

Charles F. Keyes Field Notes, Thailand
February 1 through February 28, 1963.

Field notes in this document were primarily written in Mahasarakham (Changwat Maha Sarakham), Thailand. This document is preceded by field notes written in Mahasarakham in January 1963. This document is followed by notes written in Maha Sarakham province in March 1963.

Bān Nōng Tūn / Mahasarakham

February 1, 1963

Actually, I am beginning to write up these notes which were taken on the 1st of February, on the third and since there has been considerable activity during these last 3 days, I am afraid that my recall and my note-taking may be a little scanty.

During the first three days of February, a wat fair was sponsored (idea of Mr. Wichian's as part of community development) to raise money for a new school. Fairs held two consecutive years should raise enough that the government will contribute the remainder of the ฿25,000 which the school will cost. In conjunction with the fair are a large number of ceremonies – primarily Buddhist, but also some animist. Thus, two incentives in the Thai cultural context for people to attend the fair are (a) to *sanuk dī* (สนุกดี), have fun and (b) to *tham bun* (ทำบุญ), 'make merit', since ceremonies are conducted by the monks.

The three-day program for the fair made up by Mr. Thiang is as follows:

วันที่ ๑ กุมภาพันธ์ พ.ศ. ๒๕๐๖

เวลา ๑๖.๓๐น. ประธานกรรมการกล่าวเปิดงานหลังจากการเสด็จพระ
สงฆ์ สรูปสวดชัยมงคลคาถาแล้วจุดพลุ ไตรโลมลอยโคมลอยอย่างละ

๑อัน

เวลา ๑๘.๐๐น. มวยเริ่มชก

เวลา ๑๙.๐๐ น. ราวางเริ่มแสดง

เวลา ๒๐.๓๐น. หมอลำแสดง

วันที่ ๒ กุมภาพันธ์ พ.ศ. ๒๕๐๖

เวลา ๐๗.๐๐น. ถวายภัตตาหารเช้าแก่พระภิกษุสามเณร

เวลา ๐๘.๐๐น. บายศรีและ เจิมพิชัยศ

เวลา ๑๑.๐๐น. ถวายภัตตาหารเพล

เวลา ๑๓.๐๐น. แห่พิชัยศควยคนเงินหมู่บ้านต่างๆ

เวลา ๑๕.๐๐น. แข่งคะไล

เวลา ๑๗.๐๐น. มวยเริ่มชก

เวลา ๑๘.๐๐น. ราวางเริ่มแสดง

เวลา ๒๐.๓๐น. หมอลำเริ่มแสดง

วันที่ ๓ กุมภาพันธ์ ๒๕๐๖

เวลา ๐๗.๐๐น. ถวายภัตตาหารเช้า

เวลา ๐๘.๐๐น. เทศน์ทศกัณฐ์

เวลา ๑๑.๐๐น. ถวายภัตตาหารเพล

เวลา ๑๒.๐๐น. เทศน์ทศกัณฐ์

เวลา ๑๕.๐๐น. แข่งขันโคมลอย

เวลา ๑๗.๐๐น. มวยเริ่มชก

เวลา ๑๘.๐๐น. ราวางเริ่มแสดง

เวลา ๒๐.๐๐น. แข่งขันแคนเคื่อง

เวลา ๒๐.๓๐น. หมอลำเริ่มแสดง

เวลา ๒๔.๐๐น. ประธานกรรมการ กล่าวปิดงาน

FESTIVAL SCHEDULE		
Date	Time	Event
1 Feb. 1963	2:30 pm	[Festival] committee chairman will open the festival; following this, 7 monks will chant the <i>chai mongkhon khāthā</i> and then firecrackers (<i>phlu</i>), spinning rockets (<i>talai</i>), and a smoke balloon (<i>khōm lom</i>) will be set off.
	6:00 pm	Boxing will begin.
	7:00 pm	<i>Ramwong</i> (dancing) will be displayed.
	8:00 pm	<i>Môlam</i> will be performed
2 Feb. 1963	7:00 am	Presentation of morning meal for monks and novices.
	9:00 am	<i>Bāi sī</i> and consecration of the status-fans [for Phra Mahā Seng] [with lustral water].
	11:00 am	Presentation of noon meal [for the clergy].
	1:00 pm	Procession of status-fans and ‘money trees’ to various villages
	3:00 pm	Fireworks (<i>talai</i>) competition.
	5:00 pm	Beginning of boxing [matches].
	7:00 pm	Beginning of <i>ramwong</i> performance.
	8:00 pm	Beginning of <i>môlam</i> performance.
3 Feb. 1963	7:00 am	Presentation of morning meal [for clergy].
	9:00 am	<i>Hokasat</i> sermon (<i>thēt hokasat</i>)
	11:00 am	Presentation of noon meal [for the clergy].
	12:30 pm	<i>Hokasat</i> sermon
	3:00 pm	Smoke balloon competition.
	5:00 pm	Beginning of boxing [matches].
	7:00 pm	Beginning of <i>ramwong</i> .
	8:00 pm	Solo <i>khāēn</i> competition.
	8:30 pm	Beginning of <i>môlam</i> performance.
	midnight	Festival committee chairman will announce the close of the festival.

That morning there were two ceremonies: (a) feeding of the priests, and (b) propitiation of the village patron god.

We arrived about 8:00 a.m. and went to the *kuthi* where the priests stay. In the room were large containers of food with all varieties of rice preparations: *khāo kī* (sticky rice rolled into a shape like ears of corn, rolled in raw egg and toasted); *khāo khiap* (sticky rice mixed with the root of *tot mā* (ตดหมา) and egg, rolled flat and toasted, looking but not tasting something like a chapatti); *khāo tōm* (sticky rice mixed with bananas, other fruit, honey, etc. and rolled into a banana leaf); plus lots of plain *khāo niao*, and trays of standard curries, fish, noodles, fermented fish paste, *nām phrik*, etc. There were also banana baskets (*kathong*, กระบุง) filled with rice preparations which Mr. Wichian said were for the spirits of the village, plus a large basket called *khan khayōng* (? sp.) in Lao, containing food for the Buddha image. A little of everything given the priests is placed in this and the basket put on the altar.

When we first arrived there were four priests – three others from Bān Nōng Tā, B. Yāng, B. Han Khong. During the course of the ceremony two priests from B. Nām Thiang (B. Nōng Katā) arrived, and by the last day of the ceremony, there must have been 25 priests at B.N.T.

The ceremony of feeding the priests is called *bun khāo* (‘merit rice’) (บุญข้าว). The priests are fed everyday by the people, but this is a special feeding in which all the products of the rice are given over to be eaten. It is held once a year at the end of rice harvest as a thanksgiving for a good harvest, or to propitiate the ‘powers’ for a better harvest. This day was chosen because it was also the first day of the *ngān* and therefore an auspicious day for making merit. Usually, the ceremony is held in January (the ‘3rd month). (Also, I learnt that in the 4th month there is a ceremony of *bun wēt* (บุญเวศ) or *lam mahā chāt* (ลำมหาชาติ), literally, ‘song of the great nation’, when priests speak about the story of the Buddha).¹

At the start of the *bun khāo* people made a chant of presentation, then took the food on trays and baskets and presented this to the priests. While the monks eat, men and women sit separately, as I was told happens in all religious functions in the wat area. When the monks had

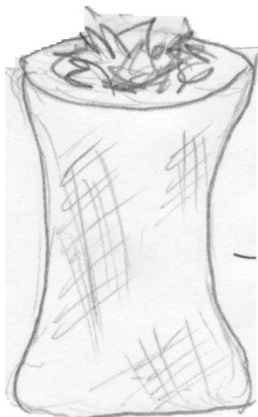
¹ In a post fieldwork note, I observed that I was incorrect in this identification. The rite centers on monks giving the sermon of the ‘Great Life’ (*mahā chāt*), that is, the *Vessantara Jātaka*.

finished, food was given to the people to eat, and any left over, was to be given to beggars (of which there were a few children on the veranda of the *kuthi*). Food left over is never to be given to the priests for their noon meal; must be new food.

After both people and priests finished eating, the monks began to chant. During the chanting the acting head monk had in front of him a bowl of water in which he stirred some leaves and a candle, swishing them around in the water during the chanting. This is the way *nām mon* (holy water) is made. Water is then taken by one of the priests and ‘sown broadcast’ on the heads of the worshippers present. Also during the chanting, a few men took some holy water and dribbled it to the ground through slats of the floor. This process, *njat nām* (หยัดน้ำ, literally, ‘drops of water’) is done to tell the ‘fairies’ to pay attention to what is happening.

With the sprinkling of holy water, the ceremony came to an end, and the blacksmith, who had been appointed *khaocam* led a procession of people (mostly men and children) to the forest near the village. After a short walk into the center of the virgin forest, we came onto a clearing in which were two small structures in the shape of *sā lā*. The larger of these was the abode of *pūtā* (a kinship term composed of the words for paternal and maternal grandfather), who is the guardian spirit or the ‘village’, while the smaller house is the house of the servants of *pūtā*.

The *khaocam* took some leaves and laid them on two bamboo stands called a *khajôî* (? sp; see illustration), and food which had been carried from the village was placed on top of these leaves. (I didn’t notice any more food being put on the of *khajôî* of the servants than on that for *pūtā*. These two offerings were placed in the houses, and a small dish of ‘curry’ placed next to the *khajôî* each house, with various rice products, *khāo khiap*, *khāo kī*, etc. around. There were also a lot of bamboo tubes lying around the bases of the houses. These had contained liquor for *pūtā* (and were consumed by the people after *pūtā* had partaken thereof).



khajôî with leaves on top.

After offerings had been placed in the houses, *khaocam* prayed to *pūtā* to help the *ngān* and bring in much money and to safeguard those who came to the *ngān*. The food, he said, was being given so he would grant these things. I also heard him mention the name of Phra Mahā Seng, the high status priest originally from the village who was present during the *ngān*. *Khaocam* then said *pūtā* had partaken of the food, and distributed it to the children who had accompanied the procession to the woods.

This ceremony is known as *buang suang* in Thai, or *sen wāi* in Lao.² There appeared to be no chants or invocations during the ceremony. (Note: It was explained to me that about 30 rai of the forest are the domain of the *pūtā* and are therefore left untouched. Nāi Caroen, the *palat amphoe*, says he knows of no better way of forest conservation, since this practice is held in every village, where part of the woods is deemed sacred).

Bān Nōng Tūn / Mahasarakham

February 1, 1963 (afternoon)

We visited the *sālā wat*. One side of this has raised dais on which many of the priests were seated (far more priests than during the morning). Also it houses the *to mū* (โต๊ะหมู่) (set of tables like an altar holding flowers, candles, Buddha images, etc.). In front of the *to mū* was a stand holding the three ‘examination fans’ of Phra Mahā Seng. These are pink with gold thread and have a Thai number embroidered on the front indicating the number of *parian* exam the priest has passed. These are known as *phat jot* (พัดยศ). In front of the fans was a tray containing three ‘handfuls’ of raw cotton cloth placed round a central dish or pan. In the pan was *nām phra phutthamon* (น้ำพระพุทธมนต์) or *nām mon* (น้ำมนต์) holding two bamboo strips symbolizing the story of the Buddha. Also flowers (*dōklak*, ดอกไม้) and candles on the tray, plus *fāi sāi sin* (ฟ้ายสายสิญ) (cotton thread) which is passed from one monk to another when prayers are being made. Villagers constructed this tray and placed it in the *sālā wat*.

² Uncertain about spelling; it may be *sen wai*, lit. ‘superstitious’ *wai*.

Festivities of the evening were those of any wat fair, consisting of (a) stalls with goods such as trinkets, combs, mirrors, etc. for sale; (b) *muai* (มวย) (Thai boxing), in which legs and feet are used as well as hands; (c) *môlam*, which took place within the overall boxing stadium and (d) *ramwong*, whose stand was next to the bar. Inside the wat grounds at the ‘control center’ priests used microphones to urge people to donate to the worthy cause. Each major attraction had its generator providing power for lights and P.A. systems: three separate generators in all.

The major difference was that instead of these events taking place simultaneously, they took place sequentially. First came the boxing bouts of three minutes fighting and two minutes rest. (In all three nights, only one fight went the full five rounds. Bouts were always called off if a fighter was in danger of being seriously hurt). Fighters first paid respects to their teachers in the art of boxing (*wai khrū*) by kneeling down in the center of the ring, placing hands in a praying position and bowing three times with head touching the floor on each occasion. (This ceremony is more elaborate in centers with major boxing arenas and professional fighters). Meanwhile special ‘boxing’ music started up. This was played by a wooden flute, set of small ‘bell’ cymbals and a drum, and continues throughout the fights. On all three nights, one fight out of the six per night billed as ‘special’, when fighters were claimed to be professionals from Bangkok or other big centers. Never true, but fighters tried to make it seem so.

Towards the end of the boxing, *ramwong* would begin. On the first night, there was only a percussion band, but on the second and third nights, there was a trumpet also. The orchestra stood on two steps of the platform built for the dancing. Girls from Sarakham and dressed in bathing suits (in between dances would wrap towels round themselves from hip to knees). There were two main types of dances: (a) *ramwong thammadā* (traditional *ramwong*), and (b) *ramwong farang*, i.e. danced to Western music (calypso, rock-and-roll). Boys and girls are not to touch (though occasionally the girls would have to push off boys who did).

Concurrent with the *ramwong* on the first night was the *môlam* play. This is the traditional ‘folk-opera’ of the Northeast, based on the *Ramakhian* (Thai version of the Ramayāna) or from other stories including the ‘dream’ plays about our own time (e.g. as on the first night, when the play was about a make-believe queen). The stage has a backdrop of three

curtains with various scenes on them which can be rolled up or down according to the act in session.

All of the *môlam* players in this instance were from the same village in T. Dôn Wãn, but not from the same family – ten families are being represented in this one troupe. The group has been operating for over 20 years. Players are all under a Master who has taught them the art of acting. The troupes usually go from fair to fair, but usually there are at least a few people in every village who can sing *môlam* songs.

