

SCA-UK Chairman's New Year Message 2106 (2011) Pi Mai Tai



King Sor Kan Fa (1291-1354)

It is a true privilege to greet you all **Happy Pi Mai Tai**. The 2106th *Pi Mai* coincides with the 700th anniversary of the ascending to the throne, aged only 20, of King Sor Khan Fa (Sky Ruling Tiger) (1311-1364) who ruled the biggest ever Tai nation in history, in the parts of what are now China, India and Union of Myanmar.

To welcome *Pi Mai* this year in the UK, we hold an academic seminar, a Buddhist blessing ceremony and a cultural event on Sunday, 27th November 2010, at the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London. The

seminar focuses on the ongoing cataloging work of some Tai *lik-loung*, great texts, in Britain. The speakers include researchers and librarians from Oxford, Cambridge and London universities. Our cultural event includes songs in Tai, Laos, Thai and other languages led by Nang Kham Nwe Leik, daughter of the famous composer Dr. Sai Kham Leik. Like last year, the Laotian community in the UK and the SOAS Thai community will join our *Pi Mai* celebration with a performance. The evening will also feature Kinnari and other Tai dances by SCA-UK members.

On this auspicious day, we think of our Tai families spread throughout the world and send our warmest greeting of peace, goodwill, hope and love to all of them: we say **Mai-soong Pi Mai Tai** to each and every one Tai in the world: from Shan State and Kachin State, to Sagaing, Bago and Yangon Regions and other parts of the Union of Myanmar, from Mae Hong Son and other parts of Thailand to Pailin in Cambodia, from Sinpsongpanna (Xishuangbanna) and Dehong Dai

and Jingpo Autonomous Prefecture to the Dai Zhuang (Bouxcuengh/ຊູ້ງ) in the Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region in southern China, to the districts of Dien Bien Phu, Hoa Binh, Lai Chau, Son La in Vietnam, from Arunachal Pradesh and Assam in India to those scattered in Europe, Australia and America.

Happy *Pi Mai Tai* 2106th to all!

Since its inception, each year, the SCA_UK has made progress in its charitable objects in raising the cultural profile of the Shan/ Tai people. This year, the SCA_UK members have been part of the project to catalogue Tai *lik-loung* in the UK, generously funded by the Dhammachai Foundation of Wat Dhammakaya in Thailand and headed by Dr. Gillian Evison, head of Oriental Section, Bodleian Library, Oxford University and Dr. Kate Crosby, director of SOAS Centre for Buddhist Studies. Our members have also been part of the Shan panel at the Association of South-east Asian Studies (ASEASUK) Conference 2011 at Magdalene College, Cambridge University in September. The

SCA_UK boys and girls entertained the academics with traditional Tai dances on the beautiful quad of the College, with the Shan long drum vibrating throughout the 800 years old famous university. Through the SCA_UK and the good office of Dr. Susan Conway (then ASEASUK secretary), a Shan historian Prof. Sai Aung Tun and a Shan cultural activist Nang Voe Seng came from Yangon to present papers at the panel. Back home in the Shan State, the SCA_UK has set up six bursaries, announced during last year *Pi Mai*, for university students in Shan State and other parts of the Union of Myanmar in honour of some of the leading Shan/Tai literary figures. They include Dr. Sao Ba Nyan Medical Student Bursary, Nang Kham Ku Bursary, Sao Garng Sor Bursary, Sao Amat Loung Merng Nong Bursary.

Again, may the 2106th Pi Mai Tai bring peace, prosperity, good health and happiness to all!

Venerable Dr. Khammai Dhammasami,
DPhil (Oxford), Hon. PhD (MCU)
Chairman, SCA_UK & Fellow, Oxford Centre
for Buddhist Studies, University of Oxford, UK

'Lik Loung' *The great text*, digitization

I would like to present our experience on a trial digitizing 'Lik Loung' project.

As you all know **Lik Loung** which means great text are written on Sa paper (sae sar) also known as Shan paper. The contents of *Lik loung* range from Theravada Buddhism, Astrology, History, and novels. They are well respected and use even today. Indeed copies of some popular lik loung are made to mark an important occasions within the family or village.

They are stored and protected in the best care they can by their custodians at home or the Monastery just as we do of our books at home. However unfortunately only the lucky few are stored in modern museums in the west in aseptic and air conditioned storages. The vast majority of them are all crumbling away with ravage of time and infestation by insects in various Monasteries and private collections. Sao Khu Dhammasami has been very

concerned as we are slowly losing one of our cultural heritages.

Going back in history our people have migrated far and wide. Only those groups that have literature and spiritual leadership retained their identity. Even in other parts of union of Myanmar many waves of migration had taken place into the central plains and the south. Only a few pockets kept their identity.

One of important fact is for us to retain our identity is in the years to come is our literature in form of **lik loung**. This was our widely practiced traditional of teaching of Buddhism and culture handed over from generations. I remember when I was young I accompanied my father to the village '**Haw lik**' evenings. Haw lik is the event that takes place for reason or none; A well trained reader chooses and read a lik loung of certain topic to an audience. It was fascinating to listen to the poetry with beautiful

rhymes and story telling. That haw lik practicemake our Tai culture quite is distinct from others around us. I always consider that we were very lucky to have the tradition handed over by our fore fathers. Unfortunately with modern way of life and pressure it is relegated to the background of our history.

It is quite difficult to preserve papers on long term except in high tech museums. I thought we should at least record and preserve them on digital forms. I have thought about it long and hard.

The problems we face are :-

1. *Lik loun* are not in regular use, not as much as it used to be.
2. Written in 'Old Tai' writing system which only experts and talented professionals are able to read them now a days.
3. It is an unusual size, too long for the standard A4 flat bed scanners
4. Professional A3 scanners mostly are not feasible to be used.

5. Digital cameras fail to give satisfactory result.

After some search on the internet I found a battery operated mobile scanner with large capacity memory chips. I tried it at home the quality was found to be quite satisfactory.

I set out and funded a trial with a group of friends in Chiang Mai who are also aware of the conditions of the manuscripts in Northern Thailand and very keen to get involved.

I would like to mention a few names with utmost gratitude.

They are:-

Venerable abbot Sao Khu Indar of Wat Pa Pao Chiang Mai,
Sao Su Wan, Assistant abbot of Wat Pa Pao
Loong Sam Mya, Senior Trustee of Wat Pa Pao
Sai U Merng volunteer research team
Sra Leng Pang volunteer research team
Loong Sra Aung Ba better known as Sra Haw Lik Auto for his smooth and speedy reading style
Chiang Mai Wat Pa Pao team



Some technical problems:-
Many scripts are already in a poor state. Rough paper surface results in slow jerky movements of the scanner which often runs out of scan time. However after a few days of trial and error a solution was found. That scanning through a strong clear plastic sheet cover over the surface moves the scanner in true straight line. It is a very tiring and time consuming work.

We then store Back-up copies in a external Hard Disk. Data transfer to UK is then made by using 'Dropbox' Takes approx 1 hr for 250- 300 MB. need to keep the PC running for the period .

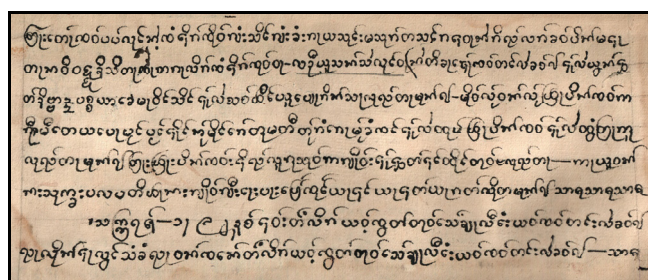
We have scanned 50 manuscripts by different authors. 48 volumes and total of **11, 484**

pages were of very good quality. Digital manipulation and saved. by Sai Lao Maung. I have collected them and kept a copy in my home server.

As a way forward we have installed A server installed at Oxford Buddha Vihara .In view of building up into an Intranet E-library in order to collect more likeloung and save them for future reference. Mean time Back-up copies to be shared with other interested Monasteries and Academics.

Chiang Mai team is happy to share their experience with other interested parties.

Sample Page 1. of manuscript called *Kaya-soogma suttasangaha* (a discourse on physical manners) from Wat Pa Pao 3 Author Sao Saray Kham Pang, dated Chulasakkaraja Era 1292 (1920)



While digitizing the manuscripts we use a research date collection formula based on the one used by scholars at SOAS. A record particulars of each work with intention of compiling a proper catalogue

Sao Khu Dhammasami has the ambition of building up catalogs from collections all over the world. He also plan to transcript selected *lik loun* manuscripts into 'Modern Tai' for scholars . Choice manuscripts into audio records with Sra Haw Lik (Sra Haw Liks are also a dying vocation).

Hopefully with portable scanners and storage facilities learning from each other's experience it will become wide spread project. As our successful trial had proven, with sponsorship and funding we hope be able expand the work as far as we can.

We have also donated a few more scanners to Monasteries at Pang Long and Kow Luck Monastery at Yangon.

I would like to dedicate my thanks to volunteer team of Chiang Mai, Wat Pa Pao who have done the pioneering work proving it is feasible to help preserve our cultural heritage without being too expensive. Hopefully we will be able to add to our collection from other centers.

I think they deserve a commendation from OBV and SCA-UK.

Mor Sai Tin Maung Samkar
FRCS, UK

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Mor Sai Tin Maung(right) Sao Htein Win (left) Dr. Nang Nidarphorn (entre) at Thai-night festival, Oxford,UK

600th Tai Khuen Rain Asking Ceremony In Keng Tung

Mahamung (Moeng Zae)
Contributed by Nang
Buakao Tungapuri and
Team, Mae Sai Karnphim,
1410 - 2010 A.D

Introduction

Most Tai or Dai people living anywhere depend on farming as a living. As farming depends on streams, rivers and dams most have to rely on rain.

As dependence on water sources has been going on since the birth of agriculture so is the belief that rain, water and rivers have guardians or spirits. When there is draught, people believe that the spirits are insulted and people beg the spirits for forgiveness, which is illogical. That leads to spirit worshipping and building spirit houses, and asking rain for farming which has become custom in Tai society.

