPP could do was request that the men report to the district office in Mae Sariang.

Despite their apparent legitimacy, there is no question but that a confidence game is being pulled here. Registration for the draft applies only to those who are literate in Thai (thus, excluding most tribals, especially those over 30) and takes place only at the district office (this according to Khrū Arām who visited me today). The hill tribes people, for the most part, have realized this and have refused to pay up. They also were pleased that the police responded to their requests for help because it suggests that the police are really interested in their welfare.

I am sure that this is not yet the end of this story.

Composition of the Provincial Council

A few days ago I was talking with Mr. Insuan about the composition of the provincial council (to which he was elected). He says that there is a total of 18 members, 4 from Amphoe Muang, 3 from A. Khun Yuam, 3 from A. Pāi, and 8 from the district which included both A. Mae Sariang and King A. Māē Lā Nōi. The council will be having its first meeting shortly to elect a chairman.

Karen Social Mobility

On the 1st we had the Coats', Peggy Smith (and a guest of the Coats') to lunch in honor of Mark Anderson who was getting ready to leave Mae Sariang (he has now left). During the course of the lunch, we asked the Coats' about a young Karen, named Bun-eng (Thai name), whom we had recently met at the hostel. The Coats' said that this boy was born in Māē Hān and was more-or-less an orphan. He showed up at the hostel and has since been raised by Benny and Lahsay. He completed MS3 in Mae Sariang and then went on to Prince Royal's College where he completed two years. He continued in study at Chiang Mai Teachers' College for one year and would have liked to take a second year but he was not successful in his application for the second year. He now wants to be a 'hill tribes' teacher.

The Coats' also said that they had had a visit from the Assistant Headman at the Boriphat Süksā school who was talking about some Karen students who have graduated this year. He apparently said that they didn't stand a chance of passing the exam for becoming teachers in the

one given in Mae Hong Son and was attempting to suggest alternative means to getting them in as teachers. (Incidentally, even the Coats' admit that placing Karen teachers in Karen village schools will exacerbate the language learning process.)

In Chiang Mai a couple of days ago, we had dinner with Amnuay and Siri who told us about a Karen lawyer, Tôm. who they think is originally from Mae Sariang and is a relative of Khrū Sant. Tôm is thinking, according to Amnuay and Siri, of returning to Mae Sariang to set up practice where he will be in a position to help the Karen. He is a Christian.

Border Patrol Police

When I visited the BPP Headquarters the other day I learned a few things about the BPP. There are 40+ men stationed here. BPP from outside the North make an effort to learn Northern Thai and even a few try to learn some Karen (the commandant knew a few words of Karen) and this contrasts markedly with the district officials.

Khrū Sant

When we were in Chiang Mai I went to the bank where I met Khrū Sant –probably the highest status Karen Christian (Assistant Manager of the Siam Commercial Bank) in the area. He arranged to travel over to Mae Sariang with us to attend the Baptist Convention which began yesterday.

Khrū Sant says that he is ½ P'wo (Fa) and ½ S'kaw (Mo), he was born in Lampang, but raised in Mae Sariang where his father moved (to be evangelist?).

Education and Hill Tribes

This morning Khrū Arām visited and helped me in working up the school survey form. I asked him if there were to be any new schools this year in hill tribes villages. He said that there will be one at Māē Hô (Tribal Development Center) and that the villagers at B. Huai Plā Kang (บ้านห้วยปลาถ้ำ) have built a school, but there are no teachers to fill the positions. Filling posts in hill tribes village schools is a major problem. For example, this year there will be two grades in Bān Chāng Mô (last year there was one because it was the first year) and there will be an additional 70+ students. Thus, there is a need for two teachers in the village. However, Khrū Arām himself has quit and they haven't even found, a replacement for him much less someone to

fill the second spot. The girl teacher at B. Huai Hôm would like to be replaced (she is one of the few girl teachers who have stuck it out alone in the mountains), but there is no one to replace her.

Ordination of Novices – Shan Style

I talked with the CKA this afternoon. I mentioned to him about the ceremony at Wat Ommarāwāt three days after the ordination of novices there. He said that this was a Shan custom called *ôngpôi* (ဝံ့ပဲယဲ). He said something like this – that the people come to present food to the monks and novices after the ceremony and when they finish the food presentation, they sell the dishes and give the money to the sponsors of the ordination who in turn sponsor this ceremony. This ceremony brings to a conclusion the ordination festivities. [This is a garbled version of what he said, I am sure.]

The ordination itself was in Thai style because only two wats in Mae Sariang can ordain in Burmese style – Wats Cantharāwāt and Uthayārom.

Burmese Influence on Buddhism in Mae Sariang

I asked the CKA about which monks have studied in Burma – the abbot of Wat Cantharāwāt (who is Burmese), the Karen monk at Wat Ommarāwāt, the Karen monk at Wat Uthayārom, and Phra Pan from Māē Lā Nôi. The latter was arrested after returning because he had no passport.

The Wat at Māē Hān is 'Burmese' style because the headman was a novice at Wat Uthayārom before it was built and the first monk then was from Wat Uthayārom. Since then the monks have been from Khonmüang wats, but none have stayed long.

A Lua Christian

This evening we were visited by one Amphôn, a student in MS2 at Boriphat Süksā and a Lua Christian from B. La' Up. He came to offer to sell us a Lua pipe which is peculiar to La' Up. His parents now live in B. Phae but they have no land. He says that he didn't do too well on the exams because he had to work so hard at home and couldn't study there. He has five younger siblings and one elder sibling, none of whom are studying. He says he is the first Lua to study in secondary school and the only one in B.S. school. There are now two more Lua (Christian also?) in the M.S. Samān school. He doesn't yet know what he wants to be, but he would like to

continue his studies. He is a student of Don Schlatter.

Mae Sariang

April 8, 1968

Talk with Čao Khana Amphoe

This afternoon I spent about two hours talking with the CKA on a wide range of subjects. We talked some about politics. The subject was introduced because, in talking about Nai Thian's mine, I mentioned that it wasn't in Mae Sariang district. The CKA said yes, but that it used to be. The lines between Tak and Mae Hong Son provinces were redrawn at the time the National Assembly existed for electoral reasons. The CKA commented that this redrawing was 'political'. I asked if Mae Sariang had any MP's when there was a National Assembly. He said there were two – both of the Thongsawat family. We then moved into a discussion of politics on a larger scale. He is fairly knowledgeable about Thai political events – mentioning the association of the four N.E. MP's. He didn't express much opinion of his own except to say that he thought national elections would be a good thing. He also said that many Thai were upset by the recent turn of events (Johnson's attempt to begin peace negotiations and his withdrawal from the race for President) because they fear that America will withdraw all of its forces from SEA and that the Communists will move into Thailand.

We also talked about the 'hill tribe' problem. He said that some people are worried that many poor Karens will be attracted to the promises of the Communists. He also said that one of the Thammacārik monks had worked among Meo in Tak last year. He was impressed by the interest, the Meo had in Buddhism – much more so than in Christianity. This year, however, there is no program in the same village because Communist agitators had won over many villagers.

He showed me a large brick from Kōng Kōi which people there say comes from an old Lua wat. The people in this village, although everyone else refers to them as Lua, prefer to think of themselves as Khonmüang. There are few people left in the village who still speak Lua. Apparently there are some similar bricks in B. Thung Phrāo.

Two of the novices who were ordained at B. Māē Tōp Nūa have not yet *sūk*. One of these is the son of the headman of B. Phae. This headman visited Wat Kittiwong today to find out the exact days of Songkrān.

There will be another *chēdī* built in a Karen village next year – in B. Māē Ngāē –which is

on the Salween River.

I mentioned seeing the new novice at Wat Ommarāwāt wearing 'prayer beads' at the *ōngpōi* ceremony. The CKA says these beads are called *lūkpakham* (ลูกปะคำ) or *lūkmākham* (ลูกหมากำ) and are worn by monks and novices when they have just been ordained and when in meditation (กรรมฐาน). The necklaces have 108 beads plus 3 beads at the end (for the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Sangha). The CKA thinks that these beads are distinctive to the North (*vis-à-vis* other parts of Thailand) and agrees with me that they may be of Mahāyāna origin.

Songkrān Customs

The CKA wrote out for me a short summary of the customs associated with traditional New Year or Songkrān (สงกรานต์) in Mae Sariang. The following is a translation of this summary (he signed it Phra Khrū Anusōn Sātsanakiat). A copy of the summary follows.

Translation of the Čao Khana Amphoe's summary of Songkrān customs

“13 April is called *wan sangkhanlōng* (วันสงกรานต์). This day is one for cleaning courtyards and buildings where people live and for washing clothes and *dam hua* 'head-bathing') in order to cleanse [these things] of defects. Almost every house has an earthen pot in which is placed Bermuda grass (หญ้าแพรก) and 5-leafed leaf (ใบต้นห้า). This pot is taken and placed in the house. [This pot] is called *mō sangkhān* (หม้อสังหาร) and is [used for] welcoming *sangkhān*. This pot will be taken and be given to the wat on the 15th where there is merit-making at the wat. This day is the first day of playing with water and throwing water at each other.

“14 April is called *wannao* (วันเนา). This day is one for preparing alms and making food [which] will be kept to be presented for making merit on the following day. The popular sweets made here include *khanom thian* ('candle sweet'), *khanom cōk* (ขนมจ็อก), *khanom lōt chōng* (ขนมลอดช่อง). In the afternoon, young and old alike go to the river and bring sand to build *chēdī*. This

is called *khon sāi* ('carrying sand') and these *chēdī* are called *chēdī sāi* ('sand *chēdī*). They will be presented in a merit-making ceremony at the wats on the following day.

"15 April is called "*wanphayāwan*" (วันพญาวัน) which is the change in the new Čulasakarāt and is the day for merit making at the wats. In the morning is the filling of alms bowls. At noon, the laity begin collecting at the wats to listen to the New Year Blessing sermon (เทศอนิสงส์ปีใหม่) and other sermons which vary according to the wat (as for Wat Kittiwong, at noon is the bathing of the holy relic of the Buddha. Wats which do not have the New Year blessing sermon are Wats Sībunrüang, Čanthurāwāt, Uthayārom, Ommarāwāt, and Suphanrangsi. These wats, besides going to make merit at them, there is also the *dam hua* of relatives).

"16 April is called *wanpākpī*. This day the laity go to *dam hua* their abbots. This is called *damhua tu luang* (คำหัวตุ้หลวง). There is no set time for this, but it is likely to be held in the afternoon. There is also *dam hua* of relatives on this day.

"On this day in the morning at about 7:00 A.M., laypeople who held firmly to the old ways will go together to make the ceremony of worshipping with rice to reduce fate (พิธีบูชาข้าวลดเคราะห์) at wats also in order to dispel the evil omens of fate and to ward off evil influences and to have good fortune throughout the year until the next cycle.

