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Locating Tai Lü and Tai Khün Manuscripts in Space and Time through Colophons

This article is dedicated to the late Cao Maha Khanthawong (1925–2013), the eminent Tai Lü scholar from Ban Chiang Lan, Chiang Rung.

This article aims to study how Tai Lü and Tai Khün manuscripts can be located in space and time using paratextual and material evidence from a corpus of fifty Tai Lü manuscripts from northern Laos and southwestern Yunnan (dated 1874–2013). In addition, we will examine forty Tai Khün manuscripts from Chiang Tung (Kengtung) collected by Anatole–Roger Peltier and kept at Chiang Mai Rajabhat University (dated 1902–2006). Most of the manuscripts analysed were produced during the last thirty years, with the most recent one in 2013. This shows quite clearly that the manuscript culture in the Tai Lü and Tai Khün areas in the Upper Mekong valley is still very much alive. While manuscript production in Chiang Tung in eastern Myanmar and northern Laos prospered almost without interruption during the twentieth century, this is unfortunately not the case in the Tai Lü areas in the Chinese province of Yunnan. In the years following the Great Leap Forward (1958) and during the Cultural Revolution (starting in 1965–66), traditional Tai Lü culture, deeply imbedded in Theravada Buddhism, was severely persecuted and manuscript production came to a halt. Since the early 1980s, the region has experienced a cultural revival which includes the revival of the indigenous manuscript culture. Most of the Tai Lü manuscripts from Yunnan included in our corpus are from private collections and were photographed by the author and Volker Grabowsky (University of Hamburg) in the course of several field trips made between 2002 and 2013. This preliminary study is mainly based on paratextual evidence. Apart from a few titles, only colophons have been analysed for this article.

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1 Introductory remarks about Tai Lü and Tai Khün manuscript cultures

Tai Lü is the name of a Tai ethnic group which predominantly lives in the Tai Autonomous Prefecture of Sipsòng Panna (*Xishuang banna Daizu zizhi zhou* 西双版纳傣族自治州), situated in the far south of Yunnan in China, bordering Laos and Myanmar (formerly known as Burma). Although Sipsòng Panna is considered to be the original homeland of the Tai Lü, we also find numerous Tai Lü settlements in northern Laos, eastern Myanmar and northern Thailand as a result of forced resettlements and voluntary migration in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. One can estimate the total number of Tai Lü speakers at more than one million, almost 400,000 of whom live in Sipsòng Panna.¹

Tai Khün is the self-appellation of an ethnic Tai group living in the eastern Shan state of Chiang Tung in Myanmar and in some areas in northern Thailand, where they were forcibly resettled in the early nineteenth century. The Tai Khün language is closely related to Tai Lü and Kam Müang, the language of Lan Na. The Tai Khün people also use a variant of the Dhamma script,² which differs from the Tai Lü and Tai Lan Na variants in a number of ways, especially with regard to the shape of consonant clusters and the use of subscripts and superscripts.³

The Tai Lü and Tai Khün alphabets are both variants of the Dhamma script that developed from the Old Mon script of Hariphunchai (an ancient Mon kingdom with its centre in present-day Lamphun province) in the fourteenth century in the Lan Na kingdom (the centre of which is situated in present-day Chiang Mai province, northern Thailand). It later spread to the eastern Shan region, Sipsòng Panna and Laos. It is called Dhamma script because it was originally only used to write Pali texts, although later it was also employed for religious texts written in vernacular languages. Ultimately, it was even used for secular literature and became the only script in Lan Na and Sipsòng Panna. The Tai Lü variant of the Dhamma script has spread throughout the Tai Lü communities – and even beyond them – to China, Myanmar, Laos, and Thailand.⁴

As for the writing support, we have to distinguish between roughly two kinds of Tai Lü and Tai Khün manuscripts, namely those written on palm leaf (*bai lan*)

1 On the demography of the Tai Lü in the Upper Mekong, see Liew et al. 2012: 7–11.

2 The Dhamma script domain as a cultural region is discussed in Grabowsky 2011.

3 Sai Kham Mong 2004: 167–200.

4 On the origins and development of the Dhamma script, see Grabowsky 2008: 16–17.

and those using mulberry paper (*kradat sa*) as writing material.⁵ In general, religious texts are mostly incised on palm leaves, whereas secular texts are almost exclusively written on mulberry paper, which is less durable in the humid climate of Southeast Asia. Tai Lü mulberry-paper manuscripts are mostly bound at the top margin of each folio. However, they can also be bound either according to the Chinese book-binding tradition called whirlwind binding (where folded sheets are stacked on top of each other) or as folding books in a concertina format. Tai Khün mulberry-paper manuscripts are bound either at the top margin (Fig. 1) or in the concertina format (Fig. 2). There has been a tendency over the last century to favour mulberry paper, perhaps due to its easier accessibility. Moreover, a great many manuscripts have been written on industrially manufactured paper since 1980.

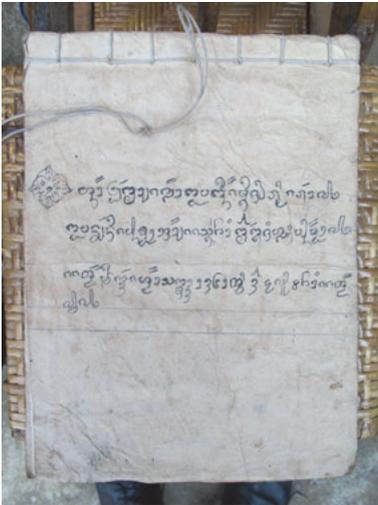


Fig. 1: A mulberry-paper manuscript is bound at the top margin (MS 6). Photograph by Volker Grabowsky.

⁵ The standard paper pulp is derived from the *sa* tree, a kind of mulberry (*Broussonetia Papyrifera*, *Urticaceae*). Therefore, one of the common expressions for a folding book is *pap sa* – Tai Lü/Tai Khün *pap* (Thai: *phap*) meaning a folded piece of paper or a book. To describe the production of mulberry paper manuscripts, let us take the example of the production of *sa* paper in the village of Talaw, Lampang province, northern Thailand. This is a place where *sa* paper has been produced for many generations, well before the introduction of industrial technology in 1986. The procedure is as follows: the bark of the *sa* tree is peeled off, boiled in water mixed with ashes until it is soft (i.e. for approximately six hours), then washed in water, pounded by large wooden mallets until it is mush, stuck onto a wooden frame, dried in the sunlight and finally peeled off the frame; see Terwiel, 2003: 17–20 and Somsak Wachiraphantu, 1994.

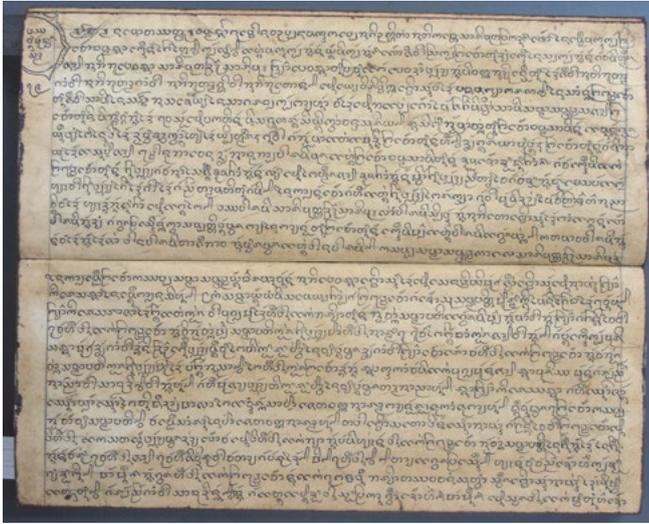


Fig. 2: A mulberry-paper manuscript in the concertina format (MS Kh 5). Source: the archive of Chiang Mai Rajabhat University.

