

**Charles F. Keyes Field Notebooks, Thailand**

**Written between October 1 and October 31, 1967.**

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 September 1967 and is followed by notes written in Mahasarakham Province and Mae Sariang in November 1967.

**Māē Lā Nôi, Mae Sariang**

**October 2, 1967**

Trip to Māē Lā Nôi

Yesterday I made a trip to Māē Lā Nôi with Jane, Sanga, Lā, Wān (our new servant) Mark Anderson, another relative of Lā's. Čit came in a Phanasit truck with a large number of other people.

Māē Lā Nôi is 32 kilometers from Mae Sariang. It is headquarters for a now sub-amphoe, but formerly it was the seat of another tambon of Mae Sariang. At present the population of the community has been at least doubled through the influx of a large number of people who are working on the road to Mae Hong Son. The all-weather road does not now extend much beyond Māē Lā Nôi.

Our first stop was at one of two wats at Māē Lā Nôi. We first climbed up an old *čēdī* on top of a hill near the wat. It is built in the traditional Shan style and appears to be relatively old, partially because there was an old laterite path leading up to it. On a pole that sets out at an angle from the *čēdī* was a carving of a Hansa or Hong (หงส์) as it is pronounced in Thai (the legendary bird, a swan, on which Brahma rode. The Hansa motif, as I discovered in the two wats, seems to be a very common Shan decorative motif. The *čēdī* seemed to be in poor repair.

Lower down on the slope was another more recent *čēdī*. Čit said that he thought it was probably the reliquary for the ashes of some abbot of the wat below who died within the more recent past.

We then went down to the wat itself. The name of the wat as I copied it from the gate was Wat Waihān Khun (วัดวิหารคุณ), but I heard it referred to by another name. The wat contains one large structure with a large number of graduated roofs that I have come to associate with

Burmese and Shan wats. This building serves both as a *wihān* and as the living quarters for the monk. The wat has no *bōt*. There were several other smaller structures around the wat which are apparently used by laity for preparing food for monks. Each of the buildings has signs in Thai script, noting that the building had been built by so and so. Leading down from the main structure was the gate of the wat and passing by the smaller buildings was a new cement walk.

On the other side of the walk and some distance apart were two tall poles from which were hung long, narrow, highly-decorated banners. At the bottom of each a collection of decorations I have before heard called "spiders' webs." I asked the head monk what these were for. He said that they had been put up at the dedication of the new wat. Obviously there was a much more complex symbolism involved. I believe that the name for these banners in Shan is either *tung* or *thung*, a word which is the same as the term used for the Phra Wētsandôn banners in the northeast.

We went into the main structure to talk with the head monk, a youngish man of about 40. We sat down on some chairs near a table and blackboard. On the blackboard were written a number of sentences in English. This wat, the abbot said, has a school for monks and novices in the afternoon. A young monk from Mae Sariang, who was present during the conversation, teaches English, among other things. Monks from the second wat in Māē Lā Nōi also come to study here.

Because neither of the wats in Māē Lā Nōi have *bōt*, monks must be ordained in Mae Sariang. However, the abbot says that permission has been requested for building a *bōt* here. The first abbot of this wat was a local Shan who had been ordained as an older man when he already had a wife and children. I don't think that the wat itself was that old.

I asked if any Karen had been ordained as monks or novices in this wat. The abbot answered that some Karens had been novices but not monks. "To be a novice is easy, to be a monk, hard," he said. Also some Karens come to make merit here. Apparently there are no Lua (or other tribal people) in this area.

In the services in this wat the chants used to be in Burmese style but now they are done in Thai style. The abbot said that "(we) live in Thailand, so we should use the Thai form." However, many of the writings kept in the wat are written in Shan. The abbot showed me one thick "accordion"-type book made of a paper called *kradātsā* (กระดาษสา) which was written in Shan. Because of this type of literature that is kept in the wat, monks are expected to be literate

in Shan as well as in Thai. (I have noticed that in my interviews most of the younger monks, 45 or so and under, speak fluent central Thai.) Sermons in this wat are given in Shan.

The people who are ordained in this wat usually are Shans from Māē Lā Nôi. People from the surrounding villages do not come to be ordained here.

I asked if any of the monks in this wat participated in the program called Thammačārik (ธรรมจาริก) i.e., the mission to the hill tribes. The young monk teacher from Mae Sariang had been in this program and had lived in the village of Māē La Huai Kung (แม่ละห้วยกุง) which I believe is connected with the Tribal Development Center. I asked him what he taught Karens (the only hill peoples he had contact with) when he first had contact with them. He answered that he would teach them to *wai phra*, the Precepts (especially the Five Precepts), the *namō*, etc. In other words he would teach them the easiest fundamentals. I asked him what language he used. He said that he had learned a little Karen and that the rest he spoke in Kammüang.

The abbot used the expression *Thai Nôi* to refer to the Thai of Thailand in contrast to the Thai Yai or the word for the Shan.

I asked about ceremonies held in the wat (a line of inquiry which has not yet been very successful whenever I have tried to use it). At the beginning it was established that the lunar calendar of the Shan, is like that of the Central Thai, i.e. 2 months earlier than the northern calendar. There is no *salākkaphat* ceremony among the Shan. It is, the abbot said, not Shan. Nor is there any *Thēt Mahāchāt* ceremony. In the 12<sup>th</sup> month there is a ceremony of "presenting cloth" (in Thai is called *thawāi phā* (ถวายผ้า)) in which every household participates. It sounds something like *thôt kathin*, although another monk said it wasn't quite the same. The "leading of Lent" ceremony is not very big on that day but it is followed shortly thereafter by a ceremony to decorate and cleanse (physically) the wat. The biggest ceremonies of Songkrān are New Year's, "entering of Lent" and "leaving of Lent."

After we left the wat we went into town and walked around a bit. The town is not very big and has only a few general merchandise shops (at least 2 of which are run by Indian Muslims), a noodle shop, another restaurant, and a few places dealing in a small number of goods.

After lunch we went to call on the monks in the second wat which is closer to the town than the other wat. Here the abbot was a much older man with heavy tattooing. He spoke central Thai, but not nearly so well or so fluently as the two younger monks who were also present. There are 3 monks and 4 novices in this wat.

I asked about the people in Māē Lā Nôi. The old monk said that they were all Shan and they had come either from the Shan states or from Chiang Mai. Mark Anderson asked where this monk himself had come from and he answered Chiang Mai, however, I do not know whether he meant he had come personally from Chiang Mai or his forbearers had. He said there are no written histories.

He said that no Karens have been ordained in the wat. However, it was interesting to note that there were a number of Karens present in the building. Even more Karens were around in the wat courtyard. They had come primarily to fetch water from the public well in the wat. Karens do come to make merit at this wat.

I said that I had read that traditionally it is more common for Shans to be ordained as novices and to spend a short time as a monk. He said that this was true and repeated the same expression used by the abbot at the other wat: “To be a novice is easy, a monk is hard.”

He said as Māē Lā Nôi becomes more developed the Buddhism there will become more like high Buddhism. He said that since the Thai are hoping to develop the area the people here should be willing to and likely to adopt Thai ways (implicitly in lieu of Shan ways). In offering these remarks which had not been stimulated by a question from me, he indicated no regret. This was simply the way things are.

In the subdistrict of Māē Lā Nôi there are four wats in addition to the one in Māē Lā Nôi proper there is one in Māē Lā Luang and one at Māē Sū (ເມັດສູ) [ʔsp.]. All except the latter which is Khonmüang are Shan.

Monks in both wats had mentioned a hot springs lying a few kilometers from Māē Lā Nôi. With a guide provided by the Kamnan, Mark and I walked out to it. The walk proved to be 5 kilometers one way, including fording a river a large number of times. In the end all we saw was a small dribble of hot sulfur water flowing into the river. A nearby cave with a Buddha image where villagers have an annual ceremony proved too inaccessible to reach. We did see a large wat which played a part in the legends of the Lua.

Trip to Some Nearby Khonmüang Villages

Today Čit and a young fellow whose name I believe is Ithā took Jane and me on a walking trip up to some Khonmüang villages in the Yuam valley. We started from *pratū thāt*. While waiting for the dugout boat which was on the opposite side of the river, we watched people on this side fill up in a boat with a motor. This boat was headed for Māē Khatuan some hour and a half downstream.

When we got to the other side, we passed first through Bān Nām Dip. This village appears to be very large because it is strung out along the path for some distance. However, it has no depth. Villagers said this time that the village has about 100 households. We stopped to look at a spring from which the village takes its name. After going a short way through the woods and across a stream we were in the village of Bān Huai Wôk (บ้านห้วยวอก) which belongs to the administrative village of Bān Khapuang (บ้านกะปาง). Bān Huai Wôk has a wat, one of three in the *mūbān* of Bān Khapuan. Only a short bit of forest divides Bān Huai Wôk from Bān Khapuang itself. In the latter there were a wat and a school. One old man who Čit visited to talk about tobacco growing said that the wat in Bān Huai Wôk was older than that in Bān Khapuang and he said the latter is at least 50 years old.

Crossing a field on a path that right angles to the one which we had been traveling, we reached the suburb village (suburb of Bān Khapuang) of Bān Don. Here we stopped at the house of the parents of Mr. Ithā where we had lunch. While waiting for lunch we talked at length with Ithā's mother about a diverse number of subjects. (Čit interpreted from Northern Thai for me).

1. The administrative village at Bān Khapuang (which has one headman and 2 wats) includes not only Bān Khapuang, Bān Huai Wôk, and Bān Don, but two other satellite villages – Bān Kô (บ้านกะ) and Bān Phae (บ้านแพะ). All of these villages and Bān Nām Dip are Khonmüang villages. [I have been struck by the non-nucleated character of these villages.] About two kilometers away (apparently on the main path) is the village of Bān Thung Phāēm (บ้านทุ่งแพม) which was formerly a Lua village but now is a Khonmüang village. It still retains some Lua customs.

2. I noticed a young Karen male working around the house and asked about him. He has come down from the mountain village of Bān Huai Ī-uak (บ้านห้วยอีฮวก) – Kammüang name meaning "village of the small frogs stream." This village is about 2 hours away from Bān Don (Karen style walking). He is paid mainly in kind. He does not live in the household constantly but will take off for a few days, come back for a day or so, sometimes with his wife and child. Čit tried asking him about his economic situation in his own village, but could get only out of him that he had land and did cultivated it. He speaks sufficient Kammüang to get on in situations of this sort. [These observations bear out what Bob Coates told me when I met him yesterday – that in difficult parts of the year, economically speaking, many Karen come down to the lowland to work for money or food for lowland Thai. I had seen Karen both in Mae Sariang and Māē Lā Nōi working in Thai households. In fact, one Karen laborer cleared out our garden for us yesterday.]
3. I asked the old woman about some Northern Thai customs. She says there is the equivalent of the *sūkhwan bāisī* ceremony for weddings and something like the *sūkhwan khāo* ceremony. In the latter instance the *khwan* is apparently called in the rice fields. The term for ancestral spirits in the local language is *Phīpūyā* (ผีปู่ย่า) [using Purnell's transliteration].<sup>1</sup> As in the Northeast these spirits can be contacted by medium. Locally the medium is known as *mā* (ม้า) literally 'horse,' because the spirit "rides" him. A medium of this sort is usually a man but it could be a woman. The person who is a medium is bound by certain taboos including not eating anything at the home where there is a funeral or where a corpse is present and not walking underneath any house (the area known in Thai as *tai thun* (ใต้ถุน)).
4. Our lunch consisted of the local mainly a green vegetable dish known as *kāēng khae* and boiled chicken with spices. The rice prepared in the household was white rather than glutinous rice. Čit says that no glutinous rice is grown in the area. What glutinous rice there is comes from Chiang Mai. We did however, have some glutinous rice because some had

---

<sup>1</sup> Nāi Mēt's dictionary writes this as ผีปู่ย่า, and he gives an alternative form ปู่เฝ้าแม่เดิม (*pô kao māē doem*). *Pūyā* (ปู่ย่า), according to Mary Haas, means 'ancestors; paternal grandparent.'

been bought before we left the market. After we finished our lunch we were given peanuts which are extensively grown in this area.

After finishing lunch we walked on through Bān Don, Bān Kô and other settled areas until we reached the river. (At this point the Mae Sariang River has already flowed into the Yuam River so it is a bigger river.) We walked along a path bordering the river for some time and reached a very ingenious ferry. A boat was attached by wires to a pulley overhead with wires strung across the river. Once the boats had been pushed into the current we were pulled across by the current to the other side without paddling.

Back on the Mae Sariang town side we walked to a settlement (unidentified) and then reached a path wide enough to take ox carts. We followed the path for some kilometers. On the way back we met an Indian who lives in a nearby village. He speaks Burmese and Karen as well as some Indian language and Thai. He apparently raises cattle and provides milk to the Pakistanis in town. We also passed a shrine (*sān ċao*) which apparently marks the place where Red Karen from Māē Khatuan used to hide out in preparation for attacks on Mae Sariang.

We then reached the village which has the tobacco drying houses belonging to the Phanasit Co. There are some people of the Phanasit Co. living here to mind the building. There was no tobacco in the building (I suppose because it was not the right season). In the course of discussing tobacco Čit mentioned that a Karen village 2 kilometers from Māē Lā Nôi was going to plant tobacco next season.

As we left the village we met the district officer, the Kamnan of Tambon Mae Sariang. There were a number of others in the district officer's entourage. They had come out to look for timber to be requisitioned as material for making a fence.