"17 April is called *wanpākdüan* (วันปากเดือน).

"18 April is called *wanpākwan* (วันปากวัน).

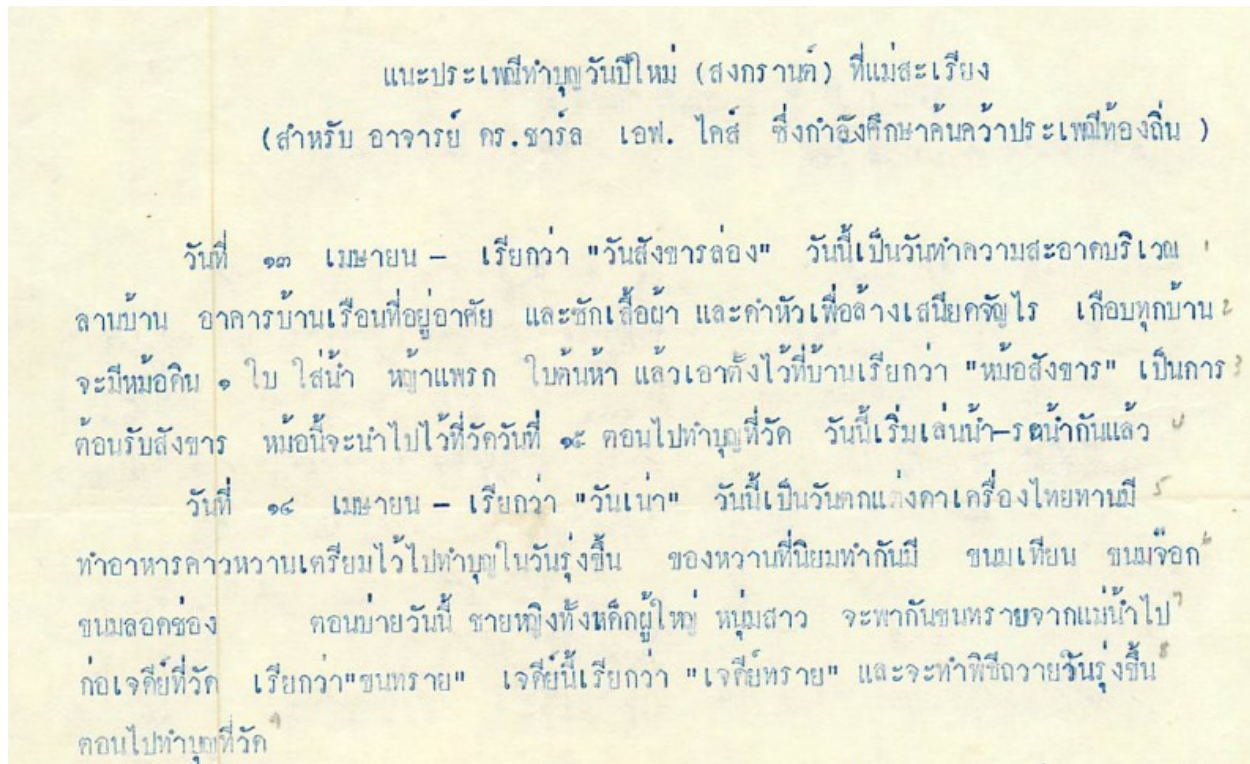
"On these two days [people] *dam hua* different wats. [This] is called *dam huawat* (คำหัววัน) [and means] that monks, novices and laity of each wat which is esteemed gather together to *damhuawat*. Wats which must not be omitted [in this ceremony] include the wats of the Čao Khana Amphoe and Čao khana tambon. Besides these, wats that are so honored are those which are appropriate. Usually, they are likely to the wats with abbots of many lents and who are widely respected.

"The custom of *dam hua* signifies the asking of pardon of one another. If [one] has offended [anyone] in body, word, or heart, then It is good to seek his pardon. [It is also an

occasion] for requesting the precepts and blessings of monks and elders in order that [one will enjoy] happiness and prosperity throughout the year."

[End of translation.]

Document: Čao Khana Amphoe's Summary of Songkrān Customs



วันที่ ๑๕ เมษายน - เรียกว่า "วันพฤหัสบดี" อันเป็นเปลี่ยนจุลศักราชใหม่และเป็นวัน
ทำบุญที่วัด ตอนเช้าทำบุญตักบาตร ตอนเที่ยงวันเป็นต้นไปทายกทายิกาจะพากันไปพึ่งเทศน์¹¹
อาวาสสงฆ์ใหม่และธรรมเรื่องอื่นๆ อีก เท่าที่ทางวัดจะจัดบริการได้ (สำหรับวัดกิตติวงศ์¹²
ตอนเที่ยงมีการสงฆ์พระบรมสารีริกธาตุ วัดที่ไม่มีการเทศน์ธรรมอาวาสสงฆ์ใหม่มี วัดศรีบุญเรือง¹³
วัดจำเริญวาส วัดอุทธรธรรม วัดอมราวัด วัดสุพรรณวังษ์) วัดนี้ นอกจากไปทำบุญที่วัดแล้ว¹⁴
มีการไปคำหัวผู้ใหญ่ในเครือญาติ (ญาติก๊วย)¹⁵

วันที่ ๑๖ เมษายน - เรียกว่า "วันปากปี" วันนี้ศรัทธาทายกทายิกาพากันไปคำหัว¹⁶
เจ้าอาวาสวัดของตน เรียกว่า "คำหัวคู่หลวง" เวลาไม่มีกำหนดแน่นอนแต่มักทำกันในตอนบ่าย¹⁷
และยังมีการคำหัวผู้ใหญ่ในเครือญาติของอีกเช่นกัน¹⁸

วันนี้ ตอนเช้าประมาณ ๐๗.๐๐ น. จะมีทายกทายิกายู่อที่ยืนในประเพณีโบราณจะพา¹⁹
กันไปทำพิธีบูชาข้าวลวดเคราะห์ที่วัดก๊วย เพื่อเสกกระทะ ปักเป่าเสนียคัจฉาโรออกไป ให้อันได้²⁰
อยู่ก็มีสุรตลอดปีใหม่ที่เวียนมาถึง²¹

วันที่ ๑๗ เมษายน เรียกว่า "วันปากเดือน"²²

วันที่ ๑๘ เมษายน เรียกว่า "วันปากวัน"²³

ในสองวันนี้เป็นวันคำหัววัดต่าง ๆ เรียกว่า "คำหัววัด" คือพระภิกษุสามเณร²⁴
และศรัทธาทายกทายิกาของแต่ละวัดจะพากันไปคำหัววัดต่าง ๆ ที่คนเคารพนับถือ วัดที่จะเว้นเสียมิได้²⁵
มีเจ้าอาวาสวัดท่าเรือ วัดเจ้าคณะตำบล นอกนี้สุดแล้วแต่จะไปคามที่เห็นสมควร ส่วนใหญ่มักเป็นวัดที่²⁶
มีเจ้าอาวาสที่อายุพรรษาสูงเป็นที่เคารพนับถือรู้จักมักคุ้นกัน.²⁷

ประเพณีคำหัวนี้จุดประสงค์คือ เพื่อขอขมาการระต่อกันและกัน หากใดล่วง²⁸
เกินค้ำกาย วาจา ใจ ใด ๆ ก็คือไปขอขมา อโหสิกรรม กันในวันปีใหม่ และเป็นการขอศีลขอพร²⁹
จากพระและผู้นับถือผู้แก่ เพื่อความสุขความเจริญของคนในวันปีใหม่ที่ยเวียนมาถึง.³⁰

พระครูอนุสรณ์ศาสนเกียรติ

To these notes, the CKA also added some other information on the customs associated with Songkrān. He showed me these sheets of *kradātsā* on which were printed various Gatha and diagrams. These he called 'candles' and said that they were requested by people especially on the occasion of Songkrān. He gave the following brief description of each:

“1. *Thian Sattaphan* (เทียนสัตตภณท์). It is popular to worship [with this 'candle'] on the 16th of April each year in order to ensure one's having happiness and prosperity in the New Year,

“2. *Thian nopkhrôtang kao* (เทียนนพเคราะห์ตั้งเก้า). It is a 'candle' used for dispelling the ill omens of fate and is commonly used when one is ill or at New Year.

“3. *Thian rapbôt* (เทียนรับโบท). It has general usage as well as at New Year.”

I have not been able to find meanings to all the words used, but some of them can be elaborated.

Sangkhān (สังขาร) according to Haas (531) means “the physical and mental constitution of the body”, while McFarland (842-3) give this meaning also (and "being one of the five elements of corporal being"), he also suggests the meaning of 'preparation' which would fit better the significance of the day. *Lông* may mean (McFarland 731; Mēt, 63) either "to descend" or "a hole or space between the floor board"- into which refuse is swept or thrown." Together these two words suggest cleansing, and preparation of oneself and house for the forthcoming ceremony.

Nao (เนา) according to Mēt (140) means "day between astrological New Year and the beginning of minor era (จุลศักราช). New Years eve of minor era."

Phayā (พญา) is a title meaning leader or supreme one. The significance here is the *phayāwan* which means the 'chief day' – i.e. the actual New Year day.

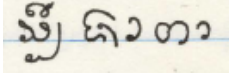
Pāk means 'mouth' and in the case of the last three days it probably has astrological significance – i.e. 'the mouth of the year', 'the mouth of the month', and 'the mouth of day'.

Sattaphan (สัตตภณท์) according to McFarland (846) means "the seven chains, or circles of mountains surrounding Mount Meru.”

Nopkhrô (นพเคราะห์) means 'planet' (McFarland. 440) and *tangkao* means "all nine" – thus "all nine planets”.

All of the customs associated with the 'candles', the CKA says, came from Brahmanism.

Ceremony of *Süp Čātā*¹

Today a ceremony was held at Wat Kittiwong for Phra Mahā Kāēo, a young monk. While the Čao Khana Amphoe was in Bangkok, according to La'ô, an ex-monk at the wat, one Mō Sanan, got very drunk and attacked Phra Mahā Kāēo with a knife. Fortunately, the monk was not seriously injured (he also reported the incident to the police who arrested Sanan). But he was very shaken by the incident. An astrologer advised him that he should have performed for him a ceremony, called in N. Thai *süp chātā* (spelt สึบชะตา  by the CKA and สึบจะต๋า หรือ สึบจาด้ by Nāi Mēt in his dictionary). In this ceremony, the recipient is to be insured of at least another year of health and well-being.