Paratexts in Tai Lü and Tai Khün manuscripts can provide a wealth of information for the reader. Colophons in particular can provide important information about scribes, donors and the manuscript itself, such as:

1. title of the text
2. name of the scribe and donor
3. date on which the scribe completed his writing; date on which the donor donated the manuscript to a monastery⁶
4. place where the author of the text or scribe of the manuscript lives; place to which the manuscript is donated
5. desires and wishes of scribes and donors
6. purposes of copying the text and/or donating the manuscript
7. price of the manuscript
8. particular events or special situations.

⁶ 154 colophons found in the manuscripts that constitute my corpus and, in particular, those found in manuscripts containing religious text written in Tai Lü inform us that the main reasons for donating manuscripts to monasteries were to support Buddhism, paying homage to the triple gems (Buddha, *dhamma* and *saingha*) and producing merit for future lives until reaching *nibbāna*.

With this in mind, in the following sections we will focus on a selected range of information emerging from the study of the paratextual material contained in our corpus, with a particular focus on spatial and temporal data.

2 Manuscript dating

The dates in colophons in the Tai Lü and Tai Khün manuscripts under investigation can be divided into at least three categories:

2.1 Date when the scribe started writing the text of the manuscript

In our corpus there are very few examples of colophons giving the date when the scribe started the writing process. Usually the only temporal information provided is the date on which the copying of a manuscript was completed. The system of dating consists of different components. A complete dating formula would comprise the following elements:

Tai year/Cūlasakaraja (CS)/month/lunar day/Mon day/Tai day/auspicious moment/time of the day

In general, we have found very rare instances where the dating of colophons is complete and contains all eight components outlined above. Sometimes only one or two components are provided, usually the *Cūlasakaraja*.⁷

Example: MS 1 *Kam khap khao mahawong taeng òn* คำขั้บคำวมหาวงศ์แดงอ่อน ('The Epic Poem of *Mahawong Taeng Òn*').⁸

The scribe mentioned the date on which he started and finished copying the text. He spent 45 days copying the manuscript altogether, but did not work on every one of those days because he sometimes had other commitments or was ill.

⁷ The *Cūlasakaraja* (Thai: *cunlasakkarat*) is a lunisolar calendar derived from the Burmese calendar. It came into use in large parts of mainland Southeast Asia during the period of Burmese political dominance in the sixteenth century. It was used by most kingdoms and principalities in the region until the late nineteenth century and even beyond; see Saimöng 1981.

⁸ In this article, I have assigned a progressive label to each manuscript (e.g. MS 1, MS 2, etc. and MS Kh 1, MS Kh 2, etc.). For more information about individual items, see the bibliography.

Colophon:

คำขั้บคำวามหาวงแตงอ่อนเปนของผูู้้ข้า้ใหม่ค้ำบ้านเสียวเมิงกงแล คู้้นไผ่หี่ยมอ่านคี่ขอพอกส่งข้า้ แต่
 ขออย่าอ้ำเล็งคี่ ผูู้้ข้า้ก่ายแล่วปีเต้าสี่ตักขาด 1374 ตัว เดีน 8 ลง 15 ค้ำ วันจัน กดเสด เลิกฟ้า 6 ตัวแล
 กางวันหน้าหลี 12 ตา ปาย 5 ฟัน เต้มแล่วแลเวลาเม้น 45 วันหิ้งยาวแท้แล
 ช้อนว่าชานวันบได้เต้มคี่มี เม้นกินน้ำอ้อยขึ้นเรินใหม่คี่มี เจบใหม่ใช้หนาวคี่มีแลท่านทังหลายขอ

[This manuscript with the title] *Kam khap khao mahawong taeng òn* is my own, Mai Kham of Ban Seo in Moeng Pong. Anyone [who wants to] borrow [this manuscript] should return it afterwards, please. I finished copying [it] in the *tao si* year, CS 1374, in the eighth [lunar] month, on the fifteenth waning moon day, a Monday – [the Tai say] a *kot set* day – at the auspicious time of 6, at noon, 5 past 12. I spent a very long time on it – 45 days – because on some days I did not copy it as I had to attend a house-warming party or I fell ill.⁹

2.2 Date on which the scribe finished writing the text of the manuscript

Usually, the information that is reported is the date on which the scribe completed the manuscript.

Example: MS 8 *Wetsandòn cadok* เวศสันดรชาดก (*‘Vessantara Jātaka’*)¹⁰

Colophon:

ปีเต้าสงะ จุฬสัถักราชตักขาดได้ 1364 ตัว เดีน 11 วุดจ้ำเรินขึ้นได้ 9 ค้ำ เมงวัน 1 ไทรายเสด
 ฤกษ์ฟ้าได้ 19 ตัว ริกขิดดแล่วแล

[The copying of this manuscript] has been completed in the *Tao Sa-nga* year, CS 1364, in the eleventh month, on the ninth waxing day,¹¹ a Sunday – the Tai [say] the *Rai Set* day – at the auspicious constellation of nineteen.

⁹ In the translations provided in this article, I have applied the following conventions: round brackets are used for the author’s own explanations, whereas square brackets indicate additions to the text by the author. Tai terms are put in italics. Whenever the original text gives numbers in Tai Lü numerals, the translation uses Arabic numerals.

¹⁰ The Pali work called *Vessantara Jātaka* (Thai: *Maha Chat*, ‘the great existence’) contains the most popular stories of the Buddha’s past lives. The story is about a compassionate prince, Vessantara, who gives away everything he owns, including his children, thereby displaying the virtue of perfect charity; see Gombrich and Cone 1977.

¹¹ 374 Bhadrapada 9 = Sunday, 15 November 2002.

In some cases, mulberry-paper manuscripts might have been copied from palm-leaf manuscripts comprising many fascicles (Thai: *phuk* ผูก). The content is divided into many parts, each of which has a colophon. In the example below, the colophon reports the date on which the scribe finished copying the first, fourth and seventh fascicles. This enables us to calculate the period of time he spent copying the manuscript. After completing the first fascicle, the scribe needed another nine days before finishing the fourth fascicle. Then he spent around thirteen days working on and completing the seventh fascicle.

Example: MS 4 *Totsa panha alòng pae kham* ทสปัญหาลองแพะคำ ('Ten Questions of the Golden Goat [Who Is the] Bodhisattva')

(โคโลโพน ผูก 1)

สาธุ บุนเหย ขอนเอาชูโส ผลา อูนิสง หื้อ
ได้ถู ได้ทาน ช้วนิ แลชาดหน้า หื้อมีหน้าตางมอจาด
หื้อมีประยาจลาด เปนเซ่เม็ง เส่คำขา แล
1371(1/7) ตัว เ दिन 7 ลง 13 คำเต็มเข้า แล
หมอยา 3 แกว เต็ม แล :

(โคโลโพน ผูก 4)

สาธุ สาธุ หน้าลิ 9 ตา 15 เ दिन แล ขอนเอาผลาอูนิสงแล
หมอยาเต็ม 3 แกว แล
1371 ตัว เ दिन 8 ใหม่ 7 คำ แล

(โคโลโพน ผูก 7)

สาธุ สาธุ บุนเหย
ผู้เข้าเต็มเข้า หน้าลิได้ 8 ต่างเข้าแล ผู้เข้าเต็มขอนเอาชูโสผลาออสง หื้อมีประยาปญา หื้อหื้อ
ดักเส่คำ เข้าแล ผู้เข้าเต็มหมอยา 3 แกว เข้า पूชเอาที่เม็งยางมาเต็มไว้เสแล แพะคำมีเม็งหา 4 ผูก
เม็งยางมี 7 ผูกแล < 1371(เลขอารบิก) ตัว เ दिन 8 (เลขอารบิก) ลง 4 คำ เข้าแล

Colophon of fascicle 1:

Sādhu. Merit. I ask for religious benefit from the donation of this manuscript. May I get happiness in this life and my next lives. May I be endowed with a handsome appearance and wisdom. May I become a person who knows the scholars of the country.