After leaving them we walked to the village which lies below Wat Čôm Thông. Here Čit talked to a carpenter about building some things for us since the company's carpenter is very busy at the moment.

To reach town from this village we could either take the much longer path, that is past Wat Čôm Čāēng or the shorter road which leads into Mae Sariang at Wat Sāēn Thông. This latter route is difficult because it is necessary to ford the Mae Sariang River and to wade through the overflow through the fields. Nonetheless we chose the latter route. On the way we passed a pole

which was written in Central Thai and Northern Thai: “Yuam, kilometer 1.” Obviously this is the first market on an old road.

#### Talk With the Manager of the Phanasit Co.

This morning before we left for our hike we talked with the manager of the Phanasit Co. I asked him how long the Bombay-Burmah Co. had been here. He said that he thought that the building the Phanasit Co. now uses and which Bombay-Burma built is at least 100 years old. He then showed us a (?) which had been written on one of the posts (in English-directing) which was dated 1901. Apparently the company closed down its operation before World War II. The building passed through two other hands before it was bought by the Phanasit Co. in 1945. When Phanasit first came into Mae Sariang they continued to ship logs down through Burma because there was no road from Mae Sariang to Chiang Mai. Then when the road was built to Bô Luang the company opened its own timber road to connect with it.

#### **Mae Sariang**

**October 6, 1967**

#### Interview with District Abbot

This afternoon I had an interview with the district head abbot.

#### 1. Organization of the Clergy Under the Abbot

The geographical boundaries of the sangha do not necessarily accord with the government. The “district” under the *cao khana amphoe* includes both Amphoe Mae Sariang and King Amphoe Māē Lā Nōi. A tambon, a clerical organization, must have at least 5 wats in it. Since none of the administrative Tambons in Mae Sariang have this many wats in it the boundaries are drawn somewhat differently from those of the government. There are 4 clerical tambons in Mae Sariang with the seats at Wat Sithimongkhon (วัดสีทิมงคล), Wat Chaiyalāp (วัดชัยลาภ), Wat Sībunruang (วัดศรีบุญเรือง), and Wat Nām Dip (วัดน้ำดิบ). The organization of the first tambon, i.e., the wat under Sithimongkhon, is described earlier in my notes. The rest of the tambon include the following wats with ethnic identification provided by the *cao khana amphoe*.



Wat and Clerical Tambon	Administrative Tambon in which Wat is located	Ethnic Identification of Wat or Village
<u>Under Wat Chaiyalāp</u>		
1. Wat Chaiyalāp วัดชัยลาภ	B. Kāt บ้านกาศ	Khonmüang
2. Wat Thākhām วัดท่าข้าม	B. Kāt บ้านกาศ	Khonmüang
3. Wat Ommarāwāt วัดอมราวาส	B. Kāt บ้านกาศ	Burmese - Khonmüang
4. Wat Sophān วัดสหหาร	B. Kāt บ้านกาศ	Khonmüang
5. Wat Māē Tōp วัดแม่ต้อบ	B. Kāt บ้านกาศ	Khonmüang
6. Wat Māē Hān วัดแม่หาร	B. Kāt บ้านกาศ	Karen
7. Wat Thāphāpum วัดท่าผาป้อม	B. Kāt บ้านกาศ	Khonmüang Shan
8. Wat Waihānkhun วัดไผ่หารคุณ	Māē Lā Nōi แม่ลาน้อย	Shan
9. Wat Māē Lā Nōi วัดแม่ลาน้อย	Māē Lā Nōi แม่ลาน้อย	Shan
<u>Under Wat Sibunruang</u>		
1. Wat Sībunruang วัดศรีบุญเรือง	Mae Sariang แม่สะเรียง	Khonmüang
2. Wat Kittiwong วัดกิตติวงศ์	Mae Sariang แม่สะเรียง	Khonmüang
3. Wat Utthayārom วัดอุทัยารมณ	Mae Sariang แม่สะเรียง	Burmese/Shan
4. Wat Čantharāwāt วัดจันทราวาส	Mae Sariang แม่สะเรียง	Burmese
5. Wat Čôm Čāēng วัดจอมแจ้ง	Mae Sariang แม่สะเรียง	Khonmüang
6. Wat Čôm Thōng วัดจอมทอง	Mae Sariang แม่สะเรียง	Khonmüang
7. Wat Sitthimongkhon วัดสิทธิมงคล <sup>2</sup>	Mae Sariang แม่สะเรียง	Khonmüang
8. Wat Sāēng Thōng วัดแสนทอง	Mae Sariang แม่สะเรียง	Khonmüang
9. Wat Suphanrangsi วัดสุพรรณรังษี	Mae Sariang แม่สะเรียง	Shan
<u>Under Wat Nām Dip</u>		
1. Wat Nām Dip วัดน้ำดิบ	Māē Yuam แม่ขาม	Khonmüang
2. Wat Huai Wók วัดห้วยวอก	Māē Yuam แม่ขาม	Khonmüang
3. Wat Thung Phāēm วัดทุ่งแพม	Māē Yuam แม่ขาม	Khonmüang
4. Wat Khapuang วัดกะปวง	Māē Yuam แม่ขาม	Khonmüang
5. Wat Thung Lāēng วัดทุ่งเลี้ยง	Māē Khong แม่คง	Khonmüang

<sup>2</sup> This wat is the seat of a *čao khana tambon* for another Sangha tambon and thus it is questionable that it is also included within this clerical tambon. However, the District Abbot noted it as such.

Tambon Māē Lāluang, King Amphoe Māē Lānōi (ตแม่ลาหลวง ., กิ่ง อแม่ลาน้อย.) is also included within the jurisdiction of the *ĉao khana amphoe* but it has no wats.

### Ethnic Identification of Wats

The chief district abbot said that the Shan wats in Mae Hong Son Province are changing into Thai wats because their monks are being ordained in the Thai way and they are shifting to chants and even sermons in Thai (or Thai way). Part of this may be explained by the fact the chief monk of the province (*ĉao khana changwat* เจ้าคณะจังหวัด) who resides in Mae Hong Son is a northeasterner originally from Yasothon.<sup>3</sup>

### Buddhist Mission to the Hill Tribes

We had a long discussion about the Thammacārik (ธรรมจาริก) program which the *ĉao khana amphoe* has been head of in this district. The program, whose purpose is to spread Buddhism to the hill tribes is under the auspices of the public welfare department and the monks who participate in it are affiliated with the Tribal Development and Welfare Center.

There are 13 monks included in this year's program in the following places:

Mae Sariang	3
(one each from Wats Ommarāwāt, Sībunrūang, and Kittiwong)	
Māē Lā Nōi (Wat Waihankhan)	1
Khun Yuam	3
Chiang Mai (Wat Phra Sing)	1
Bangkok	5
Total	13

---

<sup>3</sup> This is the second instance reported to me about northeasterners in Mae Hong Son Province. Last weekend according to Mark Anderson all the northeasterners in Mae Sariang had a party. There are a number of northeasterners here including the chief of police, two teachers, several people from the forestry department and several others from the regular police and border police, etc.

Of these three are Karen (the one from Wat Ommarāwāt who is not S'kaw Karen, but who speaks S'kaw, the one from Wat Kittiwong who is now living in Wat Māē Hān<sup>4</sup>, and one other from Khun Yuam). All the monks from Mae Sariang, Khun Yuam and Chiang Mai speak either Northern Thai or Shan. There is another monk from Wat Kittiwong who is connected with the program but who is currently staying in Bangkok.

There are two new centers (*nuai* – หน่วย) this year where five monks will live: 1. B. Māēla' (บ. แม่ละ) and 2. B. Phāē Luang (บ. แพหลวง.). Each of these centers will have three northern Thai monks, and two central Thai monks. In addition there are three villages which served as centers last year: B. Huai Kung (บ. ห้วยกุง.), B. Māē lit (บ. แม่ลิด.), and B. Māē Čāng (บ. แม่จ่าง.). These villages will have three monks (2 northern Thai and 1 central Thai) living in them this year. All of these villages are Karen villages in Tambon Mae Sariang.

This program began in B.E. 2508 (1965). According to a meeting on the program, the purpose of it is "to give the hill tribes a firm grasp of Buddhism as a means of strengthening their loyalty to the nation." (เพื่อเร่งกระชับความสัมพันธ์ทางจิตใจกับชาวเขาให้เกิดความจงรักภักดีต่อประเทศชาติโดยอาศัยพุทธศาสนาเป็นสื่อ) (เพื่อเร่งกระชับความสัมพันธ์ทางจิตใจกับชาวเขาให้เกิดความจงรักภักดีต่อประเทศชาติโดยอาศัยพุทธศาสนาเป็นสื่อ)

More specifically the abbot said that the monks will visit every household in the area in which they are working to introduce to the inhabitants what a monk is like, tell them about Buddhism and teach them the method of *wai*-ing, to make them aware of the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Sangha, of the King and of the government, tell them their purpose. Also they will teach about health and cleanliness and will teach the children Thai. They will help in teaching new methods of agriculture. Each day of their residence the monks will give the morning and evening chants. Every day the villagers will bring the monks food. Some villagers will invite the monks to *suat mon* their homes. The monks will live for four months this year at these centers.

There have already been some results from this program. In 2508 (1965) one Karen was ordained as a monk at Wat Kittiwong and two Karens were ordained as novices at Bān Māē Hō

---

<sup>4</sup> This Karen monk has been in the monkhood for 2 lents; there is apparently another Karen monk in Wat Māē Hān who has been in the monkhood since WWII.

(บ้านแม่หาะ) (novices do not have to be ordained in a *bōt*). In 2509 (1966) three Karens were ordained as monks at Wat Benchāmobophit in Bangkok (according to Čit this is one of two northern temples in Bangkok). Among these Karens ordained at Wat Benchā was the headman of B. Dong (บดง.). In the same year two Karens were ordained as novices at B. Huai Kung (บ้วย . กุ้ง). This year one Karen was ordained as a novice at B. Huai Kung. Of the Karens ordained as monks in Bangkok two stayed in for the full Lenten season while the headman of B. Dong was in for one month. Most of the notices were in for only 15 to 30 days because their parents did not like them to be ordained longer (they need their health). All of the Karens ordained as either monks or novices came from B. Māē lit (บแม่ลิด .), B. Huai Kung (บ. ห้วยกุ้ง), B. Māē Čāng (บแม่จ้าง), B. Dong (บ. ดง).

I asked why the three monks went to Bangkok for their period in the monkhood. He said that the abbot of Wat Benchā wanted them to come there with other tribal people from other parts of the north. I asked how they got along since they didn't speak Central Thai. He answered they had an official with them who could speak the local language.<sup>5</sup>

He still doesn't think Karens understand Buddhism.

The Karen monk who lives at Wat Kittiwong has been in the monkhood for two Lents. There is apparently another Karen monk in Wat Māē Hān who has been in the monkhood since World War II.

### Clerical Titles in the North

The clerical titles in the North are not the same as in the Central Plains. The term for monk is *tu* (ตุ๋) and the word for abbot is *tu luang* (ตุ๋หลวง). The word for ex-monk is *nān* (หนาน). The word for novice is *pha* (พะ) and ex-novice is *nōi* (น้อย). The word for temple boy is *kha-yōm* (กะโยม).

---

<sup>5</sup> I subsequently learned that the abbot of Wat Bencha is the head of the Thammacārik program.

### Importance of Novicehood

Being ordained as a novice is more popular in this area than being ordained as a priest. When school lets out in March or April many boys are ordained for a period of 20 or 30 days. At this time the major ceremony is held in which the candidates for notices that are dressed in "Burmese" clothing and they ride a horse in a procession to the wat. This procession is called *hāē lūk kāēo* (แห่ลูกแก้ว) ‘procession of the jeweled child’ – in the local language and *hāē sān lōng* (แห่สาบลอง) in Shan.

### Khrūbā (ครูบา)

I brought up the question of Khrūbā Khāo (the one who lives in Amphoe Lī). He says that he was a *lūk sit* of Khrūbā Sīwichai (ครูบาศรีวิชัย) the famous monk from Chiang Mai who was noted in the 20's or 30's (?) for getting things built. The Khrūbā Khāo is also known as Khrūbā Phī (ครูบาพี) and Phra khāo Phī (พระขาวพี). As a wearer of the white robes he follows the Eight Precepts. He is also noted for getting things built and practicing Vipassana. He is referred to as *tonbun* (ต้นบุญ) in northern Thai – literally a ‘meritorious person.’ He is respected not only by tribal people but also by all people in northern Thailand.

There is another man like this (noted for his getting things built) at Wat Luang Čaoentham (วัดหลวงเจริญธรรม), Tambon Māē Kā (ตำบลแม่กา), Amphoe Sanpātōng (อำเภอสันป่าตอง), Chiang Mai (6 kilometers from Sanpātōng). Although he is only 29 he has the title of *khrūbā* because he is noted for getting things built. He was holding a big *thambun* today in order to get money in connection with building the biggest Buddha image in the north.

The title *khrūbā* is usually used by the local for old respected monks, but is also used for monks who fall in the footsteps of Khrūbā Sīwichai in getting things built. The Karens who live west of town used to call the monk (now dead who lived at Wat Phāphā) *khrūbā* because he was a *lūk sit* of Khrūbā Sīwichai. They used to invite him to their houses.

Even the head abbot of the district himself is called *khrūbā* by many people even though he is still very young.

