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Editor's Note

The *Indian Journal of Tai Studies* is an annual publication of the Institute of Tai Studies and Research. Dissemination of knowledge through rigorous empirical inquiry in the field of 'Tai Studies' has been the objective of this Journal. It has already evolved as a major forum for publication of scholarly works on central and current themes of the Tai Studies. Its contents reflect the aims and intellectuals pursuit of the Institute of Tai Studies & Research and its growing importance. It is a multidisciplinary Journal which presents a diverse approaches to Tai studies. Leading scholars, in the field from India and abroad, have published their articles in the Journal on a wide variety of areas of Tai Studies such as history, culture, language, literature, society and polity, economy, archaeology and art, religion and philosophy and so on. Although, the Journal is primarily interested in academic works in the field, it also publishes contribution of other areas indirectly linked with Tai Studies. *This is the first Journal of this kind published in India*. It has already established its academic credibility as a referred Journal with the publication of its volume XVIII.

I would like to express my profound gratitude to the ICSSR, New Delhi for extending financial support to bring out this volume. Besides, my appreciation is due to all those who have extended their co-operation towards publication of this volume. It is my pleasure to put forward this volume of the Journal to the members of academic community with the hope that it will stimulate them.

October, 2018 (Girin Phukon)

Continued from last issue :

A Journey to the Land of Dai (Tai) Mao in China:
Reflections on an Indian Scholar's Field Trip to China

Chen Jianming

Part IV

Ximeng: The Dai once in a Land of the Wa, the Head-Hunters with whom Mao Zedong was Concerned

At 15:43 after the lunch, Prof. Grin Phukon nudged us to resume our journey to Dehong prefecture. At 18:54 in the shank of the evening we reached Mengsuo town, Ximeng county seatÿstaying overnight inYunjiao Hotel.

Ximenghere was a drowsy city.The ocher-coloured buildings lacing the streets had been renovated, decorated with the inverted and serrated or saw-toothed traditional geometric patterns of the Wa people. Stepping into the city is like stepping into a cluster of Wa villages. The difference is that the Wa villages do not have so many tall buildings. In November 1999, I visited the former county seat called Ximeng town, which was a mediocre one tucked away on the Mengkan mountain top on the border with Burma.[1] I remember the beautiful pink cherry flowers on the country roads. In the heat of the sub tropical sun, the Wa villages in Yuesong were impressive. Now we were staying in the new county seat, formerly known as Mengsuo township of the Dai people.

We had very tasty food in a restaurant. Prof. Phukon and his company did some shopping in so-called supermarkets, which in fact were small shops.

But here in Mengsuo are the Dai settlements in Ximeng, with two thousand *mu* of paddy cultivation in 1986. Three hundred years ago, the Dai people from Mengyang and its neighbourhood moved as refugees to what is now Menglian, and then together with another group of about 5,000 refugees, guided by Menglian's local chieftains called *tusi,* fled to Mengsuo (meaning finding a good place to live in) and settled down. Thus, the Dai people here have the same oral and written languages and similar dress and habits with those in Menglian.

More advanced in production and education than the surrounding Wa and Lahu peoples, the Dai, in their long-term exchanges with those peoples, have promoted and facilitated the development of local society. In the past,

the Dai in Mengsuo were often head hunted or their farm cattle were captured by the Wa living high up in the mountains, causing fights with weapons. After the Communist liberation in 1950, the two peoples understand and help each other. When the Dai made slow progress in digging trenches or building roads because of their labour shortage, the Wa came down the mountains to their help. When the Wa had no idea of how to use the ploughs or rakes after opening up paddy fields, the Dai sent for skilled farmers to teach them the use of these farm implements. Seeing the Wa women transplanting rice seedlings upside down or some inserting the middle of them in the mud leaving the two ends floating on the water, the Dai sisters took the initiative to teach them how to transplant rice shoots.[2]

The Dai's Mengsuo township was a well-known place in Yunnan's history. In the spring of 1936, Britain and China held a second meeting of survey for the southern section of undecided Yunnan-Burma boundary in Mengsuo. During the meeting, the British made an attempt to prove that Mengsuo was under the Burmese jurisdiction early in 1890 in the Qing dynasty. Menglian's *tusi* Dao Paihong sent his representatives to the meeting, clarifying Menglian *tusi*'s jurisdiction in the Wa areas in history and safeguarding the territorial sovereignty of China. Failing in this attempt, the British resorted to the threats of force, arousing a great anger among the Wa people. After the breakfast on the 4thday of lunar January in the New Year, the Wa, holding national flags, met in Mengsuo from all directions. They demonstrated in a protest against the British invasion. This action foiled the British scheme in their attempt to include Mengsuo and other Chinese territories into the British Burma.[3]

However, Ximeng countyis not known for the Dai people. Here is the compact settlement of the Wa people. It had been under Qing dynastic rule since 1675. On March 5, 1965, Ximeng Wa Autonomous County was established, with a total of 7 townships and towns, including one Dai township and five Lahu townships.

The Wa people believe in animism. In their views, mountains, rivers, all living things and all the natural phenomena that are difficult to understand, have souls or spirits. *Muyiji* and *Ayi'e*are believed to be the highest dominating spirits who have created all things on earth. In 1872, Li Tongming (1842-1917), known as *Sanfozhu* in Chinese meaning the Buddha, was a Lahu leader, a Mahayana Buddhism follower in the vicinity of Lancang and Cangyuan. He rose to lead an ethnic uprising against the Qing dynasty's

oppression but failed. He led part of the Lahu and Lisu people and settled down in the Wa area in Ximeng. He ruled the Wa mountain area by spreading Buddhism and swearing a blood oath for an alliance with the Wa chiefs. Thus, Mahayana Buddhism managed to spread, wielding a certain influence among the Wa people. Li had a Buddhist shrine room built about one kilometer west of the old town seat.[4]

In 1890, the British sent for James George Scott who led an armed invasion into Ximeng's Wa area. He asked Li to admit that he was one of the nationals under the British Burma and was subject to the British rule. He left when rejected by Li.[5] After Li's death, the infighting between the different powers hastened the decline of Buddhism in Ximeng.[6]

The Wa believe in primitive religion and Buddhism, just as the Kayin believe Christianity and Buddhism in Myanmar, and the Wa accepted the Lahu's rule by Li Tongming is like the Wa accepting their intermarriage with the Dai who came to Menglian. A legend has it that the Wa originated from a cave called Siligang in Bulade, about 25 kilometers west of Masa township of Ximeng, indicating that the Wa since ancient times had lived in this place. A long time ago the Wa was one of the hunting tribal peoples and later turned from a hunting people to the farming settlers.[7] Of the Wa's cultivated land, the upland accounted for almost 100%, of which the swidden accounted for more than 65% .So the Wa people were traditionally swiddeners, the upland rice cultivators. They were famous for growing upland rice and poppy. In 1954, the People's Liberation Army (PLA) and the work team helped and led the Wa in opening up hundreds of *mu* of paddy fields for planting rice, and gradually the Wa changed their swidden for the fixed land.[8]

Ximeng's Wa mountain area did not produce rapeseed cooking oil. The villagers stir-fried vegetables with animal oils. The work team members taught them how to grow rape and extract its seeds for oil, saying they could get the oil at home for cooking food. The Wa people stir-fried the vegetable with uncooked oil, which tasted unpalatable enough. They complained to the work team members. The members told them to cook the oil well over fire, which could make it taste just fine. The villagers burned the oil very hard, and the oil in the wok or pot suddenly caught a fire, which long tongues of flame pounced onto the roof, almost burning the house down. The team members respectively and quickly apologized at the villager's house, giving a hands-on lecture until the villagers understood what it was for the rapeseed oil to be "cooked well".[9]

Slavery was also common and a slave was called *qiongjiaoke*in Ximeng's Wacommunity. However, once married, the slaves became free,

terminating their status as slaves. When the adopted son got married, his owner held a cattle-slaughtering ceremony, and when the adopted daughter got married, the wedding party was held in the same way as that for the owner's true daughters. When the female *qiongjiaoke* got married, the owner then asked for bride price. If the bridegroom was insolvent, the couples were required to do manual labour at the host family for a time annually, in order to offset the debt. Generally speaking, the slavery is intended to extract surplus value of the slaves. Therefore, this fact about the Wa community is inconceivable.[10]

To judge the thief or to find out who had stolen the property, the Wa's ordeal was to have the aid of divinities, such as beating sb. on the head, suffocating sb. in water, fishing something with fingers from a boiling pot, and so on. However, of all practices of the Wa, the well-known one was the head-hunting and the Wa are known as the threatening head-hunters. The Wa even considered that manly beard was certainly more awesome than weeds so that the latter was too scared to come out. Thus, there were tragedies of beheading people as a sacrifice to upland rice. In this sense, the head-hunting also was one of the important "productive activities".[11]

In the 1950s, some local cadres briefed Mr. Wang Lianfang, the vice chairman of the central government delegation to ethnic minority areas, on the three versions of head-hunting: (1) *Muyiji*, the highest god of the Wa, told villagers that when the deluge came, offering sacrifice of hunted heads to devils would help the upland rice grow well;(2) Uncle Kongming[12] cheated the Wa by sowing in the fields cooked rice seeds that produced no rice shoots. He asked that before giving them good seeds, only head-hunting for sacrifice could ensure a heavy crop; and (3) The more common legend is that the rice could grow well for a good harvest only by the company of a person's soul. At that time, the people said that the fully bearded head was most effective.

Wang Lianfang paid a visit to Wolangniu, the most senior headman in Damasan of the Wa mountain area. He found that although the villagers did practice head-hunting, it was not randomly hacking or chopping heads. The rules were followed that only the strangers from outside villagers, not the acquaintances or powerful people, were beheaded. The head-huntingusually took place in the third lunar month when the rice seeds were already planted and no rainfalls, or the flowering rice was hit by pests or flooding in lunar August, which were irresistible disasters the villagers faced and were difficult to avoid as the frustration of their weak performance. Of course, the head-hunting for rice did undermine the solidarity between villages, deteriorating

the relations between the Wa and their neighboring groups and seriously hampering production and social progress in the Wa region.[13]

Also in the 1950s, Wang Lianfang watched helplessly a 15-year-old child beheaded in Manhai village.The head-hunter, his head red-turbaned, enjoyed a high status within the community, known as the "head-hunting hero".[14] The Wa, like Naga people, is also a cross-border people in Myanmar.

During British colonial period the Wa were hated and feared. The British distinguished two groups of Wa according to how receptive they were to the colonizer's attempts to control themÿThe'Wild Wa'were head-huntersÿand decorated their villages with the severed heads of vanquished enemies to propitiate the spirits that guarded over their opiumfields. The so-called Tame Wa allowed the colonisers to pass through their territory unimpededÿyet the area inhabited by the Wa - east of the upper Thanlwin(Salween)river in the northern Shan State - was never completely pacified by the British.[15]

In Shan State, eighty-five kilometers north of Kengtung lies the border district of Mong La.[16] Although Mong La is mainly a Thai Lü[17] districtin a deal worked out with the Myanmar military, it's currently controlled by ethnic Wa, who once fought against Yangon troops but now enjoy peaceful relations with the government.[18]In Mong La, there is the United Wa State Army. When the British arrived in Nagaland in the mid-19th century,the Naga were a fragmented but fearsome collection of tribes. Head-hunting was a tradition among them and for many decades they resisted British rule.[19]

According to Donovan Webster who visited Namlip, one of many villages of Myanmar bordering with India, which are home to the Naga, a people reported to be active head-hunters as back as 1991. The men from one village had hacked 28 heads from the enemy village. Then they brought them home as souvenirs.[20] Head-hunting is a trophy hunting.

In India, the tribes of Nagaland were once feared head-hunters. Before the arrival of the British, the Naga tribes had a deserved reputation as head-hunters. Raids on enemy villages were commonplace, and captive warriors were ritually beheaded using the fearsome Naga *dao*(machete). The Naga believed that beheading would release the human soul from the base of the neck,while the spiritual soul remained trapped in the head. Preserved heads were stored in the communal *morung*(male meeting house)in each village, and were believed to ensure the coming harvest, among other boons.[21]

In 1952, Wang Lianfang escorted the Wa headman Ai Kan to Beijing. Chairman Mao Zedong,Chinese paramount leader, invited Ai Kan to sit with

him for dinner. Talking about the head-hunting practice, Mao asked Ai Kan with concern if the human-like monkey heads could be used instead. Ai Kan said: "It won't do, because the souls of the monkeys will eat our corn. Only those of tigers can do the job, but they are not easy to catch." Mao smiled, saying: "This can be solved with discussions among yourselves."

After Mao's word reached the Wa mountain area, the upper circles and the villagers talked about how to get rid of this practice. However, its real and complete abolition took place in 1958. At that time, the villagers were awakened politically through the Communists' hard work, and the consultations, in accordance with Mao's instructions, were undergoing within the Wa communities, and the debate was furious and fierce.

The final breakthrough took place at a Wa township meeting. At this meeting, the headman, the head-hunting hero, and the villagers sat aside respectively. The headman said: "The head-hunting for rice was a ritual passed down from the grandpas and great grandpas, not to be abolished." The head-hunting hero chimed in: " Who is going to pay for the loss if the rice does not grow well for no head-hunting sacrifice for it?" The two copiously and plausibly quote authoritative sayings, and the villagers could not argue back. Suddenly, from among the villagers stood up a young Wa man, saying: "I root for the head-hunting!" Everyone was panic-stricken. He continued: "It is not easy to have any of you beheaded, for you are not willing. I think if anyone is to be beheaded, the first must be those of the head-hunting hero and the headmen, because you know the 'rules' better than others. And the rice does not do better with your heads guarding it?" His speech was applauded by the villagers. The headman was panicked and the head-hunting hero was still more panicked. They had to stand in favor of no head-hunting in the future and agreed with the villagers that anyone who violated this rule was sent to the government for sentences. After 1958, the head-hunting practice was abolished completely.[22] This is how the Wa people got rid of the life style of head-hunting among themselves. Since the abolition of the old ritual of the head-hunting, it has been rare that the deceased were buried under the stilted houses. In the past, the cattle-slaughtering ceremony was held for funerals. Now the guests are entertained by cooked pork and chickens that are offered.[23]

Elsewhere in the Wa area, the abolition of the head-hunting customs is very relevant with religion. Around the late Qing dynasty, the Wa in Banhong[24] village accepted Hinayana or Theravada Buddhism, observing with the Dai's Songkran (the Water-Splashing Festival) with the Dai people and greatly

affected by the influence of the Dai culture. Therefore, as early as in the beginning of the 20th century, they got rid of the "head-hunting for rice" customs, while in Ximeng area it continued for so long.[25]

Donovan Webster was told by Ah Naung, a Baptist in 1961 and is now the village's minister, that in this Naga village there were no known head-hunters today. Like much of this area, the Naga is now mostly Christian.[26] The tradition of head-hunting died out when the Naga were converted to Christianity by the British during the l870s The main religion is Christianity, and churches are the centre of both mainstream and tribal communities But many Naga men still wear necklaces depicting stylised human heads, and almost all carry a *dao*.There are 16 Naga tribes including the Konyak Angami Ao Phom and Lotha, many of whom still live in villages of communal thatched huts.[27] Like the Wa people in Yunnan, the Nagas use huge log-drums to communicate between villages.[28]

From Ximeng to Kejie: The Dai and Their Past and Present

Today it was January 1, 2015, New Year's Day, but without any visible celebrations. The first day is celebrated less among the Han Chinese either. New calendar festivals are not spentwith as much bustle and excitement as those for traditional ones, such as the Songkran among the Dai people.

At 9:11, Prof. Phukon and his party again started their long-distance journey in the morning after my car, was refueled at a petrol station. On the way, the road, simply blacktop and narrow, winding up and down the mountain side. At the road shoulder, Prof. Phukon asked for a stop. He saw the distant rolling hills, forests, upland and the Wa villages on slopes. I saw clouds of smoke rising from the villages but could not figure out if it was the smoke from the swiddens or that from cooking food. It was breath-taking beauty itself, typical of mountainous villages. It reminded me of an old chant *Awa People Sing New Songs*, created the 1960s and going viral in the 1970s across China, in celebration of Mao Zedong, the Communist Party of China (CPC) and socialism. Prof. Phukon told that the geometrically-patterned arches to the villages were very similar to those in Nagaland of northeast India.

My car was rolling along the Kuxing river, with its upstream in two Wa settlements of Banqing and Zhongke of Ximeng county. In 1951, the central government delegation sent two comrades, Li Qiao and Tan Qingsen, to visit those two areas. According to Li Qiao, he saw six or seven skulls hung on

some bamboo poles outside two wooden drum houses in Banqing, and the guide showed him to Longshan where he saw human skulls in dozens of bamboo cages.

Historically, the Wa in Zhongke village wiped out twice the Kuomintang army in the mountains, and armed with a lot of guns and bullets seized, the headmen had nothing to fear, having a tremendous influence. Coupled with the rumours incited by the enemy agents across the border, the headmen in Zhongke had never agreed to the PLA's station in the region. By the end of 1955, Ximeng-Lancang road was built with a detour of over 20 *li* because of the opposition of Zhongke's headmen.

In March 1956, the Communist Party of China (CPC)'s Simao Prefectural Committee sent Mr. Zhao Zhuo, the deputy secretary of Lancang Borderland Working Committee, into Zhongke. He led there several United Front personalities and a reinforced platoon.

Before entering the village, he asked the troops to send a message to the headmen making clear what they had come for. The headmen repeatedly rejected. After the troops got into the village, the headmen evaded seeing them. In the evening next day, the headmen sent a word: "For the sake of Secretary Zhao, and seeing that it was getting dark today, you may stay here in the village, but not for tomorrow." Zhao Zhuo immediately asked the messenger to tell the headmen: "This is part of China, and the PLA has the responsibility of safeguarding its territory, and there is no reason of our withdrawal from here." He clarified the situation and interests, asking the headmen to think twice. The troops got ready for combat. The headmen, seeing that their rejection did not work, offered to let one of their sons to beheld as a hostage in the county seat in order to ask the troops to withdraw. The troops certainly did not agree. After many turns of mediation, the headmen agreed to negotiate with Zhao Zhuo and his party.

On that day, Zhao Zhuo and several unarmed United Front personalities attended the meeting. Threatened by the guns and spears held by the dozens of the brawny Wa men, they went on talking and laughing as if nothing had happened, clarifying the purpose of the PLA's station in border areas and the CPC's policy towards ethnic groups. The headmen were convinced. The next day, the two parties, in accordance to the Wa customs of slaughtering cattle, planting stones, drinking cursed water, agreed with the PLA's station there. Thus, a long-standing problem was settled without firing a shot.[29] The Lancang county magistrate Li Guanghua used his special identity of a descendant of Li Tongming, the Buddha, in persuading Zhongke's headmen, Ai Ding and Ai Qiang, also playing an important role in the PLA's landing there.[30]

My car turned left on to Shuangjiang-Lancang road, not going south to Zhutang township, but north to Fubang township. This is a broad highway.

In the late 1970s, there was a movement called *Laofozhu*, meaning Li Tongming, the old Buddhist leader and thus nicknamed Buddha, was to make a come back. Many faithful followers gathered in the Buddhist shrine burning incense. Some with ulterior motives spread a rumor that if the old Buddha came back, there was no need for the engagement in production, and the rice grains would grow as big as an egg, and the Lahu could idly enjoy a happy life, and that since it was not good for the Han Chinese to come here, they must be driven away across the Lancang river.The cadres repeatedly persuaded them, but to no avail. Riding in a jeep close to Fubang, Li Guanghua got into the village alone and called the followers to a lecture: "I am the descendant of *Sanfozu*, and it is me who is in a position to explain the Buddha's old rules and regulations. It is a pack of nonsense that one produces nothing and that the Han Chinese are driven away." He was getting more and more excited, even cursing and denouncing those who participated in the movement. Strange to say, Li's reprimand was effective indeed that this fierce and fast-spreading "Old Buddha" activity soon subsided. Li used his special status and special way to quell other similar disputes.[31]

In the 1950s, the film projection team had to require the consent of the local village headmen for free screenings of films, and armed forces were sent for protection in order to avoid being disrupted or destroyed from the Kuomintang remnants across the border. What a relief that we now drive our car across this area day and night without any attacks!

Approaching 14:00, I felt the fatigue of going hungry, gnawingly and unbearably hungry. There is a Chinese saying going like this: "*Min yi shi wei tian* (Food is put first)." It reminded me of many peasants or minority peoples' past uprisings, out of famished refugees or bodies of the starved everywhere, against the ruling class across Yunnan or other parts of China. Watching a kind-hearted snake-turned fairy lady being oppressed by a monk in a pagoda, an episode in the opera *Baishe Zhuan* (The Legend of the White Snake), Mao Zedong once commented strongly: "Revolution! Rebellion! That's the answer"[32] But today, I did not make a revolution nor rise in rebellion. Instead, I stopped my car and had some fast food at the roadside Dachun restaurant. Prof. Phukon and his entourage also had some food here. Refreshed after the hasty lunch, I contacted Prof. Yang Guangyuan of Yunnan Minzu University for Kuai Yongsheng, who was waiting for us in Mangshi tomorrow morning.

Originally, I planned to take the road to Dehong prefecture via Lincang city. Before that, we could have visited Lancang's Muga, which, together with Fawo township of Wuding county, was one of the first pilot projects for rural household responsibility system initiated nationwide since 1978.[33] In Lincang, Cangyuan Wa Autonomous County was Yunnan's first place where the practice of the farm output quotas contracted to each production group was introduced for the first time.

Proceeding ahead, we could have visited Gengma county. It is reported that before the Communist liberation in the 1950s, in the market of Daxueshan (Snowy Mountains) in Gengma county, most people wore no clothes, of whom the eighteen- or nineteen-year-old young girls were stark-naked, without a shred of clothing on, except a modesty of wood on the waists. It was especially so among the men.[34]

The Dai inherit a handmade paper technology in Mangtuan village, Mengding town, Gengma county. The women are its main labor force and technical experts, with each procedure done by women in the workshops. The raw material is paper mulberry's bark. The steps include soaking, mixing of grass ashes, cooking, washing and chopping pulp, dipping, drying, calendaring and peeling the paper. A complete process of paper- making has been kept intact among the Dai.[35] In contrast, in Myanmar's Shan State, Pindaya itselfis a centre for the Burmese-speaking Taung-yo people Local handicrafts include Shan paper and parasols made from mulberry bark.[36]

In the past, there was a well-known Cucumber War in Sipaishan, Gengma county. It was a fight with weapons caused by a Wa villager stealing a cucumber from a neighbouring village. For a cucumber, the two villages kept repeated fights for decades of years, killing scores of people.[37]

However, a truck driver told me that the road to Muga and Xuelin townships were difficult to travel on, and in consideration of road safety and Prof. Phukon's tight schedule, I decided to take an alternative road to Shuangjiang county, Lincang city, Yunxian and Fengqing counties and Baoshan city's Changning and Longling counties before reaching Dehong. *On the way, I shared Prof. Phukon's oranges brought from Assam. They were as succulent and palatable as those here in Yunnan.*

At 14:43, we passed Shuangjiang county without a stopover. Shuangjiang is Lahu, Wa, Blang and Dai autonomous county established on December 30, 1984. Its full name is China's longest county name in Chinese characters. It is said that in Yunfeng village, Shahe township, the four groups of the Dai, Wa, Bulang and Lahu communicate linguistically with each other, observe the same

festivals harmoniously as a family. In March 2010, after my field work on Lancang river, I stopped at Shahe township waiting for the reopening of road to Kunming. It was the vast plain, and the Dai grandma selling snacks roadside and red and purple blooming bougainvillea left a deep impression on me.

In 1987, Shuangjiang county had a Dai population of 7,439 people, accounting for 5.86% of the county's total population and 12.16% of the total minority population. The Dai were mainly distributed in two basins of Mengmeng county seat and Mengku. These two basins had a Dai population of 6,363, accounting for 85.53 % of the county's Dai total. The rest of the Dai were found in riverside valleys in Dawen, Mangnuo and Heliu townships. The Dai here speak the dialect that is also spoken by those in Gengma and Menglian counties. They write the same Dai scripts of Xishuangbanna and Dehong.[38]

According to Xie Yuanzhang, the Dai in Shuangjiang's Mengmeng town, together with those Dai in Gengma and Cangyuan's Mengjia and Mengdong, with a population of about 50,000, are the Dai Na branch of the Dai in Dehong. They moved to the present places from Mengmao in Dehong in the Yuan dynasty. In 1348, Luchuan *Xuanweisi* (local chieftain's office) troops occupied Mengding of Gengma, and the Dai migrated from Mengmao to Mengding and other regions.[39]

Soon, we reached Mengku town, the land of the well-known Mengku broad-leafed tea, which is made with indigenous method, to be used as raw materials for Yunnan's black and green teas, with part of them for exports. The tea has full and fleshy leaves, the buds are hairy, and the taste is rich, heavy, mellow and sweet. It was determined as the second traditional one in China's first group of tea varieties at the second meeting of China National Commission of Improved Tea Varieties. Mengku's broad-leafed tea has a history of more than 500 years. In Bingdao village of Mengku is still growing the 500-year-old tea tree, more than 20 meters high, with a diameter of 30 cm. Traditionally, Mengku town was once a broad-leafed tea trade center. The broad-leaf tea is concentrated in western mountainous areas ranging from Bingdao and other villages in the north to Shahe township in the south. After 1980, Shuangjiang's tea was recognized as a major economic advantage. The CPC's county committee and government take the tea production for one of the three pillars of Shuangjiang's economic development.Now, Yunnan Shuangjiang Mengku Tea Co. Ltd. is established.[40]

In 1905, an American whose Chinese name was Yong Weili came to Shuangjiang in the name of cultural visits. He instigated Mengmeng town's Dai *tusi* to drive away the Han Chinese. He also sowed discord between the

Lahu, Wa and Dai peoples, causing the mutual killing between ethnic groups as well as the human and animal casualties. The houses and other property were gone, with Mengmeng town reduced in ruins. After the war subsided, the peoples of all those groups recognized that this was a conspiracy of imperialism, and they got united and expelled the culprit Yong Weili across the borders.[41]

At 16: 36, we passed Fengxiang town,the seat of Lincang city. At 18:39 when it was getting dark, and navigated by the car-based electronic map, we got to Aihua town, Yunxian's county seat. Again, feeling so roaringly hungry, I preferred to have food at an indecent, bleak and messy shop at the roadside. Prof.Phukon would like to go find a better eatery, but I was too exhausted to go further, like a hungry tiger ready to pounce on its prey. There is a Chinese saying that a hungry person is not choosy about his food, and an English proverb goes that hunger gives relish to any food. The lady owner was warm-hearted, preparing stir-fried rice, vegetables and boiled eggs for us and offered free oranges after the dinner. In fact, she was selling pork lard, not running a restaurant, as her business.

Yunxian county has a long history. Its Manghuai township is the site of Neolithic ruins. Other sites are located in the middle reaches of the Lancang river. The stoneimplements are characterized by the shouldered stone axes, and the rest are in shapes of battle-axes, boots and long strips, etc. The few potteries are mixed with sand-like rope-patterned coarse ones. The area is clearly the one where the cultural relics of Baiyue system were found.[42] In the 1990s, Yunxian's minority population accounts for 49.59% of the total, including Dai. There is a Dai township in the county.

Yunxian's local specialty is *Dianhong Gongfucha* (Yunnan's black tea for leisurely drinking). Here is one of the areas for the Lancang river hydropower development, with planned 14 cascade power stations in Manwan, Dachaoshan and other locations. Allegedly, the Lancang river basin hydropower resources available, if utilized, could generate 310,000 kilowatts.

At 20:35, I got my car refueled at Yunfeng petrol station in Fengqing county, also a tea-growing area. Here the mountains are high and shrouded with thick fog. The climate is mild, the rainfall abundant, and the soils fertile, given unique natural conditions for tea growing. For this reason, Fengqing has been recognized as one of the world's original lands of tea production. Now still alive on the Xiangzhuqing mountain is a tea tree that is 1,000 years old. The major tea products from Fengqing are *Dianhong Gongfucha*, *Dianhong Suicha* (broken Yunnan black tea), *Qingcha* (green tea), *Tuocha* (a bowl-

shaped compressed mass of tea leaves), etc. Therefore, Fengqing was hsortlisted as one of Yunnan's tea-producing and exporting bases. Fengqing's *Tuocha* is also recognized as the compressed mass of tea leaves in the shape of a sliding-weight of a steelyard. The third recognition of *Tuocha* of Xiaguan, Dali is that the tea was well received along Tuojiang river in Sichuan in the Qing dynasty, and the water from the Tuojiang river was most appropriate for drawing the tea. It takes green tea for its raw material.[43] Dali's *Tuocha* is also known as an "iron cake", which TV commercial was frequently aired in 2015.

We kept rolling on in the murk on the main road from Fengqing into Changning county, a first county we entered in Baoshan city.

Baoshan was called Yongchang (formerly spelt as Yung Ch'ang) prefecture in the Eastern Han dynasty, which has been an ancient trade distribution center between China and Burma, one of the important stopovers on the well-known Silk Road in Southwest China or simply Southern Silk Road. Caravans started from Sichuan, bypassed Yunnan's Zhaotong, Qujing, Dali and Baoshan into Burma, India, and finally reached the Arabian Peninsula.[44] Historically, Yongchang's silk was exported to Southeast Asian and West Asian countries. Its produced quilt covers, camlet and other products were and are still well received.[45] In the shift or reshuffle of east China's silk industry to west China, Baoshan, together with Puer and Luliang counties, plans to use its unique advantages in location, climate and area of cultivation, etc. to build Yunnan's cocoon silk industry into the next emerging green economic pillar after Yunnan's tobacco, tea and sugarcanes. Since 2001, with the implementation of West China Development strategy and the project Shift of East China's Silk Industry to West China, Baoshan City, based on its advantages in resources and location, was the first in Yunnan to have introduced east China's Zhejiang business into Yunnan, setting up Baoshan Ligen Cocoon Silk Co. Ltd. It establishes the development thinking of taking the mulberry sericulture for the city's pillar industry. To this end, Baoshan city proposed that by the end of its Eleventh Five-Year Plan, a total of 300,000*mu* of mulberry estates was to be developed in the city's Longyang district, and Shidian, Changning and other counties, with an annual output of 15,000 tons of cocoon, and an industrial and agricultural output value of 1.5 billion yuan. In 2009, the city had more than 100,000 *mu* of mulberry area. A silk industrial belt had basically formed in Longyang district and Shidian county. The townships which mulberry planation area exceeded 10,000 *mu* were respectively Banqiao, Mangkuan and Youwang. There were 15 villages which mulberry estate was respectively more than 1,000 *mu*, and its per-*mu* output value was more than 3,000 yuan. They were excellent role models.[46]

During the War of Resistance Against Japan in the WWII, Baoshan was the main battlefield in west Yunnan. Longling county's Songshan mountain was Japanese army's last line of defense in west Yunnan. Kunming-Wanding Road (formerly Burma Road, and Wanding formerly was spelt as Wanting) traverses its central part, and the Nujiang and Lancang rivers run through its territory, forming high mountains and deep valleys and making steep terrains. It was and is one of the strategic hubs in southwest China's border defense.Now, Baoshan-Longling and Baoshan-Tengchong express highways have been built. Tengchong-Myitkyina Class 2 asphalt paved road has been completed and is to be extended towards India's Ledo. Yunnan provincial government is set to build Baoshan into an import and export-producing/ processing base that is oriented to South Asia.[47] Now Tengchong airport has been built and Baoshan airport are expanded.

In 1583, Burma's King Nandabay sent his troops for invading Yunnan. It broke through Yaoguan (in today's Shidian), burned down Shidian, attacked Shunning, occupied Menglin (Longling's Zhen'an today) and killed government troops. They fought on the back of horses and elephants in an attempt to infringe on Yunnan along five routes. The Ming imperial court appointed two generals, Deng Zilong and Liu Ting, to lead an army of 5,000 respectively to dispel the invaders, with various local forces ready to come to their aid.Deng Zilong led his troops stationed in the east, and fought the Burmese elephant trains to a standstill early in November. His army suppressed those in Wandian in the lunar January next year, and annihilated those in Sanjianshan, Gengma. They won the three battles, killing Hanqian and capturing Zhaohan. In April, Liu Ting led his troops to Longchuan, quelled the rebellion and wiped out the invaders.[48]

Of the fighters on the back of elephants, David K. Wyatt mentions the epic war between Burmese and Thai armies in the 16th century: "Queen Suriyothai who had donned soldier's garb to ride out against Burmese forces encircling Ayudhya in 1549."[49] In fact, they were wars with soldiers fighting on the elephant's back.*The Legend of Suriyothai*, a Thai film production in 2001, is a reflection on this event.

Baoshan abounds with rich resources in minerals, geothermal energy, hydropower and forests, which is one of the areas that have a large economic potential in west Yunnan. Baoshan planned to complete the development of the city's small hydropower stations and even facilitate the hydropower development on the Nujiang river in its Eleventh Five-Year-Plan.[50]

Baoshan's arabica coffee is of premium quality, good smell and taste, which was once awarded the Honorary Certificate by China's former Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Cooperation. Its content of protein and glucose is higher than that of those abroad and was exported to Japan, the Soviet Union, Hungary, Poland and other countries.[51]

Beyond Changning county's Youdian town seat, we reached its Kejie township at 23:28, and,considering it was getting too late and the Indian guests were too sleepy, I stopped my car and stayed overnight in roadside bright-lit Yongxing Hotel there. All was quiet towards the midnight.

Kejie township is a settlement with the mixture of the Dai, Miao, Han and other ethnic groups. It is one of the important distributing center of farm and sideline produces between Baoshan and Changning county. The fossil of a stegodon's right mandible was unearthed in its Laohewan.[52] Here is a population of 5,000 Dai people. Because peacocks grow here, the Dai produced their long narrative poem *Golden Peacock.* The township is located on Kuke river, a part of the Nujiang river system.

There are Lujiang Dai township and Mangkuan Yi and Dai township in Longyang district, and Wandian Dai township in Changning county, all in Baoshan city. Down stream of the Kuke river is Wandian Dai township, which boasts a Ming dynasty mural in Paxu temple.On March 22, 2014, I traveled past Wandian township, and saw a Dai temple in a typical Dai village.According to one of Assam's Buranji,[53]Assam's Dai leader Chau Long Sukapha[54] left Keng Seng Mao Lung in 1215 and arrived at Monkha Mongya which was ruled by his father. Then, he and his cavalcade came to Mengmao with their pots, elephants and horses, and eventually to northeastern India via Hukawng in Burma. According to Yang Yongsheng's textual research, Mongkha Mongya is today's Kejie and Datang areas. Many people think it is Mengmao.[55]

The two basins of Kejie and Wandian used to be well-known malaria areas before the Communist liberation in 1950. In 1952, the government mobilized a bloody good lot of immigrants to those two basins. They reclaimed about 50,000 *mu* of wasteland, building them two into Changning county's sugar-producing bases.[56]

In 1855, under the influence of the Taiping peasant uprising, Yunnan's Hui Muslims held their own uprisings, spreading the anti-Qing movement across the province. In 1856, under the leadership of Wandian's Jing Fubao, the Dai people, hand in hand with a total of over 900 people hailing from Zhenkang's Hui and Han Chinese communities answered the call. In 1861, the Dai in the vicinity of Shuangjiang and Gengma actively supported the volunteers in

capturing Yongchang, Longling and other places, shocking the Qing rule in west Yunnan.[57] Changning county is also one of the tea-producing areas in Yunnan.

On Rolls My Great Wall Along the Burma Road

On January 2, 2015, at 7:17 when the dawn was beginning to quicken, we started our journey from Kejie. Soon we were travelling on the expressway from Baoshan city to Longling county. Compared with the country roads, the expressway was smooth as silk, or simply the silk road. At Longling county, the 100-odd km expressway to Ruili was under construction, so closed to traffic. We came off the expressway at Zhen'an toll gate in Zhen'an town, which was one of the Chinese towns occupied by Burmese troops on elephant or horse back in 1853.

Now we were travelling on the old road, which was not only one section of Sichuan-Yunnan-Myanmar-India route or South China Silk Road, but also one section of the well-known Burma Road from Kunming to Lashio during WWII. In August 1937, the Japanese imperialists blocked China's coastal areas and prevented foreign materials from entering China. The Kuomintang (KMT) government decided to rush-build the Burma Road. Kunming-Xiaguan Road had been built by the end of 1935. Since December 1937, the migrant workers of all ethnic groups in west Yunnan had been recruited to build a total of 547.8 kilometers of Xiaguan-Wanding[58] section. From the end of 1937 to the end of August 1938, it took only nine months to complete the road. The Burma Road ran a total of 959.2 kilometers, starting from Kunming in the east end and finishing at Wanding in the west. The native Yunnanese then laid an extension into Burma from Wanding to Lashio in 1940 for a total length of 1,200km. Early in the war,this Lashio-Kunming route served as the main supply line for the KMT. In 1941, when the Pacific War broke out, the Burma Road became China's only international passageway in southwest China, with a monthly transported volume of more than 10,000 tons. About 100,000 migrant workers were dispatched from Baoshan, and about 10,000 of them were killed and wounded.[59]

In May 1942, aided by the Burmese Independence Army(BIA) the Japanese imperial army marched into Burma within weeks of Pearl Harbor attack and by mid-1942 had driven the retreating British-Indian forces along with the Chinese Kuomintang forces(which had come to their aid) out of most of Burma. The Japanese occupied all of Burma, and the Burma Road was interrupted. As the Japanese pressure from the south increased, the Allies looked for an alternate route from India.[60]

On March 21, 1942, the U.S. Air Force ordered the formation of an India-Burma-China air transport route, known as the Hump. The first flight included 25 American aircrafts flying from India's Assam to Myitkyina and Kunming (a total of 880 km).[61] The Allied supplies for the ground war fought in Lower Burma were easily flown or shipped from India. Supplying the China front,however, required dangerous flights over the Hump,a series of high Himalayan peaks that separate Burma and China. Over 1,000 airmen died flying this route,and 607 supply planes crashed, prompting the Allies to look for a new way to supply Chiang Kai-shek's nationalist Kuomintang army,who were fighting the Japanese in western China.[62]

American General Joseph "Vinegar Joe" Stillwell proposed the construction of an all-weather, two-lane road from India to China via northern Burma.The plan was to link up not with the original Lashio-Kunming route,but with a rough dry-weather track developed by the Chinese between Bhamo in southern Chin State and Yunchang,[63] Yunnan. British army engineers,using a trail created by war refugees fleeing to India from Upper Burma,began building the 800 km Ledo road from Ledo, Assam,to the Bhamo terminus of the Bhamo road in 1942. Although the engineers originally had 5,000 labourers at their disposal, the progress was slow and work was abandoned in May 1942. A huge contingent of American engineers took over in November 1942, and assembled 35,000 Burmese, Indian, British and Chinese troops to tackle the enormous task of cutting through thick jungle,upgrading the Bhamo track,and spanning 10 major rivers and 155 secondary streams between Ledo and Wanting.So many men were lost along the way that the builders sardonically dubbed the route the "man-a-mile road". Completed in May 1945, the Ledo road- also known as the Stillwell road - was maintained until a year later, when all Allied units were withdrawn from the China-Burma-India (CBI) Theatre.The Myitkyina Bridge, which spanned the Irrawaddy[64] river south of Myitkyina and was the longest pontoon bridge in the world, was deemed an obstacle to river traffic and was dismantled in 1947. One of the chief post-war effects of the Bhamo-Myanmar road network was the opening up of the Kachin State remains of the Ledo road, which quickly fell into disuse.[65]

More details of the Stillwell Road: The road is also known as China-India Road in Chinese. On December 10,1942, the vanguards of American corps of engineers and the 10th regiment of Chinese engineer troops took part in the inception of the road at India's Ledo. The road was built to traverse Hukawng, Mogaung valley and reached Myitkyina on August 5,1944, a total of 485 km. Beyond Myitkyina. It was divided into north and south lines: (1)

the north: Myitkyina, Heinitang Pass, Tengchong's Guyong and county seat, Longling, Baoshan and Kunming, a total of 1568.3 km; and (2) the south: Myitkyina, Bhamo, Namkham, Wanding, Burma Road and Kunming (Ledo to Kunming for 1,731.7 km). Donovan Webster writes that the Ledo Road was 500 miles (800 kilometers),with the town of Wanding connecting the Burma Road with India. Ledo and Burma Roads is a 1,100-mile route. Straight-line distance from Ledo to Kunming is 460 miles (740 kilometers).[66]

The section from Kunming's North Ring Road, Burma Road, Longling, Tengchong, Myitkyina to Ledo, as Chiang Kai-shek proposed, is called Stilwell Road. However, it is customary to call Kunming-Lashio section as the Burma Road and Longling-Tengchong-Myitkyina-Ledo section as the Sino-Indian Road.[67] Those roads contributed a lot to the Allies war efforts in CBI Theatre. When Burma Road was opened to traffic, more than 3,000 children of overseas Chinese in Southeast Asian countries returned to China and worked as mechanical workers, i.e. truck drivers and maintenance workers, on the Burma Road. In recent years, the books, movies and TV Dramas about them have been published or released. In Kunming, a monument has been set up in their memory. It was described at an exhibition of the War of Resistance Against Japan in Yunnan Library in August 2015, the trucks transporting war supplies on Burma Road used charcoal rather than gasoline as fuels.

On May 4, 1942, the Japanese forces invaded Longling and sent 54 aircrafts bombing Baoshan county on the same day. In the morning next day, the Japanese climbed up to the mountain top of the west bank of the Huitong bridge on the Nujiang river. The engineers of Chinese Expeditionary Forces was ordered to blow up the Huitong bridge to block the enemy on the west bank of the Nujiang river. Four or five hundred Japanese soldiers crossed the Nujiang river in rubber boats under fire cover. The 36th Division of the 71st Army of KMT troops fought fiercely against the enemy around the area of Huitong bridge. As a result, dozens of remaining enemies fled to the west bank, and the rest was annihilated. Since then, large areas of land west of the Nujiang river had been occupied by the Japanese troops. The 71st Army of Chinese Expeditionary Forces set up defenses for more than 250 kilometers along the east bank of the Nujiang River, preventing the Japanese army from moving eastward. The two armies faced each other across the river until May 1944.[68]

At the end of October 1943, six divisions of the Chinese Expeditionary Forces stationed in India, together with the British and Indian forces, launched a counter-offensive against the Japanese army in northern Burma. The

expeditionary forces stationed in west Yunnan responded by launching a counter-offensive against the Japanese army in western Yunnan in order to break through the Burma Road and recover the enemy occupied areas. Stationed at Mawangtun, Baoshan, General Wei Lihuang, the commander of the Chinese Expeditionary Forces, commanded 16 divisions and 160,000 troops of the 11th and 22nd Armies who began the forced crossing of the Nujiang river in left and right flanks on May 11,1944, making a thrust towards Longling and Tengchong. They captured Songshan on September 7, recovered Tengchong and Longling respectively on September 14 and November 3. They recaptured Wanding after Mangshi and Zhefang. On January 27,1945, the generals of the anti-Japanese forces in west Yunnan and northern Burma joined forces near Wanding. So far, the enemy occupied areas in west Yunnan had been recovered. In this large-scale offensive, more than 21,000 Japanese troops were wiped out, and more than 100,000 people from Baoshan died.[69]

Now we were travelling in the same direction of Chinese army's thrustto Burma on the same Burma Road. Here in Longling, I noticed a plate suggesting the Songshan battlefield where Japanese and Chinese armies once waged a life-and–death war in WWII. The Songshan campaign was the key battle for the signal victory of the anti-Japanese counter-offensive in west Yunnan in 1944. On June 4,1944, the Chinese Expeditionary Forces launched an attack and conquered it on September 7 of the same year. After three months and three days of fierce fighting, more than 3,000 Japanese defenders were annihilated, with its commander committing *hara-kili* (stabbing his own belly).[70]

Donovan Webster visited Stilwell Road and Burma Road and had his own account of the roads published in *National Geographic* in 2003. He writes that Songshan (Pine Mountain) is also known as the eastern Gibraltar. In World War II, with 26 miles (42 kilometers) of ridgeline and thousands of armed Japanese entrenched along its summit, not to mention the boiling river at its base thousands of feet below, Songshan must have glowered like an impossible redoubt. But by September 1944 the Chinese had reached the top, and after nearly a month of fighting, the Japanese were finally bludgeoned and blasted into defeat. When it was over, at one battle site alone, 62 pairs of Chinese and Japanese soldiers would be found dead in each other's grasp. Overall the Chinese lost 7,675 men, and the Japanese roughly 1,300.[71]

In fact Donovan Webster started from India's steep Patkai Range and down through the jungles of Burma to Kunming in China, with Burma Road's 1,100-mile (1,800-kilometer) length. He combines total length of Burma Road and Stilwell Road (also called Ledo Road, Pick's Pike or the man a mile

road). He found that today the remains of these roads - the 1937-38 supply track and the 1942-45 spur - link India, Myanmar, and China, winding through the lands of at least three dozen mountain and rain forest peoples, some nearly as isolated today as they were in the 1940s - or the 1840s.This is because Myanmar's leaders have until recently pursued an isolationist policy, there is also no longer a passable road to India in this part of Myanmar. Like the current plan to reopen the Ledo Road between Myanmar and India (jump-starting trade between the two nations), drug eradication is another way Myanmar is trying to reconnect with countries beyond its borders.[72]

In Myanmar, the original name of the Hukawng valley,*ju-kawng*, means "cremation grounds" in the Jinghpaw[73] dialect of the Kachin people. During World War II the British gave it another name.The Japanese controlled most of Burma,and a footpath through the valley became an escape route for refugees and Allied soldiers fleeing to India.So many people died en route that Hukawngbecame known as the Valley of Death. Between1942 and 1944 American General Joseph "Vinegar Joe" Stilwell cleared a 1and route of close to 500miles passing through the Hukawng Valley.Described as the "man a mile" road because so many died of malaria,typhus,and sniper fire,the Stilwell Road was finished only months before the war ended.Soon afterward the thick jungle reverted back into the hands of the Kachin people in the low lands and the Naga,their neighbors in the mountains.The road became impassable as floods washed away bridges along the Chindwin river.In an effort to keep out government forces,the Kachin Independence Army (KIA) destroyed the few bridges that remained.The valley has been the KIA's base of operations since 1961, when the Kachin began their fight for autonomy from the central government.[74] Despite what the old soldiers and goatherds advise, Donovan Websterfound the Burma Road is alive in Yunnan, moving people and animals and all manner of things over more than a thousand miles (1,600 kilometers).[75]

In June 1945, the oil pipeline was put into operation connecting Calcutta, Ledo, Myitkyina, Bhamo, Wanding and Kunming. It provided a lot of badly needed oils for the Chinese war efforts against the Japanese invasion until it stopped such a transportation in January 4, 1946.[76] In September 2015, Kunming residents were told that they would use Myanmar's natural gas soon.

After his Burma Road travel, Donovan Webster had his book published with the title of *The Burma Road: The Epic Story of the China-Burma-India Theater in World War II*.[77] However, after reading it, Yunnan-based army writer Peng Jinfeng comments that his book describes the situation in China before the Japanese invasion, General Stilwell and his 114 non-

combatants' retreat from Burma on foot to India when defeated in Burma in May 1942, and the fighting of only 3,000 U.S. troops during the counter-offensive in north Burma from 1943 to 1944. However, the engagements of Chinese armed forces in China, Burma, India and Tibet areas is completely ignored or weakened.[78] Therefore, I think the wars that connected China, Burma and India (including roads, airlines, pipelines, etc.) are worth rewriting, which is conducive to India's "Look East" policy, BCIM corridor, and China's One Belt and One Road initiative today.

There was a Dai population of 1,213 in Longling county in 1987.[79] In November 2009, the experts from Yangtze River Water Conservancy Committee under China's Ministry of Water Conservancy went deep into Longling's Mengnuo town to conduct a preliminary investigation on hydropower development in the Nujiang river basin, and they found that wild rice was growing in its Jianzhongshan area.[80]

Dehong: A True Home of the Dai

We got to Mangshi at 10:59 before noon.

Mangshi was also called Mangshi in the Tang Dynasty, and it was passed down as a De'ang word. *Mang* means supreme leader, and *Shi,* a name of people. It is said that Mangshi is the progenitor of the the De'ang people that later evolved into ethnic group name and place name. In Dai language, it is called Zhemomu or Zhemenghuan. Of Zhemomu, *Momu* means a flower known as *momu.* The Dai call Mangshi basin as Menghuan, meaning a place where cocks crow at the daybreak. So Mangshi is also called Menghuan City.[81] After the Communist liberation in1950, Mangshi was used as the seat of the people's government of Luxi county and was selected as the capital when Dehong Dai and Jingpo Autonomous Region was established in 1953. In the past, Mangshi was literally an administrative city, but in fact it was a small town of Luxi county, later of Luxi city.[82] In September 2010, Luxi city was renamed as Mangshi city, an only place name approved by China's State Council after 1989, which is the name that combines the proper and general administrative names. [83]

The two-character name Dehong is the transliteration of the Dai language, of which *De* means downstream, and *Hong,* the Nujiang river (or Lu river). So when combined, Dehong means the lower reaches of the Nujiang river. In 1953, the establishment of an autonomous region for all ethnic groups in Dehong was deliberated. After repeated discussions among the representatives of all groups of peoples, it was unanimously agreed that the

word Dehong should be used as the name of the autonomous region (later changed to prefecture) according to its geographical location.[84]

As early as in the Han and Jin dynasties, there were already peoples called Pu and Yue in Dehong area. The Yue were the progenitors of the Dai. During the Tang and Song dynasties, there lived the Mangshi and Baiyi peoples in Dehong. The Baiyi was the ancestors of the Dai people. Xunchuan people appeared in the vicinity of Zhanxi, Yingjiang, and the Xunchuan was the forefathers of Jingpo people.[85] The Achang people in Husa and Lasa have a high level of iron-forging and sword-making skills, enjoying a high reputation. Their products, comparable to the Paliang machetes of the Lahu people in Menglian county,have a ready market. There are five basins in Dehong, including Luxi, Zhefang and Ruili. In the past, Dehong was a place where many rulers left their footprints. When the Ming dynasty fell in north China, its emperor Zhu Youlang in southern China, better known as South Ming Emperor Yongli, chased by the Qing court army, escaped here all the way from Guilin and Kunming. On lunar January 18, 1659, he and his over 4,000 men crossed the border at Tengchong into Burma. One of his concubines surnamed Dou died of illness and was buried on the Dieshuihe river, and her tomb was called *niangniangfen*, meaning the tomb of that imperial concubine.[86] In 1662, former Ming general Wu Sangui led the Qing troops into Burma, and the Burmese king had to surrender Emperor Yongli to General Wu, and the emperor was brought to Kunming and was executed, symbolizing that the Ming dynasty was completely toppled. Today, there erected a tablet to his death at Bisipo, meaning forced to commit suicide, near Green Lake Hotel in Kunming, Yunnan, China.