Bān Nông Tūn / Mahasarakham

February 2, 1963

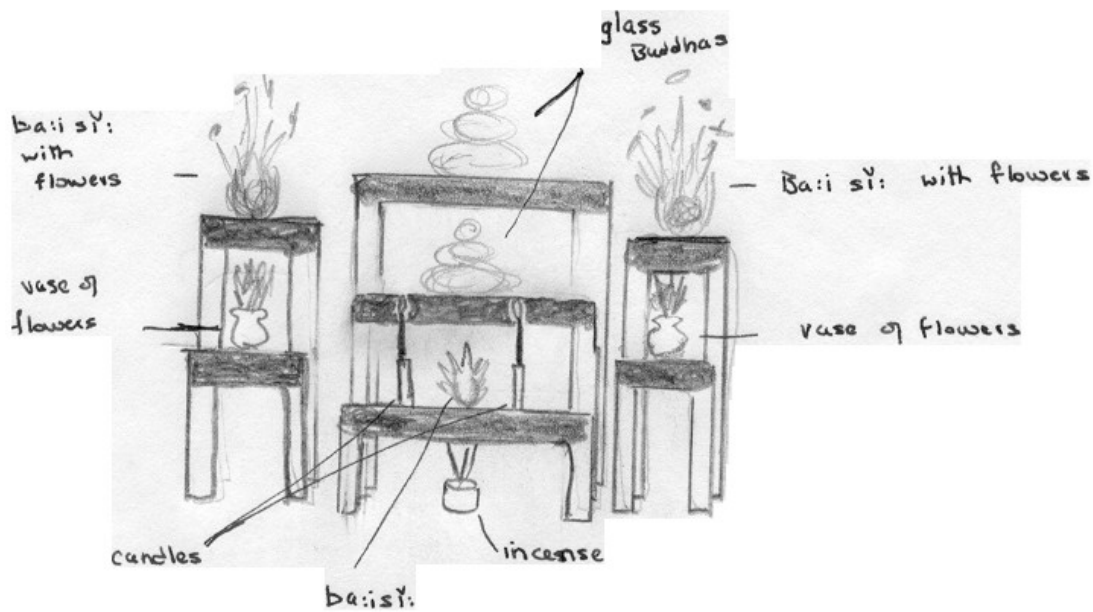
Bāi sī sūkhwan rite to honor Phra Mahā Seng

Mr. Wichian and I attended the *bāi sī sūkhwan* ceremony to honor Phra Mahā Seng who had achieved a higher clerical rank. *Bāi sī* seems to refer both to the ceremony (see notes of January 30, 1963) and to the banana leaf cylinders made especially for this ceremony. (These consist of a central cone elongated by having triangular pieces of leaf attached to the base and built down till the cone is deemed tall enough. At the four corners, separate structures consisting of five small cones piled one on top of the other are attached, spreading out in a fan-like tier. Base of the whole is then tightly bound with banana leaf padding and stood upright. Lotus-flowers with small splints of bamboo pushed through their pistons are then inserted into the tips of the cone as in the illustration below. This note is a description by E. Jane Keyes.)

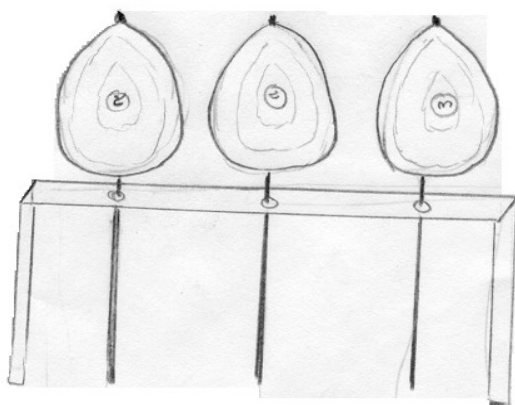


In the *sālā wat* women were working on the accoutrements or the ceremony before it began, such as the *bāi sī* (known as *māk beng* (มักเบ็ง) in the local language), and making food for the monks' noon meal (*āhān phēn*).

On the dais stood a 7-tabled *tomū* (more important ones are 9-tabled). The following is a sketch of the *tomū*.



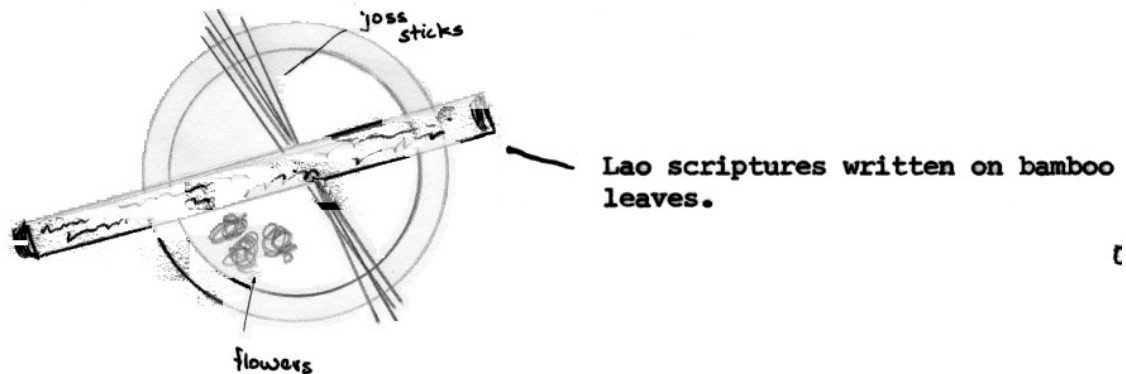
In front of the *tomū* on the main floor was a stand holding the of *phat jot* of Phra Mahā Seng.



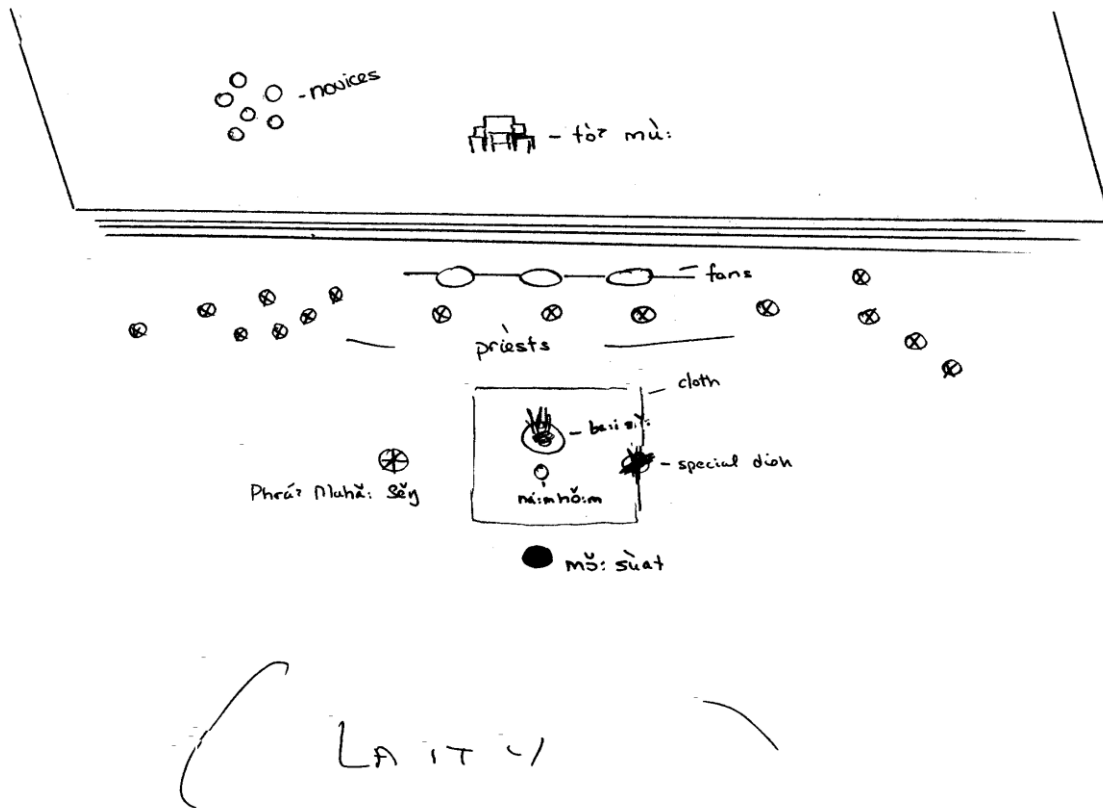
These ‘fans of honor’ are given to a Buddhist monk when he has passed a *parian* exam. The number in the middle indicates the number of exam which has been passed (3 is the lowest).

In front of the fans, white cloth was laid and a very old iron tray with a pedestal (*phan*) which contained the main things of the ceremony was placed on this cloth. On top of the tray was laid a piece of cloth, some banana leaves and on this a four set of 5-pronged *bāi sī* with a flower in each prong. The *bāi sī* was then bathed with yellowish-colored ‘fragrant water’ (*nām hom*). Also on the tray were placed other leaves – *bai jô* and *bai khung*, plus and two eggs. Chunks of thread about 6” in length (cut up from long skeins by the village women – E. Jane Keyes) were placed between the prongs of the *bāi sī*.

This tray was then placed on the white cloth in front of the fans. Other people came and placed more chunks of short strings on the *bāi sī*. Set in front of the tray was a bottle of *nām hom*. To the side was a plate with incense sticks (*thūp*), leaves and the set of Lao scriptures written on bamboo leaves.



Phra Mahā Seng was seated to the left (my left facing the altar and priests) of the *bāi sī*. Other priests were seated between the altar and the following is a sketch of the arrangement of people and objects in the *sālā wat*.



A priest's alms bowl (*bāt*) and a cover of the bowl (? EJK) were brought in and set next to the *bāi sī*. Then came chanting, first by the priests, then by the laity, then by Phra Mahā Seng who chanted things expected of him as a priest. The *mô suat* 'read' from Lao scriptures on bamboo strips. In this he called the soul (*khwan*) of Phra Mahā Seng to come here if it is located anywhere else. The end of this reading marked a definite transition in the ceremony. Then the *mô suat* read from other scriptures, apparently written in *khôm* characters.

(Mr. Wichian explained that *bāi sī* is the name of the whole ceremony as well as of the banana-leaf construction, whereas *sū khwan* is the name of what occurs at the ceremony) .

When *mô suat* had finished reading, he took one of the strings which had been laid on the *bāi sī* and wrapped it round the outstretched wrist of Phra Mahā Seng and twisted the two ends of the string slowly while chanting. Then the priests present each tied a string around his wrist. Finally the strings were distributed to those present.

As they came, they would drop some money (usually a baht) into the begging bowl before tying the string. Women not allowed to tie the string, but would only lay string on the wrist of the Phra Mahā Seng, and have a man tie the string for them. The money given was to be

used for the school. Most people coming up would say good wishes for Phra Mahā Seng. When everyone had finished, the priests chanted. Then the two eggs on the tray were opened to read the fortune of Phra Mahā Seng (whether good or bad, I didn't gather). The eggs then were given to Mr. Wichian and myself to eat.

(I think this ceremony is connected with or is an aspect of "tying the *khwan*" – see phya Anuman's article on the *khwan* in December issue of *JSS*.)

Schedule of Events for February 2nd

7:00 a.m.	Presentation of Morning meal for priests and novices.
9:00 a.m.	<i>Bāi sī</i> and the ceremony connected with the fan.
11:00 a.m.	Presentation of noon meal for priests.
1:00 p.m.	Procession with the fans to other villages.
2:00 p.m.	Fireworks competition.
5:00 p.m.	Beginning of boxing.
7:00 p.m.	<i>Ramwong</i> begins.
8:00 p.m.	<i>môlam</i> begins

(Prior to the boxing in the evening, I hear the following by way of advertising: "Come see the boxing. Enjoy yourselves and make merit by giving money to the new school.")

In fact, no *môlam* this night, but a movie instead. Mr. Wichian and I went to *ramwong* after boxing. Pressure on for me to dance, but didn't. However, the girl was brought over to our table for a private demonstration. She had very white make-up and unlovely legs.

Bān Nōng Tūn

February 3, 1963

Phra Mahā Sēng

I noticed this morning that Phra Mahā Sēng had only one of the strings left on his wrist. Mr. Wichian said he only kept the strings on one night and then took them off (save one). (There is no time period for these strings.)

*Bun Phra Wēt*³

Outline of Day's Events	
7:00 am	Presentation of morning's food
9:00 am	<i>Hokkasat</i> sermon (see below)
11:00 am	Presentation of noon meal
12:30 pm	<i>Hokkasat</i> sermon
2:00 pm	Smoke balloon (<i>khōm lom</i>) competition
5:00 pm	Beginning of boxing
7:00 pm	Start of <i>ramwong</i> .
8:00 pm	Competition on a single <i>khāēn</i>
8:30 pm	Beginning of <i>mōlam</i>
12:00 pm	Closing of the fair

I had previously discussed the preparations for today with the Phra Khrū Choei (พระครูเชย), the abbot of Wat Ban Khwao, a priest of some 36 years, very likeable, and with jurisdiction over all the priests in the commune. The ceremony was listed in the program as *thēt sahoksat* (เทศหกษัตริย์) and was called by those involved *Wētsandōn* (เวศสันดร). I had difficulty in getting full sense of the ceremony, but I was aided by Mr. Wichian, Phra Khrū Choei, Kenneth Wells, *Thai Buddhism*. I was unable to find any translation of *thēt hokkasat* as unit word, but Phloyphrom says *thēt* connotes a “religious festival” as in *thētsakān*, season in which religious or civil functions are held”, and *thētsakān khaophansā*, “religious functions observed at the beginning of the Buddhist Lent”, (p. 619). *Hok* means “to overturn, to spill” (p. 1391). I can find no definition of *sattri* anywhere (at least with this spelling).⁴

According to Mr. Wichian and Phra Khrū Choei this word could be defined as a religious ceremony in which teachings are given to the people in the form of a play discussion.

Wētsandōn (Vessantara in Sanskrit) is defined Phloyphrom as “name of Lord Buddha in his tenth incarnation as a Bodhisattva” (p. 1266).

³ At the time I witnessed these events, I did not really quite know what I was observing. A more sophisticated description occurs in my fieldnotes for March 7-8, 1964. I have made few corrections in these notes in light of what I later learned. [note added in 2010.]