The CKA said that the ceremony is "connected with continuing age". Both he and Mr. Insuan agree that the ceremony is Brahmanistic, not Buddhist. Nāi Mēt's dictionary (p. 221) says that *süp cātā* means the worshipping of the nine celestial bodies (Sun, Moon, Mars, Mercury, Saturn, Jupiter, Uranus, Venus, and Neptune) in a merit-making ceremony in order to 'continue ones age' (ต่ออายุ) – i.e. to insure continued life in the face of some difficulty, shock, disease, etc. McFarland (p. 295) defines *chātā* (ชะตา as "born; produced; caused; arisen". Haas (p. 179) defines *chatā* or *chātā* (ชตาชตา, ชตา,) as "fate, destiny." Mēt (p. 70) defines *cātā* (จะต๋า) as "destiny, fate, time of nativity". *Süp* has the meaning of "to continue" in both Central and Northern Thai.

Although the ceremony today was for a monk, it is by no means restricted to being performed for monks. In fact it is usually held for monks only when they have reached old age, when they have been made an abbot, or when they have been raised to some other high status.

¹ Charles F. Keyes's tape recording of the *süp chātā* ceremony at Wat Kittiwong on April 11, 1968 is located in the UW Ethnomusicology Archive, reference numbers 2001-2.35 EC and 2001-2.36 EC. The original tape is titled, "Tape Number 21, Side 1." The recording has also been digitized. An index and Thai transcript of part of the recording is located in UW Special Collections, and within the Charles and Jane Keyes Collection on the digital ResearchWorks archive at UW.

But, special circumstances led Phra Mahā Kāēo to having this ceremony. When held for a layman, it is held in the home where monks are invited.

The CKA told me that the ceremony must be held in the mornings, before noon. The symbolism here is that the rising sun accords with a person's desire for a continued destiny in this world, whereas a falling sun would not be so auspicious.

The ceremony began about 10:00. It was only attended by a few people it was a private ceremony to which one had to be invited by "the offering of a candle". Host present were relatives of Phra Mahā Kāēo and were primarily middle-aged and older. The sponsor of the ceremony was the man who had sponsored Phra Mahā Kāēo's ordination and not his real parents.

On the raised platform in front of the *kuthi* were seated nine monks not including Phra Mahā Kāēo, on whom the CKA was the first. In front of them, and still on the platform, were three 'poles' which were leaned together to make a tipi structure. Each 'pole' was composed of several items, each of which had symbolic significance. There were also other items of symbolic significance set next to the poles. (These are explained by Mr. Insuan on the tape which I made of the ceremony.) Underneath the poles was a rug and on top an unlit candle.

During the opening part of the ceremony, Phra Mahā Kāēo came in and knelt down under the poles. He *wai*-ed the image and then the CKA. Then he took up. The regular position under the poles, facing the monks. He tied around his head a string which passed through the top of the poles and thence to a ball (actually a stick on which the string was wrapped) which was in front of the CKA. This string is the *fāi mongkhon* (ฝ้ายมงคล (or ฝ้ายมงคล) or *sāi sin* (สายสิญจน์) as it is called in Central Thai – i.e. the 'sacred thread' that is used in many types of ceremonies in association with chanting.

The ceremony began with the usual old man as lay leader (*ācān*), leading the congregation in the *waiphra* (อรหัง...) and the *khōsin* (มัยัง กนเต...) by the lay leader himself. The CKA then *haisin* (นมโหม and สีล). It was during the first part that Phra Mahā Kāēo took his place.

Next, the ball of string was unwrapped and passed from monk to monk until all monks were holding the string. Then all of the monks chanted Gāthā, but not simultaneously. Many monks were reading from books. These were the Gāthā special to this ceremony. Some monks,

including the CKA, blew on the string as they chanted. Insuan said these Gāthā were in both Pāli and Northern Thai. The CKA was the last to finish, having read his Gāthā at a much slower rate.

Then the *ācān* chanted something, followed by a monk from Wat Sībunrūang (third monk in row) chanting. Then all monks chanted while holding the string. During this chanting, Mr. Insuan went up and lighted a three-pronged candle which was attached to a *bāt* filled with *sompōi* water in front of the CKA. Later on the CKA held the candle over the water and then finally doused the candle in the water. This chanting ended with the monks still holding the string.

Then the CKA gave a sermon in Northern Thai, during which he held the string under the sermon text. Other monks were making an effort to hold string, although it still lay in front of them and in some cases still in their hands.

All this time Phra Mahā Kāēo had been seated under the poles. But when the sermon was finished, Phra Mahā Kāēo disengaged the string from his head and from the poles and went and sat in front of the CKA. The CKA broke a piece of string and tied Phra Mahā Kāēo's wrists (both of them). He gave a short chant during the tying. Phra Mahā Kāēo then went to the next monk (who was the abbot from Wat Sitthimongkhon) who also tied his wrists, but did not give a chant.

After Phra Mahā Kāēo moved from under the poles, several laymen removed all this apparatus and placed it to one side.

Phra Mahā Kāēo then moved back to stage center (where the rug still was) and sat there. The CKA then chanted the *truatnām*, with the CKA and Phra Mahā Kāēo pouring the water during the chant.

This over, the sponsor of the ceremony and Mr. Insuan took a tray of offerings and presented them to each monk. These offerings included banana leaf packets in which was placed the tobacco, ingredients for betel chew, *miang*, matches, and traditional cigarettes and envelopes with money. There didn't seem to be enough banana leaf packets for all monks, but there were enough envelopes of money. In presenting them, the laymen would place them in the monk's shoulder bags which the monk held open. A metal basin filled with a coconut, candles, soap, and other such things was also presented to the CKA.

The gifts distributed, the monks chanted the *haiphon*.

This ended the ceremony proper. I then went to talk with the CKA. He explained about another tray of traditional offerings which was in front of him and on which the sermon text had

rested. His description is recorded on the tape on which the ceremony is recorded. On this tape, following this explanation, I also recorded the explanation, by Mr. Insuan, of all the apparatus employed in the ceremony.

Although the official ceremony ended with, the blessing, the feeding of the midday meal which followed was also part of the event since the food was prepared by the relatives of Phra Mahā Kāēo. The main food was a noodle dish, called locally *khaonom sen*. The laity attending were also given dishes of this, but not the other foods given to the monks. When the monks finished eating, they chanted the 'blessing' for the food. Then the invited monks departed for their respective wats.

Mae Sariang

April 12, 1968

Ordination of Novices at Mūang Pôn

A month ago a major ordination of novices and dedication of a new *bōt* took place at Mūang Pôn. I was invited, but didn't go. However I was given an invitation. A translation and copy of the invitation follow:

Translation of Invitation to Ordination Ceremony

PETITION TO SPREAD THE MERIT [TO BE MADE] AT THE CELEBRATION OF A
BŌT [DEDICATION] AND ORDINATION OF *LŪK KĀĒO* [AT] WAT MŪANG PŌN,
KHUN YUAM DISTRICT, MAE HONG SON PROVINCE 10 - 15 MARCH, 1968

May merit come to all you worthy people.

Ever since Wat Mūang Pôn in T. Mūang Pôn, Khun Yuam District, Mae Hong Son Province received temple boundary stones (พระราชวิสุงคาม) in 1944, the temple committee and faithful of Mūang Pôn have striven together for many years to erect an *ubōsōt* building. At the completion of the building, the total capital outlay was 30,127 baht.

At the present time the temple committee and faithful of Mūang Pôn have arranged a merit-making celebration [in conjunction with the dedication] of the *ubōsōt* and as an offering in Buddhism for monies to use for their ceremonies. Also, in this same festival, there will be the ordination of sons or as it is called [in Shan] *pōi sānglōng*. The schedule [of this festival] is as follows:

10 March 1968 (19th day of the waxing of the moon, 4th lunar month)

8:00 A.M. Opening Ceremonies. The opening ceremony will begin with the arrangements Chairman lighting candles to worship the three Gems. Then [he] will read the report about the building of the *ubōsōt*. The Chairman of the ceremony will reply and the festival will then be begun. The Clergy will chant the *chaimongkhon gatha*.

11:00 A.M. Presentation of mid-day meal to the clergy.

7:00 P.M. There will be one sermon and then *sai boek* (ใส่เบ็ก[?]).

11 March 1968 (13th day of the waxing of the moon, 4th lunar month)

7:00 A.M. and 11:00 A.M. Presentation of morning and midday meals for Clergy who have come to the ceremony.

During the day heads of different wats and will come together for merit-making.

7:00 P.M. Sermon and *sai boek* ใส่เบ็ก

12 March 1968 (14th day of the waxing of the moon, 4th lunar month)

[Same events as previous day.]

13 March 1968 (15th day of the waxing of the moon, 4th lunar month)

5:00 A.M. Presentation of the honeyed rice with milk (ข้าวมธุปายาส) (ข้าวพระเจ้าหลวง)

9:00 A.M. Opening of the royal eye (?).

11:00 A.M. Presentation of midday meal to clergy.

12:00 A.M. Day of the *lūk kāēo* (*sānglōng*)

14 March 1968 (1st day of the waxing of the moon, 4th lunar month)

7:00 A.M. Presentation of morning meal for clergy.

9:00 A.M. Procession of *sānglōng* or *lūk kāēo* and alms from houses to wat.

11:00 A.M. Presentation of midday meal to clergy.

15 March 1968 (2nd day of the waxing of the moon, 4th lunar month)

7:00 A.M. Presentation of morning meal for clergy.

10:00 A.M. Ordination of 20 sons as novices.

11:00 A.M. Presentation of midday meal for clergy.

12:00 A.M. Feeding of faithful who come to join in the festival

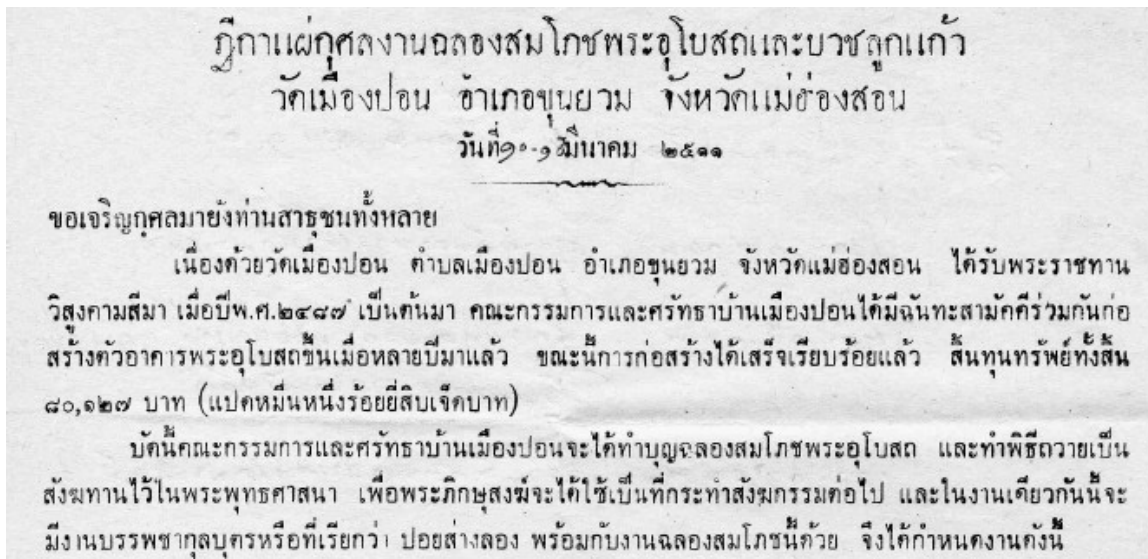
1:00 P.M. Ceremony of presenting alms [dedication of bōt] which will begin with the receiving of the precepts [followed by] a sermon and presentation of alms. The monks chant, of gratitude (อนุโมทนา) will end the ceremony

During each day of the ceremony there will be various *mahōrasop* (มหรสพ ["games and ceremonies in honor of the opening or dedication of a monastery" (McFarland, 626)] and feasting as well.

