

Charles F. Keyes Field Notebooks, Thailand
Original hand-written version

2/12/63

Made side trip to Thát Phānōm & B. Renu: Nakhō:n.

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Returned from Nakhō:n Phānōm across Phuphan Mts. & via
Sākō:n Nakhō:n & Kalasin to Mahasarakham.

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into office. Mr. Phon was naturally everyone's first choice. The comm. includes the following 9 people:

- กบฏ พน-ท้าวสุริ (Mr. Phon Thápsuri) - Headman (KW)
- กบฏ พนมมา สี่ตระกูล (Mr. Phonma: Sê:trák-sú:) - Mr. W. Soup he is chm. (KNKN)
- กบฏ ท้าว สัมพันธ์ (Mr. Tà:p Sámphithák) (KY)
- กบฏ โฮม ท้าวสุริ (Mr. Ho:m Thápsuri) (KY)
- กบฏ ไชย สัมพันธ์ (Mr. Chai:j Sámphithák) Asst. Headman (KY)
- กบฏ พัน ท้าวสุริ (Mr. Phan Thápsuri) (KL)
- กบฏ ส้ม ท้าวสุริ (Mr. Sóm Thápsuri) (KNKN)
- กบฏ ลา ท้าวสุริ (Mr. La: Thápsuri) (KL)
- กบฏ สิ้น สี่ตระกูล (Mr. Sìn Sô:trák-sú:) (KNKN)

4 December, 1963

Today, ^{rather than a} ~~after a~~ week's trip around the N.E., Tom Kisch went along with Mr. Wichain & me to visit the abbot at Bâ:h Khwâw & then onto BWT.

RELIGION:

We had a very interesting & free-ranging discussion with Phrá Lú chō:j. Some of the points that we covered including the following:

People come to feed the monks at B. Khwâw rather than the monks going around the village to have their bowls filled. The abbot gave a couple of reasons for this. For one, this means that people only come when they feel that they afford

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to feed the monks and not be forced into a somewhat embarrassing position of having to feed them everyday or else be publicly missed. Also, he said that by being fed in the wut, "time is saved"

In discussing the ordination procedure for monks and novices, he said that it is necessary to have at least 5 priests present at an ordination as witnesses and one of these must be a monk who is qualified to ordain. ~~Only~~ ^{Only} ~~one~~ monk is necessary to ordain a novice, though this monk must also be one who is qualified to ordain. The only exceptions to this are novices who enter the monkhood for a few days ^{hours} to make merit for a recently deceased relative. In that case it is not necessary to have an ordaining monk.

Monks must carry identification card which attest to their bona fides when travelling. Monks must ask permission of the câw khō:j wut before they can go to spend a single night or longer away from their home wut.

Monks only "meditate" in wutpâ: or when they are wandering "forest" monks. In other words no meditation takes place in the ordinary village wut.

When a monk leaves the monk hood (W) he should go ask permission of the ordaining monk. At such a time 4 priests must be present and then the monk leaving will make a formal request in Pali to return to being a layman.

During last there was a priest from B. Hân who came to live & study at wut B. Khwâw. There is now an older man who used to work from the highway Dept.

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who was ordained after his retirement and though he orig. is from Suratani, he is now living at Wat B. Khudaw.

I asked about who become dékawát and the abbot said that there are the following reasons why a boy becomes a dékawát:

- 1) Because their parents want their children to be good and thus send the children to the wat to learn things about Buddhism.
- 2) Because their parents are poor or because relatives have moved away.
- 3) Because parents are very busy and can't take care of children.
- 4) Because they have been sent to study in town and thus become dékawát in order to have some place to live.

We got into a large discussion about whether Buddhism is as socially oriented as Christianity. I started the discussion by saying that many Westerners believe that Buddhism only teaches that one should make merit for oneself and thus is anti-social in nature. Mr. Wickham disagreed with this violently. Not only does one make merit by giving things to others and by helping others, but an important part of a sít is the muéw ná'ím where merit made during the service is spread to all living creatures and all thawada. One of the major teachings of Buddhism is "compassion" and its opposite is kilét (กิเลส) which is the bearing of the pain & grief resulting from all the misdeeds and bad things which one has done to others.

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INHERITANCE AND KINSHIP PATTERNS:

Today, I was asking Mr. Wickham about inheritance and kinship patterns in the Northeast in order to see if the information which I already had gathered on BNT was specific or general. He gave me the following information & said that it applied not only to Mahasarakham & Roi-et but also to all the chao people of the N.E.

Inheritance:

With regard to inheritance, the ideal pattern is the one which is most often manifest is that daughters inherit all their parents property & sons will expect nothing except to be helped in raising a bride-price. If there is some dispute as to how property should be divided, an old and/or respected relative or friend of the family who is called tau'ké: (see below) will be chosen by the family to arbitrate the disputes.