I finished copying [this manuscript] in the year [CS] 1371, on the thirteenth waning day of the seventh month.¹²

¹² 1371 Vaishaka 28 = Thursday, 21 May 2009.

Colophon of fascicle 4:

Sādhu Sādhu. At 15 minutes past 9. May this be of benefit.
Mò Ya Sam Kaeo copied [this manuscript].

Colophon of fascicle 7:

Sādhu Sādhu. I finished copying [this manuscript] at 8 o'clock. I copied [it] for religious benefit (*phala anisong*). May I become a person endowed with intelligence. I, the scribe, [whose name is] Mò Ya Sam Kaeo, copied [this manuscript] from a master copy in Moeng Yang. [The manuscript entitled] *Pae Kham* ('Golden Boat') of our country has four fascicles, [while the corresponding manuscript] of Moeng Yang has seven fascicles. The copying was completed in the year [CS] 1371, on the fourth waning day of the seventh month.¹³

2.3 Date on which the scribe/donor donated the manuscript to a monastery

Theravada Buddhism is the most widespread belief among Tai Lü and Tai Khün people, so sponsoring and donating manuscripts to monasteries is regarded as both a privileged means of supporting and promoting Buddha's teachings and a strategy by which the sponsor/donor can acquire merit. Therefore, the majority of Tai Lü and Tai Khün manuscripts have a religious content, ranging from canonical texts and commentarial literature to Jātaka stories¹⁴ and Buddhist chronicles. Such manuscripts would usually be kept in monastic libraries (*hò trai*). These manuscripts mostly record the date on which they were donated, sometimes along with that of their ritual consecration.

Example: MS 10 *Tamnan that long cao ceng tuem* ตำนานธาตุหลวงเชียงทึม. ('The Chronicle of the Great *Ceng Tuem* Pagoda')¹⁵ – Ban Nam Kaeo Luang, Müang Sing district, Luang Namtha province, 1959

¹³ 1371 Vaishaka 19 = Tuesday, 12 May 2009.

¹⁴ The Jātakas are a collection of stories pertaining to the Buddha's previous lives, both in human and animal form. Although in the Theravada tradition, Jātakas form part of the *Sutta Pitaka* (a canonical work written in Pali), we also find numerous non-canonical Jātaka tales composed in vernaculars throughout Southeast Asia.

¹⁵ The actual pronunciation in the areas where Tai Lü is spoken is different from the orthography because the Tai Lü written language differs from the spoken language. The written language has diphthongs, whereas the spoken language only has monophthongs. For example, in written language, the word 'great' is *luang*, but in spoken language it is *long*. Moreover, some consonant letters are different from the consonant sounds, such as the aspirated consonant /t^h/, which the

หน้าทับพวยเกล้าธำค่านานชาดหลวงเชียงทิมผูก 1 ย่าขัวร์เข้าผูก 1 อยู่กับกันสองผูกแล เป็นปูปพิค
เจตนาสัทธาผู้ข้าอาจนขนานอินประยา แลลูกเด้าทั้ง 2 ชื่อว่าห้วอินควงแลอ้อมเปนเกล้า ลูกเด้าทั้ง 3
ทั้ง 4 ส้างเปนนานแก้ว 3 ประทานในปีกักได้สักขาดได้ 1321 ตัว ขอหือเปนนูปนิโส ประใจคำชูชั้วนิ
แลชาคหน้า ยาวะตราบุด้อ(เท้า)เข้าสู่ณิพพาน นิพพาน์ปรมฺสุขขยามิ ขอหือถึงสุกทะแห้ข่าแล บุนเอย
เดิน 3 ออก 15 คำ หยคานำหมายทานแล

The front cover folio [contains the title of] the religious chronicle of the great *stūpa* of Chiang Tūm (Tūng), one fascicle, and of *Ya khwan khao*, one fascicle. These two fascicles are put together [in this manuscript]. As the leading initiator and devoted believer, I, Acan Khanan In Paya, and my two children, whose names are Ho In Dong (Hua In Duang) and I Pòm, along with their three and four children respectively, have donated [this manuscript] to the three gems in the year [CS] 1321.¹⁶ We ask that [this donation] will be a disposition helping us in this life and in the next existences until finally reaching *nibbāna*.¹⁷ *Nibbānaṃ paramaṃ sukhaṃ yācāmi*. (We crave for *nibbāna* as the highest stage of happiness.) May this lead us to real happiness and religious merit. The consecration ceremony was conducted on the fifteenth waxing day of the third month.¹⁸

Some manuscripts convey two different dates, namely the one on which the scribe finished writing his manuscript and that on which the manuscript was donated to the monastery. In the following example, the scribe completed the copying process on the fourteenth waning day of the ninth month, as the first sentence of the colophon states. Thereafter, the colophon is continued in pencil, stating that the manuscript was donated to the monastery in ‘[CS] 1338, on a waxing day, the Mon [say] a Wednesday of the eleventh [lunar] month’, corresponding to either 25 August, 1 September or 8 September 1976.

Example: MS Kh 1 *Phra Sing Long Chiang Mai Chronicle* ด่านานพระสิงห์หลวงเชียงใหม่.
(‘The Chronicle of the Singha Buddha Image of Chiang Mai’)

ผู้ขัวร์จิตแค้นแล้ว มื้อวันต้า ห้อยสิน เเดิน 9 ล่อง 14 คำ แต้มแล ข่าแล ผู้ข่าได้แค้นค้อขอหือได้
เปนมลอาณิสุง ขอหือข่าได้หันหน้าพระเจ้าทั้งสี่ตน ด้วยแต่ นิพพาน์ ปรมฺ สุขข
(เขียนด้วยดินสอ) ปูปพิคเจตนาสัทธา ตัวผู้ข่าชื่อว่าลูงไต้ เมิงเมล๊ะ เป็นเกล้ากว่ากริยา ชื่อว่านาง สุก
พร้อมกับด้วยบุดตีบุดคลูกยิงลูกชายทั้งหอทังเริน จึงจักขอสุกยอนบุนเอา สุกสามพระกาน

Tai Lü pronounces /tc/. For example, the word for ‘town/city’ in written language is *chiang*, but in spoken language it is *ceng*.

¹⁶ CE 1959/60.

¹⁷ Tai Lü and Tai Khün texts usually prefer the Pali form *nibbāna* to the more widely known Sanskrit term *nirvāṇa*, which literally means ‘extinction’ and in the Buddhist context pertains to absolute freedom from desire. It constitutes the highest and ultimate goal of all Buddhist aspirations; see Nyanatiloka 2004: 123.

¹⁸ 1321 Pausha 15 = Wednesday, 13 January 1960.

