

## THE ASOKĀRĀMA INSCRIPTION OF 1399 A.D.

### Epigraphic and Historical Studies, No. 2\*

by

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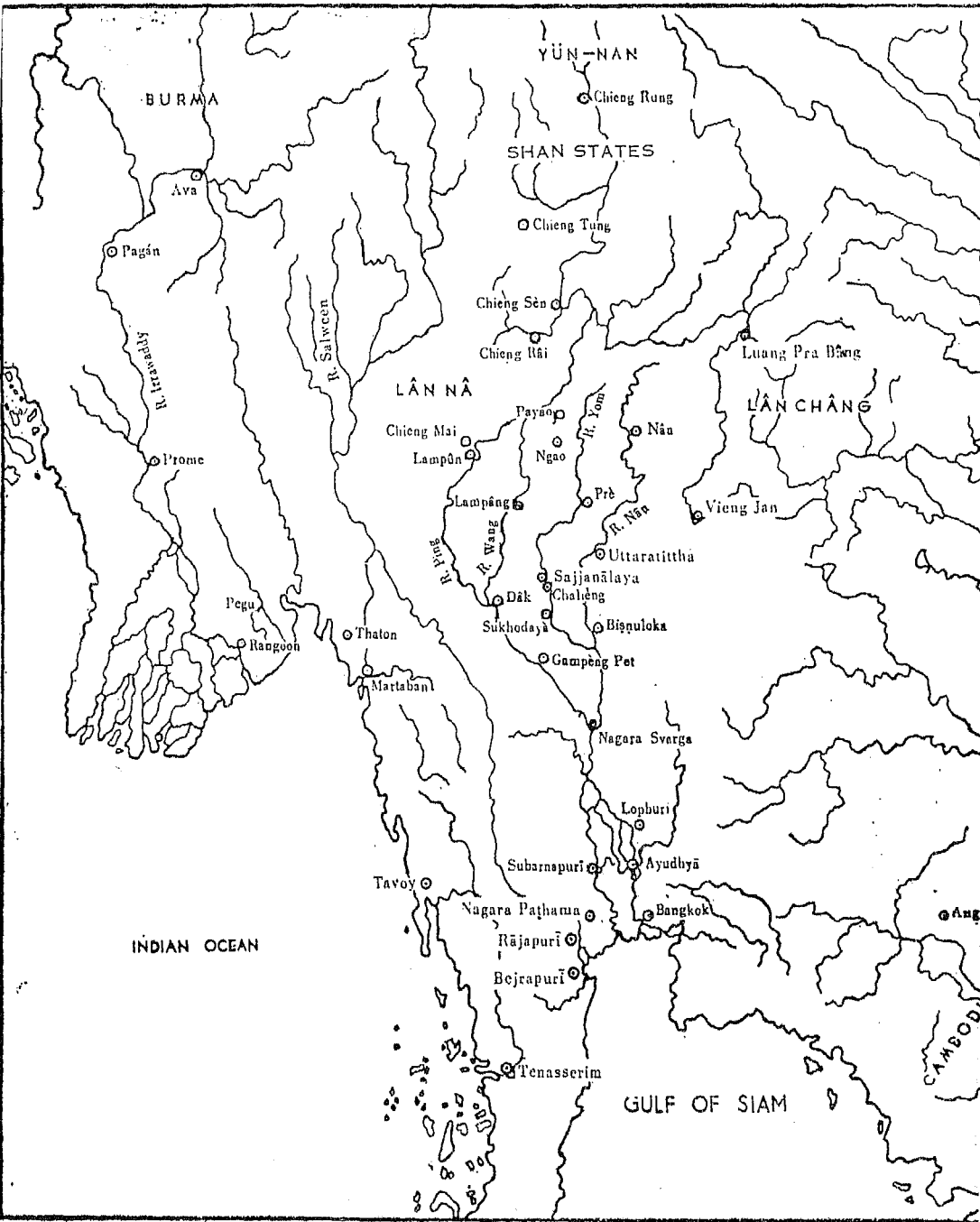
In 1958 some treasure-hunters, while digging into a *cetiya* in the ruins of the Asokārāma, south of the southeast corner of the walled city of Sukhodaya, discovered an inscribed stone, which they threw aside.<sup>1</sup> Upon learning of it from the villagers, the representatives of the Fine Arts Department removed it to the Sukhodaya Museum, where it has been ever since.