After the British invasion of Burma, Jiangkuo Mangsa (as the Chinese called him, and his true name was Mangdala), the first true grandson of the Burmese king, fled to China in 1890 and went to Lianghe and Tengchong counties. During this period, he wrote twice to the Chinese government, demonstrating his anti-imperialist and patriotic passion. The Chinese government and people held a protective attitude towards him and took care of him and his relatives. In 1919 and 1921, he organized two armed anti-British forces in Maocaodi and Muse. The British sent letters to the Chinese government to extradite him to Burma. But he was determined not to be kept and groomed by the British. In 1936, the Kuomintang veteran and famous patriot Li Genyuan and others visited his residence and presented a poem to encourage him to take revenge. In 1942, when Tengchong fell, he was captured by the Japanese army and sent to Dehong's Mangshi, where he died at age 84.[87]

The Nujiang river passes through Dehong into Burma, from which it is named Salwin river. But Ruili river belongs to the Ayeyarwady (formerly Irrawaddy) river system. Dehong is home to Yunnan's bisons (Yunnan gaur,Bos gaurus readei), Asiatic elephants (Elephas maximus Linnaeus), peacocks, etc. Established along the Sino-Burmese border is the Tongbiguan nature reserve, harbouring Shorea assamica and other plants. Rice is grown in two seasons of one year and has many varieties, and there are wild rice growing. In addition, there are wild sugarcane and raised zebus. [88]

By the eve of the Communist liberation in 1950, only four or five *tusi* chieftains had purchased sedan cars. People carried the cars back from Burma after climbing mountains and wading rivers. Among the peasants, there were only big-wooden-wheeled oxcarts, pack oxen and horses.[89] In the early period after the liberation, only the Burma Road (known as the Kunming-Wanding Road in Yunnan province) passed through Dehong with a total length of more than 100 kilometers. A large number of people walked, carrying their goods on the backs of people and horses on muddy and bumpy post roads. The larger six rivers in the prefecture had no permanent bridges, and people had to cross rivers by bamboo rafts.[90]

In the 1950s, when Wang Lianfang was leaving for west Yunnan on the Burma Road, he rode in a charcoal-powered truck which was exactly like the ones transporting war supplies on the Burma Road during WWII. It travelled for 40-50 kilometers a day.At that time, although the Burma Road ran across west Yunnan, few vehicles were found travelling on it. The only vehicles were used in transporting the cloth, table salt and articles of daily use to the people and troops in Dehong. The young members of the work team carried bags on their backs and went on foot. When they went down to the foot of Santaishan mountain, the bad word came that the remnant bandits had just killed two road maintenance workers on the mountainside. As they approached Zhongga, the news came of the ambush of the enemy's special forces, but the team members marched on without hesitation.[91] In the spring of 1955, the people's government immediately organized road builders to cooperate with the People's Liberation Army (PLA) in repairing the sections of the Burma Road in a timely manner, and set up armed road maintenance teams to link Dehong with the inland China.[92]

There was an exchange of unequal value with business people from inland China. The farmers of all peoples here had to exchange with their lowest-priced agricultural and sideline products for high-priced outside goods. It was very common to change a buffalo for a big iron pot, a big hen for a bag

of needles, an egg for a needle, and a basket of mushrooms for a few *liang* of salts. In addition to purchasing a small amount of necessities that could not be produced by the peasants themselves, they grew and ate home-grown grains, wove and wore their home-made clothes, and were still in a state of self-sufficient natural economy.[93]

In July 1953, the Dehong Dai and Jingpo autonomous region was established, and on May 1,1956, the autonomous region was changed to Dehong Dai and Jingpo autonomous prefecture. From 1955 to 1956, the feudal lords and landlords were redeemed on the premise of abolishing the feudal land ownership and exploitation in terms of government rent, land rent and labor, etc. The people's political powers at all levels were established by election in the rural areas, thus completely ending the system of *tusi* and lords that had ruled for more than 500 years. This is the so-called the peaceful consultation in land reform. In the mountainous areas where the remnants of the primitive communes remained among the Jingpo, Lisu and De'ang peoples, they were helped in vigorously developing production and gradually carrying out mutual assistance and cooperation. In those processes, the privileges of mountain officials were abolished and necessary reforms of the old system and the originally backward factors that hindered the production were carried out, bringing them gradually and directly into socialism. This is called a "direct transition" for short. The work was basically completed by 1958.[94]

Since 1978, the Dai and Jingpo language classes have been restored or newly opened in Dehong's 420 primary schools where more than 60% of the students were from the Dai and Jingpo families. Nationalities Publishing House of DehongPrefecturecompiled and published the Dai, Jingpo, Wa and Lisu language textbooks for primary schools, mathematics textbooks in the Dai, Jingpo and Wa languages, and the corresponding teaching reference books. The implementation of bilingualism in teaching in both ethnic languages and Chinese accelerates the popularization of primary education in ethnic minority areas and improves the quality of education.[95]

There are ethnic song and dance troupes and Dai troupes, and there are performing arts publicity teams in the prefecture. Founded in 1980, the prefectural federation of literature and art circles launches three literary and art publications: *Peacock* in Chinese, *Yonghan* in Dai and *Wenbeng* in Jingpo.The Dai, Jingpo, Achang, Lisu, De'ang and other ethnic minorities living in the prefecture have a long-standing cultural tradition, have handed down a rich variety of folk literature, and love to sing and dance. On every traditional ethnic festival, hundreds or even thousands of all peoples gather together to

sing and dance in celebrating the festivals. They include the Dai and De'ang's Songkran (Water-Splashing Festival), the *Gayang* and peacock dances, the Jingpo's *Munaozongge* festival and the machetes dance, the Achang's *Dengwoluo* dance, the Lisu's production and dances on heel, etc. The Dai's folk narrative poem *Ebing and Sangluo*has been translated into many languages and published in China. Their traditional peacock dance once won silver medals at the World Youth Festival held respectively in Warsaw and Moscow. The prefectural song and dance troupe's Jin Xiaofeng, a young Dai singer, and Kong Xiufen, a young Jingpo singer, as well as Gong Qianguo, a soloist of *hulusi*, a calabash-based music-instrument, all won awards in nation-wide competitions.[96] Born into a Dai family, the late Gen Dequan was a well-known *hulusi* maker and player from Dehong.

TheDai's peacock dance, the art of playing cudgels and boxing, the Jingpo's *Munaozongge* and martial art of machetes, the Lisu's archery and boxing, the Achang's drumming and other traditional sports are increasingly going viral. They are actively performed in the traditional sports meets of Yunnan and China's ethnic minorities, of which the Dai's peacock boxing and Jingpo's machetes dance were rewarded.[97]

Dehong People's Broadcasting Station officially began broadcasting in 1981, and now broadcasts in four languages: the Dai, Jingpo, Zhaiwa and Han. First published in January 1955 by CPC Dehong Prefectural Committee, *Dehong Tuanjie Bao* (Dehong Solidarity News) has been published in four languages of the Han, Dai, Jingpo and Lisu. Recently, it has added a Zhaiwa version to the newspaper. It is the only local tabloid published in five languages among China's ethnic autonomous regions. Nationalities Publishing House of Dehong Prefecture was established in September 1980. In recent years, it has published a rich assortment of books in five languages of the Han, Dai, Jingpo, Zaiwa and Lisu.[98]

In 122 B.C., the envoy Zhang Qian reported to Emperor Wudi of the Han dynasty on the Southwest China Silk Road after returning to China from Bactria (now Afghanistan). Emperor Wudi immediately sent people to Yunnan to break through this road, but was hindered by the tribes in Kunming (now Dali area) for more than four years before they could pass.[99]

In fact, long before Zhang Qian was sent by Emperor Wudi to the Western Regions in 138 BC, Dehong had become China's main passage on the Southwest China Silk Road or the Southern Overland Silk Road, that is, the Sichuan-India Road, earlier than the Northwest China Silk Road. This road passed through Dali, Baoshan and Tengchong from Sichuan to Yunnan,

and from Dehong to Burma, India and other countries. To be more exact, from Chang'an at that time, it passed through Sichuan, Dali, Baoshan and Tengchong, and then through Lianghe and Yingjiang in Dehong prefecture. It crossed the border into Mogaung, northern Burma to Imphal in northeastern India, Bangladesh, upstream the Ganges to northwest India, Pakistan, Taksasila bordering Iran, and then westward, and connected China's Northern Silk Road. The road linked Western Asia and Europe.[100]

This Silk Road existed as early as in the 4th and 5th centuries, B.C., before the Warring States period. According to India's *Arthashastra* and *Laws of Manu*, as early as in the 4th century B.C., Sichuan's silk and silk cloth had been sold in large quantities in India and resold to west Asia, Africa and Europe. In Yunnan's Dianchi Lake area, many western Asian cultural relics were unearthed from the tombs of the Warring States period to the Western Han dynasty. They came in from this Sichuan-India Road. Many *wuzhu*-coins unearthed in Tengchong's Hetaoyuan were minted during Emperor Wudi's Yuanshou reign. Many stories about the India's Asoka of the Maurya dynasty in Yunnan local documents in the 5th century B.C. are closely related to the passage of this road. As far back as in the Han, Tang, Song and Yuan dynasties, the trade on this Silk Road became more frequent. Buddhism was introduced, with Yongchang and Lishui peopled by Indian descents there. It was until the opening of the Burma Road in 1939 that the commercial trade on the Southwest China Silk Road gradually shifted. Dehong is an important pass on the Southwest China Silk Road. For example, Dao Anren (1872-1913), the 24th Dai*tusi* of *Xuanfusi*(local chieftain's office) in Ganya (now Yingjiang county), visited Burma and India in 1905 by this road.[101]

In the early Tang dynasty, Dehong belonged to the Yao *dudu* (prefectural commissioner) of Jiannan *dao* (province) in the Tang dynasty, as the area of Jinchi. In 730, Piluoge unified the six *zhaos* and was awarded as Yunnan king by the Tang imperial court. The Nanzhao (or Nanchao) local regime was established and Dehong was under the jurisdiction of its Yongchang *jiedushi* (prefectural commissioner). After the establishment of the Dali regime in 936, it was bordered by Longjiang river, with the area beyond the west bank belonging to Tengchong prefecture, and Mangshi beyond the east bank being Nongmoudian, belonging to Yongchang prefecture.[102]

In the Tang dynasty, the Nanzhao regime took Dehong and its neighboring areas as the main sources of its army and a gold production base. It strengthened its rule, opened up towns, and promoted immigrations, bringing cultural exchanges among different ethnic groups and promoting the

development of this area. Most of the troops in Nanzhao were recruited from this area. It is written in Fan Chuo's *Book of Yunnan*: "The total number of soldiers in Nanzhao is 300,000, while those from the area west of Yongchang rank first." That is to say, one third of the large armies of Nanzhao were drafted from the west of Yongchang. At the same time, Nanzhao forced large scale of immigration, and those involved in Dehong and its vicinity were the following facts: When Geluofeng attacked Xichuan, he moved 200,000 households to Yongchang; during the battles of Shilangzhao, Jianchuan, Yegong, Tubo and Nongdong, all the captured people were also moved to Yongchang. During Zhenyuan's reign, Yimenggao displaced more than 1,000 families from Yongchang's Wangwaiyu and Wangjuzi to Tuodong (now Kunming), and when breaking through the Jinchi people, he "captured all these people" and sent them to his kingdom's south, east and north, and in Tengchong he "chased the barbarians, set up Ruanhuafu prefecture, and later seven kinds of barbarians were migrated to it, thus the prefecture was renamed Tengchong. "There were more than 3,000 captured people from Pyu kingdom in Burma.They were displaced to Tuodong. The captured three or two thousand people of Michen and Minuo were sent for panning gold in Lishui, etc. Those large-scale forced immigrations separated many men and wives and displaced them. However, they played a very good role in promoting the region's cultural exchanges and economic development.[103]

In 1531, after he unified Burma and established Taungoo (Toungoo) dynasty, Tabinshwehti sent his men to instigate a treason among the border chieftain *tusi*s for Burma. Duo Shining, the *xuanfushi* (commissioner)of Longchuan contacted other *tusi*s for a refusal to do so. Respectively in 1573, 1582 and 1593, Taungoo's invasions of Dehong and Shidian and other places failed. In view of the forty years of anti-Burmese war, Yunnan governor Chen Yongbin decided to set up eight strategic passes of Shenhu, Wanren, Jushi, Tongbi, Tiebi, Huju, Tienma, Hanlong and the town of Pinglu to defend for a long-term defense.In 1766, Burma's Alaungpaya dynasty sent a large army and invaded areas in Dehong from the passes of Shenhuguan and Wanrenguan areas. Emperor Qianlong of the Qing dynasty had to send Ming Rui and Fu Heng to fight against it. The *tusi* chieftains and mountain officials of Dehong actively organized the masses into the war of resistance against the Burmese.[104]

In 1874-1875, Augustus Raymond Margary, an alleged British undercover agent, collected a lot of information and surveyed the terrains in the name of a tourist all the way from Beijing, Hankou, Kunming, Xiaguan, Tengyue to Burma and was prepared to flee from Dehong into Burma. At the

same time, the British Empire sent Horace A. Browne to lead a nearly 200-member-strong armed "survey team" from Burma into Yingjiang's Bengxishan to meet him. The people of all ethnic groups headed by the Jingpo tribe were driven beyond forbearance. Swarming together, they intercepted and killed Margary in Yingjiang's Mangyun. Marching into Bengxishan the next morning, they put to a rout Browne's colonial army, thus making the British Empire's plot unsuccessful. [105]

Before the Communist liberation in 1950, the cultivation of poppy in Dehong's mountainous areas had a history of several hundred years. All previous governments had banned its cultivation but without complete eradication. After the peaceful negotiation of the land reform in 1955, the prefectural government issued notices banning the poppy cultivation and allocated a large mint of money for the transformation of the mountain areas in order to help to develop grain and tea and other diversified businesses. It transformed the poppy mountains into those of grain and tea and economic trees and improved the lives of the people of all ethnic groups.[106] The prefectural government selected seven biologically distinctive industries with Dehong's characteristics and outstanding comparative advantages, with the development priority on six trees of bamboo, coffee, macadimia nuts, lemon, oil-tea camellia, walnut and one grass of century plant.

In Songshu village, *Prof. Phukon was welcomed by Mr Kuai Yongsheng, the chief of Dehong Prefecture's Bureau of Ethnic and Religious Affairs,* Mr. Gong Jinwen, a retired staff member from Dehong Prefecture's Bureau of Commerce and a scholar of the Dai language and culture, and Cai Xiaohuang, a retired lady professor from Yunnan Minzu University. They are Tai Mao people of Dehong Dai and Jingpo autonomous prefecture.

Mr Kuai had his back of palms tattooed, a typical Dai man's life-style. It is often cited that the Dai people's tattoo is mostly for men, with tattoos on four limbs and body, not on the face.The tattoo patterns include the Dai scripts, animals of lions, tigers, elephants, unicorns, David's deer, phoenixes, peacocks, etc. to demonstrate one's bravery and manhood as well as a wish for an auspicious and smooth life. If the Dai men are not tattooed, the girls will look down upon them.[107] David K. Wyatt writes that in Thailand, tattooing is associated with the passage to adulthood, was widely practiced among men.[108] It is reported that the Shan in Burma "were known for their faith in talismanic tattoos".[109]

But of the Nagas, older Konyak men often have elaborate facial tattoos.[110] In Burma, the most extraordinary Chin fashion was the custom of tattooing the women's faces. Chin facial tattoos cover the whole face - starting at just above the bridge of the nose and radiating out in a pattern of dark lines that resemble a spider's web. Even the eye lids were tattooed.Traditionally, the tattooing was done to girls once they reached the age of 12 or 13. The practice died out after WWII, but in many Chin villages one can see a few tattooed grannies going about their daily chores. Legend has it that this practice was initiated to keep young Chin maidens from being coveted by Rakhaing princes whose kingdom bordered the southern Chin hills.[111] It reminds me of the facial tattoos among the Dulong ladies on the Dulong river in northwest Yunnan. In fact, Wang Guoxiang found tattoos among the Dai women as well.[112]

I visited Songshu village one year in the early 1990s when Songkran was celebrated. My co-workers and I were invited by one of the hotel attendants, a young and moon-faced Dai girl surnamed Duan, into her family in the village. Very hospitable were the Dai villagers, including those I met in my following field work trips in other parts of Dehong and Xishuangbanna.

Today, the Chinese hosts offered us a lunch with lots of Dai dishes including *Luk Lao* (liquor). The two parties had a discussion over the lunch and after that, *Prof. Phukon played before his Chinese hosts Tai Ahom's prayer by Molung Punarm Mohan Phukon. The Chinese were very excited hearing it and enjoying the video of Mainer's (Prof. Phukon's younger daughter) wedding ceremony.*

There Prof. Phukon took interviews with them. Mr. Kuai informed us that Dehong prefecture has a larger Dai population of 360,000 than that of 320,000 in Xishuangbanna prefecture. I could detect a sour sense on part of Mr. Kuai that Dehong is more of a Dai country than Xishuangbanna. I think there are three reasons that Dehong is not regarded as much as that. Firstly, the Dai people in Dehong is much developed, more open to the outside world than tradition-bound Xishuangbanna. Secondly, Xishuangbanna prefecture is sacred to the Dai only, but the Dai in Dehong have to share the prefecture with the Jingpo. Thirdly, less publicity of Dehong than Xishuangbanna. For instance, for many years, the well-known song *There Is a Beautiful Place* was regarded as a Dai folk song from Xishuangbanna. It was all about the Dai people's praise of new Communist government who had offered a great deal of aid to the native ethnic peoples, including the Dai.Zhang Nuanxin's movie *Qingchun Ji* (The Sacrifice of Youth) is based on Zhang Manling's novel entitled *There Is a Beautiful Place,* a borrowing of the same title of the

song for the inland urban school-leavers in Xishuangbanna during the Cultural Revolution. On this trip with Prof. Phukon, I asked the Indian guests to enjoy it, together with some other Yunnan music pieces, with my built-in car USB player. But it was claimed years later that the same song was composed by Yang Fei, an army composer when stationed in Ruili. The composer was asked to name the river in the song lyrics as the Ruili river. It was like a war for intellectual property right.

Prof. Phukon invited the Chinese hosts to participate in the conference sponsored by *Ban Ok Puplik Moung Tai* (Northeast Tai Literary Association) in the coming February in Assam. Prof. Cai Xiaohuang accepted the invitation to attend it.

Mengmao: The Dai's Connection with Myanmar and India in Different Versions

We set out for Ruili at 16:48. The road was numbered old G320, a national road, now wet with some rainfall these days, and it seemed that it was not wide enough, with some sections under construction or repair. The road was running in parallel with the Ruili river (formerly Shweli), a border river between China and Myanmar.

We arrived at Zhefang town, at which the Longjiang river is called Ruili river. Here is a well-known plain or basin for traditional quality rice production of the Dai people. It is said that Mangshi and Zhefang are original places of rice cultivation, and now there are growing wild rice, the rice's forefather. Before the Communist liberation of March 1950, farming in Dehong was extensive, and there was a saying that "the corn with dung applied was not good to eat, and the girl carrying dung was a stinker." They kept the habit of "doing only two jobs a year", without field management in between, entirely dependent on the weather. The Jingpo, De'ang and Lisu areas were still in the primitive agricultural stage dominated by swiddening cultivation in mountainous areas.[113]

Despite this, "the unhusked rice of Mangshi and the polished rice of Zhefang" have been praised. Their main varieties are numbered four, of which only one was still planted among a few farmers in 1987. There is a saying circulating here: "When the rice is turning yellow, the Dai are happy," reflecting that grain income is the main source of rural economy, with which the people's lives are closely related. As early as in the Qing dynasty, the rice here was selected as a tribute to the imperial court. The Zhefang rice is a soft one, with its quality ranking between those of glutinous and non-glutinous rice. The rice

is the treasure of treasures among rices, with the best color, fragrance, taste, often used in festivals, banquets and entertainment of guests. The soft rice, when cooked, is not hard, not to taste raw. It is still easy to taste soft and delicious.[114]

Soon after Zhefang, we entered the territory of Ruili city, and the road was running in parallel with the Longjiang river, the upper reach of the Ruili river. To have a close-up look at the Ruili river, Prof. Phukon stopped for a visit to the Stilwell Road Dock Wetland Park on the river side. It was far from completion,but the name of Stilwell Road was attractive for our journey, for it connected India, Burma and China in war times and still connects them back in our mind.

At a road junction, one could have turned left to Wanding town. *But Prof. Phukon did not do so.* Wanding is the end of Kunming-Wanding Road. In August 1938, the Burma Road was open to traffic, and Wanding became the main overland passage from China to Burma, by which Wanding developed accordingly. On January 31, 1985, Wanding was approved by China's State Council to set up as an administrative city. But later it was lowered as one of the towns of Ruli city.

The Wanding bridge is not only the one spanning the river between China and Myanmar, but also an important channel for the peoples of China and Burma or Myanmar for mutual trade, market and economic and cultural exchanges. The bridge was built in 1938 when the Burma Road was rush-repaired. During the War of Resistance against Japan, hundreds and thousands of motor vehicles passed through the bridge every day. It was an important international communication port for China's foreign relations at that time. Hundreds of thousands of Chinese Expeditionary Forces entered and left China from here, and millions of tons of military aid were transported to the mainland China from the bridge. On May 3, 1942, the Japanese army, guided by armored vehicles and with those vehicles carrying infantry, invaded Chinese territory along the Burma Road from Burma's Lashio. On January 20, 1945, the 53rd, 2nd and 6thArmies of Chinese Expeditionary Forces got reunited in Wanding, and a flag-raising ceremony was held on January 21 to celebrate the recovery of Wanding. In December 1956, it was by walking from Wanding bridge that Premier Zhou Enlai and Vice Premier He Long escortednU Nu, the Prime Minister of Burma, to attend the border people's gala in Mangshi.[115]

It is believed that there are ruins of Guozhanbi imperial city in Bangbeng, Jiele township. The temple in Hansa village is one of the larger Buddhist temples in Ruili, with magnificent and beautiful buildings and colorful

decorations. The beautiful scenery of the village was used for filming the outdoor inspection of the prince in the movie *Peacock Princess*.[116]

Eventually we got to Ruili at 20:20 in the evening. But I got lost in the buzz of a busy city highlighted by red and green neons and glossy building. Actually I visited Ruili for the first time in the early 1990s. At that time, the special market for border trade was covered with roofs, filled with tents, a large shopping mall. The business firm was the buzzword then. But now I had no idea of it, completely lost and disoriented in a modern metropolis.

Prof. Phukon was accommodated free in a very beautiful hotel, New Kai Tong International Hotel, a posh up market hotel with an excellent restaurant. The host was Mr Ai Xiangbao, chief of Ruili City's Bureau of Ethnic and Religious Affairs. We benefited as his attendants. The room was quiet, warm and welcoming. After dinner, we went for shopping. It was a city with many shops on the streets. The vendors, especially the young women, were busy touting their articles of daily use.

Ruili is bordered on northwest, southwest and southeast by Myanmar, and the boundary line is 141.4 kilometers long. Ruili was known as Mengmao Guozhanbi in ancient times, meaning a place where the fragrant and soft rice was grown. In the Western Han dynasty, it belonged to Ailao area. In the Eastern Han dynasty, it was attached to Yongchang prefecture. In the Tang dysnasty's Nanzhao regime, it belonged to Yongchang *jiedudi* (commissioner's prefectural region). In the Song dynasty under the Dali regime, it was part of Jinchi area. The Yuan imperial court set up Luchuan *lu*(prefecture) here. In the Ming and Qing dynasties, it was *Anfusi* office of Mengmao. In 1932, the Republic of China set up a Ruili *Shezhiju* bureau and coexisted with Mengmao *tusi* chieftains. Liberated in May 1950 and formally approved by China's Council of Government Affairs (later changed to the State Council) in 1952, Ruili county was established in 1950. The county was named after the Samesake river nearby, meaning auspiciousness and beauty.[117] In 1993, Ruili county was abolished and Ruili city was set up instead. Interestingly, there is a fashion magazine called *Ruili*, but it has nothing to do with the Samesake in Dehong.

The ethnic groups in Ruili are mainly the Dai and Jingpo ethnic groups, followed by the De'ang and Lisu peoples. *The Dais, who live in Ruili, call themselves Dai Mao, belonging to the Dai De branch, who are the progenitors Prof. Phukon and as such he had travelled a long distance to visit his father land.*

Ruili city seat is Mengmao town at the northeast foothills in the Ruili valley, with its southwest facing mountains. A good 34 kilometers away in its

southeast is the famous Ruili river, and the old river was flowing right from the city. Mengmao is of the Dai language. It also refers to the entire valley basin and the city seat town, meaning a misty place or foggy city. The river was once named Nanmao (south of Mengmao) river, and now called Ruili river.

Recently, I have read a number of works introducing Ruili's Mengmao kingdom, including *A Study of the Daguang Kingdom and the Guozhanbi Kingdom in the Dai History* compiled by the Dai Research Society of Dehong Dai and Jingpo Autonomous Prefecture, anonymous Dai literatures translated by Cai Xiaohuang and Yue Xiaobao, and some other local chronicles. There are different interpretations of Mengmao and Guozhanbi kingdoms.

Some people believe that in 568, the brothers of Hunlu and Hunlai built a powerful and unified Dai regime in Mengmao, namely, the kingdom of Mengmaonong Guozhanbi,[118] which is short for Mengmao (now Laiyunjian at the northern foot of Mengmao city). It saw the rule of brothers Hundeng and Yalu regimes and three dynasties of Si family in the Yuan and Ming dynasties (in 1336, Si Kefa took over the Mengmao regime). It ended in 1448 when the Ming troops wiped it out in the third Luchuan battle at Mengmao. Altogether, the kingdom lasted for 881 years. Zhaowuding, the Dai prince of Guozhanbi kingdom, met with misfortune in the primitive forest. With the help of elephant trains, he fought back and seized the throne of Guozhanbi kingdom. Zhaowuding, belonging to Hunlu and Hunlai dynasties, further unified the Lehong area in Lincang and Simao. Some believe that there was Mengmao kingdom 3,000 years ago, and the later Guozhanbi kingdom was founded by Mengmao, Meng Xinggu and other two tribal alliances around the 10th century.[119]

It is also believed that in the early 14th century, Si Kefa, the chief administrator of Luchuan *lu*, rose and established the local regime of Guozhanbi, extending eastward to the west bank of the Red river and westward to the Brahmaputra valley, which was the most brilliant period in the history of the Dai people. Guozhanbi was put down after 1441 when the Ming Dynasty went on three punitive expeditions.[120]

In the three versions above, some people believe that Mengmao Guozhanbi or simply Guozhanbi is a myth (e.g. Jiang Yingliang[121]). Some render that they are historical facts e.g. Yang Yongsheng and Dehong Prefectural Society for the Dai Studies[122]). The Si's regime in the Yuan and Ming dynasties is claimed to be Guozhanbi or Luchuan regime (e.g. Jiang Yingliang[123]).

Yang Yongsheng believes that Guozhanbi kingdom was a state established by the Dai ancestors during 567-1488. However, before that, they established

Daguang kingdom from the 5th century B.C. to the 6th century A.D. The first country of the Dai people, it extended to what is Yunnan and Myanmar today.[124]

In recent years, He Ping, based on domestic and foreign data has proved that Guozhanbi or Kawsampi in Dai history are all based on some legends and stories of an ancient Indian country of the samesake and have nothing to do with the Dai history.[125] The legend that the Daguang kingdom in the history of the Dai people is a legendary story about the Taigong kingdom in the history of Myanmar, which does not exist in the history of the Dai people.[126] Hence, He Ping also denies that Dianyue, Shan and Pong were the countries established by the Dai and Shan peoples.[127]

It is pointed out that Sanskrit has been used to name the places in the countries and regions where Theravada Buddhism was prevalent. It is understandable that the leaders of the Mengmao regime in the Dai area regarded Guozhanbi as the honorary title of their own kingdom and called it Mengmao Guozhanbi, just as some Dai localities today call themselves Mengbalanaxi. Therefore, the Sanskrit names can not be used to infer that they were part of India or other places.

What is based on reliable historical records and thus undisputable is the Ming dynasty's three punitive expeditions, from 1441 to 1449, to Luchuan regime centered around today's Ruili. After Si Kefa became the leader of Luchuan in 1340, Luchuan became the regime of feudal lordship in the Dai area of west Yunnan. The conflicts broke out repeatedly between Luchuan and the central regime of the Yuan dynasty, but the latter failed to capture it in repeated attacks. In the Ming dynasty, Luchuan's power continued to expand, occupying Tengchong, Lujiang, Jinchi (now Baoshan area), and attempting to capture Dali, Yunzhou (now Yunlong area) and other places.[128]

According to another study,with the rise of Si Kefa's Luchuan forces, it expanded rapidly to the east and west banks of the Irrawaddy river and southwest Yunnan, and many Dai ancestors moved southward or eastward, once again causing many Dai people in western Yunnan to move southward and some of them were attached to the army. For example, a large part of the Dai who call themselves Daiyun in Lincang, Shuangjiang, Gengma, Jinggu and so on moved southward at this time.[129]

In my opinion, as a historical research method, myths and legends do reflect to some extent the ancient ethnic history and culture, especially among the non-literal ethnic groups. For example, Jian Bozan, in his An *Outline History of China*, deals with Chaoshi (Youchaoshi), Suirenshi, Huangdi, Yandi, Chiyou, Fuxi, Yao and Shun, and believes that "these legends are used as a tool, also

managing to draw a simple look of primitive society in China." Jian Bozan's view is modest.[130] Bai Shouyi and his counterparts also use myths and legends to outline the beginning of Chinese history.[131] In sharp contrast, John King Fairbank and Merle Goldman, apart from archeological finds, use no myths or legends in describing the beginning of the Chinese history in their book *China: A New History*.[132] However, in the current study of Chinese history, there is a phenomenon that mythologyor legends are used as tried and true historical materials. I think that a host of information about Mengmao Guozhanbi and King Zhaowuding are based on the Dai's own myths and legends, which need to be treated with caution.

Mengmao kigdom reminds me of the Jinglong Jindian kingdom in Xishuangbanna. Both of them were powerful Dai regimes. According to *Le Shi* (A History of Lue) , in 1180, the head of the Dai people, Payazhen,[133] took Jinghong for the center and unified all the parts of the Dai people and established the local regime of Jinglong Jindian kingdom. However, he still accepted the rule of the Chinese feudal dynasty, took the Celestial Empire as the common lord and was given the title and a tiger-headed gold seal by the Celestial Emperor.

According to Xie Yuanzhang, Jinglong Jindian kingdom, established in 1160, was the regime of the Dai Lue, a branch of the Dai people, known as Hekanjinghong in the Dai language and Cheli (formerly Chedi) *Xuanweisi* (local chieftain's office) in Chinese. At that time, the other branches of the Thai-Dai ethnic group established brotherly states successively at the same time, including Guozhanbi (Luchuan *Xuanweisi*) in Dehong area of western Yunnan, Lanna (*Pa-paiXuanweisi*) in northern Thailand, Lan Chang (Laogao *Xuanweisi*) in present-day Luangprabang, Laos) and Mubang (Mubang *Xuanweisi*) and Mengyang *(*Mengyang *Xuanweisi)* in the Shan state, northern Myanmar. Later, Guozhanbi or Luchuan was abolished by the Ming dynasty because of the conflicts between them, Lanna was merged into Bangkok or Chakri dynasty, Thailand, Lan Chang or Laogao developed into Laos to become a French Indochina colony later, Mubang and Mengyang became a British colony in Burma. Only the kingdom of Jinlong Jindian continued in the form of a Cheli *Xuanweisi* to the early 20th century.[134]

Jiang Yingliang quoted a folk legend from among the Dai in Ruili's Mengmao: The Dai people established a Mengmao kingdom on the banks of Ruili river 3,000 years ago. A thousand years ago, the population of Mengmao increased, migrating to all directions, and many small regimes were established. These legends indicate that the Dai people in Dehong entered a stage of fast development around the 10th century.[135]

Joachim Schliesinger writes: The Tai Mao were the first Tai group to establish a properly documented Tai kingdom. William Clifton Dodd believed that the Tai Mao founded the small kingdom of Muang Mao already before the middle of the sixth century BC. However, documented proof of the existence of the Muang Mao kingdom dates back only to 607 AD. Following Dodd's assumption about the early history of the Tai race, people of the same migration, or of the Tai Mao stock, also founded the kingdoms of Sip Song Panna with its capital at Chiang Rung, Chiang Tung in the Shan State of Burma and Yonok with its capital Chiang Saen in northern Thailand. The state of Mao, or Muang Mao, derived its name from the Mao river (or Shweli river in Burmese). The Muang Mao or Muang Mao Lung kingdom was located in the most western section of today's Yunnan province of China near the Myanmarian border. The present border line between Myanmar and China would have divided the kingdom at that time into two halves. The kingdom of Muang Mao was organized into several territorial units, *muangs*, under chiefly families. During the days of its greatest glory, the kingdom had its capital and seat ofgovernment on the left bank ofthe Mao river,about 21 kilometers east of Namkham, in the modern village of Se-Lan in Yunnan. The present site of the village of Muang Mao, however, is shorn of all its ancient glory.

During the eighth and ninth centuries a number of Shan principalities sprang up in today's Shan State of Myanmar and the Tai Yai people became the dominant rulers of the region. During its long period of existence, the Mao kingdom had several capital seats at different locations, they were all located directly on, or a short distance from, the bank of the Mao (Shweli) River.

The Mao kingdom reached its peak in the middle of the thirteenth century, when the Tai Mao and their migrating kin groups, the Tai Yai and Ahom, dominated most parts of northern mainland Southeast Asia. Their dominance stretched from the Mekong in the east over upper Burma into Assam (the Ahom of Assam are a category of the Mao Shan)in the west and from southern Yunnan in the north to today's border area of northern Thailand in the south.

It is said that when Kublai Khan conquered the kingdom of Nanchao in1252, the principalities of Muang Mao surrendered to him, but when the Ming dynasty took power in 1368, the Tai Mao became independent again, Seidenfaden reported that much fighting had gone on in the Mao kingdom between Burmese and Chinese troops including Tai Yai soldiers within the Burmese army, during the thirteenth and sixteenth centuries. Finally, the Tai Mao were defeated by the Chinese in 1604 with the help of tribal troops from as far away as the borders of Tibet. After that the small Tai Mao principalities

on both sides of today's territorial borders were either under Chinese or Burmese influence. The glory of the Mao kingdom had now passed over.

The Tai Mao under Chinese influence were grouped in eleven districts ruled by their own Chao Phao (or *sawbwas* in Burmese), assisted by ministers, but all under a Chinese governor. With the exception of Lukiang and Chefang and two other states peopled by Chinese, Lisu, Chingpaw (Jinghpaw or Jingpo) and Rumai, these small Tai states had Tai names like Muang Mao, Muang Wan, Muang Khwan, Muang Nai, Muang Ti, Muang Chanta and Muang Phan.

When the British took control over what is today the Shan State of Burma between l 885 and l 887, the administration of the various Tai peoples of the area took the form of an indirect rule, with local chiefs (*sawbwas*) retaining considerable independence. Although the Tai Mao were under the influence of two different countries, Burma, ruled by the British, and China, initially this had relatively little impact on their daily lives, as British and Chinese administrative control over their area was weak at that time. Under Chinese suzerainty, the royal family of Muang Mao adopted the surname of Kan, and the Mao *sawbwa* at the commencement of the twentieth century was Kan Kuo-fan. He died in l928 and was succeeded by his son Kan Yin-feng who died just one year after his appointment. His successor was his youngest son aged two years, in the normal course of events his mother would have acted as regent during his minority. But another heir to the throne, Kan Kuo-cen, who traced his descent from a former *sawbwa* who had ruled Muang Mao over a hundred years ago, decided to seize Muang Mao by force. He collected an army of several hundred men and advanced on Muang Mao city. After a long and bloody battle he finally managed to take the city. Much booty fell into his troop's hands, and his soldiers deserted him to return home with as much as they could carry. The Chinese authorities then requested peace in that frontier state and appointed the *sawbwa* of Kanai and a Chinese resident to join forces in ruling Muang Mao.

After World War II the situation for Muang Mao changed totally. China and independent Burma sought to increase their control over the remote border area under their respective jurisdictions. The Tai Mao on the Chinese side were heavily suppressed during the Cultural Revolution(1966-1976). Communist troops destroyed their temples and prohibited cultural practices associated with Buddhism. In Burma, the Tai Mao were affected by the political and military struggles for independence between the Shan and other ethnic minority groups and the Burmese government in Rangoon.[136]

In Dehong's Dai areas, especially in Ruili's Mengmao, there are many legends and stories about ancient history. The story of Zhaowuding is very complicated. There are several volumes of books written in the Dai language, and some good story tellers can tell stories for days and nights. Zhuowuding is considered the earliest king of Mengmao. His mother, about to give birth, was carried by a big bird, alighting on a big tree. The next day, she gave birth to Zhuowuding. A wandering monk saved his mother and son from the tree, and his mother got married to this monk. Zhaowuding grew up and, withthe help of the monk, returned to his native land and became a king. He was so strong that his neighbouring kings surrendered to him. The king of Menggen was greatly worried about the strength of Zhaowuding, so he laid an ambush, lured Zhaowuding to send out troops and captured him. In order to learn Zhaowuding's skills, Menggen king, not to kill him, asked his daughter to learn from him. The two soon fell in love with each other and cheated the king out of his white elephant that ran the fastest. They took the opportunity to flee the land of Menggen, settled down in the place known as Mengge Zhanbi, and later established a kingdom called Wuding and he was made the king himself. The kingdom was to become Mengmao later. After the founding of Wuding dynasty, the couple believed in Buddhism.

At that time, when Sakyamuni had become a Buddhist monk for ten years, he came to a place near Mengmao and met an old woman named Benglang. Seeing that Sakyamuni was outstanding in appearance and rare in talent, Benglang proposed to marry off her daughter Nama Hengti to Buddha. But Buddha declined it. Enraged, Nanma Hengti made a pledge: "I must get married to Zhaowuding in order to revenge this insult." Later, Nanma Hengti was married to Zhaowuding as his next wife.

At this time, Shakyamuni was begging alms in Mengmao, and Princess Menggen often devoutly gave alms.Nanma Hengti did not succeed in designing to kill the Buddha for several times. One day, when Zhaowuding was going hunting and Princess Menggen was visiting Buddha, Nanma Hengti took the opportunity to set the palace on fire and burned to death Princess Menggen and her attendants. Returning home, Zhaowuding was so angry that he killed Nanma Hengti and her whole family in a bloodbath, which made the Nanma clanperish. Since then, the Dai people of Mengmao never dare to have a surname again, for fear that one person will cause a trouble and the whole family will suffer from it.

The story above has a strong Buddhist flavor, mainly because the venerable Buddhists, when accounting stories from the sutras, added many

Buddhist legends to the story. With the religious elements excluded from the story, it will become a historical story of the Dai clan in Dehong. Zhaowuding was the chief of a clan tribe in the eastern part of Dehong adjacent to Menggen. Later, he was defeated by another clan in Menggen area and was captured. Then he fell in love with the daughter of Menggen chief. With her help, he and some of his clan members managed to escape and rebuilt the clan and tribe in Mengmao. He also established affinity with a neighboring clan tribe, which was annexed by Zhaowuding. This shows that the Dai people in Dehong have entered the historical stage of tribal alliance and tribal wars.[137]

The fame of Mengmao was also based on the fact that the Tai people in India's Assam came from here. According to Assam's Tai documents Ahom Pu-Lan-Chi, in 1218, Shukapha[138] led 9,000 people from Mengmao to settle in Assam after 13 years. In 1228, they conquered the tribes, ended a long war, and established a dynasty, historically known as the kingdom of Ahom. The Ahom people established a strong dynastic rule in the region. In 1826, the British entered the Assam area, forcing Burma to cede Assam to Britain, which sent its governor to administer it, ending the Tai's rule for 600 years in Assam. Since then, Assam had become a province of British India. In 1947, India declared independence and Assam became one of India's states. Due to the inter marriages between different tribes and the decline of Tai's status in local society, most of the Tai have been integrated into other ethnic groups, leaving less than 600,000 Tais who have accepted Hinduism and mainly engaged in agricultural production.[139]

The reason Shukapha left Mengmao for Assam is that he was adopted by his uncle who had no sons. Later in his old age, the uncle got a son, Sukanpha, and Shukapha lost his succession. His mother-in-law advised him not to fight for the throne with Sukanpha, but to create a country of his own. Shukapha accepted her mother-in-law's advice and began preparations in 1215. In 1218, he moved westward with 9,000 people. In 1228, Shukapha established the kingdom of Ahom in Assam.[140]

Other accounts of the Ahom history record that the man who led the Ahom's westward movement was not Shukapha, but his younger brother Samlongpha. His elder brother Sookampha sent him on a westward expedition and he would like return after the victory but was afraid his brother's jealousy and harm to be inflicted on himself, so he led all his followers to stay in India.[141]

It is also believed that the Tai people living in Assam did not go with Shukapha, but later they went in different groups. I think they formed different Tai branches later.

The Ahom chronicles date the Ahom incursion into Assam in the first decade of the thirteenth century and attribute the leadership of their campaigns to Shukapha, the elder brother of the great Mao Shan king Hso Hkan Hpa. By 1227, Shukapha had established a small principality in eastern Assam, a base from which, over the next century, his successors were to expand their control over most of Assam. In the process, however, by moving across the mountains that divide Burma from India the Ahom rapidly became separated from the cultural and political world from whence they had come. By intermarrying with the local community, they maintained their power and a good measure of their social and political position, but their cultural traditions gradually were supplanted by the Indian culture of the region into which they had moved, and most of them ultimately were to lose even their identity as Tai. Their fate is one extreme outcome of the general phenomenon of the Tai encounter with the established civilizations of the region, a fate apparently shared by no other Tai group.[142]

Joachim Schliesinger provides more details: The earliest Tai entry into Assam of India is believed to have occurred already in the eighth century AD, yet no historical records have been found about the settlements before the thirteenth century.

In the year 1215, the Tai Ahom, a branch of the Tai Mao, began their march under the leadership of Siu-Ka-Pha from the kingdom of Muang Mao westward, passing through several *muang*s, staying some time at each place, and then crossed the Irrawaddy river near Wing Men, may be today's Bhamo. From there they marched toward the Hukawng valley of today's Kachin State of upper Myanmar and crossed over the northern part of the Patkai range into northeastern Assam. The Tai Ahom chronicles note that Siu-Ka-Pha had an army of 9,000 men with superior weapons. On their way they came to Mainkwon the seat of all influential Naga chief. Siu-Ka-Pha conquered the site and continued his march towards Pha-Ke-Che-Ring, the state of the Tai Phake people, an area south of the Kham hill and just west of the Loglai River.

The Phake people, another branch of the Tai Mao, originally came from Muang Mao via Muang Kwan(today's Maing Kwan)in the Hukawng valley. Then, they advanced to the Nong Jang lake on the Patkai range. Siu-Ka-Pha declared the lake as his territory of which the eastern limits formed the boundary between the Nara county and his land. From the Nong Jang Patkai pass he moved towards the Ruk river along the bank of the Pong or Bong river. There, they built rafts and the whole party,including three hundred horses, descended to the Dihing river. From the confluence they rowed on the Dihing

river southwest through the present Tirap division and entered the Brahmaputra valley in a region called Tipam.

There he founded the first Tai state in eastern Assam in 1229. Because of seasonal flooding, Siu-Ka-Pha ventured southwards down the Brahmaputra valley for the next twenty years. All the various locations settled at for some years proved unsuitable for cultivation until he reached the area of Sibsagar division. There, he built his first capital on a permanent basis in 1252. In much later years, the Ahom were followed by the Aiton, Khamti, Phake, Khamyang and Turung, all Tai-speaking groups from upper Burma.

In the following centuries the Ahom state was greatly enlarged. By 168l the whole valley of the Brahmaputra came under their political domination. The Ahom brought their own political system, administrative structure, social institutions and religious beliefs with them from Muang Mao, their place of origin. They also left many records written in Tai language in the script they received from the Mon. With the incorporation of more and more people from India speaking the Assamese language, the process of integration continued and by the eighteenth century the distinction between the Ahom and the local culture almost disappeared.

The Ahom kings enjoyed uninterrupted power till l826 when the British East India Company conquered Assam after the Anglo-Burmese War of 1824-1826. Most of the descendants of the Ahom and other Tai groups in Assam live today in several locations in upper Assam and the eastern part of Arunachal Pradesh. They are Buddhists of the Hinayana school.

Dai Mao or Tai Mao are also found in Ban Mai Mok Cham, MaeAi district and Fang district in province of Chiang Mai, Thailand. Its population was estimated to be 100 millions in2000. In the early 1970s, they left their homeland, Namkham district in Burma's Shan state, very near the Chinese border, and migrated via Kengtung to their present locations in Chiang Mai province. Security and economic reasons were given as the main factors in deciding to leave their homeland. Approximately 25 Tai Mao families have settled in the upper part of Ban Mai Mok Cham of Mae Ai district, a small village located on the left side of the Kok river,where they live together with Tai Yai people. A few Tai Mao families have also settled in the city of Fang. The Tai Mao are also known as Mao, Mau, Northern Shan and Chinese Shan. Older British sources refer to Tai Mao as Chinese Shan or Eastern Shan and the Burmese call them Shan Tayok. The Lue refer to the Tai Mao sometimes as northern Tai, or Tai Nua, because they live north of Sip Song Panna (Xishuangbanna).[143]

The Dai people's migration to India reminds me of Marco Polo's journey from Yunnan to Myanmar, G.E. Morrison's travel from China into Burma and Calcutta,[145] and the Chinese troops and Stilwell's retreat from Burma into Assam in WWII.

It was a hectic day today, and tomorrow Prof. Phukon was to visit the ancient Mengmao city, and the new cluster of Dai-style imperial palaces now under construction, and to undertake interviews with the Dai in the villages.

To be continued

Notes and references

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24. Also spelt as Panhung.
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    It seems that most last rulers of a dynasty had an uncomfortable or turbulent life. In Burma, when the royal palace was looted and used to quarter British and Indian troops, Burma's last king Thibaw and his queen were unceremoniously bundled into oxcarts and then onto a waiting steamer. The former king spent the rest of his 1ife in exile in India (Steven Martin, Mic Looby, Michael Clark, et al. op. cit. 2002). Vietnam's last emperor Bao Dai spent his days in exile in France ever since 1955.

    China's last emperor was Aisin-Gioro Pu Yi, better known as Henry Pu-yi. He was overthrown in the Revolution of 1911 and was restored as the puppet emperor of Japanese-ruled Manchu. He was captured in the Soviet Union as one of the war criminals after the Japan surrendered at the end of WWII. After Tokyo trial of war criminals, he wassent back to China for sentence. He was released from the prison and lived as a staff member at a botanical garden in Beijing (for details, refer to Aisin-Gioro Pu Yi. From Emperor to Citizen: The Autobiography of Aisin-Gioro Pu Yi. Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1979, or alternatively see the movie *The Last Emperor*, directed by Bernardo Bertolucci).

    Dao Shixun, the last chief of Xishuangbanna, was appointed as a hereditary *zhaopianling* and *xuanweishi*, underwent the war years in WWII and China's civil war. He received his higher education in Yunnan University and worked as a linguist in an ethnic research

institute in Kunming. During the Cultural Revolution, he was forced to labour on a farm from 1969 to 1978. After that, he was rehabilitated and was appointed as one of the vice chairmen of Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference in Yunnan. He died on October 1, 2017, China's National Day, at the age of 89.

Zhu Yunwen, better known as Emperor Jianwen, though he was not the last monarch but the second emperor of the Ming dynasty, was believed to spend his vagrant life in Yunnan after his uncle, Zhu Di, later to be Emperor Yongle, the third emperor of the Ming dynasty, attempted to kill him.

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Songs of the Tai Aiton, Tai Phake and Tai Khamyang[1]

Stephen Morey

There are a number of Tai communities living in North East India, and in this article, I will survey the kinds of songs traditionally sung in those communities. I commenced my study of Tai languages back in 1996, spending time in two villages – Ban Lung (otherwise Barpathar) in Karbi Anglong district, a Tai Aiton village, and Namphakey in Dibrugarh district, a Tai Phake village. In both villages there were very fine singers, and over the years I have recorded many songs in the Tai language there. Subsequent to 1996 I have visited many other Tai villages and recorded traditional songs wherever I could. This article will include songs of Phake, Aiton and Khamyang.

Traditional songs in these communities take a number of forms, some being strongly connected to the Buddhist religious practices of the community. I will survey the types of songs, and give some examples of the songs, from each of three communities, Tai Phake (section 1), Tai Aiton (section 2) and Tai Khamyang (section 3).

The earliest recordings of Tai songs are those made by Dr. Banchob Bandhumedha (see section 4 below), and these are very fine examples of these songs. Dr. Banchob's songs were recorded only in audio, but I have been fortunate to be able to make videos of some of the singers that I worked with. I have recently set up three YouTube Channels so that the videos of Tai culture I have made can be put up on line and made available for everyone in the Tai community. These are:

Tai Aiton Culture:
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCWiix918fLnibaWD9KO__og

Tai Khamyang Culture:
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCebNW4Q5eBgKL0wJMb66m8w

Tai Phake Culture:
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC56pzAb8fqv2tHiGwmOdTuA

I plan to make more for Tai Khamti and Tai Ahom very soon, as well as for Singpho, and will announce these on my Facebook page.

1. Tai Phake

The 2016 volume of the Indian Journal of Tai Studies included my article Realisation of Tones in Traditional Tai Phake Songs. This article gives an overview of Tai Phake songs, and discusses one song, the Kham Khe Khyang, in detail. The Khe Khyang style is also sung in Tai Aiton and Tai Khamyang, and this article will be the first to present information about the Khe Khyang song in those languages.

Table 1 presents a list of song types in Tai Phake that I am aware of. In these names, the Tai Phake name for a song is a compound word, mɔ¹ khām², meaning literally 'sing word'[2].

Table 1: Types of Song-Poetry among the Tai Phake

ꩡꩬꩵꩫ	mɔ¹ khām² sɔi¹ yɔi⁴	Rice Pounding Song
ꩡꩬꩵꩫꩮꩣꩫꩵ	mɔ¹ khām² sā¹ ɔi²	Songs sung when visiting the forest
ꩡꩬꩵꩫꩭ	mɔ¹ khām² phɔi²	Songs in the composed or elaborated style
ꩡꩬꩵꩫꩪꩣꩫꩮ	mɔ¹ khām² siŋ² kaaŋ²	Festival songs (Lit: song-prevent-drum)
ꩡꩬꩵꩫꩣꩫ	mɔ¹ khām² puŋ¹	Songs performed in Tai Dramin
ꩡꩬꩵꩫꩮꩬꩵꩬ	mɔ¹ khām² khe² khyāŋ²	Songs in the *Khe² Khyāŋ²* style
ꩡꩬꩵꩫꩭꩭꩣꩬꩮꩵꩫꩵ	mɔ¹ khām² lau³ luk² ɔu¹	Songs for teaching children
ꩡꩬꩵꩫꩣ	mɔ¹ khām² mau¹	Modern songs

In this section, I will give examples of the mɔ¹ khām² sɔi¹ yɔi⁴ 'rice pounding songs'. Since 1999, I have been very fortunate work with the expert singers Aije Let Hailowng and Nang Ee Ngyan Kheit, and to record examples of the rice pounding song that they sang.

The rice first of these is the rice pounding song sung by the late Aije Let Hailowng, which was videod on 12th January 2000. This video can be seen on the YouTube channel athttps://youtu.be/fZDUyKLVz8g

This rice pounding song is an example of the poetry of the Tai language, with its rich system of rhymes and poetry. Consider the following two lines that occur in the first verse of this song. Here the 5th word of the first line,

khe² is rhyming with the 5th word of the 2nd line phɛ². Since Tai languages have tones, it is important that these words rhyme in tone, so both of these words carry the 2nd tone, which is a high falling tone.

1) ၸွဵ ၼၢ ၵဝ် ၵွမ်ၶ ၵၢ ၸၢမ်꧉

sɔi⁷	mɔ⁶	thɔ⁶	ɔn¹	khɛ²	cam⁴
pound	song	push	first	talk	PRT

'At first I will sing the rice pounding sound.'

2) ၵူ ဢဵ ထၢ ၸၢမ် ထဝ ၵဝ ၽၢ ၸဝ ꧉

au²	ŋāi²	phā³	cām²	phɛ²	we⁵	mā¹	se⁶
take	look like	cloth	edge	satin	wear	shoulder	PRT

'The words which I will sing are like a beautiful shawl,'

The full text of this rice pounding song is given below in 6 in bothTai script and in English. This Tai script, known as to² likt tai² (Tai letters) is similar to, but not the same as the Burmese and Shan scripts.