⁴ I was confused by not having enough knowledge at the time I wrote my fieldnotes to understand. The term เทศหกษัตริย์ literally means the “sermon of the six kings.” *Thēt* (เทศ) means ‘sermon’. [note added in 2008]

Wells' explanation is as follows: - "In addition to the chants listed above, there are 89 others in the *Royal Book of Chants* which may be used in worship services or for study, making a total of 223. Aside from these, there are many Jātaka Tales, sermons and other words in Thai used in Buddhist worship. This type of service is called *Preaching the Dharma* and does not differ greatly from the style employed in *suat chaeng*. The preaching or reading, which usually takes place on a special occasion such as a festival or dedication, may be done by any number of monks from one to eight, each seated on a preaching chair in front of the audience with a bundle of palm leaf manuscripts before him and each assuming the part of a different character in the Tale ... The following works are among those used in,

“PREACHING THE DHARMA”

1. The *Vessantara Jātaka*, or *Desanā Mahā Chāt*;
2. The *Gāthā Phān*, a condensed form of the *Vessantara Jātaka*, in one thousand verses. (F.N.2 An annual service is held in some temples in which this *Jātaka* is read in one day and night). To attend such a service is highly meritorious.)
3. The *Pathom Sombodhi* or Life of Buddha.

*** [There are 15 of these listed]

"Many of these urge the hearers to present offerings to the bhikkhus, to assemble at the temples on holy days and to listen to the sacred writings as a means of gaining great reward..." (Wells, *Thai Buddhism*, pp. 273-275.). Wells then gives a short description of the *Gāthā Phān* on pp. 275-278, based on a version which he mentions in a footnote on page 275 (footnote 2).

Wells' description certainly jives with what I learned about the ceremony.

1. The ceremony was held on the occasion of a village fair.
2. I was told that the ceremony was supposed to be held once a year.
3. The ceremony brings much merit for those attending.
4. The full name of the ceremony is *wēsandôn chādok*. *Chādok* ("stories of the incarnations of the Buddha") is the Thai word for *Jātaka*.

Preparations for and Accompaniments to the Ceremony

- A. *Hô uppakhrut* (หออุปการุท). Near the *sālā wat* was constructed a tower of about 6' in height which supported a place for a specific type of shrine. This word means literally "tower of

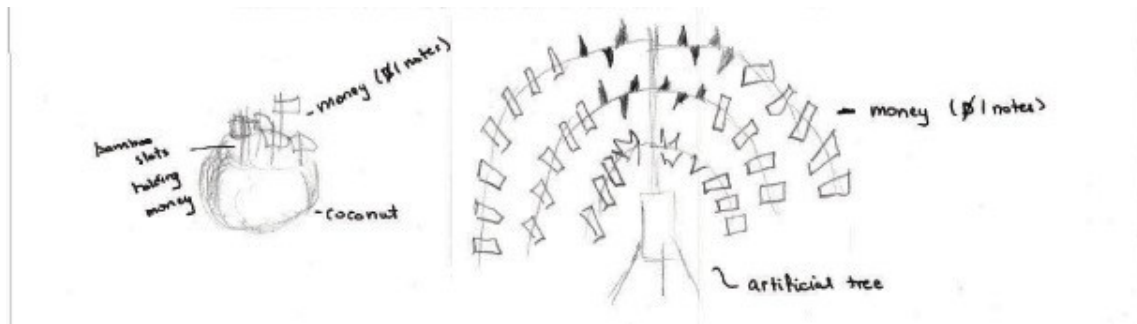
uppakhrut”, *uppakhrut* being the name of a Buddhist saint or *orahan* (อรหันต์).⁵ This tower is constructed in order to protect the ceremony from “dangers”. In this shrine are the following:

- a. *khru than* (ครุภัณฑ์) – a container of 1000 flowers, 1000 rice kernels, 1000 *miang*, 1000 pieces of tobacco, 1000 pieces of betel, etc.
 - b. *bāi sī*
 - c. priest’s bowl (*bāt*)
 - d. 2 sandals
 - e. Umbrella
 - f. *phanhā* (พาน้ำ) a tray with candles, leaves, statue of Buddha.
 - g. A small ball of glutinous rice with a little bit of fish. The *hō uppakhrut* is supposed to protect the ceremony “from any direction”.
- B. *Thong chai* (ธงชัย) literally “standard” (flags). Surrounding the *sālā wat* were large bamboo poles supporting homemade standards with religious symbols. There were eight of these standards placed at points in each of “The eight directions”. It is necessary to have these flags when having this type of ceremony (why, my informants, the priests, did not know). Another name of these flags is *tong phra wētsandôn* (ธงพระ เวศสันดร).
- C. Name of ceremony. The following were given to me as the name of the ceremony: *bun mahā chāt* (บุญมหาชาติ), *bun phra wēt* (บุญพระเวศ) and, *wētsandôn chādok* (เวศสันดร ชาติ).
- D. *Kan* (กัณฑ์) – when the people come to hear the stories of the day, they bring gifts (usually of money) which they give to the priests (in this case to be used for the school). There are two types of gifts:
- a. *kan thēt* – Brought by the villagers in the morning before the ceremony. Consisted of flowers, candles, incense, cotton, rice (uncooked), money, *khāo khiap*. People

⁵ See footnotes for March 7-8, 1964 for a fuller explanation of the disciple of the Buddha whose Thai name is a rendering of Uggagupta [note added in 2010].

brought these in on trays (not necessarily all of them) and priests receive them and place them into separate containers. Phra Mahā Seng wrote each donation down on a sheet of paper. The incense, flowers and *khāo khiap* would be kept by the priests for their own use. The money went directly to the school fund. The rice and cotton would be sold and the money given to the school fund (there was a huge pile of rice being amassed in the courtyard ready to be sold).

- b. *kan lôn* (กัณฑ์หลอน)⁶ – These are gifts - almost exclusively of money - brought by non-villagers attending the ceremony. The money is usually placed in a rather dramatic way of which I saw two. The former were present at the beginning of the ceremony. The latter were brought in during the middle of the ceremony. (See illustration).



Two types of *kan lôn*

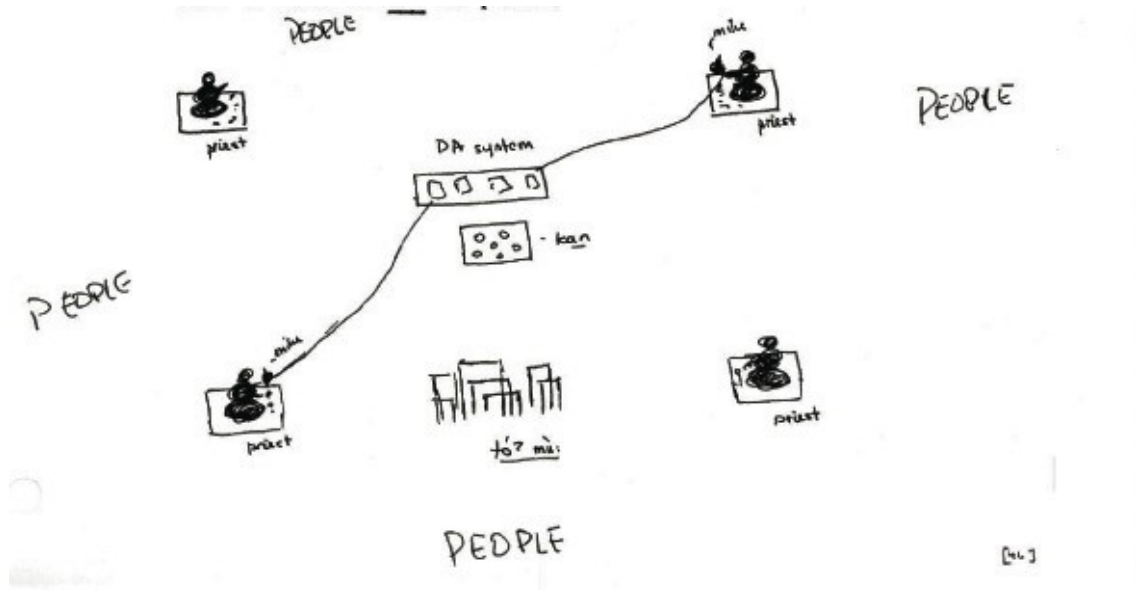
In addition to these two kinds of *kan*, during the ceremony, a *bāt* was taken around and people contributed money. In turn, they had their names recorded on the list of those who gave to support the school. All these forms of *kan* are ways of *tham bun*, “making merit”.

The Ceremony

The ceremony was supposed to take place in the morning, but many people were absent (hangovers?). Therefore, it did not start till about 1:00 p.m. It took place in a clearing between the *bōt* and the *kuti*. In the center of an audience were four priests seated on school desks

⁶ *lôn* (หลอน), ‘to take by surprise’ (Reinhorn); the meaning here seems to be that these offerings are presented in a ‘surprising’ way.

(ธรรมาสน์). On one side was a *to mū*. In the center of the priests was a PA system and a table on which the *kan* was placed.



Each priest was provided with water, tobacco, betel, and also had the palm leaf scriptures. The people were seated around the outside of the center circle and were seated on straw and mats. Differing from ordinary religious services, the people didn't have their hands in the *wai* position.

The course of the ceremony was as follows: Two monks would carry on a dialogue through mikes. This often provoked laughter and was sometimes of a sexual nature. Then one of the priests would break into a chant. I gathered that each was taking a part in the story of Vessantara – his father (Sanchai สันไชย, Sanjaya in Sanskrit), mother (Phutsati พุทศตี), Vessantara himself, his wife, and his children. The effect was a bit like a musical comedy. All was taken in good humor by the monks, who seemed to enjoy playing the roles as much as any amateur actor.

In the Vessantara story there are 13 lessons. Today only two lessons were given (concerning “giving something to another”). There would have been the full set of lessons if the ceremony had begun in the morning as planned.

In the middle of the afternoon, the Nāi Amphoe arrived with Mr. Sawai, the Community Development Supervisor for the Amphoe, two other Community Development workers and a police officer. The Nāi Amphoe was on his way to observe an irrigation project in a nearby Tambon; the police officer was searching for a valuable Buddha image which had been stolen from a nearby village, and the community development people had come for the *ngān*.

At the boxing that evening, there were so few people that the admission price was halved. Matches went very fast, and finished in about an hour. Afterward, all those who had helped on the *ngān*, plus the community development people, were treated to a dinner with a variety of chicken dishes.

Mr. Wichian and I then attended a *khāēn* contest, this one being held on a “long *khāēn*”. Apparently several varieties or styles must be played in a competition. Very attractive.

General Remarks about the Fair

1. First time a fair had been held in the village.
2. Probably the first time electricity had been seen in the village itself.
3. The fair is almost detached from the village in the sense that so many people from outside were involved, and so few from the village itself (once the dirty work of building and setting up fair-stands was over).

Footnote: I gave ฿500.00 to the school fund on the second night of the fair. Mr. Wichian was anxious for a picture of the formal presentation. This did not eventuate, but did make me give it in formal presentation to the *Kamnan* at the boxing match. I wonder how this will affect my status.

Bān Nōng Tūn

February 4, 1963

Khôm (ខ្មែរ) and *Khamēn* (កម្ពុជ)

Today I went to see Mr. Wichian and Mr. Čarōen at the Amphoe office. In my conversations with them, I learned that the *Khôm* (ខ្មែរ) and the *Khamēn* (កម្ពុជ) are considered by Thai to be two separate peoples – the *Khôm* having come from India and the Khmers being indigenous.

Kū Bān Khwao

Mr. Wichian took me to the *Sālā c̄hangwat* to see the two images (*thēwarūp*) which had been taken from the *Kū* in Tambon Khwao. There are a pair of these images, both of which have their hands grasping some object which projects from mid-waist. The images resemble very closely that found at Prasāt Hin Khok Prasāt (ปราสาท หิน โขก ปราสาท), Amphoe Nang Rong (อำเภอ นาง รong), Buriram. See figure 38 in *Plan and Report of the Survey and Excavations of Ancient Monuments in Northeastern Thailand*. In looking at the *Kū* found at this site (fig. 37), I would say that these are comparable sites. If that is true, it is fortunate because at Prasat Hin Khok Prasat was found an inscribed bronze (fig. 40) which puts its date at 1139 A.D. (report on p. 71). This would provide a reason for dating the *Kū* in T. Khwao as 11th or 12th century.

In Chin Yudi's *Bōrānawattthusathān thua phraratcha-ānāc̄hak* (Bangkok, Fine Arts Dept., B.E. 2500, pp. 160-62) there is a section on Maha Sarakham. Under Section 2 ("Sites to be examined") there is the following:

(e) *kūbānkhwao* (คูบานเขวา). In Amphoe Müang, Tambon Khwao there is a *kū* called in the literature *khūmahāthāt müangyāng thitsanāk* (คูมหาธาตุ เมืองยาง ทิศนาท). It is made of *sāēng* (แสง) [?laterite] in the form of a pavilion (*kračhōm* กระโจม) with four corners. It is 8 meters (4 *wā*) high, 5 meters (2 *wā* 3 *sōk*) wide. It has an entrance on the East side.... There are 2 stone *thēwarūp* within the *prasāt*.

Bān Nōng Tūn / Mahasarakham

February 5, 1963

Ngān Wat: Aftermath

This morning there was a big-to-do in the village about the money received from the *ngān*. B^{ht}1900 was taken in cash; B^{ht}500 was expected from the sale of tobacco, cotton and rice which had been donated; plus a further B^{ht} 900 was expected from the sale of the woven bamboo mats used for the walls around the boxing arena. B^{ht}1400 is still owed by people who attended the fair "on credit". In all, they hope to get about B^{ht}4700. This is still far short of the B^{ht}310,000 hoped for. As it was then realized, it might take several years to raise enough for the new school; discussion then took place as to where the money should be kept in the interim. Mr. Thiang

wanted it deposited with the educational office at the Amphoe, so that the money could not be touched except for school use. Mr. Phon, the headman, and the other village elders, wanted it deposited in the Government Savings Bank. The group gathered to attend controversy, including the heads of the various *khum*, the teachers (including the wife of Mr. Thiang, who was the only woman with rights of a full participant), plus interested onlookers (mainly men), Mr. Thiang and myself.

The meeting was interesting as a study in small group dynamics. Mr. Phon first seated himself with the villagers while Mr. Thiang seated himself with Mr. Wichian and myself (thus symbolically identifying himself with us). However, Mr. Phon later moved next to Mr. Thiang. Mr. Sanit, the second teacher, sat on somewhat middle ground between the villagers and the four of us, but Khun Beng, Mr. Thiang's wife, who came late, sat herself right on the edge of the villagers.