Therefore, all the members of the temple committee and faithful of Wat Müang Pôn would like to invite all pious people to join together with us in the merit-making in conjunction with the dedication of a new *bōt* and the ordination of novices as related in the above schedule.

[Signed] *Phra Khrū Anusōnsātsanakiat* (พระครูอนุสรณ์ศาสนเกียรติ), Chairman of Clerical Arrangements [and Čao Khana Amphoe Khun Yuam], Mr. Prasoet Čantharothēpsī (นายประเสริฐ จันทรเทพศรี), Chairman of Lay Arrangements [Approval Stamp by the District Abbot.]

Document: Invitation to Ordination Ceremony



วันที่ ๑๐ มีนาคม ๒๕๑๑ ตรงกับเดือน ๔ ขึ้น-แรม ๑๖ ค่ำ

เวลา ๐๙.๐๐ น. ทำพิธีเบิกงาน พิธีเริ่มด้วยประธานจัดงานจตุรปูเทียนบูชาพระรัตนตรัยแล้วกล่าว
อ่านรายงานการก่อสร้างพระอุโบสถ ประธานในพิธีกล่าวตอบแล้วเบิกงาน พระสงฆ์สวดชัยมงคลคาถา

เวลา ๑๑.๐๐ น. ถวายภัตตาหารเพลแก่พระสงฆ์

เวลา ๑๕.๐๐ น. มีการแสดงพระธรรมเทศนา ๑ กัณฑ์ *แล้ว ๑ ชั่วโมง*

วันที่ ๑๑ มีนาคม ๒๕๑๑ ตรงกับเดือน ๔ ขึ้น-แรม ๑๗ ค่ำ

เวลา ๐๗.๐๐-๑๑.๐๐ น. ถวายภัตตาหารเช้า-เพลแก่พระสงฆ์ที่มาในงาน

เวลากลางวัน มีการแห่สังฆลึงหรือลูกแก้ว และวันนี้นำวัวค่าง ๆ แห่ควัทานเข้าร่วมทำบุญ

เวลา ๑๕.๐๐ น. มีการแสดงพระธรรมเทศนา ๑ กัณฑ์ *แล้ว ๑ ชั่วโมง*

วันที่ ๑๒ มีนาคม ๒๕๑๑ ตรงกับเดือน ๔ ขึ้น-แรม ๑๘ ค่ำ

เวลา ๐๗.๐๐ น. ถวายภัตตาหารเช้าแก่พระสงฆ์

เวลา ๐๙.๐๐ น. คณะศรัทธาแห่เครื่องไทยทานจากบ้านไปวัด และแห่สังฆลึงด้วย

เวลา ๑๑.๐๐ น. ถวายภัตตาหารเพลแก่พระสงฆ์ และวันนี้นำวัวค่าง ๆ แห่ควัทานเข้าร่วมทำบุญ

เวลา ๑๕.๐๐ น. มีการแสดงพระธรรมเทศนา ๑ กัณฑ์ *แล้ว ๑ ชั่วโมง*

วันที่ ๑๓ มีนาคม ๒๕๑๑ ตรงกับเดือน ๔ ขึ้น-แรม ๑๙ ค่ำ

เวลา ๐๕.๐๐ น. มีการถวายข้าวมธุปายาส (ข้าวพระเจ้าหลวง)

เวลา ๐๙.๐๐ น. ทำพิธีบรรพชาอุปสมบท ๒๐ คน เป็นสามเณร *เปิดพระาม๑๗*

เวลา ๑๑.๐๐ น. ถวายภัตตาหารเพลแก่พระสงฆ์

เวลา ๑๒.๐๐ น. เลี้ยงอาหารแก่ศรัทธาที่มาร่วมงาน *ไม่ลดแล้ว (๕๖๖๖๖)*

เวลา ๑๓.๐๐ น. ทำพิธีถวายทาน พิธีเริ่มด้วยรับศีล เทศน์ ถวายเครื่องไทยทาน พระสงฆ์อนุโมทนา
เย็นเสร็จพิธี

ในเวลากลางคืนของงานทุกคืนมีมหรสพต่าง ๆ แสดงสมโภชด้วย

ฉะนั้น ในงานฉลองสมโภชพระอุโบสถและงานบรรพชาในครั้งนี้ คณะกรรมการและศรัทธาบ้านเมือง
ปอนทุกคน ขอออกบุญเชิญชวนท่านสาธุชนผู้ใญ่บุญทั้งหลาย ไปร่วมทำบุญอนุโมทนาพร้อมกับศรัทธาข้าพเจ้าทั้ง
หลาย ตามหมายกำหนดการดังกล่าวข้างต้นนั้นโดยทั่วถึงกัน

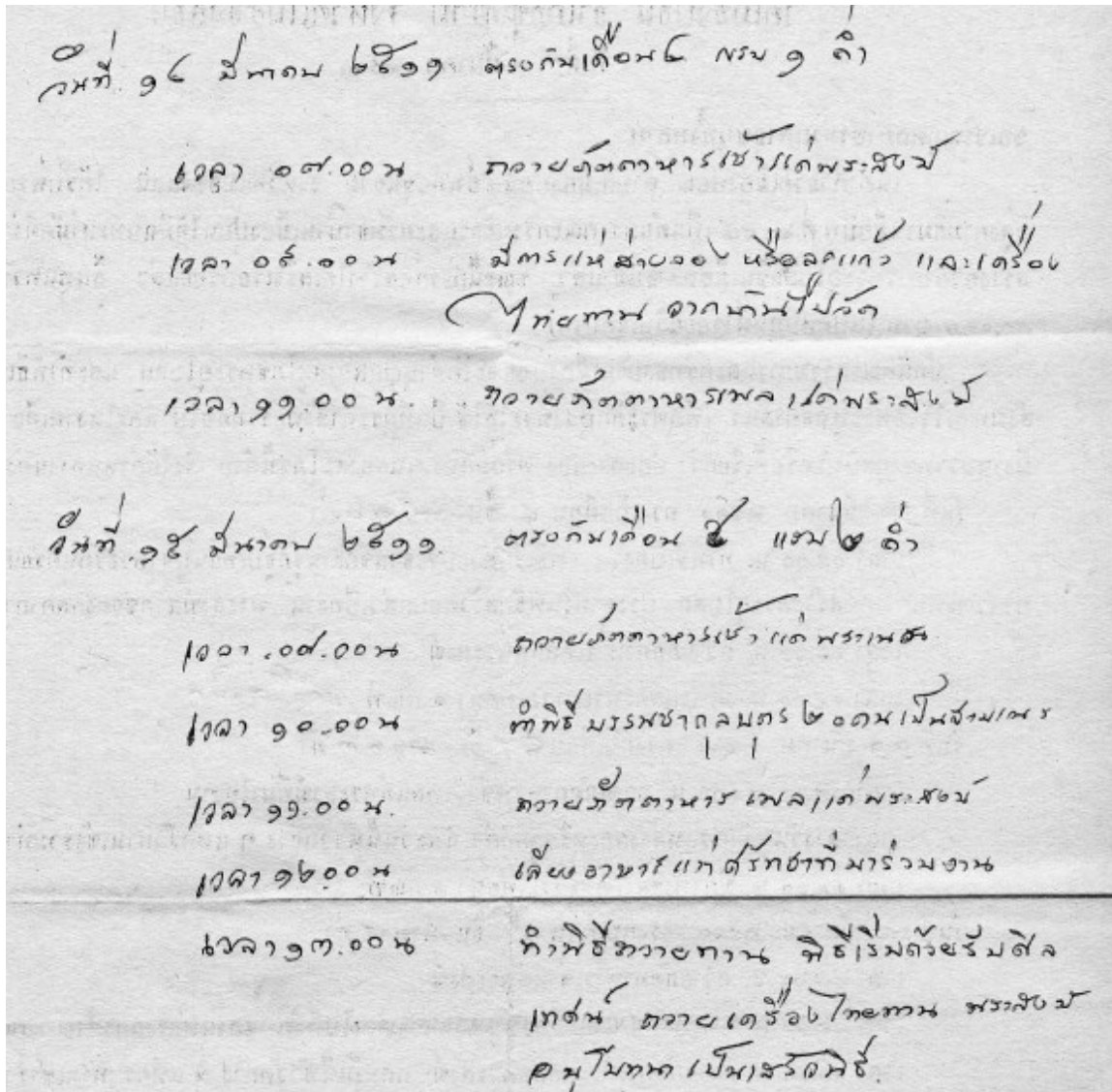


พระครูอนุสรณ์ศาสนการ
ประธานจัดงานฝ่ายสงฆ์
นายประเสริฐ จันทระเทพศรี
ประธานจัดงานฝ่ายคฤหัสถ์

พิมพ์ที่พระสังฆการีพิมพ์ ๒๐ ถนนลำ ซอย ๑ เชียงใหม่ นายประทวน สักกะทวนชัย ผู้พิมพ์โฆษณา

พรึก

๕ ๖๖๗



The invitation came in the usual envelope which those invited should use to place their donations to the ceremony.

Use of Yuan Script

The CKA said today that he knew a monk from Kengtung who was living in a wat in Chiang Mai who used to use the Northern Thai (or Yuan) script for writing letters. He even sent letters from London in this script and they reached their destination. Thus, this script still has some secular uses.

Songkrān Customs

The CKA said today that on the 14th people will take offerings to present then at the shrine of the Čao Müang (town spirits).

On the 20th or 21st there will be *songkhrô* ceremonies in front of Wat Suphanrangsī and other 'corners' which the CKA had told me about before.

School Survey

Today I obtained permission from the District Education Officer to give my school questionnaire to headmasters under his jurisdiction.

Mae Sariang

April 14, 1963

Songkrān

The last two lays have been the beginning of Songkrān. Yesterday, we weren't aware of much happening although a little water throwing was occurring. Also, at night Sāēn, our landlady and next door neighbor, made various types of sweetmeats. From the CKA's description and the happenings today, it would seem that everyone was making sweets yesterday.