Table 2: The Rice Pounding Song sung by the late Aije let Hailowng

၁. ၸွဵၵေတ်ၵွမ်ၶၵၢ ꧉ ၵူဢဵထူၸၢမ်ထဝ်ဝေ ၵၢဝေ ꧉ ၸွဵၵိုဝ်ၵွၵ် ၵၢမ်ၶၢဝ်ဢိၸွဵဢိၸၢဝ်ၵၢထူ ၸၢမ်ၵွၼ်ယိုင် ꧉ ဖိုဝ်ဖိုဝ်ဖိုဝ်ဖိုဝ်ယွင်ထူဢိၵၢမ် ဝေၵူ ꧉ ၸွဵၵိုဝ်ၵွၵ်ၸွဵဢွဵ ꧉꧉ၸွဵၵိုဝ်ၵွၵ် ၸွဵ ၵေတေၵွမ်ၶ ꧉ ၸွဵဝဵဝေၵွမ်ၶၵၢမ်ၵွ ယိုင် ꧉ ထူဝေၵၢမ်ထဝေ ꧉ ၸွဵၵိုဝ်ၵွၵ်ၸွဵဢွဵ ꧉ ၸွဵၵိုဝ်ၵွၵ် ၶၢဝ်ဢိၸွဵဝဵဝေၵၢထူၵိုဝ်ၵွၵ်ၵွမ်ၶ ꧉ ၵူဢိဝၢဖိုဝ်ဆိုဝ်ထူဢိဖိုဝ်ၵၢ ꧉ ဝၢဝ်ဝေၵူယွင် ယၢ ꧉ ၸွဵၵိုဝ်ၵွၵ်ၸွဵဢွဵ ꧉	**Verse 1:** The response-song of rice pounding. The words which I will sing are like a beautiful shawl. Pound. Oh! The speaking style used in pounding, imitate it! Raise the hands in the Anjali position of supplication. Pound. Oh! Pound! Pound. Oh! Sing the response song of pounding Imitate the speaking style of response. Like wearing the highest quality satin over the shoulder. Pound. Oh! Pound! When pounding take the speaking style, take the words. Take the ten fingers and make the position of supplication in Anjali Pardon and praise! Pound. Oh! Pound!

၂. ပျဲကိုးကွမ်ဒိုင် လေ့စာင့်ကွပျဲမဝဲ ။ ပျိုစ်ပျဲ ပေဟိုးဟျူးယေ ။ ပျဲကိုးကွပျဲပျဲ ။ ပျဲ ကိုးကွမ်ဖျိုးဝေဒိုးဟဲသာမဇးတာကဲ ။ ထဲလာ မူယီးဟဲ ။ ပျဲကိုးကွပျဲပျဲ ။ ပျဲကိုးကွ ဟဝးစင်ပျာ့ကွပူးဟဝ်ဟျူးပျဲပေဟိုးဟျိစ် ။ ပျဲကိုးကွပျဲပျဲ ။ ပျဲကိုစ်မွမျိုးစာင်ဟိုးဟာ ဇးဟူ ။ ထဲလာကွေးဒိုင်ဟျးယေ ။	**Verse 2:** Pound! In this big country where we live, We enjoy again and again Pound, Oh! Pound! Pound, Oh! Let the many dangers not come to us. Oh for you many persons, females and males. Pound, Oh! Pound! In this wide place where we live, we live happily, joyful again and again. Pound, Oh! Pound! If we pound, sorrow will not attack us, it will not come near. Oh! For all people.
၃. ပျဲကိုစ်မျိုင် လေ့စာင့်ကွပျဲမဝဲ ။ စီကီဂျ ဟိဟုစ်ဒွိဟဝ်ကျင်ယေ ။ ပျဲကိုးကွပျဲပျဲ ။ ပျဲကိုးကွ်ာကာ်စီဟဝ်လေးဂျမ်ဒွဲးဂျဒွဲးဟွာ်ကျဲ ကျစိဟ်ဆာ် ။ ပျဲကိုးကွပျဲပျဲ ။ ပျဲ ကိုးကွ ဟဝးစင်ပျာ့ဟဝးဟဝ် ။ ဟဝဝိုစ်စီကီဂျ ဒွိဟဝ်ကျင်ဟိုးဟုစ် ။ ပျဲကိုးကွ်ာကာ်စီ ယေ ဂျမ်ဒွာ်ကွဲးဟဝ်ဒွးပျိစ ။ ဟွာ်ကျဲကျစိဟ်မျိုစ်ယေ ။ ပျဲကိုးကွပျဲပျဲ ။	**Verse 3:** Oh Pound! In this great country where we live. It is a good place in which to conduct our business. Pound, Oh! Pound! Pound, Oh! May our businessmen and our youths gather abundant goods every day. Pound, Oh! Pound! Pound, Oh! Our wide country is such a place. A place where trade is good. Pound, Oh! This is the place where our businessmen and youths are joyful and happy. To gather abundant profits every time. Pound, Oh! Pound!

The rice pounding song used to be sung by people who were using a great stick to pound the husks off rice to prepare it for cooking. This was work that happened every day, often for long periods, and while it was sung by both men and women, some of my consultants have told me that it was the women who did most of this hard work.

Back in January 2000, in Namphakey village, Ee Ngyan Kheit demonstrated this song style while using the traditional mortar to demonstrate the pounding of the rice. This recording is uploaded to YouTube at https://youtu.be/VRz1d9yKUAo.

The fifth verse of this version of the song reads as follows :

3) Pound, Oh Pound! The poor woman must prepare the meal only rising from it when the sun reaches its height. Pound, Oh! Pound.
Others will walk and roam but only then will the girl put down her pounding.

We poor females must pound the rise until we face the sunshine and its light, Pound! Oh Pound!
When others reach the field, then I will be able to put down this work, Pound!

As sung by Ee Ngyan Kheit, this song gives an opportunity for the hard working woman to bemoan her lot in having to work so hard while others can walk and roam around. In the first line of this section, we see how the work of pounding begins in the early morning and continues until the heat becomes too much for the work to continue. Then only can the woman who is doing this work take rest.

The poetic structure of these lines can be seen even in this English translation. The first line tells of the woman and her hard work, and the second line compares her to the others in the community who are free to move around.

The third and fourth lines repeat this content, but in a slightly different way, using some different words that I have tried to render into English. So consider the portion translated 'when the sun reaches its height', from the first line, given here as (4), and the 'until we face the sunshine and its light' from the third line, given here as (5) :

4)

thüŋ^{6}	nā^{3}	wan^{2}	suŋ^{6}	nɛt^{1}	kɛ^{1}
reach	face	sun	high	sunshine	old

'when the sun reaches its height'

5)

tɔ^{1}	nā^{3}	nɛt^{1}	kɛ^{1}	laiŋ^{2}	mā^{2}
until	face	sunshine	old	light	come

'until we face the sunshine and its light'

Here we see similar words arranged in a different order to express the same meaning (the arrival of the heat of the day). The complex poetic structures of traditional Tai songs means that the beauty of the language as well as the melody will express the richness intended here.

In former times, these songs were not written down as they are today, but were composed by the singers as they undertook the hard work of the

daily husking of rice. Nowadays the best singers write down the words of these songs.

Much more research is needed on the songs of the Tai Phake, and this has been just a brief introduction to a rich musical tradition.

2. Tai Aiton Songs

Over the years that I have been researching, a number of traditional songs were recording in the Tai Aiton language, and in this paper, I will present some details of several of these.

Two important singers in the Tai community, both of whom have passed away in recent years, were Nang Aihom (who died in about 2012 aged about 70), and Nang Am (who died in about 2009 aged over 90).

Nang Aihom sang a number of songs that were composed by an old man named Pu Dumai from Barhula village, who had passed away in about 1975. Barhula village, though a Tai Aiton speaking village in present times, had been a Turung speaking village at an earlier period and still has a number of bilingual speakers who are fluent in both Tai Aiton, and Turung. Turung is a Tibeto-Burman language that is a variety of Singpho with influence from Tai language.

As an example, we can see this in a Khe Khyang song that Pu Dumai composed, which mixed Tai words and Turung words, in example (6). The word makhun is a Turung word for a young woman, and is paired here with the Tai word pa¹saau¹.

6) မုၵ်ၶုၼ်း ပၢ်ၸဝ်ဢူ ပိဵ် ၵၢၼ်း ၵေ ‖

makhun	pa¹saau¹	pɛu¹	kan²	le¹
girl (Tur.)	girl	happy	RECIP	roam

'The girls were happily roaming.'

Kham Khe Khyang, sung by Nang Aihom, line (31)

In this article, I present the text and translation of two songs sung by the late Nang Aihom, both composed by the late Pu Dumai. The text and translation of the first of these songs, presented as Table 3 and can heard on the You Tube channel at https://youtu.be/6LqgA_RcPrg.

This song tells is a descriptive song, telling about the markets that were attended by young women coming down from the hills of Nagaland (perhaps including Karbi Anglong), in their

pretty silk dresses, bringing with them the produce of their farming, taro, chili and dried shoots. This song speaks about the long history of contact between different tribal groups, and the diverse communities that live in the part of Upper Assam where the Tai Aiton villages are situated.

The word that we have here translated as 'Naga' is khang, which is perhaps better translated as 'tribal person', and may be applied to a range of different communities.

Tale 3: Song sung by Nang Aihom - Song 1

ယိုင်ဒေ ဝေတ် ပင် ဟ ဟင် ဂွံ ဂျင် ထျင် ဒွံ ။	'The shops are spread out across the market field and the Nagas are gathering, coming down from the high lands.'
ဟ ယွင် ယွံ ဘွင် ဘက် ဇိုက် ဓးဇိတ် ဒေ 'ဂိတ် စာင် ကင် ဂစ် ဟိ ဓက် ဘွံ ဟေ	'They carry their long baskets, pulled down by the heavy taros, chilis and dried shoots, and put them down in the middle of the market to sell their fruits in the town.'
ကဒေ ကိ စွ ကဒီယ ဂွံ ယိတ် ထွံ စူ ဟ ဖိတ် ဒုင် ဟ့ ။	'As the pigeon opens its wing (to take off), so the poison is hung as bait to coax the body of the fish onto the fish-hook.'
ယိုက် ယ ထိ ထိ ဒေ ဇေ ဆိ ။	'The beauty, dressed in silk is good to see.'
ဂွံ ဂိင် မေ ယဂ္ဂ ယိင် ဂဂြိ ထံ ပွ ပတ် ဂွင် မုတ် စာစာ ဒီ ဒီဘ် ဘံ	'Like the way the wind blows, so the sound is *hari*, the sound is lifted up, good to hear.'
ယွံ ဒေ ပယွဘ် ဂွဘ် ပယွဘ် ဂွဘ် ဟွံ ဟွံ 'ဘင် ဒီ ဟွံ ။	'When they begin to be ladies ... they will be good ladies.'
ယွင် ဟိုက် ယျပ် စိုက် ဒေ ဟိုက် ယွံ ။	'Putting bangles on both arms, they dance *yoi yoi*.'
ဂွဘ် ယိုင် ဂျုက် မေ ဟွံ ။	'The diamond girl is singing.'
ပဘ် ထိုင် ဒေ မ ထေ ဘင် ဟွံ ။	'One time dance with me, you girls!'

The second song that I present here that was composed by Pu Dumai, and is a song in the style of Khe Khyang. Over the past 20 years I have recorded several versions of this song, both sung by Nang Aihom and also by Sri Nabin Shyam Phalung, who retired from service at the Department of Historical and Antiquarian Studies in Guwahati. Nabin had written down this

text on a manuscript, and for the purposes of the translation here, we were able to compare the version sung by Nang Aihom and the version in Nabin's manuscript. The translation combining the two versions is presented as Table 4. The version in Nabin's manuscript finishes with the line 'The food for the monks in the morning and day is given and sent.', followed by the last two lines in the text as given here.

There are two versions of this song available on YouTube. The first is the version sung by Nang Aihom, at https://youtu.be/6LqgA_RcPrg.
The second version is that sung by Nabin Shyam in March 2004, which is on You Tube at https://youtu.be/LCgagfAybRs.

Table 4 : Song sung by Nang Aihom - Kham Khe Khyang

ၵၢင်ဝေ် ၵေၣ် ဟွ် ဟိုင် ။	'*Ha le, Ha le, Ha le*, oh me!'
မၢၵၢ် သူ ပျော် မၼတ် ၸၣ် ဟွ် ။	'The words of the people, (tell) this story of the joyous life'
ၵွၼ် မၢ ၶူ လၢၼ် ၵျၢၵ် လွှဲ ၶေၢ် ။	'From the start, (I) tell this paragraph and announce it.'
ဟ့ၢတ်ဢ ပၢၼ် ၵွၼ် မၢၵၢ် လွင် ။	'From the first the words good appear.'
ၸိုၵ် ၶူ ၵၢၼ် လွင် ပၣ် မၼတ် ၵီ ။	'So that other people will understand this story fully.'
ၵွၼ် ၼ့ ဟွ် ထိုၵ် ဢောၵၢယော် ။	'From the beginning, we speak out *Okasa*.'
မၼတ် ၵၢ် ဢၣ်ယော် ဟွ် ဆိုၵ် ၵေ ။	'The Bodhisattva Prince from a previous life enters the great forest.'
ၶွဲ့ လီ မၼ် ဝေ ဝေၣ်ၵၢ် ပတ် ။	'We will try to set up this poem.'
လၢၵ် မၢ ပျိ မၼတ် ပၺ်ဩိုယော် ။	'We will come to show the life of the *Sulya* Bodhisattva.'
ဒီ ၽွၣ် ဩ့တ်လတ် မၢၵၢဟ့ၢ်တ် ။	'The second son is the loved *Chanakhat*.'
ၶွဲ့ လီ ၵိုၵ် ၵၼတ် ၶ့ ၸိုၵ် လွင် ။	'We will make effort to get others to understand.'
ၼၣ် မွ် ယၢၵွၣ် ၶ့ ၶိမ် ပျိ ။	'A group of youths will bring joy.'
ၷ့ၢ် ဖိၼ် ဓ ယွတ် ပယ် ဓေ ။	'Reaching the time of Mai Ko Sum Paha.'
ၼၣ် ဟျၢၵ် ဖိၼ် ၵဲ ၶ့ ၶဲ ၷၢၵ် ။	'We get to see a group from a far country.'
ၷ့ၢ် ဖိၼ် ၶွဲ့ ပၢၼ် ၸိုၵ် ပယ် ၵၣ် ။	'We meet at the time of cold shaking in the great third month.'
ၶွဲ့ လီ ပျိ ပၣ် မၼတ် ၵွၣ် ဩ့ၢ် ။	'We will show the story of the life of the Buddha.'
ၶွဲ့ မၢ ၵိုၼ် ဂျူ ၶၢၵ် ဂူယော် ။	'We will come, trying hard, with love and blessings.'

ဟ့ၵ်ၵူတ်ဝၼ်ၶုၼ်ၵဵ်ၵူၵ်ၼိဝ်ၵူၵ်။	'We want to reach the bridge to Nibbana.'
တၢၼၢ်ဟ့ၵ်ၵွၼ်ၵွၵ်ၵေးလေၼၢ်။	'Our mind is corrupted with desire and instability.'
ၼၢ်ပိၼ်ဟေၢ်ဟၢ်ၸ်းၸိဝ်ဝေ။	'(Our mind) wants to come and cross the four rivers (Ganga, Jamuna, Godavari, Krishna).'
ၵၢ်မွၵ်ၵိုၵ်လေၵိုၵ်တီဟ်။	'If there is no boat, how will we cross?'
ၵၢ်မွၵ်ၵိဟမ်ယဵၵိုၵ်တၢင်ၸိ။	'If we do not practice a good way,'
ၵၢ်မွၵ်ပၢၼ်ၵီလူလေဟစုၼ်။	'If we do not give to help all the people.'
ပွၵ်လုင်ၵိုၵ်လုၼ်ဟွၵ်မိတော။	'A great festival will come when Maitreyya comes.'
တၢင်တဲဟိုဟ့ၵ်လေၵဵ်ၸိလွတ်။	'So that we may escape death and all the dangers.'
ၵဵ်ၸိဆိုင်ၵွၵ်ဟေဝိပွၼ်။	'And get to reach the city of Nibbana.'
တိၵ်ထၼ်ဟောၵၢၼ်ၸိယိဟ့ၵ်ဟွၼ်။	'We are promised to gain much heart.'
စိင်ယိုင်ယုတ်ဟွံတီဟိုယော။	'It is a diamond city, at the highest place.'
ဟ့ၵ်ၸိၵၢတူဢုင်ၵွၵ်မၢဲ။	'At the time of these words, this is the story of the men.'
ၶုင်ပူယၢၸိဆွၵ်ၵူဟွၵ်။	'The grandparents and all the old white headed ones.'
မုဟ့ၵ်ဟူယွၵ်ပိၼ်ၵၢၼ်လေ။	'The girls were happily roaming.'
ၶွၼ်ပိၵေဢြေတီၵွၵ်မေ။	'Don't criticise the singer (of this song).'
ပိုၵ်စောမၢတျော်ၶွၼ်ပိၸိၵ်။	'If you are not happy, do not criticize.'
ပိၵ်စောမၢၵိၵ်ယၢဖွံစူဟ့ၵ်။	'If you do not have love, do not look down on the these words.'
ၶွၼ်မၢမုင်စူဟ့ၵ်ၸိတွဲဟျိင်။	'Whoever comes to stare, can look clearly.'
ယၢဆိင်ၵၢလေးဂဲယၢဟစၢ။	'Don't add .. it is very good.'
ၶူဢွံဟွံပျိဟေၢမုပ်ၵၢၼ်။	'Those people who are sick, are fighting each other.'
မွံဟ့ၵ်ယိုၼ်ပၢၼ်ၸိဟမ်ပေဟမီ။	'Don't agree to to mean to them.'
ၵပ်ယုၵ်ၵူလဵဝၵိုဟ့ၵ်ၸိၵူ။	'The bad era is much to be feared.'
ပိၵ်ဟ့ၵ်ဟိဟူၵိုစ်ဟစင်ဝေ။	'If we speak words, we do not know how to repair.'
ပိၵ်ဟ့ၵ်ဟိဟမ်ၵုင်ယေၵိုဟ့ၵ်ၸၢၼ်မၵ်။	'If you do business, you will slowly but surely get rich.'
ယေဟိုဟ့ၵ်ယပ်ယၵ်ဟွံဟ့ၵ်ဟမ်ၸၢ။	'It is more difficult for the farmers.'

မွ် ၵွၼ် တုၼ် ပွၵ် ဢမ်ၼ် ယၢပ်ၵျူ ။	'They will never get much in the way of coins.'
မွ် ပေ ယီ ပၼ်တၢ် ထိုလံ ၸၢ ။	'But if they cannot give, their fields will be given to others.'
တဲ မိုင် ယေၢးး ပၼ်တၢ ၸးၵ်။	'The Tai country is one of sadness from
ဟၢ ၵူ ၵၢ ပၵ် ဢေၢ ၵြၢ် ။	'(All that we can do) is to open our own mouths and call on God.'
မိုင် ၸၢၼ် ကၢတြေၢ် ထဲ ဟၢ ဟွ် ။	'Because we came to Assam.'
ကေၢယၢ် စဲ ၵွ် ယဲ် ကေၢ်ဒဲ ။	'Kosa Shyam Gohain, our Tai leader.'
တင်းလံ ယၢၵ် ဝိ ယင် ပေၢ် ကဲ ။	'The foreigners who killed him were not so far away.'
ၵၢၵ် စၢင် ထိုင် ဝိ် ကဲ ၵွၼ် ပွင် ။	'(And then) the train reached from Calcutta to Assam.'
ဒွိုယင် ဢေၢ်လွင် ကဲ ဟူ ၵိုမ် ။	'The Doiyang bridge was erected as a permanent bridge.'
တေၢ ၵိၼ် မၢ် ထိုမ် ၵုမ် စၢင် တီဟ့် ။	'(They) carried the stones to put down and build the road.'
ဝုတ် ဟိုၼ် ဗွိ ဟၢၼ် ပွင် ၵူ ပိမ် ။	'(They) raised the steep hill and the tunnel.'
ယိကျူ် ဟၢ် ဟိမ် ၸၢ် ကျွၵ် ။	'Like Sikkya ordered a cave to be made.'
ၵၢဒ်ဢြး တေ စၢင် ပဲ ။	'The English foreigners made roads for travelling.'
ကၢမိမ် ယင် စဲ ၵိဟမ် ဟိဝီ ။	'It is the nature of Tai people to do farming.'
မွ် ဟွ် ကူဖီ ဟွ် ကၢတြေၢ ။	'They were not going to enter as Labourers under the English.'
ပေၢ် ကၢ ၵိဟမ် ၸၢ စဲ ဟွ် စၢ် ။	'When they go to work in the fields, the rice is sweet.'
ဟူ ပူ စၢင် ၵၢၼ် ပုၼ် စဲ ၵွၼ် ။	'In grandfather's time, things were different.'
ပဲ ဆဲ ဝိုမ် ၽွၼ် ဟ ဒိၼ် လံ ။	'We could go and plough the grass on the steep sides and lie down on the earth.'
တေၢ ကွဲ ထိုင် ဟုၼ် လုၵ် လေၢ် ထိၼ် ။	'Reaching until the (time of) the great grandchildren.'
ၸၢ်ဒူလံ စဲ ၸၢ ၵွ် ဒုမ် လၵ်။	'Plough the field and making the cows pull (the plough).'
ယဲ် ပၢ် မွ် ဟစပ် မွ် ပိုၼ် လံ ။	'Three times we would do it, making sure that the soil does not join, does not throw , and fall.'
ဝေ့ဢၢဝီ ဒိၼ် လုင် ကွင် ၵဲ မေၢ ။	'In Woisali, the great land, the drums beat.'
ဒိၼ် ယိပ် ဢုင် ၶူ ဆုင် တၢ ကတ် ။	'In the tenth month the cows have the habit of pushing down the fences.'
မွ် ပဲ လေ ကတ် မွ် ပေ ဟူ ။	'If you do not go to market, you cannot stay.'
ၵွ် ၸဲ ဟျိုၵ် ထိုပ် ဟီဢၢ လံ ။	'You will get to meet in a good way.'

ꪎꪱꪀ꫁ ꪙꪳꪉ꫁ ꪚꪴꪖ꫁ ꪕꪶ ꪀꪳꪎ꫁ ꪎꪶꪖ꫁ ꪎꪫꪒ꫁ ꪉꪽ ꪀꪾ ꪉ	'At the time of reaching the way, our hearts will stay well.'
ꪎꪱꪒ꫁ ꪎꪱ꫁ ꪎꪱꪒ꫁ ꪚꪎ꫁ ꪀꪱ꫁ ꪕꪶ ꪎꪱꪉ꫁ ꪉ	'The food for the monks in the morning and day is given and sent.'
ꪎꪱꪒ꫁ ꪎꪉ꫁ ꪙꪴ ꪉꪾ ꪀꪎ꫁ꪀꪱꪙ꫁ ꪎꪱꪉ꫁ ꪉ	'The words of spirits and of blessings spread out and are lifted up.'
ꪎꪱꪒ꫁ ꪎꪷ ꪀꪎ꫁ ꪚꪱꪉ꫁ ꪙꪉ꫁ ꪎꪉ꫁ ꪉꪾꪖ ꪉ	'These people know what the Patesa is.'
ꪎꪾꪚꪎ꫁ꪚꪱ꫁ ꪙꪴ ꪉꪷ ꪎꪷꪚꪎ꫁ ꪀꪎ꫁ ꪀꪳꪎ꫁ ꪉ	'All animals young and old get to eat.'
ꪉꪷꪚꪎ꫁ ꪙꪕ꫁ ꪕꪳꪎ꫁ ꪀꪎ꫁ ꪙꪱꪉ꫁ ꪀꪎ꫁ ꪀꪳꪎ꫁ ꪉ	'If you are grateful in ploughing you will gain riches.'
ꪀꪎ꫁ ꪕꪴ ꪎꪱꪒ꫁ ꪚꪱꪉ꫁ ꪙꪱꪉ꫁ ꪙꪽ ꪎꪾꪙ꫁	'But if on this side there is trouble with the morality, your stomach will not be full.'
ꪱꪒ꫁ ꪕꪴ ꪉꪷꪖ ꪙꪙꪙ꫁ ꪀꪱ꫁ ꪎꪾꪀ꫁ ꪕꪴ ꪫ	'It will be very difficult to get all the luxuries of the householder's life.'
ꪎꪾꪙꪱ꫁ ꪙꪎꪱꪀ꫁ ꪀꪊꪻ ꪚꪷꪖ꫁ ꪕꪴ ꪱꪒ꫁ ꪀꪎ꫁ ꪉ	'The females will weave with the loom.'
ꪚꪷꪖ꫁ ꪙꪎꪱꪀ꫁ ꪀꪊꪻ ꪚꪷꪖ꫁ ꪉꪷꪎ꫁ ꪀꪎ꫁ ꪉ	'A greedy mind is like empty and will fall into trouble.'
ꪚꪎꪱꪀ꫁ ꪎꪫꪒ꫁ ꪙꪽ ꪱꪒ꫁ ꪚꪱꪒ꫁ ꪎꪾꪀ꫁ ꪎꪾꪀ꫁ ꪉ	'The more that riches are given, the more that you will want.'
ꪎꪱꪎ꫁ ꪱꪒ꫁ ꪙꪽ ꪙꪙ꫁ ꪎꪾꪀ꫁ ꪱꪒ꫁ ꪎꪾꪙ꫁ ꪉ	'If greed comes, there will never been enough for you.'
ꪎꪱꪎ꫁ ꪚꪷꪖ꫁ ꪙꪴꪉ꫁ ꪙꪙ꫁ ꪙꪽ ꪎꪫꪒ꫁ ꪎꪾꪖ꫁ ꪉ	'.. And you mind will be of one kind.'
ꪚꪱꪎꪫꪀ꫁ ꪎꪫꪖ꫁ ꪚꪷꪚ꫁ ꪙꪽ ꪎꪱꪒ꫁ ꪀꪀ꫁ ꪉ ꪚꪷꪖ꫁ ꪎꪫꪒ꫁ ꪎꪫꪒ꫁ ꪙꪽ ꪎꪾꪀ꫁ ꪎꪾꪀ꫁ ꪉ	'The people are two much ... the females will see the life story, oh us!'
ꪙꪽ ꪎꪫꪒ꫁ ꪙꪽ ꪎꪱꪎ꫁ ꪎꪾꪀ꫁ ꪙꪽ ꪎꪫꪒ꫁ ꪎꪾꪀ꫁ ꪉ ꪀꪱꪀ꫁ ꪙꪽ ꪎꪱꪉ꫁ ꪎꪾꪀ꫁ ꪉ	'If we get to donate, then the fruits of sadness will be kept away, oh others!'
ꪎꪾꪙ꫁ ꪚꪷꪖ꫁ ꪙꪙ꫁ ꪎꪾꪀ꫁ ꪎꪾꪀ꫁ ꪉ ꪙꪽ ꪎꪫꪒ꫁ ꪎꪾꪀ꫁ ꪉ	'This is the end of the words but I cannot remember them all.'

Like the Tai Phake examples of the Khe Khyang song, there is a rhyming scheme where the last syllable of each line rhymes with the last syllable of a line rhymes with the fourth syllable of the next line. This is termed a 'waist rhyme'. It is exemplified by the two lines presented as example (7). Here we can see that the last word of the first line khaau[1] 'white' rhymes in its final element, long /a/ followed by /u/, and also in its tone, which is tone category 1, with the word saau[1] 'young female', the fourth syllable of the next line.

7) ꪹꪾꪉ ꪉ ꪙꪱ ꪙꪱ ꪙꪴ ꪱ ꪀ ꪫ

phuŋ¹	puu²	ʒaa²	naa²	thau¹	hu²	khaau²
group	grandfather	grandmother	grandmother	old	head	white

'The grandparents and all the old white headed ones.'

ꪣꪱꪀꪱꪙ ꪱꪊꪙꪱ ꪖꪉ ꪀꪱꪙ ꪀꪊꪊ ꪫ

makhun	pa¹saau¹	pɛu¹	kan²	le¹
girl (Tur.)	girl	happy	RECIP	roam

'The girls were happily roaming.'

The next line after these has the word kɛ́¹ɛ́¹, a Pali borrowing meaning 'criticize', and the last syllable rɛ́¹ is in the fourth position and rhymes with lɛ́¹ roam. An important feature of these rhymes is that the tone must also rhyme.

The Khe Khyang song discussed here has a different topic from the Khe Khyang songs that were sung by the Tai Phake people I have recorded. In Tai Phake, three main texts have been analysed, one sung to honour the visit of Indira Gandhi, one to honour the visit of Dr. Banchob Bandhumedha, one one to honour the printing of the first Tai Phake book in 2000 which honours me3. One of the functions of the Khe Khyang song, then, is to honour visitors that are highly respected, or mark significant occasions.

The song discussed here, composed by the late Pu Dumai, however, tells about different things. It documents the history of the Tai Aiton people and the importance of their culture. It contains references to a leader of the community, named as Kosa Shyam Gohain; references to the construction of the Doiyang bridge, and the refusal of Tai Aiton people to engage in manual labour during British times. It talks about the importance of ploughing the fields and of weaving the loom. Moreover, it places the Buddhist heritage of the Tai Aiton high in importance.

Unlike in the Tai Phake villages, where Rice Pounding songs are still sung by a number of people, in the Aiton villages, I have only recorded two4 Rice Pounding songs. The first of these, sung by the late Nang Am, was recorded on 29th March 2004 and can be viewed on the You Tube channel at https://youtu.be/IGKcP99Jd Q.

In this recording, Nang Am sang the song several times, and discussed the meaning with me; towards the end of the recording, her family members brought a rice mortar so that she could demonstrate how the song was performed in traditional times.

The text that she sang commences with the words kai¹ phu¹ phok¹ 'white male chicken', which are the words that other singers sing as a lullaby. Nang Am explained that while doing the rice pounding, in the early morning, the chickens would often crow, and this is why these words are sung.

Research on Tai Aiton songs needs to be taken further, a task that is becoming increasingly difficult as the older generation who have expertise in singing pass away. As yet we do not have a list of the different types of Aiton songs, but some consultants in Duburoni village gave me a list of at least four additional types :

8) kʰaam² son¹ luk³ɔn¹ 'songs for teaching children'
kʰaam² a¹Kʰiŋ¹ pat¹ kʰau³ 'songs at the time of reaping rice'
kʰaam² pa¹mau¹ pa¹saau¹ mɔ¹ kik¹ kan¹ 'songs where boys and girls sing in turn'
kʰaam² sɔm³ naa² 'songs for rice planting'

The last Tai Aiton song that I will present here was described to me as either a 'Love Song' or a song about Tai Aiton History. It was sung to me by a range of different Aiton singers over the years, and the version I present here was sung by Mr. Ong Cham, who is also the lay leader of ceremonies and the Buddhist temple in Ban Lung (Barpathar). This song can be viewed on You Tube at https://youtu.be/aHoTMjel91w.

A translation of this song is presented as Table 5. It refers to musical instruments that have long ceased to be used in the Tai community, named in the first section. In later sections it refers to the Tai Nation and the coming of the Tai Aiton to the Karbi Anglong area. It is not known who composed it, but in its present form, since it names Kaziranga and Karbi Anglong, it must have been produced in the mid 20th century.

Table 5: Translation of the song sung by Ong Cham

Oh hear the noisy drums, the big drum, the kɛ² wɛŋ² and the nɛ², come and play this drama.
Do not leave out the piercing sound of the kar¹ tak³ or the big bell.
Hear the big sound of the flute and the pɛhɛraa.
The copper threads come together and are turned,
A big and noisy sound.
Oh, all my friends of the three ages, listen!
Furthermore.

Old and young, children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren, come all and listen!

If it is not beautiful, do not lament these words, do not criticise.
Many times we have shown this drama of the Tai nation.
In this village, the scholars write down on paper to show the story of the Tai Aiton.
The big drum of Assam, of those who hit the cow skin cover.
Like the axe of Indra, Lord of the thunder, let the sound ring out!

Oh! root of my life, I love you lady Kaliya.
Oh, Lord Nanta, I am so sad.
May the businessmen who ply the zigzag river,
May they go to do business in order to raise the bride price.
May those businessmen of the river.
Go to do business in order to raise the bride price, following the wishes of the young men.

Oh! root of my life, I love you lady Kaliya.
Oh, Lord Ananta, I am so sad.
To you, dear lady, I cannot express in words.
If I were a crocodile in the river, I would come to you, dear girl.
To you, dear lady, I cannot express in plain words.
If I were a great tiger, concealed in the jungle, I would catch you, dear girl.

Oh! beautiful root, I love you lady Kaliya.
Oh, Lord Nanta, I am so sad.
If we fall in the water, we could be fish together.
We could stay in a deep pool, twenty yards around.
We could live as elephants together if we found ourselves in the forest.
In the great forest of Kaziranga, we could stand near to each other at the distance of tusks.

Oh! beautiful root, I love you lady Kaliya.
Oh, Lord Nanta, I am so sad.
Oh by the words of Nanta, I sang to the lovely lady Kaliya.
In the Tai country and Kong country, they sung like this at that time.
Oh! beautiful root, I love you lady Kaliya.

Oh, Lord Nanta, I am so sad.
Your words are sweet like the honey of Sadiya.
Which the Si Si and Si A Pii peoples sell in the markets of Sadiya in the fourth month.
Your body, oh lady, is fragrant like the flowers that decorate the Shwe Dagon Pagoda in Rangoon.

When the great teacher, the Abbot, left this lower Assam and reached the country of Kong,
He sat and told this story, compressed.
Like in the time of the rains retreat, when the La Hang people come and exchange rice with us.
All the Karbis came and sit together in this country of Karbi Anglong.
And sang

Blessings

3. Tai Khamyang songs

Tai Khamyang language is now only spoken by a very small number of elderly people living at Pawaimukh village, around 7 km west of Margherita town in Tinsukia district. The village is situated near the mouth of the small Pawai River and the Dihing.

My main consultant there, the late Chaw Sa Myat Chowlik, passed away in December 2014, but I had recorded a number of traditional songs with him 2004 and 2005. I will report on, and exemplify, these songs in this short section.

In May 2004, Chaw Sa Myat sang two short verses of a traditional Tai drama song (mɔ^{1} khâm^{2} puŋ^{1} in Tai Phake), which consisted of a verse sung by King, and a second verse sung in response by a Minister. These songs are based on a drama that has its roots in one of the Jataka stories, former lives of the historic Buddha, in which the characters of King and Minister were frequently encountered. In some cases either the King or the Minister are earlier incarnations of the historic Buddha, depending on the particular story. The video of the discussion that we had in 2004, which also includes the singing of snippets of a forest song, is available on the YouTube channel at https://youtu.be/I4kCvoaA46M.

Chaw Sa Myat explained that in former times there were a range of different songs, but most of these he hadn't sung for a long time and had forgotten. The songs that had existed in the past are listed in Table 6:

Table 6: Types of Song-Poetry among the Tai Khamyang

ᦶᦵᦴᦸᦶᦵᦴ	khaam tam khau	Rice Pounding Song	now forgotten
ᦙᦸᦶᦵᦴᦞᦳᦵᦸᦶᦺ	mo khaam theun	Songs sung when visiting the forest	fragments still remembered
ᦙᦸᦶᦵᦴᦔᦳᦺᦉᦱᦴ	mo khaam pung chat	Songs performed in Tai Drama	fragments still remembered
ᦶᦵᦴᦸᦱᦺᦶᦺᦵᦺ	khaam khe khyeng	Songs in the *khe khyeng* style	some portions still remembered
ᦙᦸᦶᦵᦴᦞᦳᦴᦟᦳᦵᦴᦟᦳᦴᦺᦶᦴ	mo khaam lau luk on	Songs for teaching children	a few examples still remembered

In the 2004 discussion, he promised me that if I came back the following year he would have remembered them by then and he would sing them for me. This he did in a series of audio recordings made in March 2005. The list of songs sung by Chaw Sa Myat Chowlik are given in Table 7:

Table 7: Songs sung by Chaw Sa Myat, recorded in 2004 and 2005

Name of Song	Name in Tai	Sung in May 2004	Sung in March 2005	Notes
Mo Kham Pung	ᦙᦸᦶᦵᦴᦔᦳᦺ	YES	YES	In the 2005 recording, there were two verses, one of the King and the second of the Minister, parts of a much larger series of songs. The second verse, that of the minister, was transcribed and partially translated
Kham Khe Khyeng	ᦶᦵᦴᦸᦱᦺᦶᦺᦵᦺ	NO	YES	This was transcribed and translated with Chaw Sa Myat's help in 2005. The recording is only audio, but the text and translation is presented below as Table 8
Mo Kham Theun	ᦙᦸᦶᦵᦴᦞᦳᦵᦸᦶᦺ	YES	YES	

He added that the Rice Pounding Song, which is still so well remembered in the Tai Phake villages, was forgotten by Khamyang singers, although he did know the Rice Pounding Song of the Tai Phake a little.

The text of the Kham Khe Khyeng, which is presented below as Table 8, differs somewhat from the examples of the similarly named Kham Khe Khyang in Tai Aiton (see above Table 4 and example (7). In this example, there are

generally five syllables per line, and most of the lines commence with the word an, a classifier for objects, but here translated as 'those (who)'.

The song follows a similar rhyming system to the other examples of Khe Khyang, however, in that the last syllable of each line rhymes with a syllable in the middle of the next line, here usually the 3rd syllable, as in (9):

9) ꪀꪱꪙ ꪀꪎꪙ ꪀꪫꪀ ꪊꪱ ꪮ

an	khun khun	cam	ya
CLF	mix.REDUPL	N.FIN	medicine

'Those that are mixed like medicines.'

ꪀꪱꪙ ꪉꪱꪀꪫꪀ ꪊꪱ ꪀꪫꪀ ꪑꪎꪀ ꪮ

an	hit	la	cam	puuk
CLF	do	field	N.FIN	mud

'Those who do the fields in the mud.'

Here we can see the final word of the first line ya 'medicine' rhyming with the third word of the second line la 'field' (pronounced na in other Tai languages). These two words probably do not have the same tone category in Tai Khamyang, and thus this song style does not rhyme in the same way as that of Tai Aiton and Tai Phake.

Unfortunately the late Chaw Sa Myat Chowlik was the last expert of the Tai Khamyang language who knew these types of songs. With his passing, the many questions that we might have about traditional Tai Khamyang songs can no longer be answered.

Table 8: Kham Khe Khyeng sung by Chaw Sa Myat

ꪉꪱ ꪀꪫ ꪉꪱꪫ ꪀꪎꪙ ꪎꪙ ꪮ	'They are place across each other like a stick.'
ꪀꪱꪙ ꪎꪙ ꪫꪀ ꪫꪉꪒ ꪮ	'Those howling like a tiger.'
ꪀꪱꪙ ꪉꪱꪒ ꪫꪀ ꪖ ꪮ	'Those spread and placed on top like wood.'
ꪀꪱꪙ ꪫꪱ ꪫꪀ ꪎꪙ ꪮ	'Those like the tracks of the worm.'
ꪀꪱꪙ ꪊꪎꪙ ꪫꪀ ꪉꪱ ꪮ	'Those being trained like the buffalo (to plough the fields.'
ꪀꪱꪙ ꪫꪱ ꪫꪀ ꪉꪱꪙ ꪮ	'Those patterned like the civet cat.'
ꪀꪱꪙ ꪖꪱꪙ ꪫꪀ ꪉꪱ ꪮ	'Those that smell like shit.'
ꪀꪱꪙ ꪫꪊ ꪱ ꪫꪀ ꪀꪎꪙ ꪮ	'Those people that have the debts.'

ꩻꩻ ꩺꩽꩴ ꩻꩫ ꩻꩺ ꩻ	'Those that are mixed like medicines.'
ꩻꩻ ꩺꩫꩻ ꩻꩺꩮ ꩻꩫ ꩻꩫꩮ ꩻ	'Those who do the fields in the mud.'
ꩻꩻ ꩺꩫꩻ ꩻꩫꩮ ꩻꩫ ꩻꩫ ꩻ	'Those who make the seed beds in the fields.'
ꩻꩻ ꩻꩺꩮ ꩻꩫ ꩻꩫ ꩻ	'Those who are scolded by the master.'
ꩻꩻ ꩺꩫꩻ ꩻꩫ ꩻꩫ ꩻꩻ ꩻ	'Those who are the masters ordering the servants.'
ꩻꩻ ꩻꩺ ꩻꩺ ꩻꩫ ꩻꩫꩮ ꩻ	'Those who do the fields in the mud.'
ꩻꩻ ꩺꩽꩴ ꩻꩫ ꩻꩫ ꩻ	'Those who are quarreling with the master.'
ꩻꩻ ꩻꩮ ꩻꩫ ꩻꩫ ... ꩻ	'Those ...'

However, Sa Myat did explain that this Kham Khe Khyeng was sung in antiphonal style. He said that "When we would make a festival, or something like that", this song would be sung. He went on to explain how the song would be sung in antiphonal style, adding that, "this is what is Kham Khe Khyeng":

10) ꩻꩺꩮꩻꩫꩴ ꩻꩫꩮꩻꩫꩮ 'one person will start'
ꩻꩴꩻꩫꩴ ꩻꩫꩮꩻꩺꩽꩴ 'everyone will follow'

I also asked Chaw Sa Myat if songs were written down in the old days. His answer was "In those days who would have written them? They were forest people." We can conclude from
this that writing was never a very strong part of the traditional Tai community; it was perhaps confined to a very small number of men who had been monks and who, as they became older, might have become the the lay leader of ceremonies in the Buddhist temple, a role that Chaw Sa Myat also held.

There is one more very short traditional song recorded from another speaker, the late Ngi Kya Lu at Pawaimukh, on 18th December 1999. This was a very short example of the Mo Kham Theun (Forest Song), sung between girls and boys. It is uploaded onto the YouTube channel as https://youtu.be/y2aUhcCQVDA.

4. A note about songs recorded by Dr. Banchob Bandhumedha

The late Dr Banchob Bandhumedha recorded songs in every Tai community that she visited. In the Tai Phake community, this includes the

songs of the late Ngi Pe Pang, a copy of which I brought to the village of Namphakey in about 2001[5].

Of the Tai Aiton, Dr. Banchob recorded Kham Wang Theun (forest songs), sung by Mohendra (Ai Ni) Shyam at Barpather, and one song sung by Am Ing, which was described as "Song of Bodhisattva born as a Kinnara (half man, half bird)".

I hope that in future years I can present more information about these traditional songs to the readers of the Indian Journal of Tai Studies, as part of the process of properly documenting the traditions of the Tai people.

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Notes

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2. When transcribing Tai words, I use superscripted numbers to indicate the tone category. The tones are discussed in detail in Morey (2005).
3. This is indeed very prestigious company!
4. The second was sung by Nang Ruhila in Ban Lung village. In future I plan to analyse it more deeply.
5. One evening, sitting in the house of Nang Ee Ngyan Kheit, after we had completed our work for the day, I mentioned to her that I had a CD with some old recordings from Dr. Banchob, and perhaps she would like to hear them. In those days I had a laptop with a CD

player in it, so I started playing the CD. Also sitting in the room was her son, Sam (3rd son), and as soon as the song began, she uttered a few words to him, that I did not catch. Soon after he got up and left the house. I assumed that he had left because he did not want to listed to old fashioned traditional songs. But a few minutes later, as the singing continued, I heard someone running and then run up the stairs of the house, and such running is a rare thing. Sam had returned with a young man I did not know. Soon I was told that the recording we were listening to was the late Ngi Pe Pang, the father of this young man, who had died with his son was just 1 year old. So this was the first time he had heard his father's voice. this story speaks to the importance of recording traditions and making them available to the communities; this is work I am trying my best to do.

The Tone Systems of the Central and Southwestern Tai Languages of Maguan County, China

Eric C. Johnson

Abstract

In China's Maguan County on the Vietnamese border, Zhuang nationality people speak two different Central Taic language varieties, while some of the Dai nationality neighbors speak a Southwestern Taic language. The present paper describes and compares tone systems of these three languages.

Introduction[1]

Maguan County is in the southeastern corner of Yunnan Province, one of eight counties comprising the Wenshan Zhuang and Miao Autonomous Prefecture. Maguan County borders on Wenshan, Xuzhou and Malipo Counties, Honghe Prefecture's Hekou and Pingbian counties, and northern Vietnam. The population of approximately 360,000 people (Maguan County People's Government, 2008) is divided among Han, Zhuang, Miao, Bai, Dai, Yi, Yao, Gelao and other nationality groups. The terrain is mountainous, and the climate is cool due to the altitude and moist due to the plentiful precipitation.

Around 55,000 of Yunnan's 1.1 million Zhuang nationality and 6,600 of Yunnan's 1.1 million Dai nationality people live in Maguan County. (Maguan County People's Government 2008) Most of the Zhuang speak one of two languages: Nong Zhuang (also known as Yan-Guang Southern Zhuang) or Dai Zhuang (also known as Wen-Mao Southern Zhuang). Though these two languages are related linguistically, both belonging to the Central Taic group of the Tai-Kadai (Kam-Thai, Zhuang-Dong) family, they are quite different from phonologically and speakers of one cannot understand speakers of the other without extended exposure. The Dai nationality people speak either Nong Zhuang or a Southwestern Taic language we will refer here to as "Tai Dam."

1.1 The Nong Zhuang and Dai Zhuang Languages of Maguan County

Nong Zhuang, also known as Yan-Guang Southern Zhuang (ISO 639 code [zhn]), is the largest Zhuang language in Yunnan, spoken by at least 500,000 people throughout Wenshan Prefecture. Dai Zhuang, also known as

Wen-Ma Southern Zhuang or Tu Zhuang (ISO 639 code [zhd]), is spoken by 100,000 to 120,000 speakers primarily in the western half of Wenshan Prefecture. Bilingualism in Chinese (either local dialect or standard Mandarin) is high among speakers of both languages in Maguan County, though probably higher among the Dai Zhuang than the Nong Zhuang.

The present paper analyzes data collected in a Dai Zhuang village and a Nong Zhuang village in January and February 2006. Results of comprehensive test shows Nong and Dai Zhuang to be mutually incomprehensible. Though a few Dai Zhuang have acquired limited comprehension of Nong Zhuang due to past language contact, these two languages are so different phonologically as to render inherent comprehension impossible. However, the Dai Zhuang of Maguan County were able to comprehend the Dai Zhuang of northern Wenshan County quite well, and likewise, the Maguan Nong Zhuang has no difficulty in understanding the Nong Zhuang recordings from Wenshan, Yanshan and Guangnan counties.

In both villages the Zhuang languages appear vital with young children learning Zhuang before Chinese, and in each village some non-Zhuang people have learned to speak the Zhuang language and even started wearing the Zhuang costume in some cases. (There are several Han families in Laochangpo and several Gelao families in Xinzhai.) Bilingualism is quite high in both areas, with reportedly all the Dai Zhuang of Laochangpo also speak local Chinese, and most of the Nong Zhuang in Xinzhai speak local Chinese, though in the latter some older people only speak Nong and some children have limited speaking ability in Chinese.

In 1977, Chinese-American linguist Li Fang Kuei proposed three divisions of the Taic group of languages to which he assigned the geographically-based names "Northern Tai," "Central Tai," and "Southwestern Tai," primarily based on phonological evidence for an historic split between these divisions. Following Li's classification, the Nong Zhuang and Dai Zhuang have been classified as belonging to the Central division, along with several languages of Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region and northern Vietnam. There are several historical phonological innovations which set apart this Central Taic group from both the Northern Taic group (which includes Bouyei and Northern Zhuang languages) and the Southwestern Taic group (which includes most Dai languages, Thai, Laotian, several languages of Vietnam and the Shan language of Myanmar). These Central Tai Zhuang languages, also known as "Southern Zhuang," have been classified as follows :

Tai-Kadai, Kam-Tai, Be-Tai, Tai-Sek, Tai, Central (Gordon 2005)

The distinguishing features of Central Taic (CT) languages as originally proposed by Li and summarized by Luo (1997: 43) are :

1. Merger of Proto-Tai (PT) *tr- and *t^hr- into an aspirated dental stop /t^h/.
2. Some retention of PT clusters *pr-, *?bl/r- and *vl/r- (typically realized as [p^{hj}], [?b^j] and [p^j], respectively).[2]
3. Development of PT *f- into an aspirated labial stop /p^h/ in many CT languages. (But shared by some Southwestern Taic languages, such as Phake and Black Tai, according to Luo.)
4. Development of PT *y- into an unaspirated velar stop /k/.
5. Some CT languages have patterns of tone splits and mergers only found in other CT languages.
6. Absence of a set of phonological and lexical features shared by Northern and Southwestern Taic languages.
7. A set of lexical items not shared by Northern and Southwestern Taic languages. Though this was part of Li's original justification (his earliest threefold division of Tai, in 1959 and 1960, was based purely on lexical features rather than phonology), Luo points out that only three distinctive CT lexical items were identified, and one has since been shown to be shared by some Northern Taic languages.

More recently, Luo has proposed an additional distinctive: "retention of voiced quality for etymologically voiced series of initials." (Luo 1997:43). Both Maguan Dai Zhuang and Nong Zhuang share most of the above characteristics except for the second; all these three PT clusters have been simplified in both languages to a single consonant.

Luo points out that the most significant among the above features for identifying CT as a distinct branch are the first two, but that "the delineation of the Central dialects still needs more empirical work before a definite conclusion is made." (1997:53) As Luo points out, Li's Central Tai criteria were not adequately distinctive so as to persuade all linguists that Central Taic should be recognized as a distinct branch of Tai, though some felt Central Tai had more in common with Southwestern Taic languages (such as Haudricourt), whereas others felt the Central Taic languages grouped more neatly with Northern Tai (such as certain Chinese publications stressing the common features shared by all "dialects of the Zhuang language") or as a transitional set of languages between the Northern and Southwestern groups (Gedney).

1.2 The Tai Dam Language of Maguan County

Yunnan province is home to virtually all of China's 1.1 million Dai nationality people. Within Wenshan Prefecture itself there are around 15,000 people classified in the Dai nationality (Yunnan Province 2003), almost all living in Maguan, Wenshan and Malipo counties. As of October 2008, there were 6858 Dai nationality people in Maguan County. (Maguan County People's Government 2008) At least some of these people were the "Baiyi" (摆衣) ethnic group who were originally classified as Zhuang during the national classification of ethnic groups in the 1950s but then were reassigned to the Dai nationality in May 1980, according to the *Gazetteer of Wenshan Zhuang & Miao Autonomous Prefecture's Ethnic Groups* (Wenshan Min-Zong Wei 2005:20), although this same document later lists the name "Baiyi" (摆衣) as another name for the "Bu Dai" or Dai Zhuang (Wenshan Min-Zong Wei 2005:355).

According to the book *Maguan Dai Nationality* (Yunnan Dai Studies Association 2008), the Dai of Maguan are divided into three subgroups which are named according to the color of the women's costumes: "Black Dai" [tai^{33}dam^{33}], "Red Dai" [tai^{33}leŋ^{33}], and "White Dai" [tai^{33}xao^{33}]. Non-Dai people sometimes refer to the Dai according to whether they live near the water ("Water Dai," *Shui Dai* in Chinese, [tai^{33}namu u] in Dai) or away from the water ("Dry Dai" or *Han Dai* in Chinese). (Wenshan Min-Zong Wei 2005:160). The Black Dai are the most numerous, wide-spread and have retained their language the best according to *Maguan Dai Nationality.* The Red Dai have mostly switched to speaking local Chinese and the White Dai, who live near Nong Zhuang villages have mostly switched to speaking Nong Zhuang. The Black Tai live in the districts of Dalishu, Muchang and Baima, which have a combined Dai nationality population of around 3500 people. (Yunnan Dai Studies Association 2008:125-6)

The language of the Maguan Black Dai is described in both Zhou and Luo (1999) and in *Maguan Dai Nationality*, and is clearly a Southwestern Taic language and thus should share the same classification assigned to most of the other languages spoken by the Dai nationality, as well as Thai, Laotian and Shan :

Tai-Kadai, Kam-Tai, Be-Tai, Tai-Sek, Tai, South-western (Gordon 2005)

To distinguish this language from the Dai Zhuang language spoken by members of the Zhuang nationality who call themselves [p^{h}u^{22}ta:i^{11}], we will

refer to it as "Tai Dam." All though speakers of this language refer to themselves by the same name as those of the Black Tai (or Tai Dam) language spoken by around 700,000 people in Vietnam (ISO code: [blt]), there are significant phonological differences according to Fippinger, who has extensively researched Vietnamese Black Tai. In addition to vowel and tone pitch value differences, Fippinger reports that Vietnamese Black Tai shows only a single tone split in the Proto-Tai A category (that is, most words belonging Gedney's tone boxes 1, 2 and 3 carry the same mid-flat tone), whereas Maguan Tai Dam shows a double split of this category, as the present article will discuss below. Also, the tones resulting from Proto-Tai tones B1 and C2 show quite different pitch values in Vietnamese Black Tai than in Maguan Tai Dam. (Fippinger 2008) We have no data to assess the degree of intelligibility between the Black Tai language spoken by members of Vietnam's Thai nationality and the Tai Dam language spoken by members of China's Dai nationality in Maguan County.