No formal ordering of the meeting, but first the villagers claimed that if money was deposited with the educational office, there would be much red tape getting it out, whereas in the Savings Bank it would earn interest (the figure of B^{ht}102 was mentioned, and though I don't know if this would be the interest, this was the figure accepted by those present). Mr. Thiang said nothing. Mr. Wichian took the floor in defense of the villagers (he was the only person who commanded the floor without interruption). However, Mr. Thiang, on being asked to speak by Mr. Wichian, stated that the money was for building the new school, and since he was headmaster, it was under his discretion alone how the money should be cared for. He wanted the money deposited at the Amphoe office so it would stay a part of the educational funds and not be used for anything else. Mr. Thiang refused to alter his position one whit, and so it was "decided".

That afternoon I watched the school. I was shocked by the indiscipline and lack of proper teaching. I watched some third graders. They were copying the Thai from a text into their notebooks. This was a course of writing. Mrs. Beng would then correct the lesson books. If correct, she would throw the book back on the floor for the student to pick up. If incorrect, she would have the student come to her desk and sometimes grabbed him (or her) by the ear or cheek as she explained what he had done wrong.

After school was over at 2:45, Mr. Thiang wrote a daily report in a Teachers' log which he must keep. Typical entry: "day went as usual", or the like. Later I saw the women digging in

dikes for snails and small frogs to eat, and also saw the small vegetable plots which are watered with well water.

I learnt that Friday is to be a national holiday (*Mākhābūchā*) – major Buddhist festival. No celebration in the village (not enough priests), but possibly in Ban Khwao.

Mr. Wichian had arranged, much to my embarrassment, to have me presented with a certificate in recognition of my donation of B^{ht}500 at the Bān Nōng Tūn fair. This certificate, prepared by the Governor, was presented to me today at the Governor's office.

The following is a translation of the certificate:

No. 2/2506 (1963)

CERTIFICATE OF PRAISE

This certificate demonstrates that Mr. Charles F. Keyes has donated money in the sum of 500 baht (Five hundred baht total) in connection with the cooperation in building; a school in Bān Nōng Tūn Tambon Khwao, Amphoe Müang, Mahasarakham, Čhangwat Mahasarakham.

It is recognized that the actions of the donor have been beneficial for the public welfare. Let him enjoy all four types of happiness and prosperity: longevity, status, health, and strength. *Thōen*.

Sālāklang Changwat Mahasarakham

The 5th day of February month 2506 B.E.

Signed _____

Governor of Changwat Mahasarakham

Seal of office is affixed.



Bān Nōng Tūn / Mahasarakham

February 7, 1963

Kū Bān Khwao

Today, I paid another visit to the *kū* in B. Khwao in order to take some pictures and gather some more information. In diagram 1 there is a rough sketch of the site (not drawn to scale because I didn't have any measuring equipment). I have left out indication of the *sālā kū* because it is of recent construction.

The main entrance to the *kū* is at the gate in the East (1.). The gate in the West (3.) seems to be one which was not in the original structure. In the Eastward gate, the steps are very well worn, showing that they have undergone much use. Also, there are some large stones near the gate which are obviously neither part of the gate nor of the wall as all the other stones are made of sandstone.

The *prasāt (kū)* (2.) seems nearly intact (except for a few bricks at the top). On the lintel are two large stones which differ from all other stones in the structure in that they are not of sandstone. At the present time, the inside of the *kū* houses some Buddha images and a wooden

door has been attached to the entrance. However, the structure originally housed 2 *thēwarūp* which are now in the *sālāklang čhangwat* (see notes for February 4, 1963).

Directly in front of the *kū* is a large stone of rectangular shape (4.). This stone is a three-tiered carved slab (see detail in diagram 2). There are lines carved across each of the tiers. Also, there are what look like some carvings on the surface of the stone, although these are two large to ever have been inscriptions. The base of the stone is imbedded in a concrete floor which has recently been laid down.

The most interesting stone is the one which is located to the left facing from the front of the *kū* (no. 5; detail in diagram 3). This stone which is very much worked upon has a large hole in the center. On one corner the edge has been worn down and has what looks like nicks in it. This corner is extended down from the whole. In the middle of another side is a smoothed edge with a groove in it. It looks a bit like a sacrificial altar.

Another stone with a hole in the center appears at the back right corner of what is now the *sālā kū* (no. 7.).

The stone slab which rests in a symmetrical position to stone no. 5 (i.e., stone no. 6) is obviously not in its original position as it is resting on some pieces of hewed sandstone. It is a similar smooth slab with some carvings on top (but probably not inscriptions).

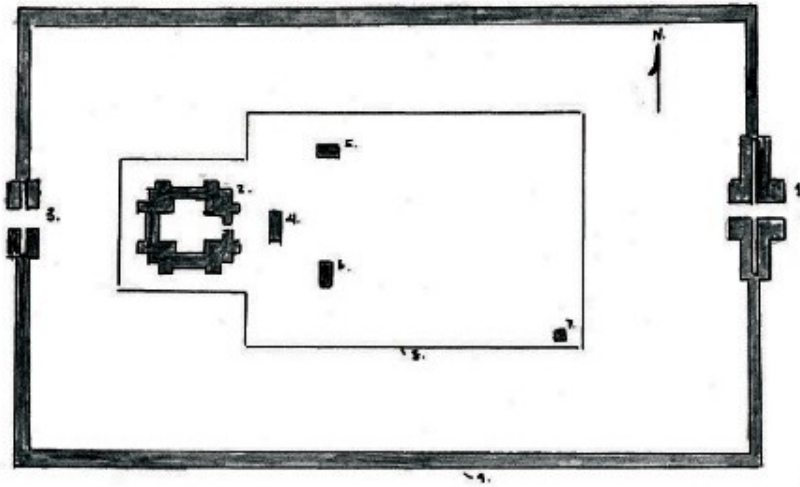
One can still see remnants of a wall or structure around the inner court near the *kū* (no. 8). This consists of sandstone sections which are partially hidden by the modern concrete. The outer wall (no. 9) consists primarily of sandstone blocks which all have the holes in them as formerly described. Occasionally, one sees a smooth stone in the wall which obviously does not belong there.

About 16 steps to the south of the wall nearest the *prasāt* is another site which consists of sandstone slabs set in a rectangular order. In the middle of this is a raised earth area which must contain many interesting things.

February 7, 1963

2.

(10)



(10)

Diagram 1.

(10)

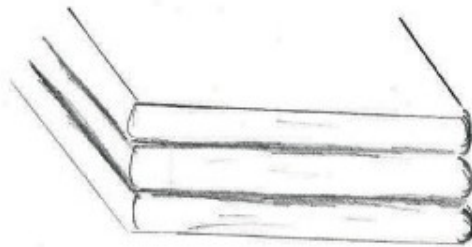


Diagram 2.

(10)

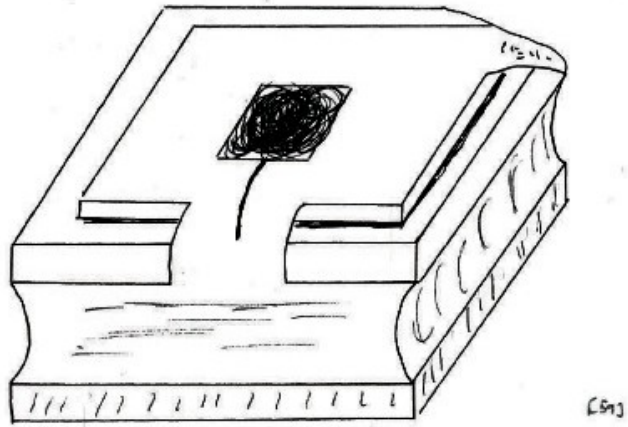
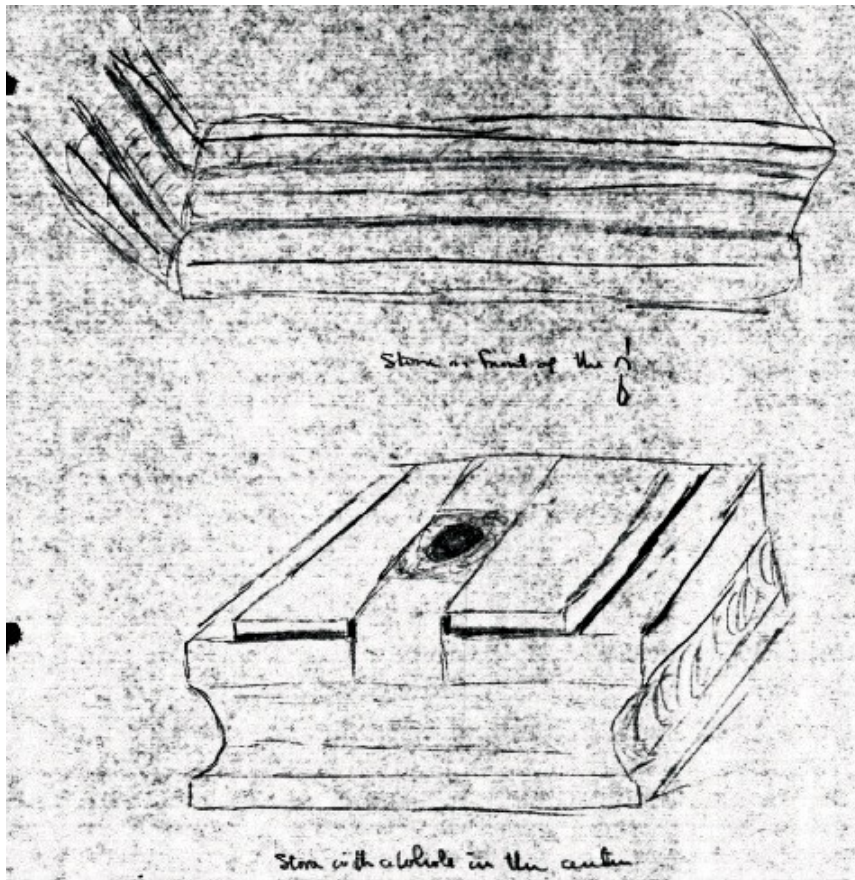
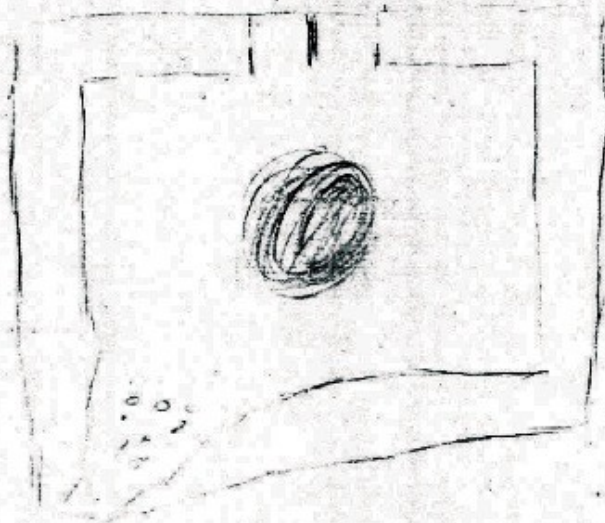


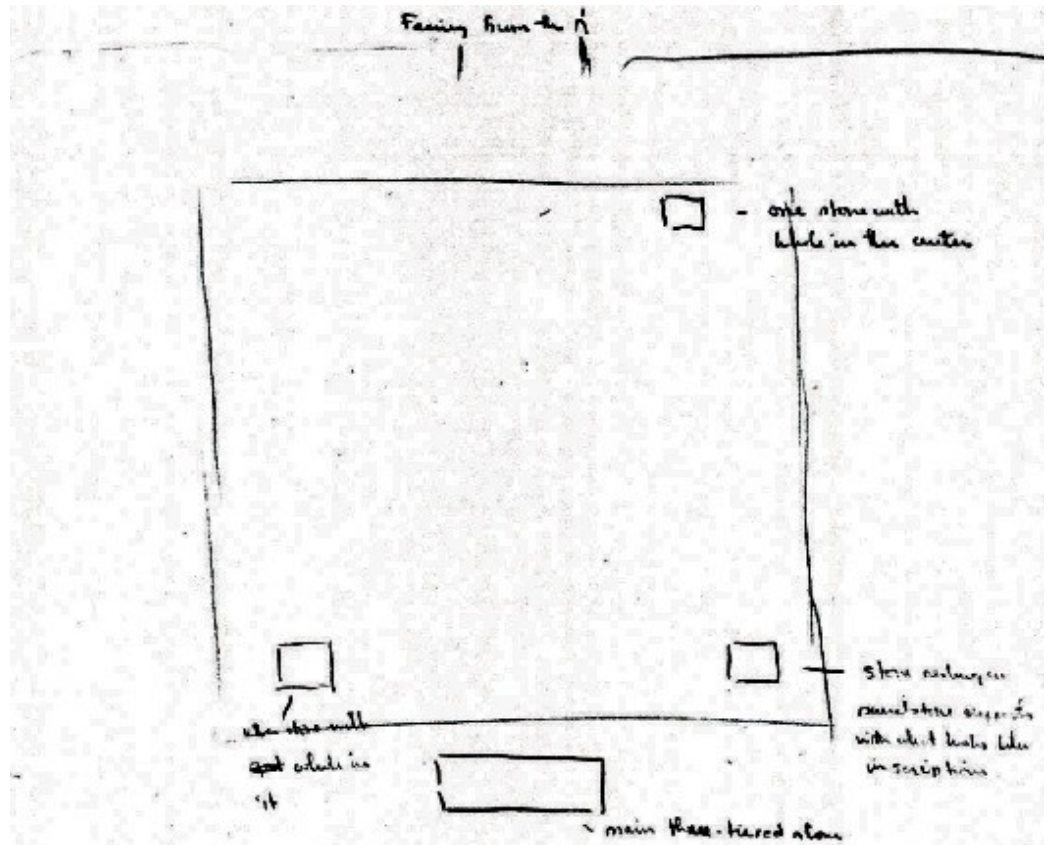
Diagram 3.



The stone with the hole in the center has some very interesting
 One side there is the top is expanded ~~with~~ to the size and there is a
 stone the middle.