มีมหานรพานเจ้าเป็นที่แล้วด้วยแต่ ทานเมื่อปี 1338 ตัว เดือน 11 แพงมวงวันพุธ
หยาดน้ำหมายทานกับวัดราชฐานหลวงวัดอิน ว่าเปนประกาศนีนี่ข้าแล

I finished copying [this manuscript] on the fourteenth waning day of the ninth month. I ask for religious benefit. May I see the four previous Buddhas. *Nibbānaṃ paramaṃ sukkaṃ*. (*Nibbāna* is the highest stage of happiness.)

(Written in pencil) the principle initiators are Lung Sai of Moeng Ma and his wife, Nang Suk, along with their children. May we all obtain the three kinds of happiness in finally entering into *nibbāna* as the most supreme state. They donated [this manuscript] to the Rajathan Long Wat In monastery in [CS] 1338, on the full-moon day of the eleventh month, the Mon [say] a Wednesday.¹⁹

The year of the writing process is not stated in the colophon, but we assume it is the same as the year of donation. Therefore, it ought to be safe to suggest that around 47 days elapsed between the compilation and the donation. However, this case cannot be taken as a model, as other examples show that the donation could have happened immediately after the compilation or long after that. In the manuscript entitled (MS 14) *Pha cao lep lok* ('The Legend of the Buddha's Journeys around the World') from Moeng Hai (Sipsòng Panna), for instance, the colophon on the front cover page says '[The manuscript] was donated in the *rai cai* year, [C]S 1358, on the full-moon day of the fifth month', and the colophon on the back cover page says 'The writing/copying [of the manuscript] was finished in the *rai cai* year, [C]S 1358, on the twelfth waxing day of the fifth month'. In other words, the donation took place only three days after the manuscript was compiled. In contrast, in the manuscript entitled (MS 15) *Pathama puen lok cadok* ('Jataka about the Creation of the World') from Müang Sing, the colophon tells us that the writing process was finished in CS 1353, on the twelfth waning day of the fifth month (1353 Phalguna 27 or Monday, 30 March 1992), while the donor donated the manuscript in CS 1354, on the fifth waning day of the eleventh month (1353 Bhadrpada 20 or Wednesday, 16 September 1992). This means that this manuscript was donated almost half a year after the scribe finished writing it.

Furthermore, Volker Grabowsky and I have found some remarkable cases in which several dates are found in the same manuscript. A manuscript called *Hom phithikam tang tang*, for example – a multiple-text manuscript containing different ritual texts over 145 pages – was written in two periods. The first date records the year in which the manuscript was written by the monk, Phra Thera Dhamma Paññāsa (CE 1908). He wrote the manuscript for himself, as he explicitly points out. His handwriting ends on the 29th page of the manuscript. Then, a further

¹⁹ 1338 Bhadrpada 15 = Wednesday, 8 September 1976.

scribe added another text to the same manuscript. We know the identity of this second scribe from the second colophon appearing at the end of the manuscript. It states: ‘This manuscript is mine – my name is Nan Thera Saeng Wong. I wrote it in CE 1971’. That happened 63 years after the manuscript was originally written/copied.

Example: MS 7 *Hom pithikam tang tang* รวมพิธีกรรมต่างๆ (‘Collection of Rituals’) – Ban Nam Kaeo Luang, Müang Sing district, Luang Namtha province

พับดูนิเอนของข้าคนชื่อว่าเถรธัมมปัญญาสกิกขุสร้างไว้กับตนแล สร้างในปีสักราชได้¹²⁷⁰ ตัว
ในเดือนสิบสองขึ้น 8 ค่ำ วันนั้นแล เราคนเป็นอธิกอนสอนในศาสนาพายมิงเหนอวัดนี้
แก้วหลวงเปนกาลวิบัติ คนอันใ้ที่อยู่สาสนามิพายน้อยเปนที่สุดที่ช้อยพระน้อยกิน
เข้า คื่บมีกาละขามเวลา คื่มีขามนนั้นมีหันชะแล ชากแท้ ๆ ชากแท้ ๆ เอยเอย ...

(ปกพับหลัง - ตัวอักษรลาว เขียนด้วยหมึกสีน้ำเงิน)

แก้อุบาท ราชนาต่าง ๆ ของหนานเถรแสงวง

(บันทึกท้ายเรื่อง)

ผู้ข้าอาจนหนานเถียนใส่ค้ำน้ำแก้วเต็มในปี 1333 ตัว เดือน 6 ขึ้น 3 ค่ำ วันนั้นแล

Colophon (at the beginning of the text):

This manuscript is owned by me, Thera Dhammapañña Bikkhu, who created (*sang*)²⁰ it for myself in the year CS 1270, in the eighth waxing day of the twelfth month.²¹ I am an abbot teaching the religion (*sasana*) [according to the tradition] of the northern country at Wat Nam Kaeo Luang in difficult times. Those who have devoted themselves to religion are very few in number. It is deteriorating as the novices (*pha noi*) do not eat at the appropriate time; they eat whenever they like. It is really very difficult, so difficult.

Front cover folio (passage in Lao script written with a blue ballpoint pen, colloquially called a ‘magic marker’ in Thai):

[The proposals for] overcoming calamities and [achieving] satisfying results are from Nan Thera Saengwong.

²⁰ A *phu sang*, literally the ‘maker’ of a manuscript. This term refers to the person who sponsors the making of the manuscript by employing a scribe before the manuscript is donated (*thawai* or *than*) to a monastery or to monks. However, in the above context, the scribe (*phu taem* or *phu likkhita*) and the sponsor are one and the same person.

²¹ 1270 Asvina 8 = Saturday, 3 October 1908.

Colophon (end of the text):

I, Acan Nan Thera [Saengwong], dedicated [this manuscript] to [Ban] Nam Kaeo [Luang] in the year [CS] 1333, on the third waxing day of the sixth month.²²

Moreover, in some of our corpus manuscripts, the scribe inserted his biography in between the main texts. In the example below, the scribe is a monk. He noted his birthday, the date when he was ordained as a Buddhist monk, the date when he rose to the higher ranks of the Saṅgha (lit., ‘association’, ‘assembly’, referring to the Buddhist monastic community of ordained monks and novices) and the last date is the date when he wrote this manuscript.

Example: MS 2 *Kammathan* กัมมัฏฐาน (‘Buddhist Meditation’, in Pali ‘*Kamma-thāna*’)

(ประวัติผู้แต่งแทรกอยู่กลางเรื่อง)

สักกราชได้¹²⁷⁴ ตัว ปีธำแต่ใจ ปีไทรวงเร็ว ฤกษ์ฟ้าได้⁰⁶ ตัว ปีเกิดแล : สักกราชได้¹²⁹⁵ ตัว
ปีธำแต่ใจ ปีไทเม็งมด เดือนกำ ลง 7 คำ แมงวัน 7 ไทวันกัลดเร็ว ขึ้นภิกขุแล : สักกราชได้¹²⁹⁸
ตัว ปีธำธำใจ ปีไทขดเมด เดือนเจียง ขึ้นสิบสองคำ แมงวัน 3 ไทวัน(แต่)งี่ง่า ขึ้นเป็นเถียรแล
: สักกราชได้¹³¹ ตัว ปีธำธำเป้า ขึ้นเป็นสิมิแล : สักกราชได้¹³³ ตัว ปีธำธำใจ ขึ้นเป็นสังแล;
สักกราชได้¹³¹⁵ ตัว ปีธำธำใจ สักหลกหนีปีไทเม็งหม้า เดือน ลี ขึ้น 11 คำ ขึ้นเป็นครุวาไหนแล้วแล //
จุฬสักกราชได้¹³⁶ ตัว ปีธำธำ กังง่าหลกหนีปีไทเปิดลี เดือน .11 ขึ้น 9 คำ
แต่กัมมัฏฐานผูกนี้ไปแล :

I was born in [C]S 1274,²³ the *tao cai* Dhamma year [which is] a *ruang rao* Tai year, at the auspicious time of 6. In the *ka rao* Dhamma year [which is] a *moeng met* Tai year, [CS] 1295, on the seventh waning day of the second [lunar] month, the Mon [say] a Saturday, the Tai [say] a *rat rao* day,²⁴ I was ordained as a Buddhist monk; in the *rawai cai* Dhamma year [which is] a *kat met* Tai year, [CS] 1298, on the twelfth waxing day of the first [lunar] month, the Mon [say] a Tuesday, the Tai [say] a *tao sa-nga* day,²⁵ I became a *thera*²⁶; in the *ka pao* Dhamma year, [CS] 13[1]1,²⁷ I became a *sami*²⁸; in the *ruang sai* Dhamma year, [CS] 13[1]3,²⁹ I became a [high-ranking member of the] Saṅgha. In the *ka sai* Dhamma year [which is] a

²² 1333 Caitra 23 = Friday, 17 March 1972.