When a woman marries, her property becomes the common or joint property with her husband so that inheritance is not in the eyes of Northerners from mother to daughter but from parents to daughter. However a matrilineal principle is used in determining conflicts which might occur. Thus, if a woman marries and her parents are dead, then her inheritance becomes joint property with her husband. However, if the woman should die & she still has unmarried sisters, the property becomes joint property between widowed husband and wife's sisters. This is an unstable situation when all parties are relatively young because the unmarried sisters-in-law will marry and the widowed husband will be pushed one-or-less into the background. Thus, he will prob. marry again or she

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will return to his parents' home. If a man should marry again, his rights to the property of his former wife will be forfeited. However, if a woman should die & her husband is relatively advanced in years, & there are no unmarried sisters, the man continues to hold the property until his death. In other words, the joint partnership between man & wife continues in principle even though the partner through whom the property has been inherited has died.

I asked Mr. W. why a man is always the head of household, even when he is an outsider who has married in. He explained this as because Thai law requires that the head of household be a man (unless there is no man to be). However, I don't think this is the case because from what I have observed, there is no ambiguity about a man inheriting merely as head of household and it certainly isn't incongruous with the system in which property becomes joint on marriage. At any rate, the titular "head of household" is passed from man to his son-in-law.

This inheritance pattern explains why there is very little registration of land on the part of Northeastern Laos. The law which was made to accord with patterns in the Central Plains or else in accord with the ideals of urbanized Thais runs contrary to the patterns of Lao people. That is, the Lao principle is one of inheritance by daughters alone & joint ownership between man & wife. The legal regulations assume a pattern of bilateral inheritance & ownership and/or control by man only.

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Analysis:

These patterns bring about a continuity of family by means of a modified matrilineal principle. However, N.E. Thai-Lao society could not be classified as a matrilineal society primarily because there are no matrilineal descent groups. Property sales are contracted between men on behalf of families, though women certainly have an influence, informally, to buy and sell property.

Another way in which[^] matrilineal principle works can be seen in a couple of patterns that exist: Marriage tends to be somewhat unstable in that men may go off to work away from the village or simply to find a new wife. Thus, the matrilineal principle provides for a continuity of family in which the male members tend to be somewhat transient. Also, in the pot village of B. M^o: only the women know how to make the pots while the men are in charge of marketing pots. The women thus keep up the continuity of traditions in a situation where men may marry into the village from other villages (following the uxorilocal residence pattern) & also where marriage tends to be somewhat unstable.

Running parallel to the matrilineal principle of inheritance and preservation of family continuity is the patrilineal inheritance of surnames & in some cases the patrilineal inheritance of certain status; e.g. in BNT Mr. Toip inherited his position of headman from his father; Mr. Phon more-or-less inherited his position as headman from his father (thus, it must be written out as very tenuous inheritances). Also, in some cases, men

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will inherit property from their parents. This is explained as a result of a family being much more wealthy than the family of the bride. Thus, in order for a man to retain his socio-economic position, he will inherit land & property from his own family. Also, if there are no daughters, the sons will also inherit.

Taukka: (ໂຕ໊ກ໊):

Mr. Wichian went on to explain the function & nature of the taukka: (ໂຕ໊ກ໊) in N.E. Lao life. A taukka: is a respected friend or kinsman who is called in to perform certain functions for a family. The 3 major functions which Mrs. Wichian mentioned were (1) arbitrating inheritance division; (2) acting as a marriage broker; and (3) arbitrating conflicts. There is no tendency for the person who acts in one of these roles to be the same person as the one to act in any other role. In fact the tendency is for the person to be different in each case. The taukka: is chosen anew by the family for each particular need that arises. Thus, there is no continuity of position & certainly this person does not represent a "clan" leader in any sense of the term. Though the headman may be chosen by some people to act as the taukka: in arbitrating conflicts of interest, it does not necessarily follow that he must be chosen to act in such a role & many people would prefer to have someone else act in that role - particularly if it would be expected that the headman might be biased one way or another on the incident in point. Also, if a kinsman is chosen, he need not be of the same surname nor need he be from one side of the family or the other. If a non-kinsman is chosen,

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he may be chosen on the basis of high status rather than on the basis of friendship. Thus, Mr. W. said that he could be asked to be a taukka:.

Sponsorship of marriage:

Bride price is certainly related to the wealth of the bride's parents because she will inherit the property which the bridegroom will ultimately work and manage. The person in charge of raising the brideprice - the *câu phá:p* (ໂຕ໊ກ໊) for the bridegroom's side - is usually the father of the bridegroom. However, if the father is dead, it will be the mother; if both parents are dead, it will be a brother - preferably elder; and if there are no brothers, but there are sisters, the eldest sister will act in this role.

5 December, 1963

CEREMONY FOR KING'S BIRTHDAY:

Today was the King's birthday & was also the beginning (in Sakon) of a fair in celebration of the hundredth anniversary of the founding of the Red Cross. This fair will continue for 5 days & has its counterpart in every *Changwat* in the country. The fair is being held on the grounds of the Sala Kleng & there are pavilions representing the Ministry of Agriculture with displays on fish, animal husbandry, crop raising, etc. as graphic demonstration of how farmers can improve their income; each *amphue* with goods & handicrafts from that *amphue* on sale; various schools in town such as the Teachers' College; An *Changwat* jail also with handicraft items for sale. These pavilions have been constructed in elaborate designs with the Red

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Cross as their theme. Some of these pavilions also served as "bars" & all but the Ministry of Agric. one are selling handcrafted items such as silk scarves and sarongs, basket work, etc. In addition there are all the usual things of such a fair: the mū:lām nū:, cinema, namwong modern style, bars, etc.