It looks like a ceremonial stone.



Mākhābūchā and Buddhist Observances at B. Chiang Hian, Tambon Khwao

I hoped to see the celebration of *Mākhābūchā* (มาฆบูชา). However, I learnt this was never celebrated in BNT. At B. Khwao, villagers gave special presentation of food to the priests, but were not celebrating the festival as their abbot was at B. Chiang Hian. I went there to find this village was opening a fair, and while the abbot and other monks of B. Chiang Hian were being fed, no ceremony celebrating this special Buddhist day would be given as the abbot was busy helping to open the *ngān*. The celebration of *Mākhābūchā* therefore was postponed this year. (However, for a description of the ceremony, see Kaufman, pages 190-191; Wells, pages 13, 78-84).

(I really get enjoyment out of talking with the abbot of Ban Khwao. The presentation of food at Ban Chiang Hian had taken a long long time due to the chants being given by the laity. When the food was finally presented, the abbot said that the people in Ban Chiang Hian take too long a time in making their presentations.)

Religious Linkages of Bān Nōng Tūn

One thing that I have definitely noted about BNT is that in many ways it is not a unit. There are many functions which relate it to the Tambon center. To be specific, take the question of religion. In BNT there is presently only a single priest. Thus, this means that there aren't enough priests for many of the religious activities of the community. Thus, either the villagers must go to another for some celebrations, or else they must have priests from other villages come to BNT. The natural place for other priests to come from is from other villages in the Tambon. And when the villagers do go somewhere else for ceremonies, it is only natural that they go to Ban Khwao, the Tambon center. Khwao has a considerably larger wat and more priests. Furthermore, the abbot of B. Khwao is the head of all the priests of the commune. Finally, as B. Khwao is a rich village, the villagers of B. Khwao are more in a position to support the really large ceremonies which require a large output of money for accoutrements for the ceremony.

Bān Nōng Tūn & the Central Thai Village of Bangkhud compared

BNT is interestingly very comparable in size to Bangkhud where Bangkhud had 137 households and 744 persons, BNT has 119 households and 699 persons. And whereas Kaufman claimed that Bangkhud roughly represented the villages of the central plains, I think I can make a claim that BNT represents – more roughly – the villages of the N.E. I say more roughly because I think that there is greater differentiation of villages in the N.E. – economically, ethnically, and in terms of communications. Certainly, Bangkhud is a far richer village than is BNT.

Bān Nōng Tūn / Mahasarakham

February 9, 1963

Mr. Tāp: Blacksmith and *khaočham*

I visited Mr. Tāp (who had been *khaočham* on day of trip to worship *pūtā*) who was blacksmithing with friends at the blacksmith's place in front of Mr. Tāp's house. He was making all the parts of the traditional axe: metal ring which holds the blade in, wooden handle and the blade. The blade is then stuck in a hole in the wood which has the metal piece at the top and then hot molten lac is poured into the hole to secure the blade. These axes sell for about 12 baht apiece.

Mr. Tāp said he made only 1-200 baht a year from blacksmithing, as he only works at it for two months during the dry season. He can make three knives-cum-axes a day. (While we were talking I saw him take a white powder substance and add it to the metal he was heating. This is some chemical he buys in the market for B^{ht}1 – a supply lasts ten days.) He said BNT is noted for its smithing and people from all over the tambon plus people from other tambons come here for their work. There are three blacksmiths in the village (and a fourth starting). Mr. Tāp claimed it was hard to teach others to be smiths because they are weaker than he is. He himself learned his trade from another smith, now dead, who lived in the village. He has been a smith for about 15 years. He got his bellows from his teacher, but made his other equipment himself. The bellows are about 40 years old.

Village Enterprises

Also, I visited a second smith, who had earned from a different teacher. He said there are two villages in the tambon which do smithing. The smith has three small laborers to help him.

Also, I came on a man making a device to hold homespun thread and another hewing a board from a log. Then I came on some women engaged in the full clothing-making process. One was spinning, another winding thread on a large trundle, another was weaving. All cloth is for home consumption. Also, I came on a woman taking seeds out of a *makhām* fruit. These she said she would sell.

I stopped at the village “shop”, which is run by a man who has a rice mill (now broken). He owns a radio and a bicycle. The shop has only a rudimentary stock of goods - cheap liquor, soap hairpins, etc.

Sexual Violations

Then I chatted with a group of women, mostly married and including several old crones. While discussing a forthcoming wedding, the subject turned to illicit sexual relations in the village and what happened if a man got a girl pregnant and then didn’t marry her. The old crone said the man must pay a fine (from about ฿10-300 depending on the wealth of the boy’s father).

She cited a case which occurred last year, when Mr. Tāp’s son (Samôn / สมอน) got a girl (Bunhōm Thapthānī / บุญโสม ทัพธานี, HH# KY58) pregnant. In this case Mr. Tāp only paid ฿12 fine. The amount of the fine is apparently set by the headman in consultation with other people of importance. If the boy’s family won’t agree to the fine, then the case could go to court. One woman stated that such incidents occur fairly frequently of late because “all the eligible young men go to Bangkok”. If the parents catch a couple in the girl’s house at night in *flagrante delicto*, (*sū sao*), the parents of the couple have to get together and decide whether to have a marriage or an indemnity. In one case the parents of the boy paid ฿174. I asked if many such incidents occur, but the answer was that there were not many, but when there were, there might be three or four on one night.

Weddings

Then we discussed weddings. Apparently, there are no weddings during the rainy season. If poor, some people have no wedding ceremony. They just present flowers and candles to the bride’s parents. The important thing is not the wedding ceremony, but the marriage settlement.

Marriage Settlements

When a couple have decided to marry (and it was stressed by the villagers that Thai people, as compared with Chinese, have the right to choose their own wives – the parents do not choose mates), the boy tells his parents who then arrange a meeting with the girl's parents. Though many relatives from both sides will be present at this meeting, one of the relatives of the bride's parents will be designated the *kōt kaodō* (?) (this person also has an important function at the wedding). The person must be consulted before a bride-price is settled upon. The women said bride prices vary from B^{ht}100 - 1000. The bride's side will always ask for more than they expect and the groom's side will name a lower price than they expect to pay. The final decision will depend on the relative wealth of the groom's family.

Residence Patterns

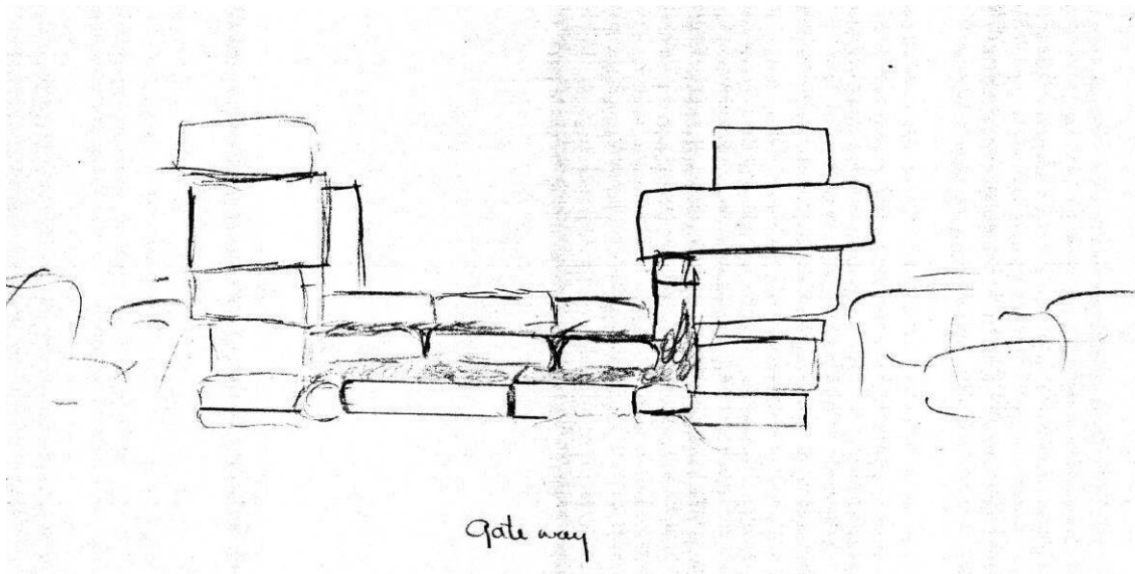
A couple always first settles in the compound of the bride's parents. How long they stay will depend on the couple. Sometimes they stay indefinitely. The bride's parents must help build a house for the new couple.

Choice of Mates

Usually marriages take place between people within the village, though again the feeling was expressed that this is now difficult because so many young men go to Bangkok. Marriage between cousins is disapproved, though such unions do occasionally occur. The people think this is not good, and “against our customs”.

Kū Bān Khwao

The following is a sketch of the entryway to *Kū Bān Khwao* :



Bān Nông Tūn

February 10 1963

I went to the village with Mr. Sēn, and joined a group for a general talk. Two travelling snack peddlers (girls) entered the village and we had a dish full of *khanom*.

We visited another *khum*. (The two major *khum* near the wat and school are called *Khum yai* and *Khum wat*.) There were only women about, as the men were in the fields or in the forest. The men arrived later in the afternoon. All the activities of this *khum*, were being practiced in a clearing around a *môlam* practice stage. There were women spinning, winding the thread and weaving (one woman was making a multi-colored home-grown silk *phāsīn*); one man was repairing his barrow; young men were carrying huge bamboo logs from which they began making house logs; etc. We sat and watched while Mr. Thiang played on the *khāēn*, and then later I had him give me the Lao equivalents of different Thai words. Mr. Thiang knew there were five tones in central Thai, but claimed there were three in Lao. (There are supposed to be seven: I can only distinguish six.) Also, when people are speaking in normal conversational tones, they go very much higher in their high tones. I can't tell whether this is merely emphasis, and thus part of the intonation pattern, or whether it is phonemic. Mr. Thiang seemed to catch on quite well to my asking of word lists.

I realized, yesterday, how important it is to have a house or base of operations in the village. I really can't observe the full daily cycle by making only these temporary excursions.

Bān Nōng Tūn

February 11 1963

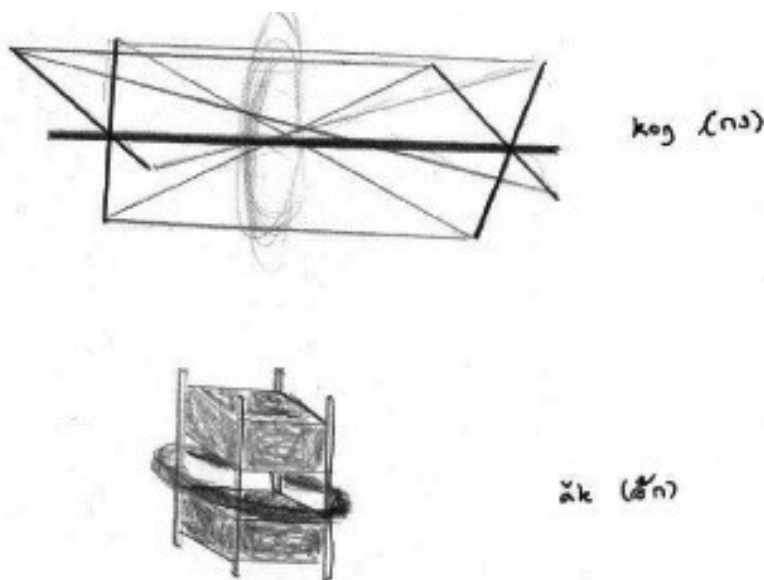
Visit to school

Jane and I attended a class at school, where third year pupils were having a class in Thai language – in this case, going to the blackboard, and reading some writing in Thai. The first year class were copying *phô dū* (พอคู่), *phô mā* (พอมา), etc., all taken from a graded reader owned by Mr. Thiang. Then we went to see cloth making.

Cloth-making

The first process, so far as I could tell, is to take the raw cotton and roll it into elongated balls called *lôt fāi* (หลอด ฝ้าย). These are then used for spinning (*khīan fāi* เคียน ฝ้าย – i.e. to ‘wind’ cotton?) of the cotton thread (*sen fāi*). Just how this operates is still a mystery to me.

The thread is then either left in the natural color or dyed (see later section on dyeing), and is wound on a variety of different devices, or even from peg-to-peg of a harrow.



The thread is then woven (*thô phā* ทอ ผ้า) in Central Thai, *tam hūk* (ตำทุก) in local language). Almost every house has its loom underneath the house (called *kī* in Central Thai and

kī in the local language). The loom has two devices which keep the thread apart and which alter the warp and weft (foot-operated), known as a *fūm* (ฝีม). The comb pulling the thread into place is a *khao* (?) the shuttle is a *suai*, and the spool in the shuttle a *lôt*. The villagers weave plain white cloth, black cloth (pre-dyed strings) and multi-colored cloths.

For everyday wear, villagers use cloth dyed a navy-blue color. The dye for this comes from the *kham* plant (a low shrub) which is soaked several days in water. Charcoal and the ash of a certain wood is then added to the dye-pot (called *cup* [?] *mô nin*), forming the dark blue-colored dye. Other colors are made from trees or minerals as follows:

Yellow	<i>khē</i> (เข)
Black	<i>makhia</i>
Red	<i>khao min</i> (เขามิ้น) (cumin) mixed with <i>pan</i> (?)
Green	<i>somā</i> (?)

Also, we saw young men making bamboo strips by slitting bamboo tubes extremely fine with sharp knives. These are to be used for weaving bamboo mats and walls.

Also we learnt during the morning that Nai Phon, the headman, speaks Central Thai quite well, and has five children – one married daughter living in the same compound. He also said the forthcoming wedding will be for three to four couples.

In the afternoon, we sat under *makhāmwān* tree with Mr. Wichian, Mr. Tongduan, Mr. Bunthian, Nai Phon and Jane, with villagers around. We learnt that quite a few young men go to Bangkok, not because of lack of land in the village, but to make more money. Most become laborers. These young men to help with the rice cycle.

Jane noticed a woman eating something green and asked what it was. Mr. Wichian misunderstood and thought that Jane was making a comment on the fact that she had her breasts uncovered. With much embarrassment, he explained that when a woman marries, she begins to go without a top covering (there certainly is no modesty among married women regardless of age as regards the breasts insofar as I have observed).