Starting from the people living along Song-da (Black river), Song-

hong (Red river) in Vietnam, Tai Chung or Tzuang, Tai Tong, Tai Nung along Sai Kham River (Yang Tze – Jiang) in Guangxi and Yunnan provinces, Tai Lue, Tai Khuen, Lao and Yuan along Mekong (Lanchang-jiang), Tai Nua, Tai Mao and Tai Long along Nam Khong (Salween or Nu-jiang) up to Tai Leng, Tai Khamti along Nam Kiu (Irrawaddi), including Tai Ahom, Tai Aitorn, Tai Phagae along Nam Ti Lao (Brahmabutra River) in Assam state of India. (This excludes Thai who are developed and staying along Nam Mae Chao-phraya or Mae Nam River). All these Tai communities have something in common, which is “Rain Asking Ceremony”. Even Chinese, Indian, Vietnam, Khmer and other races have similar ceremonies.

Spirit worshipping and rain asking ceremony have been custom for Tai people since before Tai people accepted Hindu and Chinese (Tong-han) customs. After accepting Hindu and Tong-

han customs, Tai people also accepted worshipping Hindu gods and Chinese gods from Taoism, as well as teachings of Confucius. Even after accepting Buddhism as a main religion, Tai people still believe in spirits, gods and Bodhisatta. There are also Christians, Muslims, Sikhs, Mahavira (Jains) and worshipers of Guan-Imnie (Miss Miao San, who is popular Chinese's goddess) who also believe in spirit as a secondary belief.

Although the aim of spirit worshipping and rain asking are solely for getting water and rain for farming, the customs and ceremonies do differ from one another from what the author has learned.

In some places, offering is made with frogs, bull frogs, toads and traditional believes. In some places, people use ducks, chickens, pigs, dogs or even cattle. Anyhow there are some common themes, such as using drums in ceremonies, may it be made from wood, bamboo, iron, brass or bronze. The other one is using rockets. Tai people believe that launching rockets and

beating drums will remind the spirits and gods to send down rain water for agriculture.

In Tai Khuen Gen Gong ceremony, Gen means to hang in Khuen and Lue (Gwaen in Lao and Khwaen in Thai). Hanging the drum onto a beam and beating the drum for ceremony is called Gen Gong. Tai Khuen Gen Gong ceremony is a rain asking, a spirit worshipping, ceremony before entering the farming season. An effigy of a big frog biting the moon is also made as an offering to the gods (Brahma and others) on the bank of a river.

Tai people who use frogs as offerings are found in Tai Khuen, Tai Chung and Lao. The author will not explain the Tai Chung and Lao customs, but only of Khuen Gen Gong, rain asking ceremony of Keng Tung or Tungapuri.

Gen Gong ceremony

“The Keng Tung history record, Tamnan Tungarasi and Padaeng Chronicle” which Sao Sai Mong Mengrai translated to English recorded Keng Tung History from

its establishment. Khuen-yon of Chiang Saen who became King Mangrai the Great (1258-1347) established Keng Tung and sent his nephew Sao Namthom to rule, (The first Khuen King) in the year of the snake C.E. 651(AD.1253-1264). From then up to the reign of Sao Boon Su (Sao Kaen Lek (AD.1390-1403), there was no evidence of rain asking ceremony by offering frogs.

In the reign of Sao Yee Kham Kha (Phaya Kaewmadhu, AD 1403-1416), the ninth ruler during the year of the Tiger C.E.772 (AD 1410), there was a big fire and a drought. There was no water for farming. People gathered to meet at the court and pleaded the leaders who then took the matter to the King. The King then discussed the matter with the leaders and consulted with the Brahms (Brahmins) to look at the fate of the country. The Brahms told the King that the star of Keng Tung was a tiger. So it was necessary to make an effigy of a frog biting a moon (Rahul biting Chadra) as a sacrificial offering, hold a parade, and take the Khun Sankharn (god

year) with victory drum to the bank of Nam Khuen River which is on the North West of the town and offer the frog there. It was believed this would cure the drought. This meant that Keng Tung had Hindu cultural influence since then.

The ruler and the ministers then beat the victory drum and broadcasted to the people about the consultation with the Brahms. It is said that rain continued to fall for seven days at that time. The country was saved from drought and the people were saved from famine.

From the reign of Sao Kaewmadhu, the custom of Gen Gong and the sacrificial frog parade to the bank of Nam Khuen River continued as a rain asking ceremony up to this day (AD. 2011)

On the fall of sankarn (mostly 13-15 April), the royal court appointed Phaya-Zar to take the victory drum, which was kept at Wat Keng Chan and suspend it on the yard of Keng Chan market (old market). A group of 9 or 10

Loila people from Loimorn Sip-ha (Yarng Ngnuen village, Mongyang district, which is between Mongla and Silue were to participate in the ceremony.

The drum will be beaten starting from 1 pm on the 13th or 14th April up to 1 pm on the 14th or 15th without stopping. The 14th or 15th is marked as the day to carry sand for sand pagoda to be built on New Year day at one's Wat (temple).

People from all quarters will gather at the yard. Phaya-Zar will then start the ceremony according to custom and the parade will begin. Khun Sangkharn (God year) will be carried along with the drum. The beating will continue along with gongs and water will be thrown and the water festival will continue. The parade will head for Nawng Phaa Gate (Northern) then turn left to North West direction. The parade will stop on the bank of Nam Khuen at Fah-ho Bridge. The clay frog biting the moon will be left on the bank as a sacrifice. The place is called Ta Long Kope up to now-a-days. It is

also a time for youths to play in the Num Khuen River and a chance to court.

After Khun Sangkharn arrived at the bank, Phaya Zar will then invite four monks to chant 7 grade Jeyya Gatha and offer sand to Wats (Temple). This Buddhist custom was included from the reign of Sao Kaewmadhu (AD 1410), but was discontinued later. At the end, farmers will take some clay from the clay frog to use as a token for his land.

People who take part in the parade will carry sand from the river on the way back. The sand is for sand pagodas to be built at one's temple. Phaya-Zar will then invite monks to Bodhi tree in the middle of the town. Chanting of Jeyya Gatha and sprinkling of holy water to deter bad luck will be done. Wishes will be made for peace, prosperity and health from the New Year Day. It is a Hindu custom mixed with Buddhism. The victory drum is returned to Wat Keng Chan. The Loila people are rewarded and permitted to return to Mon Sip-haa- yarng-nuen. The Gen Gong ceremony ends for the year and people will

prepare to go to temples to make merits on the return of Sangkhan day (usually 15th April in common year and 16th April in lap year).

Conclusion

Gen Gong ceremony is meant to beg or ask for rain during the Hindu solar New Year, mostly on the fifth or sixth Tai month which Tai people adopted as one's own custom about 600 years ago. It is a custom to beg for rain from the sky god and rain god, rain which is vital for the people of all classes.

From the reign of the 9th King (Sao Kaewmadhu 1403-1416), Tai Khuen people have kept this Gen Gong ceremony and the sacrifice of the frog up to this day. It is believed that sand and soil from Tha-Long-Kope at the bank of Nam Khuen River is holy. From 1410, the place at the bridge is called Ho-Ko Fah-ho as after the (first) ceremony there is often a sudden rain.

Rulers and people of Keng Tung believe that if the ceremony was not hold there would be a

drought, rice crop will fail and so there would be less land tax. Because of this belief the Gen Gong ceremony is held every year up to this day.

Note: *The years in this document are as of Sao Sai Mong Mang Rai*

References:

- Tamnan Tungarasi (Date written unknown) in Khuen script.
- Sangkhan History of Kengtung in brief written in Burmese by Sangkhan committee.
- Jengtung State Chronicle: Sao Sai Mong Mangrai, 1939.

Lue Dai Library : 01 April 2011, Hung Mao in Tai Year (Year of the Rabbit)

Tel: 66-81-7846290 (Thai) & 09-49032862 (Myanmar)

E-mail: taikhuen@yahoo.com



ဝမ်း 13/04 ဂူဝီ လာဝ်းလွဲလ ဝမ်းဆူးငိုဆီး
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တီးဂင်ရှင်,ဂါတ်,ဂပ်,ဂိုင်းလမ်း

မှိုင်းဂ်းဂ်း 600 ပီစွပ်; မိုင်းဂ်းဂ်းတင် 600th Tai Khuen Rain Asking Ceremony

မရှာမုင့် (မိုင်းဂ်းဂ်း)

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Meng Rai, Sao Sai-meng Mengrai
etc.) တင်းမးလိမ်မိုင်းပီဆ်သိုတ် 1253 ဆ်း
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 ရွှင်ဝါး- နှိမ်ရွှင်၊ ဝံးမားပိမ်ဖွိုင်းနှိမ် ရွှင်
 ကဆဲဂိုဏ်းပိုဆဲးမိုင်းနှိုင်းတင်မားတော့၊ဝဆဲးမိုင်း
 ဆွဲ။ ဖွိုင်းနှိမ်ရွှင် လောင်းတံးခိုဆဲ 600 ပီဆွဲ
 ဆပွဲ ကပ်တင်းစတ၊ပဆဲလင်းနှိုင်းမထုမား
 တော့၊ထိုင်မိုင်းလိပ် ပိမ်ဆွဲးပီ 1410-2011
 လံးမား 600 ပီ တိမ်လှိုင်းဆဲ။ [ရွှပ်းကပ်လွမ်း
 ပီမိုင်း လင်းသံမိုင်း မင်းရံး ဖွိုင်းလှိုင်းဖွဲ၊
 ပုတ်းလှိုင်းတံးစလးမိုင်းဂယား (ပဆဲးမိုင်း
 ရှမ်းတုမ်မဆဲးရွှမ်းစေ 10 ပီ) ဂေ၊ကွဆဲ
 တင်းသုတ်း စလးပိမ်လုဂ်းလံးလင်းဖွဲ၊
 လှိုင်းရွှမ်းနှိုင်း ကိဆဲးထလိင် (1897-1973)
 ကဆဲပိမ်ပီးဆွဲ (ရှမ်းပေးတင်၊စမး) ဂဆဲ
 တင်းလင်းဖွဲ၊ရွှင်တံး (1937) ပေးလင်းဖွဲ၊
 သူမ်လိတ်း လင်းလံးလှိုင်း မင်းရံး (1937-
 1959) ကဆဲပိမ်