1.3 The Lachi Language of Maguan County

In addition to these languages, a much smaller language known as Lachi (or Laji or Lati; ISO code: [lbt]) is spoken by a small ethnic group who call themselves Lipulio living in a few villages in Maguan County as well as in Lao Cai Province, Vietnam. Min (2004) lists the Lipulio population of the Lachi as standing around 3400 in 1989, though he states that many have switched to Chinese or Nong Zhuang since 1980 and "now only a handful speak Lachi." According to Li (2000) many speakers have entirely switched to speaking either Chinese or Nong Zhuang or both, with others still able to understand but not speak Lachi, and only about 2% of the Lipulio population still able to speak Lachi fluently. According to Li, the language is more vital in Vietnam, although the White Lachi speakers there are also switching to speaking Nong Zhuang.

Though the classification of Lachi has not been firmly established, it appears that it is only distantly related to the Taic languages. According to Li Yunbing, "While we can say that Lachi and Tai-Kadai are definitely related, the relationship is fairly distant" (2000:285)[3] Li proposes placing Lachi in an outlier group of the Tai-Kadai group, along with the language Mulao, Gelao, Pubiao, Buyang, etc. (2000:288). Liang (2004) sees lexical similarities and some syntactic similarities between Lachi and Gelao especially, and based on Liang's research, Gordon (2005) has assigned Lachi the following classification, along with several Gelao languages and White Lachi of Vietnam:

Tai-Kadai, Kadai, Ge-Chi (Gordon 2005)

The Lipulio speakers of Lachi were originally classified within the Yi nationality in the 1950s but were reassigned the Zhuang nationality in 1996.

1.4 Other Related Taic Languages

In addition, there are a small number of Zhuang and Bouyei nationality people in Maguan County speaking northern Taic languages. The northern Taic speaking Zhuang are usually referred to as "Sha" people when speaking in Chinese. The Bouyei nationality people of Maguan originated from Guizhou Province originally and reportedly many have now switched to speaking Chinese.

The closest linguistic relatives of the Taic languages of Wenshan, besides the other Zhuang languages of Guangxi and Guangdong, the other Dai languages of Yunnan and the Bouyei languages of Guizhou and Yunnan, are the languages spoken by the Nung, Tày, San Chay, Thai and Giay nationalities in Northern Vietnam. There are over two million speakers of these languages, most of them speaking Central, Southwestern and Northern Taic varieties.

Previous Research into the Taic Languages of Maguan County

Many Chinese and foreign linguists have researched the Taic language family during the past fifty years, though most did not include data points in Maguan County itself. Though we do not have space here to detail all the previous research from which the present brief overview has benefited, we will highlight a few of the most significant points for interested readers' future study.

The Chinese-American linguist Li Fang-kuei (李方桂) researched the Zhuang, Dai and other languages for many years and in 1977 published his landmark book: *A Handbook of Comparative Tai*. While this book did not include data from the Taic languages of Maguan County, it did include data from a Northern Taic Zhuang dialect spoken in Bo'ai Township of Funing County, in the east of Wenshan Prefecture, and established the basic classification structure we will use in the present article to discuss these two Zhuang languages spoken in Maguan County.

During the late 1950s and early 1980s, linguists from the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS) and other government research bureaus did important research into both the Zhuang and Dai languages. The Dai languages research team did research in Muchang District of Maguan County and have published their findings in CASS's *Daiyu Diaocha Dagang* [*Outline of Dai Language Survey* 《傣语调查大纲》] and Zhou Yaowen (周耀文) and

Luo Meizhen's (罗美珍) 1999 work *Daiyu Fangyan Yanjiu* [*Dai Dialect Research* 《傣语方言研究》]. The Zhuang language research team did not include any Maguan County data points to our knowledge, but did visit Zhuang data points in nearby Wenshan, Yanshan, Qiubei and Guangnan counties. The Zhuang team's research has been published in Yan Shangyue's (颜上月) 1959 work, *Zhuangyu Fangyan Tuyu Yinxi* [*Phonologies of Zhuang Dialects and Subdialects* 《壮语方言土语音系》], Wei Qingwen (韦庆稳) and Qin Guosheng's (覃国生) 1980 work, *Zhuangyu Jianzhi* [*Brief Overview of the Zhuang Language* 《壮语简志》], and Wang Jun's (王均) 1984 compilation *Zhuang-Dong Yuzu Yuyan Jianzhi* [*A Brief Overview of the Taic Languages* 《壮侗语族语言简志》]. A large work on the Zhuang languages that added new research and analysis to the previous works was published in 1999: *Zhuangyu Fangyan Yanjiu [Zhuang Dialect Research* 《庄宇方言研究》], edited by six linguists: Zhang Junru (张均如), Liang Min (梁敏), Ouyang Jueya (欧阳觉亚), Zheng Yiqing (郑贻青), Li Xulian (李旭练), and Xie Jianyou (谢健猷).

The Thai linguists Theraphan L-Thongkum and Pranee Kullavanijaya have researched many Taic languages of China and southeast Asia including some data points in Maguan County and published some of their research in English language articles (Theraphan 1997, Pranee and Theraphan 1998).

During the 1960s American Linguist William Gedney studied a language he called "Western Nung" with refugee speakers living in Laos. His complete field notes were edited by John Hudak and published in 1995. One of the speakers originated from either Maguan County or neighboring Hekou County, and the language described by Gedney in his 400 pages of notes is the same as the Nong Zhuang language as spoken in Maguan County.

Lachi was first researched a century ago by French linguists August Bonifacy (1906), E. Lunet de Lajonqière (1906) and J. Robert (1913) in northern Vietnam. In 1989 Chinese linguists Liang Min (梁敏) and Zhang Junru (张均如) researched Lachi in Maguan County. Chinese linguist Li Yunbing (李云兵) did further research among the remaining Maguan County Lachi speakers in 1996 and in 2000 published a volume entitled *Laji Yu Yanjiu [Lachi Language Research* 拉基语研究]. American linguists Gerald Edmondson, Kenneth Gregerson and Vietnamese linguist Nguyen Van Loi elicited data from two Lachi subgroups in northern Vietnam in the late 1990s and discovered a larger tonal inventory than has been documented by Chinese linguists for Maguan County Lachi. (Edmondson, Gregerson and Nguyen 2000).

2.1 Data Sources

The data presented in this paper was elicited during research trips to the Dai Zhuang village of Tangfang Laochangpo (南捞镇塘房村委会老厂坡村) in northeastern Maguan County in January 2006 and the Nong Zhuang village of A'e Xinzhai (仁和镇阿峨村委会新寨村) the following month. The research trips were conducted under the auspices of the Wenshan Prefecture Zhuang Studies Development Association in partnership with the Assistant Director Mr. Wang Mingfu (王明富). A wordlist of 492 lexical items was transcribed and recorded, a sociolinguistic interview was conducted with village leaders, and comprehension testing was conducted with several individuals using recordings of short anecdotes recorded in other Dai Zhuang and Nong Zhuang areas. (Johnson 2010, Johnson 2011). In addition, lexical data from Zhou and Luo (1999) and Li (2000) will be compared to illustrate the significant differences among the tone systems of Maguan's Zhuang languages and those of their neighboring distant cousins.

Comparison of Maguan County's Taic Tone Systems

3.1 Brief Introduction to Taic Tone History and Nomenclature

This analysis of the tone systems of the Taic languages of Maguan County is based upon the reconstruction of Proto-Tai proposed by Li in his 1977 work *Handbook of Comparative Tai*. Before presenting the tonal systems of these languages we will briefly review the history of Taic tones as presented by Li.

In organizing the various tones of different Tai dialects, Li's mentor, the American linguist William Gedney, discovered that there were several significant variables that could explain the historic splitting processes that had resulted in such a variety of tone systems, most importantly, the degree of aspiration of the syllable onset, type of syllable coda and the length of medial vowels in checked syllables. His "checklist" consisted of a matrix of twenty unique syllable types (at least unique in their protoforms). Words representing each type of syllable would be elicited and by observing which types of syllables had differing tonal values in the synchronic forms of various dialects tone split paradigms could be established and various dialects could be grouped based on which paradigm their tonal systems match (even though the specific tonal values might differ.) Gedney did not claim that any particular Taic dialect would have unique tone categories for all twenty syllable types, but that the twenty types represented all possible combinations of the relevant variables

that had been shown to affect tone splitting in some Taic dialects he had previously studied.

Gedney's tone box notation (Gedney 1966, 1972)

↓ syllable initial proto-tone/coda →	A (unchecked)	B (unchecked)	C (unchecked)	DS (checked + short vowel)	DL (checked + long vowel)
1. voiceless friction //pʰ tʰ kʰ m ɲ ŋ h s f x//	1	5	9	13	17
2. voiceless unaspirated stops //p t k//	2	6	10	14	18
3 voiceless glottal //ʔb ʔj ʔ//	3	7	11	15	19
4. originally voiced //b d g m n ŋ l r//	4	8	12	16	20

A few years later in 1977, Fang-Kuei Li published his seminal work *A Handbook of Comparative Tai*. In this work he reconstructed Proto-Tai as possessing four tone categories, three of which are found on unchecked syllables (ending in a vowel or nasal coda), called "A", "B" and "C", and one on checked syllables, "D." For the majority of Taic languages the D tone category split according to vowel length; thus "DS" refers to those checked syllables with a short medial vowel, and "DL" refers to those with a long vowel. For most Taic languages, another tone split also took place according to the nature of the syllable onset. The most common of onset-induced tone split was a division between fully voiced onsets (//b d g m n K l r//) and all other onsets (Li's Proto-Tai has no vowel onsets). The result of this split was that the pronunciations of tones deriving from the proto-Tai tone categories A, B, C, DS, or DL on syllables whose initial sound was fully voiced no longer resembled the pronunciations resulting from the same proto-Tai tone categories on other syllables, apparently resulting from secondary articulatory features being reinterpreted as tone and eventually replacing non-tonal phonemic differences as the primary distinguishing feature. Thus, in the most common Taic tone split system there result ten distinct tone categories (although two or more categories may surface phonetically in an identical pitch contour in a given dialect). Li represented this type of tone split system by adding "1" to the tone category letter (e.g. "A1") for the tone categories resulting from the historically voiceless initials (including glottals) and a "2" (e.g. "A2") for those categories resulting from the historically voiced initials.

Fang-Kuei Li's (1977) Proto-Tai Tone Split Numbering System

Syllable Initial (in Proto-Tai form)	Proto-Tai Tone				
	A (unchecked)	*B* (unchecked)	*C* (unchecked)	***DS*** (checked + short vowel)	***DL*** (checked + long vowel)
1. aspirated voiceless stops & voiceless continuants (*p^h-, *t^h-, *k^h-, *c^h-, *h-, *x, *s-, *f-, *η^h-, *n^h-, *η^h-, *η^h-, *l^h-, *m^h-, *r^h-)	A1	B1	C1	D1S	D1L
2. unaspirated voiceless stops (*p-, *t-, *k-, *ʔ-)					
3. glottal stop & preglottalized consonants (*ʔ-, *ʔb-, *ʔd-, *ʔj-)					
4. voiced stops & fricatives (*b-, *d-, *g-, *j-, *m-, *n-, *ŋ-, *ñ-, *z-, *v-, *γ-, *r-, *l-, *w-, *j-)	A2	B2	C2	D2S	D2L

Chinese linguists, such as those who edited *Zhuangyu Fangyan Yanjiu* (Zhang et al. 1999), use the numbers 1 through 8 (or 1 through 10 if there has been a tone split based on vowel length in PT Tone D) to refer to the modern descendants of these categories in living Zhuang dialects, with a check mark following the digit (e.g. "9'") for tone categories resulting from loan words or a different splitting pattern than the common system of simple voicing-based tone split. The odd numbers correspond to those tones above numbered "1" (believed to have originally been higher in pitch), and the even numbers correspond to those numbered "2" above (originally lower in pitch). Note that the order of the proto-Tai tone categories B and C is reversed in this numbering system; this is due to the connection Chinese and other linguists have noticed between the historical tone system of Chinese languages and those of Zhuang and other Taic languages. Proto-Tai Tones A, B, C, and D correspond to a significant degree with the Chinese historical tone categories entitled *ping* (平), *qu* (去), *shang* (上), and *ru* (入), respectively, and the voiceless register of Taic tones often corresponds to what in Chinese linguistics is called *yin* (陰), with the voiced register corresponding to *yang* (陽). Because the traditional order for these Chinese tone categories is *ping*, *shang*, *qu*, *ru*, therefore the mainland Chinese linguists have traditionally numbered Taic tone categories were numbered in the order A1 (*yin ping*), A2 (*yang ping*), C1 (*yin shang*), C2 (*yang shang*), B1 (*yin qu*), B2 (*yang qu*), D1 (*yin ru*), D2S (*yang ru*).

In the present work, we refer to the tone categories using Li's Proto-Tai Tone numbering system. For the purposes of this brief overview, this

diachronic approach will inevitably ignore other important factors such as more recent language contact and borrowings, tone allophony (tone sandhi), super segmental phenomena, etc.

In the analysis that follows, Lachi language data is presented to demonstrate the degree of difference between it and the neighboring Taic languages. Though the remaining speakers of Lachi are now categorized within the Zhuang nationality, unlike the Zhuang languages, Lachi is not believed to have descended from Proto-Tai. As will be seen below, most of the Lachi items are not obviously cognates with the Proto-Tai forms or their modern Zhuang and Dai reflexes.

3.2 Tone Systems Analysis

Though a clear majority of the lexical items collected are obviously cognates between the Dai Zhuang, Nong Zhuang and Tai Dam languages of Maguan County, there are interesting phonological differences as well. It is beyond the scope of the present short paper to examine the consonant and vowel differences; here we will simply focus on the differences in their historic tone splits.

3.2.1 Proto-Tai Tone A

Proto-Tone A in Nong Zhuang has split cleanly between the originally voiced initials and the voiceless initials (including pre-glottalized initials), with a rising tone for the latter (A1), and a mid-flat tone for the originally voiced initials (A2).

Though the Proto-Tai forms listed in this and subsequent tables are those of Li (1977), Luo (1997) has proposed several revisions to Li's reconstructions, one of which concerns Li's *tr initial cluster. Luo feels that data from Saek indicates that items for which Li reconstructed *tr- can be assigned to his labial cluster *pr-. This concerns two of our items here: 'to die' and 'eye', reconstructed as *trai and *tra, respectively, in Li 1977, but according to Luo probably should be *prai and *pra, respectively. (Li 1977: §7.3, 118, Luo 1997: §2.6.1, 54)

In the Dai Zhuang of Maguan County, we find an interesting split of PT Tone A. Two distinct tones result, but the lines of the split are more complicated than the simple division between originally voiced and voiceless initials seen in Nong's *A tones. In Gedney's box 1 (voiceless friction) we have voiceless aspirated stops and voiceless non-sibilant fricatives showing a low falling tone, identical to that shown on words with originally voiced initials as well as the

two key lexical items, 'eye' and 'to die.' All other items, including voiceless sonorants, voiceless sibilants, voiceless unaspirated stops and stop-lateral clusters, and voiceless glottals group together in the other A tone category, which shows reflexes of a low flat tone, a low rising tone or a mid-flat tone according to the location.

The Tai Dam language spoken by some of the Dai nationality people of Maguan County shows yet another splitting pattern for PT Tone A. According to the data collected in Maguan's Muchang District and presented in Zhou and Luo 1999, PT Tone A has split into three distinct tonemes: words originating from PT forms with voiceless aspirated stop, voiceless fricative, and voiceless continuant onsets show a high rising tone with pitch value of 35. Words descending from syllables with voiceless unaspirated stop and glottalized onsets show a mid-flat tone (33), and those originating from words with voiced onsets show a slightly higher flat tone (44).

We present many examples here to help verify that this unusual tone split pattern is following certain features of the syllable initial sounds rather than just being a set of unrelated tone category shifts. Again, the Lachi items are only presented to demonstrate the degree of difference between this a language and the Taic languages; except for Taic loanwords into Lachi, these words are not believed to have originated with the Proto-Tai forms proposed by Li.

Development of Proto-Tai Tone A

syllable initial	English gloss	Chinese gloss	Proto-Tai (Li 1977)	PT tone	Maguan Nong Zhuang	Maguan Dai Zhuang	Tai Dam (Zhou & Luo 1999)	Lachi (Li 2000)
1. voiceless aspirated stops, voiceless fricatives, except for sibilants (Gedney's box 1)	ghost	鬼	*phlˀɹɯi	A1	p^hi^{24}	ph^hi^{31}	p^hi^{35}	$ɯi^{35}$
	head	头	*thɯᵊ	A1	t^hu^{24}	$t^hɤ^{31}$	ho^{35}	$ɲin^{44}\ k^hɲ^{44}$
	stone	石头	*thɹin	A1	$ɹ^ɦa^{24}$	$(kaŋ^{24})\ t^hən^{31}$	hin^{35}	$la^{35}m^{35}$
	leg	腿	*kha	A1	$k^hɑ^{24}$	$(gâ^{31})\ k^ho^{31}$	xa^{35}	ko^{31}
	sell, to	卖	*khaiˀ	A1	$k^haːi^{24}$	$k^hʌ^{31}$	$xaːi^{35}$	$veːi^{35}$
	son-in-law	女婿	*khɯiˀ	A1	$(lɔk^{33})\ k^hɔi^{24}$	$(lɐʔ^{33})$ $k^hɯɛi^{31}$	$lok^{33}k^hɯi^{35}$	$a^{33}ʑi^{44}$
	white	白	*xauˀ	A1	$k^haːu^{24}$	$k^hɛːu^{31}$	$xaːu^{35}$	i^{35}
	green	绿(青)	*xiauˀ	A1	$/ɔk^{33}$	$ɕ^hiu^{31}$	xiu^{35}	$meːi^{35}$
	bitter	苦	*xemˀ	A1	$k^hɐm^{24}$	$k^hɔn^{31}$	$k^hɯm^{35}$	$n^{44}qaŋ^{35}$
	ginger	姜	*xiŋ	A1	$ɕ^hiŋ^{24}$	$ɕ^həŋ^{31}$	$xiŋ^{35}$	$qeːi^{35}$
	laugh, smile	笑	*xɹɯᵊ	A1	k^hu^{24}	$k^hɤ^{31}$	k^ho^{35}	$a^{44}ɕu^{35}$
	ear	耳朵	*xɹŋɯ	A1	$(ʔbaɯ^{24})$ $t^hɕu^{24}$	$(ʔbiɛŋ^{24})$ $k^hɤ^{31}$	hu^{35}	$li^{44}pu^{13}lu^{35}$
	dream (V)	做梦	*fanˀ	A1	$p^hən^{24}\ (xən^{33})$	$(nuɛ^{31})\ p^hɐ^{31}$	$(nɔn^{2})\ fun^{35}$	$paŋ^{35}$
	rain	雨	*fonˀ	A1	p^han^{24}	$p^hən^{31}$	fun^{35}	$ŋaŋ^{35}$

2. voiceless sonorants, voiceless sibilants (Gedney's box 1, continued)	to smell	闻	*hmɐn 'to stink, smell bad'	A1	man^{24}	mən^{11}	*dum*^{33}	mi^{13}
	pillow	枕头	*hmɔɔ	A1	mɔɔn^{24}	muə̃^{11} (tʰɤ^{31})	(ho^{35}) mɔn^{44}	a^{44}nay^{35}kʰi/a^{44}
	dog	狗	*hma	A1	ma^{24}	mɵ^{11}	ma^{33}	ljou^{13}m^{44}, m^{33}
	pig	猪	*hmu	A1	mu^{24}	mɣ^{11}	mu^{35}, m^{33}	mɨe^{55}
	thick (paper)	厚	*hna	A1	na^{24}	nɔ^{11}	na^{35}	ŋaŋ^{33}
	pus	脓	*hnɔŋ	A1	nɔŋ^{24}	nuŋ^{11}	nɔŋ^{35}	ŋu^{13}
	skin (human)	皮肤	*hnaŋ	A1	naŋ^{24} (nuə^{33})	naŋ^{11}	naŋ^{35}	a^{44}tu^{35}
	mouse, rat	老鼠	*hnu	A1	nu^{24}	(mi^{33}) nɣ^{11}	nu^{35}	lja^{44}
	snow	雪	*hnəi	A1	moi^{24}	muɛi^{11}	muui^{35} "frost"	a^{44}mua^{55}
	thorn	刺（植物上	*hnam	A1	nam^{24}	nã^{11}	nam^{35}	ŋo^{44}

syllable initial	English gloss	Chinese gloss	Proto-Tai (Li 1977)	PT tone	Maguan Nong Zhuang	Maguan Dai Zhuang	(Zhou & Luo 1999)	Lachi (Li 2000)
		的）						
	morning	早晨	*hn(ɔɔ)m	A1	(caŋ^{24}) nɐɯ^{24}	(kɐŋ^{11})mɐɯ^{11}	na^{33} (tsaɯ^{4})	pʰe^{44}hɨe^{55}
	to yawn	打哈欠	*hŋam	A1	ŋa^{24} (ŋap^{31})	ŋɛ̃^{11} (hɣ^{55})	haɯ^{35}	
	sweet	甜	*hwan	A1	wɑɛn^{33} ('delicious')	huã^{11}	vɑɛn^{33}	n^{44}kʲaŋ^{44}
	many	多	*hlai	A1	laːi^{24}	lɣ^{11}	laːi^{35}	ma^{44}vua^{33}
	clean (e.g. clothes)	干净	*sɯɯ	A1	θəɯ^{24}	ʂəɯ^{11}	saɯ^{33}	pʰe^{13}
	two (ordinal)	二	*ɔɔŋ (Luo 1997)	A1	θɔŋ^{24}	sɐŋ^{11}	sɔŋ^{13}	su^{11}
	three	三	*sam	A1	θɑːm^{24}	sã^{11}	saːm^{35}	ɕe^{31}
	high; tall	高	*ssaŋ	A1	θoŋ^{24}	saŋ^{11}	soŋ^{33}	vei^{33}
3a. Voiceless unaspirated stop+ʲr clusters (Gedney's box 2)	to die	死	*tmi (Luo 1997: *pri)	A1	tʰɯi^{24}	tʰʌ^{31}	taːi^{33}	pʰin^{55}
	eye	眼睛	*tra (Luo 1997: *pra)	A1	(lɔk^{33}) tʰa^{24}	(le^{33}) tʰɔ^{31}	ta^{33}	la^{44}ʔou^{55}
3b. Voiceless unaspirated stops (including affricate *c) (Gedney's box 2, continued)	to go	去	*pai	A1	pei^{24}	pɛi^{11}	*ku*^{11}	vu^{44}
	fish	鱼	*pla	A1	(ti^{33}) pa^{24}	(mi^{33}) pɔ^{11}	pa^{33}	o^{44}li^{35}
	leech	蚂蟥	*pliŋ	A1	(ti^{33}) piŋ^{24}	(mi^{33}) pjɯ^{11}	piŋ^{33}	
	door	门	*tu	A1	(ʔbak^{33}) tu^{24}	(mi^{33}) tɣ^{11}	(na^{3}) tu^{33}	ŋ^{55}
	to pound (rice)	舂（米）	*tam	A1	tam^{33}	*sɨ*^{33}	tam^{33}	tin^{54}
	year	年	*pi	A1	pi^{24}	*mɯei*^{11}	*hai*^{11}	pi^{35}
	full	满	*tjiem	A1	tam^{24}	tɐn^{11}	tɛm^{35}	ti^{55}
	eat	吃	*kin	A1	cin^{24}	*tsʰ*^{33}	kin^{33}	ko^{31}
	I	我	*ku	A1	*ku*^{33}	kɔu^{11}	kau^{35}	ki^{55}
	to scratch the face	抓（痒）	*kɔu	A1	kau^{24}	kʰɛ̃^{31}; kɔu^{11}	*jip*^{33}	n^{44}saa^{31}

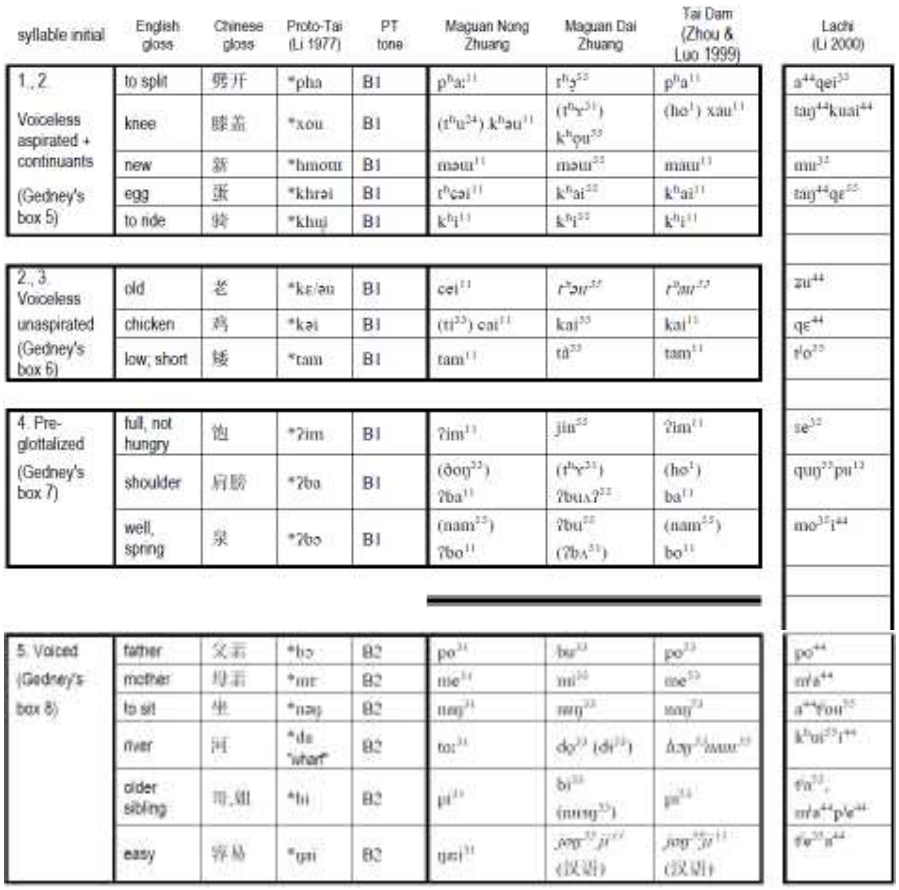
	face	脸(脸)	*kɔ̃	A1	kau[24]	kau[11]	jɣ[55]	ŋ[44]
	bow	弓	*kou	A1	kɔŋ[24] (lei[31])	kɔŋ[11]	koŋ[55]	nu[44]
	deer	鹿	*kwaŋ	A1	(ti[33]) kaŋ[24]	(mi[33]) kuŋ[11]	kaŋ[33]	a[44]ɕi[55]e[44]
	to swallow	吞	*klɯn	A1	kan[55]	kuan[11]	ʔɯn[33] (from *ʔdɯɯn B1?)	a[44]li[55]
	far	远	*klai	A1	kai[24]	kuɛi[11]	kai[33]	a[44]le[55]
	salt	盐	*klio	A1	kuɛ[24]	kv[11]	kuɛ[33]	a[44]nuŋ[33]
	heart	心脏	*ceːm	A1	caɯ[24]	tsɔɯ[11]	tsam[33]	caŋ[55]
4. Voiceless glottal (Gedney's box 3)	to fly	飞	*ʔbin	A1	ʔban[24]	ʔbɔn[11]	bɛn[33]	nin[55]p[h]aŋ[33]
	red	红	*ʔdl'iŋ	A1	ʔdiɛŋ[24]	ʔdiɯŋ[11]	diŋ[33]	ɬo[44]
	star	星星	*ʔdl'rəi	A1	ʔdaːu[24] (ʔdi[22])	ʔdɒu[11]	daːu[33]	a[44]lie[44]
	to take	拿	*ʔəu	A1	ʔaɯ[24]	ʔɒu[11]	ʔau[33]	nauŋ[55]
	medicine	药	*ʔjɯɔ	A1	ja[24]	jo[11] (je?[55])	na[33]	a[44]lo[55]

syllable initial	English gloss	Chinese gloss	Proto-Tai (Li 1977)	PT tone	Maguan Nong Zhuang	Maguan Dai Zhuang	Tai Dam (Zhou & Luo 1999)	Lachi (Li 2000)
5. Voiced (Gedney's box 4)	hand	手	*mɯ	A2	mɯŋ[33]	mɯ[11]	mue	tɕɯŋ[13]m[55]
	rice field (paddy)	稻田	*na	A2	(ʔdoŋ[22]) na[33]	nɔ[21]	na[44]	nu[55]
	snake	蛇	*ŋɯn	A2	(ti[33]) ŋu[55]	(mi[44]) ŋv[21]	niu[44]	a[44]ŋ[55]
	daytime	白天	*ŋwaːu	A2	(caːŋ[24]) waːn[33]	(laŋ[11]) wɑ̃[21]	(kaŋ[33]) van[44]	vuaŋ[55]
	sand	沙	*ɕa	A2	θai[33]	sɤ[21]	xai[44]	na[55]
	water buffalo	水牛	*ɣwai	A2	wai[33]	wɤ[21]	xai[44]	nin[55]qua[44]

3.2.2 Proto-Tai Tone B

Similar to PT Tone A in Nong Zhuang, PT Tone B in Dai Zhuang, Nong Zhuang and Tai Dam splits along the lines of voicing. Although the super segmental feature of "breathy voice" is seen fairly frequently on the Maguan County Dai Zhuang low flat tone (11), we did not perceive strong breathy voice on all items in these categories and thus conclude that breathy voice is probably a secondary allophonic feature of these low tones, but not a core part of the tone itself. Also many of the speakers we worked with were middle aged men who smoked, so the breathy voice feature may more distinctive in their pronunciation than that of other speakers. B1 pitch values are identical between Nong Zhuang and Tai Dam and both show a falling tone for B2, though the range is lower in Nong Zhuang than in Tai Dam.

Development of Proto-Tai Tone B

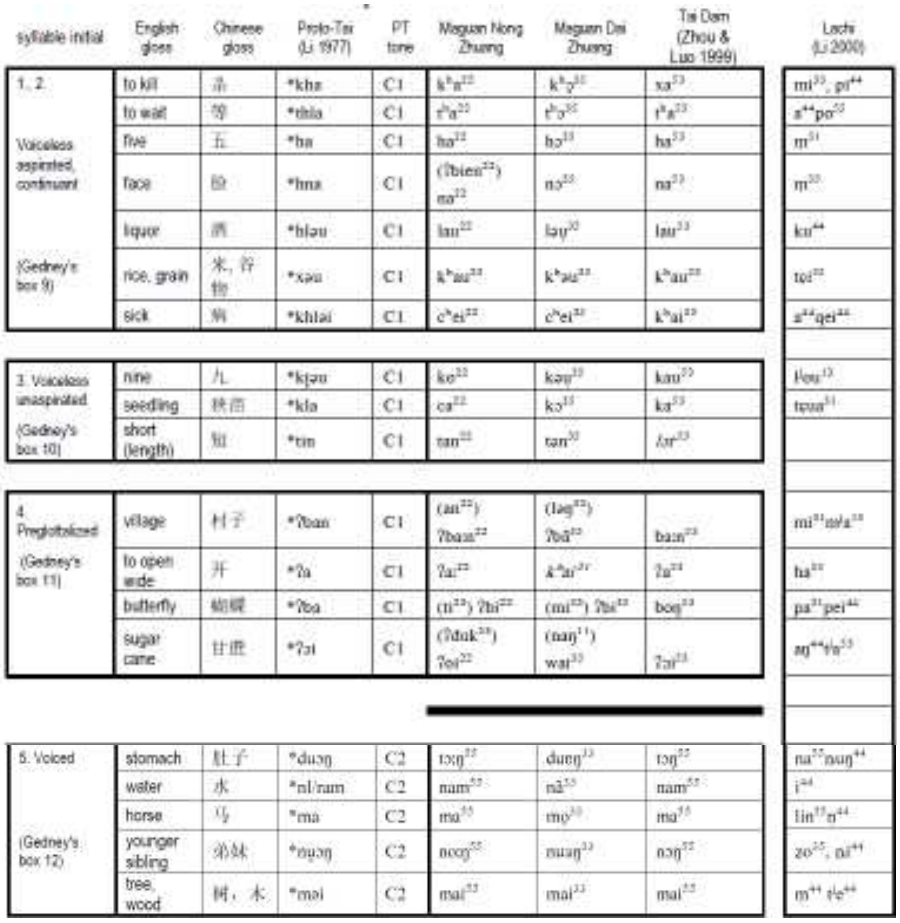


syllable initial	English gloss	Chinese gloss	Proto-Tai (Li 1977)	PT tone	Maguan Nong Zhuang	Maguan Dai Zhuang	Tai Dam (Zhou & Luo 1999)	Lachi (Li 2000)
1, 2 Voiceless aspirated + continuants (Gedney's box 5)	to split	劈开	*pha	B1	$p^ha:^{11}$	$t^hɣ^{55}$	p^ha^{11}	$a^{44}qei^{55}$
	knee	膝盖	*xou	B1	(t^hu^{24}) $k^həu^{11}$	$(t^hɤ^{31})$ $k^hǫu^{55}$	$(hɔ^1)$ xau^{11}	$taŋ^{44}kuai^{44}$
	new	新	*hmoɯ	B1	$məɯ^{11}$	$məɯ^{55}$	$maɯ^{11}$	mu^{55}
	egg	蛋	*khrəi	B1	$r^hɕai^{11}$	k^hai^{55}	k^hai^{11}	$taŋ^{44}qɛ^{55}$
	to ride	骑	*khuj	B1	k^hi^{11}	k^hi^{55}	k^hi^{11}	
2, 3 Voiceless unaspirated (Gedney's box 6)	old	老	*kɛ/əu	B1	cei^{11}	$r^hɔu^{55}$	r^hau^{55}	zu^{44}
	chicken	鸡	*kəi	B1	(ti^{33}) cai^{11}	kai^{55}	kai^{11}	$qɛ^{44}$
	low; short	矮	*tam	B1	tam^{11}	$tâ^{55}$	tam^{11}	$ɬo^{55}$
4. Pre-glottalized (Gedney's box 7)	full, not hungry	饱	*ʔim	B1	$ʔim^{11}$	jim^{55}	$ʔim^{11}$	se^{55}
	shoulder	肩膀	*ʔbə	B1	$(ðoŋ^{22})$ $ʔba^{11}$	$(t^hɤ^{31})$ $ʔbuʌʔ^{22}$	$(hɔ^1)$ ba^{11}	$quŋ^{55}pu^{13}$
	well, spring	泉	*ʔbɔ	B1	(nam^{55}) $ʔbo^{11}$	$ʔbu^{55}$ $(ʔbʌ^{31})$	(nam^{55}) bo^{11}	$mɔ^{55}i^{44}$
5. Voiced (Gedney's box 8)	father	父亲	*bɔ	B2	po^{31}	bu^{33}	po^{33}	po^{44}
	mother	母亲	*mɤ	B2	me^{31}	mi^{33}	$mɛ^{33}$	$mɤ^{44}$
	to sit	坐	*nəŋ	B2	$nəŋ^{31}$	$nəŋ^{33}$	$nəŋ^{33}$	$a^{44}ʧou^{55}$
	river	河	*da 'wharf'	B2	$tɑ:^{31}$	$dǫ^{33}$ $(dɤ^{33})$	$ðɔŋ^{33}/ɯɯ^{33}$	$k^hai^{55}i^{44}$
	older sibling	哥,姐	*bi	B2	pi^{33}	bi^{33} $(miŋ^{33})$	pi^{33}	$ʧa^{33}$, $mɤ^{44}p'e^{44}$
	easy	容易	*ɣai	B2	$ɣai^{31}$	$ɲoŋ^{33}ji^{11}$ (汉语)	$ɲoŋ^{33}ji^{11}$ (汉语)	$ʧe^{55}a^{44}$

3.2.3 Proto-Tai Tone C

PT Tone C shows a simple split along the division between originally voiced initials versus voiceless and preglottalized initials in Nong Zhuang, Dai Zhuang and Tai Dam. Nong Zhuang and Han Zhuang have identical pitched reflexes for C2, both of which are as high as the pitch range allows at 55. This is significantly higher than Nong Zhuang's C1 reflex of 22 although at the time of the tone split between the voiced and voiceless onset categories, it was presumably the voiced onset syllables that were being produced with a lower pitch than the voiceless onset syllables.

Development of Proto-Tai Tone C



syllable initial	English gloss	Chinese gloss	Proto-Tai (Li 1977)	PT tone	Maguan Nong Zhuang	Maguan Dai Zhuang	Tai Dam (Zhou & Luo 1999)	Lachi (Li 2000)
1, 2. Voiceless aspirated, continuant (Gedney's box 9)	to kill	杀	*kha	C1	k^ha^{22}	k^ha^{33}	xa^{53}	mi^{33}, pi^{44}
	to wait	等	*thla	C1	t^ha^{33}	t^ha^{33}	t^ha^{53}	$a^{44}po^{33}$
	five	五	*ha	C1	ha^{33}	$hɔ^{33}$	ha^{53}	m^{31}
	face	脸	*hma	C1	($ʔbien^{22}$) ma^{33}	$nɔ^{33}$	na^{53}	m^{33}
	liquor	酒	*hlau	C1	lau^{33}	$lɔu^{33}$	lau^{53}	ku^{44}
	rice, grain	米，谷物	*xau	C1	k^hau^{33}	k^hau^{33}	k^hau^{53}	$tɑi^{33}$
	sick	病	*khlai	C1	c^hei^{33}	c^hei^{33}	k^hai^{53}	$a^{44}qei^{35}$
3. Voiceless unaspirated (Gedney's box 10)	nine	九	*kjəu	C1	ko^{33}	$kəu^{33}$	kau^{53}	$ʔou^{13}$
	seedling	秧苗	*kla	C1	ca^{33}	$kɔ^{33}$	ka^{53}	$tɕua^{31}$
	short (length)	短	*tin	C1	tan^{33}	tan^{33}	$ʔan^{53}$	
4. Preglottalized (Gedney's box 11)	village	村子	*ʔban	C1	(an^{22}) $ʔban^{22}$	(lag^{33}) $ʔbā^{33}$	ban^{53}	$mi^{31}ma^{13}$
	to open wide	开	*ʔa	C1	$ʔai^{22}$	k^hai^{31}	$ʔa^{24}$	ha^{33}
	butterfly	蝴蝶	*ʔba	C1	(ni^{22}) $ʔbi^{22}$	(mi^{33}) $ʔbi^{33}$	$boŋ^{53}$	$pa^{31}pei^{44}$
	sugar cane	甘蔗	*ʔai	C1	($ʔduk^{33}$) $ʔoi^{22}$	($naŋ^{11}$) wai^{33}	$ʔai^{53}$	$ŋ^{44}ʔe^{33}$
5. Voiced (Gedney's box 12)	stomach	肚子	*duəŋ	C2	$tɔŋ^{22}$	$duŋ^{13}$	$tɔŋ^{22}$	$na^{22}nuŋ^{44}$
	water	水	*nl/nam	C2	nam^{22}	$nā^{33}$	nam^{22}	i^{24}
	horse	马	*ma	C2	ma^{33}	$mɔ^{33}$	ma^{35}	$lin^{33}n^{44}$
	younger sibling	弟妹	*nuəŋ	C2	$nɔŋ^{22}$	$nuaŋ^{33}$	$nɔŋ^{22}$	zo^{35}, ni^{44}
	tree, wood	树，木	*mai	C2	mai^{22}	mai^{33}	mai^{22}	m^{44} $ʔe^{44}$

3.2.4 Proto-Tai Tone DS

Though most Taic languages, including Nong Zhuang and Tai Dam, treat voiceless aspirated stops and voiceless continuants identically in terms of tone splits, it appears that Dai Zhuang treated them differently in its development of Proto-Tai Tone D with items originally possessing phonemically short vowels (PT Tone DS). Although Gedney and Li often treated voiceless aspirated stops, voiceless continuants and pharyngeal (laryngeal) fricatives (*h) as a single category, as have we thus far in this paper, in fact Li did recognize a distinction between a category of syllable initials consisting of voiceless aspirated stops (*p^h, *t^h, *k^h) plus *h and a category consisting of voiceless continuants (*s-, *f-, *hm-, *hn-, *hK-, *hn-, *hl-, *hw-, and *hr-).

(1977:§2.26.1) Li does not actually specify to which category the voiceless velar fricative *x belongs, though we assume it belongs along with *h to the category of voiceless, aspirated stops, and this is how it appears to function in Dai Zhuang in terms of tone. Items whose Proto-Tai forms begin with voiceless, aspirated stops or a voiceless velar fricative pattern together with originally voiced initial words, showing a falling tone reflex. Other voiceless continuants, on the other hand, group together with voiceless, unaspirated stops and preglottalized initials, showing a mid-flat tone reflex.

Also, as can be seen from data for PT Tone DS as well as DL to follow, Dai Zhuang has lost syllable final oral consonants, though some remnant of this history remains on some items in the form of a perceptible final glottal constriction.

Development of Proto-Tai Tone DS

syllable initial	English gloss	Chinese gloss	Proto-Tai (Li 1977)	PT tone	Maguan Nong Zhuang	Maguan Dai Zhuang	Tai Dam (Zhou & Luo 1999)	Lachi (Li 2000)
1. Voiceless aspirated, fricatives (box 13)	vegetable	蔬菜	*phl:rak	DlS	p^hak^{33}	p^ha^{33}	p^hak^{33}	$a^{44}luŋ^{22}$
	hot, spicy	辣	*phet	DlS	p^hat^{33}	p^he^{21}	$p^hɛt^{52}$	$a^{44}tua^{31}$
	six	六	*xrok	DlS	$r^hɕak^{52}$	ts^ha^{31}	hok^{23}	$aaŋ^{22}$
	bite (V)	咬	*xep	DlS	k^hap^{55}	$k^hɛ?^{31}$	kap^{33}	$a^{44}ta^{22}$
2. voiceless continuants (Gedney's box 13)	flea	跳蚤	*hmat	DlS	$ti^{55}mat^{55}$	(mi^{44}) ma^{33}	mat^{33}	$ma^{31}m^{31}$
	to cover	埋	*hmok	DlS	$mɔk^{55}$	ma^{33}	mok^{53}	m^{31}
	ten	十	*sip	DlS	$θip^{55}$	$sɛ^{33}$	sip^{33}	$pɛ^{21}$
	heavy	重	*hnak	DlS	nak^{55}	na^{33}	nak^{33}	$k^haŋ^{22}$
3. Voiceless unaspirated (Gedney's box 14)	to fall	掉	*tok	DlS	$tɔk^{55}$	ta^{22}	tok^{53}	li^{22}
	seven	七	*cet	DlS	$ciɛt^{55}$	$tsɛ^{33}$	tsɛt^{33}	t^he^{22}
	duck	鸭子	*pjet	DlS	(ti^{33}) pat^{55}	$pɛ^{33}$	pɛt^{33}	$a^{44}qo^{44}$
	liver	肝	*tap	DlS	tap^{55}	ta^{33}	tap^{33}	t^ha^{21}
4. Preglottal (Gedney's box 15)	chest	胸脯	*ʔŋuk	DlS	(pak^{11}) $ʔak^{55}$	$(nɔ^{35})$ $ʔa^{33}$	(ho^{33}) $ʔok^{53}$	ai^{44}
	extinguish	熄、灭	*ʔdap	DlS	ʔdap^{55}	ʔda^{35}	*mɤ^{11}*	
5. Voiced (Gedney's box 16)	narrow	窄	*grp	D2L	kap^{33}	*jɛ*^{33}	tip^{33}	$k^hɤ^{21}$
	to launder	洗衣服	*rak	D2S	thk^{33}	*za*^{11}	sak^{53}	$p^hɤ^{11}$
	ant	蚂蚁	*ml:ŋŋ = *mot	A2 D2S	$(miəŋ^{33})$ mat^{33}	(mi^{44}) $mɤ^{21}$	maat^{33}	$ma^{11}n^{44}ŋ^{44}$
	bird	鸟	*nl:nk	D2S	(ti^{33}) $nɔk^{33}$	(mi^{44}) na^{21}	nok^{33}	$ai^{44}ao^{11}$
	to steel	磨	*dlak	D2S	lak^{33}	$la?^{21}$	lak^{33}	lin^{44}

3.2.5 Proto-Tai Tone DL

PT Tone DL (originally possessing phonemically long vowels) shows a simple split along the division between originally voiced initials versus voiceless and preglottalized initials in both Zhuang languages as well as Tai Dam of Maguan County. The forms for 'wing' and 'bone,' which result from *pi k D1L and *ʔdl/ruok D1L respectively, show reflexes of 55 in Nong Zhuang instead of 11, the expected reflex for D1L in this language. So it appears that the forms for 'wing' and 'bone' have switched tone categories from D1L to D1S in Nong Zhuang, though not in Dai Zhuang nor in the Southwestern Taic Tai Dam language of Maguan County. Li's "Lungchow" Central Taic representative also showed a D1S reflexes for these two items. (Li 1977:42, 62) Though Dai Zhuang does demonstrate several phonological development features typical of Central Taic languages, the fact that these items show reflexes of D1L rather than D1S, as shown in some other Central Taic languages, indicates a relatively early split and long period of independent development from the other Central Taic languages.

Development of Proto-Tai Tone DL

syllable initial	English gloss	Chinese gloss	Proto-Tai (Li 1977)	PT tone	Maguan Nong Zhuang	Maguan Dai Zhuang	Tai Dam (Zhou & Luo 1999)	Lachi (Li 2000)
1,2. Voiceless friction	to carry on a pole	担，挑	*thrap	D1L	t^hap^{11}	$t^hà^{22}$	hap^{11}	ha^{21}
(Gedney's	gums	齿龈	*hŋuak	D1L	$ŋuk^{11}$ (fan^{33})	$ŋɐn^{11}$ $vǎ^{22}$		
box 17)	forehead	额头	*phl/rak	D1L	(na^{33}) p^hak^{11}	(t^hy^{31}) $p^hà^{22}$	(ho^{33} na^{33}) p^hak^{11}	$ku^{44}ni^{55}$
3. Voiceless	mouth	嘴巴	*pak	D1L	($cèu^{31}$) pak^{11}	(p^hi^{22}) pa^{55}	mup^{33}	$u^{44}ɕin^{33}$
unaspirated	eight	八	*pet	D1L	$piet^{11}$	$pjə^{33}$	pet^{11}	$ŋuai^{21}$
(Gedney's	lungs	肺脏	*pɔ/tɯɔt	D1L	$pɔt^{11}$	$puə^{55}$	$pɔt^{11}$	$p'e^{44}l'e^{44}$
box 18)	wing	翅膀	*pɨɔk	D1L	pik^{55} (D1S)	$pɨɐ^{33}$	$pɨk^{11}$	$li^{44}pu^{21}lu^{33}$
Voiceless glottal	hungry	饿	*ʔjuak	D1L	jak^{11}	$jɐʔ^{33}$	jak^{11}	
(Gedney's	hot	热	*ʔdwat	D1L	$ʔdat^{11}$	$ʔduɛʔ^{33}$	$ʔau^{11}$	pi^{44}
box 19)	to bathe	洗澡	*ʔɔp	D1L	$ʔɔp^{11}$	$ă^{44}$ ($nă^{22}$)	$ʔɔp^{11}$ ($ʔu^{22}$)	ho^{33}
	flower	花	*ʔbl/rɔk	D1L	$ʔdɔk^{11}$ (wa^{24})	$ʔduɛ^{33}$	$mɔk^{11}$	$m'o^{21}$
	brain	脑子	*ʔuk	D1L	$ʔɔk^{11}$	$ʔuʌ^{33}$	(ho^{33}) $ʔɔk^{11}ʔɤk^{11}$	$quŋ^{22}ɬou^{44}puŋ^{11}$
	bone	骨头	*ʔdl/ruok	D1L	$ʔdok^{55}$ (D1S)	$k^hɔu^{33}$ $ʔdɤ^{55}$	dok^{11}	$aŋ^{33}t'ua^{21}$
Voiced	root	根	*drak	D2L	lak^{21}	la^{44} (mai^{33})	hak^{33}	$a^{44}ɳɕe^{33}$
(Gedney's	rope	绳子	*junk	D2L	$ciɛk^{21}$	$tsɛʔ^{44}$ (pa^{21})	$ɛuk^{33}$	$a^{44}so^{44}$
box 20)	out	外	*nl/rɔk	D2L	(pai^{21}) $nɔk^{21}$	$lɯɛ^{44}$	$nɔk^{33}$ (D2S)	
	blood	血	*luet	D2L	lut^{21}	$laʔ^{44}$	hut^{33}	$p'o^{33}$
	child	孩子	*lɰuk	D2L	$lɔk^{21}$ ($ʔeŋ^{24}$)	mi^{44} ($ðin^{21}$)	$lɔk^{33}$	$li^{33}cua^{44}$

3.3 Summary of the Tone Systems

Diachronically, Nong Zhuang, like many Taic varieties, seems to have originally undergone these two tone-splits, one along the lines of voiced vs. voiceless and preglottalized syllable initials, and the other in PT Tone D based on vowel length. This resulted in a ten-tone category system. However, today we see that some of the historically unvoiced initials result in tone pitches that are lower than their historically voiced counterparts, even though presumably the original motivation for the voicing-based tone split was the lowered pitch of voiced initial syllables.

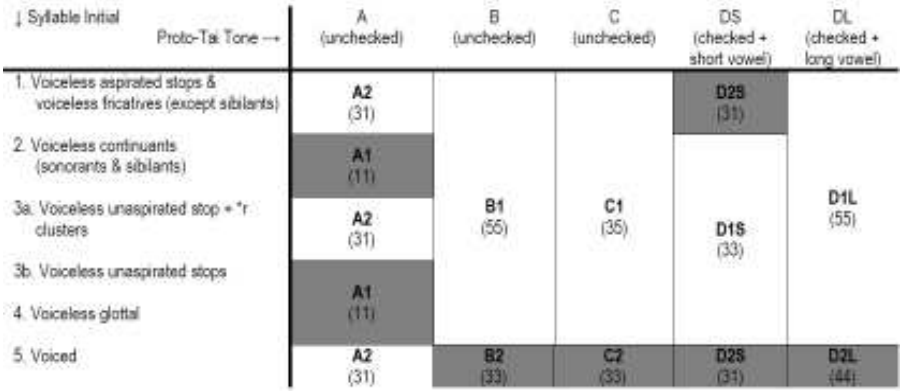
Nong Zhuang Tone System

↓ Syllable Initial / Proto-Tai Tone →	A (unchecked)	B (unchecked)	C (unchecked)	DS (checked + short vowel)	DL (checked + long vowel)
1. & 2. Voiceless aspirated stops + voiceless continuants 3. Voiceless unaspirated 4. Voiceless glottal	**A1** (24)	**B1** (11)	**C1** (22)	**D1S** (55)	**D1L** (11)
5. Voiced	**A2** (33)	**B2** (31)	**C2** (55)	**D2S** (33)	**D2L** (31)

From a synchronic perspective, that is the way a native speaker or learner would see the language, the Nong Zhuang of Maguan County has only six unique tone contours—four level or register tones: 11, 22, 33 and 55 (˩, ˧, ˦, ˥) ; one rising tone: 24 (˧˦); and one falling tone: 31 (˦˩). All of these can occur on open syllables but checked syllables can only carry four of these tones. So in terms of synchronic tones, we can summarize the Maguan County Nong Zhuang tone system by saying that D1S is equivalent to C2, D2S is equivalent to A2, D1L is equivalent to B1, and D2L is equivalent to B2.