Today was fairly quiet until late afternoon. This morning about 9:30 we went to Wat Ommarāwāt to present food (special food made by Sanga). Only a couple of temple boys were present in the main building, in addition to the Karen monk. The old Shan monk, according to the young monk, was down at Nāi Thian's mine. The young monk told us that the special ceremony at this wat will be on the 17th and will be to "worship the *chēdī*".

About 2:00 in the afternoon, Jane and I toured the town in the car. We went to the shrine of the tutelary spirits, but, although the shrine was open, no one was about. According to both Lā, who visited us today, and the CKA people take the special sweetmeats and candles, incense, and flowers to offer to the tutelary spirits.

About 5:00 P.M., or thereabouts, we observed people bringing sand in from the river to make sand *chēdīs* in the wat grounds. We saw this being done at both Wat Kittiwong and Wat Ommarāwāt. At both places, wooden frames were set up in the wat courtyards into which the people poured the sand. Most of the people we saw carrying sand were children and a few teenagers.

From mid-afternoon until nightfall, the throwing of water, particularly around places

where the stream (called *nām müang*) runs through Bān Pông, around the irrigation ditches and at the river. More in keeping with the tradition, people were also visiting relatives and friends and respected people to *damhua*. We ourselves stopped at the house of Nāng Kiang (the person at whose house we first observed the *pôï khāosang* ceremony) and were given the special sweetmeats and were honored by *damhua*. While there, a group of young teenagers also came and *damhua* us. Later, about 7:30, La'ô, her sister (or sisters) and a few girlfriends came to our house to bring both sweetmeats and to *damhua* us.

The giving of sweetmeats is another way in which one shows respect to people in this occasion. People have been coming all day to bring us these special treats. Among them have been Sāēn, Lā, the boy who carries our water, children of a few neighbors, the boy from Nāi Tan's shop who delivers our paper, and La'ô.

We have noticed on the fences or house railings of many houses, vases of paper flowers. In fact paper flowers are in great evidence (La'ô also gave us some).

Deaths in Mae Sariang

Today we learned of two recent deaths. A 14-year-old girl who was a child of someone who works for the Phanasit Company. She displayed diarrhea which got steadily worse and she died within a day (Bob Coates thinks it might have been cholera, but he didn't see the girl). She was cremated this afternoon (I attended the cremation). While at the cemetery another cremation took place. The cremation was of a 56 year old Chinese man who committed suicide (by taking rat poison) after an argument with his wife. His wife was at the cremation in white mourning. Both cremations involved monks, who came and chanted and received the *phā bangsakun* (a white square of cloth).

Mae Sariang

April 15, 1968

Songkrān

This morning we went to Wat Kittiwong to observe the ceremonies there. This day is New Years Day proper end is probably the biggest occasion of Songkrān.

When we arrived at about 7:40 (Jane, Nick A Keyes, Sanga, Phan and I all went although the others returned home early), the *kuthi* was already full of people. A layman was standing in the middle of the congregation making announcements (in Northern Thai) about the Čao Khana

Amphoe's (CKA's) forthcoming trip to Malaysia and about the schedule of events at the Wat during Songkrān. As to the latter, he announced that there would be the ceremony of bathing the Buddha relic kept in Wat Kittiwong at noon today and that tomorrow at 4:00 P.M. there would be *damhua* for the monks in the wat. As to the former, a collection was taken up to help in defraying the expenses of the CKA when he goes to Malaysia. Baht 561 was collected (I gave Baht 25).

Then the morning service followed:

- 1) *wai phra* (อธิ...)
- 2) *khōsin* and *rapsin*
- 3) *suat* by monks (including a number of monks from Bangkok who are engaged in the program).

During the chanting, people took their rice and *tak bāt*. The *kap khāo* had already been taken on arrival and placed on a table in the back of the room. The rice was placed in *bāt* on a table placed in left center of the room (as one faces the altar). Both men and women *takbāt*.

- 4) *thēt* – an extemporaneous sermon in a mixture of Northern and Central Thai by the CKA on the meaning of Songkrān. One point that he made was that there is a difference between Central Thai and official custom where the 13th of April is the New Year Day and is called *wan mahā Songkrān* and Northern Thai custom where the 15th is the first day of the New Year.
- 5) Presentation of food by laity led by the *ācān* after which the food set in front of the monks who indicated their acceptance. After the chant of presentation, the monks said *satthu*.
- 6) *haiphon* and *truatnām* by monks.

After this the ceremony was over, I noticed at the ceremony a number of officials - headmaster of the Boriphat Sūksā school, Khun Praphin, Sgt. Tawat of the BPP (visiting here from Chachoengsao), etc., and a few officials' wives. The crowd was quite large for ceremonies in the *kuthi*.

At 11:45 I returned to the wat for the relic-bathing ceremony. As I arrived I noticed that several laymen were cutting up the relic-bathing apparatus in the courtyard. Inside the *kuthi* the

monks were eating at a table in the back of the room. The congregation was not as large as in the morning and was composed primarily of middle-aged and older women, and older men plus a few children who had come in most cases with their grandparents. The official types were not present.

On a table on the raised portion of the room (where the monks and imager, are) eas the wooden lacquered *bāt* in which the relic is normally kept when it resides inside the inner structure. Next to the *bāt* was a lacquer *khan* need for pouring water over the relic. Both these rested on a fancy cloth. On another table, next to the first, rested the *phan* and container in which the relic is placed when being bathed.

In the front center of the room were several receptacles for the offerings of the congregation (see diagram).

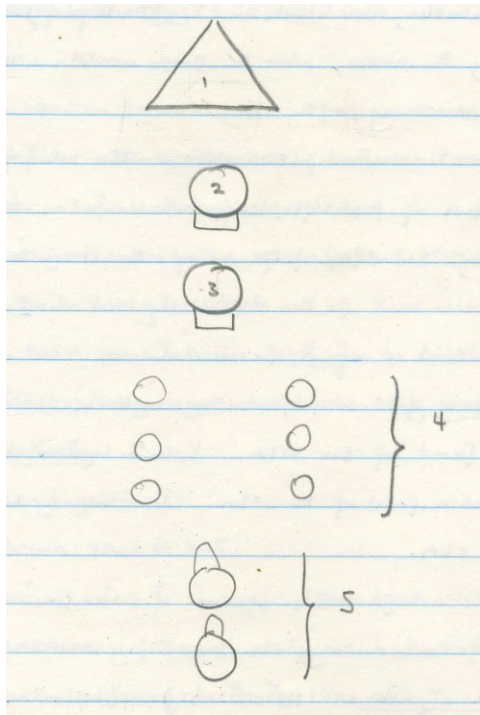


Illustration of arrangement of receptacles and objects used in a Songkrān ceremony

The first three (numbers 1-3) were receptacles for *khriiang būchā*. The first one is called in Northern Thai *khan kāēo tang sām* (ขันแก้วตั้งสาม) – i.e. *khan* of offerings for worship of the triple gems. The second is called *khan namtān* (ขันน้ำตาด) and is that *khan* of offerings which is used in requesting a sermon on behalf of the whole congregation.

Sometimes money is pieced in this *khan*. The third *khan* is called *khan khōsin* (ขันขอศีล) and is used when requesting the precepts on behalf of the wat's congregation. All three of these containers are made of wood and are covered with lacquer and paint decorations.

Behind these were six water basins (number 4) in which people were placing money. This the CKA explained as being for requesting sermons. They seemed to be special for the day. Contributions were again being made by the congregation in general. Finally, behind these were two plastic buckets (number 5) in which the members of the congregation poured a portion of their *nām sompōi* which they brought in various containers (bottles, silver *khan*, etc.). This liquid would later be used in bathing the relic by the monks, while the people would use their reserved portion for doing their own bathing of the relic.

In front of the first receptacle (number 1) was another set of offerings which included a basin full of foodstuffs, soap, tobacco, etc., and a mat and pillow. These were brought by the wife of one of the Thōngsawat family, herself a Chinese, in order to make merit for her mother who had died in Red China. This offering also carried with it a request for a sermon.

Before the beginning *or* the service, some laymen took candles up and lit them on a wooden railing in front of the altar. Later a layman took up the *khan kāēo tangsām* and placed in front of the altar. The second two *khan* were placed in front of the CKA.

Near the altar were a large number of vases of paper flowers, etc. which I had seen on fences and house railings when travelling around town yesterday. These the CKA said were *mōsangkhān* (หม้อสังฆาร). (I also noticed a row of those this morning on the railing of the *bōt* porch.) The CKA pointed out the various flowers in the pot: *dōk khapāng tāngmū* (ดอกขะปางตางหมู) – popped rice on a string *dōkmathā* or *dōkmatā* (ดอกมะพร้าว), *dōk üang tüng* (ดอกเอื้องตึง) – a type of orchid, *dōkpūmāk* (ดอกปูหมาก), *chōkradāt* or *cōkradāt* (ช่อกระดาษ) – kind of paper flag. Some also had paper flowers proper (ดอกกระดาษ). These *mō*, the CKA said, are made on the 13th to "receive the *sangkhān*."

The service went as follows:

- 1) Sometimes the two buckets of *sompōi* water were placed next to the tables on which the relic resided.

- 2) The CKA removed the relic from its normal receptacle and placed it in the bathing receptacle.
- 3) The *Ācān* presented the *khôsin* and *namtān khan* to the CKA by *ācān* leading congregation.
- 4) *wai phra* by *ācān* leading congregation.
- 5) *khôsin* by *ācān* leading congregation and *rapsin* by CKA leading congregation.
- 6) *Ācān suat* in Northern Thai.
- 7) *Ācān suat* in Northern Thai again, this time with people holding their containers of *sompôî* water in a *wai* position. Both these have to do with preparing to bathe the relic.
- 8) Bathing the relic: First the CKA and the other monks came and bathed the relic (including monks from Bangkok. Then a few laymen including the *Ācān* (and myself) bathed it on the table. Water was scooped by dipping the lacquered wooden *khan* into the *sompôî* water and pouring it over the bathing container. The CKA repeated so phrase or words, below hearing level, before; pouring but the others just held the *khan* in *wai* position and then poured.

Once this group had finished, the chief layman picked up the *phan* containing the relic and bathing container and carried it underneath a ceremonial umbrella to the apparatus outside where it was bathed by the other laymen and laywomen (see description of the End of Lent for more details of the same ceremony). As soon as the relic was picked up to be taken outside drums were beaten and were continued to be beaten until the bathing was over.

Once the bathing was over, the relic was taken back into the *kuthi* and the CKA placed it back into its original container.