²³ CE 1912/13.

²⁴ Friday, 24 November 1933.

²⁵ Tuesday, 27 October 1936.

²⁶ Usually the title of a monk who has been ordained for more than ten years already.

²⁷ CE 1949/50.

²⁸ Sanskrit: *svāmin*, literally ‘master’, refers to a higher rank in the Saṅgha hierarchy above the *thera* level.

²⁹ CE 1951/52.

moeng mao Tai year, [CS] 1315, on the eleventh waxing day of the fourth [lunar] month,³⁰ I became a *khuba*.³¹ In CS 13[1]6, in the *kap sanga* Dhamma year [which is] a *poek si* Tai year, on the ninth waxing day of the eleventh month,³² I wrote this manuscript, *Kammathāna*.

3 Placing manuscripts in a locational context

In colophons of Tai Lü and Tai Khün manuscripts, places usually appear together with the names of scribes or donors. If manuscripts are not too old, it is very useful to look for scribes who are still alive so they can be interviewed. In the following example, the manuscript mentions the name of the scribe and the names of the scribe's 21 informants and their places.

Example: MS 5 *Khao nitan satsana moeng long atikamma latthabuli thon sam* คำวนิทานศาสนาเมืองหลวง อติกัมมรัฐบุรี ถ้วน 3 ('Religious legends of Moeng Long Atikamma Rāṭhapuri, vol. 3')

(หน้าปก)

หน้าทับพายเค้า คำวนิทานศาสนาเมืองหลวงอติกัมม
รัฐบุรี ๓ ตาคือถ้วน ๓
ไชยศรี อ้ายแสงน้อย พ่อคำลือบ้านเพยลงเมืองหลวง
แถมเขียนในปฏิพัสักขาด 1356 ตัว แล แถมไว้กับเรินแล
คำนำ
เกศคนว่าแจง

พับหน่วยนิเวแถมไว้หลายดินแล ผู้อันเอากากคำมาเติมช้อยนั้นมิพายไต้แล มีขนานแพงเมือง
เชียงจัน, พ่ออ้ายคุณ บ้านเพยลง, อ้ายชายขน เชียงหลวง, อ้ายคำผุง เชียงมูน, ขนานพิงเชียงมูน, ขนานบัน
เชียงจัน, พ่อเจ้าชาโบ เชียงโน, พ่อเจ้าแดงหมออยา เชียงโน, พ่อเจ้านาคำแดง เชียงโน, พ่อเจ้าบุญน้อย
เชียงหลวง, ขนานช้อย บ้านทอง, พ่อเจ้าอ่อนแก้ว บ้านเพยลง, พ่อเจ้าบุญหมออยา บ้านเพยลง, อ้ายช้อย
บ้านเพยลง, พ่อเจ้าจันเจ้า, ขนานหน่อแก้ว บ้านเพยลง, พ่ออิมอน บ้าน เพยลง, พ่อเจ้าแดงสิง
บ้านเพยลง, ขนานแดงยวง บ้านล่องซ้อ, พ่ออันแพง บ้านเพยลง, พ่อคำหลวง บ้านเพยลง

[The front cover page]

The front page of the manuscript bears the title *Khao Nithan Sasana Moeng Long Atikamma Rattha Buri*, part 3

30 Sunday, 14 February 1954.

31 The honorary title of a senior monk who is both of greater age and has already been ordained for quite a long period. A *khuba* (Thai: *khru*) would need to behave as a model monk and is in charge of a wide range of activities in the monastic order.

32 Monday, 6 September 1954.

I, the scribe, [called] Caiya Sari Ai Saeng Nòi, father of Kham Lue of Foei Lung village, in Moeng Long. I copied it for my household in the year [CS] 1356.³³

[Preface]

I spent many months copying this manuscript. The people who gave me the information [regarding the legends] are Khanan Phaeng Moeng [from] Chiang Can, Phò Ai Tun [from] Ban Foei Lung, Ai Chai Khon [from] Chiang Long, Ai Kham Pung [from] Chiang Mun, Khanan Ping [from] Chiang Mun, Khanan Ban [from] Chiang Can, Phò Thao Cabo [from] Chiang Nai, Phò Thao Daeng Mò Ya [from] Chiang Nai, Phò Thao Na Kham Daeng [from] Chiang Nai, Phò Thao Bun Noi [from] Chiang Long, Khanan Còi [from] Ban Thong, Phò Thao On Kao [from] Ban Foei Lung, Phò Thao Bun Mò Ya [from] Ban Foei Lung, Ai Còi [from] Ban Foei Lung, Phò Thao Can Thao, Khanan Nò Kao [from] Ban Foei Lung, Phò I Mon [from] Ban Foei Lung, Phò Thao Daeng Sing [from] Ban Foei Lung, Khanan Taeng Yong [from] Ban Tong Khü, Phò On Paeng [from] Ban Foei Lung and Phò Kham Long [from] Ban Foei Lung.

In the following example, the name and place of residence of the former owner of the manuscript are stated in the colophon. He is identified as a monk called Duang Saeng who previously lived in Myanmar. Afterwards, a monk called Khanthawathi Bhikkhu bought this manuscript at the price of eleven piastres, which is equivalent to 55 yuan, in order to donate it to the monastery of Ratchathan Wat Long Moeng Long in the northwestern Lao province of Luang Namtha.

Example: MS 3 *Puttha boek* พุทธเบิก (‘Opening [the eyes] of the [image of] Buddha’)

(เขียนด้วยปากกาหมึกแห้งสีน้ำเงิน)

พอบพุทธเบิกหน่วยนิตัวข้าชั้นรวทิกิกู

ทนายทูลวงดอนหลวงบูชาชื่อเอาหนึ่งทวดงแสงบ้านข้าวไห้ เมิงยกาก ปีหลวงมด กำมัน 11
หมั้นเงินหนัก แม่นเงินกคกาด 55 แขน น้อมถายเปันทานกับ ลาชถานวัดหลวงเมิงลอง

Colophon (before the beginning of the text, written in dry, dark blue ink):

I, Khandhawadi Bhikkhu Phra Cai, abbot of Wat Dòn Long, purchased this Phuttha boek manuscript from Phra Duang Saeng at Ban Sao Hai in Moeng Phayak in the *ruang met* year [CS 1353] at the price of 11 piastres, which is equivalent to 55 yuan. I donated it to the monastery of Wat Long Moeng Lòng.