As today was the major day, all govt. officials from all over the Changwat were supposed to be present. We met the head man of BNT and Mr. Hoim, the Kamnan of T. Khwaw, the headmaster of B. Khwaw, plus all sorts of other people.

At about 11:00 we went upstairs in the Sala Klauy & joined with officials in the assembly room who were to participate in the special ceremony for the King's Birthday. The room, other than the chairs, was arranged as follows: towards one end was a picture of the King set on a Buddhist torii:. On the latter were placed makheng & unlit candles, flowers & unlit incense. In front of this was placed a tall cylindrical shaped object wrapped in banana leaves & then the Thai colours & topped by a baij sī:. In the front of the room was a row of priests seated on a platform & provided with various accoutrements. Next to the head priest was a torii: with the traditional items & topped by a Buddhist statue.

The ceremony began by everyone standing & facing the picture of the King while the new governor lit the candles & incense on the altar in front of the King's picture. Then the governor was handed a special paper from which he read a formal expression of the desire of the inhabitants of Mahasarakham that the King should

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continue in good health and that he might have all fortune smile on him. Then the people in the room sat down & from the tall cylinder in front of the King's picture, the banana leaves & the colours and the tallest baij sī: I have ever seen was revealed. Then a man in white robes with traditional Thai shape came up to a microphone placed next to the baij sī: & began chanting a formal sū:khwān ceremony. This man was the official Brahmin (not called Nāj Bram, but simply Bram). This ceremony, it was explained to me by the health officer of the Changwat, was a Central Plains or Thai custom and was not a local one. When the sū:khwān ceremony was finished, all in the main room formed a circle around the picture. The Brahmin then lit candles which were attached to a special candle holder which lay flat in one's hand. There were 3 candles on three separate holders. These holders were held in leaves & were passed from person to person who would ~~circulate~~ circle the candles in front of him three times - making the circular motion by pulling the candles toward him then raising them and pushing them away from him. When finished with the 3 circles, he would pass his right hand from left to right over the flames of the candles. This circulation of candles, which is one type of uian thian, around the room from person to person was done three times. This particular ceremony was supposed to bring health & happiness to the King. The people then sat down and the ceremony was concluded by a chanting by the monks present.

I was struck while attending this ceremony by the status relationships inherent in the whole ceremony for those people who live in the town of Mahasarakham. In the front

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now or especially comfortable chairs were seated the governor, the asst. governor, their wives, & the wife of the Lord Mayor (and someone else whom I did not recognize). Interestingly, the Lord Mayor - Mr. Chuanchai was in charge of the ceremony & the latter was a head of Master of Ceremonies. I wonder if this is because these two are descendants of long time residents of the town - the Lord Mayor a descendant of the old *câw myay* & Mr. Chuanchai a descendant of one of the first Chinese merchants in town. Certainly these two represent the continuity of the town far more than the gov. or asst. gov. who are both quite recent arrivals. Also present in the room were certain interesting people - a few merchants including the owner of Sanyam Phavit; Sip-ek pling, a well known land lord - who seems to be present at quite a few such ceremonial occasions. Status differences were symbolized by those who sat inside the room; those who sat outside; by the differences in uniforms & decorations on uniforms.

TRUNKS AT SALA KRANG:

At the Sala Krang I saw the 2 *thawarâ:p* which had been taken from the Kus in B. Khwâw. These definitely are phallic as the statue depicts the deities being seated holding an exaggerated penis.

Y2: VILLAGE:

In the afternoon Tom Kirsch and I visited the Y2: village of B. ~~Kh~~ Thâ: Khon Yang which is some 3-4 km. outside of Mahasarakham; is situated on the Chi River. I was particularly interested in having Tom see this village

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as the Y2: are supposedly related to the Phu:thai. Unfortunately, the man who knows most about the history & customs of the Y2: was not present & our guide was not too helpful. At any rate Tom pointed out that there are things within the 2 box which do not exist in Phu:thai village (nor in Luavillage) - i.e., the special construction fitted in front of the main Buddha statue (see photographs). Our guide confirmed the story that the *câw myay* had once been resident here and that this was the *myay* of the Chauwat. He said that the seat of the *câw myay* was later moved to Kankara-wichai & subsequently to Mahasarakham. He also substantiated the story that the daughter of an old *câw myay* had been killed by a crocodile at this village. There still remains much to be discovered about the village & its relationship to the history of the Chauwat; to the movements of the Y2: people. Another interesting thing about the wats in this village is that they are similar to the Phu:thai wats insofar as there are very few *thâ:t*. Only important personages even have their bones placed in a *thâ:t*. The *thâ:t* here are of unique design however. There is also a "cement" wall around the wat in which bones are also interred.