### Festival Cycle in Mae Sariang

The abbot gave me a short explanation of each of the major ceremonies held in Mae Sariang. This appears in the following table. The dates refer to the northern calendar which is two months ahead of the Central Thai (and northeastern and Shan) calendar. The first month is known as *düan kiang* (เดือนเกียง) [*düan āi* (เดือนอ้าย) in Central Thai and the second month is known as *düan yī* (เดือนยี่). All the rest of the months are known by their Thai numbers.

### Ceremonial Cycle in Mae Sariang

N.B.: All dates are given according to the Northern calendar – i.e. two months ahead of the lunar calendar used by the Siamese, Lao, and Shan.

Date of Ceremony	Name of Ceremony	Explanation
14-15 <sup>th</sup> days of waxing moon & first day of waning moon, Month I วันขึ้น ค่ำ และ วัน 15 และ 14 ค่ำเดือนเกียง 1 แรม	END OF LENT ออกพรรษา	On each of these days the monks are invited out to receive alms along the roads of the town. This is known as <i>takbātkōng</i> (ตักบาตรกอง) in the local language. The first day is a day preparation; the second day is <i>wan phra</i> and the third day is the official “End of Lent”.
First day of the waning moon, Month I to the 15 <sup>th</sup> day of waxing moon, Month II วันแรม – ค่ำ เดือนเกียง 1 วัน ขึ้น ค่ำ เดือนยี่ 15	<i>THÓT KATHIN</i> ทอดกฐิน	This is new ceremony for Mae Sariang and only three wats regularly have the ceremony: Kittiwong, Sībunruang and Čantharāwāt. The latter is a recipient of a <i>kathin</i> presented by the Phanasit Co. [Čit says that the Phanasit Co. sponsored the first <i>thót kathin</i> in Mae Sariang.] This year some people from Bangkok sponsored the ceremony at Wat Kittiwong and the District is sponsoring the one at Wat Sībunrüang (the money is for a new wat school).
Eighth day of waning moon or 15 <sup>th</sup> day of waning moon, Month I วันแรม 15 ค่ำ หรือ วันแรม 8 ค่ำ เดือนเกียง	PRESENTING OF LENTEN ROBES ถวายผ้าพรรษา	Local version of <i>thót kathin</i> during which both monks and Buddha images are presented with new robes.

Month II เดือนยี่	2nd MONTH CEREMONY (ประเพณี)เดือนยี่ เป็ง	Usually consists of the “Great Life” <i>Jātaka</i> sermon or the “10 Lives” <i>Jātaka</i> sermon or some other major sermon. Not held in Shan or Burmese wats.
Month III เดือน3	(no ceremony)	
15 <sup>th</sup> day of waxing moon, Month IV วันขึ้น 4 ค่ำ เดือน 15	<i>BUN KHAOČI KHAO LAM</i> บุญเข้าจี่เข้าล่ำ	Offerings of new rice. Similar to the Shan ceremony held in the 5 <sup>th</sup> month.
Month IV เดือน 4	<i>TĀN KHAO YĀ KŪ</i> ตำนเข้าหย่ากู่	A Shan ceremony of making offerings of new rice. It is held in the home where food is presented to the monks. Then the carts are decorated and there is a procession.
15 <sup>th</sup> day of waxing moon, Month V วันขึ้น 5 ค่ำ เดือน 15	<i>MĀKHABŪCH Ā</i> มาฆบูชา	This is also a new ceremony in the area, having been instituted by the Thai Sangha.
Month VI เดือน 6	<i>PŌI KHAO SANG</i> ปอยเข้าสัง	A ceremony for making offerings for the dead. Small boats ( <i>hua nôi</i> เื่อ่น้อย) are made and on these are placed things that can be used or eaten. Monks are invited to come receive these offerings at home. The abbot said that people ‘used to believe’ that these offerings were for the dead (like the Chinese, the abbot said). This ceremony is sometimes called <i>pôi nôi</i> (ปอยน้อย) in contrast to another ceremony called <i>pôi luang</i> (ปอยหลวง) also held during this month.
Month VI เดือน 6	<i>PŌI LUANG</i> ปอยหลวง	Construction of <i>kuthi</i> or other large structures as way of making merit.
Months VI-VII เดือน 8-7	ORDINATION OF MONKS & NOVICES บวชนาค	

Months VII (April 13-18) เดือน 7	<i>SONGKRĀN</i> (Thai New Year) สงกรานต์	April 13: Clean house, etc. 14: Prepare things to take to wat. In the afternoon, make sand <i>čēdis</i> in the wat. 15: <i>thambun</i> wat. In the afternoon ritually bathe the heads of one's elders. 16: Ritually bathe the head of the abbot of the wat and the Buddha image. 17-18: Ritually bathe the heads (of monks?) in different wats.
Months VIII-IX	RITUAL BATHING OF RELICS สรงน้ำธาตุ ฯลฯ	
8 <sup>th</sup> day of waxing moon, VIII ขึ้น 8 ค่ำ เดือน 8	<i>song nām čēdi</i> Wat Čôm Čāēng สรงน้ำเจดีย์วัดจอมแจ้ง	
15 <sup>th</sup> day of waxing moon, VIII ขึ้น 15 ค่ำ เดือน 8	<i>song nām phra borommathāt</i> Wat Kittiwong สรงน้ำพระบรมธาตุ วัดกิตติวงศ์	
8 <sup>th</sup> day of waning moon, VIII แรม 8 ค่ำ เดือน 8	<i>song nām čēdi</i> Wat Čôm Thôm สรงน้ำเจดีย์วัดจอมทอง	
15 <sup>th</sup> day of waning moon, VIII แรม 15 ค่ำ เดือน 8	<i>song nām phraphutthabāt thī Thung Phā</i> สรงน้ำพระพุทธรูปบาทที่ทุ่งฝ้า (New Shrine which is not yet well known)	
8 <sup>th</sup> day of waxing moon, IX ขึ้น 9 ค่ำ เดือน 8	<i>song nām čēdi</i> Wat Čôm Kitti thī Bān Nām Dip สรงน้ำเจดีย์วัดจอมกิตติที่บ้านน้ำดิบ This is at the <i>čēdī</i> on the hill and not the old one at the school.	
15 <sup>th</sup> day of waxing moon, IX ขึ้น 15 ค่ำ เดือน 9	<i>song nām čēdi</i> Wat Thā Khām สรงน้ำเจดีย์วัดท่าข้าม & <i>song nām phet</i> Wat Sāēn Thôm สรงน้ำเพชรวัดแสนทอง	
Month 10 เดือน 10	ORDINATION OF MONKS AND NOVICES บวชนาค	
15 <sup>th</sup> day of waxing moon, X วันขึ้น 10 ค่ำ เดือน 15	BEGINNING OF LENT เข้าพรรษา	
Month 11 เดือน 11	(No ceremonies)	



Months 12-1 เดือน 1-12 13 <sup>th</sup> day of waxing moon, XII ขึ้น 13 ค่ำ เดือน 12	<i>SALĀKKAPHAT</i> สลากภัตต์ Wat Sibunrüang วัดศรีบุญเรือง 1 <sup>st</sup> wat because it used to be seat of dist. abbot.
8 <sup>th</sup> day of waning moon, XII แรม 8 ค่ำ เดือน 12	Wat Čôm Čāēng วัดจอมแจ้ง
15 <sup>th</sup> day of waning moon, XII แรม 15 ค่ำ เดือน 12	Wat Chaiyalāp วัดชัยลาภ
8 <sup>th</sup> day of waxing moon, I ขึ้น 8 ค่ำ เดือน 1	Wat Kittiwong วัดกิตติวงศ์
8 <sup>th</sup> day of waning moon, I แรม 8 ค่ำ เดือน 1	Wat Nām Dip วัดน้ำดิบ
14 <sup>th</sup> day of waning moon, I แรม 14 ค่ำ เดือน 1	Wat Sophān วัดสบหาร

### *Salākaphat*

We discussed the latter ceremony at more length since it is the one currently going on. This year apparently one or more wats forgot the dates. Others which are not on the list had to squeeze their ceremonies in on days other than *wan phra* since these are all pre-empted — for example, Wat Ommarāwāt and Wat Sithimongkhon.

I asked the abbot about my observation that after the ceremony is over the donor of the gift personally presents the offering to the monk who has got his number while the monk pours water into a khan or some other vessel. The abbot answered that this is the same as *truat nām* (which in the local language is *yāt nām* [หยาดน้ำ]). A monk takes the direction of the donor (written on the offering) and specifically directs that the merit made should be for the deceased given in the written direction.

He said that an offering consists properly of three things: *kuaisang* (กำยสั่ง), *ton* (ตัน), and *kuaisalak* (กำยสลาก)<sup>6</sup>. I think these refer to the offering for the dead, the other offerings, and the money tree.

At Wat Kittiwong the ceremony is different (see below) in that all the gifts are distributed to monks and novices (not by *čap salāk*) and none are retained for offering to the Buddha. Each offering is identified by the name of the donor, the deceased person(s) for whom the merit is directed and the residence of the donor. Only when the identification has been made is the offering placed in the *bōt*.

#### Old Čēdī at Nām Dip

The abbot says that this is the oldest monument in Mae Sariang.

#### Comments about Northeastern Monks

I once mentioned to Čit and Sanga about the chief abbot from the province being from the northeast region. Čit says that whereas there are only the two northern wats and two southern wats in Bangkok, there are many northeastern wats. Sanga also says that many famous and/or important monks were northeasterners in Bangkok. Čit adds that the northeastern monks studied for many years as novices and monks are often very learned.

#### Salākaphat Ceremony at Wat Kittiwong

The other day I received a formal invitation (mimeographed) inviting me to the *salākaphat* ceremony at Wat Kittiwong. The following is a translation of the invitation. A copy of the invitation follows.

---

<sup>6</sup> Nāi Mēt's dictionary gives *kōi* (ไคย) instead of *kuai*, meaning 'bamboo baskets' and writes instead สละก of สลาก.

Document translation

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

MERIT-MAKING CEREMONY OF *SALĀKKAPHAT* (*kin kuai salāk* กิ่งกล้วยสลาก)

WAT KITTIWONG

AMPHOE MAE SARIANG

The annual merit making ceremony of *salākaphat* (*kin kuai salāk*) a popular ceremony since olden [times] will be held at Wat Kittiwong on 11 October 2510, that is wan *phut khün 8 kham duan kiang nüa* [Buddhist Sabbath, the eighth day of the waxing of the moon, 1<sup>st</sup> lunar month, northern reckoning] The events and their times are as follows.

900-1200 hours: the offerings from different wats will be carried in procession and collected together

1030 hours: food will be presented by the 126 monks and novices who have been invited to the ceremony

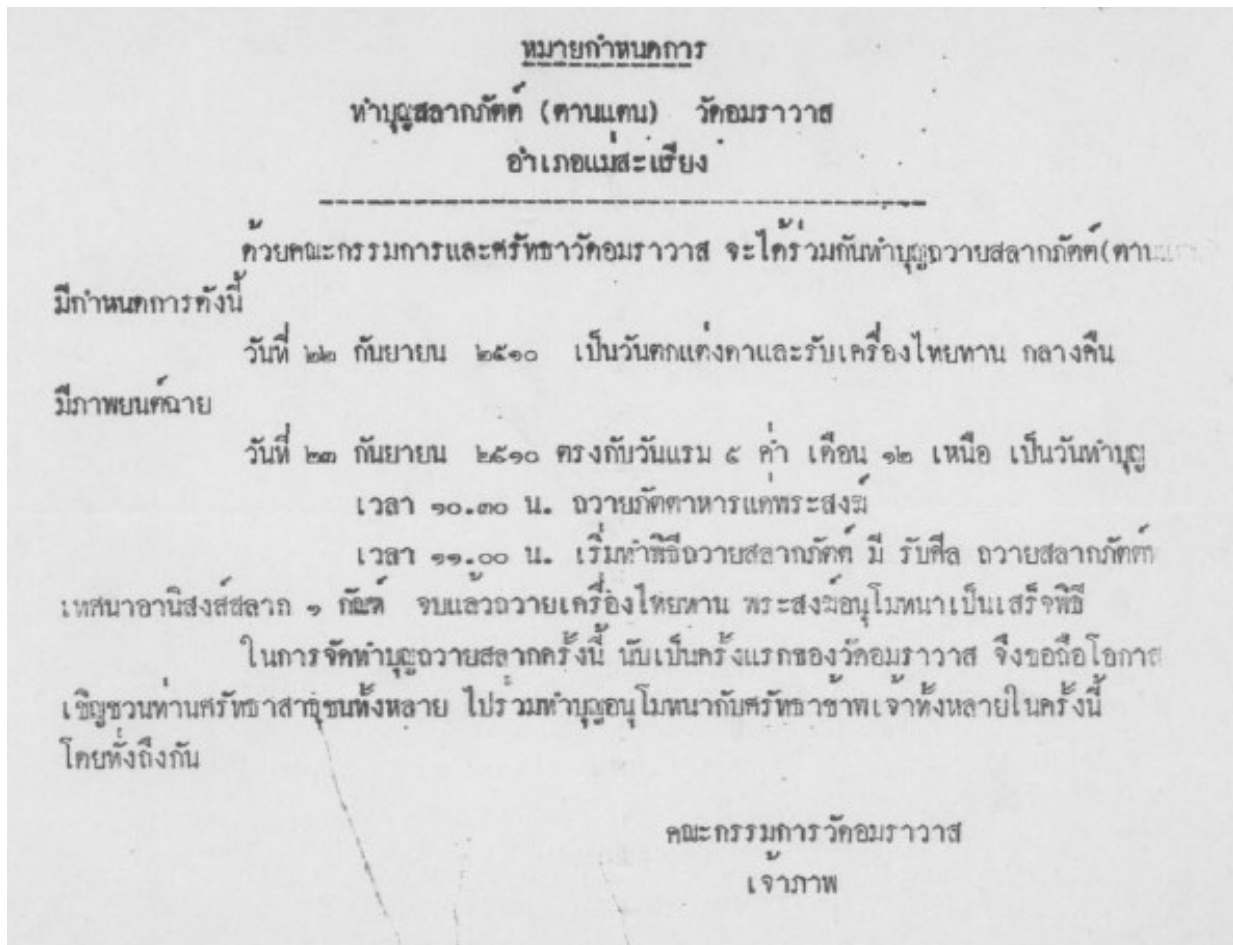
1200 hours: beginning of ceremony, receive the Five Precepts, *wēn thān* (เวณทาน( one chapter of the *thēt ānisong* (เทศานิสงส์), presentation of the *salāk* offerings for the monks and novices, the clergy's formal expression of gratitude (*anumōthanā* อณุโมทนา), then the calling out of the offering identities.