**ဝဆဲး 14/ /04 ဂူပီ လောင်းမိုင်းနှိုင်းတင် ရှမ်း
 ကဆဲးစတု၊စုဆဲသင်စာဆဲမိုင်းလူးတီးတားလွှင့်ဂူပီး**

လင်းဖွဲ၊တူဆဲလိုဆဲးသုတ်းမိုင်းနှိုင်းတင်
 တိမ်းဝံမိုင်း 1939 ဆွဲးJengtung Chronicle

ဆဆွဲဝါးစလး 600 ပီ တိမ်မိုင်း (ပီ 2010)
 ပီဂံ]

လံးဂဆဲးပွဲးနှိမ်ရွှင်ဖွိုင်းစာဝ်းသွဆဲးဆမ္မ-
 1) ဝဆဲးတီး 13 ပိုတ်၊ပင်နှိမ်ရွှင် စတု၊ရှုံ၊
 ရွှင်လံး တင်းစတ၊ 13:00 မူင်း
 တော့၊ ထိုင် 13:00 မူင်း ဆွဲးဝဆဲးတီး 14
 လှိုင်း 4 ဂလးဂူးပီပီ။



*A shrine at the town centre where
 Kong Sai (Drum of Luck and
 Prosperity) is held*

1) ပူတ်းပင်နှိမ်ရွှင် ယမ်း 13:00 ဆွဲးဝဆဲး
 တီး 14 ယဝ် ကွဆဲဂဆဲးစတု၊စုဆဲသင်စာဆဲ
 (လွမ်းပီဂပ်၊လှိုင်း) ရှုံ၊ဝံဂိုဏ်းဖွိုင်းဆမ္မခိုဆဲ
 တီးတားလွှင့်ဂူပီး(ရွှပ်းပဆဲးရှမ်းဂူပီးဂိမ်
 လှိုင်းဝံ ပိုတ်းတားဝံးဝဆဲးပူးလား စုဆဲးဖွဲ၊
 ဖေထိမ်စလးဖွိုင်းဆမ္မတီးဆဆဲးလင်းရွှင်
 ဝါး-တားလွှင့်ဂူပီး။

စုပ်စာမ်းဆမ္မခိုဆဲးတီးဂိုဏ်းဆဆဲးဂေး
 (မီးဆေး တင်းလိင်၊ရွှင်၊ဝဆဲးတူဂ်း ဝိင်း
 နှိုင်းတင်) မိုင်းဖွိုင်းဂိုဏ်းပင်ဝံးဖွဲ၊ဝဆဲး
 ဖေဂမ်းရှပ်တီး (မိုင်းပီ 1410) ဆဆွဲ
 ဖွဲဆဲလှိုင်း ရှိုင်းဂင်တူဂ်းလှိုင်းမား မိုင်း

လီတ်,မံးယူ,ဆဆံးလးရှင်ဝါး-
ရှင်ရှင်ဟူရှင်, ဆဲးမး တေ,မိုဝ်းလီဝ်။

2) ဝမ်းတီး 14 ဆဆံး ဝံးရှိတ်းပင်ယွမ်း
ဆမံးယွမ်းယွမ်း ကွမ်းကွမ်းတင်းသံးမးရှမ်း
ဝံးတီးဂင်ရှင်,ဝံးဟူဝံးမမ်း ပိုဝ်းတေ,
ရှိတ်းရှင်မးသံးဝံးသုပိမ်းပုတ်ထပူးလး
မိုဝ်းဝမ်း ခိုမ်းဝံး (ဆဲးဝမ်းတီး 15)
မိုဝ်းဟူရှင်။

3) မိုဝ်းဝမ်းစု,ဆဆံးသင်ခါးရှင်,တီးရှပ်းဂိမ်း
လှိုမ်းရှမ်းဟူ,ဆဆံးခိုမ်းဆဆံး တင်းရှပ်းရှင်
တင်းလီမ်းဆမံးယွမ်းယွမ်း,ဂင်ရှင်,လွမ်း
တင်းပိမ်းမူမ်းပိမ်းသိုဝ်း ဟူတေလံးလှို
လမ်းရှင်ဟူလး ရှင်ဝါး- ဝမ်းလွတ်း
ရှပ်း,(ဝမ်းရှမ်းတူဝ်းသ)ဆဲးမး။
[မံးတွင်း-ပေ့ရှင်ကါး,တီးရှင်ဟူ,တီး
ယွမ်းမးတီးကီးမိလ်းပးတွင်းရှမ်း
ကင်းဂိသျှံးလံးယူ,]



A statue of celestial being and its associated animal figure



Beating of Kong Sai (Drum of Luck and Prosperity) by Tai Loi from Merng Yang



A sand statue of Frog at the bank of Num Khun and Ajahn performing the offering ceremony



A sand statue of Frog at the bank of Num Khun and Ajahn performing the offering ceremony place



The Bhoti Tree where the blessing



*SCA_UK at the Oxford Buddha Vihara
Kathin ceremony, Oct 2011*



*The famous Wat Pra-Sao-Long
situated on a route to Merng Yang
along which the procession takes*



*SAC_UK Participation Cambridge
University Conference 2011*



*A temporary sand pagoda for the
offering ceremony on the New Year
Day at a local temple*



*SAC_UK New Year Celebrations, UCL,
University of London 2010*

Interview with Mawm Sao Kiao Merng, Keng Tung

**Dr. Nang Nidarphorn,
MBBS, London**



*Sao Kiao Merng & Sao Sein Mya
Taunggyi, November 2003*

Born in Keng Tung, one of the princely states in what is now Shan State, Union of Burma (Myanmar), to the 40th ruling prince of the Keng Tung State, Sao Kawn Kiao Intaleng (1874-1935) and his 3rd wife, Sao Nang Bo Tip Loang, on 8 July 1920, Sao Kiao Merng is one of the Shan princes to have survived the WW II and the many trials and tribulations of the Union of Burma (Myanmar) that followed her independence from Britain in 1948. His nephew, Sao Sai Noi, ruled Keng Tung State as the last Saopha before the military coup by General Ne Win in 1962 and was one of the Shan leaders to have

been imprisoned by the military rulers. A family man, a peace-loving man and a good Buddhist, Sao Kiao Merng, known to his family and friends simply as Mawm, talks about his life from his childhood to the periods when he was forced to retire, like all other members of Shan Saophas, by the Burmese army and to how he came to Britain. He shares his view on Buddhism and individual moral life that he sees as very important to a person's life.

I cannot help wishing to find out more about this incredible individual who has crossed many historical milestones, to learn from him and to share his wisdom with our readers.

This is an interview with Mawm Sao Kiao Merng.

Nidarphorn: How many brothers and sisters have you got?

Mawm: I had 3 sisters and a brother. The three eldest were the sisters and they were (1) Sao Van Kiao, (2) Sao Sukantar, and (3) Sao Van Tip. (4) My elder brother was Sao Singzai and I was the youngest. I also had 8 half-brothers and 6 half-

sisters, a total of 19. They all have passed away.

Nidarphorn: We have heard of your father but there are very little written about him. Can you tell me your memories of your father?

Mawm: My father, ruled over Keng Tung State which is 12,400 square miles in area. He was good at training elephants and had 17 of them. He also constructed Haw Loang, the big Keng Tung palace, in 1905 after returning from the Delhi Durbar in India. The palace was sadly demolished on 09 November 1991 by the Burmese military government. My father also promoted Khun Theravada Buddhism as practised in Keng Tung, which I believe bears a lot of similarities with Buddhism in Lanna. He was also known for establishing a modern tradition of celebrating lunar New Year, Song Kran, in Keng Tung which is still preserved until today.

Nidarphorn: What about your mother?

Mawm: I remember her as a very pious and quiet lady. She was a vegetarian who was totally absorbed

in Buddhism and mindfulness meditation.

Nidarphorn: Do you remember your grandparents and what was the fondest memory you have of your grandparents?



Mawm playing Shan Long Drum at OBV's Song Kran Celebration, April 2009

Mawm: My paternal grandfather was Sao Kawng Tai, also known as Sao Mawm Keng Hkeng (1829 – 1886), the 38th Saopha of Keng Tung; he ruled from 1881 to 1886. His wife was Sao Wonna of Mong Luay. I was very close to her and when she died at the age of 82 with dementia, I cried my eyes out. My maternal grandfather was Phaya Khek, who served as a judge during my father's reign. His wife was Nang Zoom Bu.

Nidarphorn: What was the relationship like within your family members?

Mawm: Because my father had 6 wives, we were indeed a big family. Nevertheless we all got on well and looked after each other. I have had many fond memories in my childhood. At home, I was known as Sao Say, meaning slim child.

Nidarphorn: The schooling at the time must be quite different from now-a-days. Could you please tell me what it was like going to school when you were young?

Mawm: I started my formal education at the American Baptist Missionary School in Keng Tung up to the 3rd standard. I was then ordained as a Buddhist novice for 2 years at Wat Hoe Koang in Keng Tung where I learnt writing the Tai-Khun language and the teaching of Buddha. It was a custom for boys to be sent to a monastery for a period of time for his initiation into the Buddhist order and to instil in him some discipline and spiritual knowledge. According to our tradition, a son in the family is to be ordained when he reaches the age of 10 or older. It is believed that this will bring good health and wisdom to the son as well as to the family.

Then my father sent me to the Shan Chiefs' School in Taunggyi, the capital of the Shan State. It was a

boarding school and I studied there until the start of World War II. The Shan Chiefs' School had a principal from England and the medium of teaching was in English. Most of the students were children or relatives of Saophas from all over Shan State. I studied Shan, Burmese, English, Mathematics, History, Geography and Science. We also engaged in sport. At my school, football, boxing, gymnastics, cricket and weightlifting were quite popular.