SUWIN ELEPHANTS:

On the way back from the Y2: village, we met 5 elephants which were being taken from Suwin province to where they are raised by Thai-Khmer to that Phnom for the big fair there.

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INFORMALITY OF VILLAGE PRIESTS:

Today went on a tour of the fields with the Head priest. We met the youngest priest (the 2nd having already left the monkhood) working in the fields of Mr. H₁; at whose house he lives in lay life. His harvesting is strictly forbidden by Buddhist regulations and so when we took a picture of him working, he buttoned up his farmer's clothes so that his priest's underwear would not show. Later, he said that he is planning to leave the monkhood next month; has therefore bought a new set of "civilian" clothes. At the way we took pictures of the priests both in civilian - fully dressed with wrist watch and hat to cover their shaven heads.

RICE CYCLE:

Rice harvesting will be completed in the 2nd lunar month, & then threshing will begin. As rice is harvested it is piled up in a special manner so that it will shed water if rain comes in the fields. Near this pile will be the threshing floor and a small ^{temporary} house usually built of kenaf stalks is constructed so that someone in the family can remain near the rice day & night to protect the rice from thieves or from someone setting fire to it. I asked if there had ever been a case of thieving or firing in BNT. The answer was no, but everyone fears it. After the rice has been harvested, threshed & placed in a granary there will be a ceremony called sū: khwān khā:w (๕๑๕๐ ๕๑๕๐). Each household will hold this ceremony and it is usually held in the 3rd lunar month.

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DEATH:

Na:ng Beg (๕๑๕๐๕๐) who lives in Kw died yesterday & was cremated this morning (before we arrived). It sounds as though she had a stroke because it happened rapidly and she was also paralyzed. Several of her sons and grandsons were "nurses for a day" for the funeral. I asked if those who are ordained in such cases as this are always only nurses (not priests) no matter their age & the answer was that this was so. I also asked Mr. Ng, who was now head of the household & he immediately answered that it was Na:ng Sam:in, the son who married the da. of Na:ng Beg last 6th month (a wedding we observed).

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MISC:

There have been several births recently in the village including one born to Na:ng Tē: (๕๑๕๐๕๐).

Discussed with Mr. Ng. This morning aspects of seeing a bai:st: ceremony in a Phu:thai village, what the significance of various elements of the ~~ceremony~~ things contained in the bai:st: tray are. He didn't know.

Went to way to take pictures of priests. Priests from B. Na:ng visiting here. Head priest commented that he liked to wear dark glasses because it made him look like the King when he was ordained.

CLOTHING AND NATIONAL INFLUENCES:

I was noting yesterday that women in BNT are very much influenced in matters

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of dress is dominated by patterns not in Bangkok. Here one rarely sees the hair drawn back in a bun, the tradition of phosai - blouse that one sees in Laos and which used to be the style here. Here one sees - among young women - quite - short western style - often permanents (albeit done very badly) in their. Blouses and even phosais are quite often made up of cheap Japanese material - though phosais are still often of traditional style or styles imported from Chiang Mai & the central plains. Older women, however, still retain traditional garb - which is traditional for the N.E. But, even Mr. Ng. says, there is definitely a tendency away from making things to buying things.

MAKING A WATER BASKET:

M²: Ho:m was making water buckets today. The buckets had been woven from bamboo by her son Muai & she says that she is unable to ~~do~~ make them herself. She took na:m ja:ig - a sticky sap which has the same name as rubber and mixes it with crushed shell from shell fish. This substance is then rubbed into the surface of the bucket into all the holes by hand. When the bucket is dried, it will be completely waterproofed.

N²:j:

N²:j was arrived today - just returning from a thanksgiving ceremony in another distant village. He said that he was on his way to harvest rice, & as I know that his father has no rice, I asked him he was helping. He said that he was helping Na:j

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Phan (K.L.). I asked him if it was usual for people to help other people in harvesting & he answered that it was only when a person had a large amt. of rice.

He has just "bought" for \$100 a flintlock, single shot pistol which he got "to protect myself against thieves". This gun takes bullets that cost \$5 each. This gun is a type which is forbidden to be owned.

FUNERAL CUSTOMS:

There is the usual 3 night "wake" going on at the house of Na:j Ping. This wake is called in Lao g²:in h²:an di: (ᨾᩯ᩠ᨦᩉ᩠ᩅᩁᩬ᩵) because in a house where a person has died there is the fear that someone else will die, and so to confuse the malevolent spirits, the "wake" is called the "party at the good house".

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DEATH OF PRIME MINISTER:

At about 9:00 last evening we heard on the radio that P.M. Sarit had died at 5:00 in the afternoon. Mr. Ng²aw said that he was very sorry to hear of his death because Sarit was a Northeasterner. He also said that Sarit had been interested in development & especially in developing the N.E. Ng² would go on to predict that if Sarit had lived, there would have been electricity throughout the country in a very short time. He returned again to the theme of Sarit's Northeastern origins. He said that of the 3 men highest in govt., one was from the south & one was from the cent. plains, but Sarit who was the highest of all was from the N.E.