Then the Assistant abbot of the wat mounted the preaching platform (a new accretion of the wat given by the District Officer) and gave a sermon. Before he began, a sermon was 'requested' by the *Ācān* while people *khriang būchā* and lighted candles. Once the sermon began, the people set their lighted candles in front of them and- then a layman collected them and placed them on the altar railing. The sermon was in Northern Thai and was 'read' from a manuscript.

I left after this sermon was over, but there were more sermons to follow.

Songkrān (Continued)

This morning I went to Wat Kittiwong for a Songkrān ceremony the Čao Khana Amphoe called *būcākhalot khô* (บูชาเขาลดเคราะห์ or บูชาข้าวลดเคราะห์). In front of the altar, but to the right of it (as one faces the altar) were a collection of 'offerings' each consisting of a container (usually a water basin) on which had been placed a nine-chambered *satuang*. There were about 10 of these. In the courtyard, on the apparatus for the bathing of the relic (this apparatus was not a necessary part of the ceremony, but was merely a convenient thing to use), were stuck sticks from which drooped a number of strings.

The people were few and were all women (or children) except for two elderly laymen. Apparently, only ten families were represented. The only other person involved was the CKA.

The ceremony began with the CKA kneeling in front of the altar. Then the two laymen came and lit candles in the *satuang*. The CKA began chanting in Northern Thai (reading from a manuscript in front of him). At some point, one layman said something and the women went downstairs to the courtyard. Meanwhile the two laymen removed all of the *satuang* from the tops of the basins, left the *satuang* near the altar, and turned all of the basins, with the clothes in them, upside down behind the *satuang*. Below, the women all took positions around the apparatus. Most, simply stood and conversed, even smoking, but two older women crouched with lit candles.

When the chanting was finished, a layman informed the women and they lit all the strings. The people returned upstairs, and the layman handed each their basins, this time right side up. The women then shook the clothes piece by piece, and then departed.

The CKA says that the shaking of the clothes is to "have the *khô* go" – i.e. to get rid of the omens. He says that the people, not an *ācān*, made the *satuang*. This ceremony is held three times a year (1) today or *wanpākpī* during Songkrān, (2) the first day of the waning of the moon at the Beginning of Lent, and (3) the first day of the waning of the moon at the End of Lent. It is also held at other times where a person is not well, has had an accident or "if there are *khô*" (ถ้ามีเคราะห์). Then, as well, the ceremony is performed at the wat.

The ceremony is held today at all Khonmüang wats.

The threads that are burnt are called *sāikāking* (สายกำกิ้ง). There are as many strands to the thread as there are years in one's life and the length is one *wā* measured according to the person who is doing the worshipping.

I asked the CKA about the difference between *chātā* and *khô*. He says that the former has to do with continuing one's age whereas the latter are bad omens.

Both today and yesterday people have been visiting others to *damhua*.

About 4:15 I returned to Wat Kittiwong to observe *damhua* monks and images. People were still gathering, although it had originally been announced that the ceremony would begin at 4:00 P.M.

People brought in their offerings of *khriiangbūchā*, money, and dry goods and placed them in one of several "*khan*". The dry goods were all combined in several basins, property of the wat, the *khriiangbūchā* on one large lacquered wooden *phan* (not the three-cornered receptacle), and money was placed on a smaller *phan*.

A Buddha image of about 2½ feet in height was brought out from the room where the relic is kept. It was first placed on a table inside the *kuthi*, but later taken below and put under the apparatus which was used for bathing the relic. The bathing receptacle for the relic was also present on a table in the *kuthi* but it was not used for any part of the ceremony.

A drum was beaten during these preliminaries to call people to come to the wat for the ceremony.

People also brought more containers of *nām sompô*i with them, part of which was poured into one or two plastic buckets. The CKA invited the monks from Bangkok to participate in this ceremony (as well as resident monks). Nine monks were seated in a row, in front of each was placed a basin. The two buckets of water were placed in strategic locations also in front of the monks.

Before the ceremony began, the CKA made some announcements about a bridge-opening ceremony which the District Officer had requested people attend (see below). During his announcement, several laymen divided up the money on the one *phan* into nine parts and placed each in an envelope.

The ceremony proceeded as follows:

- 1) The offerings of drygoods were placed near the CKA and the *ācān* presented the "*khan*" with the *khriiangbūchā* to CKA.

- 2) *waiphra* – congregation led by *ācān*
- 3) *Khôsin* – congregation led by *ācān* and *rapsin* – congregation led by CKA.
- 4) *Ācān* chanted.
- 5) Presentation of "*khan*" including distribution of money to each monk.
- 6) CKA, holding fan in front of face, gave what he referred to a *haiphon phünmüang*. It was mainly in Northern Thai with some Pāli. This turned into the regular Pāli chant used to the Thai tradition for *haiphon* which was joined by all the monks from Bangkok.
- 7) Then, people came to *hotnām tu čao* (as the CKA called it). This consisted of the layperson kneeling before each monk in turn, raising a container of *sompôï* water to a *wai* position, and then pouring the liquid over the outstretched wrists and palms of the monk over the water basins. When the pouring was ended, some laymen at least now and again *wai* the monk.

Although the people inside the *kuthi*, when the ceremony began, were mainly women and older men, younger people mainly teenage girls began coming into the wat to *damhua* the monks after the chanting was over. I also noticed that the monks were joined by the novices at this point who were also having their wrists bathed. Once the wrist-bathing was done, people went below to bathe the Buddha image. Some people came only to bathe the image and didn't go up into the *kuthi* to *hotnām tu čao*.

I stayed below taking pictures for about 15 minutes. When I returned to the *kuthi* all but three monks had disappeared. These three, including the CKA, were chanting a blessing over an offering being presented by one man.

CKA and the Nai Amphoe

Before the ceremony began, the CKA read a letter which he said he had received yesterday from the Nai Amphoe. (The letter was dated April 6.) It concerned the dedication of a bridge near Wat Čom Čāēng which the people had helped build. The announcement said there would be a *tham bun pôet saphān* on April 25, 1968, at which the Governor will preside. It further announced the presence of monks and entertainment to follow.

After reading the letter in Central Thai, the CKA switched into Northern Thai for an

exegesis. For ten minutes or more, he humorously attacked the Nai Amphoe for not understanding Northern Thai customs. He said that the Nai Amphoe had once approached him about making the dedication an occasion for a *pôl luang*. But the CKA explained that *pôl luang* could be held only when some structure had been built in the precincts of the wat. He then said with a smile that he hadn't heard any more about it until yesterday. He said to the congregation that it was inappropriate to have such a ceremony as outlined in the Nai Amphoe's letter because it wasn't in a wat. He asked at least two times: "Isn't, there anyone who can introduce the Nai Amphoe to local customs?" He did, however, encourage people to attend because it was something towards the development of the local area, even if the Nai Amphoe doesn't understand the local customs. These remarks couldn't help but to undermine the position of the Nai Amphoe.

Customs Associated with Songkrān

Before the ceremony began, I had a talk with the CKA about customs associated with Songkrān which will occur tomorrow. He says that tomorrow 4-5 people will decorate the wats in the morning in preparation for the *damhua wat*. The *damhua wat tāngtāng* will take place in the afternoon.

The 'candles' (sheets of paper with *gāthā* which are made up into candles) are not distributed generally but only to those who request them. Most take them and *būchāthībān*, but some give them to monks to use to *būchā*.

At about noon tomorrow Mō Amphōn (Sombat's wife) will *thawāi cēdī* 108 and sponsor two Northern Thai sermons in order to exorcize a spirit of a Karen who died. This Karen killed himself (so I understood) and his soul has been predicting dire things for Mō Amphōn. A medium in CM advised her to perform this ceremony to get rid of the spirit (วิญญาณ used here).

Mae Sariang

April 17, 1968

P'wo Karen Village of Māē Phāē Luang

This morning, I went to Wat Kittiwong where I found the Čao Khana Amphoe and one of the monks from Bangkok talking with the Headman of Bān Māē Phāē Luang, a P'wo Karen village which *is* one of the renters of the tribal development program. The headman was with another villager whose long hair was tied in a distinctive knot.

The headman, who speaks very good Northern Thai, said that he had come down because

the Assistant Headman had been arrested in connection with opium.

The headman says there are 70+ households in this village, but the Bangkok monk who is a Thammacārik monk in the village, says there are about 60 households.

The CKA asked if any people in the village were Christian. He said no although Christian missionaries (*farang*) had visited the village three times. He himself refused to accept the Christian literature because "he thought of the King who provides his headman's salary."

I asked about the age of the village. He said his Father's Father founded the village (of two households). He doesn't know where his Grandfather came from, but says not from Burma (but he seems very attached to being a 'Thai'. He even said his Grandfather was "Thai, not Burmese," to which the CKA responded that if he were Thai, he would have spoken Thai.)

The village is under Tambon Kōng Kōi.

Headman says two villagers are opium addicts – whereas in Māē Phāē Nōi, according to the monk, about 20 percent of the village are addicts.

Karens and Songkrān

This morning a large number of Karens from B. Phae and B. Māē Hān came to *damhua tu luang* (i.e. the CKA) at Wat Kittiwong. On their way they stopped at the Nephew's house of the Māē Hān Headman (Khrū Kham) and *damhua* him. (They call the CKA *khūbā*). CKA says that they come each year to do this. Usually, they come with people from B. Pā Māk, but this year this village is planning to come separately as they have a monk living at their chēdī. The Karens foregather at Wat Māē Hān where they join together for Songkrān ceremonies.

The ceremony consisted of (1) *waiphra* (I think), (2) precepts, (3) presenting *nām sompōi*, and (4) receiving blessing. The first was done by the layleader, chanting in Burmese style, followed by a chant in Northern Thai style by CKA. The second part also consisted of Burmese-style chanting on part of layleader and congregation and Northern Thai chanting by Phra Khrū. In (3) the water and associated offerings were given to the CKA and then he followed with (4) in Northern Thai form.

The people didn't actually pour water on the monks, but the CKA says that he will use the offered water for bathing himself. This he said is the local custom and that the pouring of water over the hands as we saw yesterday was a to the Bangkok monks present (but Sanga says that in Bangkok the people bathe the monks). This same custom of presenting *sompōi* water to the

monks was followed later in the afternoon and evening when people went to *damhuawat*.

Merit for the Dead – Nāi Sombat²

Beginning at about 11:00 in the morning, a group led by Mō Amphôn, came to make merit for Mō Amphôn's late husband, Nāi Sombat. According to the CKA, Mō Amphôn had been advised by a medium in Chiang Mai to make the following offerings:

- 1) Two northern Thai sermons, the *Thammakam* (ธรรมกัรรรม) sermon and the second *Thammālai yōk lōk* (ธรรมมาลัย โยค โลก) sermon.
- 2) Seven sets of alms (เครื่องไทยทาน ๗ ชุด).
- 3) Seven *khan* of food (ขันข้าว ๗ สำหรับ).
- 4) One 'memorial flag' (ธง ๑ ตั้ว).