Nidarphorn: Did you have friends that you were very close to? And could you tell me the most memorable time you had during childhood?

Mawm: Oh yes, Sao Wunna, the last Saopha of Kayah State was a very close friend of mine. We very much enjoyed being boarders in Taunggyi together. I guess I had most fun when I was doing gymnastics, weightlifting and fretwork. Those were wonderful and memorable times for me.

Nidarphorn: What were your interests and hobbies? And are you still pursuing your hobbies?

Mawm: I enjoyed making jig-saw puzzles as I liked doing fretwork. I also did gardening and constructed

two of my own houses. I suppose I am a Jack of all trades and master of none. I still sometimes spend my time making rugs at home and donate some of them to sangha at Oxford Buddha Vihara, and Birmingham Buddhist Vihara.

Nidarphorn: I am very impressed! Before we move on, could you tell me how you saw Keng Tung as a child?

Mawm: To be truthful, I did not get the chance to see Keng Tung as a state as I hardly left Keng Tung town until I was 13 years of age, and then I had to go to Taunggyi to become a boarder at the Shan Chiefs' School. But, I remember Keng Tung as a small town when compared to Taunggyi.

Nidarphorn: You had spent more time in Taunggyi for your education. After you graduated from High School in Taunggyi, what was your thought about going to university?

Mawm: Unfortunately, I did not get the opportunity to be educated in a university. After my 10th standard, which was called matriculation, I joined the army, the 14th Burma (Myanmar) Rifles. I became an officer. After WWII when we were disbanded, I was sent for

judicial training in Taunggyi at the Government Judicial Department and Magistrates Court, by the Saopha of Keng Tung because Keng Tung State needed a judge. After two years training in Taunggyi I worked in Keng Tung as a judge for 13 years (1949-1962) until the military seized power. I have a delightful memory of one or two cases as a judge: one was when the Venerable Webu Sayadaw of Kyaukse visited Keng Tung, I was asked to refrain from eating beef, which I do up to this day, and the second one was to spare the life of a notorious murderer who had been given a mandatory death sentence; I commuted his death penalty to a life sentence.

Nidarphorn: I really admire the fact that you took up the role to become a judge for Keng Tung when it needed one. Was there someone or some principle that inspired you to become a judge?

Mawm: Being a judge suited my personality as being assertive and decisive, and also I wanted to treat everyone with due fairness and appreciation.

Nidarphorn: Out of interest, if you don't mind me asking, how

much did you earn as a judge at the time and what was the currency?

Mawm: You wouldn't believe if I told you. The salary scale was Kyats 350 – 600 per month at the time. But it was adequate for the entire family.

Nidarphorn: It was indeed the number that I did not imagine. Apart from working as a judge, did you have any duties to fulfil within the royal family and also in the community, as a prince?

Mawm: I was just a member of the family and had no involvement in palace administration. Also, I always tried to stay out of family affairs.

Nidarphorn: What was Keng Tung like at the time, regarding communication, transportation, economics, etc?

Mawm: Communication was limited to the post office and the use of telegrams. To travel we had jeeps, bicycles, horses, and bullock-carts or ox-carts. The economy of Keng Tung at that time was dependent on opium, which was legal then. Opium was being traded at 15 Kyats per viss by the British administrators in 1950. During that time, people were able to earn

enough to live a comfortable and peaceful life.

Nidarphorn: Listening to what you have just told me, Keng Tung must have looked so different back then. You mentioned that you already had your own family when you started working as a judge. When and how did you first meet your future wife?

Mawm: I met her when I was visiting her parents at Loilem, Southern Shan State, whilst working as a clerk under the Japanese subdivision office of the Timber Union. Her name is Sao Sein Mya, a member of Mokmai Saopha family. She was 19 years old then and living with her parents. She cooked and washed for her parents and her hobby was knitting.

Nidarphorn: What attracted you to her? And how did you win her heart?

Mawm: Undeniably, her kindness and beauty captured me since I first met her. She also seemed to like me. The attraction was mutual, I think. I visited her parents frequently and became familiar with her gradually. Then we started talking to each other and became

sweethearts. I used to visit her riding on an elephant as I was working for the Timber Union.

Nidarphorn: That was so sweet. Could you also tell me about the wedding?

Mawm: We got married in 1944 in Mong Nai and lived there for a while. It was a simple Buddhist ceremony. After the war, when the Timber Union closed down, we moved to Lawksawk to live with my sister, Sao Van Kiao who was married to the Saopha of Lawksawk.

Nidarphorn: Would you mind sharing with us something about your family?

Mawm: We have five children, 3 sons and 2 daughters. The eldest son, Awt, lives and works in Tachileik, one of the most important trading border towns between the Shan State of Burma (Myanmar) (Myanmar) and Thailand. The second son, Noom, is in Maechan, Thailand, and the youngest son, Noi, is in Maesai, Thailand. The elder daughter Dong, lives in the U.S.A and the younger, Ouie, in the U.K who is now looking after me and my wife. All my children graduated from High School and except for the eldest son,

they all went to university, and eventually took up jobs that they wanted and liked.

Nidarphorn: You said you retired in 1962 when the military coup took over the country. Could you tell me more about your retirement? And what did you do after your retirement to occupy yourself?

Mawm: After I was forced to retire from work as a judge following the military coup d'état in 1962, I did all sorts of work to earn a living. I worked as a broker or middleman in the jewellery trade, and even sewed children's clothes.

Nidarphorn: I really admire your determination and persistence. I notice that it has only been quite recently that you moved to the United Kingdom. When did you move to the UK, and how are you finding it here?

Mawm: As we are getting older each day and all our children insisted that we stay with them. So we finally left Shan State, the Union of Burma (Myanmar) and came to the UK on 4th December 2004. We now live as dependents of our son-in-law and youngest daughter in the U.K.

Nidarphorn: How did you feel when you found out about Oxford Buddha Vihara?

Mawm: I felt happy to learn that the Buddha's teaching is practised by people all over the world. The Shan State was once under the British Empire and now Shan Buddhists are contributing to the promotion of Buddhism in the U.K. I hope Buddhism will spread to more corners of the world.

Nidarphorn: Have you got anything to say about the Shan Cultural Association in the United Kingdom?

Mawm: I am happy for the Shan youth who are here in the U.K and hope that they will pursue their education successfully and have a prosperous future. I also hope that with the help of the SCA-UK, not only will the Shan culture be preserved but also Buddhism spread all over the U.K.

Nidarphorn: I am very glad to hear what you feel about SCA-UK and very grateful for your support. You have certainly come across many great historical events in your life time. What are some of the changes in our society that you have

seen and experienced personally in your lifetime?

Mawm: The biggest change in our society, especially for our Shan people was the disappearance of the Saophas and their administration of their individual states, and the introduction in its place of a central government and governing via township military officials. For my personal experience, I would always remember being the Phaya Daga (Chief Supporter) of Kyaung Murg Nai, also known as Wat Dhammadoya in Keng Tung; I gather that there are more than three hundred monks and novices studying Buddhist scriptures in the monastery under the learned abbot who is in his eighties. I was also privileged to have attended the historic Sixth Buddhist Council held in Rangoon between 1954 and 1956 in the famous Kaba-Aye artificial cave. Buddhist leaders, scholars and devotees from all over the world participated in the event that was about the celebration of the 2500th anniversary since the Buddha passed away. I learnt that Theravada scriptures from many countries were compared and edited.

Nidarphorn: Do you have any special dates that mean a lot to you? If so what are they?

Mawm: There are a few on my list. 13th – 16th April, which is the period designated as the end of the old year and start of the New Year. My birthday, which is the 8th of July, and I am especially aware of this date because I have already passed my 90th birthday.

Nidarphorn: It is truly a blessing that you are still in good health at the age of 90. I am most certain that you have seen much more than we know. What is something that you are really proud of and why?

Mawm: I have been able to avoid all criminal activities and have not committed any religious offences throughout my life. And I am particularly proud of it.

Nidarphorn: What are some of the qualities that you value in a person? And what are the goals you are still working towards?

Mawm: Various people would define values differently. As for me, keeping the Five Precepts (non-harming, non-stealing, no sexual misconduct, non-telling lies and no intoxicants) and being generous and providing dana are the most important qualities that a person should have. Throughout my life, my goal is to lead a peaceful life.

Nidarphorn: When people look back at your life, how do you want to be remembered?

Mawm: I would be happy if I would be remembered as a calm and peace loving man.

Nidarphorn: Thank you very much for your time given to this interview. I really appreciate that and thank you for an interesting story. Is there any wisdom that you would like to pass down to the generations to come?

Mawm: I would like to urge all the younger generations to follow the teachings of the Buddha and try to be at peace with everyone.