The stone is a slab of greenish schist, measuring 1.34 m. × 54 cm. × 15 cm., with slightly slanted edges and an ogee-shaped top. (Figs. 1 & 2). Both faces are devoid of decoration except for an engraved border of flame motifs. Face I bears 47 lines of Siamese, written in Sukhodayan characters; Face II bears 54 lines of Pali, written in Khmer characters, making 85 hemistichs or half-verses (170 pādas) of *anuttṛhubha* plus a 'signature'. Both faces have been read and transcribed into modern Siamese characters by Mr Prasāra Puṇṇpragḍṇ. Face I, with annotations by Dr Prasert ๓ Nagara, is published in *Śilpākara*, VIII/2; Face II, with a Siamese translation and annotations by Mahā Sēṇ Manavidūra, is published in *Śilpākara*, IX/3. In our references to Face I (as in our previous article in this series), the Arabic numeral after the slant corresponds to the number of the line (e.g. I/3 means Face I, line 3). Our Romanization of Face II is based on Mr Prasāra's Siamese transcription; we follow him in splitting the text into hemistichs and pādas; in addition we have

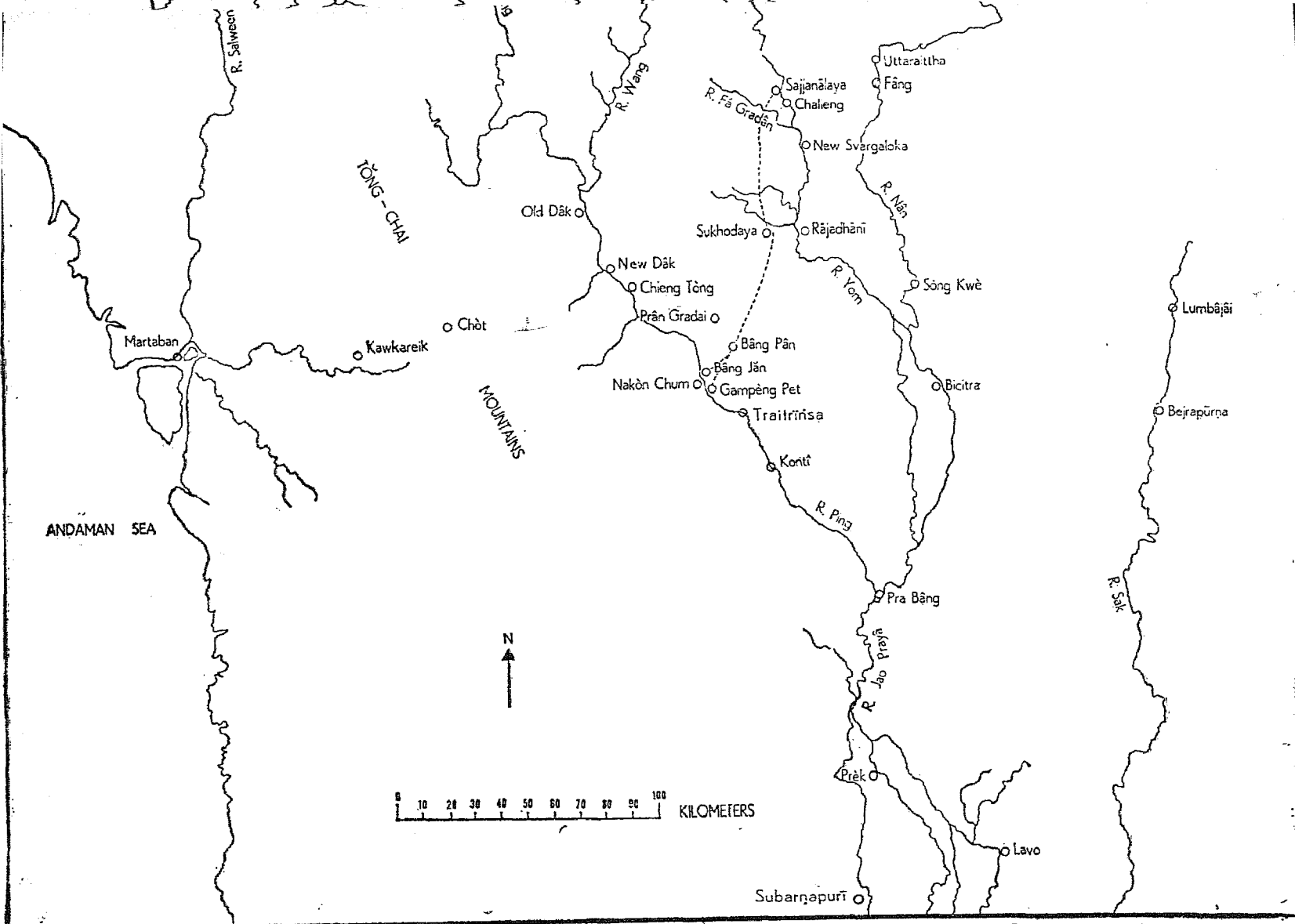
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\* For the two systems of transcription used in our Epigraphic and Historical Studies, see the first article of the series, JSS LVI/2, pp. 245 ff. Words transcribed according to the Graphic System are printed in ordinary type or bold-face. Those transcribed phonetically are printed in italics when they first occur. See *infra*, Abbreviations and Bibliography.