Maguan County Dai Zhuang, along with Dai Zhuang data points elsewhere, shows a distinctive splitting pattern of PT Tone A and PT Tone DS. The tone category resulting from the originally voiced initials belonging to PT Tone B seems quite unstable in Dai Zhuang, merging with B1, A2 or C2 according to the location. The tone categories resulting from PT Tone D basically no longer exist as synchronic tone categories because final oral plosives have been lost (or are in the process of disappearing) and thus words carrying these tones are now indistinguishable, as far as we were able to determine, from the open syllable tones with the same pitch values.

Dai Zhuang Tone System

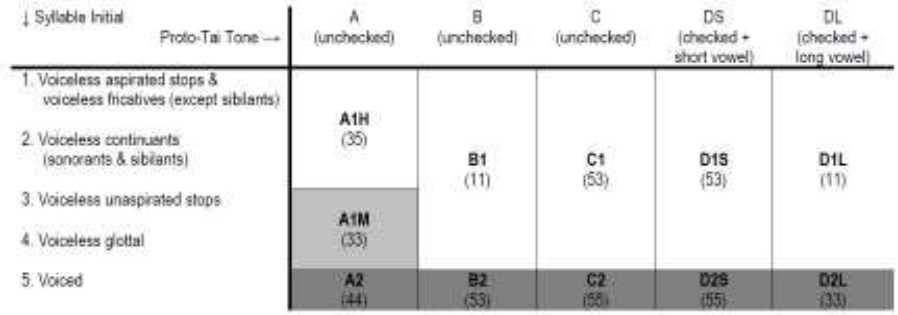


↓ Syllable Initial / Proto-Tai Tone →	A (unchecked)	B (unchecked)	C (unchecked)	DS (checked + short vowel)	DL (checked + long vowel)
1. Voiceless aspirated stops & voiceless fricatives (except sibilants)	A2 (31)	B1 (55)	C1 (35)	D2S (31)	D1L (55)
2. Voiceless continuants (sonorants & sibilants)	A1 (11)			D1S (33)	
3a. Voiceless unaspirated stop + *r clusters	A2 (31)				
3b. Voiceless unaspirated stops	A1 (11)				
4. Voiceless glottal					
5. Voiced	A2 (31)	B2 (33)	C2 (33)	D2S (31)	D2L (44)

All the Dai Zhuang dialects seem to be in the process of losing syllable-final oral stops, though glottal stops are still retained in the place of historical oral stop codas in some instances. Therefore the checked tone categories resulting from Tone D are no longer distinguishable from those on unchecked syllables with the same pitches. Thus minimal pairs are possible between the tones resulting from PT Tone D and those resulting from the other three PT tones. Maguan County Dai Zhuang has the following six distinct tone pitches : 31 (˨˩), 11 (˧), 55 (˥), 33 (˧), 35 (˧˥), 44 (˦)). B1 and D1L have the same pitch and C2 and D1S have the same tone pitch.

The Tai Dam language, shows a three-way split of PT Tone A and a single split along the lines of onset voicing of each of the other PT tones, including a split of PT Tone D based on vowel length, although, like Nong Zhuang, vowel length as a phonemic feature has now been lost in Tai Dam, at least in checked syllables. (Both Nong Zhuang and Tai Dam appear to maintain contrastive vowel length for the vowel /a/ before nasals and semivowels.)

Tai Dam (Maguan Dai) Tone System (Zhou & Luo 1999)



↓ Syllable Initial / Proto-Tai Tone →	A (unchecked)	B (unchecked)	C (unchecked)	DS (checked + short vowel)	DL (checked + long vowel)
1. Voiceless aspirated stops & voiceless fricatives (except sibilants)	A1H (35)	B1 (11)	C1 (53)	D1S (53)	D1L (11)
2. Voiceless continuants (sonorants & sibilants)					
3. Voiceless unaspirated stops	A1M (33)				
4. Voiceless glottal					
5. Voiced	A2 (44)	B2 (53)	C2 (55)	D2S (55)	D2L (33)

According to Zhou and Luo's data, the language spoken by the Dai nationality people of Maguan maintains six distinct tone pitches, of which four are possible on syllables checked by oral plosives: 35 ( ), 33 ( ), 44 ( ), 53 ( ), 55 ( ), 11 ( ). (Zhou and Luo 1999:65)

Zhuang Tone Systems

Nong Zhuang of Maguan County		Dai Zhuang of Maguan County		Tai Dam of Maguan County	
PT Tone categories	tone values	PT Tone categories	tone values	PT Tone categories	tone values
A1	24	A1	11	A1H	35
A2 = D2S	33	A2 = D2S	31	A1M = D2L	33
				A2	44
C1	22	C1	35	C1 = B2 = D1S	53
C2 = D1S	55	B2 = C2 = D1S	33	C2 = D2S	55
B1 = D1L	11	B1 = D1L	55	B1 = D1L	11
B2 = D2L	31	D2L	44		

3.4 Classification of Maguan County's Taic Tone Systems

The tone split system of Nong Zhuang belongs to Li's Type I tone splitting pattern, for PT Tones A, B, and C. Li lists Guangxi's Longzhou (Longchow), Vietnam's Nung and Tày, and Taic languages as following this split pattern. This pattern can be found in all three of Li's Taic branches and is quite common. Because each of the six result reflexes have a unique pitch Nong is a prototypical example of Type I for unchecked syllables, not belonging to any of the subcategories. Concerning PT Tone D, Nong Zhuang fits Li's Subtype Ia pattern for PT Tone D tone splits in that Tone D has split into four distinct tones and none of these have remerged with each other, although they do share pitches with unchecked syllable tones. At the time of his writing, Li was not aware of any Central Taic variety that fit this pattern (Li 1977: 52).[4]

Li notes that "on the whole, tones D1S and D1L in many dialects tend to be identical with B1, and D2S and D2L tend to be identical with B2…" (1977:54) In Maguan County Nong Zhuang we do see D1L identical to B1 and D2L identical to B2; in Dai Zhuang and Tai Dam of Maguan County only B1 has merged with D1L.

Gedney's "Western Nung" language (Hudak 1995) shares the same tone split pattern, and the tone pitches are remarkably similar to our Nong Zhuang data. Although Gedney wrote about his Western Nung as a language of the Muong Khuong area of Lao Cai province, Vietnam, the home of his original Western Nung informants with whom he worked in Laos in 1964, the majority of data in his field notes comes from a later informant he worked with in 1968-69, whose home village, called Muong Thin Na (mɯŋ^{44} tʰin^{31}

na[44]), was actually a night's walk north of Muong Khuong in China, probably in Maguan County or the bordering Hekou County (now part of Honghe Prefecture).[5] In addition to the identical tone split systems, as we have elsewhere analyzed other aspects of Gedney's Western Nung data, both phonological and lexical, (Johnson forthcoming) it is clear that "Western Nung" and Nong Zhuang are indeed the same language.

Maguan County Nong Zhuang Compared with Gedney's "Western Nung"

Maguan Nong Zhuang		Gedney's "Western Nung"		
PT Tones	*pitch*	*Gedney's numbering*	*PT Tones*	*pitch*
A1	24/35	1	A1	14
A2 = D2S	33	4	A2 = D2S	44
B1 = D1L	11 / 12	2	B1 = D1L	21
B2 = D2L	31	5	B2 = D2L	31
C1	22	3	C1	22 (glottal constriction)
C2 = D1S	53 / 55	6	C2 = D1S	55 (glottal constriction)

Though Dai Zhuang's PT Tones B, C and DL resemble Li's Type I tone split pattern, the splitting that we observe in PT Tones A and DS doesn't fit into any of the patterns Li noted in his *Handbook of Comparative Tai.* The closest pattern to what we observe in Dai Zhuang is his Type IV, for which he had only one confirmed example, T'ienpao (Tianbao, today's Debao County in Guangxi), also a Central Taic variety.[6] This type also involved a split of Li's syllable initial group 3, with members of that group which had developed into aspirated consonants or /h/ grouping together with his group 1 initials (voiceless aspirated stops), and other members of the group grouping together with his group 2 initials (voiceless continuants). However, Dai Zhuang's tone mergers and Tones B and C behavior are quite different than those of Tianbao. None of Li's Tone D split patterns exactly resembles those seen in Dai Zhuang, though we do see some similarity between the Dai Zhuang tone mergers and those described for Tushan, which has lost final –k after both short and long vowels, namely that D2S merges with A2. (Yongnan Southern Zhuang in Guangxi also appears to show unusual splitting of PT Tone A according to Zhang 1999: 121.)

Theraphan (1997) presents her analysis of Dai Zhuang data collected in locations in Wenshan and Maguan Counties, as well as data from the Tianbao dialect of Funing county and that of Debao County, Guangxi.

She refers to the Dai Zhuang as "Dai Tho" and to the Tianbao and Funing dialects as "Tai Tho."[7] In terms of the tone splitting patterns, her four

Dai Tho locations look quite similar to our data, with a two-way split in Tone A resulting in PT voiceless aspirated plosives grouping with PT voiced initials and a similar split in DS. Though the pitch values and mergers she has identified vary slightly from our data, when we look more closely, we see that the differences are probably mostly due to imperfect tonal perception (probably on our part, Theraphan is a native speaker of a Taic language) and we are in fact describing the same language. To whatever degree the differences between our analysis and hers reflect actual dialect difference, this is probably another indication of the dialectal variety within the Dai Zhuang language. We have lined up her data here with to compare with our data, though we are not able to exactly determine the geographical proximity of the various data points.[8]

Maguan County Dai Zhuang

↓ Syllable Initial Proto-Tai Tone →	A (unchecked)	B (unchecked)	C (unchecked)	DS (checked + short vowel)	DL (checked + long vowel)
1. Voiceless aspirated stops & voiceless fricatives (except sibilants)	Johnson: 31 Theraphan: 41			Johnson: 31 Theraphan: 31	
2. Voiceless continuants (sonorants & sibilants	Johnson: 11 Theraphan: 12˚	Johnson: 55 Theraphan: 454˚	Johnson: 35 Theraphan: 35		Johnson: 55 Theraphan: 44
3a. Voiceless unaspirated stop + *r cluster	Johnson: 31 Theraphan: 41			Johnson: 33 Theraphan: 33	
3b. Voiceless unaspirated stops	Johnson: 11 Theraphan: 12˚				
4. Voiceless glottal 5. Voiced	Johnson: 31 Theraphan: 41	Johnson: 33 Theraphan: 454˚	Johnson: 33 Theraphan: 33˚	Johnson: 31 Theraphan: 31	Johnson: 44 Theraphan: 44

Pranee and Theraphan (1998) identify the splitting of Tone A as a significant factor for a subdivision of Central Taic, along with the development of the dental consonant clusters *tr and *t^hr. (The two *tr example words used by Pranee and Theraphan are the forms for 'eye' and 'to die'; the same forms which Luo 1997 are more likely to descend from *pr, based on data from Saek.) They propose a twofold split of Central Tai into groups called "Nong-Tay" and "Budai," the latter of which is characterized by a three-way split of PT Tone A and *tr and *t^hr merging into t^h. Nong Zhuang, which only splits PT Tone A along the lines of voicing is assigned to their "Nong-Tay" group, where languages such as Dai Zhuang that show a more complicated split of Tone A are assigned to their "Budai" group.

Based on their Dai Tho data, Pranee and Theraphan describe the secondary split in PT Tone A as resulting in two categories, one of which consisted in proto-voiceless aspirated stops, proto voiceless dental clusters, and proto voiced initials (which we refer to as "A2"), and the other consisting of proto voiceless sonorants, proto unaspirated stops and proto glottalized stops ("A1"). This is generally the same as our findings, except that we also note that voiceless fricatives are divided between the two groups, with non-sibilant fricatives falling into tone A1 and sibilants belonging to tone A2 and also it appears that not all dental clusters to pattern with the aspirated stops and voiced initials, as we find the dental lateral-cluster *tl%iem A1, meaning 'full', showing reflexes belonging to the A2 group, probably because unlike the words resulting from *tr- (or *pr-), *tl- did not result in an aspirated stop in Dai Zhuang, but rather a voiceless, unaspirated stop /t/.

Other Chinese works on the Zhuang languages, such as Wei and Tan 1980, Tan 1996 and Zhang 1996 noted the unusual split in PT Tone A from a synchronic perspective by statements such as "expected 1st tones [A1], when on aspirated initials, merge with 2nd tone [A2]" (Wei and Tan 1980:95, Tan 1996: 79, Zhang et al. 1996:194.)

The language spoken by some of the Dai nationality people of Maguan County which we have been referring to as "Tai Dam" shares many similarities to Nong Zhuang, even showing identical reflexes for certain items.9 Certainly Tai Dam is much more similar phonologically and lexically to Nong Zhuang than it is to Dai Zhuang. Its tone split system is similar, but not identical, with a three-way split of Proto-Tone A, lacking in Nong Zhuang.

Among the languages available to Li in his comparison the tone split type represented by Maguan County's Tai Dam was quite rare, with only a single example: the U Thong dialect of Central Thailand (Suphan Buri Province) a Southwestern Taic language described by Brown (1962). The splitting pattern of PT Tones A, B, and C, in which A splits into three tones with the first combing Li's syllable onset categories 1 and 2, the second combing categories 3 and 4 and the third tone included items with voiced onsets in Proto-Tai and in which PT tones B and C split a single time based on voicing Li assigned the title "Subtype IIIe." In U Thong as in the Tai Dam of Maguan County, B2 merged with C1. With regards to the splitting of PT tone D, Tai Dam, like Nong Zhuang, fits Li's Subtype Ia pattern for D tone splits in that PT Tone D has split into four distinct tones and none of these have remerged with each other, although they do share pitches with unchecked syllable tones.

The similarities between the Nong Zhuang and Tai Dam tone split systems could give the impression that these two languages are simply dialects of each other, or that they have had a very short period of independent development. However, if we look at other features of the language, we find that in fact these are significantly differently languages that though resulting from a common ancestor, have had quite different histories of linguistic development (probably resulting from differing migratory histories of their speakers). Tai Dam clearly does show phonological features distinctive of Southwestern Taic languages, whereas Nong Zhuang is a fairly prototypical Central Taic language (and Dai Zhuang appears to be a bit of an outlier to the Central Taic group). Though it is beyond the range of this paper to analyze the other similarities and differences in the phonological developments of these three Taic languages, in the following table we present some data organized according to Proto-Tai onsets to show some ways Tai Dam have differed in their historical development of these onset phonemes.

PT initial	Gloss		Proto-Tai form (Li 1977)	tone	Tai Dam (Zhou & Luo 1999)	Maguan Nong Zhuang	Maguan Dai Zhuang
*f- →					/f/	/pʰ/	/pʰ/
	to dream	做梦	*fan	A1	(nɔn^{2}) fun^{1}	pʰən^{24} (xən^{31})	(nuə̃^{31}) pʰə̃n^{31}
	rain	雨	*fon	A1	fun^{1}	pʰan^{24}	pʰən^{31}
*dr →					/h/	/l/	/l/
	root	根	*drak	D2L	hak^{22}	lak^{21}	la^{44} (mal^{22})
*t/pr →					/t/	/tʰ/	/tʰ/
	to die	死	*trai (Luo 1997: *prai)	A1	tai^{1}	tʰai^{24}	tʰɤ^{31}
	eye	眼睛	*tra (Luo 1997: *pra)	A1	ta^{1}	(lɔk^{22}) tʰa^{24}	(la^{22}) tʰɔ^{31}
*thr- →					/h/	/tʰ/	/tʰ/
	head	头	*throw	A1	ho^{24}	tʰu^{24}	tʰɤ^{33}
	to carry on a pole	担，挑	*thrap	D1L	hap^{11}	tʰap^{55}	tʰa^{55}
*j , *ɣ →					/s/	/ɛ/	/s/
	rope	绳子	*jɯak	D2L	tɯk^{22}	ciek^{21}	tsɤ?^{44} (pɤ^{21})
	heart	心脏	*ce:ɯn	A1	tsam^{24}	(tʰu^{24}) cau^{24}	(tʰɤ^{31}) tsəu^{11}
	seven	七	*cet	D1S	tsɿt^{22}	cit^{55}	tɕi^{33}
*ŋ →					/ŋ/ (& /x/ ?)	/ŋ/	/ŋ/
	snake	蛇	*ŋɯŋ	A2	ŋɯ^{44}	(ŋ^{33}) ŋu^{33}	(ŋɯ^{44}) ŋɤ^{31}
	silver	银子	*ŋɤn	A2	ŋɯn^{44}	ŋɯn^{33}	ŋɤ^{31}
	shadow	影子	*ŋau	A2	(ʔi^{33}) ŋau^{44}	(ŋ^{33}) ŋau^{33}	*ʔa^{33} ŋa^{33}*
	branch	树枝	*ŋa	B2	ŋa^{35}	ŋa^{35} (mei^{35})	*kɤŋ^{35} ŋaa^{35}*

***hŋ- →**					**/h/**	**/ŋ/**	**/ŋ/**
	to yawn	打哈欠	*hŋau	A1	haw^{33}	$ŋa^{24}$ ($ŋap^{21}$)	$ŋi^{31}$ (ho^{33})
***kh- →**					**/x/, /kʰ/**	**/kʰ/**	**/kʰ/**
	leg	腿	*kha	A1	xa^{45}	$kʰa^{24}$	($ŋi^{31}$) $kʰo^{31}$
	sell, to	卖	*khai	A1	xai^{33}	$kʰai^{24}$	$kʰɤ^{31}$
	son-in-law	女婿	*khuu	A1	$lak^{22}kʰu^{45}$	($lɔk^{21}$) $kʰɔ^{24}$	(le^{454}) $kʰuɤ^{31}$
	to kill	杀	*kha	C1	xa^{33}	$kʰa^{22}$	$kʰɣ^{35}$
***khlai →**					**/kʰai/**	**/cʰai/**	**/cʰai/, /kʰai/**
	sick	病	*khlai	C1	$kʰai^{33}$	$cʰai^{22}$	$cʰai^{35}$
***kai →**					**/kai/**	**/cai/**	**/kai/**
	chicken	鸡	*kai	B1	kai^{11}	cai^{11} (kai^{11} in some Nong areas)	kai^{33}
***ɣw →**					**/x/**	**/w/ (or /v/)**	**/w/**
	water buffalo	水牛	*ɣwai	A2	xai^{44}	wai^{33}	wa^{31}
	night	夜	*ɣuau	A2	(ho^{33}) xau^{44}	($ɛaŋ^{24}$) hau^{31}	($ŋaŋ^{33}$) $ɣi^{33}$
***x- →**					**/kʰ/, /x/ (& /k/ ?)**	**/kʰ/, before front vowels: /cʰ/**	**/kʰ/, before front vowels: /cʰ/**
	white	白	*xau	A1	xau^{33}	$kʰau^{24}$	$kʰau^{31}$
	green	绿(青)	*xiau	A1	xiu^{33}	$ɕi^{33}$	$cʰiu^{31}$

Conclusion

We have seen that though the three Taic languages of Maguan County share much in common, each possesses a unique tone system that reflects a certain period of independent development. Although all three are in close geographical and social contact today, with even some degree of language shift occurring from Tai Dam to Nong Zhuang, the distinctives of each language are still evident through their tone systems, as well as through other aspects of the languages.

Lachi, which may descend from a common ancestor to both it and the Taic languages more remote than Proto-Tai is clearly quite linguistically distant from these three languages, although many of its speakers are also shifting to Nong Zhuang. Though its speakers have recently been reclassified into the official Zhuang nationality, the language itself has been correctly identified by Chinese linguists as not belonging to the Zhuang group of languages. At least within China, Lachi is an extremely endangered language that will probably disappear within a generation.

The Tai Dam language may also be threatened if its speakers shift to speaking Nong Zhuang and/or local Chinese. The similarities between the phonological, lexical and grammatical systems of Tai Dam and Nong Zhuang may be facilitating the speakers' shift to Nong Zhuang, which has a much larger speaker population.

Dai Zhuang has only about one quarter the population of speakers of Nong Zhuang, and in all areas we visited, we found Dai Zhuang communities to be nearly 100% bilingual in local Chinese, and in some areas near the Wenshan county seat of Kaihua Township, all younger Dai Zhuang people have shifted to Chinese to the degree that they cannot speak Dai Zhuang, and many even can no longer understand Dai Zhuang. Why are these Dai Zhuang speakers shifting to local Chinese, rather than to the larger Nong Zhuang, as Maguan County's Dai nationality people seem to be doing? There are probably numerous factors, a major one being the proximity of some of the Dai Zhuang to the urban center of Kaihua and the economic and political power of Chinese over Zhuang. Nong Zhuang villages within 10 kilometers of the prefecture seat are also show shift to exclusive use of Chinese among those born since the 1990s. But another intriguing possibility is that the more similar phonologies between Tai Dam and Nong Zhuang allow Tai Dam to acquire fluency in Nong Zhuang more rapidly than the Dai Zhuang speakers can. Even though both Dai Zhuang and Nong Zhuang are Zhuang languages, and both Central Taic, the significant differences in their phonologies, including their tone systems, may mean that for Dai Zhuang speakers, Nong Zhuang would be as difficult to master as would a non-Taic language such as Chinese, with far less economic and social benefit for them.

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Notes

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2. Although Theraphan, following Ladefoged 1971 (6-22), prefers to refer to these sounds as 'voiced implosives' rather than 'preglottalized,' we use the latter term in this work because this is the terminology that has been used by Li and mainland Chinese linguists, and because the degree of glottal constriction before these sounds does not seem to be of

uniform quality across dialects and across speakers. Some speakers exhibit a very clear glottal constriction prior to or simultaneous with the production of the voiced plosives, whereas for other speakers the only contrast between these sounds and their unaspirated, voiceless equivalents appears to be voicing. (Gedney only noted a voicing contrast in his Western Nung field notes.) Therefore we prefer to refer to these phonemes with the symbols of a glottal stop followed by the voiced stop ('ʔb' and 'ʔd'), with the understanding that for some speakers the actual phonetic form is simply the voiced stop : [b] and [d].

3. "可以说拉基语与壮侗语一定有关系，但是关系比较疏远。"
4. Li apparently did not have access to Gedney's "Western Nung" field notes (finally published in 1995) although the data was collected a decade earlier than the publication of *Handbook of Comparative Tai* (1977). The Central Taic languages included in his study were "Lungchow" and "T'ien-pao" of Guangxi, China; and Tay, Nung and Tho of Northern Vietnam. Thus, no Central Taic language of Yunnan was included in Li's analysis, nor in that of Luo (1997).
5. We have not yet been able to identify a modern village name that matches this pronunciation. This could be due to the fact that Gedney's informant only provided the Nong pronunciation of the name and not the Chinese characters, and/or due to the fact that many villages were collectivized and renamed during the 1950s, and then sometimes the form of the name was again modified during the effort to standardize place name spellings and pronunciations during the 1980s, the results of which were published in the county level Geographical Names Atlas series (*Di Ming Zhi*, 地名志). Hudak lists the location of this village as being "across the border in China, an overnight journey or about thirty kilometers from Muong Khuong." (1995:405) Presently Muong Khuong lies about 5 km south of the Chinese border, north of which lies a narrow peninsula of Hekou county, and then Maguan County. A location 30 km from Muong Khuong could be within Maguan, Hekou or possibly even Pingbian counties.
6. Li suspected Nung Fan (Phan) Slinh of Vietnam could possibly be another example of Type IV. (1977:50)
7. As mentioned earlier, the Qing dynasty name for Debao County, Guangxi is Tianbao, and the Funing dialect bearing that name (also spelled T'ienpao) is spoken by communities who migrated into Funing from nearby Debao in the recent past, according to Lu and Nong 1998.
8. We have not been able to identify the exact locations of L-Thongkum's Dai Zhuang data points as she does not present the village names in Chinese characters or in standardized Pinyin Romanization, nor does she list the name of the districts or townships to which these villages belong.
9. Although some of the similar or identical lexemes may be due to borrowing from the much more widely spoken Nong Zhuang into Han Zhuang; as mentioned above, apparently a significant percentage of Wenshan Prefecture's Dai nationality people have already switched to speaking Nong Zhuang.

Gender Relations and Masculinity Among The Nung Fan Slinh: Rethinking Gender Equality in Southeast Asia

David B. Wangsgard

Introduction

This article is based on field research that I conducted in a small mountain village in northeast Viet Nam among an ethnic minority group, who identify themselves as *Nùng Fan Slình.* Hereafter I will refer to Nùng Fan Slình as Nùng, as they themselves often do. When I began my research I did not intend to examine gender relations or pursue the question of Nùng masculinity. However, based on past ethnographic research experiences, I kept my eyes and ears open to unanticipated lines of inquiry. Soon after my arrival in the village I noticed that a favorite topic of conversation was me and the very strange way in which I went about being a man. I was given perspectives, advice, instructions, exhortations and reprimands about my own masculinity (or, at least, others' perspectives of my masculinity) from males and females of all ages. These instructions, etc. were most often given by way of contrast between the instructors' perceptions of my behavior and his or her ideas about a proper man. Research participants would most often articulate cultural assumptions about masculinity when I would transgress deeply held beliefs of masculine behavior. This is not to say that people's beliefs are "either or" propositions; Nùng culture allows for a range of masculine possibilities. It was when my ideas, practices, values, moods and temperaments fell outside this range that I would receive my most insightful and illuminating lessons in Nùng masculinity.

It is these unsolicited lessons in combination with dialogue with research participants, and my participation in and observations of gendered social life that inform and shape my experiences and understandings of masculinity within the Nùng system of gender relations, and upon which I base my descriptions, explanations and analyses.

Framing the Problem

I will be employing a framework of "locally engaged theory." Anna Tsing defines locally engaged theory as "eclectic, not exotic, theory." Tsing further elaborates this concept as follows:

> Transcultural conversations sensibly make use of fragments of whatever theories are available; I see no reason not to make use of European theories. Yet there is also no reward here for pursuing the coherence of an approach to its logical end, a common goal of earlier theory building. Locally engaged theory can take various pieces of classic approaches and apply them in addressing particular intellectual challenges. Theory is situated as it engages with locally specified puzzles. (1993:32)

However, I should point out that the question of Nùng masculinity is only a locally specific puzzle in that I took it up as an intellectual challenge in a particular locale. In other words, I specified this particular question in a particular place. For research participants there are particular practices and ideas recognized as feminine or masculine. But people's recognitions were typically not explicated, they were tacitly assumed. These assumptions are realized and re-produced as lived realities through configurations of masculine and feminine practices within a system of gender relations. This gender system can be conceptualized as "a framework of meaning, containing relations within which the sex of the person is made socially relevant" (Holter 2005:20).

Modern European/American culture, as well as social theory, treats men and women as the bearers of polarized character types. Masculinity only exists in relative opposition to it's polar opposite: femininity (Connell 2005). Such a rigid dichotomy may be useful in understanding gender systems and their associated masculinities and femininities in the West, but are of little use in analyses of Southeast Asian gender systems in general, or of Nùng gender systems in particular. The focus of this article is not the history of gender in the West, so I will only give it cursory treatment here.

In regards to social theory, Freud was the first to attempt to formulate a theory of masculinity (Connell 2005). Freud defined the essence of masculinity as activity, as opposed to feminine passivity (Freud 1953 [1905]). Carl Jung, one of Freud's early followers, latched into this essentialist dichotomy and continued to develop and elaborate a theory of masculine/feminine polarity as a universal structure of the human psyche. Jung argued that a person's gendered identity is not only shaped by individual life history, but by archetypal images of men and women. He saw these archetypes as being universally inherited, timeless truths rooted in the human psyche (Jung 1953 [1928]).

In the 1930s, the heyday of functionalist theory, the concept of the "social role" was gaining popularity in the social sciences. Within a framework of functionalism the concept of the social role was used to explain the differentiation

of functions in a social group. Attempting to move beyond Jungian accounts of gender as a universal structure rooted in the human brain, researchers concerned with sex difference applied the role concept to explain the different social functions of men and women, and the term "sex role" was born. Within this framework, gender is most commonly conceived of as "enacting a *general* set of expectations which are attached to one's sex-the 'sex role'" (Connell 2005:22).

One of the most sophisticated applications of sex role theory was made by the renowned structural-functionalist theorist, Talcott Parsons (Parsons and Bales 1956). Taking the family as a social group he conceives of gender as complementary sex roles: the masculine as instrumental; the feminine as expressive. Inherent in functionalist theory is the assumption that social structures, institutions and roles operate in concordance to the end result of a smoothly functioning, stable social group. This also holds true for sex role analysis : Men and women internalize the social expectations and norms, transmitted through the agencies of socialization, which are attached to their sex. The two sex roles operate in a reciprocal and complementary way resulting in a functional gender order-women fulfilling an expressive role, and men an instrumental role (Connell 2005).

The problems with this approach are many. Here I only briefly address those I consider to be the most germane to the discussion at hand. Male and female sex roles are attached to biological sex. Thus, gender is reduced to two discrete, homogeneous categories-man and woman. The smooth operation of a functionalist gender order demands a give and take reciprocity between these two discrete, homogeneous groups, which implies a dichotomous polarity, albeit a complementary one. We can begin to see the difficulties of applying sex role theory and its accompanying assumption of an oppositional dichotomous balance to "a situation where male and female relations are managed in a way as flexible and fluid as they are in Southeast Asia" (Wazir Jahan Karim 1995:26).

Many researchers have claimed that Southeast Asian gender systems re-produce gender equality, symmetry, complementarity, and the "lack of exaggerated opposition of male and female ideologies" (King and Wilder 2003; Esterik 1996; Errington 1990: 1). Anthropologists researching gender issues in Southeast Asia have recognized that "often the attributes of 'maleness', on the one hand, and 'femaleness', on the other, may not coincide exactly to form discrete and exclusive categories, rather they may overlap and constitute differences of degree" (King and Wilder 2003:262).

The anthropology of Southeast Asia abounds with claims of gender equality, or gender symmetry, with the usual caveat that this equality or symmetry does not encompass all spheres of social life (King and Wilder 2003:265). Michael Peletz, working with a group of Malays, observed "a social and cultural environment that places relatively little emphasis on gender or gender difference(s)" (1996:232). But he qualifies this statement with the caveat, "there are various contexts in which villagers assert that males and females differ in certain fundamental respects and are of dissimilar status" (ibid:233). In this same vein, Ingrid Rudie, who has conducted research in another Malay society, argues that there is "a fair balance between male and female in the restricted public field of the local community" but that this balance is countered by a heavily male-dominated political sphere at higher levels (1994:83). For me, claiming gender equality or symmetry in a sociocultural context that privileges men in the domain of politics (i.e. the act of governing, administering or controlling) does not add up. So what are we to make of all this?

I argue that a gender system that lacks oppositional; polarized, dichotomous gender categories of "man" and "woman", and assumes gender difference as a non-discrete, fluid difference of degree rather than type does not necessarily re-produce gender equality. Browsing the literature on Southeast Asian gender studies, the proliferation of sex-role theory language quickly becomes apparent. I believe the application of a theoretical framework that conceives of gender as the enactment of discrete, categorical norms, expectations, and values attached to a person's sex, and further assumes gender complementarity and reciprocal polarity is what leads many researchers working in Southeast Asia to claim gender equality in the face of glaring exceptions. In other words, the application of sex-role theory may erroneously lead gender analysts to the conclusion that in socio cultural contexts where a polarized, dichotomous gender system is absent then gender equality obtains, at least in most spheres of social life.

Perhaps a more appropriate framework for understanding gender systems in Southeast Asia can be found in or adapted from *yin-yang* theory. Kam Louie argues that Western theorists often only superficially understand *yin-yang* theory as a binary opposition, similar to Pythagorean oppositions. Respectively, *yin-yang* are very frequently represented as cool-hot, feminine-masculine, weak-strong, passive-active, yielding-firm, and so on. When applied to an analysis of gender by a mind accustomed to organizing the world into binary opposites (whether that of a "new-age" Taoist author or social scientist) the *yin-yang* concept can easily be reduced to fixed essences of woman and man. In Asian contexts, however, both *yin* and *yang* essences are

> regarded as being in constant interaction where *yin* merges with *yang* and *yang* with *yin* in an endless dynamism. This suggests that every man and woman would embody both *yin* and *yang* essences at any given moment and during sexual intercourse, the two sexes exchange sexual essence. For the male, the ideal situation is one where he absorbs *yin* essence from the woman, without losing his precious *yang* essence to her. For the woman the reverse is true-she must absorb the man's *yang* essence without losing her *yin* essence. (2002:9)

Gender difference in Southeast Asia cannot be reduced to the simple understanding that men embody *yang* essence and women embody *yin* essence. A single individual, whether male or female, has the ambigenous ability to embody both *yin* and *yang* essence. In other words, masculinity/maleness and femininity/femaleness are not conceptualized as discrete and exclusive categories corresponding exclusively to either *yin* or *yang*, but rather "overlap and constitute differences of degree". After all, completeness is represented by the *yin-yang* compass or circle, where both essences are equally present and eternally merging into one another. This approach assumes that men and women do not necessarily posses qualitatively different characteristics (a sociocultural construct recognized by countless researchers working in Southeast Asia), but rather both have capacity for the same kinds of characteristics-keeping in mind that all men and women do not posses equal capacity.

Using fragments of *yin-yang* theory is not inappropriate to theorizing a system of Nùng gender relations, as many Taoist concepts are assumed within the imaginative universe of the Nùng (Abadie 2001). Elements of Taoist philosophy, at least as it is practiced by the laity, are quite apparent in Nùng religious practices and beliefs, such as the widely held belief that spirits pervade and continually interact with the human/natural world; religious officials or priests/shamans *(laao slây* or *cân slây)* intervene in and mediate between the spirit and human/natural worlds; revered Spirits are waited on and supplicated like people of high status or station in the human world; evil spirits or demons are bribed, threatened, tricked and cast out of homes or the community like human thugs and outlaws would be (Wolf 1974). Furthermore, the Nùng folks I worked with migrated from the southern Chinese province of Guangxi (now the Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region) roughly 200 years ago (see Howard and Howard 2002), or, as reckoned by the Nùng, five generations ago. Taoism was sanctioned by the Chinese state in 440 CE as an official religion. State support for Taoism in China ended in 1911 CE (Wolf

1974). The ancestors of the Nùng folks with whom I worked were undoubtedly exposed to Taoist, as well as Buddhist and Confucian philosophies. In many of my conversations with Nùng priests/shamans (hereafter, simply referred to as "priests") and lay people, as well as my observations of and participation in various ritualized ceremonies, I saw and heard elements of all three schools of thought jostle and mix with a cult of ancestor worship and animist beliefs. All this said, I remind the reader that I will not be attempting to elucidate Nùng gender by clinging dogmaticallyto Taoist *yin-yang* theory and its accounts of femininity and masculinity. Rather, I will appeal to shreds and patches of *yin-yang* theory as I feel it will help make sense of the gendered realities I encountered during the course of my research.

Among the Nùng, women and men are most definitely recognized as different. However, women and men are not understood to possess qualitatively different characteristics. Gender difference is not understood as an oppositional dichotomy. Men and women both put value on the same kinds of personal or individual characteristics and attributes, such as craftiness, wickedness, physical ability to labor, ability to establish, maintain and mobilize social networks, spiritual potency, etc. It is not the absence or presence of these characteristics and attributes, but an individual's *capacity* for these characteristics and attributes that separates men from women. Nùng cultural assumptions of gender hold that women have a diminished capacity for desirable or valued human traits and characteristics. The lack of an oppositional, polarized gender dichotomy that corresponds to discrete, exclusive gender categories does not necessarily re-produce a system of gender equality; in fact, there is a marked lack of gender equality among the Nùng.

In this article, I will explore a system of Nùng gender relations through an examination of particular social institutions, rituals and holidays and their associated gendered practices, as well as men's and women's narratives of gender. I will attempt to show how these gendered practices re-produce an extremely patriarchal order, which guarantees male domination and female subordination.

Delimiting the Problem

The village where I conducted my research consisted of 60 households[1]. Among the Nùng, descent is traced solely through the male line. Every household in the village, with the exception of three households whose patriarchs married into the village[2], shared the same surname and could trace its genealogy to a common ancestor. One of the most common phrases I heard during my

research was "here we are all brothers." It wasn't long before I realized that when a man or woman uttered this phrase he or she was not only making a symbolic statement of male solidarity, but was also referring to the fact that the men in the village (with the three exceptions) are cognatic relatives.

The majority of the households in the village were on relatively equal economic footing. There is an ethos of brotherly unity that obtains in the village. Brothers are expected to share unselfishly with one another so that no one goes hungry, so that no one goes without. This ideal is not always realized in practice, and there are intra-village rivalries and jealousies that exist. However, brotherly unity is expressed through ritualized practices, some of which will be discussed below, as well as through certain concrete practices such as house construction, the installation and maintenance of a water supply line and electrical lines to the village. There were two households that were considered to be wealthy, and one household that was considered to be particularly poor. In the village, a man's socioeconomic position was not seen to produce a particular kind of masculinity. Rather, it is a man's capacity to embody and practice the hegemonic pattern of masculinity that results in his socioeconomic position.

I recognize that within any given society there are relationships between different masculinities and different femininities. Along these same lines, the interplay of gender with class, age, sexuality and ethnicity create further relationships between differently configured masculinities and femininities. In a more stratified society, or if I was to broaden my scope of focus to include neighboring villages and nearby towns, whose populations consist of Tày, Yao and Kinh ethnicities, I would be inclined to include discussions differently configured masculinities and their relationships. In this article, rather than elaborating on the relationships between different configurations of masculine and feminine practices, I will be focusing on hegemonic masculinity as it was practiced in the village where I conducted my research. Connell (2005:77) defines hegemonic masculinity as "the configuration of gender practice which embodies the currently accepted answer to the problem of the legitimacy of patriarchy, which guarantees ... the dominant position of men and the subordination of women."

Within the village, all masculine practices that I identified tended toward a hegemonic pattern of masculinity. Although not all the adult men I knew were rigorously practicing the hegemonic pattern in its entirety, they all did enjoy a patriarchal dividend. In other words, the men of the village enjoyed the advantage that "men in general gain from the overall subordination of women" (Connell 2005:79).

Women's Position in the Gender System

In order to sketch a clearer picture of Nùng masculinity we need to have some understanding of women's position in the Nùng system of gender relations. For the purposes of this article I will give a very general overview of Nùng engagements and wedding practices; leaving the finer details for another place and time. Then, by way of narrative examples communicated to me by men and women, I will attempt to illuminate the position of women as wives or in-laws (*lù)* as well as the status of female children.

Engagements

A boy's parents will go to the homes of girls that the boy likes to inquire about the girl's eligibility for marriage. Or the parents may ignore their son's wishes and go find out about the girls they want their son to marry, which was the most common practice in the past. (I was told that only in the past ten years have children begun to dare refuse their parents' choice of marriage partners.) Nowadays, parents typically consult with their children about eligible marriage partners rather than forcing a marriage *(ep aú)* because if the groom rejects his bride, or if the bride refuses to take up residence with the groom it becomes "a terrible mess, and a waste of money." Young men and women are typically between 16 and 20 years old when their marriage arrangements are made.

After the 15th day of the first lunar month (the last day of the new year holiday), and before the third day of the third lunar month (grave cleaning holiday), boys' parents car go find out about potential brides. This is called *aú mình* or *aú slo*^{2ed}, which means "getting/taking numbers/destiny/fate". These "numbers" refer to a person's birth year month, day and hour, which determine to a large degree a person's personality and destiny or fate. Each of these numbers corresponds to an astrological sign in the Nùng zodiac. Certain configurations of these signs are more auspicious than others, and the more auspicious a person's configuration of signs then the higher or stronger their numbers.

The boy's parents then take his numbers and the girls' numbers to a priest who know : how to "see" or read numbers. After the priest determines which girls would make appropriate matches with the boy, his parents return to the girls' homes to further discuss the potential match with the girls' parents. If a girl's parents approve of the match then the two households discuss money and meat. The Nùng practice a form 0f bride price. The Nùng term that refers to giving a daughter away in marriage is *"khai luc sláo"* [ed.: NT:

khaai luuk saao], literally translated it means "sell daughter". The average price for a bride in 2004 was two million Vietnamese *aông* VND, the official currency of Viet Nam, [here equivalent to some more than 200] and at least one large rotisserie roasted pig. The average price for a healthy adult buffalo was five million VND.

Weddings

The wedding itself takes place over the course of three days. These days are chosen in consultation with a priest, so that the wedding takes place on auspicious days. The first day is a day of preparation at both the groom and bride's respective homes. This basically involves stockpiling rice liquor, food preparation and preparing the homes to receive guests. The quantity of meat that was agreed upon during the marriage negotiations is prepared at the groom's house and inspected by the priest, who is also involved in the marriage negotiations, to ensure that the proper amount has been provided. The meat is then offered to the groom's ancestors by the priest, who prays for luck, success and happiness for the bride and groom. After this offering is complete, the food is taken by the cooks and kitchen helpers to the bride's house, where it is offered to her ancestors. During any kind of festivities, the lead cooks are always men, with women serving in the capacity of helpers who perform the menial tasks such as cookingthe rice, washing the dishes, etc. (Although women and children typically prepare the food that sustains daily life in the village, it is generally assumed, at least among the men, that men are inherently better cooks than women. I most often heard men make this claim over daily meals while disparaging the food prepared by their wives and children[3]. So, naturally, men take the lead in preparing important meals.)

On the second day of the wedding the primary festivities take place at the bride's home. The groom comes to the bride's house accompanied by two helper friends or "groom's assistants". Friends and family of the bride are gathered and lots of food and liquor has been prepared for the occasion. The large feast is then consumed and many toasts made to the bride and groom's happiness and success. When the meal is finished, or before the meal commences, depending on personal preference and the tempo of the party when the groom arrives, the groom offers the adult males a drink of rice liquor, a drink of tea and a cigarette. When this is finished the adult males stuff money (small denominations of 1000 or 2000 VND) into one of the empty cups to give to the bride and groom. Then two women from the groom's side arrive with betel nut that is put into rice bowls with a little fresh tobacco and a

cigarette and placed on a mat in the middle of the floor. Then close female friends and family of the bride put money on a collection plate and are given a bowl of betel nut with the tobacco and cigarette by the two women from the groom's house. During this time the groom is escorted home by his two friends. After the bowls of betel nut, tobacco and cigarettes have been distributed, the priest makes a prayer in front of the bride's family altar for a good union, long life and happiness for the bride and groom. Then two young women from the bride's side leave for the groom's house. One of the young women carries a shoulder pole with a container on each end that hold the bride's blanket, mosquito net, and some personal items and affects. The other young woman carries a sleeping mat that is rolled around two poles that will be used to hang the mosquito net. In the mat is also a stalk of sugar cane, representing sweetness so that the bride will cook deliciously. These two young women are not allowed to turn around or look back once they leave for the groom's house a symbolic cutting of ties with the bride's natal family. As the bride prepares to leave, the priest makes a prayer into an umbrella that is given to the bride, or one of her escorts to carry to protect the bride from rain or shine as she makes the trek to her husband's house.

Then, at an auspicious hour appointed by the priest, the bride is escorted halfway to the groom's house (most often in a different village) by a group of female friends and an adult male relative. At the halfway point, all of the friends except for two helper friends, or "bride's assistants" and the adult male return to the wedding party at the bride's home, and the bride with her two assistants and male protector finish the journey to the groom's home.

The bride and her entourage sleep at the groom's house on the night they arrive. The following day is the primary wedding day at the groom's house. The bride and her entourage participate in the feasting and drinking that take place during the day, and then in the evening they all return to their respective homes. Very often, when the bride's entourage leaves the wedding party at the groom's house to return to their home village, the bride also returns to her parent's home. A bride typically does not take up permanent residency in her husband's home until several years after the wedding. I will elaborate on this below.

The wedding celebration at the groom's house looks very similar to the celebration and festivities that took place on the previous day at the bride's house. The primary differences are the rituals that the priest performs and that it is the bride and her helpers who offer the wine, tea, cigarettes and betel nut to the guests.

The two young women carrying the bride's belongings arrive at the groom's house first and put these things in the space that has been set aside for the new bride in the groom's house. The bride's space and her bed have been predetermined by the priest, and this is usually in the bride's/women's room. If there is no space for her in this room then she is given one of the beds that are often tucked in back and to either side of the household altar and screen. The priest spreads the bride's sleeping mat out on her bed. The priest sits on the bride's bed and makes a prayer to the ancestors asking that the bride and groom will be a good match. Holding a burning joss stick, a bowl of water and reading from the appropriate prayer/chant book, the priest then cleanses the bed and sleeping mat by drawing anything unlucky or bad into the bowl of water. The bowl of water represents the ocean-if there is anything bad or unlucky in the bed or sleeping mat they are "buried in the ocean" by the priest. The priest then empties the bowl of water under the bed, dispelling any bad influences.

Then the priest makes prayers in all comers of the house to clean it of any bad influences that might otherwise come to the new member of the household. This is also accomplished with a burning joss stick and bowl of water, which are the general cleansing paraphernalia employed by priests. Then in front of the groom's family altar he offers a chicken, rice and joss sticks to the ancestors and introduces the new child in law *Luc Lù)* to the ancestors. This introduction can either take place on the night that the bride arrives at the groom's house or the following day, depending on the priest's druthers, so long as it is performed before the wedding concludes. After this, the offerings and ceremonies are finished, now it is just feasting, drinking and partying the Nùng term for "wedding" is *kin lâu*, which literally means, "drink rice liquor".

At every festive occasion that I ever witnessed or was privy to the men and women rarely mingled, and when they did it was mostly for utilitarian purposes (e.g. male and female kitchen helpers interacting to prepare the food; men giving direction to women to bring more chairs, etc.). The men in attendance were always seated with other men at tables set in central spaces that were the focal points of the festive activities. Women were always seated with other women at the margins of the festive spaces, most often at tables that were tucked into comers and side rooms. The one exception I ever saw to this arrangement was during the primary wedding day at a bride's home. At

the time, this particular bride was finishing her senior year in high school and many of the guests and friends in attendance were her schoolmates, comprised mostly of Kinh and Tày boys and girls who were socialized in mainstream lowland society. However, it was only the bride's schoolmates (some of whom were also Nùng kids from the village) who sat, ate, drank and socialized in mixed company.

On a fourth day, after the three days of a wedding have concluded, the groom and a few of his close male relatives and friends return to the bride's house with some food and rice liquor. This is a ritualized activity that also takes place on an auspicious day appointed by a priest, and is called *thoi hòi*, or "bride returning ceremony". If the bride did not return to her parent's home on the evening of the third day of the wedding, then she accompanies the groom and his entourage on this day. At each of the five weddings I attended, however, the brides all returned to their parents' homes at the end of the third wedding day. Several married women explained to me that young Nùng couples are extremely shy, the women more so than the men, and no young bride would feel 6comfortable sleeping in a strange house while only in the company of strangers. (Trying to get a bride and groom to even stand close enough together for a photograph is almost an impossibility. I saw this achieved just once, and only after considerable peer pressure was applied by the bride and groom's lowland Kinh and Tày schoolmates.) Although this event is called the "bride returning ceremony", at the two *thoi hòi* I witnessed it was exclusively men who gathered to eat, drink and socialize. When I inquired as to why this was case, I was told that, "this ceremony is basically to keep up good relations between the two households." When people, male or female, spoke of households it was always in reference to the male family members.

Females occupy a difficult position in the system of Nùng gender relationships. As daughters, females are viewed as future members of other families : women's labor power will be exploited in the interest of their future husbands' households; their reproductive power only has the potential to produce male members for their husbands' households; and they will only provide for the needs and wants of their husbands' deceased ancestors. Female offspring do not inherit any property. If a husband and wife do not have any sons they will adopt a son. I was told that most people preferred to adopt a son from a close paternal relative, in order to keep wealth and property in the family, i.e. the male members. Females are, after all, only provisional family members. If close paternal relatives do not have a second or third son available for adoption, then a sonless husband and wife will adopt the husband of one of

their daughters. This is not the preferred method of acquiring an adopted son, and it had only occurred thrice since the village was established over 200 years ago.

As wives or *lù ("in-law"),* women do not transcend the position of provisional family member. I often heard married women speak of themselves as outsiders who consumed the resources of a household that was not theirs. I often heard men speak of in-laws as property, bought and paid for. Although women are responsible for the bulk of physical, agricultural labor, it is the men who own and control the land, as well as the produce thereof. Likewise, women bear the responsibility for the bulk of childcare; however, the children belong to the husband and his patriline. Reproduction was explained to me in agricultural terms: the man plants his seed in the woman, like he would plant a crop seed in his field-the land and the woman belong to the man, as do the fruits thereof.

The Status of Female Children

During the course of my field research, it was very apparent to me that male and female children were treated differently. I want to emphasize that the mothers and fathers I interacted with most in the village genuinely cared for and loved their daughters. Two families I was particularly close to had marriageable teenage daughters (16 years old), and several boys' parents from neighboring villages had come and gotten their numbers. These girls' numbers had successfully matched with some of the boys' numbers, and the boys' parents had returned to negotiate marriage engagements. However, the girls' parents were very selective with regards to which household they were willing to "sell" their daughters to in marriage, and to date have not agreed to any marriage proposals. Parents are very concerned to "sell" their daughters to good households. One mother told me, "of course parents try to sell [i.e. marry] their daughters to good households where the groom's father is a good, gentle, decent man [because it is the patriarch who sets the tone of the household]. We want our daughters to be happy." Of course, other factors are also taken into consideration, e.g. the resources potential grooms' households have access to[4]. Regardless of the fact that mothers and fathers do care for their daughters, they do not cherish them like sons. From my observations and conversations with men and women, there is a large discrepancy between the way parents (as well as grandparents, uncles, aunts, brothers, sisters and cousins, for that matter) dote on, cuddle, fondle, comfort, give attention to and submit to the wants of their male children and female children, who are 'just girls to be sold to other households". The following conversations and observations illustrate this point well.

One evening I was at a family's home for dinner. After we finished the meal, we sat around talking, as per usual. The individuals present were a widow in her 40s, her mother-in-law, her two daughters, her adopted son and her nephew (her adopted son's older brother). The 40 year old woman was explaining to me that in 1990 she was ready to "skip town", to leave her two daughters, her house and family to go south and work in the coffee fields. She said that she was going through very hard times. Her husband had died before giving her a son. She had to labor all day and take care of her two infant daughters who would just cry all the time. If she had enough money to make the trip she would have left them and gone south. (1 was told that husbands and wives very rarely split up after they have had children. One woman told me that, "A wife will not voluntarily leave because she is not allowed to take the children with her, they belong to the husband's family. Every once in a while a husband chases his wife home to her mother [i.e. divorces his wife), but the children stay and work for their father. It is more common that a wife will leave if the husband dies, but even then the children cannot follow the mother unless the husband's family allows it, and I have never heard of a husband's family allowing it, even if the children are only girls. The children are from the seed of the man, they belong to the man.") I asked, "You would have left your daughters, your children?" She said, "Surely, they are only girls, I did not have a son. Sons are the ones who take care of you; they take care of the parents. Girls leave and take care of their husband's household, sons are very important, not daughters." I turned and asked the woman's oldest daughter, who is an atypically independent and outspoken young woman, what she thought of all this. She simply said, "That's right." Then the woman's nephew spoke up and said, very matter of factly, "Girls are nothing. They get sold as wives and become members of other households." The woman nodded in agreement. She must have been in a very difficult position. She had been sold as a wife to another household, so she no longer belonged to her parents. Before she could bear a son, the man she had been sold to died. Thus, without a son and her husband dead she no longer had a substantial link to her new household, and was left in a vulnerable position. She is a woman, an in-law, and hence an outsider living in a close knit community of "brothers", and because she had not produced a male heir she had no legitimate tie to her husband's familys daughters are only future members of other households; it is sons who stay in the parents' households to

support them in their old age and make offerings to their ghosts once they are dead. She then reiterated to me the importance of sons by telling me that, "You need to have a child." 1 told her, "I already have a child." She replied by saying, "You have a daughter. Unless you have a son it is not really your child."