Thus we would like to invite [name of person to whom invitation is addressed] to join with us in making merit at the “*kin kuai salāk*” on the date mentioned.

[signed]

Wat Kittiwong wat committee

Sponsor



**Mae Sariang**

**October 10, 1967**

**Karen Indebtedness**

Tonight Bob and Pat Coates visited us because Pete and Sally were here on their way to the hills. Pete asked Bob about the "rice bank" program of the Baptist mission which makes it possible for Karens to have a reserve of rice against bad times. One of the reasons for this program is because some Karens become so indebted to lowland merchants that they have to mortgage their crops away. He gave us a specific example of the Karen village of Māē Lā Lu (? sp.) in Tambon Māē Lā Nōi He said that a year or two ago all but two households in the village were so indebted that unless they got help they would become, in Bob's terms, no better than the slaves of the Māē Lā Nōi merchants. What happens, apparently, is that the Karens buy things on credit and promise to pay back in rice (with exorbitant interest). After the Karens have paid back their debt they do not have enough rice left for themselves. They then have to borrow their own rice back from the merchants who again charge it up against the next rice crop (with at least 50

per cent interest). Eventually the Karens are in so deep that they are permanently in debt and getting in deeper. Bob admits that it is not entirely the merchants fault, although he has no sympathy with their interest charges. The Karens are gullible enough to want things on credit because they do not figure what the consequences will be.

In a similar vein Pat does not think that elephant ownership pays greatly. She says that some families whose children have come to the hostel have netted no more than 1,000 baht per year. Bob was skeptical of this figure.

## **Mae Sariang**

**October 11, 1967**

### **Māē Tia Village**

This morning I took Pete and Sally out to Māē Tia where they were to pick up elephants for their trek up into the hills. According to Benny, who went along, the usual charges for an elephant for a one-day trip is 70 baht (actually 35 baht per day, but also one has to pay for the travelling down the day before). However, since these elephants had come down the day before with a load of rice their owners charged Pete and Sally only 50 baht for the day per elephant.

Pete said that if the elephant managers are not Christian they will have to be a *danhua* (literally, ‘headwashing’) ceremony for the elephant on which Sally will sit. Last night Bob Coates said that many elephant owners will not carry women at all.

In Māē Tia I let Pete and Sally off at the house of a “teacher” whose house is just off the road. I am not certain whether he is a teacher or a Baptist minister. In any event the inside of his house is with many pictures of the King and the ubiquitous family photos. The style of the house and the clothing worn by him and his family would not have told me that he was a Karen. However, there were a number of other people around in Karen dress.

### **Salākaphat Ceremony at Wat Kittiwong<sup>7</sup>**

Today we attended the biggest festival that we have thus far seen in Mae Sariang. The *salākaphat* ceremony held at the residence of the chief abbot of the amphoe Wat Kittiwong.

---

<sup>7</sup> Charles F. Keyes’s tape recording of part 6 of the *salākaphat* ceremony held at Wat Kittiwong on October 11, 1967 is located in the UW Ethnomusicology Archive, number 2001-2.7 EC. The original tape is titled “Tape Number 4, Side 1.” The recording has also been digitized. A Thai language index and transcription of the recording are located in UW Special Collections, and within the Charles and Jane Keyes Collection on the digital ResearchWorks archive at UW.

Jane, Sanga and I went to the wat and were later joined by Čit and his two older children. When we arrived at the wat at a little after 9:00 a.m. there were not many people in the wat grounds. However for the next two hours, the crowd grew and grew. Each person or representative of families brought a *salāk* gift. For the most part these were not the tin buckets, water basins or water jug containers which I have described before. Most of the offerings at this ceremony were a type of basket which in the central Plains is called a *chalôm* (ชะลอม) and in the north *kuai* (กำย). Because of this fact the ceremony is referred to as *kin kuai salāk* (กินกำยสลาก) in Mae Sariang. These were not the only offerings however. Several of the wats in town and several of the schools also made tower-like structures which were decorated usually with money, but also with notebooks, cigarettes, pencils, etc – anything practically which could be hung. Finally, some individuals, including ourselves, brought the type of offering I have described for other ceremonies.

As each donor entered the wat he or she would usually fill in a sheet of paper, one which was written the formal presentation of the *salāk* including the name(s) of the donor, the donor's address, and the persons or spirits deceased for whom the merit made was to be given. Some of these slips called *sēn* (เสี้ยน) in the local language were written (or typed) in Thai, while others were written in Northern Thai. The papers used ranged from sheets torn from notebooks (then cut to make them look nice), ordinary paper, and strips of bamboo cut to look like leaves of a *bailān* book. Some of the slips had symbols on them. These same symbols were often found on a number of slips. The chief abbot of the amphoe wrote the slip for me (I will make a translation of this in a separate place.). The *sēn* were taken by the donor to the *bōt*. If the donor were a man he could enter the *bōt*, make his obeisance before the altar and mix his *sēn* in with the others that lay in a pile before the altar. If the donor were a woman, and, thus, could not enter the *bōt*, she would give the *sēn* to one of the older laymen who stood on the steps of the *bōt* and he would take it in and place it in the pile for her.

Some people did not write *sēn*, but placed their offerings after proper obeisance on a platform in the courtyard of the wat. These gifts would not be included in those which were later distributed to the monks and novices present, but were for Wat Kittiwong. I also observed a

couple of cases where the offering was taken into the *kuthi* and presented to the abbot before the actual ceremony began.

Most did prepare *sēn* and after they had presented their *sēn* they would take their offering and sit in one of the two *sālā* in the wat or would sit under the *kuthi*.

The large offerings from schools and wats were brought to the wat in procession and in at least two or three cases were preceded by a group of musicians playing drums and cymbals. One such group of musicians stayed in the courtyard and played throughout the proceedings. Not all schools made presentations. For example, Mark Anderson, who was present, said that the middle school did not make an offering. Also most of the school children returned to the schools after having brought their offering to the wat.

As the wat grounds filled up I noticed several Karen men wander in and look around, rather bewildered at the ceremony. In addition, there was a group of Karen, including two adult men, two adult women, and at least three teen-age girls who actually made an offering. I also noticed two other Karen women sitting in the *sālā* where Jane and Sanga were sitting. All of these Karen were noticeable because of their dress.

The music for the ceremony preceding the ceremony consisted primarily of taped music played over the PA system. This music included everything from Central Thai songs to traditional northern music recorded in Chiang Mai. There were also the percussion orchestras. Throughout the proceedings firecrackers were continuously set off.

At a little before 11:00 all of the monks and novices went to the *kuthi* where they were presented with their midday meal. Once they were through eating they went into the *bōt*. By a little after noon all the people were in their places. The *bōt* faces east. On the north side of the *bōt* sat the monks. On the south side sat the novices. There were almost 1 1/2 times as many novices as there were monks, i.e., about 20+ monks and 30+ novices (not the 126 the invitation had promised). In the central part of the *bōt* was a small group of laymen, mainly older men and including the laymen of the wat committee. On the porch of the *bōt* were a large number of children. The rest of the donors sat in the *sālā* or under the *kuthi* where they could take up their respectful positions or else they wandered around the wat grounds. Just outside and just inside the main wat gates were food vendors.

The ceremony was divided into the following components.

1. The chief layman knelt in front of the chief abbot of the district and led the laity in the beginning of the morning worship (see Pali Chanting Scripture, P. 8). He then asked for the Precepts (op.cit, p. 164). The chief abbot of the amphoe then gave the Precepts by first leading the laity in the *Namō* and the *Tisarana* (op. cit., pp. 2 and 4) and then lead the laity in repeating the Eight Precepts (op.cit., p. 166-167).
2. Chief laymen's formal presentation of the offerings using formalized Northern Thai. During this chanting several of the chief laymen came to the front of the *bōt* and threw all of the *sēn* up into the air to thoroughly mix them up and then collected them together and piled them together in piles of ten which they tied together with bamboo strips. These bundles were again tied together in groups of how many I couldn't see.
3. Chant of formal gratitude by monks. (In Northern Thai style)
4. Formal Thanks by monks.
5. Sermon. During the sermon several monks came and distributed the *sēn* into equal piles for monks and equal piles for novices (monks get more than novices). The chief monk of Wat Sithimongkhon first counted the slips according to the number of bundles which the laymen had made. Then these were re-distributed into bundles of 12 each for monks and 7 each for novices. These new bundles were also tied with rattan strips.
6. The chief monk of the amphoe made a series of announcements, Explanation of the participants in the ceremony, etc. and discussed the end of Lent festivities which will take place next week [I have recorded this talk and plan to transcribe and translate it.].
7. The bundles of *sēn* were distributed to each monk and novice.
8. End of ceremony chant by the chief abbot of the district, followed by the *truat nām*.

When the formal ceremony had ended, all bedlam broke loose. Each monk and novice had several lay representatives who went around the milling crowd reading off the donor's name. If the donor was able to hear his name called, the representatives would direct him to where he could find the monk or novice in question. The donor would then take the offering and present it to the monk or to the novice. If a monk, this presentation would involve the monk chanting and sending of merit to the designated recipient (usually among the dead) and pouring water simultaneously. If a novice, this did not take place.



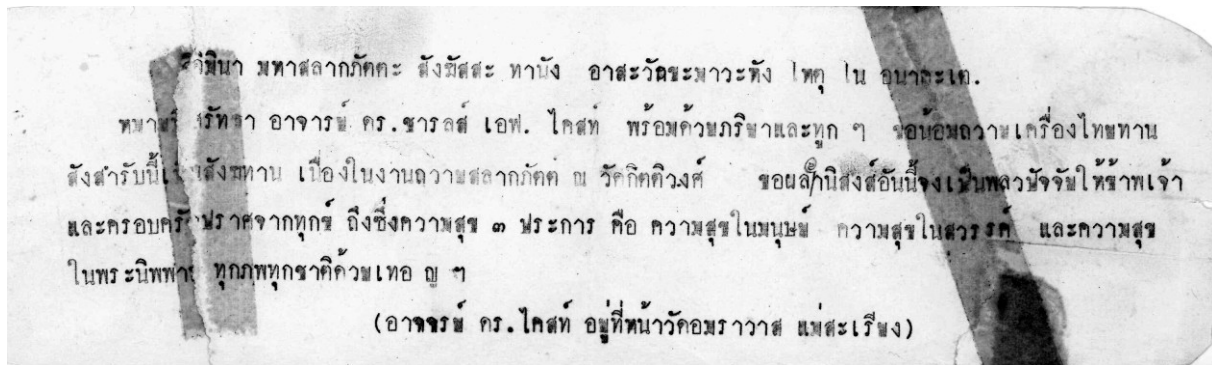
Our offering was “won” by a monk from Wat Sībunrūang. The presentation was made inside the *bōt* (so Jane was unable to join me). I knelt before the monk who then handed me my *sēn* and indicated that I should tear it up, which I did. He then chanted the formal “sending of merit” and poured the water (from a glass which had been given as part of a jug and glass set in our offering).

We observed also two Karen men presenting an offering to a monk. There were several Karen women and girls standing behind the men – probably wives and children.

The crowd began to disperse as the offerings found their proper destination. We left however before all the offerings had been distributed.

The following is copy of the “message” prepared by the CKA for me to attach to my *salāk* offering and its translation:

Document and translation: note to go with *salāk* offering



*Imina Mahasalakkaphatta sang hassa dānang sawakkhamavahang hetu nō anakatē* [Thai Pali] Meaning that the faithful Ācān Dr. Charles F. Keyes together with [his] wife and [son] [lit. 'all', but think misprinted *thuk* for *lūk*] humbly offer this donation on the occasion of the festival of offering *salākaphat* at Wat Kittiwong. May the results of this [merit-making] cause my family and I to be free of affliction to the point of reaching the three kinds of happiness: human happiness, heavenly happiness, and Nirvana happiness [and] in all lives. ... Thoen ... [so be it!].