We also noticed a older man with a wonderful set of tattoos on his chest, arms, and legs. I have noticed that most men of middle age and older have tattoos, but younger men do not seem to have tattoos.

We had some discussion about finding a house in the village and Mr. Thiang is supposed to help in this regard.

When we got back to the motorcycle, we found that I had a flat tire. As a result, I had to push the cycle from the village to Ban Khwao (hoping that I haven't ruined the tire). I must say that Mr. Wichian is really something. He went to Ban Khwao and arranged for a truck from the highway department to carry my cycle, Jane, and me back to Sarakham and even to bring us home (without charge). One Peace Corps boy once remarked that if one had to run into trouble (such as vehicular breakdown), one couldn't do it in a better country than in Thailand.

Bān Nōng Tūn

February 12, 1963

School

We visited the school this afternoon. Some children were stringing tobacco on wires to dry. Discipline was non-existent. Mr. Sanit was on leave of absence visiting his sick brother in Bangkok; therefore, full teaching load was on Mr. Bunthiang and wife. Mr. Bunthiang feels there should be four teachers in the school, one for each grade. This was so last year, but the fourth teacher left because of age, and nobody else was forthcoming for this year anyway.

Names of teachers: Khun Bunthiang, Khun Sanit, Khun Beng.

For 1½ hours, I watched at the school in the afternoon, the curriculum was as follows:

1st grade: Drill on the word *hen* (เห็น), "to see" in Central Thai. On the blackboard was written

(from the graded reader):

māna hen phō มานะ เห็น พ่อ

phō hen māna พ่อ เห็น มานะ

thidā hen phō ธิดา เห็น พ่อ

phō hen thidā พ่อ เห็น ธิดา

which can be translated thus:

Mana (a girl's name) sees father.

Father sees Mana.

Thida (a boy's name) sees father.

Father sees Thida.

The students, one by one, would come to the board, take a stick, and by pointing to the syllables lead the class in recitation of the words. Then the students would copy the phrases into their copy books.

2nd and 3rd grades: A poem (simpler for the 2nd grade) had been written on the blackboard, and the students were copying these into their copy books. The 2nd grade was getting no supervision, but Khun Beng would take the copybooks of the 3rd graders and correct their errors in copying.

4th grade (13 girls and 14 boys): Mr. Thiang had written a short paragraph about India on the board.

The 4th graders are learning about India, Japan and China. The paragraph began: “India is a country located to the west of Thailand”. The paragraph included information about geography, the rivers and mountains of India (including mention of Mount Everest).

Yesterday, four were absent from the first grade and five from the second – nine in all.

Mr. Thiang himself has five children, three girls and two boys, the eldest being 12.

Village Neighborhoods (*khum*)

There are five *Khum* in the village:

Khum yai คຸ້ມ ໃຫຍ່

Khum wat คຸ້ມ ພັດ

Khum pā hāt คຸ້ມ ປ່າ ຫາດ

Khum cāēn wāēn คຸ້ມ ແຈນ ແວນ

Khum nōn khwao nōi คຸ້ມ ໂນນ ເວາ ນ້ອຍ

Today, Mr. Thiang and I visited *Khum nōn khwao nōi* which is some little distance from the two major *khum*. Probably the first time a motor cycle was seen by the inhabitants, who swarmed round. There was also a police corporal in the *Khum* whom I had met before. I couldn't gather whether he lived in the village or not. He seemed to be “selling” liquor.

We visited the house of the head of the *Khum*. His house is large, with corrugated metal roofing and even a gate at the head of the stairs. There are wooden doors with locks on them leading to other quarters off the main room which contained mats, pillows and mosquito netting. He owns a radio (tuned to Khon Kaen) and a rice mill nearby. Mr. Thiang said he was quite a rich man, and has four children – all boys.

There are 22 households in the *Khum*.

He showed me a bucket of small frogs called *khiat-īmō* (เขียดอีโม) which they catch in the fields. While at his house we had lunch of *somtām* (ส้มตาม) (green papaya salad), *pādāek* (ป่าแตก) (in this case whole fermented fish), *nām phrik* and sticky rice. The conversation centered mainly on what I was doing, what countries I had lived in, etc. He seemed friendly, interested and pleased to have me in the village

Incident in Bān Chiang Hian

On my return to Sarakham, a somewhat untoward incident occurred. While passing through Bān Chiang Hian, I was hailed down by the headmaster and a group of his cohorts – all of whom seemed slightly drunk. The headmaster wanted to know why, since I had given 500 baht to BNT, I couldn't have given at least 200 Baht to Chiang Hian. He was quite insistent about it, although I was able to pass. I am afraid that my gift might have some ill ramifications.

Bān Nōng Tūn

February 13, 1963

House-hunting in Village

The first part of the afternoon was spent in negotiating for a place to live in the village. We went to the house of Khun Hon in *Khum yai*, and were negotiating for half (open half) of his house, which would be made into two rooms for us.

School Teachers

We then chatted at the school with Mr. Thiang on (1) language; (2) social patterns, e.g. that I should sit with legs crossed but not pointed up, and when sitting in wat should have legs to the side like women, as sign of respect to the monks; that we should wash hands before meals, and drink water at the end of them. (3) He stated he is 35 and his wife, 36; with their eldest child

attending school in Mahasarakham in *pathom* 6 (M. 2). Also, he told me what subjects he had taken examinations in order to get his teachers' certificate: Thai language, history, geography, science, ethics, etc.

He explained the levels of examinations of teachers (further clarification required). Apparently, the different levels entitle a teacher to a higher position and/or higher salary. As I understood it, the following are the exams:

1) *pô* ป.

2) *pô pô* ป.ป.

3) *pô mô* ป.ม. (*pô* stands for *prayōk* ประโยค or “grade”.)

1) *pô* level is the basic level which a teacher must attain to become a teacher. On passing this level, the teacher has achieved *khurū mūn* (ครูมูล), “basic teacher”. In order to take this examination, he must have completed a *Mathayom* 6 education and had one more year of study.

2) *pô pô* – here the initials stand for *prayōk prathom* (ประโยค ประถม)

3) *pô mô* – initials stand for *prayōk matthayom* (ประโยค มัธยม)

Also, a parallel set of levels to the three above which seem to have the same status are:

1) *phô* พ.

2) *phô pô* พ.ป.

3) *phô mô* พ.ม.

In this case *phô* stands for *phisēt* (พิเศษ) (“special”). The second letter stands for the same as in the first case. Either of these can be a stepping stone for advanced training in Bangkok at one of the two teachers' colleges there to obtain a *kô sô bô* (ก.ศ.บ.) degree, i.e., *kānsūksā banthit* (การศึกษามัธยมศึกษา) (“Bachelor's of Education”).

Bān Nōng Tūn

February 14, 1963

House-hunting in Village

The late morning was occupied with looking at a second house, as Mr. Phon felt that living with a family of four was not too good. A new suggestion was that of sharing the store owned by Mr. Ngao (เหง้า), since one person would be less disturbing (when he has a radio?!). Mr. Ngao was very interesting. He is not a native of BNT, but has come here to open the shop. Mr. Thiang didn't know how long he had been in the village.

Boxing and the Village

While we were talking in the store, Mr. Thiang asked me if I knew about the Adul Srisothōn (Thailand-Bert Somodio (Philippines)) fight to be broadcast in the evening. It seems that fights such as these draw all the villagers round the few radios in the village. Very much interest and betting took place on the Pone Kingpetch versus Fighting Harada rematch in Bangkok (Held in January, 1963 - See *Bangkok World* for story).

Thus, boxing, and particularly Thai boxing, is a Thai national cultural manifestation which has its ramifications in the lowliest village. *Mūai Thai* could be termed the national sport of Thailand. Very young children (boys) play at boxing, and nearly every young man in the village knows at least the rudiments of the sport.

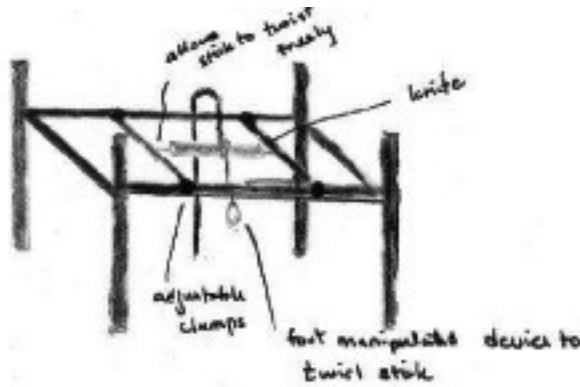
Other

Early afternoon was spent eliciting linguistic data from Mr. Thiang.

At 2:30 Mr. Wichian arrived with community development officials, including a supervisor from Bangkok who had come to see "the pigs" [80/81], a sow and boar behind the shop. These were sometimes called something like "durocraasi" (Duroc Jersey) – a type of pig which has a familiar sound but which I can't quite place (said to be an American type). The two pigs had come from the agricultural station on the road to Wapi Pathum. (Enquire more about pigs and pig-raising in the village).

Then, as seem to happen anytime there are guests, we were taken over to eat some *makhāmwān*. Two interesting things happened here. (1) There is a woman in that *khum* whose husband is an "engineer" in Bangkok. (A lot of conversation about this situation which I did not grasp). (2) There is a man in this *khum* who works wood by putting it on a device so that the

wood is twirled. He then carves into the wood by holding a knife next to the wood. The wood is twirled by a piece of rope which is wrapped. The rope is suspended from a pliable tree which operates as a spring.



The group then returned to the school, where I noticed all the students had brand new copy books laid prominently in front of them. The Community Development Supervisor asked about the number of teachers in the school and the problems attached to not having enough of them. Then we left to get some *sātō* before returning to Ban Khwao.

Mr. Thiang complained to me about being both a teacher and a headmaster. It is far better to be just one of the two, he said. There are janitors only in the larger schools: Here students clean the place when necessary. Mr. Thiang also said the reason he wants to learn English is to improve his position. He is unable to do this until he passes an examination in English.

We both visited the house of Mr. Chāi or Sāi (ชาย สมพิทักษ์), the assistant headman, in *khum yai*. Mr. Chāi's house is also "advanced", i.e. it has steps (rather than a ladder), a gate at the top, and is large and clean. He also owns a bicycle, and has ten children – 5 girls and 5 boys, with *lūk khok* (ลูกคอก C. Thai) ("first child") being 20 years old. One girl died six or seven years ago.

Another man with tattoos came to join us. He had string tied round his wrist. This was called *fāi phūk khāēn* (ฝ้ายผูกแขน). There are also threads which can be tied round the neck *fāi phūk khô* (ฝ้ายผูกคอ) and the ankle *fāi phūk khô* (ฝ้ายผูกข้อ).

These strings are tied to ward off evil *phī* or to bring good fortune or happiness *khwāmsuk* (Central Thai. ความสุข). If there has been a major danger or disaster in a person's life he will have the *sū khūan* (สูขวิญ) ceremony to tie such threads around these joints. A woman who has just had a baby will also have this ceremony. Often, though, a person will just have the thread tied around his wrist for *khwāmsuk*.

While we were sitting at Mr. Chāi's house, an older woman brought up a very small child for me to see. He had a most horrible hair lip which made the child look as if it almost had no upper lip. I don't quite know why this was done.

Bān Nōng Tūn

February 15, 1963

Tobacco

Today we visited the tobacco station at Ban Khwao. This station buys tobacco and ships it to the tobacco factories in Bangkok. Though there are several stations in Maha Sarakham, only this one deals in Turkish tobacco (the others deal in Virginia tobacco). The growing of Turkish tobacco was begun in this area as a pilot project, but now that is all that is grown here.

Tobacco is grown and dried in the villages. It is then brought to the station in bales of 1½ - 3 kilos each which are in turn checked to see if they contain any foreign (non-tobacco stuffings). The tobacco is then examined by an inspector who decides on the quality of the load. He then names a price for a load ranging from B^{ht}3-14 a kilo, with an average price being around 7-10. The tobacco is then taken to a large hall where women sort it into piles according to one of four grades. This tobacco is then stored until it is transshipped to Bangkok.

Commercial silk production

Also in Ban Khwao, we visited two villages where silk is woven. One woman had white silk, the other home a large variety of beautiful colors. However, prices were very high (higher than Bangkok). This is because (a) village silk is all pure silk, whereas Bangkok silk cloth has admixture of other textiles, and (b) village silk is so beautiful and so hard to make that villagers will not sell unless they get a good price. A man told us that he had made his only sale a few years ago, when he got B^{ht}250 for 3 meters. Now he wants B^{ht}300 for 4 meters.

Economic Decision-making

A similar attitude prevails in other situations, e.g. (1) with servants. The girls do not need to work, therefore if there is anything they don't like about the position, they quit. (2) The house in the village. The owner wants B^{ht} 50 a month for rent. Although he has already started building the extra rooms at the back, nothing seems to prevail to make him rent for less. The only thing that might work in this instance is community pressure.

Bān Nông Tūn

February 17, 1963

Mr. Ngao, the Storekeeper

Mr. Ngao comes from a village in Tambon Thā Tūm and has been in BNT for three years, I asked him why he came to BNT and he answered that he came because there was neither a store nor a rice mill in the village. He has started both. He owns both a bicycle and a radio and wears more "urban" clothes. He has only had a *Pathom 4* education, but he speaks Central Thai better than most other villagers (because, probably, he has to deal more with people from the town). I asked him why he became a storekeeper and miller, and he answered that he did because he didn't want to be a farmer. Physically, he seems different from the other villagers (curly hair, for example).

Village Economics

One of the villagers whom I was talking to along with Mr. Ngao said that the average holdings in the village were 30-40 *rai* / household. This year the average sale has been about B^{ht}6 / *thang*. In addition to blacksmithing and charcoal making as non-agricultural pursuits for money making, the villagers also weave bamboo walling.

Education in Amphoe Müang, Maharakham

Schools, Students, and Teachers in Amphoe Muang, Maharakham, 1962, by Tambon			
Tambon	Schools	Students	Teachers
Muang Municipality*	7	1,833	81
Kaeng Loeng Chan	4	745	28
Kae Dam	10	1,149	31
Koeng	9	992	43
Khok Ko	7	1,315	35
Don Wan	5	738	21
Nong Kung	11	973	28
Tha Song Khon	7	1,028	33
Tha Tum	7	703	24
Waeng Nang	7	1,145	38
Khwao	9	1,356	50
TOTAL	83	11,977	412

Source of Information: Amphoe Records, Amphoe Office, Maharakham

* Municipal schools or elementary schools.