On another occasion, I was preparing lunch with my host family. It was a cloudless, brutally hot and humid summer day. The youngest daughter (10 years old) came home from school early. She has to walk to and from school, which is 5 km round trip-s-not a long distance to walk by Nùng standards. She wasn't feeling well and looked unusually exhausted from her walk in the hot sun. Her mother and sister asked after her briefly, "Did you eat, are you not feeling well?" to which she responded with shakes and nods of her head. She went and lay down and went to sleep, and was dismissively ignored. After lunch was finished the youngest son (12 years old) came home from school. He gets to ride a bike to and from the same school. He was sweating from the hot ride home and looked flushed, but was still energized enough with his typical 12-year-old spunk as to be able to chase a few chickens around the courtyard before coming inside. As soon as he came in, his mother, his aunt and oldest sister all started exclaiming how tired he looked and how hot the ride home must have been and immediately started doting on him. The sister turned the electric fan toward him, the mother got him water to drink and told him to eat some noodles, the sister went to fix the noodles for him, and the aunt started manually fanning him with her hat. I was a little surprised at the difference in the treatment the daughter and son received, and I made the comment, "[The youngest daughter] had to *walk* home in the same sun and she is sick and no one pitied her. Why do you pity [the son] so?" They all laughed uneasily and the mother rebuffed, "Well, he had to ride a bike home from school." To which I responded, "Walking takes longer so she had to be out in the sun longer." The mother responded, "She is still small and does not know how to ride a bike." To this the oldest sister responded, saying, "Yes she does, she just does not have a bike to ride." The people present at this exchange seemed a little uncertain as to why I was asking such ridiculous questions. I sensed that a combination of the crushing heat and the obtuse anthropologist asking frustrating questions were wearing people's patience quite thin, so I dropped the subject.

Women as In-laws

The Nùng New Year coincides with the Sino-Vietnamese New Year. This is a very auspicious time of year and also considered to be the spring, carrying notions of new beginnings. Many households purchase piglets at this time (many of the adult pigs have been slaughtered for weddings and other festivities that occur at this time of the year). My host was planning to purchase some piglets, as all of his adult animals had been sold or slaughtered. I told him that I would like to contribute some money towards the purchase, as a New Year's gesture of goodwill. My host's wife found out about my offer, and one afternoon, while my host was away on "business" (men's business frequently entails socializing and drinking with friends; a necessary activity in the establishment and maintenance of important male networks, which I will elaborate on below) I recorded the following conversation with her: "[My husband] told me that you want to help pay for the pigs he is going to buy to wish the household happy New Year." I confirmed her statement. She then told me, "Do not do this, we do not need you to do this, our household has enough. You are to act like a member of the household." I told her, "I am behaving like a member of the household by contributing to the household. I know your household has plenty to eat and does not lack anything. The reason I do things for the household is because I like to. I feel more like a member of the household when I contribute to the household. Besides, it is the New Year season." To this she responded, "I just want to make things easier for you. I know what it is like to be the new member of a household, I am an in-law. The first New Year I celebrated with my husband's household was no fun. There was duck, chicken and pork to eat, and plenty to drink. The household did not lack anything. But it did not seem like anything at all to me. Everyone was enjoying the festivities and food, but I was the new in-law, the stranger, and not really a member of the household. After a few years it gets better."

On another occasion I was asking another married woman about funeral practices, and in the course of our conversation she began describing some of her experiences as an in law. This is what she told me, "Joss sticks have to be kept burning continually through each night and day of the funeral. Someone has to stay awake all night to make sure it stays lit, it is like a light for the ghost of the deceased; the joss sticks light the path for the deceased's ghost to follow. If it goes out it will be dark and the ghost may loose its way and wander from the path. I had to stay up all four nights of my father-in-law's funeral to keep the joss sticks burning. Nobody wants this task because they want to get some sleep, so it usually becomes the responsibility of the women,

and if there is a daughter-in-law it becomes her responsibility because she is the lowest and she has to be very deferential, respectful and loving of her husband's parents because she is eating their resources ... The in-law must endure hardship and perform the most undesirable tasks because they are not of their husband's household, you are a stranger in the house but you eat their resources. The husband's family is very jealous/resentful of you because you are a stranger eating the family's resources. So when your husband's family commands you to do something you must suffer them. And they command you to do the hardest tasks and the bulk of the work because they resent you for eating their resources. This is the proper way. If you come into a house that is not your own and eat their resources, of course they will be jealous/ resentful of you. And because you are eating their resources you have to work very hard for them and know how to love and respect them."

Women are in a double bind in the Nùng system of gender relations. As daughters they are only provisional members of their parents' households, one day to be sold as wives. As such, they cannot inherit or lay claim to any of their parents' resources, property, or wealth. Once married, women become provisional members of "strange" households, where they are constantly reminded that they are being sustained by resources that do not belong to them. However, it did seem to me that women's status does improve in old age, especially if a woman had produced a male heir, who had also taken a wife. In these cases, a woman moves from the status of daughter-in-law to that of mother-in-law. Hence, the biggest change in a woman's status is with regards to her daughter-in-law. In other words, her status relative to male family members remains the same; her status improves in the sense that there is a new household member who is of lower status than her. The men I know well in the village are generally respectful of their mothers, and in the sociocultural context of the village it is axiomatic that one's elders must be respected. However, from my observations, children and adolescents were much more likely to talk back to, criticize or ignore a female elder than a male elder. Furthermore, women-in-law are expected to labor until they are physically unable to do so. I know several grandmothers in their 70s (a ripe, old age in the village) who are responsible for herding the buffalo, cutting and collecting firewood and other forest products, and performing a wide variety of physically demanding chores. Men, on the other hand, slow down considerably once their children are physically able to labor (usually around 40 years old), and channel most of their energy into expanding and maintaining their social networks with other men.

The young unmarried women with whom I spoke at length took marriage for granted, had high hopes of being matched up with "ideal husbands", but did not necessarily relish or look forward enthusiastically to becoming a wife and in-law. Two young marriageable women (16 years old) explained subversive tactics to me that they could employ in order to thwart the marriage proposals of potential grooms' households: "If a girl knows that her numbers have matched with a boy's numbers and that his parents are coming to make a marriage proposal all she has to do is sit out in the courtyard, or someplace the boy's parents can see easily, and brush her hair, or wash her hair, or something like take care of herself [perform some kind of personal hygiene maintenance] and the boy's parents will turn right around, go home and not return." I asked why this is the case, and one of the young women said, "It is considered very rude. A good bride should be very shy, especially in front of her husband's family [wives are forbidden to even eat at the same table with her male in-laws]. She should be working the fields, collecting firewood, or at least doing kitchen chores, cleaning the house, or the like; not grooming herself in public!"

Such tactics have serious consequences for young women's future marriage prospects, In the context of the village and the hamlet (comprised of several neighboring villages) to which the village belongs, news travels like wildfire. Instances of female impropriety were known and recounted far and wide. Just one case of female impropriety can impinge heavily on the reputation of an entire village. A "worst case scenario" had occurred in a neighboring village: a young woman had become pregnant out of wedlock. The story was told to me as follows: "There were a group of construction workers in the village building a new house. They were Tày and Nùng boys, but they lived down on the paved road [i.e. they lived among the Kinh, who are the Vietnamese ethnic majority, and were considered by highland dwellers to have adopted Kinh ways of life]. One of these boys started flirting with a girl from the village. He told her that he loved her and planned to marry her, and then he really touched her. [I was often told that "lovers" only talk and exchange gifts, i.e. flirt, but never touch or "do nonsense". Otherwise the girl gets "sick" and gets chased from the village. Even after marriage, men and women can continue to go and flirt with "lovers", but "you only sleep with your husband or wife."] The girl got pregnant, but by the time she found out, that boy had left and could not be found. The girl was chased from the village, and now no one goes to [this particular village] to get girls' numbers anymore." However, this social calamity did not affect the ability of boys from this village to get wives (I attended two wedding parties at grooms' homes in this particular village), as

wives are most often taken from other villages[5]. Likewise, if a girl sabotages a marriage proposal she will get a reputation of being "a bad girl", which will compromise her marriageability. Although most women I know in the village do not romanticize the institution of marriage or the realities of being an in-law, it is still assumed to be the proper station for women, and men for that matter. The Nùng term for "making a living" is *het kin* (literally translated as "work/do/make eat"), and for women this term is used synonymously with being a wife.

Once a marriage proposal has been accepted and the marriage accomplished, young men and women are still able to sabotage the arrangement. The headman's wife, a woman in her 40s, explained to me thus :

> When I was young, newly married couples did not dare split up, did not dare to go against their parents' wishes. Now a days, it is quite common, it seems that all young couples split up, before they have children, that is. Once there are children, husbands and wives rarely ever split up. If a boy loves another girl, other than his wife, and wants to marry her instead, or if the girl is taking too long moving into her husband's house, the boy only needs to take the bride's sleeping mat, mosquito net and other things that were brought to the groom's house on the wedding day, and drop them in front of the door of the bride's parents' house. A boy will often do this without his parents knowing about it. He gathers up the bride's things and sneaks out at night while everyone is sleeping. This ends the marriage. Now a days you have to let the kids marry who they want, as long as their numbers match, or else it is a pointless and complicated mess.

A woman cannot directly enact a divorce. Several middle-aged married women told me that when they were adolescents of marriageable age, the only way out of a marriage arrangement for a girl was suicide. They then recounted stories of two young women they had personally known, who had thrown themselves into the river rather than accept the marriage arrangements made by their parents. When speaking specifically of a man divorcing his wife, the Nùng use a term that means "to discard", and it is only a man who can discard his wife, a woman cannot discard her husband. However, a woman can goad her husband into discarding her. My host gave me his perspective on the arrangement of marriages. He told me, "Nowadays, it is a pointless waste to force your daughter into a marriage. If you take the money [bride price] of the groom's household and then the girl refuses to move into his household it becomes very difficult; it is like if someone buys a product, gives the seller the money and then the seller does not give the buyer the product. If the bride

refuses to go the husband will eventually get frustrated and angry, he will take the bride's blanket and mosquito net and dump them in front of her parent's house. The groom's household will usually require the bride's household to return the money, but the bride's household, of course, does not want to return the money and often tells the groom's household that, 'it is your son, your household that discarded the bride.' Do you see how difficult this situation can be?" I had heard of three young women in the village who had either refused to move in with their husbands or had been discarded by their husbands. I was never able to learn the details of any particular case, as it was a very sensitive subject and source of embarrassment and shame for the entire village.

I had the opportunity to briefly speak with two of these young women's male relatives about the matter-one father, and two paternal grandfathers. I was able to gather that at least one of the young women refused to move in with her husband. This young woman's father was somewhat defensive of his daughter, saying, "She is too shy to move in with her husband." However, he also criticized her for not listening to her parents' wishes and causing a shameful and difficult situation for the family. This young woman's grandfather was less sympathetic, shaking his head in obvious disgust and roundly criticizing her for being a no-good, disobedient girl. The other grandfather I spoke with was not fond of the subject either. When he spoke to me about it, he diverted his eyes to the floor, which signaled to me his extreme discomfort or shame since I am many years his junior-as a sign of deference, younger people commonly divert their gaze from an elder's face, not *vice versa*. While still looking at the floor, he shook his head slowly and grumbled about his frustration with the situation. I did not linger on the subject with him.

The consequences of divorce weigh more heavily on women than men. If a man discards his wife the primary difficulty his family faces is having to pay another bride price; explained to me as, "a waste of money". If a woman refuses to move into her husband's household the groom's family will demand that the bride price be refunded. Perhaps more importantly, if a new bride refuses her marriage it brings shame on her entire family, and jeopardizes her future marriage prospects, and thus her position in Nùng society. One afternoon, I was speaking with a married man in his 40s and a married woman in her 40s. The woman was explaining to me that, "If a woman has already been married and divorced and then marries again then the groom's household only has to pay half the bride price of what they would normally give if she had not been married already-even if she does not have any children." The man interrupted and explained it to me thus, "It is like buying a used product, something that

has been used by another man already. Like this teapot here; it is dirty from being used, the lid does not fit tightly and the handle is no longer firm. Do you see how it is loose? If you are buying something that has been used by another man already and it is loose and worn out then you do not pay full price." The woman added, "It is not always the case that a [divorced] woman has 'done something' with her husband, maybe she never went near him. But how can other people know for sure? The only proof they have are the woman's words, so they still only pay half price."

A divorce that happens because of a bride's refusal to move into her husband's household does not usually happen until several years after the marriage. As I mentioned above, a bride typically does not move into her husband's household until several years after the wedding has been accomplished. Or, more accurately, a new bride does not move to her husband's house until after she becomes pregnant. The soonest I had heard of a bride moving in with her husband was five years after they had been married. A bride's refusal to move in with her husband, therefore, may not become clear to a groom for quite some time. The men I know in the village made it very clear to me that the most desirable brides were in their late teens to early 20s, "young, fresh faced, strong and healthy". By the time a groom divorces a hesitant bride she may very well be in her mid to late 20s, and her age may contribute to her undesirability as a potential wife for other suitors. A woman' place and ability to make a living, or *het kin* in village society is seriously compromised if she is not taken as a wife.

Masculine Perspectives on Marriage

A married man in his 40s gave me this perspective on finding a wife :

> You do not need to worry because there are many fish in the sea. As long as you have got property/wealth, or the ability to get these things, then it is very easy to get a wife in Viet Nam, or even multiple wives. Even if you are old you can get a young wife because *con* gái *tham tài, con trai tham sac* [vn: girls desire property/ resources; boys desire beauty]. It does not matter if the man is young, old or ugly. There are many young women looking for husbands and they are afraid of not finding one. If a woman does something you do not like you only have to tell her you are not going to marry her and she will be afraid.

Middle-aged married men were quite positive about marriage. Although I heard many of these men speak about the sexual perks of marriage, they

spoke of this subject less often than the younger men and sometimes used the topic to make jokes about their wives. Rather, middle-aged married men spoke of marriage in terms of their children and wives' labor power. For example, one afternoon I was drinking with the village headman and another middle-aged married man, who in recent years moved out of the village. Here is an excerpt from our conversation :

> I moved out to the paved road because it is too difficult to make a living in the village, but here they are still my brothers and my house remains open all the day to my brothers from (this village]. I continually have guests. In one day I expend at least three liters of rice liquor and three to four packs of cigarettes. But that is fine because I have a wife and my children are grown so I can stay home and play all day. If I want something I send the children to get it. If there is work to be done I command my wife and children to do it." The headman was in complete agreement, and I remarked that, "Your life is very easy because your wife does all the work for you." He responded adamantly, saying, "That is the way it is. I bought her, I gave her parents 100 kg of pork-she does not weigh that much! I own her flesh and her hair. She is my servant! If there is selling to be done in Loc Binh she goes to Loc Binh, if the selling is in Lang Son she goes to Lang Son. And when she gets home she has to give me her flesh three times if I want. I gave her parents three roasted pigs, and who knows how much money, and now she is at my house, eating my resources. I bought her, of course she has to serve me, that is why I bought her." I said, "With all that work she is sure to get old fast." To this the village headman responded, "No problem, if it breaks down then buy a new one." The other man said, "That is right, buy an 18-year-old, a younger one who is tighter, softer and healthier.

From my experience, men viewed marriage more enthusiastically than women. Young married men, whose wives had taken up residence with them, spoke happily of having a sexual outlet. On several occasions I heard young married men excitedly tell of how they had woken up in the night or early morning with an erection (a sign of male vigor and health) but did not have to suffer the discomfort because they were able to "hit my wife a few times and go back to sleep." Despite these young men's enthusiasm for sex, sexual moderation was a prominent theme in their banter-as for their actual practice, I cannot say. Several times I observed young married men arriving late for or leaving early from communal work projects, lion dance practices, or other

male gatherings. These late arrivals or early departures were always met with taunts or criticisms from other young men, such as, "Where are you going? Home to sleep with your wife?", or, "Ah, you must have woken up with an erection so you hit your wife a few times before coming." Again, I emphasize that such comments were given as criticisms and taunts, not compliments. After all, a proper man should be keeping the company of and socializing with "brothers", not exposing himself to the weakening influences of women, which point I will elaborate below.

The Dangers of Sex

One cold and windy afternoon, I was sitting around the cooking fire with several women and talking about weddings, as I had recently been invited to my first Nùng wedding. Present at this conversation were two married women in their 40s (one of whom is my host's wife), a widowed grandmother in her 70s, and a young married woman in her mid 20s. They were describing common wedding festivities that take place at the groom's house once the bride has arrived. They explained to me that the house would be full of guests, many of whom would stay the night at the groom's house, and that the party could last late into the night. It sounded as though there would be little opportunity for privacy and I inquired about the bride and groom sleeping together on the wedding night. One of the women in her 40s said, "They do not sleep together for a long time. They are very shy and do not even dare talk to each other. Five to ten years after they get married do they sleep together, and only to have children." The other woman in her 40s added, "I was married for ten years before I slept with my husband." I did the math: she got married at 16 years old, she was 40 years old at the time of the conversation and her oldest child was 16 years old, which works out to be roughly eight years before she became pregnant for the first time. I then asked the young married woman how long she had been married. She said to me, anticipating my follow up questions, "I have been married five years, I do not have any children yet, I have not slept with my husband, I still live with my parents and you only sleep with your husband to have children." They all agreed that, "If you have miscellaneous sex with your husband or wife the spirits will punish you, even by death." I told them that I had lots of "miscellaneous" sex with my wife and the spirits never punished me. Then one of the women in her 40s explained, "The spirits here are different, more harsh and wicked. The spirits of the Kinh are also different. Here, we have to live according to the local Nùng spirits, and the village ghost [the principal ancestor of the village, or *tho công]* is a

harsh one. If we do not observe the taboos and follow the customs of this place the *tho công* will punish us. People who have two children have slept together twice, three children then three times." I responded by saying, "You do not get pregnant every time you have sex." They all laughed and the same woman continued, "Yes, but you only have sex to have children. You have to believe us; you have seen it for yourself. You have been in this house several months and have you ever seen me sleep with my husband? This young girl here has been married five years and does not have any children because she has not slept with her husband. Do you believe us yet?" I told them that I did, and my belaboring the topic seemed to be making the women present uncomfortable, so I changed the subject back to the wedding festivities. However, I was still uncertain about how a woman would become pregnant in the first place if she was not sleeping in her husband's house. Several months later, the headman's wife was talking to me about being an in-law. She said,

> In the beginning it's very hard to be the bride, the in-law, because you are in a house that is not yours and you are with a family that is not your family. Of course, at first you do not move in completely, but you have to go and help your husband's family with work, as well as still working for your own family. You do not move in with your husband's family until you get pregnant, and then you are carrying a member of your husband's household, and that new member of your husband's household, of course, must stay in the husband's household, therefore, so must you." I asked, "If you are not yet living and sleeping in your husband's household how do you get pregnant?" She said, "Sometimes you have to work your husband's fields until dark, and then there is dinner to be made, dishes to wash and other household work to be done, most of which the new in-law must do. If you do not, people will criticize you and say that you are a lazy, no-good bride. By the time all this work is finished it is late, it is bedtime, very dark, you are exhausted and your parents' home is a far walk away, which no woman would dare make by herself in the dark; there will perhaps be ghosts out and women are more easily bitten than men because they have weaker numbers than men. So, you sleep at your husband's house, where there has been a bed set aside for you since the wedding. In the wee hours when the household is asleep your husband will quietly come to your bed. And then he goes back to sleep in his own bed. Nùng husbands and wives are very shy.

Men and women have different views about sex, or at least they emphasized different aspects of sex when talking to me. Women most often

would speak of sex in terms of reproduction. Men also spoke of sex in terms of reproduction, usually by way of agricultural analogy, such as, "The deeper you drive your plow blade, the better the crop". More often, when I heard men speak of sex, they spoke of their own physical pleasure in terms of orgasm or ejaculation. However, both men and women seemed to agree that a person should be conservative with regards to sexual activity. One evening I was at home making rice liquor with my host. He was asking about male-female relationships in the West, my own personal sex life, and giving me advice about women. He warned me that, "Sleeping with women a lot is dangerous because it is a serious drain on a man's health and energy. Once in a while is o.k., but doing it very often will expend much strength/health."

Throughout the course of my research, several men explained further that women have weak numbers and carry a weak influence with them. If a man spends any length of time in the company of women this weak influence will rub off on him, diminishing his spiritual potency and making him more susceptible to ghost bites and other misfortunes. Likewise, keeping the company of healthy, strong and spiritually potent men can only bolster one's own health, strength and spiritual potency. A contributing factor to women's spiritual weakness, I was told, is the fact that they menstruate. A woman's reproductive organs, therefore, are a source of her lesser strength, health and weal spiritual influence, and coming into contact with them is what will drain a man's strength and health, not the physical activity of sexual intercourse (men will not hold a baby until at least 15 days after the child's birth; a priest will not hold a newborn until at least a month after the birth in order to allow the weak female influence to dissipate from the child, or "until the child is clean."). Framed in terms of *yin-yang* theory, the dangers of sexual intercourse for men are the loss of strong and healthy male essences and the absorption of weaker female essences (Louie 2002).

To be continued

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Notes

1. I follow the Nùng usage of household, or "hùron", which literally translates into English as "house" and refers to an extended family group living under one roof. A Nùng housedhold typically consists of a husband wife couple, their unmarried children, and a married son, his wife and children.
2. Huclear families that do not produce any male offspring can adopt one of their daughters' husbands, a practice called "khun Khuoi" *(khün Khööi),* for purposes of inheritance and ancestor worship.

   ed. *ming* is a widespread concept for fate among Tai peoples, which goes along with *khwan (ming-khwan* as "beloved one"). Ming plays also a role in Chinese concepts. Sô *(sôô)* is a Sino-Viet term for number.

3. I never heard a woman or child rebuff a patriarch's criticism of their cooking while he was still present. However, on several occasions, and in the patriarch's absence I heard women and children grumble, saying things such as, "If he doesn't like it he can cook for himself."
4. On numerous occasions and in regards to taking a spouse, I was told by married men and women that, "women desire property/wealth and men desire beauty." One woman told me that, "Before I got married to [my husband] my numbers also matched with another man, and his family also asked my parents to buy me as an in-law. But I refused the other man because his household had five sons, so the father's land would have to be divided five ways as opposed to [my husband's] household, which only had two sons."
5. I was told that people with the same surname rarely get married. Paternal relatives must be separated by at least seven generations, and maternal relatives must be separated by at least three generations in order to be eligible marriage partners. The village where I lived had only been established for five generations, so men have to look outside the village for potential spouses

Note on Tai Lue Wooden Buddha Image Inscriptions and Buddhist Manuscript Colophons from Northern Laos

Volker Grabowsky and Apiradee Techasiriwan

The inscriptions and colophons analysed in this study all come from Tai Lue[1] areas in northern Laos, mostly from the district of Mueang Sing (Luang Namtha province) near the Chinese border. They consist of a corpus of twenty-five Tai Lue inscriptions selected from more than 160 pedestal inscriptions on wooden Buddha images which Volker Grabowsky collected from 1998-2005, and of twenty five colophons from Tai Lue mulberry manuscripts of Buddhist texts.

As a rule, these inscriptions and colophons are written in the Tai Lue language using the Tham (Dhamma) script. However some manuscripts from Tai Nuea (pron. *tai nue*) villages in the plain of Mueang Sing, such as Ban Nam Kaeo Luang, sometimes feature colophons with some parts written in other languages and scripts. For instance, the manuscript of *Tamnan Phraya Tham Ha Phra Ong* is written in the Tham script but contains two short passages in the Shan and Lao scripts.

In this paper, we have opted for a transcription in modern Thai script because the modern Thai script features a high number of graphemes, allowing for a more accurate transcription of the various graphemes in the original script. Silpakorn University uses a similar (albeit more complex) system for the transcription of manuscripts from various areas, coupled with a translation into modern Thai. This system allows the possibility of making easy comparisons with the Lan Na corpus which makes use of a similar transcription system.[2]

Fig. 1a. Buddha Image with inscription LNT 123. Wat Na Kham,Ban Na Kham, Mueang Sing district, LuangNamtha province.

Fig. 1b. Detail of inscription LNT 123

In this paper, we will outline the general pattern that seems to be common to these inscriptions and colophons and study in detail each component of that pattern. This study is part of on-going research in paratexts of Tai Lue manuscripts from Yunnan and northern Laos, which is part of an inter-disciplinary research programme of manuscript studies based at the University of Hamburg. As such, this paper builds upon the pioneering work of Hans Penth, Oskar von Hinüber, Harald Hundius, as well as more recent research by Daniel Veidlinger and Justin McDaniel (Penth 1976, von Hinüber 1990, 1993 and 1996; Hundius 1990; Veidlinger 2006; and McDaniel 2008).

General pattern of the inscriptions and colophons

Inscriptions on the pedestals of Buddha images document the donation of a statue to a Buddhist monastery.[3] The inscriptions are dated and state the names of the main sponsor (*phu pen khlao*, P. *pathama saddhâ* or *mulasasaddhâ*) of the person who arranged the making (*phu sang*) and the donor(s) (*phu than*). They also state the general purpose of the donation and the karmic benefit (*anisong*, P. *ânisamsa*) that the donor(s) expect to gain from.

A majority of inscriptions (15 out of 25) state these elements according to the following pattern :[4]

a) date
b) names of sponsor(s) and donor(s)
c) general purpose of the making and donation

d) karmic benefit expected by the donor(s)
[a-d are usually in Tai Lue]

e) a sentence in Pāli, which is either an extension or a translation of (d).

For example, Inscription LNT 123 (Fig. 1a-b) clearly illustrates this pattern :

Example 1

1) ปลีรายเลดจุลลสักกราชได้ 1248 ตัวเดินเจียงเพงเมงวัน 5 ไทดับเปา
2) ปถมกเคล้าเจ้ามูลลสัทธาหมายมีภยาหลวงไชวงเปนเคล้ากว่าอ. . .
3) ลูกเต้าหลานตนทังมวรคืมาต[ก]รังสร้างแปงยังพุทธพิมพสารูปเจ้าองนี้
4) ไว้ยค้ำชูสาสนาพระโคดมเจ้า 5 พันวสาเพื่อจักอุทธิสละสวนบนยัน
5) นี้เมือหาพี่ยิงแห่งตนมีอีขันแก้วขอหื้อนาบนเธิงนี้เมือรอดแท้แค สุทินุน้
6) วตฺถโนทานนิ นิพฺพานปจฺจโยโหนฺตุโน นิจฺจ์ ธุว์ ธุว์ ธุว์

Translation

1) In the *r[aw]ai set* year, CS 1248, in the first month, on the full-moon day, the Mon [call it] the fifth day of the week (Thursday), the Tai [call it] *dap pao*,[5]
2) I, *pathama saddh* Phanya Luang Chaiwong, the main sponsor,
3) together with all my children and grandchildren, had this Buddha image made
4) in order to support the Teachings of Buddha Gautama and make them last for five thousand years. [We] donated it
5) for the benefit of my [late] elder sister Khan Kaeo. May this be a deed that will make her merit grow (*na bun*) and have beneficial effects until she reaches *nibbâna*. *Sudinnam*
6) *vatta no dânam nibbâna paccayo hontu no nicam dhuvam dhuvam dhuvam*.[6]

This rather stereotyped pattern is flexible: some inscriptions start with the name of the donor or donors, followed by the date of donation, the purpose of the donation, the karmic benefit expected by the donors, and finally, a sentence in Pāli (for instance LNT 119 and LNT 121). In some exceptional cases, the date of the donation is not given (for instance, XB 76). A significant number of inscriptions (6 out of 25) start with a sentence in Pāli stating the

general purpose of the donation, which may or may not be repeated later in Tai Lue.

The colophons of religious manuscripts follow a similar pattern, adding just the title of the text (or texts) recorded in the manuscript. Thus, a typical colophon of a Buddhist Tai Lue manuscript has the following pattern :

a) title of main text and date
b) name of donors
c) general purpose of the making and donation of the manuscript
d) karmic benefit expected by the donor(s) [a–d are usually in Tai Lue]
e) Pāli phrase which is either an extension or a translation of (d).

When donor and scribe (referred to by various terms, including *phu taem*, *phu khian* [pr. *phu khen*], *phu likhitta* or *phu litchana*) are not the same person, the name of the scribe is usually given in a separate statement.[7] In such cases, the scribe may state the karmic benefits he expects to gain from copying the manuscript. This is the case in *Sap Upasampatthakam Lae Littananak, Kathinnakam, Paliwatsakam, Manat Apphanakam* (Fig. 2) :

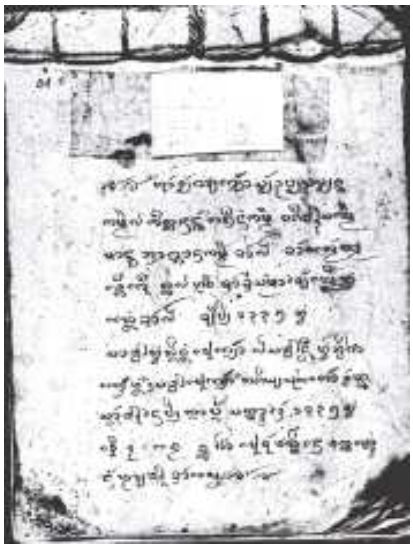


Fig. 2. Front cover folio of the manuscript of Sap Upasampatthakam Lae Littananak, Kathinnakam, Paliwatsakam, Manat Apphanakam.

Example 2

[โคโลโฟนบนหน้าปกพับสา]

หน้าทับพายเคล้า สับอุปุปสมฺปทฺทกมฺมฺแล กิตฺตนามาคกถินกมฺมฺ ปริวาสกมฺมฺ มานาต อาพภานกมฺมฺ ข้าแล ข้าแต้มตามเหิกเพินตกแลหลวงข้าขอสมมาไว้เหนอ หัวแห่งข้าแล เขียนปสี 1335 ตัว สาทธาหัวอินวงเปนเคล้า แลสัทธานึงหัว ขินค่า แก้วทัง 2 สัทธาเปนเคล้า ภริยาลูก ทังมวน ล้างทานในปีก่าเปล้า สักขาดได้ 1335 ตัว เดิน 4 แรม 8 ค่ำ เปนวันพักขิโนพักกก หยาดน้ำหมาย ทานข้าแล

[โคโลโฟนท้ายเรื่อง]

สิจิตตา แสงวง ขอผละยานิสงยันใหย่กว้าง ยามใดสมพานของข้าได้ล้างไว้ แล้ว ขอหื้อข้าได้ ตัดเสยังราคะ โทสา โมหา ตัณหา อวิชา มานะ ได้ แล้ว ขอหื้อข้าได้เข้าสู่เวียงแก้วยอดเมรพานแท้ๆ ข้าแต่ ข้าแต้มเขียนไว้ค้ำชู สาสนา 5000 วัสสา ขอผละบุนยันใหย่แต่ ข้าแต้มตกศีมิ หลวงศีมิ ข้าขอ ลมมาขัมม์(แต่เจ้าเอย)

Translation

[Colophon on front cover folio]

Cover folio of *Sap upasampaddakamma lae kittanânâga kathinakamma parivâsakamma mânatta âbabhânakamma*. I copied this from another person's text and I apologize if I have made omissions. I made the copy in the year [CS] 1335. Hua In Wong and Hua In Kham sponsored it, along with their wives and children, and they donated it in the *ka pao* year [CS] 1335, on the eighth waning day of the fourth month.[8] On that day the manuscript was donated and a water pouring rite was performed.

[Colophon following the main text (folio no. 31, recto)]

May I, Saengwong, the scribe, ask for an important karmic benefit. Once I have acquired enough merit (*bun*, P. *puñña*), may I attain complete detachment from passion (*râga*), anger (*dosa*), delusion (*moha*), desire (*tanhâ*), ignorance (*avijjâ*), and arrogance (*mâna*). May this enable me to attain the City of Crystal, the supreme state of *nibbâna*. I made this copy support the Doctrine and make it last for 5,000 years. May I obtain much merit in return. If in copying I have made any omissions, may I be forgiven.

When donor and scribe actually *are* the same person, the two functions can be the object of two distinct statements. Such is the case for instance in the colophons of *Panha Rachasut*) :

Example 3

[โคโลโฟนบนหน้าปกพับสา]

หน้าพับพายเคล้ารัมม์ปัณเหาราชจุดผูกเดียวแล ปุ๋ขุพ่อเจดนาลาพธาผู้ล้าง ทายชื่อว่าหมานธำแรงบ้านยางค่าปนเคล้า *ภรียา* ลูกเต้าทังมวมคันกาล้างได้ ยังธำปัณหาราจุดผูกนี้หานแมจไว้พายหน้า ขอที่อเทวบุตเทวดาเจ้าจงหน้าจำจื่อ ไว้แท้ๆ ข้อยแต่บุนเอย

[โคโลโฟนท้ายเรื่อง]

แล้มในปลีกาบยี เดิม 11 ขึ้นได้ 11 ค่ำแล้มแล ยามเวลา 11 มวง(โมง) นั้นแล จุลาดได้ 13306 ตัว ผู้ข้าจิกจิดดาด้วยคนชื่อว่าหมานธำแรงบ้านปล่า ต่อยข้อยแล แล้มด้วยคนหานแมจไว้ พายหน้าขอที่อเทวดาเจ้าจำจื่อไว้แด่

Translation

[Colophon on front cover folio]
Front cover folio of the single-bundle copy of *Panha Rachasut*. I, former monk (*nan*) Tham Saeng from Ban Yang Kham,[9] the main sponsor, along with my wife and all my children, had this copy of the *Panha Rachasut* made and donated it. In the future, may all the deities remember this deed and may it be a source of merit.

[Colophon following the main text (folio no. 14, recto)]
The copying [of this manuscript was completed] in the *kap yi* year, on the eleventh waxing day of the eleventh month at 11 o'clock, in [CS] 1336.[10] I did the copying myself. My name is Tham Saeng from Ban Pa Toi. I copied and donated [the manuscript]. May the deities remember this deed.

Scribes, even experienced ones, tend to apologize for whatever mistakes or omissions they may have made in the copying (as in example 2, above), and for their poor handwriting, as in the manuscript of *Aphitam Lae Mahapatthan Khampon Luang* from Ban Nam Kaeo Luang (Mueang Sing district, Luang Namtha province) :

Example 4

ข้าแต้มตัวคีปงามแล ลิกขิตตาสัมมาเณียรจันวงแต้มค้ำชูสาสนา 5000 วัสส พระโคตามาข้าแล ขอหื้อข้าได้เปนผลอานิสงข้าแด่ สูทินฺนัวาตเมตนำ นิพฺพนำ ปรมำสูกฺขำนิพฺพานปจโยโหนฺตุโนนิจฺจ ธุวำธุวำ

Translation

I have a poor handwriting. I, the copyist, Novice (*samânâra*) Chanwong, copied [this manuscript] as a support to the Teachings of Lord Gotama and make them last for 5,000 years. May this deed be a source of karmic benefit. *Sudinnam vâtametanam nibbânam paramam sukham nibbâna pacayo ho[n]tu no nic[c]am dhuvam dhuvam*.

Dating

The large majority of inscriptions and colophons in the collection considered here are dated. That date is usually the day when the Buddha image was donated or the day when the copying of the manuscript was completed. In some instances, the date also records the day when the Buddha image was donated and a water pouring rite performed (*dakkhiGodaka yat nam*).[11] The pattern of the dating in its full form, in both inscriptions and colophons, is as follows :

a) Year of the *Cūlasakarâja* (CS) Buddhist era and Tai year [or vice versa]
b) Month
c) Day of the lunar month
d) Day according to the Mon reckoning
e) Day according to the Tai reckoning
f) Time of day (generally reckoned as auspicious)
g) Watch, in which the day is broken into three-hour units

It is the case, for instance, in line 1 of example 1 or in the first three lines of inscription XB 135:

Example 5

1) ท จุพสั{ส}กก[ราช] 1227 ตัวปลีดับเปล้า เดิน
2) เจียงโหลาเพงเมิงวัน 5 ไทยเมิง
3) ไส้ยามแตรเที่ยงคืน...

Translation

1) In CS 1227, a *dap pao* year, in the
2) first month, on a full-moon day,[12] for the Mon, the fifth day of the week [Thursday], for the Tai a *moeng*
3) *sai* [day], at midnight…

The Tai year is named based on a sixty-year cycle.[13] It is usually very reliable and can help confirm or correct the corresponding 'Lesser Era' (*Cūlasakarâja*) dating.

In the Tai world and beyond, the names of the months were replaced by numerals. However, the numbering of the months varied from place to place. For example, the month *Caitra* was the fifth month in the Sukhothai, Ayutthaya, and Luang Prabang regions, but it was the sixth month in the Chiang Tung (Kengtung) region and the seventh month in Lan Na (see Eade 1989, 10). In Tai Lue areas-Sipsong Panna and Mueang Sing or Mueang Yong-the Chiang Tung calendar was used.

The Mon reckoning of the weekday (starting with Sunday as 'day 1' and ending with Saturday as 'day 7') can also be cross-checked by the Tai system of reckoning which follows a sexagesimal pattern similar to the one used for the reckoning of years.

Not surprisingly, dating featuring all seven components occurs only rarely. Sometimes only one or two components-usually the *Cūlasakarâja* dating-are present. Occasionally, the components related to the dating are separated by other kinds of information (for instance in inscription PS 9).

As a rule, colophons tend to provide more detailed information on the exact date of the completion of the manuscript. It is not surprising that a scribe noticed with pride the moment when his arduous and painstaking work of copying a long sacred text came to an end. The colophon of the *Panha Rachasut* manuscript (see example 3) exemplifies this point.

Some colophons, as in the *Tham Borawongsa* manuscript from Wat Xiang Lae (Ban Xiang Lae, Mueang Sing district), even specify the time to the minute: 'five minutes to five' (ยามเวลา 5 โมง ยัง 5) or 'twenty minutes past noon' (ยามเวลา 12 โมงปาย 20). In modern manuscripts, the date is sometimes given using the Gregorian reckoning, but does not replace the *Cūlasakarâja* dating and it is rather used as additional information. It is the case for instance in the colophon on the front cover folio of the manuscript of the *Tamnan Phraya Tham Ha Phra Ong*, where the first occurrence of the Gregorian dating is even written in modern Lao script (in italics in our transcription), while the rest is in the Tham script :

Example 6

แต้มปีดับเหม้าสักขาดได้ 1337 ตัวแล เขียนปี *1975* เดือน *11* แรม *13* ค่ำ ถวายทานปี *1975*. ปี *1337* เดือน *11* แรม ค่ำ เปนวันอยาดน้ำ.

Translation

> The copying [of the manuscript] was completed in the *dap mao* year, [CS] 1337, it was written in the year [AD] 1975, on the thirteenth waning day of the eleventh month.[14] It was donated in the year [AD]1975, in the phase of the waning moon of the eleventh month, and on that day a water pouring rite was performed.

Sponsors, donors and scribes

As stated above, the inscriptions on the pedestals of Buddha images record the names of the main sponsor, the person who arranged the making, and of the donor(s). The term *phu pen khlao* (pron. *kao*, P. *pathama saddhâ* or *mulasasaddhâ*), translated here as 'main sponsor', actually refers to the fact that that person provided all-or most of-the funding and therefore presided over the donation ceremony. The main sponsor and the person who arranged the making of the image or manuscript are usually the same.

As a rule, the generic verb *sang* 'to make' is used to describe the making of the image. Only in a few exceptional cases are the more specific verbs *phim* 'to make an image' (XB 135) or *chalak* 'to carve' (LNT 119 or LNT 121) used. Although in some manuscripts it is clearly stated that the main sponsor made it himself (*duai ton eng*, LNT 119 for instance), one must understand that he was just the person who ordered the making to be done in his name.

Only in a few cases is the main sponsor a woman. An example is inscription LNT 114 in which Nang Bua Kham, queen of Chao Fa Sali No Kham, ruler of Mueang Sing, is listed as main sponsor and donor together with her mother.[15] In most such cases, however, the female sponsor is a widow acting as the head of family.

As is the case for Buddha images, manuscripts usually have only one main sponsor. The only exceptions are long manuscripts, like *Singkhara Kuman Panha Nok Pao*, a non-canonical *j'taka* tale divided into thirteen chapters. Each chapter has its own front cover and colophon, listing a total of eleven sponsors. The final colophon, appearing at the end of the thirteenth chapter, states the name of the scribe, a fully ordained monk from the village monastery to which the manuscript was donated.

In most inscriptions, the sponsor lists other people as co-donors, mainly close members of his family: first his wife, whose name is usually recorded, and then children, who may be named or just referred to by such generic terms as *luk-tao* (children) or *luk-lan* (children and grandchildren, offspring).

Of the twenty-five Buddha images with dated inscriptions in our corpus, five were sponsored by royalty or members of the aristocracy[16], five by monks (mainly abbots) and novices,[17] and fifteen by commoners who presumably came from a wealthy background.[18] Of the twenty-five Buddhist manuscripts, eleven were sponsored by members of the *sangha*, and the other fourteen by laypeople of non-aristocratic background.

The scribes are all males. This is not unexpected, given the fact that monastic education, an exclusively male domain, was traditionally the only way to learn the Tham script.

In some cases, scribes also state the location where they carried out their work, be it the name of a monastery, in the case of monks and novices, or village, in the case of laypeople. A good example is the front cover colophon of the *Panha Rachasut* manuscript (see example 3).

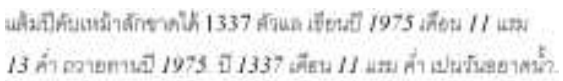
General purpose of the sponsoring

The general purpose of the sponsoring of Buddha images and Buddhist manuscripts is to support the Teachings of the Buddha (*khamchu phutthasatsana*), which more specifically means contribute to their enduring for 5,000 years after the Buddha entered *parinibb*an[19] Hence their symbolic donation to the Three Gems[20] and their physical donation to a monastery.

The colophons are sometimes quite specific on how the sponsoring of a manuscript can help achieve that goal, for example by letting future generations read or listen to the sacred text, remember its teachings, and put them into practice.

For instance the colophon on the front cover folio of the manuscript of *Chao Bun Luang* says :

Example 7



This manuscript of the chronicle of Chao Bun Luang Dhammikarat
was made for all people to pay respect to it day and night.

And a second colophon, on the last two folios adds :

จักกล่าวตำนานเจ้าบุนแปง ออกมาหื้อคุนทังหลายได้รู้ได้ทันได้ฟังดีแล้ว

This manucript of the chronicle of Chao Bun was made to provide all people with the opportunity to get acquainted with it.

The same colophon later encourages the readers to lead a righteous life by following the example of the hero :

(…)หื้อชวนกันได้ปติบัดสืบกันไปพายหน้าหื้อชวนกันไหว้นบตบย่ำแยมแก้ว 3 ประการแลลูบเ อาจานแลเถ้าแก่พ่อแม่ผู้บิวสาอายุกว่าตนแล หื้อได้ถำสีล 5 สีล 8 3 วัน 7 วัน บ่หื้อกินอาหาน อันมีจิตุดวิญญาณนั้น อย่าสู้นับกิน คันบุคลยิงชาย ทังหลายผู้ใดแลย่ใส่หื้อพ้นจากไภยหลวงลี่ หื้อได้อดหื้อได้กั้นตามดังเจ้าบุนกล่าว มานิคีจิงจักพ้นจากเสิกหลวงอันจักมาพายหน้าแท้บ่สงไสชแล/ / แล้วหื้อทาน อุคุต แลข้าสมมาหลวงหื้อได้ชวนกันคำนึ จ ง ขแท้เล้า หื้อชวน คันรักสาสีล 5 สีล 8 ไปไจ้ไจ้เทอะ

Translation

(…) Let us continue to observe the Doctrine in the future. Let us pay respect to the Three Gems and to our teachers, elders, parents as well as all senior persons. Let us observe the Five and Eight Precepts for three days or for seven days. Let us abstain from eating meat. Let us not eat such food. If all of us, women and men, want to escape from severe danger we must strictly restrain ourselves the way we are told by Chao Bun. Thus we will escape the Great War (*suek luang*) which will without any doubt happen in the future. Let us make offerings to Chao Upakhut and Chao Somma Luang and keep controlling our desires and observing the Five and Eight Precepts.

Sometimes, the current deterioration of the observance of the Doctrine is stressed, thus emphasizing the need for such support. For instance, in the colophon of *Ruam Pithikam Tang Tang* (Fig. 3), Thera Dhammapañ̃, who was probably the abbot of Wat Nam Kaeo Luang near Mueang Sing in the first years of the twentieth century, complains about the lack of discipline among the novices under his custody. His complaint may reflect the social and political crisis in Mueang Sing that had occurred as a consequence of the French take over in 1896[21]. He states :

Example 8

(…) เราคนเปนอธิกอนสอนในสาสนาพายหนิงเหนอวัดน้ำแก้วหลวงเปนกาลวิปัตติ คนอันใก่อยู่สาสนามีพายน้อยเปนที่สุดที่ซ้อยพระน้อยกินเข้าเล็บมีกาลยามเวลา คีมียามนั้นมีหั้นหแล ยากแท้ ๆ ยากแท้ ๆ เอยเอย …

Fig. 3. Colophon of Ruam Pithikam Tang Tang

Translation

I am an abbot teaching the Doctrine in the North at Wat Nam Kaeo Luang. Times are very difficult. Those who follow the Doctrine are very few. It has deteriorated as the novices do not eat at the appropriate time. They eat whenever they like. It is really very difficult, very difficult indeed!

Karmic benefits expected

As stated above, the expected outcome of the sponsoring of a Buddha image or of a manuscript is to gain karmic benefits that will help the sponsor escape the 'torrent-like cycle of reincarnation' (*ogha vaṭṭa saṃsâra*) and ultimately reach *nibbâna* (colophon of *Thammathat Luang Chiang Tuem*). The most complete formulation of such an expectation is in the colophon of *Singkhara Kuman Panha Nok Pao*, that states :

Example 9

(…) ขอหื้อเปนผลาอานิสง ค้ำชูตนค้ำ ผู้ข้าในชั่วนี้แลชาดหน้า ฮาวตราบ ค่อเท้า เข้าสู่เวียงแก้วยอดอมัตตามหาเนรพาน แท้ๆ ข้าแต่บุนเอย (…)

Translation

May this be a karmic benefit that will support me in my present and future lives until I attain the City of Crystal, the supreme and unending state of *nibbâna*. May I indeed gain such merit!

Various inscriptions and colophons even specifically list some of the steps on the path to *nibbâna* that merit should help achieve, such as complete detachment from any defilements that cloud the mind and which are obstacles to attaining enlightenment (see example 2), the achievement of Arhantship, which is the consequence of being free from all defilements (XB 76, XB 89, XB 135), and being reborn at the time of Maitreya (Metteya), the future Buddha (for instance XB 148). Sometimes, the statements are more general and just refer to the accumulation of merit or a way to make merit grow (*na bun*, see example 1).

As in the case of any merit-making, karmic benefits can be transferred to other persons, usually to deceased relatives (see for example example 1, line 5). They can also be transferred to deceased people to whom the donor caused harm in the past and who may come back and torment the wrongdoer in the form of a ghost or curses (*chao kam nai wen* or *pho kam mae wen*, as in inscription UX 52). Transferring merit to such deceased persons is the only way left to the wrongdoer to try and calm their wrath.

In several colophons, we find invocations to various deities,[22] asking them to act as witnesses to the meritorious deeds and to record them so that Phaya Yom (Yama or Yamarāja, the Lord of Death) can take them into consideration when deciding upon the fate of the souls coming to him after death. In the colophon of the *Satta Phochangkha Tang Chet* manuscript (example 10) the donor even requests that his good deeds be inscribed on materials that can resist accidental destruction:

Example 10

(…) ขอจิ่งหื้อหมู่มหาพรหมเทวบุตรเทวดาพระยาอินพระยายมมหายมมราช กับทังนาง แก้วยอดชรณี สรีกุตตอนาถ ตนจือจำบุนแลบาปตนจื่อจำน้ำหยาดแลทาน จิ่งมาลดเอาหมายเอาชื่อว่า ผู้ข้าทังเริน ไพเขียนไว้ในสุวรรณปุปผาแผ่นเงินแลรานคำ สนำจำจือไว้ตลน้ำคื่อย่าหื้อไหล ตกไฟคื่หื้อเสไหม้ (…)

Translation

> (…) May all the Great Gods—Indra, Brahma, Yama, Dharaṇī [Earth Goddess], and Śrī Kutta Āmātya[23] who records merit, sin, water pouring rites performed, and offerings made, [may all the Great Gods] record my name and the names of all members of my family on a sheet of precious metal. Thus, should [these records] fall in water, they will not be dissolved. Should they fall in fire, they will not be burnt.[24] (…)

Such invocations also appear in three Buddha image inscriptions (LNT 158, LNT 159, LNT 174) but, as one would expect, are much shorter.

The inscriptions and colophons we have studied are very similar in terms of their fundamental patterns and content. We argue that what might appear to be a collection of stereotyped formulas in fact plays the role of permanently linking the object of devotion or transmission of religious knowledge concerned (Buddha image or manuscript) to a pious personal or collective deed (its production and donation to the Buddhist community). The main aim of that pious deed is to support the teachings of the Buddha for 5,000 years. As such, the deed is expected to bring the sponsors, donors, and in the case of manuscripts, scribes karmic benefit. Therefore inscriptions and colophons often include an invocation to various deities asking them witness the deed and guarantee the benefit it is supposed to bring. This invocation is a means of furthering the progress of the donor on the path towards the ultimate goal of *nibbāna*. The inscription or colophon and the pious object are an embodiment of the very essence of traditional Buddhist practice.

The corpus of similar inscriptions and colophons in the Khmer, Lao, and Thai cultures is vast and already well documented. We are aware that future studies on the Tai Lue corpus will have to take into account that perspective. But we also hope that this study will help to draw attention to this specific corpus as an invitation to other academics to include it in the scope of their own studies.

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with the reading of some of the texts. All mistakes and shortcomings are, however, our responsibility. We are grateful to Michel Lorrillard who generously gave us access to his own collection of Buddha image inscriptions from northern Laos. Finally, we would like to express our gratitude to the Sonderforschungsbereich 950 (Centre for the Study of Manuscript Cultures) and the German Research Foundation (DFG) for having supported our research on Tai Lue manuscripts over several years.

Note on the transcriptions

In initial position, the proto-Tai voiced unaspirated stops are pronounced in Tai Lue—like in Tai Yuan and Tai Khuen—as voiceless unaspirated sounds. Hence, the low class initials *g, *j, *d, and *b are pronounced /k/, /tɕ/, /t/, and /p/ in Tai Lue. Tai Lue no longer has diphthongs (Thai: *sara prasom*) in the spoken language. The written language, however, has preserved an archaic orthography that keeps diphthongs which are pronounced as simple vowels or monophthongs. This is the case for the diphthongs /iːa/ and /uːa/, now pronounced /e/ and /o/ respectively. For the diphthong /ɯːa/, pronounced /ɤː/ in Tai Lue, the graphemes that once represented the original diphthong are no longer used.

In this article, we have romanised Tai Lue words based on the Tai Lue spelling by following the conventions used by the Royal Thai Institute (*Ratchabanditayasatan*) for the Thai language, while indicating in brackets the Tai Lue pronunciation whenever deemed necessary. We thus write for instance *luang* (pron. *long*), *thao* (pron. *tao*), but but we write, in general, personal names according to their original pronunciation. We feel that this option offers the advantage to fit with the more widespread transcriptions of geographical names and to be more convenient for readers already familiar with the Thai and Lao paradigms.