The seven monks present included several Thammacārik monks from Bangkok. The actual containers of food were *pintō* which the monks could use again.

The ceremony went as follows:

- 1) *waiphra, khōsin, rapsin*
- 2) presentation of food

A table was set up on the raised part of this room for the monks to eat. Several *laymen* presented the food while Mō Amphôn stayed in the back where the food was being dished up (Mō Amphôn said that quite often people have this ceremony at home and prepare food there, but she thought it was easier [because of the numbers involved?] to prepare food at the wat and present it there.)

The *ācān*, in chanting the presentation of food, mentioned that the merit made was for Sombat.

During the first part of the monk's meal, the *ācān* chanted what the CKA called *wēntān*

² Charles F. Keyes made a tape recording of the ceremony sponsored by Mō Amphôn to make merit for her late husband, Sombat, on April 17, 1968. The original tape is titled, "Tape Number 22, Side 1." An index of the recording is located in UW Special Collections, and within the Charles and Jane Keyes Collection on the digital ResearchWorks archive at UW. The recording was meant to be donated to the Enthomusicology Archive, but no record of it exists.

(เวณตาน) a formal presentation chant in northern Thai, including the following:

- 1) praise of the triple gems,
- 2) for all the Devas
- 3) speaks the name of the sponsor and tells what offerings there are
- 4) dedication to the person who has died.

After this chant, the lay guests are also served food even while the monks are eating. The foods served to the guests (and probably the monks as well) included *lāp* (*dip* and *suk*), leaves to go with. *lāp*, *kāēng om*, *yam mamüang*, and both white and glutinous rice. Dessert was ice cream (first time that I have seen ice cream in Mae Sariang).

After the meal, there were two sermons, the first (*Thammālai*) by the CKA and the second (*thammakam*) by the assistant abbot. Both sermons were preceded by a formal request from the *Ācān*. The last one was followed by the *hai phon* and *truat nām*, Northern Thai style.

During the sermon, I noted what was contained in the *khriiang thaiyathān* for each monk: On a metal plate was placed a package of incense, a can of milk, a bar of soap, package of candles, a tin of sardines (French), box of large 'kitchen' matches, a package of cookies, bunch of leaves placed on a newspaper cone, envelope (bearing Sombat's letterhead) containing money. All of these things were held together by a rubber band.

I noted that six monks got these offerings and the seventh got a number of envelopes (of money?). Also placed in front of the CKA -was a large basin with more offerings and the *tung*. Outside in the courtyard were the 108 sand *chēdīs*.

Mô Amphôn's own explanation of why the ceremony was held was something as follows: when a person has died an accidental death (and she specifically mentioned being shot twice), he has much *kam*, or so people believe. Thus, one must sponsor merit-making activities to help him over into the next life.

Songkrān (Continued)

In the evening, beginning about 5:00 P.M., groups of people from the congregations of each wat (with possible exception of some of the 'Burmese' wats) together with novices and monks from that wat made a tour of the town to *damhua wat tāng tāng*. I travelled with the group from B. Dong which included two monks and several novices from Wat Chaiyalāp. I met this group at Wat Ommarāwāt, and then travelled with it to the following wats: Čom Čāēng,

Sībunrūang, Uthayārom, Sāēn Thōng, and Sitthimongkhon. I then left the group, but it went on to Kittiwong and Suphanrangsī. Wat Ommarāwāt was definitely excluded. Also, Wat Čôm Thōng was too difficult to reach to be included.

At each wat, the procedure was very much the same: (1) the people would bathe with *nām sompōi* one or more Buddha images that were placed in the building or in the courtyard for purposes of *damhua*, (2) the monks, novices, and some laymen would seat themselves before the abbot of the wat. When the other people had finished bathing the images, the monks would present a bucket of offerings and a bucket of *nām sompōi* to the abbot. The bucket of liquid had been made up from some liquid from each container carried by the individuals in the group who poured it into the bucket (the bucket was creviced by the host wat). (3) the group would

receive the blessing from the host abbot and then depart for the next wat. Ostensibly, the abbot would bathe with the *nām sompōi* water, but at Wat Sāēn Thōng I noticed that a layman poured the water over the images after our group had left.

At Wat Sībunrūang I noticed that a ‘bathing apparatus’ similar to that of Wat Kittiwong, had been set up in the courtyard. There was a single Buddha image under the apparatus. The blessing given at different wats varied according to the type of wat - Burmese at Ommarāwāt, Shan at Uthayārom, and Kammüang at Čôm Čāēng, Sībunrūang, Sāēn Thōng and Sitthimongkhon.

The event was very gay, with the groups being made up primarily of young girls, with a smattering of young boys and elders (both male and female). As groups passed one another, there was great water throwing and teasing. Many groups had percussion orchestras. The event went on for at least 2½ hours and many people kept up the gaiety even after they had run out of wats.

Not only town wats were represented, for there were groups from Wat Nām Dip and Wat Thung Phāēm (but not from any Karen village – i.e. from Wat Hān).

Mae Sariang

April 18, 1968

Bathing *Chēdī* at Wat Ommarāwāt

Today there was a ceremony of bathing the *chēdī* at Wat Ommarāwāt. A monk from Mae Hong Son gave a sermon in Shan. We missed the ceremony because we had to take Sanga to Chiang Mae for emergency treatment for acute glaucoma.

Mae Sariang

April 19, 1968

Songkrān (Continued)

On the way back from Chiang Mai, we met the Čao Khana Amphoe (and many other Mae Sariang people) in Čôm Thông. The CKA said, in response to a question, that he didn't know when the *songkhô* ceremony for the town would be held, if at all. Last year they weren't held.

In the evening I spoke to a young monk from Sibunrüang who was going to a *songkhô* ceremony in B. Dong. I have noticed many *satuang* around and suppose that Songkrān is an auspicious time for this ceremony. Similarly, yesterday the CKA went to a *süp cātā* ceremony at a private home.

In the evening I passed a large group of people (mainly young) on their way to *damhua* their former teachers and the District Educational Officer. Another group of policemen were *damhua* their superiors.

Mae Sariang

April 20, 1968

Funerary Rites

Early this afternoon Phra Mahā Bēt, the assistant abbot of Kittiwong, came over to tell me about a ceremony to be held this afternoon. He was on his way to the cemetery to participate in a funerary rite involving the collecting of bone's of the deceased (*kepkradūk*). I went along to observe the ceremony.

There were about ten people present, including four novices whom I took to have been ordained for the cremation, three or four youngish women and late teenagers, and two or three young (probably unmarried) men, plus Phra Mahā Bēt. They had brought with them the following: a silver *khan* containing *nām sompôi*, a small earthenware pot, a basket, a white cloth (the *phā bangsakūn*), and a cone of *khriangbūchā*. There was also a wreath of artificial flowers made out of tinfoil, which may have been there since there were a number of these hanging on the *sālā* and they picked one off when they went to the remains of the pyre.

The young men went and collected several large leaves off plants nearby. One woman, who seemed the youngest, knelt in front of the pyre and *krap*-ed two times. Then she and the other women plus one or two of the men (including one novice) dug through the ashes and pulled out some hones. Most were, placed in the bucket while some were placed on the leaves near the

pyre. Finally, when a large number had been collected in the bucket, the *nām sompōi* was poured over them. Then as many as could be put in it, were placed in the pot. This was then covered with a small white cloth which was tied with a skein of cotton thread. The remaining bones were placed on the large leaves and the wreath was placed over them.

The pot was then take away from the pyre and on another bed of leaves. Ore woman, an older one, placed the white cloth across the pot and then placed the cone of *khriiangbūchā* over it. Mahā Bēt came over and crouched in front of the cloth. He chanted something, slowly removing the cloth and the cone of *khriiangbūchā* as he did it. Then he chanted the *hai phon*. Then the pot was taken and placed in the center of the wreath on the pyre and the ceremony was over.

Phra Mahā Bēt says that this ceremony is held either three or seven days after the cremation (in this case, three days). The deceased and relatives are Khonmüang.

Ancient Buddha Image in Mae Sariang

This afternoon I went with Phra Mahā Bēt to Wat Sāēn Thōng take pictures of the Buddha images kept there. There are three very old images there, all bronze and all apparently in Chiang Sāēn style. One image, kept in a locked cupboard, was found in a pond, called Nōng Bua, which *is* outside of the town. Phra Mahā Bēt says that there were two images in this pond – one called *phī* (the larger) and the other *nōng*. Only the latter was recovered and was sent to Chiang Mai for repairs. It now resides in Wat Sāēn Thōng.

Again, I heard the story that Wat Sāēn Thōng is the oldest wat in Mae Sariang.

Song Khô Müang and the end of Songkrān

About 5:30 this afternoon, the ceremony *song khô müang* (สงเคราะห์เมือง) was held in the middle of the intersection of Wai Süksā and Mae Sariang streets (in front of the District Office). There were only a few people present, mostly women. The two main laymen were the *ācān* (who officiated at the ceremony of a new building at the tobacco drying station) and the owner of the shop on the corner.

It is held at this place because this is the center of the old town. In the middle of the intersection was a table on which was placed four basins of alms, a basin containing a Buddha image, and a large number of containers of ceremonial items to be blessed. Below the table there

were even more such containers, most had in them smaller containers of sand, and *nām sompōi*, dry *sompōi* pods, leaves/flowers, package of candles and incense, and string or skeins of cotton thread. Around the table were four chairs, each filled by a monk. The four monks were the abbot of Wat Sitthimongkhon, Phra Mahā Bēt from wat Kittiwong, the large monk from Wat Sībunrūang, and the abbot of Čantharāwāt (the Burmese Wat). It is interesting to note that all of their wats, with the possible exception of Sībunrūang are within the old city.

On the four corners of the intersection were large *satuang* and *talāēo*. The *satuang* were pieces of bamboo matting on which were placed the offerings and which had strings attached to the corners, coming together in the middle so the offering could be hung. The offerings on the *satuang* included, cooked and uncooked rice, images of various domestic animals, bits of prepared food (both savory and sweet), tobacco, cigarettes, chews of betel, and other things I didn't have time to notice.

The *Ācān* chanted at each of these, beginning at the N.E., then on the S.E., S.W. and N.W. corners. After he had chanted at each, these offerings were taken and placed at the ends of the streets in the four directions. The significance of the *talāēo* according to the shop owner is a closing of the door (ปิดประตู) so that the spirits cannot enter.

As the *Ācān* ended his chant, a young boy took the *talāēo*, which was on a pole, and the offerings to the four directions. During the chanting, an old woman crouched near at least two offerings and lit candles and incense.

The second part of the ceremony involved the monks. The shop owner told me before this began that people invite four monks, or five counting the Buddha image placed in the middle of table. [Is the symbolism directional again?] Each monk sat facing the table with his back towards one of the directions.