1) The old name of the monastery, Asokārāma, had been forgotten until the discovery of the inscription made it known. Before that the ruins had been nicknamed Wat Salat-dai because they were overgrown with *euphorbia antiquorum* (สตัคไค). For their location, see Map 3 (site No. 36).



MAP 1  
Siam.



MAP 2





Fig. 1. Asokārāma Inscription, Face I.



Fig. 2. Asokārāma Inscription, Face II.

numbered the hemistichs in square brackets, while giving in parentheses the number of the line as engraved. In our references to Face II, the Arabic numeral corresponds to the hemistich rather than the line (e.g. II/17 means the 17th hemistich of Face II).

The object of the inscription is to record the founding of the Asokārāma by the Queen Mother Samtec Braḥ Rājadevī Śrī Cuḷālakṣaṇa Agrarājamaheśī Devadharaṇī Tilakaratana (or Lokaratana ?) in 1399.<sup>2</sup> She was a daughter of Mahādharmarājā I (Līdaiya, *Lü Tai*), who was King of Sukhodaya from 1347 until his death, which occurred some time between 1368 and 1374.<sup>3</sup> She was married to her own half-brother Mahādharmarājā II, who was forced to capitulate to Ayudhyā in 1378, and who died probably around 1398 (all we can say for certain is that he was still alive in 1390 and was dead when the inscription was written in 1399). By him she had two sons, Mahādharmarājā III (Sai Līdaiya, *Sai Lü Tai*), who occupied the throne at the time of writing,<sup>4</sup> and a prince called Asoka of whom we know nothing.

Why did she name the monastery 'Asokārāma'? It would be odd for her to name it for her younger son if he was still alive at the time; yet he seems to have been, for she does not mention him in the distribution of the merit for the foundation, which she transfers to various deceased persons, including her father and mother, her husband, and her mother-in-law (see below, p. 48). On the whole it seems most likely that her principal motive in building the monastery was to transfer the merit to her husband; his personal name is unknown, but it too may have been Asoka, and the Queen Mother's younger son

2) For further information about this lady, see JSS LVI/2, pp. 220 ff.

3) The spelling *Lü Tai* (or *Li Tai*) represents the probable pronunciation of the name; in his own inscriptions in Siamese and Khmer it is written Līdaiya (ᨲᩣ᩠ᨦᩣ᩠ᨦ) (No. III, I/3 and No. V, I/4, in Siamese; No. IV, I/1, in Khmer), and in Pali Līdeyya or Līdayya (No. VI, I/7 and III/3). His title is given in Siamese as Braṇṇā Śrī Sūryabaṇṇa Rāma Mahādharmarājādhirāja, or some variant thereof (the same in Khmer, but with **Braṇṇā** replaced by **Braḥ Pāda Kamrateṇ Aṇ**).