33 CE 1994/95.

4 Paratexts in different scripts

One element that might help to identify manuscripts in terms of time and space pertains to the scripts used in Tai Lü (and Tai Khün) manuscripts. Tai Lü has two systems of script called the old Tai Lü script and the new Tai Lü script, which developed from the old one. The basic difference between these two competing scripts is in the orthography. The old Tai Lü script (Fig. 3) follows the Indian tradition of lining consonants, vowels and tone markers. Vowels can be positioned around the initial consonant and tone markers always appear above the initial consonants, while final consonants can be placed either beneath, behind or above the initial consonants or vowels. On the other hand, the new Tai Lü orthography breaks radically with the Indian tradition (Fig. 4). Here the consonants, vowels and tone markers are all placed on the same line. The new, simplified system was introduced by the Chinese authorities throughout Sipsòng Panna in 1955,³⁴ so when we find manuscripts written in the new Tai Lü script or the new script being mixed with the old one, we might be able to roughly determine the date and age of the manuscripts.

Moreover, one interesting characteristic feature of Tai Lü manuscripts is the use of other scripts along with the traditional Dhamma script. There are several Tai groups whose settlements are situated at the interstices of the zone dominated by the Tai Lü language (written in the Tai Lü variant of the Dhamma script) and the zone where the Tai Noe language is dominant (a language written in the Lik Hto Ngouk script of the Chinese Shan). Although the local dialects in Tai-inhabited areas of Simao such as Gengma and Moeng Ting are very close to the Tai Noe language spoken in Dehong, we find a significant number of manuscripts in these counties written in Dhamma script, most of which contain religious texts.

³⁴ See He Shaoying et al. 2008: 215; Isra 2001: 459–60. The simplified alphabet abolished Pali consonants, banned the use of ligatures as well as of subscript and superscript symbols that are a typical feature of the Dhamma script, “simplified” the shape of the remaining consonant and vowel characters, and lined up consonants, vowels and tone markers in one and the same line. Since then, the younger generation has been educated exclusively in the new script, which is also used for typesetting vernacular books and newspapers.

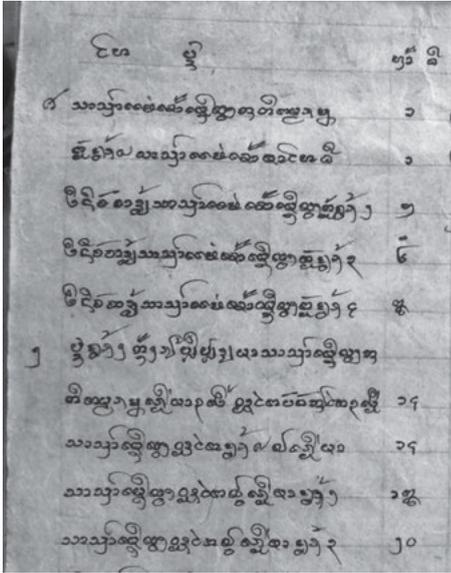


Fig. 3: Manuscript written in old Tai Lü script and orthography (MS 11). Photograph by Volker Grabowsky.

၁၃၆၄	၁၄၆၆	၁၄	၁၆	၂၆၈၁၃၄၅၆၇၈၉
၆	၁	၈၂၆၈၅	၈၁၅	၆၈, ၁၃၆၈၅
၇	၂	၆၃၆	၈၃၆	၆၈ ၈၃၆၈-၇
၈	၄	၆၃၆	၈၃၆	၈၃၆၈၅၆၇၈၉
၉	၅	၈၃၇	၈၃၇	၈၃၆၈၅, ၈၃၆
၉	၇	၈၃၇	၈၃၇	၈၃၆၈၅
၁၀	၂	၈၃၇	၈၃၇	၈၃၆၈၅၆၇၈၉
၁၁	၃	၃၄	၈၃၇	၆၈၅၆, ၆၈၅၆
၁၂	၅	၃၄	၈၃၇	၈၃၆၈၅၆၇၈၉
၁	၆	၈၃၇	၈၃၇	၈၃၆၈၅
၂	၁	၈၃၇	၈၃၇	၈၃၆၈၅၆၇၈၉
၃	၂	၈၃၆	၈၃၆	၈၃၆၈၅
၄	၄	၈၃၆	၈၃၆	၈၃၆၈၅
၅	၅	၈၃၆	၈၃၆	၈၃၆၈၅

Fig. 4: The printed book in the new Tai Lü script and orthography (MS 5). Photograph by Volker Grabowsky.

Paratexts such as marginal notes and colophons are frequently written in Lik Hto Ngouk. The mulberry-paper manuscript MS 9 Lik hong khwan khon (‘Ceremony for Calling the Guardian Spirits of Persons’)³⁵ from Gengma, for example, has the main text written in the Tai Lü variant of the Dhamma script, with its titles and colophons written variously in Lik Hto Ngouk script (*alias* Tai Noe script), Shan script and Burmese script (Fig. 5). The title folio (1r) is written in Tai Noe script, on the recto side (1v) the first line is also written in Tai Noe script, followed by a line written in Shan script: ‘Ceremony for Calling the Guardian Spirits of Persons, as already mentioned’.³⁶ Then the year of copying, [CS] 1367 (CE 2005), is again written in Tai Noe script. A few lines later, a Pali phrase inscribed in Burmese script is inserted into a Tai Noe text. It reads: *Namo tassa bhagavato arāhato saṃmasa buddhassa*.

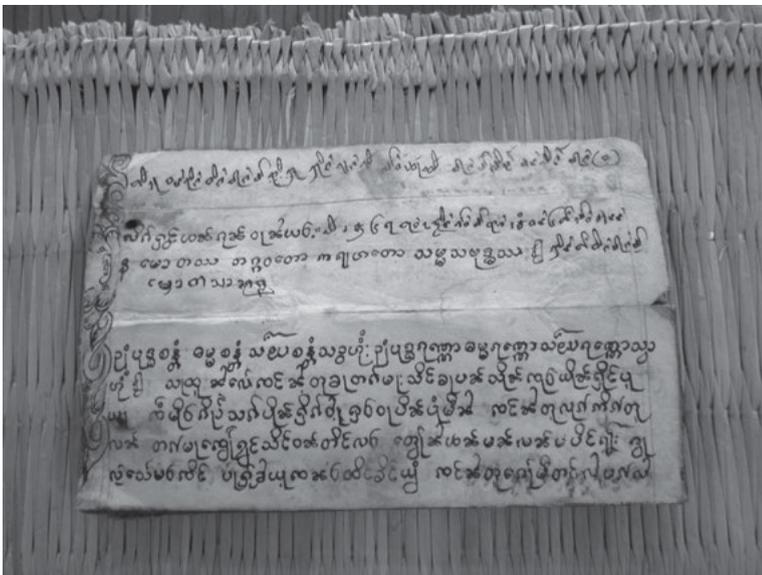


Fig. 5: The manuscript entitled *Lik hong khwan khon* (MS 9) showing the colophon written in Lik Hto Ngouk script (Tai Noe script), Shan script and Burmese script. Photograph by Volker Grabowsky.

³⁵ In traditional Tai beliefs, a *khwan* is an invisible spirit that lives within each person and is responsible for psychological and spiritual well-being. Losing one’s *khwan* is thought to cause health or mental problems. Unfortunately, a *khwan* gets frightened easily and any scary or unnering experiences can easily cause it to flee the body. To keep a *khwan* inside one’s body, or to coax it back once it has fled from it, it is necessary to feel safe, peaceful and at ease.

³⁶ The transcription of the Shan text into Thai script is *พิธีเรียกขานวิญญาณที่ใน*.