(Ācān Dr. Keyes lives in front of Wat Ommarāwāt, Mae Sariang)

## Mae Sariang

October 14, 1967

### Old Bureaucratic Ranks

I asked Čit today about the abbreviations used for ranks of the district officers. In the list I corrected on Sept 11, 1967. He said the *rô-ô* (ร.อ.) stands for *rông ammāt* (รองอัมมาตย์) – literally ‘deputy-government officials.’ This part of the title appears in all titles of officials with ranks in the old bureaucratic system and it was followed by the Pāli number *trī*, *thō*, *ēk*, indicating whether the official was third, second, or first class. In the list given in the notes for September 11, 1967 the last official holding such a rank was the district officer who was in office between 1932 and 1939. It is probable, thus, that this ranking system disappeared with the absolute monarchical system. Čit seems to think that these were bureaucratic ranks under the old monarchical system.

### Local Customs

Today Čit said that he had received an invitation to a wedding from the host who came and presented him with Miang and then invited him. Čit asked Lā if this were traditional. She said that for close friends invitations to weddings, funerals, ordinations were issued in this way. Today she says that if you don't know a person very well or if you wish to be strictly formal one would use an invitation card.

## Mae Sariang

October 15, 1967

### Ethnic Identity of Villagers in Amphoe Mae Sariang

I was asking Čit this afternoon about the ethnic identity of some villages in Mae Sariang district. In Tambon Bān Kāt, Bān Dong, Bān Thā Phāpum (also known as Nōng Phāpum นองพาม), and Thā khām are Khonmüang villages. Bān Phae which is in Mae Sariang town is a Lua village. Bān Māē Hān, Bān Māē Tōp and the other Bān Phae, Bān Sophān is a mixed village with Karen and Khonmüang. This latter village is quite large. Another Khonmüang village Bān Huai Luang, is under Bān Thā Khām.

In Tambon Mae Sariang the villages to the south and on the east side of the river which we visited with Čit a few days ago are all administratively under the headman of Bān Nai Wiang.

There are assistant headmen in these villages to assist in their administration. These villages include Bān Nā Khāo (บ้านน้ำขาว), a Lua village, and Bān Thung Phāo (บ้านทุ่งพร้าว) which is a mixed Lua, Karen, and Khonmüang village and even includes one Indian family. The head of the latter family, according to Mark Anderson, raises milk for the Muslims in town. Khonmüang in this village are primarily resettled from the Yanhee Dam area which is now flooded by the reservoir. The villagers who patronize Wat Čôm Thông are divided administratively between Bān Čôm Čāēng and Bān Nai Wiang. They are all Khonmüang.

In Tambon Māē Khong, Bān Thung Lāēng is a Lua village which is becoming Khonmüang. In Tambon Māē Khatuan, Bān Phā Phā, a very large village of about 450 households, is a Khonmüang village. Bān Mai is formerly Lua village but now is a Khonmüang village.

#### Talk With Mark Anderson

Mark came over this evening and we talked about a number of things.

#### Buddhist Christian Confrontation

Rev. Schlatter has protested the requirement in the primary schools that all students in the morals course must attend some ceremony at a wat (class outing) or be docked in their grade. Tomorrow he is going to meet with the head mistress of the chief primary school (Mae Sariang School) and talk with her about this. Palat Nakhôn (because of his ability in English (?)) has been called in to mediate. Actually, according to Mark, there will be very little mediation. In a long conversation which Mark had with Palat Nakhôn the latter said that he believed the law should be followed to the letter. Consequently, he believes that Christians should be made to attend the wat (and to *wai phra*) or else should attend Christian schools. Palat Nakhôn believes that the World Council of Churches is Healthy enough for the Christians to set up their own school here (thus Mark noted, ignoring all the sectarian differences between Protestant churches).

Apparently there is differential treatment of Muslims and Christians because Muslims are so strong in Southern Thailand. This question is also tied up with the question of what it means to be Thai. Palat Nakhôn thinks that all Thai must show proper respect to priests and must *wai phra* as well as *wai khrū*, etc. Since most of the Christians in town are tribals (or ex-tribals) the question has overtones of tribal-lowland relations.

## George Po

Mark said that George was over at his house all morning. Ostensibly because he wanted to know if the vice-consul of the American consulate in Chiang Mai had said anything about George when he visited Mae Sariang a couple of days ago. Although apparently he hadn't, George thought he might because he had just written a letter to the American Consulate. He complained that the Baptist missionary here (that is, the Coates) were harboring Karen refugees who were slandering George by saying that he is a double agent for the Burmese. Apparently relations with Benny are quite cool at the moment.

George is still actively involved in Karen affairs – he has at least in the past arranged the smuggling of wolfram into Thailand from Burma. The money paid for this has gone for arms, etc. for the Karens. Apparently some Thai officials have been involved in this smuggling. George also offered to mediate the conflict between borders Karen, Thai, and Burmese officials several years ago when Karens were making raids in Thailand. Apparently he thought he had a meeting all arranged after having talked with Thai officials, the Burmese consulate in Chiang Mai. But things fell through, George believes, because the Thai did not wish to meet in Mae Sariang. Nonetheless, this action may have been useful because George was not put in jail and Benny was.

## Mae Sariang

October 18, 1967

### End of Lent Celebration

Yesterday, today and tomorrow (14<sup>th</sup> day of the waxing of the moon, full moon day, 12<sup>th</sup> month northern reckoning and 1<sup>st</sup> day of the waning of the moon, 1<sup>st</sup> month northern reckoning) are the days in which the end of Buddhist Lent ceremonies are held. Part of the ceremony is held in the town while other parts are restricted to the wats.

#### A. Feeding Monks on the Road before Dawn

On all three days monks from all of the wats in town and some from nearby villages tour the town along specific routes to collect their alms. The abbot of the district says that the monks thus make their rounds and return to their temple before dawn. The route starts, I think, at the *hāng wiang* gate, moves down Mae Sariang road, past the district office to the corner of Sarit Phon road, turns left, down Sarit Phon road to the corner of Lāēng Phānit road, turns right and

follows Lāēng Phānit road to the Christian hospital. All along the route (and in some places off the route) people have placed in front of their houses decorative gates made of bamboo fences, banana stalks and crepe paper decorations. Also each house along the route which is participating (and some off the route) had lighted candles on their fences and some had torches made of bamboo soaked in a resin of a type of pine tree called *mai kia* (ไม้เคี้ยว). Finally, each household participating had a table, usually with some pretty cloth, on which was placed the rice and other food to be presented to the monks.

We didn't observe the ceremony yesterday morning because we were in Chiang Mai, but we did observe it this morning. Lā took us with our offering to a house near the corner of Lāēng Phānit road and the small road which comes out in front of Wat Pā Hiao. Although the people at this house are somehow “relatives” of Lā, I didn't get all the exact relationships. The owner of the house, a native of Chiang Mai, works for The Thai Airways Corp. When we reached the place a little bit before 5:00 a.m., we were told that the monks and novices from two wats had already gone by. As each new groups of monks would come by the donors would step forward. If they had rice (either *khāo niao* or *khāo cāo*) they would place a little in each of the begging bowls of the monks and novices (Jane did this). If one had other food, one would place one of each kind in the baskets carried by *dekwat* or adults who accompanied the monks.

Lā called the ceremony *tak bāt ôk phansā* (ตักบาตรออกพรรษา) but in a previous interview (6 Oct. 1967) the district abbot had called it *tak bāt kông* (ตักบาตรกอง). *Kông* literally means ‘road, street.’ The man who works at the Thai Airways Corp. said that the ceremony stems from the belief that people should welcome the Buddha as he goes out after Lent (compare Wells, Thai Buddhism, p. 104). He also said that this form of ceremony could be found in Thailand only in Mae Hong Son province. Later in the day the district abbot said that the custom was of Burmese/Shan origin. He also made reference to the story of the people welcoming Buddha.

Lā said that yesterday monks and novices from 16 wats participated and practically all the inhabitants of each of the wats went out. This morning there were not 16 wats, but there were monks and novices from out of town wats. In specific, there were monks and novices from Wat Nām Dip, Wat Thung Lāēng, Wat khapuang. Many fewer monks and novices than yesterday so La: said, participated in today s ceremony.

During the waits between the arrival of the clergy some people (mainly children) would set off firecrackers (called *bók top* – บอทดบ) and fireworks that looked like “flowers” (in Northern Thai, *bók fai dôk* – บอกลไฟดอก). (Lā says that firecrackers and fireworks are associated with the end of Lent ceremonies.

We noticed that two Karen men were carrying, *hāp* style, the extra food that the monks from Wat Kha Puang were receiving. Lā said that these were hill Karen.

#### B. Miscellaneous

After breakfast I took Sanga to Wat Kittiwong. She said that the morning services would be fairly ‘ordinary’ and that it was better for us to come about noon for the sermon. I checked with the district abbot and he said that the sermon and the ceremony of bathing a relic would begin about noon.

In the meantime we noticed many more people than usual passing into Wat Pā Hiao, despite the fact that the monks had already been given food on their morning rounds people brought even more food. I asked Lā about this and she said that “it is the custom to give monks much food on this day.”

At midmorning Wan called us to look at a ‘floating lantern’ (*khōm lōi* – โคมลอย). These are associated with end of Lent ceremonies but we didn't see any being made or sent off.

#### C. The events at Wat Kittiwong<sup>8</sup>

A little before noon Jane and I went to Wat Kittiwong. When we arrived there were a number of laymen (mainly older people with more women than men) in the main room of the *kuthi*. However, the only monk present on a raised platform was the district abbot. He was playing a tape recorded version of the *Thēt Mahāchāt* given by a monk from Chiang Mai who had visited here. It was obviously very well done (dramatically) and the congregation laughed considerably.

---

<sup>8</sup> Charles F. Keyes’s tape recording of the *ôk phansā* ceremony held at Wat Kittiwong on October 18, 1967 is located in the UW Ethnomusicology Archive, numbers 2001-2.9 EC, 2001 2.10 EC, 2001-2.11 EC. The original tape is titled “Tape Number 5, Side 1.” The recording has also been digitized. A Thai language 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.

I asked the abbot a bit more about the events of the morning. He says that in olden times people used to get up much earlier to make the presentation. For the Shans and the Burmese, the sign of when to get up at the appearance of the morning star (called in Shan *dāo rung* – ดาวรุ่ง), but in Mae Sariang the sign was the “evening star” (called in the local language *dāo mū kông* – ดาวหมู่ก้อง) [I was a little confused in this discussion because I also thought he said that *dāo rung* and *dāo mū kông* are words for the same thing]. He said that the decorations placed in front of houses called *čông sông* (จองส่อง) used to be much more elaborate. Many were large structures (like, he said, ‘towers’ made to hold the *salāk* gifts brought to Wat Kittwong last week) and contained a variety of foods, etc. He said that the decorations were made along the route “to receive the Buddha.” In Chiang Mai a ceremony to receive alms before dawn is held only on *wan phra*.

In the front of the platform near the preaching platform there was a table. On this table there was what looked like a monk's alms bowl painted in gold on a pedestal. It had a highly decorated carved lid with colored glass (or jewels) and gold paint. The whole thing was wooden. Next to it also on the table was a normal wash pan in which was placed a bronze *phān*. On the *phān* was a silver and glass vessel with a silver lid. The lid came to a point on top. Finally, there was on the table near the basin an ornate (jeweled and carved) khan or water scoop. Near the table but not on the platform was a bucket filled with a liquid in which was placed a type of food known as *som pôi* (ส้มป่อย).<sup>9</sup> These things were connected with an apparatus in the wat courtyard which we had seen on arrival. The latter could be diagramed something as follows (see photograph for more exact features). These things together with highly ornate umbrella were the essentials for the ceremony called “bathing the Buddha relic” (*song nām phra thāt* สรงน้ำพระธาตุ or *rotnām phra thāt* รดน้ำพระธาตุ).

The district abbot explained that this ceremony was held three times a year – the entering

---

<sup>9</sup> Nāi Mēt’s dictionary gives two entries under *som pôi*. *Som pôi thēt* (ส้มป่อยเทศ) or *ba’sak* (บะซัก) and *som pôi wān* (ส้มป่อยหวาน). The former translates as *sapindus rarak* (soap berry or soap nut) and the latter as *albizzia myriophylla*.

of Buddhist Lent, the end of Lent and Witsakha Būchā.

The service began with the chief layman leading the laity in the beginning of the morning worship (Pali Chanting Scripture, p. 8) the *khôsīn*. The district abbot led the congregation in the Name and the *Tisarana*. This was followed by his giving the Five Precepts. The chief layman then read formalized Northern Thai a long statement. This was followed by the chief layman making the request again in formalized Northern Thai or the song *nām phra thāt*. Prior to the beginning of the service the chief abbot had opened the golden *bāt* and taken from it a small bamboo container which held the relic. This he opened and with a very small wooden spoon about the size of a spoon used in a salt cellar he removed the relic. The relic, golden in color, was then placed in a small bronze container which had a small hole in its lid. The bronze container containing the relic was then placed in the silver and glass vessel which in turn rested on the *phān* and the water basin.

When the laymen had made the formal request that the relic be bathed, each monk in order of rank moved from the platform to in front of the table. They then picked up the ornate water scoop and filled it from the bucket. Then they would hold the scoop in a *wai* gesture and then pour water over the top of the silver and glass vessel. This vessel had holes in its lid and bottom and some water did pour through it (and theoretically through the bronze container and over the relic). When the monks had finished, the novices followed suit. Then several of the leading laymen did the same (I was invited to do so at this time). However, only a few laymen (and no laywomen) did so. Then one of the laymen picked up the water basin with its *phān* and the vessel containing the relic (now filled with water) and carried it outside. Another layman followed with a large umbrella. The sacred cargo was placed under the canopy and under the net in the apparatus outside. The layman who had the umbrella held it at an angle over the vessel. Laymen and laywomen who had not yet poured the water over the relic came outside and climbed up on the platform and poured water down the trough. The water they had was not taken from the bucket but was brought (?) to the wat by each individual in their own containers. This water also contained *som pōi*. The net caught the *som pōi* so that only the water poured over the vessel. After pouring the water the laity would scoop up a little of the water caught in the catchment. This water was now holy, in fact, Sanga, who came after the ceremony was over drank the water which Jane had in her container.