To transliterate Tai Lue words into Thai (Siamese) script, we applied a system similar to that used for Udom Rungruangsri in his Lan Na-Thai Dictionary (1990). Our system preserves the old Tai Lue orthography and the spelling of the original texts, even in cases when consonants like *kho khon* are no longer used in the modern Thai alphabet or the Tai Lue word is written with an initial or final consonant different from the Thai cognate, such as ไพ instead of ไป (to go); บุน instead of บุญ (merit); ราดinstead of ราช (king).

With regard to the representation of vowels and diphthongs, Tai Lue orthography has also been preserved; thus the Tai Lue word *doen* for 'month' is transcribed เดิน instead of เดือน as in Thai writing. It is not unusal for scribes

to omit tone markers. For the sake of clarity, we have added tonemarkers whenever they were missing in the original. Finally, in cases of hypercorrection, we have kept the original spelling, such as สัมมาเณ็ยร instead of สามเณร (novice).

Bibliography

A. Inscriptions

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LNT 117 : Inscription on the pedestal of a wooden Buddha Image in Wat Chiang Chai, Mueang Sing district, Luang Namtha province.

LNT 119 : Inscription on the pedestal of a wooden Buddha Image in Wat Chiang Chai, Mueang Sing district, Luang Namtha province.

LNT 121 : Inscription on the pedestal of a wooden Buddha Image in Wat Chiang Chai, Mueang Sing district, Luang Namtha province.

LNT 123 : Inscription on the pedestal of a wooden Buddha Image in Wat Na Kham, Ban Na Kham, Mueang Sing district, Luang Namtha province.

LNT 124 : Inscription on the pedestal of a wooden Buddha Image in Wat Na Kham, Ban Na Kham, Mueang Sing district, Luang Namtha province.

LNT 125 : Inscription on the pedestal of a wooden Buddha Image in Wat Na Kham, Ban Na Kham, Mueang Sing district, Luang Namtha province.

LNT 158 : Inscription on the pedestal of a wooden Buddha Image in Wat Pa Toi, Ban Pa Toi, Mueang Sing district, Luang Namtha province.

LNT 159 : Inscription on the pedestal of a wooden Buddha Image in Wat Pa Toi, Ban Pa Toi, Mueang Sing district, Luang Namtha province.

LNT 163 : Inscription on the pedestal of a wooden Buddha Image in Wat Pa Toi, Ban Pa Toi, Mueang Sing district, Luang Namtha province.

LNT 173 : Inscription on the pedestal of a wooden Buddha Image in Wat Pa Toi, Ban Pa Toi, Mueang Sing district, Luang Namtha province.

LNT 174 : Inscription on the pedestal of a wooden Buddha Image in Wat Pa Toi, Ban Pa Toi, Mueang Sing district, Luang Namtha province.

LNT 176 : Inscription on the pedestal of a wooden Buddha Image in Wat Pa Toi, Ban Pa Toi, Mueang Sing district, Luang Namtha province.

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LNT 196 : Inscription on the pedestal of a wooden Buddha Image in Wat Don Chai, Mueang Sing district, Luang Namtha province.

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XB 76 : Inscription on the pedestal of a wooden Buddha Image in Wat Saen Tham Hung Aram, Ban Lap, Siang Hom district, Sayabuli province.

XB 89 : Inscription on the pedestal of a wooden Buddha Image in Wat Phothiyaram, Ban Don Fueang, Siang Hom district, Sayabuli province.

XB 135 : Inscription on the pedestal of a wooden Buddha Image in Wat Phia Ngam, Ban Phia Ngam, Mueang Ngoen district, Sayabuli province.

XB 148 : Inscription on the pedestal of a wooden Buddha Image in Wat Bun Hueang, Ban Si Bun Hueang, Mueang Hongsa district, Sayabuli province.

UX 52 : Inscription on the pedestal of a wooden Buddha Image in Wat Phositak, Ban Pak Ngoei Tai, Pak Baeng district, Udomsai province.

UX 78 : Inscription on the pedestal of a wooden Buddha Image in Wat Phositak, Ban Pak Ngoei Tai, Pak Baeng district, Udomsai province.

UX 96 : Inscription on the pedestal of a wooden Buddha Image in Wat Phositak, Ban Pak Ngoei Tai, Pak Baeng district, Udomsai province.

UX 98 : Inscription on the pedestal of a wooden Buddha Image in Wat Phositak, Ban Pak Ngoei Tai, Pak Baeng district, Udomsai province.

PS 8 : Inscription on the pedestal of a wooden Buddha Image in Wat Luang U-tai, Mueang Yot U, Phong Saly province.

PS 9 : Inscription on the pedestal of a wooden Buddha Image in Wat Luang U-tai, Mueang Yot U, Phong Saly province.

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Notes

1. For anthropological accounts of the Tai Lue in Sipsong Panna see Hsieh 1989 and Hasegawa 2002. For the political history of the Tai Lue federation of Sipsong Panna and its indigenous historiography, see Liew-Herres *et al*. 2012.
2. For further details, see the note on the transcription system at the end of the paper.
3. The name of the monastery, and exactly where in the monastery the offering should be kept, is rarely specified. For an exception, see PS 8, where the sponsor specifically requests that the image be kept in the ordination hall (*ubosot*) of the village monastery of Wat Chiang Siao in Mueang Yot U.
4. LNT 114, LNT 123, LNT 159, LNT 163, LNT 176, XB 56, XB 89, XB 135, XB 148, UX 52, UX 78, UX 96, UX 98, PS 8, and PS 9.
5. 1248 *Karttika* 15 = Thursday, 11 November 1886 which, however, was a *dap kai* day. The nearest *dap pao* day was 1248 *Karttika* 5 = Monday, 1 November 1886.
6. 'Well donated is our gift. May it be a foundation for [the attainment] of *nibbâna*! [May it serve] us continuously and forever!'
7. Sometimes, as in *Singkhara Kuman Panha Nok Pao*, this statement appears in a separate final colophon.
8. Friday, 15 February 1974.
9. At present, there is no village of that name in the plain of Mueang Sing. In my research, I (Grabowsky) have never come across a document mentioning this village. I am tempted to speculate that 'Ban Yang Kham' is just another name for the Tai Nuea village of Ban Pa Toi (see colophon following the main text, below in the same example), but this would still need to be verified.
10. Wednesday, 28 August 1974.
11. See for instance inscriptions LNT 119, LNT 121, LNT 124, XB 56 as well as the colophons of *Sap Upasampatthakam Lae Kittananak*…, *Chanthasukkarika Sut*, and *Tamnan That Luang Chao Chiang Tuem*.
12. 1227 *Karttika* 15 = Friday, 3 November 1865 (a *moeng pao* year). According to the Tai Yuan calendar : 1227 *Asvina* 15 = Thursday, 5 October 1865 (a *poek san* day).
13. The Tai name of the solar year is a combination of a ten-year cycle (referring to the year of the *Cūlasakarâja* decade) and a twelve-year cycle ('animal' year cycle). As only even-with-even and odd-with odd combinations are allowed, this system produces a set of 60 possible pairs (Eade 1995, 24). This sexagesimal system is of Chinese origin and has been used in much of Southeast Asia and beyond since ancient times, although the names of the years may vary from country to country and even from region to region.
14. 1337 *Bhadrapada* 13 = Thursday, 18 September 1975.
15. See facsimile, transcription, and English translation in Grabowsky 1999, 256–258.
16. LNT 114, LNT 119, LNT 121, LNT 123, LNT 124.
17. LNT 117, LNT 185, XB 56, XB 76, XB 135.
18. LNT 125, LNT 158, LNT 159, LNT 163, LNT 173, LNT 176, LNT 196, XB 89, XB 148, UX 52, UX 76, UX 96, UX 98, PS 8, PS 9.

19. This specific formulation of the duration, originating in Buddhagosa's commentaries (fifth century A.D.), is common to all Theravāda cultures.
20. See inscriptions LNT 196, XB 148, and *Chao Bun Luang*; *Tamnan That Luang Chao Chiang Tuem* and *Pathama Phuen Lok*.
21. In May 1908, following a dispute with the local *Chao Fa*, a group of seventy to eighty men, led by the son of a high-ranking official of Mueang Sing who had fled the town the year before, attacked the town and fought better-armed French troops, who repulsed the intruders after a short exchange of gunfire. See Grabowsky and Renoo 2008, 54–55.
22. Including the Four Guardians of the World (Thao Catulokapāla), Garu a, the *nâgas*, etc.
23. Śrī Kutta Āmātya (Lan Na: Sali Kutta Amat) is Chitragupta (Udom Rungruangsri 1990, 707), the 'first scribe', the god whom Brahma created to second Yama in recording the deeds of all living things.
24. One should note also that, in Thailand and Laos, people believe that the harmful deeds and sins of human beings are recorded on dog skin records (*banchi nang ma*) and that, in contrast, meritorious deeds are on precious metal. The use of plates of precious metal for royal edicts stipulating certain privileges to monastic or secular communities is a widespread practice in Southeast Asia (see Kraisri Nimmanheminda 1990).

Changing Role of *Pi*, a Bamboo Sound producing Tool, in the *Bon Chot* ritual of the Lua-mal in Nan Province, Northern Thailand

Yuji Baba

Abstract

The people called Lua-mal; living in the mountains of Nan Province, Northern Thailand, hold the Bon Chot ritual every August to entertain and strengthen the soul of rice grown in a dry field. During the ritual period, the soul of the rice is invited from the dry field, while villagers march in the village, beating Pi, a bamboo sound-producing tool, to entertain the soul of rice in expectation of a good harvest. The Pi can be beaten only during the ritual period and only within a village. Pi is a sound-producing tool for religious purposes, rather than a musical instrument used in an ordinary music performance; it is connected to the villagers' life in nature. However, the role of Pi may change in the future, becoming a musical instrument for enjoyment, as the sociocultural economy of the Lua-mal changes. In recent years, with the demand for biofuel, corn has increasingly become a commercial; rather than subsistence crop for the Lua-mal. If rice production declines, the role of Pi, to entertain the soul of rice may be lost, and Pi may exist only as a musical instrument for an audience, and no longer limited to the specific ritual period, or inside the village. It may even be used to attract and entertain tourists.

Keywords : Lua-mal people, Bamboo sound-producing tool, Soul of rice, *Bon Chot* ritual.

Introduction

In Southeast Asia, many kinds of bamboo instruments are used in daily life, with a variety of purposes, including as containers, farming tools, and musical instruments.

In this paper, I focus on the bamboo sound-producing tool called *Pi*, which is beaten in the *Bon Chot* nrua[1], with the purpose of entertaining and strengthening the soul of rice grown in a dry field, held by the Lua-Mal people living in the mountainous area of Nan Province, Northern Thailand.

I conducted research on this ritual held in every August in Toei Klang village in Pua District, Nan Province, in 2010, 2011, and 2013. During the ritual period, *Pi* is beaten only in the *Bon Chot* ritual and only inside the village, for entertaining the soul of rice.

I describe the process of the ritual, and analyze the role of *Pi* in this ritual. *Pi* is sometimes introduced as a bamboo musical instrument. Jittreebut analyzes the structure and sound of *Pi* using an ethno-musico-logical approach. He describes *Pi* as a 'musical instrument' as a matter of course (jittreebut, 2000). However, I hesitate to categorize it as a 'musical instrument', but prefer to call it a 'sound-producing tool' following Tsuge, because its character is different from a musical instrument used for entertainment among people. Tsuge proposes that the tools that aim to produce sound, including what is usually called a 'musical instrument', should be called 'sound-producing tools' generically, because the definition of 'musical instrument' is different among cultures, and changeable, depending on the purpose and usage of producing sound (Tsuge, 1991).

In Southeast Asia, many kinds of bamboo 'musical instruments' exist. However, while some produce sound, they are not necessarily intended to perform music. For example, *Baling-bing* of the Kalinga people in the Philippines is used for threatening snakes or evil spirits en route to the fields. Its aim is similar to the sound-producing tool farmers in Northern Thailand and Northern Lao PDR use to drive animals away from the fields (Lindel et al., 1982; Takahashi et al., 2008). In Southeast Asia, bamboo tools that produce sounds, but are not used to perform music, play an important role in the life of farmers.

Pi, which is made of bamboo and entertains and strengthens the soul of rice grown in a dry field, is connected with the life in nature of the Lua-Mal people. However, this lifestyle is changing as they shift from growing rice for self-sufficiency to corn as a cash crop. Given these changes, I discuss the possibility of changing the character of *Pi* from a 'sound-producing tool' to a 'musical instrument' that might enhance tourism.

Discussion

The people of Lua-Mal and Toei Klang village

The people called 'Lua', a Mon-Khmer speaking group, are widely dispersed throughout Northern Thailand. They settled in Northern Thailand before the Lanna Kingdom was established in the 13th century.

The people called 'Lua' are divided into two groups, the "Palaung" and "Kham sub-linguistic groups. In Northern Thailand, the Lawa in Chiang Mai and Mea Hong Son belong to the Palaung and the Tin in Nan belong to the Kham. The Lua in Nan, actually the Tin, are divided into two groups, Mal and Pray (Satayawattana, 1987) (Yimrewat and Ratanakul, 1996). In this paper, I report on the Mal people, who are usually called 'Lua-Mal'. *Pi,* the sound-producing tool, is used only among the Lua-Mal people.[2]

Doi Phuka National Park in Pua District, Nan Province, contains around 20 villages of Lua-Mal, including Toei-Klang village, my research site. While many of the Lua-Mal villages are Christian, the Toei Klan villagers believe in Buddhism in conjunction with a spirit cult, with a spirit cult, with deities such as *Chao Luang Pua,* the guardian spirit for the Pua River and Toei Klan village.

The villages in the Doi Phuka National Park area, including Toei Kang village, are connected by paved roads, so Lua-Mal villages can communicate with urban areas easily and have become influenced by consumer society. Furthermore, they have accepted Thai culture through contact with the Thai people in the plains areas and are being subsumed into the Thai nation. Increasingly, young people are leaving to work in big cities, such as Bangkok, and losing interest in their traditional rituals in the process.

Traditionally, the villagers of Toei Klang village were mostly engaged in growing dry-field rice, with some corn and herb production, all for home use. The *Bon Chot* ritual entertains the soul of rice produced in a dry field, their staple food.

The structure and sound of *Pi*

Pi is made of *Mai Hia,* a type of bamboo. The wall thickness of *Mai Hia* is lighter than other types of bamboo, producing a good sound. It is used only during the ritual period and only inside the village; the instrument is made anew every year. It is prohibited to take *Pi* outside the village. When the Nan Provincial Government invited the villagers to participate in an ethnic group festival, they refused, because *Pi* is a sacred tool of the village.

Pi consists of a main bamboo tube *(Pon),* a bamboo stick *(Chan)* inserted into the hole of the lower part of the main bamboo tube, and a bamboo stick *(Awon)* for beating the Chan. The sound is produced by beating the Chan with the *Awon.* Classified by size, there are five kinds of *Pi* and five kinds of *Amkhom Pi;* these are sounded simultaneously[3]. *Pi* consist of three bamboo tubes *(Pon)* with *Chan* and *Awon,* which are inserted between the fingers.

The shortest tube produces a high tone, the mid-length tube produces a medium tone, and the longest tube produces a low tone.

Amkhom Pi consists of two bamboo tubes that create high and low tones. They create around 10 'melodies' with special names (jittreebut, 2000). The most popular melodies are *Tokya, Tamlo,* and *Pae; Tamlo* means beat well' and *Pae* means 'the third. In addition, some melody names are derived from their sounds, such as *Kumbuntum, Choncarapi,* and *Chunchui*-another name for *Pae*. With the exception of *Chama,* the usage of 'melodies' of Pi is not limited to time and space, but depends on the player, as well. *Chama* should be sounded on the last day of the *Bon Chot* ritual, in front of the shrine of the village guardian spirit, *Chao Luang Pua.* It calls the soul of rice and tells it, "see you again next year".

The *Bon Chot* ritual - calling and entertaining the soul of rice

Pi is used only for entertaining and strengthening the soul of rice in the *Bon Chot* ritual as described below. The soul of rice is invited to the rice field when the seeds are prepared for planting and goes out from the field at the time of harvest. The *Bon Chot* ritual held every August for 10 days is the most significant ritual in this rice planting cycle. The soul of rice is entertained and strengthened in the *Bon Chot* ritual, and then restored to good health and grown into beautiful rice.

On the third day of the ritual, the villages make *Pi* and invite the soul of rice. On the seventh and tenth days, they march, beating Pi in the village, and on the tenth day they return *Pi* to the forest. On the eleventh morning, they return the soul of rice to the field.

The soul of rice is invited into the village after the ceremony for inviting the soul of rice. *Pi* is made with the soul of *Pi* invited from the *Mai Hia* bamboo grove, located near the Pua River[4]. The soul of rice is entertained by the sound of *Pi* during the ritual.

• *Inviting the soul of Pi and making Pi* - On the third day two elders receive the soul of *Pi* from the sacred bamboo grove to cut bamboo to use in making the year's first *Pi.* The soul of *Pi'* invited to the ceremonial place and two elders bring the soil of that place with the bamboo for making the first *Pi* of the year to the village. In this way, the soul of *Pi* is invited to the village and then *Pi* is made.

• Sacrifice of chicken for the soul of *Pi* and the soul of rice, and for strengthening the soul of rice.

• On the afternoon of the sixth day, starting around noon, the villagers gather at the shrine of the guardian spirit, and start to march counter-clockwise within the village, while beating *Pi.*

At the priest's house, a chicken's neck is cut and its blood is poured on the altar for the soul of the spirit. Marching villagers stop at the priest's house and go up the stairs one by one with *Pi.* The wife of the priest, who hold the sacrificed chicken, daubs the blood of the chicken onto each Pi. In these performances, the chicken is sacrificed for the souls of both the rice and *Pi*

At the villagers' houses, during ceremony of strengthening the of rice, sacrificed chicken, river crab, bamboo shoot, and ginger are offered to the soul of rice. Through processes, the soul of rice comes to stay in the village and enjoys the sound of *Pi* that the marching villagers produce.

• Welcoming and entertaining the soul of rice by the sound of *Pi.*

On the seventh day, just past noon, villagers gather at the priest's house. A few women wear red dresses, designed to invite the soul of rice. Then villagers start to march counter-clockwise in the village, beating *Pi.* Sometimes they stop, beating *Pi* and dancing. The villagers march to the priest's house, beating Pi and dancing, then continue to march, circling inside the village a second time.

• Entertaining the soul of rice and sending the soul of rice to the rice field

After the march of the villagers to the sound of *Pi,* two days pass with no events. On the tenth and last day, villagers march to the sound of Pi again; the next day, the soul of rice returns to the rice field.

The following is a sketch of the events of the tenth day :

In the morning, two priests, praying for the soul of the rice, go to the shrine of the spirit of the land to pray. They report to the land spirit that the ritual time is coming.

In the afternoon, the village women, including the women wearing red clothing, start to beat *Pi* in front of the priest's house. They start to march clockwise to the sound of *Pi* in the village, and stop at the shrine of *Chao Luang Pua,* while continuing to beat *Pi.* Then they move to the priest's house and continue to beat *Pi* in the area under the floor[6]. The villagers go up the stairs one by one with *Pi;* the wife of the priest, who holds the sacrificed chicken, daubs the blood of the chicken on each *Pi.* The dead body of the chicken is offered to the altar of the soul of rice with other offerings, signifying 'the soul of rice is coming'.

In the evening, villagers start marching from the priest's house in the second circumambulation of the village with the sound of *Pi,* sometimes stopping

to beat *Pi* with dancing, and after arriving back at the priest's house, then go to the village washing place. Villagers wash away the chicken blood daubed on the *Pi* one by one, and then move to the shrine of *Chao Luang Pua,* praying to *Chao Luang Pua* and *Chao Luang Phu ka,* the guardian spirit of Phu kha Mountain, beating the *Pi.* Finally, they return to the priest's house and throw *Pi* away in the forest behind the house.

The next day, the head of each household goes to each rice field and offers liquor to the soul of rice, signifying the soul of rice has returned to the field.

This ritual consists of a series of events as follows: (1) inviting the soul of *Pi* from the sacred forest, making *Pi,* and making offerings to it at the priest's house; (2) inviting the soul of rice from the rice field and giving offerings to it at each villager's house; (3) marching counterclockwise in the village while beating *Pi* to welcome and entertain the soul of rice; and (4) marching clockwise in the village while beating *Pi* for entertaining the soul of rice and sending it back to the field.

The soul of rice invited to the village is relaxed, strengthened, and filled with energy by marching to the sound of *Pi*[7]. In this way, the strengthened soul of rice returns to the field and grows into beautiful rice bringing expectations of a good harvest

This ritual is a drama performed for the soul of *Pi* from the bamboo (*Mai Hia)* grove and the soul of rice from the rice in the dry field. The offerings for them, such as river crabs and bamboo shoots, symbolize rivers and mountains. The villagers live in harmony with nature, including the river, mountains, bamboo groves, and rice in a dry field. The ritual drama is derived from the villagers' life in nature, with *Pi,* a sound-producing tool, connected to such life.

It is unclear how the bamboo grove is connected with rice growing in a dry field, but in some places, bamboo groves are chosen for swidden cultivation. The Kham people in Udomsai Province, Lao PDR, choose *Mai Hia* groves because they believe the swiddened *Mai Hia* grove makes rice grow well. Kawano proposes that a complex culture of swidden cultivation and bamboo groves exists in both Southeast Asia and southern Kyushu, Japan (Kawano, 2009). Legends concerning bamboo and rice are found in these areas. The bamboo musical instruments or bamboo sound-producing instruments of the Kalinga people in the Philippines, the *Balingbing,* share similarities with the *Daudau* of the Khamu people in Lao PDR[8]. The idea of a complex culture of swidden cultivation and bamboo groves, which Kawano proposes, might be the key to solving the mystery of these similarities.

_Pi_ as a sound-producing tool

In the case of the *Bon Chot* ritual of Lua-Mal, the mountains, rivers, bamboo groves and rice in dry fields are brought together into one context. *Pi* is a sound-producing tool embedded in this context, not a mere musical instrument for amusement.

The Lua-Mal people have a harp shaped musical instrument called *Ko* unrelated to *Pi.* It is prohibited to play the *Ko* for ritual use, although can produce the same melody as *Pi. Ko* is played for amusement, while *Pi* is beaten only for strengthening the soul of rice in the context of the *Bon Chot* ritual; it is prohibited to beat *Pi* either outside the village or for any other occasion. Villagers also play the musical instruments that the Thai people living in the plains area of Northern Thailand use: *Pin, a* plucked string instrument, and *Salo,* a bowed string instrument. These are usually played for amusement and prohibited for ritual use (although they can be played at the final part after throwing *Pi* away into the fore on the last night of the ritual period).

This prohibition stems from a legend - long ago, when people played *Pin* and *Salo* for the soul of rice, the soul of rice got away. Then, when people beat *Pi* for the soul of rice, the soul of rice enjoyed the sound of *Pi. The* villagers believe that rice will not grow beautifully for any person who does not believe that the sound of *Pi* helps rice grow well.

Pi creates a melody by combining high, medium, and low tones. However, *Pi* is a sacred tool which itself has a soul, and it produces a sound to entertain the soul of rice only during the ritual period. Therefore, *Pi* is a sound-producing tool for religious purposes, rather than a musical instrument used in ordinary musical performances.

As *Pi* is a sound-producing tool for calling and entertaining the soul of rice, it is a tool connected with farming. Another group of Lua in Nan (Tin), the Lua-Pray, also has a bamboo sound-producing tool, called *Pre.* It consists of two bamboo tubes that are inserted between the fingers and a bamboo stick for beating the tubes. The people sound it while walking to the fields to threaten snakes or evil spirits away. Its characteristics are very similar to *Balingbing* in the Philippines, as mentioned above. Here we can find the continuities from farming tool to musical instrument. *Pi* and *Pre* or *Balingbing (Daudau)* are beaten for supernatural beings. However, each purpose is different; the former is for entertaining, but the latter is for driving. The purpose of producing sounds with the *Pre* or *Balingbing (Daudau)* is similar to the bamboo tools used for driving animals for protecting farm products, such as

the *Klock* and *klan* of the Khmu people in Lao PDR (Lindel et al., 1982). However, the sound of the former is produced by a person, but the sound of the latter is produced by natural wind or water; the former is typically considered as a sound producing tool. In this way, these several kinds of bamboo sound-producing tools connected with farming have continuities, while differing in character. If a bamboo sound-producing instrument connected with farming is defined as a farming tool in the broad sense, *Pi*, which can produce melodies, is defined in the middle, as both a musical instrument and farming tool.

Conclusion

At present, the *Bon Chot* traditional ritual retains its basis in Lua-Mal cosmology. Villagers refused to perform *Pi* in an ethnic group festival, considering it a sacred instrument instead. However, in the future, *Pi* as a sound-producing tool for ritual use may change into a musical instrument for enjoyment. During the ritual, I witnessed villagers who had made *Pi* (with seven bamboo tubes) play Thai pop music for fun. In addition, when marching during the ritual, they sometimes used Pi to play *Phan Fai* (the song of spinning), a northern Thai folk song. These innovations may reflect the changing times, in which amusement and pleasure is invading sacred spaces. Contact with the Thai people in the plains areas and being subsumed into the Thai nation may create the social background for such a change.

This recent change also reflects changes in the production system of the village. In recent years, corn, which was originally grown for home use, has become a commercial crop with the increasing demand for bio-fuel. As corn production increases, rice production will decrease. If rice production declines, then the role of *Pi* to entertain the soul of rice to yield beautiful rice may be lost. Many villagers are anxious about the potential disappearance of the *Bon Chot* ritual. However, few activities support transmitting this ritual to the younger generation, except closing school during the ritual period and modest financial support from the sub-district *(Tambol)* government. While some children and youth are interested in the ritual, some are not. Some villagers insist on preserving and propagating the Lua-Mal traditions, including the *Bon Chot* ritual. One villager, who no longer grew rice, said that "*Pi* performance must be promoted for tourists, considering the recent changing situation". This implies *Pi* would be used as a musical instrument to entertain an audience, and no longer limited to ritualistic use, nor to performances inside the village only.

In Toei Klang village, villagers are swaying between adaptations to modern society and preserving traditional culture. They need cash crops for

income, but their traditional culture related to cultivating rice has not disappeared. If agro-tourism is promoted, together with preserving *Pi* performance in Toei Klang village, the ritualistic role of *Pi* might be preserved.

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Notes

1. *Bon Chot* is the name in the Lua-Mal language; it is called *Lua Salod* in Thai.
2. Another group of Lua in Nan (Tin), the Lua-Pray, also has a bamboo sound-producing tool, called *Pre* It will be discussed Later.
3. There are five kinds of *Pi* classified by size; from mall to large, they are called *Parot, Hai, Hi, Chumyum,* and *Muiao. Amkhom Pi* are also classified by size; from small to large, they are called *Amkhom Pi Parot, Amkhom Pi Hai, Amkbom Pi Hi, Amkhom Pi Chumyum,* and Amkhom Pi Muiao.
4. The Pua River is a sacred place guarded by *Chao Luang Pua,* the guardian spirit of Tui Klang village.
5. Actually, one third of all households in the village take their turn to be in charge of inviting the soul of rice each year.
6. The house is on stilts raised above the ground.
7. Some qigong therapists explain that counter-clockwise movements bring a relaxed state and clockwise movements gather energy, but the scientific evidence of this is not clear. Further study is needed to understand the relationship between this explanation and the structure of *Bon Chot* ritual.

8. Several bamboo 'musical' instruments of Kalinga in the Philippines and that of Khmu in Lao PDR are very similar, such as *Balingbing* in Kaling and Daudau in Khmu (a bamboo tube with a slit forbeating; *Togaton* in Kalinga and *Tratik* in Khmu (stamping tubes); and Togari in Kaling and Tot in Khmu (nose flutes).
9. Landsrorm and Tayanin (1982) introduced *Klok* and *Klang* as 'musical instruments'. *Klok* is a small slit drum of bamboo, which is suspended from a higher tree stump in the field; its sound is produced by natural wind. *Klang* is a clepsydra-like device, which is planted in the middle of the brook; its sound is produced by water. They are defined as wind-driven and water-driven ideophones, and categorized as musical scarecrows. Landstorm and Tayanin (1982) seem to compare a sound of nature to music. Thitipol Kanrhiwong, interviewed at Chiang Mai University, March 14,2013, told me that "an instrument whose structure was designed to produce sound, and then handed down through generations, is classified as a 'musical instrument'". The definition of "musical instrument" is so vague.

Disconnecting the Tais:
Responses to Trade, Training and Tourism

Mary F. Connors

Setting the Scene

This paper is based on field work in Nghe An Province, Vietnam, and Vientiane, Luang Prabang, and Luang Namtha Province in Laos. It compares and contrasts the responses of Tai speaking groups living in those areas to outside influences and their increasing awareness of the commercial value of their handwoven fabrics.

Although there are few written records, it is clear that there have been Tai speakers living in Southeast Asia peninsula for thousands of years. It is widely accepted that the original home of Tai speakers was in what is now called southern China. Political instability in this area from the 10th to the 13th Centuries led to large numbers of Tai moving south into areas that are now part of Burma, Laos, Vietnam and Thailand. Tai speakers form one of the largest language groups in Southeast Asia. Tai speakers are 85% of the 68 million population of Thailand; in Laos they are 65% of the 5 million inhabitants and in Burma they are 9% of the 43 million 0 population. In Vietnam there are 3 million Tai speakers or 2.2% of the population. Additionally, there are a number of Tai dialect speakers in southern China and northeast India.

The Tai are linked not only by a common language but certain core beliefs and customs that pre-date the introduction of outside influence. While most Lao and Lue are Buddhist; most Tai Dam, Tai Daeng and Tai Khao in Laos and Vietnam are animists. All of these groups share a spiritual belief in *phi* or spirits and *khwan,* spiritual essence or soul force. Most Tai practice wet rice agriculture and live in houses built on piles off of the ground. Within their communities there is a tradition of gender specific tasks such as men working with wood and plaiting baskets and women working with cloth and weaving textiles.

The cloths the women weave also reflect a common culture. In their book *Textiles and the Tai Experience in Southeast Asia,* Mattiebelle Gittinger and H. Leedom Lefferts, Jr. speak of core textiles that were un-tailored, flat and of a narrow weft. These include costume elements such as women's skirts, household items such as blankets and ritual items such as banners. Over time, adaptations inspired by influences from other cultures have modified

these core textiles and have added new costume elements such as the shoulder cloths worn by both Lao men and women for special ceremonial occasions and the long ceremonial coats worn by the Tai Dam men and women, reflecting Indian and Chinese influences respectively.

The different styles of decorating cloths used by Tai speakers also reflect the gradual absorption of techniques from other cultures, such as the use of weft ikat, tapestry weave and embroidery. Additionally, women weavers borrowed motifs, designs and pattern layouts from other groups, assigning different meanings, reflecting their own life experiences. These types of modifications have been going on for centuries as cloths and other goods were traded or given as gifts from one group to another. Just as customs and 'northern Lao' textiles. Suddenly the cloths and the motifs they contained were tossed into a new world, creating no end of confusion for textile scholars.

The loss of these cloths diminishes a village's heritage by reducing the number of textiles a woman can draw upon as a design source when weaving new cloths. Both in Laos and Vietnam, during the time these heirloom cloths were being sold, few Tai villages were actively re-creating the older style cloths using indigenous yarns and dyes. Fortunately, both the Lao and Vietnamese governments, working with outside assistance, have taken steps to revive sericulture, natural dyes and traditional weaving techniques. The challenge is how to continue the production of well woven commercial as well as traditional textiles and to enhance the status of the makers of these cloths.

Nghe An Province, Vietnam

Although a formal Handicraft Master Plan of Vietnam was not developed until recently, a number of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have been working with the Vietnamese in preserving indigenous crafts for least the past 10 years. One outstanding non-profit organization is Craft Link founded in 1995. Craft Link started by going into the Vietnamese hinterland and evaluating the existing crafts and crafts at risk of extinction and then determining how best to configure these crafts to appeal to a distant, commercial market. This paper will look at Craft Link's efforts in Nghe An Province and the impact this organization as well as other external factors have had on the textiles produced there. There are 300,000 Tai speakers living in Nghe An Province. Most of the Tai living in Nghe An belong to two major groups: The White Tai, here called Tai Muang, and the Black Tai, here called Tai Thanh. There are a number of sub-groups that fall under the umbrella of these two main groups.

The hinterland of this province is not open to foreign visitors without government permission. While this has not stopped traders going to and from Laos, it has limited the ability of some local textile producers to sell directly to their intended customers.

Highway 7 runs from the port city of Vinh into the Lao province of Xieng Khouang, home of the famous Plain of Jars. These ancient stone jars are testimony to the trade in the region that was taking place nearly 2500 years ago. Over the centuries, the informal trade going on along this route has impacted the lives of those living in surrounding areas. Traders from Laos bring goods to sell or barter to villages in Vietnam. Sometimes they bring handwoven cloths from Laos. In this way women in Nghe An are exposed to different types of cloths, such as shoulder cloths which are not part of their costume, and to new types of motifs or pattern elements which they incorporate into their repertoire. Influence from other minorities living in Vietnam is also reflected in Tai textiles in the province. It is felt that cloths from groups such as the Muong inspired Tai women to use embroidery to decorate their skirt hem pieces, rather than the hand woven bands most Tai use for the hem piece.

In Con Cuong district a number of Tai villages were encouraged to expand into commercial weaving for a non-Tai market. One notable effort was in the Luc Da commune, Yen Thanh village. Prior to beginning the project, non-governmental organizations studied the traditional textiles produced in the village to determine what could be adapted to the commercial market. The NGOs focused originally on the narrow width head cloth worn by these White Tai women. The hand woven textile for each one is, in essence, a work of art, an expression of the weaver. However, the past few years have seen an enormous increase in the speed with which outside influences have invaded the design repertoire of Tai women weavers. This change has been influenced by a number of factors.

War raged in the Indochinese countries of Laos, Vietnam and Cambodia during the mid 20th century. After the end of hostilities, unfortunately, these countries fell into a period of economic instability. Fortunately, the United Nations (UN) and several non-governmental organizations (NGOs) took an active role in assisting and advising on how best to energize their populations to return to economic solvency. One of the areas designated for 'income generation' was crafts, and most especially hand woven cloth. While there had never been a cessation of weaving, and, in fact, the economically hard times had seen a revival as most people were no longer able to afford

commercially produced cloths or imported yarns and dyes, it was felt that women's skills could be used to help their families and villages improve their lot in life by weaving cloths that would be sold to others.

While there had been some internal migration and low level border trade during the war years, the re-establishment of peace also meant that people felt more free to move about their countries and to trade across borders. This resulted in groups that had previously been isolated from the mainstream coming into contact with outside influences.

Another factor in accelerating the pace of change in the way that women wove their cloths was, ironically, the awakening of the outside world to the beauty of Tai textiles. In the book *Traditional T'ai Arts in Contemporary Perspective.* Michael C. Howard discusses the role played by Queen Sirikit of Thailand in promoting traditional clothing and textiles not only for her own people's use but for the fashion world in general. This effort started in earnest in the 1970s. Additionally, tourism into Thailand greatly accelerated in the 1980s increasing the demand for hand woven Thai textiles. The demand was often so great that textiles began being commissioned from Tai weavers living in Laos. In the late 1980s tourism from Thailand expanded into Laos, increasing the awareness of the beauty of Lao-Tai textiles. These distinctive hand woven textiles became a commodity widely recognized internationally.

About this same time, books and magazine article "were published describing the various heirloom textiles from Laos that were appearing for sale in Laos and neighboring countries. Textile collectors were soon seeking out the previously little known beautifully woven and dyed cloths. In 1994 the first bridge linking Laos and Thailand was opened. This precipitated a flood of traders from Thailand, who actively sought out Lao- Tai heirloom cloths which they knew had a ready market in Bangkok and Chaing Mai.

As the pool of heirloom cloths from northern Laos diminished, traders were soon crossing into the Tai speaking areas of Vietnam in search of traditional textiles. In Vietnam, the Tai represent only 2.2% of the population and thus their culture is not a major part of the national identity. Knowing that textiles from Laos were more marketable than Tai textiles from Vietnam, the Tai textiles from Vietnam were sold as more marketable neck scarf - something these women do not wear - by changing the color palette and design structure. The women were not only encouraged to use non- traditional colors but also to incorporate techniques into these scarves, such as ikat that is normally used only in ceremonial skirts. They were also encouraged to weave in silk rather than cotton. While the scarves are woven using natural dyes in soft colors, the

poor quality silk used, purchased from markets in Hanoi, is a problem. However, the women are starting to raise silkworms.

Today there are a number of villages near Highway 7 where the women are weaving and embroidering to sell not only to their local market but to handicraft fairs in Hanoi and nearby towns as well as to Craft Link, and through it to the Museum of Ethnology's gift shop in Hanoi. Rather than travel to Hanoi themselves, often the weavers rely on the local bus driver to deliver their goods and collect the money.

There are some traders from Hanoi who have started working with Tai weavers such as the women in Phong village, Tuong Duong dist. Here the traders provide yarn and give sample patterns. Unfortunately the quality of the silk, spun not reeled, is very poor and much time is lost as the women work to wind the yarn from skein to bobbin. This village is lucky in that they have a lively matriarch who has kept a significant number of heirloom textiles to use as she teaches her granddaughter to weave.

The other road, Number 48, which leads from Vinh to the Northwest via Que Chau and Que Phong, is not paved all the way to the Lao border. While this has not stopped Lao traders from crossing, it has limited the options of some women weaving there.

Que Chau district was the site of a major joint project between Craft Link and the Vietnam Museum of Ethnology in 1997. The aim of the project was to develop new crafts based on traditional skills and to document old textiles. Intensive interviews were recorded on video, showing traditional textiles as well as weaving and dyeing techniques. The intent was to deepen the Craft Link project people's understanding of the Tai culture prior to designing new products and to impress upon the people associated with the museum that the culture they were recording is evolving not static. After the initial documentation for the project was completed there was a major exhibition at the museum in Hanoi. Two weavers from Quy Chau demonstrated their skills at the museum during the exhibition. This was an excellent way for them to interact with people outside their remote village and get feedback on their products. In 2001, during a UNESCO regional textile workshop held at the Vietnam Museum of Ethnology, weavers from Quy Chau were introduced to a range of innovative techniques by textile producers from Laos and Thailand. They were also shown examples of the types of cloths woven for sale by Tai speakers in these countries.

The primary village chosen for the project is the White Tai village of Hoa Tien, Chau Tien commune. In addition to weaving with ikat and

supplementary weft, the women in this region have an unusual style of weaving. a type of composite twill, they call *ma'an.* Traditionally this time consuming type of weave is used for ceremonial cloths such as the long banners, called *ma'an bang,* used in conjunction for funerals or to make rectangular cloths that can be hung on walls for ceremonial use or as a wrap for a baby being carried on its mother's back. For the foreign market this style of weaving has been incorporated into neck scarves and other small cloths.

The isolation of Quy Chau and Que Phong, further north, has been exploited by traders both local and from across the border in Laos. Not only are the traders buying up heirloom cloths (including a majority of the cloths so carefully documented in Chau Tien by Craft Link in 1997) and thus robbing the villagers of a source of inspiration for future textiles, they are paying women in isolated hamlets the equivalent of only one dollar a meter for cloths woven using the laborious *ma'an* technique. According to one source it would take three days to weave one meter using the *ma'an* technique.

The Craft Link project is exemplary. Not only does it work with other organizations to analyze traditional crafts and seek ways to adapt them to foreign tastes but, by establishing its own commercial shop for products as well as organizing craft fairs, it provides a regular outlet for the handiwork of people from rural areas. By working with the Vietnam Museum of Ethnology, it has elevated the status of the crafts produced by educating consumers about the ancient culture of people who are the creators. While some associated with the Craft Link projects express frustration at not being able to do more to fully tap the skills of the Tai weavers in Nghe An due to budgetary considerations, they have given these women from an isolated province an opportunity to speak to the world of their abilities and have encouraged younger women to continue preserving family traditions.

Luang Namtha Province, Laos

The Lao province of Luang Namtha, near the borders with China and Burma, is about 750 km. northwest of Vientiane and has been open to unrestricted tourism since 1995. Although the Lao Tourism board estimates that there were nearly 30,000 visitors to the province in 2003, many of these are traders that come across the border from China selling inexpensive household items, including pre-dyed cotton yarns to villages in the province. The majority of Tai speakers in this province are Lue, Tai Dam or Black Tai, and Tai Daeng or Red Tai.

In this remote, rural province many women weave primarily for their own families, making household items such as blankets and clothing and ceremonial cloths such as banners using both cotton and silk, both of which are produced locally.

In the late 1980s a French project, *Ecole sans Frontieres* (Schools without Borders), became involved in encouraging the Tai women in the province to weave cloths as a source of income for their families. They worked with trainers from Vientiane to educate the women to weave new products that would appeal to a foreign consumer. The local Lao Women's Union representatives agreed to assist in getting the cloths to an outside market. Simple neck scarves incorporating ikat and supplementary weft techniques using the local silk and natural dyes were chosen as the model product. Traditionally, the Tai Daeng and Tai Dam weave a skirt, called *sin mi*, which used both the techniques of supplementary weft and ikat in creating the cloth. Originally this skirt was reserved for only important ceremonies such as the funeral of the family patriarch or matriarch. Traditionally, in Laos, ikat is not used for fabrics worn above the waist.

The European Union funded re-construction of the central market in Muang Sing, a major village 7 miles from the border with China, in the early 1990s. However, recently, there has been little government support in helping village women in the area either to develop new products or to ease their access to the consumer. The Lao Women's Union no longer maintains a network to help remote villagers sell their cloths.

Today, a number of women in the region are weaving either to sell directly in the Muang Sing market or to middlemen who buy their cloths to sell in Vientiane or Luang Prabang. In some villages, such as Ban Nam Ngam, the Tai Daeng families are actively weaving both beautiful cloths for their personal use and simple scarves they make on commission. Commonly, the dealer will supply the weavers with the yarn and tell them what they should weave.

Near to Muang Sing there are some Tai Dam villages where the women are making decidedly un-traditional textiles using a mix of their home spun cotton and pre-dyed commercial yarns. In Ban Nong Buah, wall hangings and table runners are made in colors and patterns that the villagers had been successful in selling before. These pastel colored cloths are patterned with motifs traditionally associated with cloths woven for rites of passage, such as a stylized human figure standing on the back of a mythological figure. Market-savvy Tai Dam women go from village to village collecting the cloths on a consignment basis. They will either sell them in the local market or to people

who will transport them to Vientiane or Luang Prabang. Poorly woven pieces or unsold pieces are returned to the weavers, thus there is an informal form of quality control and market feedback.

Luang Namtha Province is a source of high quality silk. In the past a number of non- governmental organizations such as the Mennonite Central Community have worked to develop sericulture in the region. Near to Luang Namtha town there are a number of villages, such as Ban Tong Oum, which not only specialize in sericulture but where some village women have started weaving commercially as well, usually on consignment for buyers who come from Vientiane to purchase both the silk yarn and the cloths. Due to the success of commercial weaving shops in Vientiane, recently there has been a shortage of high quality Lao silk and efforts are underway to greatly expand sericulture throughout the country.

Vientiane

In the capital city, Vientiane, there are a number of commercial weaving galleries that have been successful in maintaining the high standards for which Lao weaving has long been famous. While some have used their skills and creativity to take Lao weaving into the contemporary art world, others are working to continue traditional styles of weaving and traditional natural dyes to produce replicas of the beautiful older cloths. The owners of these galleries work closely with the people weaving for them to inspire them to maintain and honor the well earned reputation that Lao textiles has achieved.

Additionally, the gallery owners are in constant contact with their customers and thus receive immediate feedback on what is being produced. Most of these gallery owners have also been involved in international textile exhibitions and thus have had a wide exposure to the world market. These gallery owners work hard to maintain the link between the producer and the consumer. They promote the image of Lao textiles by educating their customers about what they have for sale in their shops. Most have tags attached to their products describing the process, yarns and dyes that went into making it. Some also sell books and other publications that describe the different Lao textiles and how they are made.

Some of the more notable galleries in Vientiane are Kanchana, Lao Textiles, Nikone Handcraft, Phaeng Mai Galle and Taykeo Textile Gallery. The Sisane family that owns Kanchana has recently opened a textile museum with the goal of educating school children and others about traditional textiles in Laos. Lao Textiles, owned by Carol Cassidy, has been in business since

1990. At first Cassidy and her team of weavers produced exact replicas of the complicated weaves of the heirloom cloths she had studied. Later they moved to designing broader interpretations of traditional works. While the major target of Lao Textiles is the export market, it has had a major impact on what is currently available for sale in local markets. Cassidy has been recognized for leading the way to new, high quality silk textiles. So successful are her methods that she advises local groups in Lao as well as weavers in Cambodia, Vietnam and Assam in northeast India. Nanong Rassanikone is the managing dire tor of Nikone Handcraft. In addition to running the gallery, which focuses on home furnishings and other lifestyle products, Rassanikone has been involved in numerous training projects to help rural women create commercially viable products. The Phaeng Mai Gallery is owned by the Nanthavongdouangsy family. This Tai Daeng family not only runs a successful business whose main focus is high quality naturally dyed textiles, they work to educate visitors as well as Lao weavers by being involved in the production of pamphlets and books describing costumes styles of weaving, natural dyes and dyeing written in both English and Lao. Two of the family members have helped various NGOs in both Laos and Vietnam train rural women to weave commercially. One of the ways to maintain traditional weaving in Laos is through the careful replication of older textiles. Taykeo Sayavongkhamdy offers replicas of intricately woven cloths in her Textiles Gallery as a way of preserving Lao heritage without removing the original inspiration. In addition to the commercial galleries, there are a number of weaving workshops that target the Lao diaspora who send orders for clothing needed for traditional Lao weddings as well as decorative items for their homes.

Luang Prabang

The former royal town of Luang Prabang was declared a World Heritage Site in 1995. One of the consequences of this designation was an increase in interest in visiting this small but charming place. In January 1990 there were an estimated two to three thousand visitors to Luang Prabang. In the year 2002 there were more than 100,000 foreign visitors. In addition to having an impact on the infrastructure of this once remote town, the number of tourists has greatly enhanced the opportunities for the local people to improve their lives by working in tourist-related industries. Where once there were a few dusty shops selling locally produced items, there are now a number of smart shops offering a wide variety of merchandise. Unfortunately, not all that is on offer in the shops today actually comes from Luang Prabang or even Lao.

However, there are places where the focus is on locally produced goods, most importantly, hand woven textiles. OckPopTok is a cooperative managed by a young Tai Daeng woman, Veomanee Duangdala, who is the daughter of a master weaver and who began weaving herself when she was very young. This shop reflects her skill and understanding of the weaving process and the innovative ideas of a British woman, Joanne Smith, who works for the cooperative as a designer.

Conclusion

This paper really should have been titled 'connecting the Tai' because it became clear when I started comparing the experience of the Tai women weaving in remote provinces, that there were more commonalities than dissimilarities. Tai village women in both Laos and Vietnam received training and product development advice from Lao living in Vientiane as well as foreigners living in Laos, Thailand and Vietnam. The core product, a narrow neck scarf in subtle colors featuring ikat as well as supplementary weft, is similar in both countries. While it seems that the Vietnamese Tai are very enterprising and are quite keen to take advantage of this new source of income, they suffer from poor quality yarn. The Tai in Luang Namtha have their indigenous high quality silk and good weaving skills but do not have easy access to a large market and no longer receive input from outside sources on product development.

The introduction of commercial weaving is a mixed blessing. While there were always villages where women were dedicated to continuing traditional styles of weaving, many of the younger generation were not, and skills were not being handed down. While the contemporary commercial cloths being produced do not always conform to village tradition, at least the young are not losing their ability to weave and hopefully will be inspired to weave not only cloths for sale but for ceremonial use within the village as well.

Cloths created for commercial purposes are almost never as complex or of as high a quality as those made for family, ritual, or religious use. In the past, however, a woman would never allow an inferior quality cloth to leave the loom as it reflected badly on her skill. Loosely woven and poorly dyed cloths made to sell are a reflection of the lack of a link between the producer and the consumer. The continuation of quality can only come about through an educated consumer and a motivated weaver who understands the purpose of the cloth she is producing.

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Football and Provincial Identity in Thailand:
The Construction of Chiang Rai Identity

Bisma Putra Sampurna

It is well-known that football has become one of the most popular sports in Thailand. Football gains its popularity through the development of the professional sporting competition, national and international sporting events, and the appropriation of the game in everyday life activities (Jonsson, 2003; 2006; Chuenchanok, 2012; Chuenchanok & Brill, 2015). Currently, Thai League is, arguably, the best sporting competition in national level. In July 2016, Thai national team also recently claimed their superiority in the regional level by winning the biennial football competition organised by ASEAN Football Federation (AFF) for two consecutive times. In the everyday life of Thai society, it is common as well for youth, adolescent, and adult to investing their leisure time by playing football. The mixture of the professional league development, accomplishment in regional level, and the adaptation of football highlights the importance of football in Thailand.

Despite of its popularity, it is difficult to deny that professional football in Thailand is not only serve as a sporting competition. Rather, it serves as a field in which the complex interplay of power relations and the dynamic circumstances of its society takes place. Such condition did not occur until 2009, when the Asian Football Confederation (AFC) declared that Thailand needs to restructure its football league by privatizing the club and the league so that Thailand-based football club is eligible in competing in annual continental football competition, such as, AFC Champions League (ACL) and AFC Cup. This circumstance led to the changing ownership of football club and the establishment of new club in provincial area of Thailand; the involvement of provincial power in the provincial-based football club; and the increasing number of spectators and fandom in the locality where the club based. Consequently, a stronger sense of competition amongst the clubs and its fans becomes galvanized throughout the following seasons.

A few numbers of scholars had been attempted to examine football issue in relatively different themes. Professional football management and branding strategies (Dissatat & Titítpong, 2014; Nathenoon & Rapeepat, 2015; Sumeth, 2015; Korbtip, 2017), football culture and the politics of localism (Chuenchanok, 2012), migration of football players (Chuenchanok, and Brill,

2015) and the use of football as modernizing tools (Jonsson, 2003; 2006; Yong, & Rookwood, 2008) are the theme that have been grasped scholar attention. Yet, judging by the popularity of football in Thailand I suggest that studies of football is still highly underrepresented in Thai academic discourse.

I attempt to fill the gap of knowledge on the study of football in Thailand by giving a special attention to the construction of provincial identity through football. To provides comprehensive view on such theme, the main focusses of the discussion will be given to the rise of provincial power and provincial identity in Thailand, the role of provincial power and the emergence of provincial football club, and the construction of Chiang Rai identity. I argue that the construction of provincial identity in football space is mediated by the football club and the provincial power. Moreover, provincial-based professional football club also provides a space for the people to exercising their identity politics. And that both of main actors in professional football, the club and the fans, are taking an active role in constructing the provincial identity.

The empirical basis of this discussion derives from part of four months of multi-sited ethnography I conducted in Chiang Rai Province and Bangkok Metropolitan Region. During this time, I spent three months and a half in Chiang Rai and two weeks in Bangkok. In Chiang Rai, the research process focused on the three main groups of Chiang Rai United (CRUTD) fans and the staffs of CRUTD. In Bangkok, I focused my research on the CRUTD fans who migrates and resides in this area. In both areas, I did not limit my research solely in the stadium where the match is held. Rather, I actively followed the fans in both inside and outside the stadium. I deployed several techniques to collect the information, such as, semi-structured one to one interview, participant observation, documentary research, textual analysis, and internet research. Interview and observation are the main data collecting technique that being utilized, and the rests are intended to complement the former.