The colophon at the end of the manuscript starts with a line written in Shan script stating that the text ‘Ceremony for Calling the Guardian Spirits of Persons has been finished’.³⁷

In the same vein, some manuscripts in bilingual Tai Noe villages in Müang Sing, northern Laos, such as the village of Nam Kaeo Luang, have colophons written in several scripts. For instance, a mulberry-paper manuscript entitled *Tamnan phaya tham ha pha ong* has a long colophon that is mostly written in Tai Lü script, but also contains three passages in Burmese, Shan, and Lao scripts. MS 13 *Tamnan phaya tham ha pha ong* ตำนานพระยาธรรมห้าพระองค์ (‘The Chronicle of Five Phaya Tham’) from Luang Namtha province (CE 1975) also has its main content written in Tai Lü script, with its first colophon written in Shan and Tai Lü scripts and its second colophon written in modern Lao script (Fig. 6).

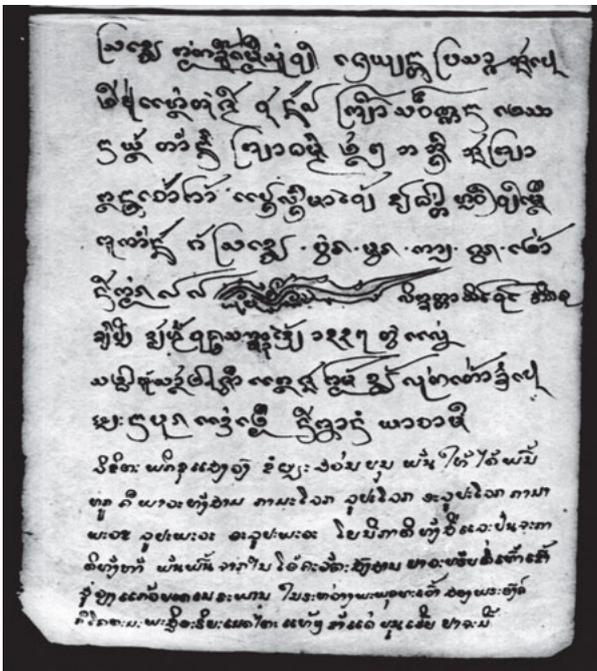


Fig. 6: The manuscript entitled *Tamnan phaya tham ha pha ong* (MS 13), the first colophon written in Shan and Tai Lü scripts, and the second colophon written in modern Lao script. Source: Digital Library of Lao Manuscripts.

³⁷ The transcription of the Shan text into Thai script is ลี้ก้อองพันกุนตุคตั้งงานเข้า.

5 Other means of locating manuscripts

Notwithstanding the helpful insights obtained from the analysis of paratexts, other non-textual features must also be taken into consideration when reconstructing the temporal and spatial features of manuscripts. What we want to stress here is the importance that a comprehensive approach to both textual and non-textual features can have in the study of manuscripts. In the following paragraphs we analyse features of the writing supports and substances used as well as aspects concerning page layout and ask how they can help us locate manuscripts in space and time.

5.1 Materials for writing manuscripts (paper, ink)

In 2012, Volker Grabowsky and I made a field trip to southern Yunnan in China. We found a surprisingly large number of manuscripts written on industrial paper in black ink and/or ballpoint pen. Furthermore, we also found photocopies of older mulberry-paper manuscripts.

The oldest extant manuscript in our corpus (MS 11) is written on industrial paper and contains an astrological treatise called *Pòp Pakkatün* ('Calendar'). According to its colophon, this manuscript was finished in 1983 and was copied by Cao Maha Khanthawong (1925–2013), a former government employee from an aristocratic background who became a productive scribe after retirement as well as a scholar who was very knowledgeable about the history and culture of Sipsòng Panna. Cao Maha Khanthawong copied numerous secular texts into notebooks and onto industrial paper. Moreover, a number of manuscript copies are being kept in a wooden casket at Rājathān Long monastery (MS 12) situated in the city quarter of Ban Chiang Lan, Chiang Rung. These are photocopies from older mulberry manuscripts that still exist or have been lost. Another case is a manuscript (MS 6) recording the dynastic history of Chiang Rung (1160–1950). It is owned by Ai Saeng Kham (born in 1932), a prolific elderly scribe and collector of manuscripts from Ban Mông Mangrai, a village situated on the outskirts of Chiang Rung City. The front and back cover page of this manuscript are made of mulberry paper. They contain the title of the text and include a statement of ownership mentioning the owner's name and year of acquisition (1999). However, the main text is not handwritten, but printed in the Dhamma script on industrial paper. The traditional whirlwind binding, however, makes the manuscript appear genuine.

5.2 Layout of manuscripts

During our field study we identified several Tai Lü manuscripts in Yunnan that were influenced by modern printing technology introduced once the Communist Party of China had risen to power in Yunnan (1950). However, in the areas of northern Laos inhabited by Tai Lü, such as Müang Sing, traditional manuscript culture does not seem to have changed that much. Printing technology had probably not spread into the countryside at that time.

With regard to the layout of Tai Lü manuscripts, we observed that Tai Lü manuscripts produced before the Cultural Revolution are usually written in *scriptio continua*, that is, in a continuous flow of letters without the separation of words, sentences and paragraphs. In contrast, manuscripts from the post-1980 period exhibit the influence of modern printed books: many of these later manuscripts contain tables of contents, prefaces, headings and sub-headings followed by new paragraphs.

We also found four Tai Khün manuscripts, namely MS Kh 5 (multiple texts), MS Kh 2 (*Namasap Pajitti*), MS Kh 3 (*Namasap Pariwan*) and MS Kh 4 (*Wisakha Thassawong*) from the archive of Chiang Mai Rajabhat University, which were copied on the orders of a high-ranking monk. These manuscripts are noteworthy, as the page immediately preceding the main text consists of a colophon – which is otherwise usually found at the end of the main text – and a table of contents. At present, we cannot find a convincing explanation of the peculiar feature of this manuscript. Remarkably, a photograph of the high-ranking monk is glued on the page on which the colophon is written in all these manuscripts (Fig. 7).

Example: MS Kh 4 *Wisakha Thassawong* วิชาข่าสสงส์.

พัชรม์ลูกนี้ สมณเจตนาสัทธา พระมหาคูรคูบารัมมกถสุนทร เจ้าอาวาสวัดจอมใหม่
มาสั่งถวายเปนทาน ในปีกัศเร้า จุฬาสักกราชได้ 1331 ตัว เดีน 7 ออก 6 คำ แมงวันอังคาร
ไทวันมิ่งเหม้า เริกฟ้าได้ 8 ตัว พุทธสักกราชได้ 2513 วสา หากเปนที่บัวรมวทรหัดน้ำหมาทาน
ขอหื้อเปนผลอะนิตสงอันประเสฐ ด้วยแต่ นิพพาน ยาจามิ

Colophon (before the beginning of the text):

This manuscript was donated by the faithful monk Phra Maha Kuru Khruba Dhammakatha Sunthòn, the abbot of Còm Mai monastery, in CS 1331, BE 2513,³⁸ in the sixth waxing day of

³⁸ BE = Buddhist Era. In Thailand, Laos and Cambodia, the Buddhist Era starts one year after the Buddha passed away. In Myanmar, India and Sri Lanka, however, the Era starts one day after the Buddha passed away. Therefore, 1 BE in Thailand, Laos and Cambodia corresponds to 543

the seventh month, the Mon [say] a Tuesday, the Tai [say] a *moeng mao* day, at the auspicious moment of 8, when the consecration ceremony was performed. I hope this will bring me a reward of merit. *Nibbānaṃ yācāmi*. (We crave for *nibbāna*.)