.....✍



*Mawm's 90th Birthday
Celebrated at Birmingham, UK*



Mawm with Oxford Buddha Vihara's chanting group



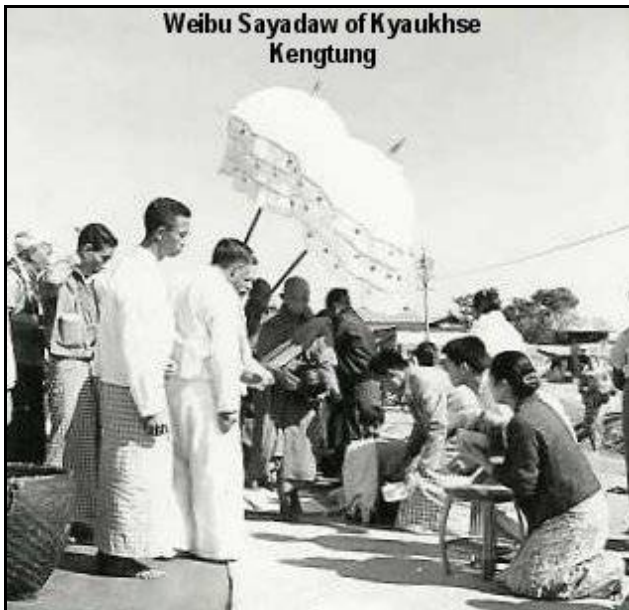
Mawm at Oxford Buddha Vihara's Kathina (robe offering) ceremony



Mawm and his elder daughter, Sao Dong (left), with Sao Mo Horm (Sipaw) (middle), member of SCA-UK at OBV's Song Kran Celebration



*Sao Nang Bo Tip Loang,
Sao Kiao Merng's mother*



*Weibu Sayadaw of Kyaukhse visiting
Keng Tung*



Young Sao Kiao Merng



*Sao Kiao Merng & Sao Sein Mya
Taunggyi, November 2003
and
Reunion of Buddhagaya Pilgrimage
Group at Oxford Buddha Vihara
33 Cherwell Drive, Oxford
9th September 2006*



*Sao Kiao Merng & Sao Sein Mya
Taunggyi, November 2003*

*1st Pi Mai Tai/Shan New Year
Celebration in the UK at Oxford
Buddha Vihara 33 Cherwell Drive,
Oxford 18th December 2005*



*Sao Kiao Merng & Sao Sein Mya
Taunggyi, November 2003*

*Visit from Dr. Sai Hsang Aik, Dr Sai
Kham Leik, Gordon Paw, Sai Htee
Seng, Mg Mg Naing Myint, Nang Ei
Ei Zar, Dr Aye Aye Myint, Sai Kai
Kham (Sai Htee Seng's son), Sao
Dimp and Nang Kham Nwe Leik on
1st Dec 2007*

Spirit of the Shan through Arts

Feraya Nang Mone

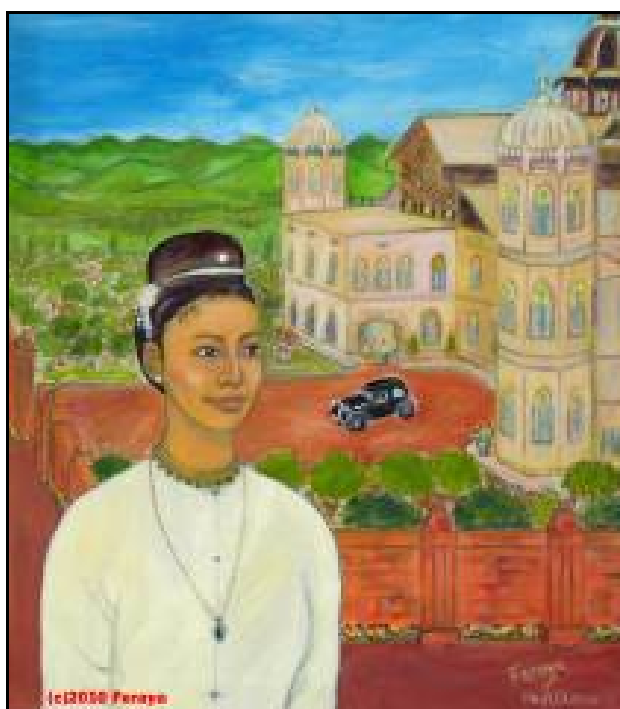
I left Merng Tai since I was a young girl. However, even though Shan culture had not featured a great deal in my life, the Shan dances and mountains featured strongly, now and again in my dreams. I was out of touch with Shan people and the Shan culture for quite a while, due to my personal life and work, but I started getting involved with the Shan again in 2002, my Shan wedding ceremony being the main catalyst for my path with the Shan people.

Suddenly, I realized that being Shan is an important part of being me, and that I should evoke what exists in my heart all along. When I started my website, Taigress, to spread awareness of our Shan State and culture, I was surprised that I received quite a number of appreciative comments from Tai people worldwide, from Australia to USA, which encouraged me to create

two more Shan websites, Tai Culture and Artferaya, my art website.

I have painted a few Shan theme paintings, such as "Shan Girl", which expressed the spirit of a Shan girl flourishing in abundance, "Merng Tai" which brings home the atmosphere of Shan people and culture to the global communities, and "Shan Princess" which is a portrait of my great aunt, Chao Nang Ventip (Princess Magic Mirror) with the Kengtung Haw (palace) in the background, which is my way of preserving our history.

At the moment, I'm also learning to read and write Shan language, because although I spoke Shan at home, regretfully, I never had the chance to learn to read and write Shan.



*SCA_UK Participation at Thai night,
Oxford University, 2011*

Sa-thung: A Brief History of Its Rulers

Khun Hti Charles Sao

Sa-thung was a Shan state¹ in present-day Shan State since its formation in 1781 (Hkun Kyi, 1942; Saw Maung, 1988)² until the end of the Saopha System in 1959. It is now known as Sisaeng Township, Sisaeng being the main town in the territory in recent times. Between its creation in 1781 and the abolishment of the Saopha System in 1959, the state had two ruling dynasties. This article is a brief account of the rulers of Sa-thung and of the involvement of two of the rulers, *Hkun O and Hkun Kyi in the affairs of Shan State*.

The State of Sa-thung covered an area of 471 square miles and it was surrounded by the Shan states of Mawmai, Wanyen, Samka and the Karenni state of Loikaw. Some eighty percent of the inhabitants were ethnic Pa-o and the rest were ethnic Tai-Shans (Saw Maung, 1988). Most of them were peasants. It is widely believed that the Pa-os in

Sa-thung were the decedents of the refugees, who fled a city named Sa-thung in present-day Mon State, Myanmar, when King Anawratha of Pagan attacked and conquer the city in AD 1056. In Sa-thung Chronicle, Saw Maung speculated that the most probable reason for those refugees to choose the location of present-day Sisaeng as their destination was that the area was not under the control of Pagan kingdom. Moreover, it was sparsely populated due to fighting between ethnic Shans and Karennis.

It was during the reign of King Bodawpaya (1745 – 1819) of Konbaung dynasty that the Burmese court learned about the presence of the Pa-o population in present-day Sisaeng Township (Hkun Kyi, 1942; Saw Maung, 1988). Consequently, the area was carved out of the state of Yawnghwe and created the state of Sa-thung in 1781. The Pa-o chief of Thamsaeng village in the territory was given the title Khun

San Oo (first to rule) and made the first chief of the newly created state.

Little is known about the first ruling dynasty except that it ended in 1839. (Saw Maung, 1988) Moreover, the rule of the first dynasty was punctuated by periods of direct rule by the Burmese court due to internal conflicts within the ruling family. (Hkun Kyi, 1942) Thus, U Mya Aung and U Naing, who were listed in Saw Maung's manuscript as rulers of Sa-thung after Khun San Oo's passing, could very well be Burmese officials assigned by the Burmese king to rule Sa-thung.

According to "Shan States and Karenni List of Chiefs and Leading Families", Hkun Jaw La became the new ruler in 1839 and thus started a new line of hereditary rulers (Saw Maung, 1988). He was succeeded by his son, whose name is no longer known. No records of the events during their rule exist among the collections of the former ruling family. Upon the death of Hkun Jaw La's son,

his grandson by the name of Hkun O took over the state (Saw Maung, 1988). However, this account does not agree with Sir George Scott, who stated on page 160 of his "Gazetteer of Upper Burma and Shan State", that Hkun O was preceded by Hpaw Di (date unknown) , Hkun Sein (1852) and Hkun Konwara (1856). The author has seen a grave, which bears the name Hkun Konra, Ruler of Sa-thung. It is highly probable that the names, Hkun Konwara and Hkun Konra, refer to the same person although the year of death, as written on the grave, is 1842. Further research is necessary to reconcile these different lists of rulers.

Hkun O was a warrior and an expansionist, and his activities will be described in the next section. One of Hkun O's legacies was the expansion of the state (Saw Maung, 1988). Originally, Sa-thung consisted solely of the territories east of the Tam Pak River and almost all of its inhabitants were Pa-os. On the west side of this river were Shan

states of Tampak and Lakmerng. When the Shan rulers of these two states failed to pay tribute on regular basis to the Burmese King, Hkun O stepped forward and promised to pay the tribute for them. Consequently, these two states were dissolved and incorporated into Sa-thung and the newly expanded Sa-thung ended up with a mixed population of both Shans and Pa-os. Hkun O was also a formidable warrior and he was part of the Linbin Confederacy, an alliance of Shan Chiefs which was formed with the goal of dethroning King Thibaw and installing the prince of Linbin, a puppet of the Shan Chiefs, as king of Burma. During the Linbin rebellion, Yawngghwe was one of the major Shan States that sided with King Thibaw to fight against fellow Shans (Saw Maung, 1988). Being a renowned warrior in the area, Hkun O was given the task of attacking Yawngghwe. His military action resulted in wounding Saopha Sao Mawng of Yawngghwe, who had to flee his own state (Saw Maung, 1988).

Upon his passing in 1896, Hkun O was succeeded by Hkun Law who ruled until 1905 when he was assassinated by Hkun Mong, a half brother of Hkun O. (Saw Maung, 1988). Hkun Mong was tried and executed by the British authorities, and Hkun Sing, a brother of Hkun Law, became the next ruler. Hkun Sing's rule ended in 1929 when the British removed him for extra-judicial executions of those whom he believed to be witches. Hkun Sing was succeeded by his son Hkun Kyi on June 1, 1929.

Hkun Kyi was the first person in the family to go beyond the borders of Shan State for further education. He received college education and he was an engineer by profession before he became ruler (Hkun Merng) of Sa-thung in 1929. Soon after becoming a ruler, he served as secretary of the Federal Council of Shan Chiefs.

The 1920s and 30s were a time when Shan rulers were working for the restoration of the status that they had lost when the

newly formed Federated Shan States took over many of their traditional rights in 1922. Moreover, the Federal Council of Shan Chiefs, which was created in parallel to the Federated Shan States, was granted neither legislative nor executive power. In response, the Shan rulers submitted several memoranda with their demands to the British authorities. Two of the main points of the first memorandum of the Shan chiefs, submitted to the Secretary of State for India in 1925 are (Maule, 1993) are that the status of the rulers as Hereditary Ruling Princes, although British subjects, be confirmed and that the validity of the Customary Law of each State be confirmed, together with the power of the Chief to change it, provided that such a change is not contrary to the spirit of British Indian Law. The rulers followed up on the matter with more memoranda to the British in which they asked for higher status as princes and more power. Apparently, the chiefs thought that they could save Shan State from the prospect of

living under Burmese rule in the future by having the British grant them more power and accord them a higher status as Princes.