The following remarks were appended to the form which I had Nāi Čarōēn, the Palat Amphoe Tho fill out:

“There are other schools in following:

- (a) 2 secondary schools, 10 teachers and 349 students;
- (b) 4 private schools, 62 teachers and 1,088 students;
- (c) 1 teacher training school, 52 teachers and 627 students;
- (d) 2 government secondary schools including the preparatory school “SARAKAM PITAYAKOM”, 40 teachers and 1,075 students;
- (e) 2 vocational schools, 54 teachers, 816 students;
- (f) 1 kindergarten school, 8 teachers and 124 students.”

Religion in Amphoe Müang, Mahasarakham

Schools, Students, and Teachers in Amphoe Muang, Mahasarakham, 1962, by Tambon			
Tambon	Wats	Monks	Novices
Muang Municipality	14	124	191
Kaeng Loeng Chan	6	22	16
Kae Dam	14	64	39
Koeng	10	52	27
Khok Ko	10	62	56
Don Wan	10	35	35
Nong Kung	19	49	39
Tha Song Khon	10	69	22
Tha Tum	10	33	18
Waeng Nang	16	68	49
Khwao	11	41	41
TOTAL	130	619	533

Source of Information: Amphoe Records, Amphoe Office, Mahasarakham

Bān Nōng Tūn

I have noticed that even the youngest girls have their ears pierced and wear earrings. The women prefer to see Jane to me and are quite anxious when I don't bring her with me. One woman kidded me about my taking her to America with her.

I started the census today.

Marriage customs

Talked with Mr. Thiang about marriage customs. He said the bridegroom's family give a bride price (*ngōēn sin sôt* เงินสินสอด, literally "money for cutting in") to the bride's family. The average family would pay about B^{ht}400 at the marriage of their son.

Sources of Data

Today, Mr. Thiang showed me the registration forms for all people born in the year 2499 (21 of them). These forms include the names of parents, the household no., and the village no. It suddenly dawned on me that Mr. Thiang would have this information for several years back. In addition, he has records on attendances at the school over a period of time from which I could get average absenteeism. Further, Mr. Phon would have records of all births and deaths in the village.

BNT is the seventh village in Tambon Khwao.

Bān Khwao / Bān Nōng Tūn

February 19, 1963

I spent the morning and part of the afternoon in Ban Khwao. Bought some silk from Phra Khrū Choei, the abbot at Wat Bangkok. Also, I joined some Community Development people in observing the Ban Khwao “stockyards”. Here pigs were being brought to ship to Bangkok. The pigs sell for B^{ht}4.70 per kilo on the hoof in Ban Khwao (as compared with B^{ht}6 a kilo alive in Bangkok and B^{ht}12 a kilo for pork in the market at Sarakham).

I arrived in the village around 3:00 p.m. and spent some time gathering census material. That evening the following was held:

Ceremony of *Tāēng kāē* (แต่งแก้)

This is a special ceremony to “rectify” the ill-effects of bad dream which Māē Nā who lives in House 23, *khum yai*, had had last night.

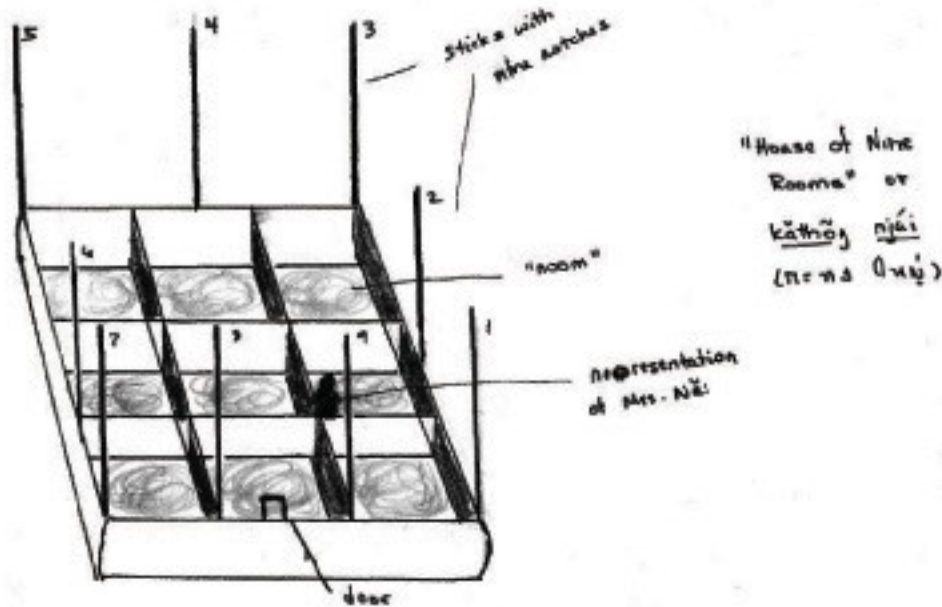
The dream: Mrs. Nā had dreamed that a tooth was broken. This is a very inauspicious dream for it possibly presages ill happenings to the dreamer or to his/her family.

Shaman: To “correct” possible bad effects, a *mô tāēng kāē* (หมอแต่งแก้) was called in to perform the ceremony of *tāēng kāē* (literally, *tāēng*, “to arrange, compose”; *kāē*, “to correct, to better, to ameliorate”). This man is a wonderful old character, the same man who acted as *mô* at the *bāi sī* or *sū khuan* ceremony for Phra Mahā Seng. I asked when he had learned this ceremony, and he said when he was 10 years old. He learned from a man in Kāē Dam village (now dead). This man said he went to Vientiane last year to perform this ceremony. He said every family in Vientiane does this ceremony, but there was some doubt as to whether it is performed by the Central Thai or not. This man is a most humorous character. During the reading of the Lao writings during the ceremony, he would turn to us and laugh, making us laugh also.

Preparations: The major accoutrements were as follows:

- 1) The “house” of 9 rooms, or *katong yai* (กะตงใหญ่); this is a bamboo box with 9 compartments. This “house” had nine sticks sticking up from the sides, each of which had

9 little nicks or notches in them. In one place, there was a bamboo figure in a *phasin* representing Mrs. Nā. At the front was a “door”.



In each “room” was put the following:

- Nine *bai lī dā* (ใบลีดา?) (81 total). These were little cups each formed from a single leaf with a little piece of bamboo stick to hold them in shape.
- ball of “black rice” in each room;
- khāo nāo* in each room;
- pādāek* (fermented fish) in each room;
- salt sprinkled throughout the house;
- “yellow rice” (*khāo nāo* mixed with cumin) in each room;
- bit of soil in each room. The soil represents animals: chickens, buffalos, etc.;
- some peppers in one of the rooms;
- 2 cigarettes (local make, i.e. local tobacco wrapped in a shaft of dried banana leaf);
- prepared betel

In the 9 nicks on each of the stakes were put small threads of white, black, red and yellow (also dipped in cumin) cloth.

2. Candles: When we entered the house there were some long – very thin - candles (made by soaking thread in wax) hanging from the ceiling. These were then taken and one long candle cut by measuring on the body of Mrs. Nā - first around her head and then from her shoulder to lower part of breast. This candle is called a *thian rôp hūa khā king* (เทียนรอบหัวค้ำกิ่ง?). The other candles were cut into about 2” lengths.
3. Bowl: In a metal bowl were placed the following items:
 - a) a home-spun blanket; b) the leaf-flower (9 of them) of *dôk pīk kai dam* (ดอกปีกไก่ดำ⁷); c) the short candles; d) an egg. e) some thread wrapped around a bamboo horseshoe;



f) some *bai mongkhon* (ใบมงคล); g) some sticky rice; h) some short bits of string.

This bowl was set next to the “house”.

4. Large banana leaf. The “house” was set on this leaf.
5. *nam som pôi* (น้ำส้มป่อย): A water dipper was brought in with water and a burnt fruit of the *som pôi* tree. This was also set next to the “house”.
6. Bottle of “liquor”: A bottle of water representing liquor was set next to the “house”.
7. Bowl of raw rice: A bowl of raw rice was set next to the “house”.

Preliminary Observations

There are several other names for this ceremony: (*sīa khrô* (เสี่ยเคราะห์) – Lao *sia khô*) and บูชาโชค (*būchā chōk*, *būsā sōk*), literally, “to worship fortune”).

This ceremony can only be held on Sunday, Saturday, Monday or Tuesday.

⁷ lit. ‘flower - black chicken wing’

Just before the ceremony began, the husband came and took a large ball of string which I think he wrapped around the real house, but I am not sure. Also, just before the ceremony began, a drum or cymbal was heard which probably called the relevant spirits to pay attention to what was happening (incidentally, the husband disappeared at the beginning of the ceremony and didn't reappear until it was over).

Several times during the ceremony, a chicken ran right across the "house", but this didn't seem to bother anyone except as an annoyance.

Ceremony

The shaman took the string, wrapped it around the tops of the stakes 1, 3, 5, 7, then re-deposited the string in the bowl of things. He then took the long candle – the *thian rôp hūa khā king* and fastened it to stake 1. He put one little candle on the "door" as such:



Then, rolled some glutinous rice into a ball, held this in front of Mrs. Nā, twirled the rice and chanted. He then threw the rice into the house. He repeated this process, called ตวด ข้าว (*tūat khao* ?) . He then took some of the raw rice and sprinkled it over the box, and sprinkled some of the *nām som pôi* over the head of the figure and chanted some more. Then, he sprinkled some more rice. He then took some bamboo leaves with Lao writing on them and "read" from these in a chanting matter. Then, he took the large candle and lit the string wrapped around the stakes in the middle of the string at stakes 2, 4, 6 and where the string ran from stake 7 to the holder. He chanted all the time he was doing this. He then lit the candle at the entrance and poured water over the figure's head (still chanting). [Then, he took the small thread and tied it around the woman's wrist, chanting as he twisted the ends of the thread. She made the *wai* when he had finished.

Remuneration How much the shaman gets for performing the ceremony depends on the people requesting the ceremony. In this case he got the baht, the egg and the small candles which had been laid in the bowl.

Bān Nōng Tūn

February 20, 1963

Shaman

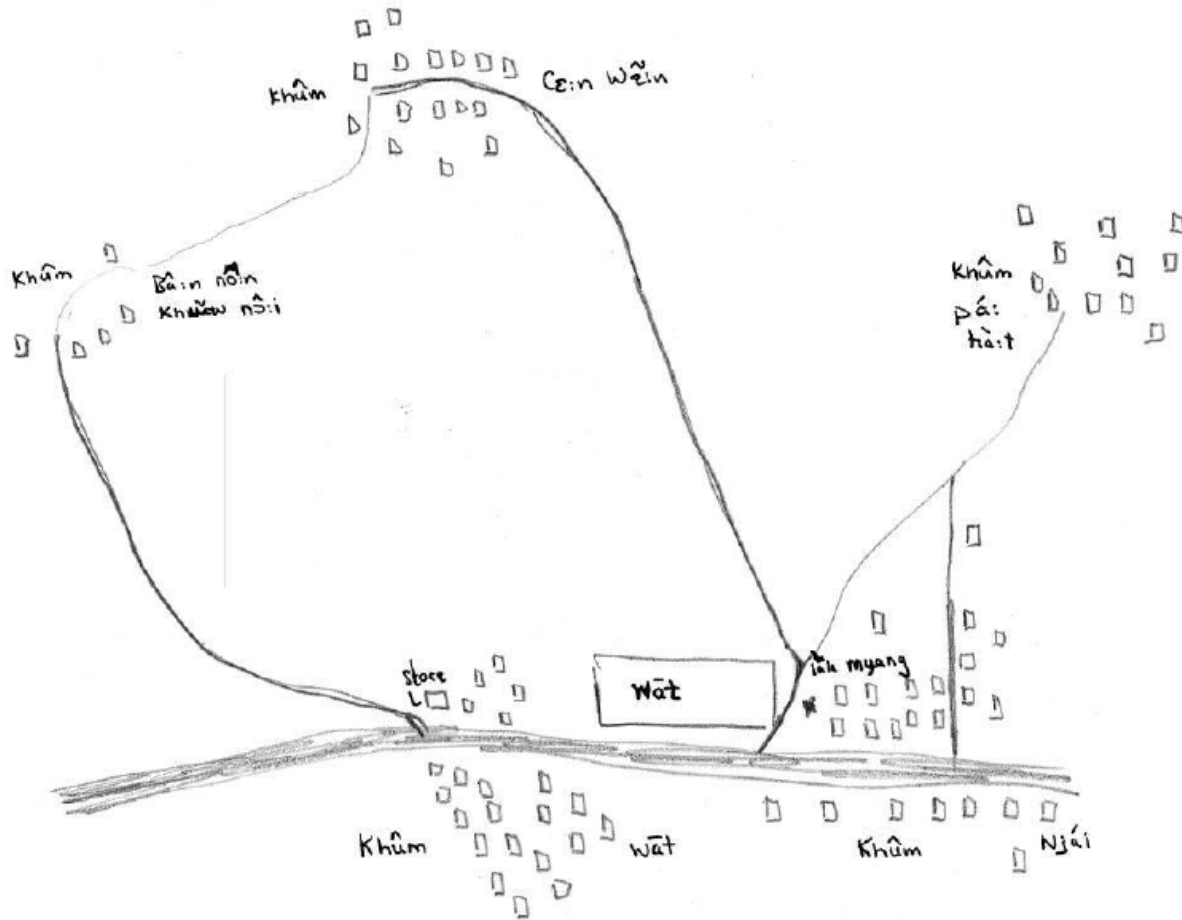
The name of the shaman who officiated at the ceremony of rectifying the bad dream is Mr. Sīhā (นาย สีหา). He lives in *khum yai*.

Mr. Thiang

We had a discussion about salaries. I learned that Mr. Thiang is a third class official. (There are four classes with the fourth class being the lowest). He receives ฿740 a month, but the officials keep ฿80 of this (retirement pay or equivalent). He is much desirous of learning enough English to pass the examination to become a second class official. He is now in his second year at BNT. He spent eleven years in Amphoe Phayakhaphumphisai (พัยคัฆภูมพิสัย) and one year in Tambon Koeng, A. Muang, before coming to BNT. He enjoys going to Sarakham on Saturdays to the government officials' club in order to play billiards and drink beer.