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CUSTOMS RELATED TO DEATH:

Due to the death of Naig Deng, I have had occasion to gather some data on death customs especially on a tham bun for the dead & the collecting of bones from the ashes. The general pattern of death customs ~~is~~ for the days between the death and the collecting of bones seems to follow this model:

- 1st Day (a) Death
(b) Preparation of body & things for funeral (coffin, etc.)
(c) "Ordination" into novitiate of one or more relatives of the deceased
(d) Priests come to home to quiet
- 2nd Day (a) Cremation
(b) After the cremation, the "temporary novices" return to lay life.
(c) In the evening first night of wake is held (hāin hān di:)
- 3rd Day - 4th Day Two more nights of the wake.
- 5th Day (a) Tham bun for the dead held at the house of the deceased
(b) Ritual collection of bones to place in the wait to await the "placing in wait" ceremony.

Customs on Day of Death:

I asked Mr. Ng. about what happens from the time that a person dies until the cremation the next day as I haven't had an opportunity to see ~~the~~ for myself. He could only give me the briefest sketch as he has not had much experience. He said that the body will be washed (lā:ŋ sōp - ๗๓๖ ๗๓๖) with coconut water (all ritual bathing with coconut water is

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done using as yet unripe coconuts) and "fragrant water" (Nā:m hō:m - ๗๓๖ ๗๓๖). Also, the body will be laid out with the palms together on the chest. The monks come & chant in order to remove every misfortune from the home. This quiet concerns the rebirth of the soul.

THE WAKE:

I have already described the essentials of the wake previously. However, there is one custom which I have not described. I have noticed in all the cases of wakes that I have been to that the ba:jiain from the wait or some other book lies to the household. This Mr. Ng. explains is because a dead person likes to have nithain read to him. Whether in actual fact anyone reads the stories, I am not certain, but I rather doubt it.

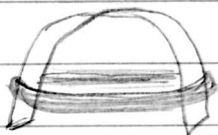
THAM BUN FOR THE DEAD:

This morning we went to the hse. of Na:ŋ Deng for a tham bun ceremony. This tham bun ceremony is to purge the house of misfortune and to ward off evil and to bring happiness & good health to the other members. The ceremony is organized as follows:

1. A layman takes a water scoop & places in it candles & flowers. Holding this in a "worshipful" position he khū:sin ("requests the precepts"). The monks will accept the scoop and then will chant the precepts.
2. A layman takes a tray on which is placed the following things: 3 piles of ~~cotton~~ new ŋā:j mōngkōn cotton, leaves, strands of cotton thread, candles, "auspicious cotton thread" (๗๓๖ ๗๓๖) & a dish in which was placed two pieces of charcoal, water, & two sticks crossed at rt.-angle floating on the water (called mā:j tinka: - ๗๓๖ ๗๓๖). This whole tray

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is called kha:j mo:khon (กฐน มอฆโณ) or "auspicious tray". The "auspicious cotton thread" is 3-strand and is wound around a piece of bamboo to form a horseshoe shape:



กฐน มอฆโณ

The symbolic number 3 in all cases stands for the 3 "jewels of Buddhism": The Buddha, the Dharma, the Sangha. Mr. Ng. wasn't certain about the symbolism of the small dish with the maj tinka: 3 the pieces of charcoal.

When the priests have received the กฐน มอฆโณ, they chant or suet mon while holding the string passed from priest to priest (to novice). ~~They~~ When finished chanting they take the string & tie it around the house in order to bring the merit & the resulting good fortune to the inhabitants of the household.

When they have finished this, the priests chant สวด พระหัจ (suaet phre huj).

3. Then food was presented to the priests in the usual manner. When the priests had finished eating, the guests present also ate.

4. Following this, a water scoop was taken and into it were placed rice, cotton, flowers, & candles. 2 other candles were lit and attached to the side of the scoop. This is called กฐน มอฆ (kha:j the:t) & is used to request a "sermon" from the priest. The bowl was held in the "worshipful" position by layman who chanted a request. After the scoop had been accepted by the priests, the candles

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were blown out and then the head priest read a sermon from a book.

5. After the sermon was finished, a basket full of water was placed in front of the 2 priests. A bunch of leaves was placed in the basket of water. These two long candles were handed the priests & lit. The two priests held the candles over the water so that the wax dropped into it & chanted. In this way they made na:m mon (น้ำมนต์). This water was sprinkled around the room or the inhabitants to bring good fortune & health.

6. The ceremony ends with the priests chanting trai na:m or suaet na:m as it is also called.

Collecting of Bones:

Following the tham bue ceremony, the priests, several relatives of the deceased (including Na:j Sa:m:in who is now head of household), & we went to the cemetery (which is also called khosik) to collect the bones of Na:j Ong. When we reached the site, the ashes were still smoldering & so the first thing that had to be done was to pour water on the ashes. The ashes were raked around a bit. Then a person came with 3 sticks which had been split in the middle and gave one to each of the two monks & to the novice. They went and with these sticks picked up the most important bones - i.e. the breast bones - & placed them in a bottle. This was all the priests did. Then, everyone else fell to collecting the bones & placing them in a clay pot.