In contrast Hkun Kyi pushed for the formation of a People's Council in which the rulers participate in politics along side politicians as representatives of the Shan people. He also believed that the Shan states should join Burma as equals when Burma became a dominion of the British Empire and that Shan politicians should cooperate with Burmese politicians to stand up against the British. When it became clear that preceding efforts to have the British raise the status of the Shan rulers were not leading anywhere, Hkun Kyi sought to convince other rulers to adopt his approach by circulating a memorandum in 1931. In one of the closing paragraphs, Hkun Kyi stated that: [Soft Break]

Complete separation from Burma and the status of an autonomous section of the British Empire is a utopian conception, pleasing to toy with, but

impossible of realization as a matter of practical politics. No country situated as ours is, in the midst of a group of the states, could possibly survive an isolated existence. We are a small scarcely populated country wedged in between Burma, Siam, China and French Indochina, and if the ideal of isolated self-government raises our enthusiasm, we must first consider of stern military necessity. Independence connotes more than anything the ability to stand on our own feet not only from the point of view of numbers but more so from the economic point of view.

In a push for eventual termination of the feudal ruling system in Shan State, he stated that: [Soft Break]

The Chiefs of the Shan States, as in the case of other leaders all over the world, are not rulers by divine right owning the bodies and souls of their people to wreck upon them whatever fate may be inspired by the whim of the moment. They are trustees of the

people, repository of their hope and aspirations, and their policies should be based on the requirements of the future. If the great Rulers of India, with their background of brilliant history and hoary tradition, are willing in the interest of their people to sink their isolation and co-operate with the rest of India in the advance to freedom, what reason is there to prevent the Chiefs of the Shan States from proving to the world that they also are patriots first and Chiefs after?

Upon the expiry of his term as Secretary of the Federal Council of Shan Chiefs, he left the post to focus on the affairs of his state. His notable achievements (Saw Maung, 1988) as Hkun Merng of Sa-thung include infrastructure development to facilitate agriculture, mandatory schooling for children, programs to achieve self-sufficiency in preparation for the Second World War and waging guerilla warfare against the occupying Japanese army during the War whenever feasible while maintaining such a level of

relationship with the Japanese that allowed him to protect his people from Japanese mistreatment.

Hkun Kyi came back to the forefront of Shan State politics again 1946 after the end of the Second World War. By then, the British had the Simla plan, which was drawn up by the government of British Burma in exile while Burma and the Shan States were under Japanese rule. The plan called for keeping the Shan States under the rule of the governor of British Burma until their amalgamation with Burma proper. Moreover, the Burmese led by General Aung San were asking for an independent Burma as soon as possible. Under these circumstances, the Shan chiefs had no choice but to prepare for the future as a part of Burma. Working with Sao Sam Toon and Sao Shwe Thaik, Hkun Kyi was instrumental in organizing the Panglong conferences which brought together the leaders of non-Burman homelands, including the Shan States to negotiate terms of joining the future Union with Burma.

Though he attended the first Panglong conference in person, Hkun Kyi was a bed-ridden and frustrated man by the time the second Panglong conference was convened in February 1947 to finalize the Union treaty between the Shans, Kachins, Chins and Burma. At the same conference, the ruling Chiefs and the people of the Federated Shan States formed a unified entity, Shan State, on February 7, 1947. Hkun Kyi could not participate in the final negotiations or signing of the treaty in person. Eventually, on January 4, 1948, Union of Burma came into existence as an independent nation state. Within hours after attaining independence, Sao Shwe Thaik, the newly minted Union president, visited Hkun Kyi for what turned out to be their last meeting. As soon as he met the president, Hkun Kyi raised his concerns about the future of Shan State. The president told him in Burmese not to worry and the discussion continued in Shan. As the only other person present in the room did not understand Shan, the contents of the

discussion are gone forever with the passing of the two Shan statesmen. Hkun Kyi died four days later, bringing an end to the participation of the last ruling dynasty of Sa-thung in the politics of Shan State.

Hkun Kyi was succeeded by Sao Aung Myint, who was only 13 years old at the time. Due to his young age, Sao Aung Myint never had a chance to rule his state. He was still an engineering student in Cleveland, Ohio, USA when the Saopha system came to an end in 1959. He moved back to Shan State in 2011 after spending most of his adult life in Rangoon, Burma and then Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, USA.

Notes

¹ A Shan state was a semi-sovereign political entity on the Shan plateau. These states were ruled by hereditary rulers, some of whom held absolute power over the internal affairs of their states until the arrival of the British. The rulers of the larger states were held the title of Saopha or Celestial Ruler whereas those of smaller states were referred to as Hkun Merng or Chief of City.

² Hkun Kyi was the second last and the most prominent ruler of Sa-thung. Saw Maung was a former state official of Sa-thung and a relative of Hkun Kyi.

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SCA_UK New Year celebration, UCL, University of London, 2010

Tofu Oon with Rice Noodle Recipe (Rice Noodle with hot liquid tofu)

Sai Hseng

Tofu Oon is a noodle based dish with hot liquid tofu which is usually served as breakfast. It is very famous within and outside Shan States in Myanmar. Although rice sticks are recommended for noodle base, you can also use other rice noodles of your choice, but NOT vermicelli.

Ingredients (serves 4)

- Rice Stick 500 g
- Gram flour (1kg)
- Cold water (3 Litres)
- Salt to taste
- Vegetable oil (2 table spoons)
- Coriander (a small bunch)
- Garlic (3-4 cloves)
- Dried chilly (1 to 4 teaspoonfuls or to taste)
- Sesame seeds to sprinkle
- Peanut (a small pack)
- Soya sauce (light/dark)

Preparation:

Rice noodle:

Soak the rice stick in the cold water for 1 hour and rinse it. Boil the water, put the rice stick in the boiling water and stir it well. When it is tender, rinse it with cold water and leave it covered.

Tofu Oon (Liquid):

- Mix 1kg of gram flour and 3 litres of cold water well in bucket
- Sieve it with thin cloth
- Rest it in the pot for 1 hour, let it set.
- Heat the pot; add 2 table spoons of vegetable oil.
- Slowly pour the gram flour mixture into pot, and stir. Do not pour all the flour, some thick mixture left at the bottom of the bucket
- Keep stir until it boil, add some salt to taste (optional: add turmeric powder)
- When it boil, slowly pour the rest of the mixture into pot, keep on stirring until it

become really thick and low the heat

- Cover the pot and leave it for 10 minutes

To garnish:

- Coriander roughly chopped
- Garlic finely chopped and fried
- Dry chilli crushed and fried
- Sesame seeds pounded
- Peanut pounded

Side dishes:

1. Pork crackle (kep moo)
2. Pickled mustard leaves
3. Blanched pea shoots (young pea leaves)
- 4.

Serving:

- Put 150 grams of cooked rice stick in a bowl
- Pour 2 ladles of tofu oon (hot liquid tofu)
- Add 1 tea spoon of garlic oil, sesame seeds, peanut, soya sauce, coriander and chilly (if wanted).
- Some also add a small amount of blanched pea shoots in the bowl before adding the liquid tofu

- Mix it before eating on its own or with side dishes such as pork crackling and pickled mustard leaves



Garnishes and side dishes for Tofu Oon



Rice Noodle with Tofu Oon and garnishes



Sai Hseng

Khao Ya Khu Glutinous rice pudding

Sai Hseng

Khao Ya Khu (glutinous rice pudding) is a well loved dessert among Shan community, usually served at special occasions including Shan New Years and the harvest festivals.

Ingredients:

- Glutinous rice (1 kg)
- Slab Cane Sugar (150 gm)
- Fresh coconut (1)
- Roasted sesame (150 gm)
- Roasted ground peanut (150 gm)
- Butter 200gm
- Salt (1 teaspoonful)
- Banana leaves
- Oil to grease the banana leaves

Preparation:

- Soak the glutinous rice in cold water over night,
- Rinse the water and cook in steamer (Chinese style steamer)
- Melt the slab cane sugar and butter
- When the rice is cooked, mix the warm rice with sesame seeds, ground peanut, salt and melted slab cane sugar together well in the pot.
- Lay the greased banana leave in a big oven dish

- Pour the rice mixture into tray, press evenly.
- Scatter ground peanut, sesame seed and grated fresh coconut on top
- When cold, it can be cut into 1.5 inch pieces

Alternative way of cooking (to serve hot)

Mix soaked glutinous rice, melted slab brown sugar and raw whole peanuts, which is then packed into small parcels using greased banana leaves. Steam the parcels for about 30 minutes or until cooked. When cooked, unwrap the parcels and Khao Ya Khu can be served hot with a sprinkle of freshly grated coconuts or on its own. Perfect festive food we enjoy at outdoor Pi Mai Thai festivals in Shan States winter time.



KhaoYakhu

တောဝုးလွင်းဂိခ်ယမ်.ဂေး ဂွပ်းဝုးဂူခ်း
Asia ဆမ်မးဂိုဝ်ကမ်,ဂူ. တီးဂျူ,မဆီ,ဆံ. တင်း
ဂိခ်မိုင်းဂှ်းဂေးလံးတင်းဆမ်၊ တေ,တီးဗှ်း
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ခပ်ထင်ဝုး မိုင်းဂျူ, မဆီ,ဆံ. ပိခ် Paradise
of Beer ဆံဝုး။ တီးဆွးသိင်,တင်းဂိခ်

လဝ်းကဝ်းလဝ်း



SCA UK Charity Shop, Oxford, 2011

Shan in various professions

Jai Merng

Our feature Shan professional this year is “Mo Hom”, the creative director, a fashion designer and the co-founder of Lotus Hom LLC, New York - USA. Mo Hom is originally from May Myo (also known as “Pang Oo” in Shan and “Pyin Oo Lwin” in Myanmar), a summer town which is 2 hour drive away from Mandalay within Northern Shan States vicinity.