Khum

The following rough map illustrates the relative location of the five *khum* of BNT: [94]



With regard to *khum bān non*, there are five houses in this, the smallest *khum* of the village. I was told that each of the houses had the following number of people:

House Number	Number of People	Comments
69	7	
69	3	
71	7	This may also include a son-in-law who is in BK (House 71)
64	5 (6)	The son-in-law in BK, but supposed to return shortly (House 64)
67	7 (9)	Said to be 7 but may be 9 due to number of children (House 67)
	29	

Bản Nông Thuận**February 21, 1963****Education**

Today was examination day at the school. The third and fourth graders had been divided up according to sex: The boys taking an examination in boy scouting and the girls in Junior Red Cross. The first and second graders were taking examinations in a variety of subjects. Mr. Thiang showed me his grade book in which he was grading each student. Here was information on the student's full name, his father's full name, and father's occupation. Also, he showed me the class schedule which he says applies to all but the fourth grade. (See chart below)

School Curriculum, BNT School, 1963					
	Monday จันทร์	Tuesday อังคาร	Wednesday พุธ	Thursday พฤหัสบดี	Friday ศุกร์
8:00	Health พลานามัย	Health พลานามัย	Health พลานามัย	Health พลานามัย	Mathematics คณิตศาสตร์
8:30					
9:00					
9:30	Mathematics คณิตศาสตร์	Thai Language ภาษาไทย	Mathematics คณิตศาสตร์	Science วิทยาศาสตร์	Social Studies สังคมศาสตร์
10:00					
10:30	Social Studies สังคมศาสตร์	Science วิทยาศาสตร์	Social Studies สังคมศาสตร์	Thai Language ภาษาไทย	Social Studies สังคมศาสตร์
11:00					
11:30	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
12:30	Thai Language ภาษาไทย	Social Studies สังคมศาสตร์	Thai Language ภาษาไทย	Social Studies สังคมศาสตร์	Social Studies สังคมศาสตร์
1:00					
1:30		Thai Language ภาษาไทย	Science วิทยาศาสตร์	Art ศิลปะปฏิบัติ	Art ศิลปะปฏิบัติ
2:00	Singing	Singing	Health พลานามัย	Health พลานามัย	Health พลานามัย
2:30					
3:00					
3:30				กิจกรรมพิเศษ Special Activities	กิจกรรมพิเศษ Special Activities

Mr. Ngao

Mr. Ngao is quite the entrepreneur. He has a "Duroc" boar which cost him ฿500 when it was young (now worth over ฿1000). He charges ฿50 a time to breed from this boar. Also, he has two sows (*mū tuamía*). All totaled he has 19 pigs (3 piglets by one sow, and 13 - in two litters - by the other). He buys charcoal from the villagers and resells it in the market (buys it for ฿1.25 a *bīp*). He has also offered to make our furniture for us. Thus, he has interests in rice milling, a store, pig-raising and charcoal. I am most impressed with his behavior which is so untypically Thai (in the economic sense) though he doesn't appear to be either Chinese or Vietnamese. I don't think his efficiency is the greatest, but he is still young. He seems to have one assistant (who is it?).

General Activities

Jane and I wandered round the village observing blacksmithing, the setting up of a loom (a most complicated process), and the weaving of bamboo walls (sold for ฿4 a piece).

Conceptions of Time

Mr. Thiang said the villagers believe that marriage and house building (but not necessarily house improvements) should not take place on the odd (1, 3, etc.) months of the lunar calendar. This led me to some questions about the lunar calendar. This calendar has alternatively 30 and 29 days (to account for the 29.5 day cycle of the moon. The names of the [97/98] months are Thai numbers except for the first and second numbers which use "old Lao numerals".

Month	Thai	Transliteration	No. of Days
1	เดือนอ้าย	<i>düan / dian āi</i>	29
2	เดือนยี่	<i>düan / dian yī / ñī</i>	30
3	เดือนสาม	<i>düan / dian sām</i>	29
4	เดือนสี่	<i>düan / dian sī</i>	30
5	เดือนห้า	<i>düan / dian hā</i>	29

6	เดือนหก	<i>düan / dian hok</i>	30
7	เดือนเจ็ด	<i>düan / dian čet</i>	29
8	เดือนแปด	<i>düan / dian pāēt</i>	30
9	เดือนเก้า	<i>düan / dian kao</i>	29
10	เดือนสิบ	<i>düan / dian sip</i>	30
11	เดือนสิบเอ็ด	<i>düan / dian sip-et</i>	29
12	เดือนสิบสอง	<i>düan / dian sip-sōng</i>	30
Total			354

The lunar year is called *pī čantharakhati* (ปีจันทรคติ; CT) as compared with *pī suriyakhati* (ปีสุริยคติ) which is the solar year. Because each year the lunar calendar is off by 11 or 12 days, something had to be done to bring the lunar calendar into accord with the solar calendar. Thus every 19 years, the lunar year has a double-eight month, i.e. two eighth months.

Khum Pā Hāt

We had lunch here (*somtām, pādāēk*, cucumber, dried fish and sticky rice). Talked with Mr. Sang who has just refurbished his house, till now the finest in the village, made with beautifully planed boards. He also has a servant. I don't understand his source of wealth. He says he is broke now after having done up his house. He is the younger brother of the headman.

Bān Nōng Tūn

February 22, 1963

Mr. Hô or Ček

One of the most interesting characters of the village is Mr. Hô (ห่อ) who the villagers call Mr. Ček (เจ๊ก) which is one word for "Chinese". He is called this because he speaks funnily and sounds like he has a foreign accent. He went to Bangkok as a young man and worked as a coolie for an Indian family (can thus speak some Indian dialect). He is reported to be the richest man in the village. Next month he will be building a new house because his is too small. (N.B. Though reputedly rich, always poorly dressed and his present house is shabby).

Mr. Sao

Physically striking – a little like Hollywood conception of a South Sea Islander. Slightly effeminate looking. Mr. Sao Thapthānī (เสว ทัพธานี) is the leader of the *mōlam* players. Learned his art in Muang Phon (Khon Kaen province).

Religion

I had noticed early on that the *kuthi* in the wat is quite large, particularly for a single priest who now lives in the wat. I asked Mr. Phon if there used to be lots of priests living there and he answered that about 20 years ago when the wat was first built, about 15-16 priests lived there (I didn't gather whether all these were from the village).

Village Democracy/Leadership

This morning a meeting of village leaders to discuss building new roads in the village was held. As it is now, the *khums* of Pā Hāt, Čāēn Wāēn, and Nōn Khwao Nōi have only footpaths connecting them with the main road. Though the villagers in these *khums* can drive their ox-carts in the dry season to the main road, it is impossible for them to get through in the rainy season. Again, the discussion began without formality (though Mr. Wichian seemed to chair the meeting). Much discussion about the various possibilities, and about the needs of the people. One suggestion was to build a bridge in one field to make *Khum Pā Hāt* accessible during the rainy season. Final decision was that initially the main road would be transferred from running in front of the wat to in back of the wat. Villagers do this themselves, clearing trees and scrubs, starting Monday.

Also discussed at the meeting was that several men would give a silk-raising demonstration in April.

Most of the men then left, but few still stayed on to again raise the subject of the money earned at the fair. Obviously, the villagers are not happy with this being in the hands of the education department at the Amphoe office. But Mr. Thiang was completely unmoved by the new discussion.

This morning the villagers were making surveys of where to lay the road. The focus of interest was at *Khum Pā Hāt*.

Silk Raising:

Saw aspects of the silk raising process:

- 1) The worms: The silk worms, called *tua mai* (ตัวไหม) in Central Thai and *môn* (ม่อน) in the local dialect, are kept in bamboo trays called *dong* (ด้ง, literally "rice winnowing tray") in Central Thai. They are fed on mulberry leaves, Central Thai *bai môn* (ใบหม่อน) which are grown locally. This tray is kept covered by a piece of cloth so that large flies won't molest the worms. We asked about how the worms are produced. They said that the butterfly which comes from the worm is kept under cover on top of a piece of cloth. It then lays the eggs on this cloth (I have seen some of these cloths, which are just a mass of eggs). How they capture and breed the butterflies I do not know.
- 2) Silk making: When the worms start to spin their silken cocoons, they are taken from their tray of mulberry leaves and put into another tray called a *cô* (จ้อ) in Central Thai and Lao. These balls of silk are called *fak lôt* (ฟักหลอด) in Central Thai and Lao. If the worm has been removed, it is called a *fak lôt līp* (ฟักหลอดลิบ).
- 3) Spinning: Silk spinning is not like cotton spinning. A bunch of chrysalises (the *fak lôt*) are put in a pan of near-boiling water. Then a woman using a pronged stick begins the threading process by pulling the thread from the chrysalis through the pronged stick to a stick with a hole for making the thread and on out to a container of the thread. I don't pretend to understand how this works.
- 4) Dying: We saw the dying of two colors: yellow (gold) and a purplish red. The yellow dye is made from a plant called *khē* (เข้). The reddish color is made by mixing lac and *khē*. The dyes are formed by putting the constituents in boiling water. When the dye is made,

long bunches of thread are dipped into the dyes. When they have been dyed they are hung up to dry. We also saw weaving of a silk *phākhāomā* (ผ้าขาวม้า), a man's waist cloth.

Teachers' Meetings

Today Mr. Thiang had stayed in Ban Khwao to attend the meeting of headmasters (*khrū yai*) from the tambon.

Bān Nōng Tūn

February 26, 1963

A Startling Food: A Horse Slaughter

Today, though I gathered little data, I underwent somewhat traumatic experience, namely watching the butchering of a Thai pony in a clearing (a cloth was laid on the face of the horse). It was first struck with a blow from a heavy long, and this was repeated till the horse was dead. Then the butchering began.

In what followed, I could well see primitive man. Except for the steel knives, there was little difference between the Thai and the tribesmen of Africa or the Plains Indians in a buffalo hunt. The horse was first skinned and then skillfully butchered. The meat was laid on a bed of leaves and divided into several piles (most of the meat was being sold). When the insides were reached, the liver was taken out and cut up into mouthful size pieces which were then eaten raw (by myself as well). Other bits of insides and some pieces of good meat were thrown into a makeshift fire and then also eaten over the carcass of the horse, whose muscles were still moving.

The meat was being sold and so only a small portion of the village men were present. Later we had "lunch" which consisted of raw horse *lāp* – a rather bloody mess, as well as cooked *lāp*, fried horse, *pādāēk*, etc.

I met in the village yesterday the brother of my host's sister (my host lives in the farthest house of *Khum Pā Hāt*). His parents live in *Khum Wat*. He is a student in Mae Sariang just finishing *Mathayom* 6. He has been a monk for 4-5 years, and now wants to go to Bangkok to join the Navy.

Bān Nōng Tūn

February 27, 1963

Material Culture

Today, Jane and I went first to Mr. Tāp's house, where we watched blacksmithing for awhile. We learned from Mr. Phon that the weddings will be held on *rāēm sip kham duan sī* (แรมสิบค่ำเดือนสี่), which is the 10th day of the waxing of the moon in the fourth month (March 19).

We went to *Khum Pā Hāt*. There we talked with a number of people about the names of things and about words. Some things in connection with cloth making are:

kong (กง) – a device for keeping thread (see figure 1 in notes of February 11)

ak (อัก) – a device for keeping thread (see figure 2 in notes of February 11)

nai (ไ้) – spinning wheel.

phuang sao mai (พวงเส้าไหม) – device for spinning silk.

kī (กี่) – loom.

iu (อีว) – cotton gin

yōm mai (ย้อมไหม) – to dye silk

We also heard and saw the instruments used in the *mōlam* plays: the *khāēn* (แคน); the *phīn* (พีน) a stringed guitar; *ching* (ฉิ่ง) small cymbals

In the afternoon we went to *Khum Yai* and took some census material.

Bān Nōng Tūn

February 28, 1963

Only spent the afternoon in the village. Sat around talking and drinking with a group of men from *Khum Yai*. Quite often on occasions like this, I am pressed with questions about America. Asked the name of the King and Queen. Quite obvious that not everybody knows their name, though it was ultimately elicited. Something about a *tham bun* ceremony with the accoutrements of a village fair. Something happening next Tuesday. A large group of travelling salesmen came to the village selling such things as *phasin* belts. This group seemed to be

travelling by foot. Drank much rice wine; end of data collecting. "Knives" cost about 10 baht each. Learned that *môlam* plays have scripts which are printed in Khon Kaen.

ca February, 1963, no date

Roles in BNT

In the village I have learned that there is a trader and a tailor - therefore, it is important for me to investigate diversity of occupation in the village. Certainly one indicator of change is that of diversity of occupation. In the "folk" community, occupation is homogeneous - and the families are by and large self-contained economic units. In any peasant community, there are certain rudimentary breakdowns in specialization of occupation. For example, in the traditional Thai village there are the monks and the laity - occupational specialization which was offset by that most monks did not spend their lifetime in the monkhood, and to a certain extent (and certainly as an ideal) all the men of the village had been or would become monks thus making the specialized talents somewhat of an extension of the male sex role instead of a true occupational specialization among the men. With regard to the monkhood, thus, one would expect that the greater the urbanization process in the village, the fewer men who become monks.

HYP: The greater the role diversification of a community, the greater its urbanization.

Role specialization can even be found in the realm of agriculture. In the traditional Thai community, every man is foremost a rice farmer. With greater urbanization, and the concurrent introduction of new agricultural pursuits as cash-making occupations, the more specialization in various diverse agricultural pursuits. Thus, though a man still may be basically a rice farmer, he may also be a tobacco grower, a pig raiser, a kenaf raiser, a vegetable cultivator, etc. And eventually, one would expect that some men would shift their major emphasis for rice farming to some other agricultural occupation where the price is better, though still keeping up rice farming as a subsidiary occupation.

Roles in BNT: Monk, teacher, rice miller, tailor, trader, store-keeper.

I have noted that there are two rice mills in the village, one store, one tailor "shop", one trader (whatever this means), three teachers, one monk (who has been in the wat for one year).