The setting was something like this:

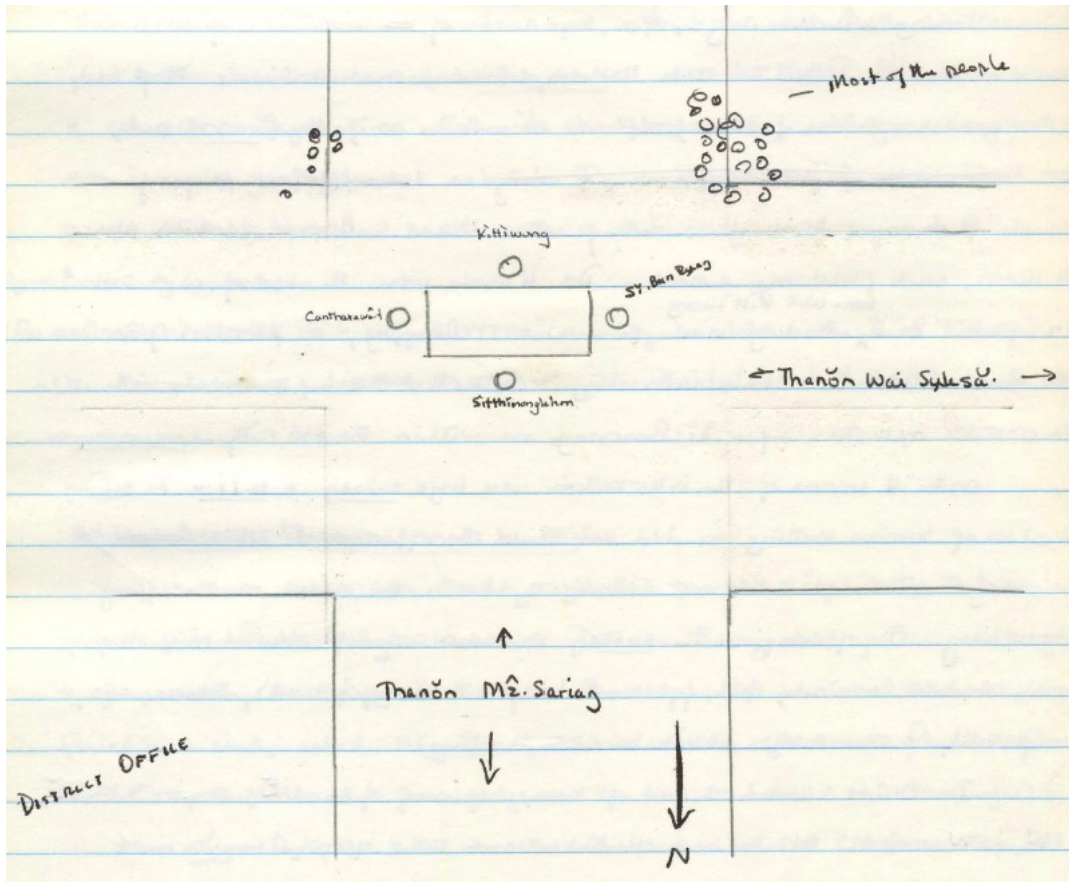


Illustration (1) of setting of *song khô müang* ceremony in Mae Sariang

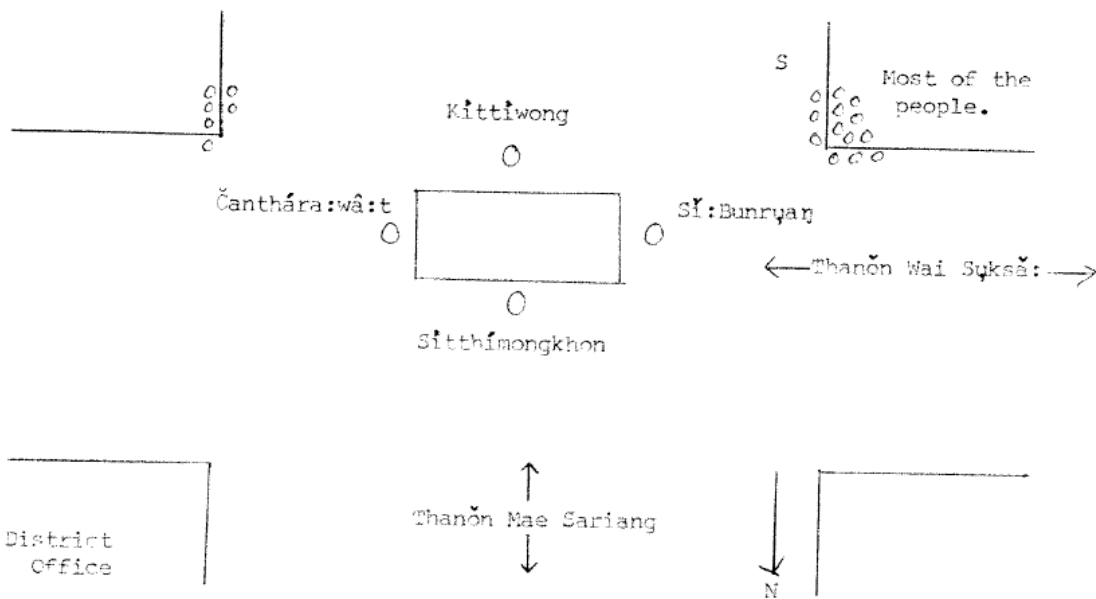


Illustration (2) of setting of *song khô müang* ceremony in Mae Sariang

The *Ācān* came and crouched *between* the monks from Sībunrüang and Sitthimongkhon. This latter monk seemed, to be the head monk. He chanted the *wai phra* and then the precepts were requested and received from the Abbot of Sitthimongkhon. This done, a *sāisin* was attached to the Buddha image in the middle of the table, then passed around the table from monk to monk and around all items under the table as well. The monks then each read from a separate book in chanting fashion, the monk from Čanthurāwāt reading from a Burmese text and the other three from Northern Thai texts. This finished, there was the *suatmonyen* by the three Northern Thai monks. Then, I think, there was some effort to make 'holy water', but it was by now raining so hard that no candles could be lit, and I couldn't see what happened. I also think there was the *haiphon* at the end.

I asked the shop-keeper several questions about the ceremony. He said it is performed on the day following Songkrān and it is held for the purpose of making the people content (สบายใจ). He says that it is not a Buddhist but a Brahmanistic ceremony because "Brahmanism came to Thailand before Buddhism." He explained that the trays of sand, *nām sompōi*, *sompōi*, and *khriang būchā* are not offerings, but have been brought by the people for blessing and will be taken and used in the home after the ceremony (in one case, the old woman who was lighting the candles on the *satuang* placed a *talāēo* plus homemade rope on her offering). The alms proper have been collected together in four containers, but represent the gifts of those people who wish to donate things. Those of the people who participate or attend this ceremony are from the area around the corners. The site of the ceremony was chosen because it is the old 'center of town' (the old town) – he used a word something like *nom* to refer to this. In former times, the streets were closed off for the period of the ceremony and the *kamnan* enforced this rule. People didn't walk, drive, or ride through the streets. Put today there are too many cars and people are not so interested (one truck passed through the corners during the ceremony).

Very few people were in attendance – maybe 30 or 50 – and were mainly women and children.

Chiang Mai

April 23, 1968

Interview with Mr. Sanguan Chōtisukkharat

In Chiang Mai today I sought out Mr. Sanguan Chōtisukkharat (สงวน โชติสุขรัตน์), the publisher and writer who has written more on Northern Thai history and customs than anyone else. I wished to talk with him particularly because he had just made a trip to Mae Sariang and plans to come again in Mid-May in connection with writing a monograph on Mae Sariang at the behest of the Čao Khana Amphoe (CKA).

He showed me a *bāilān* manuscript in Northern Thai script which he had borrowed from Wat Kittiwong. This is a manuscript that was found in an old *hōtham* near the Salween in an area where there are now no people except Karens. Sanguan and a monk from Lampang who was also present both agree that the calligraphy is not good and that the style, although Northern Thai, is strange, almost as though written by someone whose native language was not Northern Thai. This led me to suggest that it might be Lua or ex-Lua who had written it. Both Sanguan and the monk think this is very plausible.

Sanguan thinks that the image in Wat Sāēn Thōng is Chiang Sāēn style and is very old.

The three men whom Sanguan says have played important roles in Mae Sariang history are Thēp Sing (who he says was definitely from Müang Yuam/Mae Sariang and not from Khun Yuam), the builder of Wat Chēdī Luang in Chiang Mai, and Kōlān. He thinks that Thātrafan is a traditional crossing between Burma and Lannathai.

I mentioned observing the ceremony of *song khô müang* in Mae Sariang a few days back and asked if it were found also in Chiang Mai. Sanguan said that it used to be performed every year in Chiang Mai, but has slowly become performed less frequently. It will be performed this year because Chiang Mai has undergone so many tragedies this year (airplane crash, fire, etc.). The Governor and mayor have specifically asked that it be performed. This will be the first time in 10 years. It will be performed at the *lakmüang* which is at Wat Chēdī Luang in May.

He says that he believes this practice to be *saiyasāt* (ไสยศาสตร์) Brahmanism.

Mae Sariang

April 24, 1968

Lua and Buddhism

This afternoon back in Mae Sariang we had a visit from the Lua (ex Chāng Mô) man who brings things to sell. He brought us this time some Lua earrings which a young girl who had just migrated down from the mountains (as yet unmarried) wished to dispose of because she has now taken up Khonmüang clothing.

I asked the informant about the tattooing on his arm. Some is in Northern Thai and other he says are not words although it looks like it. He then said that if one really wished strong amulets against various types of dangers, then one should visit the Khūbākhāo. He says that when he was in the mountains, and still now, he goes to *wai* the *khūbā* quite often as do other Karen and Lua. When the group from B. Dong went recently, he sent along a contribution for alms.

Mae Sariang, Northeast, Khon Kaen, Korat

April 30, 1968

Trip to Northeast

After many complications due to Sanga, developing acute glaucoma and having to be operated upon, we weren't able to leave for our Northeastern trip as planned. However, on 26 April we finally left Mae Sariang, spent two days in Chiang Mai, and on 28 April left Chiang Mai taking Phan and Wan with us. The night of the 26th we spent in Nakhon Sawan. The next day we drove to Khon Kaen via Saraburi and Korat. On the way we stopped at Lopburi and Korat.

We visited the Dregers, CMA missionaries, in Khon Kaen and I bought some more Northeastern books at the Khlang nānā withayā (คลังนานาวิทยา) store in Khon Kaen. This afternoon we drove to Mahasarakham via Kosumphisai. Here we are staying at the house of Mrs. Chuanpit.