During the ceremony the monks and novices eat in the *kuthi*. In other words the



ceremony in the courtyard was exclusively a lay affair. After everyone had finished their water pouring they returned to the wat. The relic on the *phān* and the water container was carried back into the wat by an older layman and placed on the table. Another layman carried the umbrella over the relic as it was carried back in.

When the congregation had again come back into the *kuthi*, the chief layman made the formal request for a sermon. The chief abbot then gave one part of the Wetsandôn story. He was followed by the second monk of the wat who gave the second part of the same story. Some laymen had also brought gifts in order to make merit for the dead. Each of these gifts necessitated the giving of another sermon followed by the sending of the merit made through the offering and the sponsoring of the sermon to the dead in question (monk poured the water to accomplish this sending). There were three such offerings. These sermons were what the abbot called *thēt chāo bān* (เทศน์ชาวบ้าน). All in all we spent over 3½ hours in the wat. The abbot said that the lay people in this area especially like to hear the *thēt mahā chāt* at the end of Lent ceremonies.

The ceremony ended with the chanting of the *truatnām*.

At the end of the ceremony I noticed that three Karens had entered the *kuthi*. One woman had noticed hanging around the wat during the entire service. I asked the abbot about them. He said that they had probably come to request food. He said that this morning more than 20 Karens had come to request food. Apparently this is quite common occurrence on the *wan phra* at the end of Lent because the wats receive so much food from the laity. He said that the Karens come and *wai* him and then request food.

I had also noticed during the services that monks from other wats were gathering in the *bōt*. The abbot said that each full moon *wan phra* monks from about 10 wats come together to chant the *patimōk*. However, on this day the monks only engaged in confession to one another. I had also noticed that many of the monks were newly shaven.

#### D. Candle lighting of the wat

In the evening people go to the wats to light candles. I had observed some of this part of the ceremony at Wat Pā Hiao. Along the path someone had placed torches of the resin soaked bamboo. Candles were being lit inside the *kuthi* and in front of the sole *čēdī* in the wat. Also at the *čēdī* there is a stature of an elephant which had candles placed on it. I noticed one woman

kneeling before the *čēdī* and chanting something that sounded neither like Northern Thai nor Thai (or *suat* in the form used by speakers of these languages). I thought it might be Burmese but Lā says she thinks it is Shan. We didn't see the most spectacular part of this ceremony which must have taken place sometime between 8 and 10 p.m. because we had no one to watch Nicholas.

According to Sanga and Čit this same candle lighting takes place at other wats in town. The whole night was alive with candle light, and the crowds of milling people, firecrackers, *likē* (in Sukhothai) being held in the wat grounds. The town had a true festive character.

### **Mae Sariang**

**October 19, 1967**

#### **Talk with Pat Coates**

This morning I delivered a note to Pat Coates Pete and Sally had sent to the Coates via us (by carrier from B. Pāpāē). In talking with Pat I learned something about the outcome of the confrontation between the missionaries and the schools over the question of school children being required to attend wat ceremonies as part of their morals/ethics courses. Apparently Bob ran into Palat Nakhôn in town and the latter asked him to attend the meeting. Bob explained that Rev. Schlatter was not alone as regards the complaint but that in the past both he and Schlatter had made joint representations. Nakhôn told Bob the same thing as he had told Mark (in fact, Pat said that Bob was extremely offended by Nakhôn). In the final analysis Nakhôn is supposed to have said that a person cannot be Thai unless he is Buddhist.

Actually Rev. Schlatter is up in the mountains at the moment and apparently is not aware of the meeting. A meeting was held in which Pat guesses the children were told much the same thing as the missionaries had been told.

I expressed surprise that this issue should be arising at this point and that it hadn't been settled long ago. Pat said that they thought it had been. Apparently it arose anew in September after the Coates return. At this time a Thai-Christian convert reported to the Coates that he was shocked that the Christian students had been required to participate in some *wian thian* ceremony. He had explained the meaning of the ceremony to the Coates and they had made it a protest.

Nakhôn reportedly asked Coates why he hadn't talked with the educational officials rather than with the headmaster. Pat said that they had talked to the district educational officer

who had said there were different practices in different schools and that they must talk to the different headmasters. In response to Coates' question of why Muslims were not required to attend services Nakhôn had responded that they attend schools other than those affected. Apparently he thinks that only the Mae Sariang School (which is a government school) is affected.

Pat says that the Karen are very strict (I think she means in their adherence to Christianity) and that if the school requires Christians' children to participate in Buddhist ceremonies, the parents will pull their children out of the school. In another example of the discrimination against Karens Pat told me that she had recently tried to open a bank account in a new bank for two Karens. She asked how much they would have to have to deposit in their account to open them. The man in charge asked if the depositors were Karen. When she answered yes, the man said that in that case they would have to deposit 500 baht.

### End of Life Ceremonies

This morning was the last of the offering of alms before dawn. Sanga, who was staying at her brothers in the Phanasit compound, offered alms. She said that there weren't as many monks as the first day when she had presented alms but still about 10 wats were represented. She said, however, there were many fewer people offering alms.

This afternoon I asked Lā several questions about the ceremony. She said that the local name for presenting alms is *sai bāt kông* (ใส่บาตรกอง). She said that the local word for torches is *tāmkia* (ตามเกียะ), and the local name for the custom of decorating the house is *khat tātchawat* (ขั้ดราชวั้ดน์).

Lā also gave me the name of two *khanom* which are made especially for this event – *khanom cōk* (ขนมจอก) and *khanom thian* (ขนมเทียน). Both are made with flour, some glutinous rice and with sugar.

### Gate of the Old City

Ĉit came over this evening and said that he finally discovered the name of the western

gate of the old city, namely *pratū sāēn thōng* (ประตูแสนทอง).

**Mae Sariang**

**October 20, 1967**

End of Lent Ceremonies

I forgot to note that when we returned from feeding the monks on the 18<sup>th</sup> of October we noticed that at the house of our landlady small banana leaf containers of food had been placed on the fence in two places. There was also a candle next to it. Lā said that these were offerings for spirits.

**Mae Sariang**

**October 22, 1967**

Hāēthian heng Ceremony<sup>10</sup>

Last evening there was a major procession of lights through the town that ended up at Wat Pā Hiao where there was a ceremony. Lā said that the name of the ceremony is *hāēthian heng* (Central Thai transliteration) or *hāētian heng* (แห่เทียนหึ่ง), Northern Thai transliteration. Lā says that this ceremony is usually held twice during the season, once at Wat Pā Hiao and once at Wat Sībunrūang. However, this year it is only held at Wat Pā Hiao. She also says that the ceremony has a single sponsor. In this case it was a postman.

I have not been able to find references to this ceremony in any of the books I have on the North. However, Peter Hinton (who arrived last evening with his wife Elizabeth and his parents who are visiting from Australia) says that he saw the same ceremony on a smaller scale in Bān Kāt, Amphoe Sanpatong, Changwat Chiang Mai where Paul Cohen is working. Peter says that in that village it lasts for three days.

The procession reminded me vividly of the pictures I have seen of ceremonies dedicated to spirits in Luang Prabang. In specific, the procession follows a large beast-like figure called *tō* (in Bān Kāt it apparently is called *singtō*). If this is the word for lion, this creature certainly does

---

<sup>10</sup> Charles F. Keyes's tape recording of the *hāēthian heng* ceremony held at Wat Pā Hiao (Wat Ommarāwāt) on October 21, 1967 is located in the UW Ethnomusicology Archive, number 2001-2.8 EC. The original tape is titled "Tape Number 4, Side 2." The recording has also been digitized. A Thai language index and transcription of the recording are located in UW Special Collections, and within the Charles and Jane Keyes Collection on the digital ResearchWorks archive at UW.

not look like a lion. In fact, the body reminds me of a llama, while the head with horns and a flattened appearance reminds me of no creature I have ever seen. The creature was made of crepe paper placed over some sort of frame. The head perched on a high neck was made, it looked like, of pink *papier maché*. The creature was flanked by at least two masked attendants. In both cases the main body was decorated with white crepe paper cut to look like feathers.

The procession also included two long strings of lanterns carried primarily by young men which flanked a procession of girls carrying candles placed in the middle of white circles of paper. I believe Lā had said that only young unmarried girls can carry the candles. At the end of the procession was a long tower of lanterns which was also carried by men. Near the *tō* was an orchestra of percussion instruments (drums, gongs, cymbals) while in front of the lantern procession was an orchestra comprising of Burmese instruments.

The procession began sometime after 7:00 p.m. at Wat Kittiwong and then wound its way through town passing by several wats as markers of the procession. As it moved it collected large numbers of people who weren't carrying candles. The *tō* would stop every so often and wheel around making as though it were about to attack people with its horns. I wasn't sure whether the *tō* was manned by two or three people, but they certainly were coordinated. The two masked figures danced around the *tō*. There were also other men who, like so many in the procession, seemed very drunk, who danced around the *tō* or in front of the orchestra. The route was lined with resigned torches.

About 9:30 the procession reached Wat Pā Hiao. Prior to this time monks from several wats had already arrived in the temple. When the procession reached the wat grounds the two strings of lanterns were placed on either side of the walk leading up to the main building. The tower of lanterns was carried into the building and placed in the center of a large room. Most of the people including the orchestras entered the building and took up the *wai phra* position. However, a number of people, primarily men, stood outside where the *tō* continued to cavort throughout the ceremony.

The arrangement in the main building of the wat was something like is shown in the following diagram.

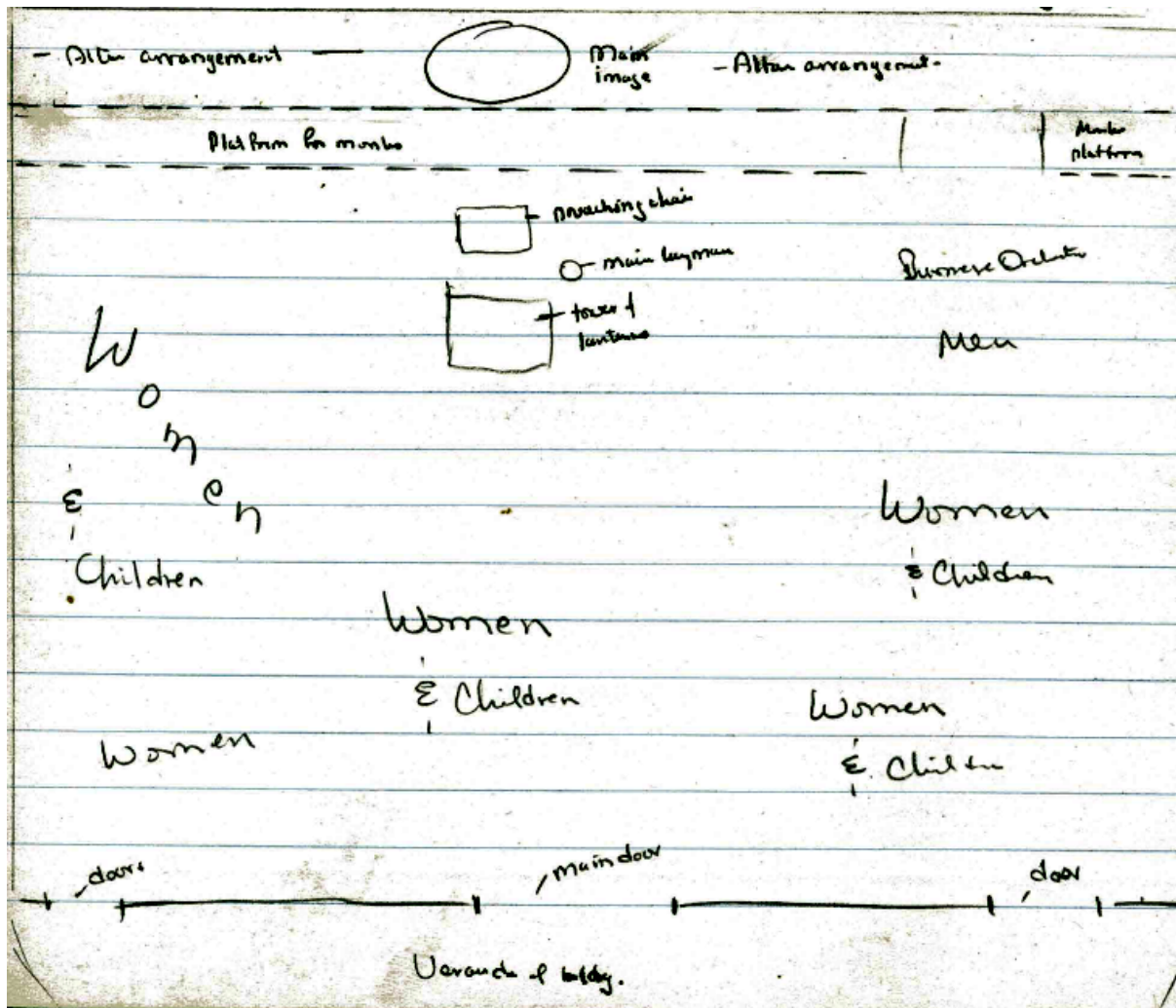


Illustration of the arrangement of the *hāēthian heng* ceremony at Wat Pā Hiao

The monks were about half from Burmese wats and about half from Thai (Khonmiang) wats. The 'Burmese' monks sat to the left as one faced the altar with the 'Thai' (excepting the abbot of Wat Pā Hiao) sitting on the right. I recognized the two monks from Wat Čanharāwāt, two from Wat Pā Hiao, the abbot from Wat Čôm Čāēng], the abbot from Wat Čaiyalāp, and a monk from Wat Kittiwong. There were several others.