While this was being done, a woman spread out on banana leaves some food

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(including glutinous rice, chicken laip, sweet potato, papaya, & a few other things) &
tobacco to be given to the phii of Nong Bery.

When all the bones had been collected, both the bottle & the pot were placed on the
ashes. The bones in the bottle had been washed by pouring plain water over them. Then the
priests came & poured both coconut water & naimmon over the bones in both containers.
They were followed by other people present continuing the water pouring process.

Then a white cloth was placed over the pot & a rope was tied around the pot to
secure the cloth. Then a bangsaku was placed on top & a rope of white thread was
fastened to it. A post was placed upright near the ashes. 2 candles were lit & attached to the
post. Then the priests & novices each took hold of the string leading from the pot of bones
& then chanted a suat for the dead.

When the priests had finished, the pot & bottle full of bones were taken from
the ashes & a uak hole was dug in the ashes. Then the pot of bones was turned upside down
in this uak hole. The post mentioned previously was taken & stabbed through the center
of the pot & into the ground/ashes. I could not discover - at least no one knew - if there
was any symbolism present in this. The ashes were raked up over the pot & swept by
a leaf broom up around the post & over the pot. What remained was now a pile of ash with a
post sticking up in the middle of it. This post now became a thait marking the graves so
that no one would use the same place again.

Then the priests chanted again & the ceremonial gathering of the bones was over.

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The bones in the bottle were then taken to be stored in the boit until a propitious time for
planting placing them in a thait in the wat area.

THE GRAVEYARD:

Mr. Ngaw says that graveyards have been such from the first time they were used
for cremation because after that no one would dare use the area for planting or anything
else. What an archaeological find some graveyards would be - say the one at Chaiy
Hain - because of the practice of burning artefacts with the dead.

ATTITUDES TOWARD GOVERNMENT & KNOWLEDGE OF OUTSIDE WORLD:

This afternoon the announcement came over the radio that the Defense Minister Thanom
Kittakachorn had been appointed by The King to be the new P.M. I asked Mr. Ngaw if he
thought that Thanom would be as good a P.M. as Saik had been & he replied that he didn't
know because Thanom was not from the N.E. He went on to point out that Phibun had
hardly ever visited the N.E. & had never done anything about developing the N.E. whereas Saik
had made many visits up here & had taken a great interest in helping the N.E.

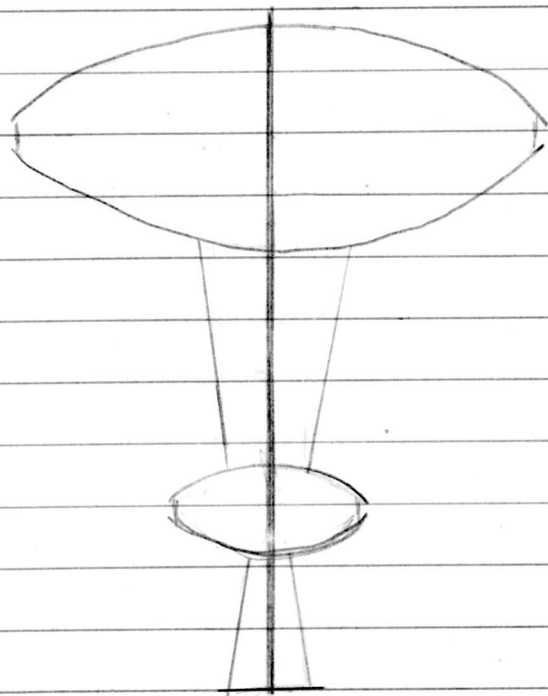
The general reaction of villagers to Saik's death has been simply the spreading of the
word that he is dead & very little beyond that. People generally seem only mildly interested,
& I was surprised at how little even Mr. Ngaw knew about Saik. He didn't know any thing
about his wives, about how many children he had, etc. (though he did know his latest
wife's name). This may, however, be simply a function of the paucity of information ever
put out through mass media on Saik's life.

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Min asked tonight who was it who died in America. when I said that it was the President, he asked what disease he died of. Apparently, the thing that has made people most aware of Sarit's death is the fact that there has been no MS:lam on the radio all day today.

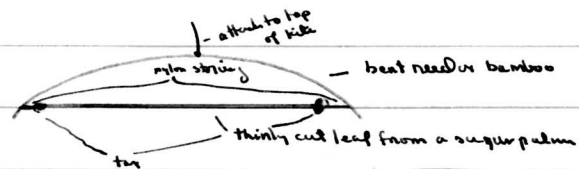
ENTERTAINMENT:

The priests & Mr. Njau are making an especially large kite (at least 9' in height) for our sake (and for my family when they come). The particular shape they are making is one which is very popular in the N.E. (Not a "Cuba" kite).