First Fashion Show Appearance

With Mo Hom’s permission, we have presented her profile from her own webpage to share with you in this newsletter.

Lotus Hom, LLC was founded by designer Mo Hom in New York, a native of Shan State of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar (also known as Burma). “Mo” meaning of the “Lotus” flower in her native language, combined her Shan and English names as well as her dual experiences for her new founded business venture in mid 2010.

Mo Hom was born with the love of fashion at a very early stage, sketching paper dolls for her classmates in primary school and eagerly learning pattern making and sewing from her beloved mother. A wonderful woman who, as a housewife, made beautiful clothing for her entire family, ensuring they were up with fashion at all times! At the age of 13, Mo pulled out her mother’s fabric shelves and created her very first design; a Lilac coloured polka-dot skirt,

highly impressing her parents and relatives.

After her University years, Mo Hom gained confidence contributing to the socialite circle in her homeland and also sharpened her personal relation and business instincts working for high-end hotels as a Marketing and Communication Executive. Mo Hom finally has followed her childhood dream to becoming a Fashion Designer abroad. And which scene did she choose as a debut? New York City.

Mo Hom studied Fashion Design and Merchandising at Gibbs New York, however later that year she dropped out of school, feeling deeply that she wasted her time studying something that she already knew. So in true head strong style, she enrolled at New York School of Design in Fashion Illustration/Textile for short-term courses. After successful involvement with various fashion house around the corner of Fashion Avenue in “New York”, late September 2010 saw Mo Hom launch her own

collection line “L’hom” in New York” and “Sweet Lotus”.



Mo Hom

Creative Director Mo Hom designs and realises timeless silhouettes in feminine, sexy, sophisticated, style. A glamorous, fashion forward attitude for her new customers. Her collections are defined as having a youthful and luxurious sense of style along with tasteful, colourful and exquisite designs. She has created pieces for women to be comfortable, self-confident and yet beautiful in her domestically

made fine products in New York City.

In October 2011, Mo Hom launched her first Autumn/Winter 2011 collections where she open Lotus Hom's first flagship boutique on 262 Mott and Prince Street. She and her business partner are planning to break through the global market along with "Lotus Hom" Accessories, handbags, shoes and fine jewellery collections in the near future.

www.lotushom.com/mobi



Mo Hom and Some of her collections



SCA_UK New Year celebration, UCL, University of London, 2010

The Hare deceived the Tigar (Shan Folk Lore Story from Hill and Water Country)

William C. Griggs

*(American Baptist Shan Mission
House, Bhamo, Burma, 1902)*

Disclaimer:

This folk lore story presented below is extracted from The Project Gutenberg EBook of Shan Folk Lore Stories from the Hill and Water Country, by William C. Griggs, under the terms of the Project Gutenberg License included with this eBook or online at www.gutenberg.net.

The following story has been taken from the great mass of unwritten lore that is to the black-eyed, brown-skinned boys and girls of the Shan mountain country of Burma what "Jack the Giant Killer" and "Cinderella" are to our own children. (William C. Griggs)

The Story:

At the beginning of the world a hare, tiger, ox, buffalo, and horse became friends and lived

together. One day the tiger was out hunting when, it being in the middle of the hot season, the jungle caught fire, and a strong wind blowing, it was not long before the whole country was in flames. The tiger fled, but the fire followed. Never mind how fast he ran, the flames followed him, till he was in great fear of being burned alive. As he was rushing along he saw the ox feeding on the other side of the river and called out to him:

"O friend ox, you see the fire is following me wherever I go. Where is a place of refuge that I can escape the fire?"

Now close to the tiger was a jungle full of dried grass, such as the Shans use for thatching their houses, and the ox replied, "Go to the grass jungle yonder, my brother, and you will be safe."

But dried grass is the most inflammable thing in the whole hill and water country, and so

here, not only did the flames follow the tiger, but they ran ahead of him and threatened to engulf him on every side. In great anger he roared at the ox, "False deceiver, if ever I escape from this danger, I will return and kill you," but the ox only laughed at him and continued eating.

In desperation, the tiger leaped over the flames and found himself near the horse. "O friend horse," he cried, "where can I go? I am in great danger of being burned to death."

Now it happened that once the tiger had been very rude to the horse and called him many bad names, so now he thought this was a good opportunity to be revenged; so he said: "Yonder is a big bamboo jungle, run to that and you are safe"; but the tiger found that the horse was also a false friend, for the fire following him speedily ignited the tall bamboos which burned fiercely and falling from above, almost completely covered the poor beast.

At the beginning of the world the tiger was a beautiful yellow colour, but the bamboos falling all over him, burnt him in stripes, and since that time his descendants have had long black stripes all over their coats.

"When I have escaped from this," yelled the angry tiger, "I will come back and kill you."

"Very good," sneered the horse, "and I will arch my neck so that you can get a good bite," but this was said to deceive the tiger, as the horse intended to lash out with his hind feet when the tiger came to fight him. Nevertheless, from that day the necks of all horses have been arched, and they cannot fight an enemy in front, but are obliged to arch their necks, lower their heads, and kick from behind.

The tiger, by this time tired to death and suffering from the burns of the bamboos, saw the buffalo and accosted him as he had his other friends.

"O good friend buffalo," he cried, "I am in great danger of being burned alive. The horse and

the ox have not only deceived me, but in following their advice I have arrived at a worse condition than before. What can I do to be freed from this great danger?"

The buffalo looked up from the cool river where he was enjoying a bath, and taking compassion on him said: "If you will catch hold of my throat I will duck you in the river and so you shall escape from the danger that is following you."

So the tiger seized the good buffalo by the throat and was held under water till the fire had burnt itself out. The tiger was very grateful to the buffalo and made an agreement with him that from that time no tiger should ever kill a buffalo, and it is only the very worst tigers, those that kill men, that ever kill a buffalo, and the tigers that are guilty of killing buffaloes are sure to be killed themselves, sooner or later.

The tiger held so fast to the buffalo that when the latter came out of the water, his throat and neck were all white, and buffaloes all have that mark on

their necks and throats till this very day.

The tiger was so cold after his bath that he shook and shivered as though he had fever, and seeing a little house made of dried grass a short distance off he went to it and found that a hare was living there.

"Good friend," said the tiger, "I am so cold I am afraid I shall die. Will you take compassion on me and allow me to rest in your house and get warm before I return home?"

"Come in, our lord," said the hare. "If our lord deigns to honour my poor house with his presence, he will confer a favour that his slave will never forget."

The tiger was only too glad to go into the hare's house and the latter immediately made room for him by sitting on the roof. Soon the tiger heard click! click! click! and he called out:

"O friend hare, what are you doing up there on the roof of your house?"

Now the hare was really at that moment striking fire with her

flint and steel, but she deceived the tiger and said, "It is very cold up here, and our lord's slave was shivering," but the next moment the spark struck the dried grass on the roof and the house was soon in flames.

The tiger dashed out just in time and turned in a rage on his late host, but the hare was far away, having jumped at the same moment that the spark set fire to the roof of the house.

The tiger gave chase, but after a while he saw the hare sitting down and watching something intently, so he asked, "What are you looking at?"

"This is a fine seat belonging to the Ruler of the Hares," returned she. "I would like to sit on it," said the tiger.

"Well," said the hare, "wait till I can go and ask our lord to give you permission."

"All right, I will watch till you come back and will not kill you as I intended doing, if you get me permission to sit on it," said the tiger.

Now this was not a chair at all, but some hard sharp stones that the hare had covered with mud and shaped with her paws to deceive the tiger. The hare ran off a long distance and pretended to talk with someone and then called out: "The lord of the chair says, our lord the tiger may sit, if he throws himself down upon it with all his might. This is our custom."

The tiger flung himself upon what he thought was the chair with all his might, but the soft mud gave way and he fell upon the stones underneath and hurt his paws badly. He therefore sprang up and vowed vengeance on the hare that he could just see far off in the distance.

By and by as the hare was running along she saw a large wasps' nest hanging from the branch of a tree, so she sat down and watched it intently. When the tiger came up he was so curious to know what the hare was looking at so intently that he did not kill her, but instead asked her what she was looking at.

The hare showed the tiger the wasps' nest on the tree and said: "That is the finest gong in all the hill and water country." "I would like to beat it," said the tiger.

"Just wait a minute," returned the hare, "and I will go to the lord of the gong and ask permission for you to beat it."

The hare ran till she was far away in the jungle, and then at the top of her voice called out: "If you wish to beat the gong, the lord of the gong says you must strike it as hard as you can with your head. That is his custom."



"Again the cunning hare deceived the tiger"

"Again the cunning hare deceived the tiger."

The tiger butted at the nest with all his might and made a big jagged rent in its side, and out flew the angry wasps in swarms, completely covering the poor tiger, who with a dreadful yell of

pain tore away from his tormentors. His face was all swollen, and from that day till the present, the faces of tigers have all been wide and flat.

Again he chased the hare, and when the smart from the stings of the wasps had subsided a little, he found to his great joy that he was gaining on his enemy fast. The hare on her part saw that the tiger would soon catch her and looked around for some means of escape, and spied just before her a snake half in and half out of its hole.

The hare stopped as before and sat gazing at the snake so intently that the tiger instead of killing her as he had intended to do, asked her what it was in the hole.

"This," returned the hare "is a wonderful flute that only kings and nobles are allowed to play. Would our lord like to play?"

"Indeed I would," said the tiger; "but where is the lord of this wonderful flute? Whom shall I ask for permission?"

"If our lord watches right here," said the cunning hare, "his slave will go to the lord of the flute and ask permission," and the tiger, well content, sat down to wait.

Again the cunning hare deceived the tiger by pretending to ask permission, and when a long distance off he called as before: "Our lord has permission to play the flute. Let him put it in his mouth and blow with all his might. This is the custom of the lord of the flute."

The foolish tiger immediately took the snake's head into his mouth, but the sound that followed came from the tiger, not from the flute, and a terrible yell he gave as the snake bit his mouth! But the hare was far away and would soon have been safe but for an unlooked for accident that nearly ended her life.