As people congregated in the wat the Burmese orchestra played and a couple of apparently drunken men danced. The music (recorded) was quite different from Thai music, seeming almost like Greek music. The instruments included several mandolin types, two strange violin & types (played with a bow but with an attachment that looked like the bell of a trumpet), a wooden block, small cymbals, a drum and perhaps others which I didn't see.

At the beginning of the ceremony the monk from Wat Chaiyalāp took the sermon seat. A middle-aged man (the sponsor?) took the position of the chief layman. The beginning of the service included the layman's leading the laity in a chant, followed by the abbot from Wat Chaiyalāp leading in the *Namō*, the *Tisarana*. Then the chief layman requested the Precepts which the abbot gave (in response form) the Five Precepts. Then followed a very interesting long chant with the Burmese monks using the Burmese form and the Thai monks the Northern Thai form. The abbot from Chaiyalāp then gave a long sermon – in Central Thai! This was followed by a closing chant, Thai style given only by the Thai monks (the Burmese monks did not even sit in the *wai* position during this chant). This was followed by the preservation of gifts (boxes of candles and a money tree stuck in a water vase) for each monk.

After the presentation a huge gong hanging in the building was struck and then the Burmese orchestra began again. People (including the monks) began to depart. However, a number of people (mainly middle-aged) stayed and began dancing. First men danced and they pulled several women up and they began (reluctantly, so it appeared) to dance as well. Outside the *tō* was still acting up. However by 11:00 p.m. nearly everyone had disappeared and gone home.

### Fresh Market

This morning Jane and I made a visit to the fresh market. I again noticed a lot of Karen in the market.

### Mae Sariang

October 23, 1967

### Christian Hospital

Yesterday we met the new doctor, a woman, at the Baptist hospital. She had been a missionary doctor in Moulmein, Burma for 9½ years. We learned a few things about the hospital. Two of the nurses are Karen refugees from Burma. Most of the other employees are also Karen Christians. This morning we took Sanga up to the hospital to have her leg X-ray'ed. However, although she waited for two hours she didn't get in. The system at the hospital is to give each person a number as they come and then they are taken in turn. There were a large number of Karens waiting as well as Thai and townspeople.

### Visit to the House of a Local Lawyer

There is a shop on Mae Sariang Road between the road that comes out of the district office and Sarit Phon road which has long intrigued us since it has on display a number of the traditional bells (which can be found in the antique shops in Chiang Mai), some silverware, opium weights, etc. This morning, after buying some *phāsin* at the Ômārī shop (and looking at some jewelry there) we decided to stop at the shop that interested us. As we did we realized that George Po was inside talking to a man in a bathrobe. Since George had seen us, we entered and were introduced to the man. He is a local lawyer who was born in Mae Sariang, studied in Chiang Mai (partially at Prince Royal's) in secondary school and went on to Bangkok to study for his law degree. He returned here about the time of World War II. His wife is not a northerner, but is from Ang Thong. George had been consulting the lawyer on some business which was never specified.

Since we had expressed an interest in old things which were for sale in the shop, the lawyer called his wife out. We looked at the bells which George explained to us were used in pairs in buffalo caravans. The lawyer said that the style of these bells dated back to Sukhothai (the woman wanted 500 baht for the pair). The opium weights also ran expensively, 400-800 baht for the largest one. The wife also trades in jewelry. She brought a collection of sapphires, rubies, onyxes and artificial stones, set and unset for Jane to look at. While doing so another woman from near the shop brought over some Shan silver bowls and some jewelry of her own for us to look at. This woman, George said, was Red Karen, *yāng dāēng*, that is Kayah. George spoke to her in Burmese. This woman had one exquisite piece of workmanship, a Shan silver bowl with  $\frac{3}{4}$  bas relief (the ordinary Shan bowls are  $\frac{1}{4}$  relief and the Thai style are even less). We really coveted this bowl, but its price (900 baht) was a bit steep.

We spent a long time in the shop, but didn't buy anything. The lawyer invited us back to talk with him sometime.

### Visit to Wat Ômmarāwāt (Wat Pā Hiao)

This afternoon I paid a visit to Wat Pā Hiao and took ray tape recorder with me and played back for the benefit of the monks the ceremony held there on Saturday night. During the course of my stay, a young monk, the old monk, one middle-aged layman, one elderly layman, and one layman gathered around.



I asked the young monk a little about himself. He said that he was born in a Karen village (*bān yāng*) near the Thai-Burmese border (on the Burmese side I believe). He came to Mae Sariang about 15 years ago. He was ordained in Mae Sariang, lived here for one Lent and then went to Burma for 4 (or maybe 6) years. He speaks and reads Burmese and probably speaks *Tôngsū* (Taungthu). He does not speak Central Thai, only Northern.

I asked a bit about this wat. There is a *čēdī* on the grounds which the middle-aged layman said was built about 20 years ago – or a little before the “Japanese period.” The young monk said that it contains the ashes of the first abbot of the wat. According to the middle-aged layman this wat was built 30+ years ago, and, if I understand correctly, this wat is a successive to another wat in the area (Bān Pōng). I asked what ethnic groups attended this wat. The middle-aged layman answered *khon phūn miang* (i.e. Northern Thai), Shans, (he called them *Thai yai*) and *Tôngsū*.<sup>11</sup> The monks say that the sermons are in Burmese and the chanting is Burmese style. The other day Lā said that the orchestra which played at the ceremony was *Tôngsū*. The monk agreed.

### Hāēthian heng Ceremony

I have learned some more about the *hāēthian heng* ceremony from Lā and from the people at the wat. I asked Lā if the *tō* represented a *phī*. She said no. I then asked what this creature signifies. She said “nothing, it is just the custom (*praphēnī*).” However, the middle-aged layman and young monk at the wat gave me a slightly fuller story. The middle-aged layman referred to the creature as *singtō*. The young monk told me a story that had to do with Buddha coming down from heaven and the candles were lit for this purpose (thus relating this ceremony to the feeding of monks in the early morning on *ōkphansā*). The middle-aged layman said that *tō* was manned by two children and one adult.

Thus, Lā and the informants at the wat called the two costumed attendants of the large creature *phīkhon* (ผีคน). The middle-aged layman elaborated, referring to them as spirits of men (*phīmanut* – ผีมนุษย์). Both were performed by children. The middle-aged layman also referred to them as *čao singtō* (เจ้าสิงโต).

Lā gave me the order of the procession. It begins at Wat Čôngkham (Wat Suphanrangsī),

---

<sup>11</sup> According to Kunstadter (*Southeast Asian Tribes, Minorities, and Nations*, p.87), Taungthu (Pa-O) is a type of Karen.

goes to Wat Kittiwong, to Wat Khapuang (Wat Sithimongkhon), Wat Čanthurāwāt (Wat Mantālē), Wat Sībunrūang and Wat Čôngsūng (Wat Uthayārom). The procession was then supposed to go to Wat Pānāt (Wat Chaiyalāp) but people were “lazy” and turned off the lower road and came directly to Wat Pā Hiao (Wat Ommarāwāt).

The middle-aged layman and the young layman gave me the list of wats who sent monks to represent them at the ceremony. One each except from Wat Ommarāwāt which had two monks:

1. Wat Chaiyalāp (Thai)
2. Wat Ommarāwāt (Burmese)
3. Wat Uthayārom (Burmese)
4. Wat Sībunrūang (Thai)
5. Wat Čanthurāwāt (Burmese)
6. Wat Sithimongkhon (Thai)
7. Wat Sāēn Thōng (Thai)
8. Wat Kittiwong (Thai)
9. Wat Suphanrangsī (Burmese)
10. Wat Čôm Čāēng (Thai)
11. Wat Thung Lāēng (Thai)

Lā said that the lanterns carried on the string are called *khōm fai* (โคมไฟ). She also said that this year's ceremony was not very good – not as good as last year, but then she is a very opinionated girl.

The laymen at the wat were commenting about the drunkenness of a number of people who were dancing.

The young monk showed me the preaching chair which had been given by the sponsors of the ceremony. It had written on them the names of the donors, i.e. Nāi Tan, Nāng Phičit, Čároenyot phrôm [*duai*] but, etc (นายตัน นางพิจิตร เจริญยศ พร้อมด้วยบุตร). He is, as Lā says, in the post office.

**Mae Sariang**

**October 24, 1967**

*Thôt kathin* at Wat Sībunruang

On the 21<sup>st</sup> a man came to the house with an envelope which contained an invitation to the *thôt kathin* at Wat Sībunruang which is being sponsored by the district office. The envelope itself provides information pertaining to the gift which the invitee will give. Translated, the outside of the envelope reads as follows:

---

INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE IN THE MERIT MAKING OF *THÔT KATHIN*  
SAMAKKHĪ

*Thôt* at Wat Sībunrüang, Mae Sariang District, Mae Hong Son Province

---

Name of Donor \_\_\_\_\_

House Number          Street \_\_\_\_\_ Tambon \_\_\_\_\_

District \_\_\_\_\_ Province \_\_\_\_\_

Amount of Donation *baht* \_\_\_\_\_ *satāng* \_\_\_\_\_

With the strength of this faith may you have success in all things which are desirable.

---

Inside the envelope was the mimeographed invitation which in translation reads as follows:

---

Notice of the Spreading of Merit

INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE IN THE ANNUAL *THÔT KATHIN SAMAKKHĪ* FOR MAE  
SARIANG DISTRICT

2510

Together the officials at all departments in the district of Mae Sariang, the teachers, Kamnan, headmen, merchants, and the people who join together in the annual merit making [ceremony] *thôt kathin* sāmakkhī for 2510 at Wat Sībunrüang, Tambon Mae Sariang on Saturday [sic]<sup>12</sup> 1 November 2510. The result which will come from this merit making will be the enduring of the Poriyat tham Foundation of the Mae Sariang Sangha in order to further the improvement of the

---

<sup>12</sup>The dates given are correct but the day should be Tuesday, 31 Oct. and Wednesday, 1 Nov., respectively.

Poriyat tham education of monks and novices in the district. The order of events is as follows:  
Friday [sic] 31 October 2510, the 13<sup>th</sup> day of the waning of the moon in the first month, Northern reckoning:

- 900 hours - decorating of *kathin* offerings at the district office
- 1900 hours - nine monks will be invited to the district office to chant at the *kathin* banquet and there will be one sermon. When the ceremony is over, there will be entertainment at a banquet.

Saturday [sic] 1 November 2510, the 14<sup>th</sup> day of the waning of the moon in the first month, Northern reckoning:

- 1500 hours - the government officials, teachers, Kamnan, headmen, merchants, and people will form a *kathin* procession which will move from the district office, go along several of the streets, and then present [*kathin*] at Wat Sībunrüang. Therefore, the district thus wishes to spread the merit by soliciting contributions from all Buddhists (who) will participate in this large merit making [ceremony] on the days which have been mentioned. In order to make it convenient for the district to collect the merit making offerings this time from this moment on you who have faithful hearts to offer money or gifts of any kind please take them and present them to the district educational officer, the committee or the clerks at the district office. As for you who live in distant tambons please place the offerings [literally ‘the requisite thing’] in an envelope and give it [along with] your name and address to the Kamnan or headman.