Identity and Football : The Two Interrelated Elements in Sport

Identity and football are two elements in sports that inseparable. Such phenomena occurred throughout the globe and have regularly being examined by scholars. The discussion of identity in sports and football which had been put under scrutiny is ranging from class, race, gender, subculture, fandom, and locality (Frey & Etizen, 1991; Hadas, 2000; King, 2000; Washington, Robert & Karen, 2001; Guilianotti, 2002; Sandvoss, 2003; Molina, 2007; Porat, 2010; Topic & Coakley, 2010; Cleland and Cashmore, 2014; Dart, 2014; Gomez-

Bantel, 2015).[1] Part of this is because football has the unique capability to institutionalized a particular forms of identity which allows us to study the group or individual identity within the formation of sporting competition (Molina, 2007). The fluidity characteristics of identity which enable one to adopt multiple identities or identifying themselves based on the specific context and their motivation also makes the discussion of identity becomes more intriguing to be examined (Hall, 1996; Jenkins, 1996).

The roots of the identity which embodied by the fans of football club often has it ground on a uniquely distinct history of its socio-cultural formation of its society, if it is not the football club. For instance, Glasgow Celtic and Glasgow Rangers fans who hold deep rivalry between them because of the distinct identity of the club. Celtic have strong Irish-Catholic traditions whilst Rangers have strong Protestant, Unionist and Loyalist traditions (Giulianotti & Robertson, 2007). Another example is FC Barcelona, one of the most successful club in Europe, which massively supported by the Catalonian since the club serve as a symbol of their political struggle towards the Kingdom of Spain (Gomez-Bantel, 2015). Another evidence also found in other area as well, such as, *Bobotoh* the fans of Persib Bandung in Indonesia, who has strong roots on their Sundanese identity; and Israeli fans of Hapoel Tel Aviv, Maccabi Haifa, Beitar Jerussalem and Bnei Sachnin (Porat, 2010). The distinct history of socio-cultural formation of the society enables the fans to distinguish themselves from others by reconstructing their identity through their imagination of who they are. In a way, this condition supports the argument that football club might serves as an 'extension of self' (McLuhan, 1964). It is worth to be noted that not many professional football club, or sporting club, have the prerequisite which enables them to construct their local identity. To develop and to construct the local, regional, or provincial identity, a football club and its fans must have their own uniqueness based on the socio-cultural formation which allows both actors to conjoin themselves as a unit.

The football club also plays its role in the construction of identity by representing the local-related symbol or by constructing the image of themselves in certain way which shares the similar interest of its fans. Giulianotti and Robertson (2007) show how Glasgow Rangers refused to recruit players who hold Catholic belief until the late 1980s. VfB Stuttgart, in Germany, demonstrates the identity construction by adopting the usage of local symbol. The coat of arms of the House of Wurttemberg which has three black antlers on a gold field is being adopted as the coat of arms of VfB Stuttgart (Gomez-Bantel, 2015). Moreover, various ways to construct or even retain the identity

of the club can also be done by prioritizing squad with players from the club academy, the existence of politician or officials that shows support to the club and retain the regional identity, and employing directors with strong commitment to the proximity of the club (Molina, 2007; Gomez-Bantel, 2015).

I had shown how identity penetrates the dynamism of professional football club and it fans and how the club can play an active role in exploiting it by maintaining the identity which holds by the fans. However, I contend that one should not treat the club as an active actor and the fans as a passive consumer. Gomez-Bantel (2015) suggests that the club can perform as a carrier of a group identity and it provides the club with greater meaning which benefit the club in various ways. Yet, he negates the discussion on how the fans play their part in the process of identity construction. The club might reconstruct the regional identity by utilizing the image or symbol, but it is still unclear how the fans absorb the identity being presented. To this regard, I support Guschwan (2016) on his claim that the performances by the fans during the match is a process of reshaping their collective identity which they embrace outside the match. In other words, the performances of the fans resemblances the culture of the society in the locality. This indicating that the fans are having an active role in the process of identity construction within football club activities. Thus, the process of constructing, reconstructing, or maintaining the local identity is occur through active participation from both ways.

In contemporary Thailand, the relation between identity and football is also apparent. However, there is a slight difference between the identity that they show compares to the football clubs outside Thailand which has been examined by scholars. Instead of embodies local or regional identity, the football club in Thailand tends to embody the notion of provincial identity. The professional football team which base outside Bangkok actively promotes their provincial identity in various ways. They promote and construct the identity of the club by exploiting the existence of socio-cultural formation which embodied by its fans and transform it to the mixture of local-provincial identity. In order to comprehend the aforementioned argument, there is a need to first understand the socio-political-economy context of Thailand in general.

The Complexity of Provincial Identity and The Rise of Provincial Power in Thailand

Provincial identity in Thailand is a relatively new term in Thai academic discourse. Yet, in Thai society, the provincial identity has been apparent for around twenty years. Nishizaki (2011) is the first scholar to introduce the

notion of provincial identity in Thailand. In his assessment in Suphanburi Province, provincial identity can be understood as a form of identity which related to a positive social identity that gained by the people by series of development project in the provincial area which provides with a sense of pride towards their province where often associated with 'backward-ness'. Keyes (1967) had also analysed similar condition through a close examination on the Isan area, northeastern region of Thailand. Keyes (1967) did not provide a specific meaning on what 'regionalism' means, however, I interpret that regionalism is a notion that related with the manifestation of Isan culture in daily life which has differences in terms of its culture, history and origins compared to the Central part of Thailand. It motivates by the idea that both Isan and Siam culture is appropriate to be used as a guidance for people social interaction. Recently, Chuenchanok (2012) introduces the term 'Localism' in the study of football and identity in Chonburi Province as a term to depict the physical and mental identification of individuals with the province of Chonburi. This is not my intention to generalize the utilization of each term and giving them the same meaning, since that provincial identity and localism are refer to a single specific area of province, and regionalism is referring to a broader area of a region. By showing the three terms, I intend to provide the reader with the general concepts that has been used to depict the idea of local, regional, or provincial identity in Thailand. For the following discussion, I prefer to adopt the term of provincial identity because it confers more specific meaning towards the identity of the people in certain locality.

The provincial identity that embodied by the people does not appear single-handedly. It is assisted by the rise of the provincial power in their provincial area. The provincial power plays his/her role in 'liberating' the people in Thailand provincial area so that the people have a more positive association of themselves and the localities where they reside. The provincial power also does not arbitrarily arise and utilize their power in directing the development of the identity and social condition of the society. The provincial power gained their power by the influx of capital to the provincial area of Thailand and the political turmoil in the Thailand national politics. Before conducting further examination regarding the relationship between provincial identity and provincial power, it is necessary to provide a brief explanation on what provincial power is.

I adopt the term of provincial power from *Chao* pho, a term that has been often used by scholars to delineate the powerful man in the provincial area of Thailand (Ockey, 2000; Sombat, 2000; Pasuk & Baker, 2000). Chao pho, literally means 'godfather', often used to delineate a man in the countryside

area of Thailand; who possesses the characteristics of being wealthy by doing business, either legal or illegal; has economic and political influence (*Ittiphon*); and capable in providing assistances for the people who lives in the locality under his control (Pasuk & Sungsidh, 1996). Albeit there are debates on whether the meaning of Chao pho derives from the word '*Nak Kleng*' or '*Ittiphon*', I support the idea that Chao pho is an actor who holds power, politically and economically, and have influence towards the government officials and the people of their locality (Ockey, 2000; Sombat, 2000). The term of Chao pho evolves to has a broader meaning after the involvement Chao pho in Thailand national political landscape. Chao pho still retains their characteristics as a person who have the power in their provincial area. Yet, their power transcends their locality after they play a significant role in national politics. The rise of Chao pho can be understood by comprehending the historic transformation in the Thailand political-economy context. The raise of Chao pho in terms of economic context can be seen after the 1957 coup. The World Bank recommendation to promotes the private-led development generated economic influx to the provincial area. Chao pho who has established politic and economic networks then exploits the opportunity in the development project in their locality (Ockey, 2005). Subsequently, they became richer and more powerful. Having bigger power, they then involving themselves in the local politics and received a positive portrayal from the people as *phu yai* (big man) (Pasuk & Sungsidh, 1996). In terms of the political power, the 1973 political uprising was the pivotal moment for Chao pho. The demand for a democratic regime opened the opportunity for Chao pho to penetrates the national politics. For instance, the ambitious Chao pho like Banharn Silpa-archa from Suphanburi Province was one of many provincial-based politicians who can be claimed as successful in the national politics by becoming a Member of Parliament (MP) and then a Prime Minister of Thailand in 1995-1996 (Nishizaki, 2011). During his regime, Banharn was well-known in allocating a huge budget to his province and conducted series of development project to develop Suphanburi area. The impact of this abuse of power has, arguably, led to intensification of the construction of provincial identity.

The transformation in the political-economy condition subsequently affects the attitude of the people in the provincial area towards the central people of Thailand. The people in the provincial area become prouder towards their locality and they feel that the derogative association, such as, 'backward people' that used to be associated to them by the central people is no longer relevant. The sense of provincial identity then arose as part of its consequence.

The case of Banharn and the rise of provincial identity of the people in Suphanburi is just one example that could be utilized to delineate the social condition of the people in the provincial area. However, we need to be careful to not arbitrarily generalizing such condition in other part of Thailand. Because the study on the provincial identity and the provincial politician is still very limited and it remains unclear on whether the people in other provinces who has Chao pho who involving themselves in the national politics have the similar feeling as what the people of Suphanburi feel.

It is debatable on whether the term of Chao pho is still relevant with the current circumstances in the discussion of Thai national socio-political condition. This is because the current situation has provided more opportunity for provincial actors to involving themselves in the national economy and politics. Furthermore, the characteristics of Chao pho that delineated by scholars is also debatable, since the power in the provincial area is more spread compared to the situation in the 1970s-1990s (Prajak, 2016). However, it is difficult to deny that the descendant and the political affiliates of the Chao pho still benefits by the economic and political power that have been accumulate by the Chao pho.

Based on the aforementioned argument, I suggest that the term of provincial power is more suitable to be utilized to depict the current condition in Thailand provincial area and to be used to delineate the provincial actor in this paper. Provincial power is an actor who holds the power, either economically or politically, in the provincial area; which the power could be inherited by the existence of Chao pho or provincial politician whom they are related or affiliated; the power that holds by the provincial power is not necessarily being used to accumulate political or economic advantage; yet, their power often be exploited by the people for their social advantage; and in turn provides the provincial power with advantages, either in terms of economic, politic or popularity. The rise of provincial power oftentimes provides the people in the locality with an incentive such as provincial identity.

The Role of Provincial Power and The Emergence of Provincial Football Club

Provincial power and the emergence of provincial football club in Thailand have a very strong tie. Even though these two elements do not necessarily relate to one and another at the beginning, it then become more apparent throughout the time. The involvement of the provincial power in the emergence of provincial football club, arguably, derives from the political turmoil in 2006. And the emergence of provincial football is more related with the

regulation from AFC for the 2009 season of the Thai national football competition, which led to the establishment of Thai Premier League.[2] Yet, both events provide a perfect combination for the inception of provincial identity. I will provide more discussion on the inception of provincial identity on the next part of this paper.

The political turmoil in 2006 in Thailand was the pivotal momentum that led some of the Chao pho or provincial power to turn their agenda to football. Since the beginning of their involvement in the politics, the role of provincial based politicians was constrained by the opposition from military and Bangkok based politicians. This, then, lead to a series of coup and political crises (Baker & Pasuk, 2009). Most of the huge cases related to the political corruption scandal which involves many of the provincial based politician. The peak was marked by the dissolution of Thai Rak Thai Party in 2007, in which 111 members of the Party, including the Prime Minister, Thaksin Sinawatra, were barred from Thai politics for a five-year period. Consequently, the provincial based politician who used to comfortable in securing their role in national politics had to lose their position. Some of the most influential provincial based politician, like Newin Chidchob, started to involving themselves in the unusual type of business, which is football. Currently, (2017 season) there are twelve from eighteen clubs which able to participate and penetrate the highest tier of the Thailand national football competition which originates from the provincial area. The interesting part is that the provincial teams which able to perform and competing well in the league are owned or chaired by the provincial power of the respective province. For instance, Buriram United from Buriram Province is owned by Newin Chidchob; Chonburi FC is chaired by Wittaya Khunpluem, the son of Somchai Khunpluem (*Kamnan Poh*); and Suphanburi FC which is chaired by Varawut Silpa-archa, the offspring of Banharn Silpa-archa. Even though the involvement of the provincial based football team tends to be late compares to the central Thai based football team, the club had done remarkably well.

In Chiang Rai Province, CRUTD, founded in 2009, is the only provincial team from the northern region that able to compete in the highest tier of professional football competition of Thailand. Likewise, CRUTD is led by a provincial power, a 31 years-old man, named Mitti Tiyapairat who serves as the president and the owner of the club. He is the son of a former national politician Yongyuth Tiyapairat who used to perform actively in national politics before the dissolution of his party in 2007 and barred from the involvement in the national politics. His mother, Salakjit Tiyapairat, is a local politician who

currently serves as the CEO of Chiang Rai Provincial Administration Organization (PAO). She also serves as the CEO of CRUTD.

Chuenchanok (2012) suggests that the involvement of the provincial based politician in the provincial based football club derives from the motivation to retain their political influence in their province. However, one need to be carefully asses the proposed argument, since it is vague on whether their motivation is solely based on the political motives. Besides, when the provincial power, which is not necessarily a politician, involving themselves in the professional football club, it becomes trickier to asses on what their motivation is. Based on the interview which I conducted with the President of CRUTD, I perceive that the motivation to found a football club is not merely based on political reason. This is his answer when being asked on why he chose to established a football club:

> ….when I was 22, I was about to graduate from master degree. Actually, after I was about to graduate from bachelor degree when I was 21. I was thinking so much to work or to study. But, if I have to work, I don't want to work in the office or in the bureaucrat system. I didn't want to be the financial consultant, I didn't want to be a broker, a stock broker, I don't want to be. I wanted to work in the thing that I like…… So, I decided to do one more year for a master degree. And I thought, my parents cannot say anything about this. So, I finished master degree. When I started, about to, finish my master degree, I was thinking so much about what I will work on. My family background, they are politician. But, still, I think, I am still very young to get into that kind of field, you know. So, I have decided to do something that I like, and my parents was not one-hundred percent supported. But, okay, they wanted me to do, they want me to try [to see] if I can do it or not. So, I started to work on the professional football during that time, when I was 22.
>
> (Mitti, personal communication, 2017)

Mitti's answer seems to contrasting Chuenchanok (2012) arguments. He chose to establish a football club because he did not want to be a government official or work in the office, like most of the Thai people do after they graduate from the university. Moreover, his parents who are a former politician and an active local politician shared different opinion towards his idea in establishing a football club. Even though it is unclear on to what extent that they against

Mitti's idea, his answer still could provide us with a different perspective in comprehending the basis of the establishment of provincial based football club which owned by provincial power. It also entices us to questions more on whether the motivation of the local politician in involving themselves in football club is only for political reason. Nevertheless, his answer gives us a stronger foundation in perceiving how the provincial power has a huge role in the emergence of provincial based football club in Thailand.

When questioned on why he chose Chiang Rai Province as the home base of the club, Mitti also did not showed initial intention to take any advantages on his parent position as influential person in Chiang Rai Province:

> …..Actually, I was about to take over a one club at Bangkok at that time. But, after I talked to the federation, they said "hey, you don't have to take over. Now we have a new policy……..I was very lucky back in that time, because the President of the Thai Federation started to have regional league, which was in Thailand, back then when I was 23, around 2008, still, the league has a Thai league, Division 1 and Division 2. But, Division 2 is consist of a lot of team, but, located in a lot of areas and very hard to travel. So, in 2009, in the beginning, they start to make Division 2 to divided into five groups, five regions, which was a very good idea. Because in the North have one league, in the Northeast have a league, the South have a league, so they don't have to travel very far. Then I started to establish this football club, back in that time. So, it was a very good construction for Thai football.
>
> (Mitti, 2017)

Moreover, he added that part of his intention to establish the club in Chiang rai was to develop the province by providing the Chiang Rai people with an attraction which they can enjoy as part of their leisure time and to provide a public space for them to gather and meet:

> Before, back in 2007, 2008, 2009, we didn't have Central Plaza, we didn't have anything. The people didn't have anything to do in the weekend, you know. They just stayed home. They were very.. We were.. we had nothing to do in the weekend. So, I just wanted to create, I just wanted to do something new, something that can make the family to have more time together, to have more people to join.
>
> (Mitti, 2017)

It might be tempting for scholars to make a fixed claim that the emergence of the football club in the provincial area of Thailand is controlled or utilized by politician as an extension for them to gain and retain their political power. However, such claim is need to be reassessed carefully. It is not because of its tendency that can create fallacy in understanding the emergence of the football club. In some area, it is correct to make the claim. But, because of the rise of the football club sometimes is trickier than what it might be seemed. By negating the role of provincial power, which is different from the politician, one might trapped in the banal association of the tendency in the creation of provincial based football club, which often initiates by local politician. Yet, by examining the answer from Mitti Tiyapairat, it clears that the establishment of football club in Thailand is having a very strong tie with the existence of provincial power in a specific locality.

Chiang Rai United and The Construction of Chiang Rai Identity

It is a challenging task to examine the identity of a group and to define what identity that they possessed, especially in the contemporary era when the individual can be easily switch their identity and associating themselves as part of many groups. Football provides a space which the fans could maintaining their identity in a relatively stable way. This is because in the football-related activities, either inside or outside the stadium, the fans can retain their identity, as the supporter of the football club which has a specific identity, through the usage of symbol, chant, and the name. In the following paragraphs, I will try to show how both the clubs and the fans actively constructing and maintaining the provincial identity which embodies in football club.

Chiang Rai United and its fans are two actors who actively constructing the provincial identity of Chiang Rai through symbolic performances and the usage of local identity which they transform into part of their provincial identity. As I mentioned earlier in the beginning of the paper, the roots of the identity derive from the unique distinct history of the socio-cultural formation of the people who reside in the locality. CRUTD and its fans are benefitted by the unique history of the northern, if it is not Lanna, culture which distinct from the other region in Thailand. The most apparent identity that retain by the club and its fans is the *Kwang song* (Hercules Beetle). Kwang song, or Kwang, is an insect that can be found throughout the northern region of Thailand (Mulla & Siriwat, 2000; Rennason, Grimaud & Cesard, 2012). What makes it special is that most of the northern people regards Kwang as part of their childhood. During rainy season, children in the northern of Thailand usually gathered

Kwang and fight it with another Kwang. Even though at present time it tends to be more difficult to find Kwang, Kwang has become part of their identity. Nowadays, Kwang fight often conducted by adult for gambling.

In CRUTD, Kwang song become adopted to be the symbol and the nickname of the club. The philosophy behind the nickname is to symbolically projected the nature of Kwang who infamous for their fighting spirit. CRUTD also commodifying Kwang in several ways. Kwang adopted by the club as the mascot of the club. The crest of the club also use Kwang holding an orange flag with its horn to symbolize the heroic nature of the animal. In the front of their home stadium, Singha Stadium, CRUTD also exhibit a big statue of Kwang. The president of the club stated in the interview that he chose Kwang as their symbol and their nickname because he felt that it can represent the people in the northern part of Thailand:

> We have listed a lot of symbols in Chiang Rai. We have a fish; we have a mountain; we have a river, we have a Mekong river; we have elephant, same as a lot of teams here. But, we researched more. When I talked to my friend who helped me to create this symbol, we were thinking to represent not only [for] Chiang Rai, we wanted to represent the whole of the North. Lanna. Lanna area. So, the creature that have found the most in the Northern [part of the] country, is, this Kwang. And, this creature is not only a symbol. But, they [are] also very strong. They can lift [things] one hundred forty times of their body weight. So, they are very strong, you know. And they [are] also, they are fighters. When they fight to each other. So, it is a good symbol for us.
>
> (Mitti, 2017)

Uniquely, Kwang is not only used by the club. The fans also adopted Kwang as their nickname. From three organized fans groups, which actively participate and give their support during the home match, two of them are adopting Kwang as their name and naming their group with Kwang as the beginning of the group name. These groups naming themselves as Kwang Lang Goal and Kwang Khong Chai. The act of naming the group with Kwang is not only occur in Chiang Rai. The fans of CRUTD who reside in Bangkok also naming their group as Kwang Krung, shortened from Kwang Krung Thep. These acts of adopting the name might not provide a strong resemblance of the argument which said that the fans are not only a passive consumer. However, I contend that this is part of their way in actively participating themselves as part of the club and to maintain their Chiang Rai identity.

The adoption of the symbol gain a positive reception from the fans of CRUTD. Every time they being asked on how they feel about the utilization of Kwang as a club symbol, the always answer enthusiastically and provide me with a positive answer, and supplement the answer with their personal story. Thana Kochpatsirichai (Lop), a 41 years old man who serves as the leader of CRUTD fan group, called Kwang Khong Chai, who originate from Chiang Rai Province highlights the aforementioned statement:

> It is suitable [symbol for the club]. Kwang is a fighter in the mountain, he won't give up until he died….. Since I was young, I played with friends, I found Kwang on the trees. I usually was punished by teacher because I played Kwang… There were many Kwang in the mountain, Kwang will eat sweet fruits, so we can found them on trees.
>
> (Thana Kochpatsirichai, personal communication, 2017)

The leader of Kwang Lang Goal, 53 years old man, named Surasak Suwanphimol (Tu), who originally from Bangkok and migrated to Chiang Rai around 15-16 years ago to settle with his family, also shares similar opinion with Lop.

> Oh, [the usage of Kwang as a symbol] is good. It is Lanna symbol, there are only two provinces which have Kwang fighters, Nan and Chiang Rai. In Kwang season, boys will take Kwang to fight… I don't know [about Kwang, before] hahaha. Because I lived in Bangkok. I just know it when I live here. People are taking Kwang to fight by taking a female Kwang and put it between two male Kwang.
>
> (Surasak Suwanphimol, personal communication, 2017)

The fans show how they construct and reconstruct their identity in more apparent way through performance inside and outside the stadium through the chant and the usage of flag. One of the chant which chanted by CRUTD fans, interestingly, does not necessarily projecting the history of their socio-cultural formation, as it shown in the usage of symbol. Rather the chant projects a sense of provincialism. This is one example of the chant that they chanting in English:

We are Chiang Rai
We Cheer Chiang Rai

We are Chiang Rai
We Cheer Chiang Rai
La La La La

Before, during, and after the match, this chant often being sung by all CRUTD fans group, both in the Chiang Rai and Bangkok, with the sound of drums accompanying it. Spectators who are not belong to the group also oftentimes enthusiastically chanting this chant throughout the match. The chanting of the chant is led by two until four persons who acts as the conductor in each group stands.

The chant indicates that the fans are supporting the club because of the shared geographical area between the club and themselves. This chant is not specifically made by CRUTD fans. It is adopted from the chant that has been used by other football clubs. Almost every group of football fans throughout Thailand chanting this chant, with a small reservation, by changing the name of the locality in which where they are belong to. It remains unclear on the origin of the chant, since it has been used massively throughout Thailand for a long time. It might be correct to argue that the chant is not necessarily depicting their support towards their province. Yet, it also could create a fallacy since, first, in other club throughout Thailand, the fans are modifying the chant by inserting the name of their locality; second, the fans have another chant that the lyrics is specifically stating their support for the club; and third, several fans stating that they sing it to show their support for their locality or province, not only for the club.

Despite of the clear indication that the chant is projecting a strong sense of provincialism and showing the active role of the fans in constructing the provincial identity, one should not negate the role of the football club in such process. Every year in CRUTD, the president of the club organized meetings with the fan groups to discuss the development of the club and the fans performances during the match. The club does not directing, nor suggesting how the performance should be addressed. Rather, they are discussing with the fans on how to synchronize the chants and the performance should be conducted so it will provide more hostile atmosphere. This constant interaction between the club and the fans supplement the aforementioned findings that both of the main actors in the football club are playing an active role in the process of identity construction.

These two examples clearly show how the provincial identity being actively constructed by the club and the fans inside professional football-related activities. The usage of the Kwang as a symbol and the nickname of the club

and the adoption of Kwang as the name of the fan groups might not address directly how the provincial identity being constructed, because of Kwang can be found throughout northern part of Thailand. Yet, since only CRUTD which utilized Kwang and intensifying the association between Kwang and Chiang Rai people, it partly shown how the historical socio-cultural formation being adopted as an extension of Chiang Rai identity and internalized by the fans as an association of themselves. The chant, as a second example, shows clearer depiction on how the fans construct their identity as a part of Chiang Rai by treating their support towards the club as they support the province.

Conclusion

After 2009, professional football league in Thailand faces a dramatic structural change. The instruction from AFC as football international governing body and the political disruption in Thai national politics makes professional football no longer merely a sporting competition. Numbers of provincial power got involved in football and provincial-based football club begun to proliferate. This led to the circumstance in which professional football league serves as a field where the complex interplay of power relations and dynamics social interaction takes place. One of the major consequences is that the construction of provincial identity become intensified through football-related activities in provincial area of Thailand.

Through an ethnography work that I conducted in Chiang Rai and Bangkok Metropolitan Region, I examined that football and identity are highly interrelated in Thailand professional football league. The relation between football and identity tends to share similarities in terms of how the football club can play the role as identity carrier for the fans and assisting their fans in exercising their identity politics. The differences are that the identity being constructed is a provincial identity and it is mediated through the existence of provincial power and provincial football club. The football club and the fans are also simultaneously taken active roles in the process of provincial identity construction. It occurred through the adoption of the historic socio-cultural condition of the people which used by the club and its fans. Kwang is used by CRUTD as a symbol and the nickname of the club and it is being used also by the fan groups as part of their group name. Moreover, the chant which chanted by the fans in football-related activities which shown how they are associating themselves with the locality where the football club and they belong, also shown that the identity construction is occurred through dynamics interaction inside and outside the stadium.

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Notes

1. It needs to be noted that I am not suggesting that the aforementioned themes of study should be treated merely under the discussion of identity. What I am suggesting is that such themes would be beneficial in supplementing our understanding towards the notion of identity in football, or sports.
2. The football as a sport institution in today Thailand was initiated under King Rama VI (Varijavudh) by founding Siam Football Association, or later called Football Association of Thailand, in 1925. For decades, football clubs, games and competitions in Thailand were confined within state schools, government office, state enterprises and a few number of business companies. Before the development of Thai Football semi-professional leagues in 1996, and the fully professional league since 2009, TPL, the highest football competition was Kor Royal Cup (1916-1995) which organized by TFA. The team who compete in this competition were mainly centralized near to the capital city. During 1999 until 2008 there was also one league for provincial-based football club, named Provincial League, being held by Sports Authority of Thailand (SAT) and Ministry of Tourism and Sports. The objectives were to introduce professional football and to support provincial club, in part of boosting Thailand economy and social development.

Socio-religious Knowledge Culture of the Ahoms

Girin Phukon

In this paper an endcavour is made to deal with the socio-religious knowledge cultural properties of the Tai- Ahom. These include Common Pantheon, Belief Systems, *Khwan* Belief (vital essence), Ancestor Worship, Burial of the Dead, Language and Literary Heritage, and other related properties.

Knowledge of Ahom Pantheon

Creation Legend : The Tai people throughout their lands possess a common pantheon of creation of the universe and the earth. This has been uniformly retained by the Tai in different lands in identical or slightly different versions. Whenever the Tai moved to different lands, they carried this pantheon along with them but due to long separation and in contact with other peoples, they appear to be slightly different. So also did the Ahom when they moved from Mong Mao to the Brahmaputra valley. Scholarly studies on the Tai have conclusively proved that Ahom creation myth has been inherited from their ancestors.

In a study, Siraporn Nathalang, a Tai scholar from Thailand has presented a comparative account of 50 Tai creation myths, both oral and literary which she collected in her field work in several zones such as Sipsong Panna in China, Kengtung in eastern Burma, Luang Prabang in western Laos, Sip Song Chou Tay in southwestern Vietnam, the home of the Black Tai and in Assam State of India. From her study it is known that the Ahom creation myth of the Giant Gourd is also shared with slight variation by the Black Tai of Vietnam, and the Shans of Burma. This story has its parallel with the Flood Myth in the Bible. (Siraporn Nathaland 1997:31)

According to the Ahom creation legend as found in their writings, "In the beginning there were no gods and men. The world was void and was surrounded by the water of ocean. There were no air, no animals, no land, no water, no human being, no rulers, no countries and no living beings. Also the sun, the moon and the stars did not exist. There was neither the earth nor the heaven. It was total void. There was only one omnipotent being the Great God." It goes further and says, "God suddenly opened His eyes and could see

nothing attractive and charming. He created a deity known as Khun-theo-kham from his breast. A lotus plant with its flower issued from His navel. Then a crab was created. After this, a tortoise was created. He also created a large serpent which encircled the tortoise. The serpent had eight hoods which he spread to eight directions. Then he made a large white elephant with long tusks. A white mountain was made in the north. Another mountain was created in the south. Then pillars were placed on the tops of the mountains. Then a pair of large gold tinted spiders was created. The spiders, as they floated in the sky, let fall their excrement, out of which the earth arose." The Ahom account continues that the Great God also created a Goddess for his wife. Out of this pair four sons were born. In this way in course of time many gods came into existence. (Baruah G.C. 1930:27)

There is also a second creation myth. This is the Flood Myth. It is contained in the book called *Lit Lai Tu*. According to this book, at one time, the world was divided into many parts and as there were no kings to rule over them, the world fell into utter chaos and fighting ensued among the earthly beings endlessly. In such a situation, people forgot about gods and neglected the worship of the gods. Under this situation, two giants appeared; one of the two became king over them who suppressed the wild ones. Although they restored peace and order, there was no worship of the gods. Not receiving worship, the gods became restless and they went to Lengdon, the Lord of Heaven and petitioned him for rectifying the disorder. Lengdon then thought of destroying these unfaithful people and, therefore, he sent down a giant bird to eat up all human beings. But the bird could not eat up all the human beings as their number was too large. He then sent down many snakes but they too could not finish the human beings. Ultimately the Lord of Heaven sent down a deluge to wash away the sinful mankind. The great flood that came suddenly killed all except an old man. Besides, in the womb of the cow was found a large seed of gourd which was planted. The gourd seed sprouted and the plant produced, in course of time, a very large gourd. When it became ripe, Lengdon asked Ai-pha-lan, his eldest son to break it into two parts with a magical spear so that the people who were inside could come out. When Ai-pha-lan pointed his spear, the people inside it prayed not to do so for fear of death of many. From every side the prayer of the people inside was heard. However one Chao la-pang stood in front of the spear and told Ai-pha-lan to pierce him first so that the people would not see the thrust of the spear. Accordingly Ai-pha-lan pierced him by throwing his spear with great strength that passed through the body of Chao La-pang and entered the gourd. Out of the hole came men

all sorts of men, some black and some white. In this way, the whole earth was populated again. This Ahom legend with slight variations is found among several other Tai groups. Even today, the Ahom pundits in their exposition of the creation recall this legend. Since the creation myths have come down to them through generations, they constitute heritage of the Ahom. (Tai Manuscript Litlai Tu)

Traditional Belief Systems

Gods and Spirits: The Ahom believed and still believe, in spite of the fact that many of them adopted Hinduism, in multiple of gods (*pha*) both on earth and in the sky above. Among the gods in the sky (heaven), they believe that Leng-don is the greatest of all gods (Pha-niu-ru Leng-don) who presides over the council of gods who include among others Ja-sing-pha, Lang-din, Jan-sai-hung, Nyot-sai-lum. Every year at particular time these gods are required to be propitiated by offerings of their best and the choicest food that includes beautiful young fat cow, fine young pig, fat chicken, egg, best rice-wine, glutinous steamed rice, and other things. It is Leng-don who finding the earth below in a state of chaos due to lack of a good ruler sent, after consulting his councilors, his two grandsons, Khun-lung and Khun-lai with nobles, attendants and others down to the earth by a ladder. Instructions were imparted to them as to how they should rule for the good of the subjects. Certain sacred objects such as an idol of Seng-mong, a heng-dan (Ahom type of sword), a pair of holy chicken for divination by the priests, a drum and other things were sent down. They came down and founded a kingdom at Mong-Ri Mong-Ram as some scholars identified in the Upper Mekong Valley. It was from Khun-lung, the eldest prince that the Ahom royal family descended. There are other lesser gods who support and assist Leng-don among which include Chao Pha-phan, Ai Pha-lum, Bao Haw-khe, Baw Pang-mong and Lang-ku-ri. These gods and spirits are formless. (Ghosh, 2009:111)

The available recorded data and also the religious rites and practices performed by the Ahom through their priests, lead to the conclusion that the Ahom did not follow any major religious faith like Buddhism or Taoism. It is not unlikely that they came under some influence of these religions. But they were not firm adherents of any of such religion. Rather animistic character and multiplicity of gods and spirits (as noted above) are very prominent in their religious faith. Suniti Kumar Chatterjee, the very internationally reputed scholar clearly says that the Ahom followed their 'old animistic religion'(Kirata-Jana-Kriti, *Asiatic Society*, 1974, pp. 102-04). According to Amalendu Guha the religion of the Ahom is a 'form of animism tinged with elements of ancestor

worship' with that of degenerated Tantric Burddhism and tribal fertility cults (Neo-Vaishvavism to Insurgency, Occasional paper by *Centre for Social Sciences Studies*, Calcutta, 1984, p. 7). David K. Wyatt, the reputed Yale University Professor of Thai History writes, as the 'Ahom were not Buddhists, but practiced an animistic religion'. (*Chiangmai Cronicles*, Bangkok, 1995) Earlier, about the religion of the Tai, W.A.R. Wood observes, 'as a nation they (Tai) were almost certainly animists, worshipping the beneficent spirits of the hills, forests, and waters, and propitiating numerous demons with sacrifices and offerings.' (*History of Siam*, 1924, pp. 38-39). In a similar vein, Erik Seidenfaden in his book *The Thai Peoples* (1967, p.40) writes, 'The original religion of all Tai was animism perhaps coupled with ancestor worship'.

A large number of earthly supernatural are believed to exist who are known as *phi*, a term usually translated as 'spirit'. Some of these are guardian gods of the earthly objects like *Phi Nam* (guardian spirit of water/river), *Phi-Tun* (guardian spirit of tree), *Phi Fai* (guardian spirit of fire), *Phi Ruen* (guardian spirit of the house), *Phi Doi* (guardian spirit of hill), and others. Hence for the protection of paddy, fruits, plants, water, fields, their guardian spirits must be propitiated with prayer and by offerings such articles as they like to have. Otherwise the belief is that they will cause trouble. In addition to these spirits, the Ahom believed and still believe that there are malignant spirits also called *phi* who cause trouble and disturb peace. Hence they are also regularly offered articles like chicken, fish, rice, and other things to keep them happy. Thus the Ahom priests regularly worshiped all the gods and spirits.

Thus it appears that belief system prevailing in the Ahom society forms a part of Tai cultural heritage. This belief system is comprehensive enough to include their belief in various gods and spirits, both good and evil, and also their belief in *khwan* or vital essence etc.

In fact, like many other people of the world, the Ahom also believe in gods and spirits. Among the Ahom gods, Pha Leng-don is the supreme and primary god. He resides in Heaven and looks after the world of men, animals and plants. He is assisted by a council of gods, and he presides over it. Next to him is Ja-sing-pha, the goddess of learning and wisdom. There is the god Jan-sai-hung, the guardian god of rain. There is Nyat-sai-lum, the god of wind, Lang-ku-ri, the grand old god, who lives under a banyan tree. Other deities include Chao-jang-lao, Ja-sang-bun, Lai-seng-mong, Chao-pha-phet, and a host of others.

These gods are worshipped at regular intervals and also when occasions arise. They must be kept propitiated by making offerings of specific articles,

duck, chicken, pigeon, and animals like cow and buffalo so that they bestow blessings, strength, prosperity, peace and happiness. They are worshipped either individually or in groups. Nyat-sai-lum, the god of wind is worshipped when there is severe storm and howling wind. Leng-don is offered animals of white colour, while some others black-coloured animals. Even today following the ancient custom, worship of these gods is done by the priests according to traditional way.

In addition to the above named gods, there are spirits of several categories. One category is that they act as guardian spirit of objects. They are benign in character : (J.N Phukon & Grin Phukon, 2010 p.17)

Phii Nam (phii=spirit, nam=water) is the guardian spirit of Water,
Phii Fai (phii=spirit, fai=fire) is the guardian spirit of Fire,
Phii Doi (phii=spirit, doi=hill) is the guardian spirit of hills or mountains,
Phii Thuon (phii=spirit, thuon=forest) is the guardian spirit of Forest,
Phii Tun (phii=spirit, tun=tree) is the guardian spirit of Tree,
Phii Tang (phii=spirit, tang=road/path) is the guardian spirit of Road,
Phii Maak (phii=spirit, maak=fruit) is the guardian spirit of Fruit, etc.
Phii Taa (phii=spirit, taa=*ghat* or dock) is the guardian spirit of the River Ghat.
These are only some gods, there are more gods.

These *phiis* need to be propitiated from time to time keeping them contented, for the good of men. Phii Nam, or Water God is the guardian god of water who protects and controls water; Phii Mak who is the guardian God of Fruits is to be propitiated to have good and healthy fruit. In the same way, Phii Fai or Fire God that controls the fire is worshipped so that fire does not bring disaster to the people. In addition to these guardian spirits, there are other spirits some benign, some malignant that may cause trouble if offended or not given offerings.. Such spirits are thus required to be kept in good humour. These include :

Nang Rai (in Assamese Bor Bauli),
Nang Khai (in Assamese Maju Bauli),
Ai Me Nang (in Assamese Saru Bauli) They are three sisters.
Khun Thao Chaman (it is a male spirit)
Pu Phii Suo (a male spirit who resides in Banyan tree)
Chao Nuk Dam (a spirit of black bird)
Chao Nuk Daeng (a spirit of red bird)

Nang Thao Klao (an old female spirit)
Po' Lik Kha (a male spirit-father of servants)
Me Lik Kha (a female spirit-mother of servants)
Suo Phuok Suo Dam (white tiger and black tiger)
Hu Pa Lik Ka (spirit of cowherd)
Khwai Pa Lik Ka (spirit of buffalo-boy).
In addition to these there are other spirits.

Phii Ruen : The Ahom firmly believe that the living house (residence) where the family lives is a holistic space. It is therefore always defined by a raised earthen boundary on all four sides at some distance from the house itself. It is regulated by certain norms and custom. Each member of the family is required to observe these unwritten norms. It is protected by a spirit called Phii Ruen (phii=spirit, ruen=house). A main post of the house is supposed to represent this spirit. This spirit is very sacred to all members of the family. No one else but the living male head of the family can take his seat nearby it. This spot is taken to be sacred. We draw a parallel with the Tays (Tay) of Vietnam who also believe in a similar way. Dang Nghiem Van writes, "If the stilt-house with the *lac muong* symbolized the state, then each family's stilt-house – the cozy nest of a family in religious sense – was represented by the main pillar of the house". The main pillar and the hearth were the most sacred corners in the primitive tribal period. During the construction of a house, the main pillar was always first to be erected, occupying an important position for the head of the household. Whenever the head of the family goes out to a distant place for a purpose or undertakes a difficult job, he offers flowers, joss sticks, and other objects on a tray to the Phii Ruen and prays for the success of the mission. Other members too do this when they go out or undertake a serious work. This is the domain of the Head of the Family. This spirit is supposed to protect the household. Once in a year, a function is held honouring the House Spirit when all the members of the family gather to pay homage to it. Those Ahom who have become Hindu they also worship it by calling it Ghar Deoti *(ghar*=house, *deoti*<*devata*=god, that is House God).

Phii Mong Phii Ban : There is another phii called Phii Mong Phii Ban. It is the guardian spirit of the whole kingdom/county that includes villages as well. In Ahom language, *mong* means country or kingdom, *ban* means village; a *mong* necessarily includes villages. In the Ahom conceptual framework, the kingdom is regarded as a unit governed or controlled by a spirit as in the case

of other objects. In the same way, whenever a new city is founded, the spirit of the place is worshipped first by raising a pillar in its honour. It is regarded as the centre of the city. It is called *lak mong* in the Ahom language.

The Phii Mong was always worshipped by the king, lord of the kingdom as he was the head of the domain. He prayed for health, strength, prosperity and well-being of the kingdom. He prayed for destruction of his enemies. In the same way the Phii Ban or guardian deity of the village was worshipped by the head of the village for the strength, peace, happiness and prosperity of the village. Even today, the Ahom priests worship not the Phii Mong but Phii Ban, or the guardian god of the village every year at a certain time.

Khwan Belief and Rik Khwan

Belief in Khwan : The Ahom belief is that a man possesses his *khwan*, variously translated as "essence of life" (Rath-Inge Heinze, *Tham-Khwan*, 1982), "live-soul" (Stanley Tambiah, *Buddhism and Spirit Cult in Northeast Thailand*, 1970), or vital essence of life. Whenever there is some ailment in any part of the body, it is believed that the *khwan* or guardian essence of that part has taken some offence and has gone away. A religious ceremony called Rik Khwan meaning "the Calling of the Khwan" is performed in which the *khwan* is entreated to come back. On the death of a man, the core "life-essence" is split up into two parts, one part remains with the dead which then becomes *dam*, the other part goes to the sky above and takes the form of a *phi* (deity). According to Tambiah, the *khwan* is definitely a Tai concept dealing with life and changing existence. Here is a basic difference of the concept of life between transcendentalism of soul in Hinduism and in Buddhism. As a part of the *khwan* remains with the dead, in olden times, the Ahom buried all their dead with the objects of his use and love, and an earthen mound was raised over the grave. This is an original custom among all Shan Tai (Erik Seidenfaden, *The Tai Peoples*, 1867, p. 41).

The belief in *khwan* is an original part of the Ahom belief system. This belief is very widespread among the Tai people in the Mainland Southeast Asia. According to this belief, there is a master *khwan* that resides in the body of a person. But its location rotates to the different parts according to time period. For instance, for certain period it resides on the back, after which it moves to the leg, and so on. Some western scholars interpret it as "life essence", "vitality", "life soul", etc. However, an exact word for *khwan* in English is not available

The leaf of a Khwan book is shown here-

The calling of the Khwan is like below :

Khwan pai ju tam khen kang rao chan pak khop pha chan lum kaw ma.
Khwan pai ju tam nung lung khak khai ti thiu riu kaw ma.
Khwan pai ju tam rin nam ma tam tan am pak kaw ma.
Khwan pai ju tam pak lin ling khai sam lik kaw ma.
Khwan pai ju tam nam la la pang bun kaw ma.

Besides, each part of the body such as eye, ear, hand, leg, etc. possesses a *khwan* that protects that part. Whenever, for some reason, a *khwan* is displeased or offended, it leaves that part and goes away, and then that part of the body suffers. When a khwan goes away, there is a way of calling it back to its original place. This ceremony is called Rik Khwan (*rik*-calling) i.e. calling of he *khwan*. This function is generally performed by an elderly female who accompanied by some ladies goes to a nearby pond or stream with fishing trap called *jakoi*. There she calls (rik) the *khwan* by loudly chanting *mantra*, sometimes very loudly entreating the *khwan* to come back. "If you are now among the stars in the sky, come back, we have offered you a very sweet potato, which you like very much". "We are giving you soft fleshy meat of chicken", etc. All sorts of allurement are offered to it. Whatever fish is caught in the fish trap, is supposed to represent the *khwan*. This is a universal belief among all the Tai people. (J.N. Phukon & Girin Phukon, 2010:17)

Rik Khwan is also performed on other occasions. For instance, it is performed on the day before the Ahom marriage called Chak Long by the Ahom priests. In this ceremony, two three priests (Mo' Lung) carrying a jakoi (a kind of bamboo scoop with a handle used to catch fish in shallow water) go

to a nearby river or pond. After offering betel-nut, fowl's eggs, rice etc. to the water god Khao Kham, they dive the jakoi into water. Whatever fish is caught is wrapped up with a piece of cloth or in a piece of banana leaf, and is brought. Thereafter the fish is cooked and the bride/bridegroom is given to eat a portion of it for long life. A portion of the chant is given below : (Ibid)

Chao kao oi! Kao
Kao khwan mon chao chu khen dai
Kao pai yu tam cheng din cheng
Ban rik chu ma
Khup dao deng rik chu ma
Khwan da ma tan a
Chao kao oi!

Literal translation of the mantra runs like this-

> *O my supreme lord, I travelled to so many places to get you khwan. I travelled in the sky, to the sun, moon and the stars of the universe. I am praying for a long life, a good life of the young bride/bridegroom. My forefathers with golden hair and silver beard protect me and my people and the country. I have visited those places where the black crows become white, I searched for you in flowers, I searched for you in fruits, I searched for you in eggs, etc. Come O you Khwan, my Lord! and protect the young person bride/bridegroom.*

Even today, among some of the orthodox priestly families, this ritual is performed when there is some problem of the body of a person, particularly small children, thinking that some fairy might have allured the *khwan* of the small one. However, more serious *khwan* calling or Rik Khwan is performed periodically or at times by the Ahom community to restore the vigour and vitality of the people for greater assertion in life. Several Rik Khwan rituals were thus performed during the last few years. This year (2006) a collective Rik Khwan in a large scale was performed at Moran near Dibrugarh where several thousand people participated.

Me-dam Me-phi (Ancestor Worship)

Every year at a particular time, families propitiate the *dam* and the *phi* of the dead at home, and by the king at Charaideo. This is an inalienable part of the ancestor worship of the Ahom and is called *Me-Dam Me-Phi* (worship of the *Dam* and the *Phi*). Here are some instances - King Siu-huim-mong "performed the ceremony of Me-dam Me-phi" (*Ahom Buranji*, p. 77). King Gadadhar Singha performed Me-Dam Me-Phi and offered sacrifices to the Ahom gods. (*Ahom Buranji*, p. 264). Recording the events of King Pramatta Singha (1744-51) the chronicle says 'on the 28th of the month of Dinkam (Pausa), on the day of Dap-plao the king left for Charaideo. On the day of Mong-Mao of the month of Din Sam the king worshipped all the Ahom gods' (*Ahom Buranj*i, p. 279). King Rajeswar Singha (1751-69 A.D.) "In the month of Din Sip Song on the day Rai Si-Nga worshipped the Ahom gods at Charaideo. (*Ahom Buranji,* p. 313). 'Me Dam Me Phi still occurs every year at Charaideo'.

The Ahom believe that their ancestors reside above in the sky in the same status as they lived on earth and enjoy a life of eternity. From there they observe the activities of their descendants. In the royal line Khun-lung and Khun-lai were the first in the list of ancestors, In the Ahom list of kings, Siu-ka-pha, the founder of the Ahom kingdom is taken as the first Ahom king. In the same way each family has its own ancestor. For the Ahom priest Lao-khri is regarded as the first ancestor. Other families too have their own ancestors. In the Ahom scheme of things they were deified human ancestors. The Ahom firmly hold the view that their ancestors must be remembered and worshipped. The worship of these ancestors is not limited to the lifetime of an individual, but persists as long as the family exists. The ancestors might be worshipped singly or in groups. However the ancestors must be remembered periodically and offerings should be made to them. Usually the offerings consisting of pieces of cooked meat of chicken, pig, duck, the whole egg and cooked rice are presented to the ancestors on trays (called *maihang*) made of small bamboo pieces in a respectful manner. Rice-wine (*nam lao*) of the best quality invariably forms a part of it for in the olden days it formed a part of the dish.

There are two forms of worship of Dam. One is in a small scale but more intimate, and is done by the family members remembering their dead. Even today, many Ahom families perform Dam (ancestor) worship at their home annually at certain time of the year when relatives are also invited. Those who are disciples of Hindu preachers (Gossain) also perform it but devoid of meat and *nam lao* (rice wine). As a custom, the offerings made to

the ancestor by a family are not offered to the relatives and guests but eaten by the members of the family only. Even, married daughters are not allowed to partake it. The idea is that a married daughter no longer belongs to that family Dam.

The community worship of the Dam is more elaborate where the members of the whole community participate. In the olden days when the Ahom kings were ruling, Me-dam Me-phi was performed by the monarchs from time to time. There are many instances of Me-dam Me-phi performed by the Ahom kings as recorded in the Ahom chronicles. Since the loss of the political power by the Ahom, Me-dam Me-phi has been performed by the Ahom priests in small scale. Since the fifties of the last century, Me-dam Me-phi turned into a public ritual beyond the confine of the Ahom priests. During the eighties, Me-dam Me-phi attracted almost all Ahom and it was formed in large scale at different parts of Assam where the Ahom people gathered and prayed to their ancestors by making offerings sought blessings from their ancestors for good and healthy life, wealth and prosperity. Considering the widespread observance of the function the Government of Assam declared public holiday on 31st January. Thus annual worship of ancestors is now a big affair for the Ahom. Every year on the 31st of January, people gather at different places, perform *puja* by the priests, big feast is held, and the ancestors are remembered in a community manner. (J. N. Phukon & Girin Phukon, 2010:17)

Om Pha

Om-Pha is the grand worship of all gods and spirits. The Ahoms continued to worship their gods and spirits throughout the period of Ahom rule. Even after the loss of political power by them, they continued, particularly by the Ahom priests to perform worship, though in a much reduced scale. But it never ceased to exist. Maheswar Neog, a great literary figure and reputed scholar remarks "Ompha at Lakuwa Dewhal has been performed in a grand style every ten years since the time of king Purandar Singha, 1833-38" (*Pabitra Asam*, Assam Sahitya Sabha, 1991, pp. 45-46). At the present time, this grand worship is done on an auspicious day every twelfth year when all gods are propitiated at the same place on that day. This is called Om-Pha Puja. In 1829, Haliram Dhekial Phukan wrote '*Ahom Kachari Lalung mikir prabhriti parbatiya jatiyera asurik mate chungdeo puja kare*' (the hill tribes like the Ahom, Kachari, Lalung, Mikir perform chungdeo puja in a barbarous way), and '*purba dharmeo onek lok ache*' (many Ahoms are still in their old religion). (*Assam Buranji*, p.90).

The three clans that performed all sorts of religious ceremonies namely the Mo-Sam, Mo-Hung and Mo-Sai commonly known as Deodhai, Mohan and Bailung were the custodians of all religious matters of performing rites and rituals, chanting mantra, praying to the gods, interpreting religious books, divination by means of chicken thigh-bone (*kukuratheng*) and other matters. Even today they maintain this distinctive character in the Ahom society. 'Traditional beliefs and practices are still observed, particularly among the royal family members' (*Anthropological Survey of India, Assam,* Vol. XV, 2003, p. 54)

This is one of the important religious functions performed during the time of the Ahom kings. In this function all categories of gods, of the Ahom, of the local people and also neighbouring tribes received worship according to traditional requirements. The priests performing worship belonged to different categories. In the same way the chants were also different with reference to the gods. In the days of the Ahom kings it was a very elaborate function. With the end of the Ahom power it declined but continued with the Ahom priests in a small scale. However during the sixties of the last century, it was revived in a large scale by the Ahom organizations. Earlier it was performed at Charaideo. But towards the close of the eighteenth century, the shrine was shifted to the bank of the Disang River near Lakwa, where it is performed today. Since it is a very large-scale *puja* and the cost is heavy, it is performed after every twelve years. It is a day-long affair. (J. N. Phukon & Girin Phukon, 2010:17)

The following Ahom gods are worshipped in Om Pha :

1. Khao Kham,
2. Ai Lang Din,
3. Pha Niu Ru Leng-Don,
4. Jan Sai Hung,
5. Chet Lam,
6. Mut Kum Tai Kum,
7. Ja Sing Pha.

Among the local gods worshipped in Om Pha include –
Me Phi Thao is offered goat, duck, fowl, pigeon all white.
Nang Rai (Bar Baoli) is offered goat, duck, fowl, all black
Nang Khai (Saru Baoli) is offered goat, duck, fowl all black
Ai Mae Nang (Devi) is offered goat, duck, goat all black
Other local gods include Gariya, Mariya, Dhoba, Chamar, Dhuliya (Dong Dongiya), Mahamaya (Subachani), Jajali, Sajali, Bidhi, Bidhata, Tekela, and Nine Sisters.