The people who lived in that part of the hill and water country were at war with the State that joined them on the north, and thinking that the soldiers of the enemy would soon invade their

country they had made a trap in the middle of the path over which the hare was running. First they dug a hole so deep that should anybody fall in, it would be impossible to climb out again. The sides of the pit were dug on the slant so that the opening was smaller than the bottom. Over the top they had placed thin strips of bamboo that would break if any extra weight came upon them and they had covered the whole with grass and leaves so that no traveller would know that a trap was there. Into this hole fell the poor little hare.

Presently the tiger came up to see where the hare had gone, and when he saw the hole in the middle of the path, he called out, "Where are you, friend hare?" and the hare from the bottom of the trap called out, "I have fallen into a trap."

Then the tiger sat on the ground and just bent double with laughter to think that at last he had the hare in his power, but the little animal down in the hole although she did not say

anything, thought harder in a few minutes than the tiger had in all his life. By and by as she looked up through the hole she had made in the roof, she saw that the sky overhead was getting darker and darker as a storm was coming on, so in great glee, although she pretended to be very much frightened, she called out as loudly as ever she could: "Our lord tiger! Our lord tiger!"

At first the tiger did not answer, so the hare then called, "Does not our lord see the great danger approaching? Let our lord look at the sky."

The tiger looked up and saw the dark clouds coming slowly, slowly on, covering the whole sky; his laughter stopped and he soon began to get very frightened. After a while, when it had become still darker, he called to the hare: "O friend, what is the matter with the sky? What is going to happen?"

Then the hare replied: "Our lord, the sky has fallen where you see it is dark; that is far away, but in a few minutes it will fall here

and everybody will be crushed to death."

The foolish tiger was now frightened half to death and called to the hare: "O friend, I have treated you badly in trying to kill you. Do not be angry and take revenge on me, but take compassion on my terrible condition, and graciously tell me how to escape this danger, and I swear that I will never try to harm you more."

It was the hare's turn to laugh now, but she only laughed quietly to herself, for she was afraid the tiger would hear her, then she said, "Down here our lord's slave is quite safe. If our lord descends, he too will be safe," and before the hare had hardly finished, the cowardly tiger made a jump for the hole the hare had made and joined her at the bottom of the trap.

But the hare was not out yet and she began to plan how she could get out herself and yet keep the tiger in. At last a happy thought struck her. She sidled up to the tiger and began to tickle

him in the ribs. The tiger squirmed and twisted first one way and then the other, first to one side and then to the other; at last he could stand it no longer and catching the hare he threw her out of the trap and she landed on solid ground.

As soon as the hare found she was safe, she began to call at the top of her voice: "O men, come! Come! I, the hare have deceived the tiger and he is at the bottom of the trap. O men, come! I, the hare call you. Bring your spears and guns; bring your swords, and kill the tiger that I have tricked into entering the trap."

At first the men did not believe the hare, for they did not think that an animal so small as the hare could deceive the tiger, but then they also knew that the hare was very clever and had much wisdom, so they brought their spears and their guns, their swords and their sticks, and killed the tiger in the trap.

Thus did the hare prove that though small she was full of wisdom, and although the tiger

was bigger, stronger, and fiercer than she, yet she, through her wisdom, was able to kill him.



*Tai (Shan) New Year Festival (1),
Dehong, Yunnan Province, CHINA (2011)*



*Tai (Shan) New Year Festival (2),
Dehong, Yunnan Province, CHINA (2011)*



*Tai (Shan) New Year Festival (3),
Dehong, Yunnan Province, CHINA (2011)*



*Delegates from Muse, Shan State,
Myanmar at Dehong Tai (Shan) 2011*



*Shan New Year celebrations (4),
SINGAPORE (2011)*



*Shan New Year celebrations (1),
SINGAPORE (2011)*



*Shan New Year celebrations (5),
SINGAPORE (2011)*



*Shan New Year celebrations (2),
SINGAPORE (2011)*



*Shan Community Kathina ceremony (1),
SINGAPORE (2011)*



*Shan New Year celebrations (3),
SINGAPORE (2011)*



*Shan Community Kathina ceremony (2),
SINGAPORE (2011)*



*Shan Community Kathina ceremony (3),
SINGAPORE (2011)*



Tai Village Festival (2), Iowa, USA (2011)



*Shan Community Kathina ceremony (4),
SINGAPORE (2011)*



Tai Village Festival (1), Iowa, USA (2011)



Tai Village Festival (1), Iowa, USA (2011)



*Tai (Shan) Water Festival (1), Dehong,
Yunan Province, CHINA*



*Tai (Shan) Water Festival (2), Dehong,
Yunan Province, CHINA*



*Tai (Shan) Water Festival (3), Dehong,
Yunan Province, CHINA*

**Abstracts of Academic
Presentations
at the 2106th Shan/Tai New
Year Celebrations
SOAS, University of London
(27.11.11)**

**1. Shan manuscripts in the
Bodleian Library, Oxford and
sponsorship of ox-cam online
Shan manuscripts**

Dr Gillian Evison, Head of Oriental
Section, Bodleian Libraries,
Oxford

Abstract:

I will set the Oxford's Shan collection in the context of Bodleian Libraries at Oxford and present some of the current barriers which prevent scholars from accessing information about these manuscripts. I will then describe the methodology that will be applied to the Shan materials in order to create an online catalogue as part of the Revealing Hidden Collections project. I will also discuss how the catalogue fits in to the broader context of online manuscript catalogues that are being created in the UK and how features that will be developed for the Shan materials will benefit the functionality of other online catalogues.

**2. Shan Manuscripts at the Scott
Collection, Cambridge University
Library**

Dr Andrew Skilton,
King's College London and
Spalding Fellow, Clare Hall,
Cambridge

Abstract:

I will talk briefly about the Scott Collection of Burmese manuscripts held at Cambridge University Library. I will survey its contents and discuss its history, including who was responsible for bringing these materials together. I will also describe how the Revealing Hidden Collections Project at the Bodleian Library will be incorporating the Shan component of the Scott Collection into its cataloguing project with the help of Sao Saimong's handwritten notes for a catalogue of the Shan materials completed in the early 1980s. I will also discuss briefly some of the most intractable technical problems for the project, including constructing the meta-data inventory, finding an appropriate Shan font and a stable transliteration system.

3. Even the Buddha asks a Shan Saray to help save people from a ghostly life! An initial study of some popular funeral ritual texts in Shan/Tai

Ven. Dr Khammai Dhammasami
Oxford Centre for Buddhist
Studies, University of Oxford

Abstract:

Funeral is one of the major passages of life and is closely associated with one's belief system. In this brief presentation, I intend to briefly present four funeral ritual texts by different authors; they tell us what is important to the Shan/Tai in the funeral rituals as well as in their general practice of Buddhism. Known as part of lik-loung (great text), all the texts give a central role to Shan wise men, called saray, in spreading that message.

4. Cataloguing Process of Shan manuscripts / the contribution of traditional scholars

Mr Jotika Khur-Yearn
Subject Librarian and Researcher
on Shan Buddhism and Literature,
SOAS

Abstract:

I will discuss the nature and characteristics of Lik Long poetic literature, such as their varieties of genre and diversities of subject

categories. I will briefly explain how we dealt with such informatino in the creation of metadata or categories of information that we collected for Shan manuscripts in Northern Thailand and Lashio, Shan State, in a project started in 2009 to catalogue the temple collections of the area. I will also discuss the contributions of traditional Shan scholars (zare) to the our continued understanding of this literature, and in particular the help we received on our project in northern Thailand. I will then talk about my role as a cataloguer for Revealing Hidden Collections Project, and the challenges ahead. I will also explain how further consultation with traditional Shan scholars will help us in dealing with certain types of knowledge for completing the catalogue of Oxford and Cambridge Shan manuscripts.

5. Digitization of Lik Loung & SCA-UK Student Support

Dr Sai Tin Maung (Fellowship of the Royal College of Surgeons (FRCS), UK)

Abstract:

Mentioning centuries old tradition, introducing 'Khu Mor lik Tai' 'Saray Sra Haw Lik' ' Tai tradition of making merits. Collections of Old manuscripts slowly crumbling away. Running out of 'Rejuvenating process.' Difficulties and solutions of digitization and Future plans. Announcement of SCA-UK student support in honour of 'Khu mor Lik Tai.'



SCA_UK Participation at Cambridge University Conference, 2011

SOAS Centre of Buddhist Studies Numata Lecture Series on Shan and Theravada Buddhist Traditions

The Bukkyo Dendo Kyokai Visiting Professorship in Buddhist Studies 2011-12,

13 January to 23 March 2012

Professor Nicola Tannenbaum,
Lehigh University, USA

Inaugural Lecture: “Anthropology, ethnography, and the study of Theravada Buddhism with an emphasis on Thailand”. Followed by a reception.

6pm-7.30pm Fridays.
Room to be announced.

Host: Dr. Kate Crosby
(kc21@soas.ac.uk), Director of
The SOAS Centre for Buddhist
Studies, London University

Convenor: Prof Nicola
Tannenbaum (nt01@lehigh.edu)

Timetable:

13 January 2012: Anthropology, ethnography, and the study of Theravada Buddhism with an emphasis on Thailand

20 January 2012: Power-Protection and Buddhism: a Shan perspective

27 January 2012: Critiques and Classics: One, two, or many religions? Complexity and Thai religious practices

3 February 2012: Critiques and Classics: What is Thai Buddhism?

10 February 2012: Critiques and Classics: Gender

24 February 2012: What sermons can tell us and why we don't know much about them

2 March 2012: Views from a Shan community: the annual ceremonial cycle

9 March 2012: Views from a Shan community: life cycle ceremonies

16 March 2012: Views from a Shan community: extraordinary events

23 March 2012: Views from a Shan community: Contemporary Shan Buddhist practices

These lectures are open to the public. For more information, please see in this link:

<http://www.soas.ac.uk/buddhiststudies/events/numata-lecture-series>