The district expresses its general gratitude to all who will participate in this merit making,

[signed] Capt. Khačit Sukhānon

District Officer of Mae Sariang

Chairman of the Committee arranging the *thôt kathin sāmakkhī*

---

What follows is a copy of the invitation:

**ใบแจ้ง**  
**ขอเชิญร่วมทำบุญทอดกฐินสามัคคีอำเภอแม่สะเรียง**  
**ประจำปี ๒๕๑๐**

ด้วยคณะข้าราชการทุกแผนกการในอำเภอแม่สะเรียง ครุ กำนันผู้ใหญ่บ้าน พ่อค้าประชาชน จะได้ร่วมกันทำบุญทอดกฐินสามัคคี ประจำปี ๒๕๑๐ โดยจะนำไปทอด ณ วัดศรีบุญเรือง ตำบลแม่สะเรียง ในวันที่ ๑ พฤศจิกายน ๒๕๑๐ บัณฑิตที่ได้จากการทำบุญครั้งนี้จะนำสมทบทุนมูลนิธิปริยัติธรรม ของคณะสงฆ์อำเภอแม่สะเรียง เพื่อช่วยเหลือการศึกษาพระปริยัติธรรม ของพระภิกษุสามเณรในอำเภอนี้ให้เจริญรุ่งเรืองสืบไป จึงกำหนดการจัดงานดังต่อไปนี้

วันศุกร์ที่ ๓๑ ตุลาคม ๒๕๑๐ ตรงกับเดือนเกียงเหนือ แรม ๑๓ ค่ำ  
เวลา ๐๕.๐๐ น. ทกแต่งตั้งองค์กฐิน ณ ที่ว่าการอำเภอแม่สะเรียง  
เวลา ๑๕.๐๐ น. อาราธนาพระสงฆ์ ๙ รูป เจริญพระพุทธมนต์ สมโภชองค์กฐิน และมีพระธรรมเทศนา ๑ กัณฑ์ ณ ที่ว่าการอำเภอ เสร็จพิธีทางศาสนา มีมหรสพสมโภช

วันเสาร์ที่ ๑ พฤศจิกายน ๒๕๑๐ ตรงกับเดือนเกียงเหนือ แรม ๑๔ ค่ำ  
เวลา ๑๕.๐๐ น. คณะข้าราชการ ครุ กำนันผู้ใหญ่บ้าน พ่อค้าประชาชน ทั้งขบวนแห่งองค์กฐิน เคลื่อนจากที่ว่าการอำเภอไปตามถนนต่างๆ แล้วนำทอด ณ วัดศรีบุญเรือง

ฉะนั้น ทางอำเภอจึงขอแจ้งทุกสกุลบอกบุญมายังท่านพุทธศาสนิกชนทั้งหลาย ได้ไปร่วมทำบุญมหากุศลอันยิ่งใหญ่ครั้งนี้ ตามวันเวลาดังกล่าวโดยทั่วกัน และเพื่อความสะดวกทางอำเภอได้เปิดรับการบริจาคทำบุญครั้งนี้ตั้งแต่มันเป็นต้นไป ท่านที่มีจิตศรัทธาจะบริจาคเงินหรืออัฐบริวารอย่างใด ขอได้โปรดนำไปมอบต่อศึกษาธิการอำเภอแม่สะเรียง กรรมการและเลขานุการจัดงาน ณ ที่ว่าการอำเภอ ส่วนท่านที่อยู่ในตำบลห่างไกล ก็ขอได้มอบบัณฑิไลซองและแจ้งชื่อที่อยู่ต่อกำนันผู้ใหญ่บ้านของท่านได้ ทางอำเภอขออนุโมทนาท่านที่ได้ร่วมการกุศลครั้งนี้โดยทั่วกัน

ว.อ. ขจิตต์ สุขานนท์  
นายอำเภอแม่สะเรียง  
ประธานกรรมการจัดงานทอดกฐินสามัคคี

---

พระสังฆการีพิมพ์ สามล้าน ๓๐๐ ๑ เชียงใหม่ นายประทวน สักคันทวนชัย ผู้พิมพ์โฆษณา

### Thôt kathin at Wat Kittiwong

On the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> of November a large group of people from Bangkok are coming to Mae Sariang to present a *kathin* offering at Wat Kittiwong. This has grown to be a very big affair with people from all over the district being invited. Yesterday I received a letter from Pete Kunstadter apparently in the Lua village of Bān Pā Pāē (บ้านป่าแป๋) in which he mentioned about the news of this ceremony reaching the village and of the reactions of the villagers to it.

“There is supposed to be a *kathin* [sic] sponsored by some people in Bangkok at Wat Kittiwong Mae Sariang on November 15 to which representatives from Pā Pāē and other upland villages Shans, etc., are being invited (so we hear-who knows what the real story is... [dots in original]) and we will definitely be going to that...There will also be a similar, but less elaborate ceremony at one of the other wats (Sali bun lyang ??? [Sībunrüang]) in about a week or ten days. The people from this village probably will not go because of the harvest. The BPP [Border Patrol Police] teacher is pushing very hard for them to attend the one on the 15<sup>th</sup>. We do not expect to go down for the earlier one.

“This is apparently the first time people from here have been formally invited to participate in person (with sword dancing, singing etc.) though they had been invited to contribute cash or rice in the past, especially from Wat Čôm Čāēng. This begins to look like a Thai version of the Gallup Ceremonial, and our performers want to get paid for doing the sword dance-otherwise, they say, they probably won’t go...”

I have a copy of the official announcement of the events and the ceremony put out by the people in Bangkok with a seal (literally) of Wat Kittiwong. This I will translate in a separate place.

### Karens at Wat Pā Hiao

I forgot to note that yesterday at Wat Pā Hiao the young monk said that Karens do come to make merit here. In answer to my question both he and the middle-aged layman said that many Karens (hill) come to “request food” from the wat.

### Visit from Bob Coates

Bob dropped in today to leave a package for us to take to his daughter in Bangkok. In the

course of the conversation he again mentioned the trouble over the requirement of Christian children to attend the wat. He said that this problem had arisen on several occasions over the years and usually because of a zealous teacher, not because of official policy. He really thinks that Palat Nakhôn is very overbearing and thinks that he, Don Schlatter and the priest should make joint representations to the district office. When I mentioned the two forthcoming *thôt kathin* ceremonies he suggested that these might be further attempts on the part of the government to force Buddhism on the hill tribes. He says that he has no argument the government trying to convert the hill tribes, but he believes it ought to live up to its claim to freedom of religion.

### Visit from Don Schlatter

About noon Don Schlatter, the New Tribes Missionary paid us a visit. Although we had met his family before, we had not yet met him. He talked a bit about Lua (which he calls Lawa) dialects. He says that practically every village has a different dialect, in specific the northern dialect around La'up where he does most of his work are different from those of Kông Lôi and Bô Luang (the two big villages on the road to Chiang Mai). He said that Lua from two quite different dialect areas may speak Karen to one another. In response to my questions he said that Lua are usually quite fluent in northern Thai. I mentioned that Lua sometimes had Thai names and I said that they also sometimes have Karen names.

In his conversation and what I have heard (or read) from Pete I would hypothesize the basic typology of Lua into three groups along a continuum, from Lua to Khonmüang.

Even "pure" Lua (type 1) have some Thai overtones because they have lived in association with the Thai for so long. They also have some idea of connection with Buddhism. In this type I would think that Bân Pā Pāē would fall. Type 2 would be those villages which still retain much of Lua culture (including – perhaps especially – language). There are overtly Buddhists with wats. Kông Lôi and Bô Luang are of this type. Type 3 are Khonmüang villages which have a Lua ancestry and which perhaps retain a few Lua customs but no longer speak Lua and are completely Buddhist. Examples of this type would be Huai Sāi and Huai Sing. Division types would be those Lua who are Christian and those which are assimilated into Karen. This likelihood that this type there are no example of villages, only households.

In the region of Mae Sariang town Schlatter says that there are something on the order of

120 to 150 households of Lua. The largest majority of these, 90 to 100, are in Bān Phrae and the others are located in the village to the south below Wat Ćôm Thōng (the Thung Phrāo area). There are a few households beyond the border of Bān Phae (wherever that is) towards town (maybe 6 or 8) but none in the town itself. Bān Phae is not totally Lua, but there are some Khonmüang families living there as well as a few Khmu' families. He said that about 95 households in Bān Phae are Christian. His own house in the New Tribes Christian Church is located in Bān Phae.

I asked him about the difficulties of the people living in Bān Phae. He says the people fall into three categories: (1) long-term residents (as much as 30 years) who have titles to their land, (2) residents of 10 or more years who have no official titles but who believe they fulfilled the law in developing the land and thus being eligible for titles, and (3) recent immigrants who realize that they are “squatting” on land belonging to the police. The only category that feels that they have grievances in the re-settlement plan is category (2). The government recognizes the right to those who have titles (group 1) and those who realize they are squatters (category 3) claim no rights. The second group is trying to get help from the government in resettling. Only house land (no paddy land) is involved.

He has been in Thailand 14 years. 10 of which have been in Mae Sariang. First he was in Kanchanaburi working with Thai. When he came here he first lived in Kông Lôi. Of the 20+ New Tribes Mission missionaries in Thailand four are in the North all working with Lua. In addition to himself there are two single men from New Zealand (one, Chuck Weeks, and one a new chap who has just come) living in Kông Lôi. There is also an Australian nurse (presently on home leave) who works out of Mae Sariang.

#### Conversation with George Po and Mark Anderson

This evening Mark Anderson came by followed shortly by George Po and both stayed for dinner. George had come around with silver bowls and more information in connection with our desire to get the special bowl we had seen yesterday. He and Mark stayed until about 8:30.

George talked a bit about his problem as a political refugee. He is only one of two Karens here with “political refugee” (*phū līphai thāng kān müang* ผู้ลี้ภัยทางการเมือง) status as contrasted with “wartime refugee” (*phū līphai thāng songkram* ผู้ลี้ภัยทางสงคราม) status which Benny and



some of the others are. He claims to have been threatened with death with some other Karens (connected with the Mission) and who had been threatened with expulsion by certain Thai officials. He has been fighting back with complaints to the police department and letters to high government officials in the American Consulate. Apparently his talking with a lawyer (his name is Nāi Puang) yesterday was in connection with this. The lawyer promised to see the district officer on George's behalf.

He also talked a bit about Mae Sariang. George said that there are Mons here (in contrast to Don Schlatter who says there are none) as well as P'wo Karen and other groups. The area George lives in is primarily Shan. Mark chimed in to say that the assistant headman of Mae Sariang School is Shan although I know he was born in Mae Hong Son. There is another family of teachers who are Shan. The slaughter house is government owned and the butchers are Shan (pigs) and Indian Muslims (cattle and buffalo). George also talked at length about his favorite topic – Karen nationalism. He says that he has been out of Burma – meaning out of Burman territory – since 1946. When Burma got its independence, he was in the Karen Independence Movement already. During the negotiations prior to independence, four Karens made representations on behalf of Karen in England. Three are now dead and the other is a refugee in Kanchanaburi. George was treasurer in the Free Karen Movement (or at least a treasury officer). He says that this movement suffered because of the conflict between old and young and that the young felt that if one couldn't carry on, one would be of no use to the movement. They had no use for "theories." Finally George felt that he could no more (or was no longer wanted) and left the movement in 1954. He came to Mae Sariang in 1956.

He feels that the only hope for the Karens is complete independence. Once they have gotten independence, along with the Shans, Kachins, etc. being independent, then all groups can negotiate with the Burmese on a footing of equality. However, he feels that as long as the Burmese dominate, Karens will be downtrodden. He mentioned several Karen leaders who had tried to work with the Burmese only to be betrayed.

He is not without certain reservations about the Karens. He feels that they have no artistic tradition like the Burmese or the Shans, and that they are somewhat rougher types. He also feels that the Burmese have been very successful in getting their way through cunning ingenuity since they first defeated the Mons.

On another topic I asked George if he knew about *singto*. He said that he did and that it

was kept by a police officer in a house near his home. He said that it is sometimes referred to in Burmese by a term that means body of a lion and head with horns. Alternatively, it is called in Burmese “five animal creature” since it is supposed to have the tail of a fish, the body of a lion, the wings of a bird, the head of a deer, and the trunk (small) of an elephant. He said that this custom is popular in Mae Sariang but not necessarily in many other places in Thailand. Mark said that the Mae Sariang *singtō* was out on the night of the 17<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> at the candle lighting in connection with the end of Lent ceremonies.

Note: From **October 26 to November 19** made a trip to Chiang Mai, Bangkok, Mahasarakham (Bān Nōng Tūn). The following notes are from this trip.

### **Chiang Mai**

**October 24, 1967**

#### **Visit to Spirit Medium**

This afternoon Ratana (the Kunstadter’s servant) took us to visit a medium who lives on the edge of town on the road to Fāng near Sanga’s brother's house. The compound of the house was quite large with one building that looked like a *sālā*. We entered the house and walked around a large veranda to a room heavily decorated in flowers and other decorations including a peacock’s tail. The medium was sitting in front of the room and was wearing a sarong, a man’s shirt and a headcloth wrapped in Burmese style. According to Ratana she was already possessed by spirits – in this case a male spirit (hence the clothes), but she is possessed by different types of spirits on different occasions. (Next to her she had a cupboard filled with different types of clothing.)

There were only a few people in the room (I think 5 besides ourselves) – all women. As our group (Sanga, Ratana, Nicholas, Jane and myself) entered the room we took up the wat sitting position. Then people in the room would request some specific fortune told from the medium. Sangha asked about her leg. The medium, speaking in a deep quasi-male voice would pick up some joss sticks, play with them in front of her (transferring several from one hand to the other and then back again), asked the supplicant a few questions (year of birth in the animal cycle, day of birth, etc.). In front of her she had a *phan* with flowers on it and next to it was a bronze container of (cold) water. Finally she would answer the question. In Sanga’s case she said

that it was the muscles (*sen*) not the bones that were causing the trouble. She took a bottle, filled it with water from the container in front of her, mixed it with a packet of medicine, blew through the opening a few times said some words over it and then gave it to Sanga to drink as a help for her leg. (This blowing on something to be taken as medicine or on a person himself is a quite common occurrence among people who are somehow supernaturally endowed). The medium asked Jane, Sangha, Nicholas, Ratana and myself to move closer. Jane asked if she could have any more children. The answer is yes: two, a boy and a girl. Ratana asked her if her *phī* (i.e. lover or quasi-husband) would return soon. Answer, yes, today or tomorrow (he actually did return the some evening). Jane asked also for all three of us if we would have long lives. The medium said that she could not answer that question. She did volunteer in my case that I would attain my high status in four years time. Each request for an answer was preceded by presenting the medium with 5 or 10 baht.

After we returned home Ratana talked a bit about the medium. She used the term *čao* (เจ้า) and *ông* (องค์) in referring to the medium. Apparently she is possessed everyday around noon time and is available for consultation all afternoon.