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On top of this kite will be placed a thing called a pa:nu: (as on all kites) This thing looks like a bow:



If this instrument is moved rapidly through the wind, the palm leaf will make a deep vibrating sound. Thus when it is placed on top of the kite, the wind & motion of flying the kite will cause it to vibrate.

Misc. Customs:

If there is a special than bun ceremony on wanphai (such as for a dead person or a than bun ba:n) others than those directly concerned can still take food the priests.

I asked Mr. Nj. why he is planning to build a granary while it was still an odd-numbered month & he answered that any time will do for building a granary. It is only house building which must be done in even-numbered days & completed in one day.

FARM LABOUR:

Naj is helping Naj Phan harvest rice because he sleeps in the house of Mr. Phau. There is no system of paid labour for harvesting - only วอโง (khō:se:ŋ) or พอโง (log khō:k) or วอ (wā:n) in Lao - in which food & drink is given in repayment for the help of friends & relatives. But for transplanting, people are hired for ฿5/day - if labour is needed. In such cases, the labourer must bring his own food. Only the poorest people hire out. The difference is because harvesting is done very rapidly. In harvesting ~~work~~ of ~~work~~, hiring of labour also

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Usual wages 5 sheaves of kuaif harvested: \$1 or \$5/day (Nuan oap also hired for \$3-4/day).

WEALTH AND STATUS WITHIN VILLAGE:

In response to a question about who was the richest man in the village, Mr. Ng. was hard put to answer & so I began to try different people. First, I asked about Mr. Phun, the head man, & he answered that he certainly isn't wealthy even with his \$50/month gov. salary. I said that I thought that he had lots of land, but Mr. Ng. said that he didn't. He said that the land he has is his 1st wife's inheritance. His 1st wife was the sister of Mother Ho:m & they had an equal amt. of land - & that isn't very much. Mr. Ng. incidentally said that Mr. Phun is luckier than Mother Ho:m because he has a strong son-in-law to help whereas Mother Ho:m's son-in-law - i.e. himself - doesn't work in the fields.

I then said that I had heard that Mr. HSi was a rich man, but Ng. said that though he has lots of land, he has very little money (thus, my question about relative wealth was interpreted in terms of money). We asked about Mr. Soin because he has a fine house in KKN, but he says that he used to be poor but now he has lots of sons who have helped him. I asked about Mr. Lai, the Naklong & he said that at the moment he is quite poor. Finally, he said that he thought Mr. Sv. (Sv) who lives in KV was the richest.

MARRIAGE AND INHERITANCE:

The conversation then led into one about inheritance and marriage. He said that Mr. Phun was to be pitied because he had a large number of daughters & thus their inheritance

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would be small. He said that people prefer to have sons because they are strong helpers and will not take the inheritance. Mr. Phun's daughter Tho:g ju: has reached marriageable age & Mr. Phun says he will get \$1600 bride price for her. In actual fact he will probably get about \$1000 (according to Mr. Ng.) of which all the bargaining has been finished. Mr. Ngao said that girls like to marry for love, their fathers like them to marry someone wealthy who will bring a good bride price & young men like to marry a girl who has a good inheritance. Apparently, according to Ng., it is often the girls who lose out in the deal - particularly in a conflict of interest with their fathers.

Physical attractiveness plays a role in marriage choices. An ugly person with some outstanding physical deformity will find it difficult to find a mate - eg. Mr. HSi's son (who has buck teeth and "likes to be dirty") & the tall sister of Mr. Phun. But beauty isn't everything. For if a beautiful girl comes from a poor family, she will still have a difficult time to get married - eg. the girl with the illegitimate child by the son of Mr. Ta:p.

Bun cut prothip:

We also discussed the ceremony of Bun cut prothip (ບຸນຕັດປຣາທິປ) which is held on wan 5:k phansa: & for 2 subsequent nights. At this time the priests will make little colored containers with candles which they then take & holding up in a worshipful position will say that they worship the 3 jewels of Buddhism & then request that Buddha bring wealth, happiness, freedom from disease, etc. Then they place the containers on top of a banana stalk.

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MR. NGAW'S GRANARY:

Mr. Ng. has bought a granary from Ba:n D:n Du:. This granary is over a hundred years' old (at least the main frame is) & was torn down in part so that it could be rebuilt here. He paid \$1,100 for this granary. He also bought a smaller one which he will erect for his nephew-in-law. That one cost \$500. He bought these granaries from people who are moving a way from Ba:n D:n Du:. He bought the big granary so that he will be able to buy rice when it is at its cheapest (30-40 ct./kg.) & be able to sell it when it is at its highest price.

ATTITUDES TOWARD THE HEADMAN:

There is some feeling in the village that Mr. Phou is not as good a headman as he might be. This is a result of his not knowing quite what to do. He has not pushed for development - roads, etc. - in certain areas where he ought & when it comes to things concerning religion, since he has never been a monk, he is often at a loss as to the right thing to do. On the other hand, his brother Mr. Ho:m, is much more capable & has taken charge of many things. Mr. Ng. says that many people feel that Mr. Ho:m ought to be the next headman & he is very popular. He has been now accorded, de facto, the title of thi: chae:j ("assistant")

But Mr. Chae:j, the 1st act. headman, is also well liked though prob. not as capable as Ho:m.