Fig. 7: The table of contents, colophon and photograph of the high-ranking monk who ordered the manuscript to be copied appeared at the beginning of *Wisakha Thassawong* (MS Kh 4). Source: Archive of Chiang Mai Rajabhat University.

6 Concluding remarks

In Tai Lü and Tai Khün manuscript cultures paratexts, in particular colophons, exhibit characteristic features which provide information about the date and time when the scribe started and/or finished copying his manuscript. In most cases, only the date and time when the copying process was finalised are stated, but

BCE, whereas 1 BE in Myanmar, India and Sri Lanka is equivalent to 544 BCE (Visudh Busyakul 2004: 468–478). For this article, the author has calculated the eras in terms of the Thai, Lao and Cambodian system; 2014 CE is equivalent to 2557 BE, for example.

there are a few cases in which paratexts mention both the date when the scribe started the writing process and when he finished it. This enables us to calculate the number of days needed for writing the whole manuscript or parts of it. Furthermore, colophons also exhibit a refined system of dating and reveal the names of the scribes, donors and sponsors as well as the names of locations where the manuscripts were produced.

In the case of manuscripts produced during the last twenty years, this data was very helpful in identifying the scribes, many of whom are still alive and active despite being in their seventies or eighties, enabling us to visit them at their homes where the manuscripts originated. Volker Grabowsky, who studied the colophons of the Tai Lü manuscripts kept in the Payap University archive (Chiang Mai, Thailand), found that according to their colophons, some manuscripts date to around the last twenty years. In February 2014, he undertook a field trip to Sipsòng Panna to meet three scribes whose names appear on the colophons: Ai Khan Kaew in Moeng Long, Cao Maha Buntan in Moeng Hai and Cao Maha Suriyawong in Chiang Rung (Jinghong 景洪). He conducted interviews with them in their residences and had the opportunity to photograph manuscripts in their personal collection.

Furthermore, it is not only the kind of writing support used for scripts (in our case study, this was mulberry paper and industrial paper) that is crucial for locating a specific manuscript in space and time, but the layout, too. Most if not all of the manuscripts produced after the Cultural Revolution show the influence of printing technology. Moreover, there are paratexts other than colophons as well as structural elements that are worth studying, such as the insertion of Chinese, Shan and Burmese characters. In a number of instances, especially in manuscripts containing historiographical texts, we find even longer Chinese, Shan or Burmese words written in the Dhamma script. Such “curiosities” reflect the fact that many Tai people in the cultural domain of the Dhamma script in the Upper Mekong were fluent in more than one dialect or language and were able to read and write several scripts, such as variants of the Dhamma script, as well as scripts of neighbouring languages. They were also quite mobile, even when the region came under the competing sovereignties of modern nation states.

Tai Lü manuscripts

- MS 1: *Kam khap khao mahawong taeng òn* คำขับคำวามหางส์แดงอ่อน (The Epic Poem of Mahawong Taeng Òn). Tai Lü mulberry-paper manuscript copied and owned by Ai Mai Kham, Ban Seo, Moeng Phong. 66 fols. (CE 2013).
- MS 2: *Kammathan* กัมมัฏฐาน (Kammathāna). Moeng Ting. Mulberry-paper manuscript written in Tai Lü script, Wat Kun Nòng, Moeng Ting, Gengma county. 75 fols. (CE 1954).
- MS 3: *Puttha boek* พุทธเบือก (Foundings of the Buddha). Tai Lü manuscript from Wat Long Phakham, Luang Namtha, Laos. Tai Lü mulberry-paper manuscript, 49 fols. (undated).
- MS 4: *Totsa panha alòng pae kham* ทศปัญญาหอลองแพะคำ. Tai mulberry-paper manuscript, written in Tai Lü script from Wat Ban Lan, Moeng Laem, Simao, Yunnan. 48 fols. (CE 2008?).
- MS 5: *Khao nitan satsana moeng long atikamma latthabuli thon sam* คำนิทานศาสนาเมืองลวงอดีตกัมมวัฏฐบุรี ถ้วน 3 (Religious legends of Moeng Long Atikamma Raṭhapuri, vol. 3). Tai Lü mulberry-paper manuscript written and owned by Ai Saeng Nòi, Ban Foei Lung, Moeng Long, 74 fols. (1994).
- MS 6: *Pop pün moeng ceng hung* พอบพูนเมืองเชียงรุ่ง (The Chronicle of Chiang Rung). Tai Lü manuscript, Ai Saeng Kham (Ban Mòng Mangrai), Yunnan province. 34 fols. (CE 1999).
- MS 7: *Hom pithikam tang tang* รวมพิธีกรรมต่างๆ (Collection of Ceremonies), Ban Nam Kaeo Luang, Müang Sing district, Luang Namtha province, 145 fols. (CE 1908).
- MS 8: *Wetsandòn cadok* เวสสันดรชาดก (Vessantara Jātaka), Wat Ban Nakham, Müang Sing district, Luang Namtha province, 217 fols. (CE 2002).
- MS 9: *Lik hòng khwan khon* (Ceremony for Calling the Guardian Spirits of People) ลึกฮ้องขวันคน. Wat Kun Nòng, Moeng Ting, Gengma county, Yunnan province. 86 fols. (CE 2005).
- MS 10: *Tamnan that long cao ceng tüm* ตำนานธาตุหลวงเจ้าเชียงทึม (Chronicle of the Great Stupa of Chiang Tüm), Müang Sing district, Luang Namtha province, CE 1959, PLMP Code: 03 02 02 13 004 07, 13 fols.
- MS 11: *Pòp pakkhathün* พอบปักขทั่น (Divination). Tai Lü manuscript kept by Cao Maha Khanthawong, Chiang Rung. 79 fols. (CE 1983).
- MS 12: *Parami* ปารมี. Tai Lü manuscript, Wat Latcathan Long, Bang Chiang Lan, Chiang Rung, Yunnan province. 6 fols. (undated).
- MS 13: *Tamnan phaya tham ha pha ong*. ตำนานพระยาธรรมห้าพระองค์ (The Chronicle of Five Phaya Tham), Ban Nam Kaeo Luang, Müang Sing district, Luang Namtha province, CE 1975, PLMP Code: 03 02 02 13 012 00, 31 fols.
- MS 14: *Pha cao lep lok*. พระเจ้าเลียบโลก (The Legend of the Buddha's Journeys around the World). Tai Lü manuscript, Wat Long Cheng Hai, Moeng Hai, Yunnan province. 4 fols. (CE 1991).
- MS 15: *Pathama puen lok cadok*. ปฐมพินโลกชาดก (Jataka about the Creation of the World). Ban Nam Kaeo Luang, Müang Sing district, Luang Namtha province, CE 1991, PLMP Code: 03020212006_00, 62 fols.

Tai Khün manuscripts

Anatole Roger Peltier Collection

MS Kh1: *Phra Sing Long Chiang Mai Chronicle* ตำนานพระสิงห์หลวงเชียงใหม่. 142 fols. (CE 1973).

MS Kh2: *Namasap Pajitti* นามศัพท์ปาจิตติย. 267 fols. (CE 1970).

MS Kh3: *Namasap Pariwan 1–7 bundles* นามศัพท์ปริวาร ผูก ๑-๗. 267 fols. (CE 1970)

MS Kh4: *Wisakha Thassavong* วิชาษา ทัสสงวณ. 203 fols. (CE 1970)

MS Kh5: (multiple texts). 267 fols. (CE 1972)

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