VILLAGE BLACKSMITHS:

The 3 blacksmiths in the village: HTD 017U (Mr. Tai:p), KY; HTS 01 (Mr. Di:), KW.
HTD 217 (Mr. Mo:), KY.

10 December 1963

~~revised~~MISC:

This morning several men - relatives of the Ngaw - Ho:m families - came to help prepare things for erecting the new granary. For their help, they received liquor & food. This group worked all day on getting the posts ready to use. About 3 p.m. they helped chop down a big sugar palm in the place where the granary will be built.

The heart of the sugar palm (00017D - j:t ta:n) which is taken from the crown of the tree was chopped out & will be used to make a ke:j similar to ke:j no: ma:j. The very heart we ate & it was a sweet substance similar to artichoke heart. We felt as though we were partaking of a delicacy very few people including Thais (this was the 1st time Mr. Ng. had ever eaten it) have ever tasted.

12 December, 1963

BUILDING A NEW GRANARY:

This morning beginning at about 7 p.m. "friends & relatives" began to come to help build the new granary. Included were people from all khums and even from Ba:n D:n Ma:k ja:. It was quite something to see these men construct a building without using any of the tools & aids a carpenter in the West would think necessary. For example, they use a rather ingenious level. From ^{the middle of a} string held taut by two men between the two points across which one wants the level tested another string with a weight on it is suspended. Then a man passes water in the first string. If the water runs straight down the string with the weight on it (i.e., it does not leave the string at some point on the weighted string)

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Then the level is correct.

This erection of the granary was an example of ๓๐ ๑๑๑๑ / ๗๐ ๑๑๑๑ (log khē:k / khō:re:ŋ) or in lao, ๓๓๓ (wā:n). The men who helped were repaid by locally-made rice wine, tobacco and a feast at midday. While the men were working, the females (and a few males who enjoy cooking or who had to kill ½ dozen chickens) made the food. A truly good example of traditional co-operative labour.

#

13 December - 10 January - involved in going to Bangkok to meet Prof. Steiner, preparing for parents visit, taking them around up here & in Bangkok, and in staying a few days in Bangkok.

On the 26th of December my parents, my sister, & my Aunt Uisien spent the day in the village. This was a great day for the village and the villagers went all out to make my family feel at home. We flew the huge kite which Mr. Njan - the priest had made.

#

9 January, 1964

Economics:

While I was in Bangkok, I had a talk with Mr. Hans Platinius, the World Bank Adviser to the Northern Development Comm. Among other things, we discussed a couple of things which bear directly on the economic activities of the village. This year the

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govt. has been encouraging the growing of watermelons in the N.E. & distributed free seeds to many villagers. As a result, according to Platinius, the market price has dropped tremendously. It will be interesting to see if the amount of watermelon production drops next year as a result of the low market.

I have often wondered why since there is a tobacco station in Ban Khuei which purchases Turkish tobacco, why no one (except the school last year) produces tobacco for sale to the station. I mentioned this to Mr. Platinius & he suggested that the following might be the reason for lack of tobacco production in BNT. Tobacco bought by the Govt. Tobacco monopoly is purchased on a quota system. If the farmers are not in the quota, then anything which they produce may or may not be purchased depending on the demands of the station and the quality of the tobacco produced. Thus, Platinius suggested, BNT villagers may have thought that the production without the quota was too risky.

I also discussed the tobacco situation today with Mr. Wichien. He suggested two reasons why BNT does not grow tobacco commercially:

1) No one from the tobacco station has ever gone to show the people how to grow the tobacco.

2) When a few years ago the station was buying Virginia tobacco instead of the

Turkish variety, the villagers did grow it. However, they were often unable to sell

their tobacco because it was usually adjudged to be of an inferior quality. Thus,

they became discouraged & ceased growing tobacco.

Mr. W. also said that people (i.e. villagers) weren't getting their proper share of the money paid

13 December 1963

Add

Left for Bangkok (~~Jam staying in MK~~).

14 Dec.

Bangkok

15 Dec.

Bangkok: Met with Prof. Skinner.

16 Dec.

Bangkok: Met Skinner again.

17 Dec.

MK?

18 Dec.

MK

19 Dec.

MK

20 Dec.

21 Dec.

22. Dec.

Left for Bangkok (Jam staying in MK).

23 Dec.

Bangkok: B.H.'s parents arrived.

24 Dec.

Travel with Parents to MK.

25 Dec.

Christmas with parents in MK.

A 4d

20 December 1963

Mukharakhham

21 Dec.

MK

22. Dec.

Left. MK for Bangkok (Junk in MK).

23 Dec.

Bangkok: Parents, arrived. Marilyn, Urian arrived.

24 Dec.

Traveled with relatives to MK.

25 Dec.

Christmas with family in MK.

Add

26 December 1963

Took ~~parents~~ ^{family} to BNT, return to MK.

27 December 1963

28 Dec.

29 Dec.

30 Dec.

31 Dec.