4) For further information about this monarch, who threw off the ties of vassalage to Ayudhyā in 1400, see our article *A Declaration of Independence*.

may have been named for him just as her elder son Sai Līdaiya was named for his grandfather Līdaiya<sup>5</sup>; the Sukhodayan royal family had a tendency to re-use honored names. On the other hand it is possible that both Prince Asoka and the Asokārāma were named for some other ancestor, or for the Indian emperor. Still another possibility is that the monastery stood in a grove of Asoka trees (*saraca indica*): these are not listed among the trees the donor planted at the monastery (II/45 f.), but that might be because they were already there in quantity.

The Pali verses were composed on behalf of the donor by her younger brother the Kavīrājapaṇḍita Śrī Dharmatrailoka, who writes of her in the third person to II/65, but from II/66 on makes her speak in the first person. Face I, which speaks of her entirely in the third person, seems to have been composed by the donor herself, probably with her brother's help.

The two faces cover much the same ground, so that the general sense of most of the illegible passages in each can usually be discovered by reference to the other. But they are not identical in content; in discussing the donor's operations at the Asokārāma they emphasize different details; and Face I gives a list of benefactions performed by the same donor at other places (not mentioned in Face II), while Face II gives some biographical information about Mahādharmarāja II and specifies the limits of his kingdom (not given in Face I).

The historical information that can be extracted from this inscription is considerable. We have already commented on it in our article *A Declaration of Independence and its Consequences* (JSS LVI/2 pp. 213 ff.); further comments will be found below.

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5) *Sai* means that he was the fourth son of his father, who doubtless had the first three by other wives.



**TEXT**  
**Face I**

๑. นมัสสัรวิตรคันนมหัสสัมมกโลกอบบอรรมานศกัราชไตเจตรอ
๒. ย หกสิบเอคโตะนักษัรตัมภกัณมาสออกเจตค้ำโดยฤกษมหุรตีเ
๓. เลกิตีนาทือนโยคยโยกัสม์เตจพระราชเทพีศรีจุพาลกัษณอรรครา
๔. ช (มเหสี) เทพธอร (ณี)... กรคัน.....มาท  
    ปรวรากเป
๕. นชายาแต่สัเตจมหาธรรมราชาธิราชเกาปรทวยปญัจิพริกลัยานี
๖. (มีสิริ).....กลใจหมันในพระชินศาสนาทานจึงปรติสทา
๗. พระสคูปไว้ในวคัโสการามท้านเอาพระมหาธาตุเจ้าสองอ
๘. งคมาแต่เมืองบนองคณักรามเทำเมคเข้าสานหกัเค็ริง
๙. พรรณตังผลิกรคันองคณักร.....
๑๐. ณตังพิกุลท้านปรติ(สตาครรภพระมหา).....(พระม)
๑๑. หาเจตนีเิงสัเคือนอิกพระพุทธรูป.....
๑๒. นกัฎฐีพระสรีมหาโพธิวงกรมลยาณ.....ป
๑๓. ราการสพานถนลอำพลทวย (ไม่ไหลย) ทงัหลายค้ำนบ
๑๔. ทานจึงล่ำคบัปฎักไทรยถวนสำรบักับักรรมกถิกสอง
๑๕. องคองคณักรเจ้าญาณวงัสรราชบณัทิกองคณักรชีเจ้า
๑๖. สรวังมีทงัสมวตธรรมทนให้ชีเจ้าสังขัสอร แล้วทานกัช้อย
๑๗. ปรติสทาผู้คณอนันเตงกบัปการพยาบารทงัหลายห้ำสิบเรี
๑๘. อนมีปรรานคัณายชยงสรจันทกบัทัง (นาสองรอยล่ำ).....ก
๑๙. อร เข้าญีสิบห้ำกวยนทกรุงปีท้านชีสวทงัหลายห้ำล่ำ
๒๐. ร เปนสุมพยญชนาการโดยประมาณแลวนแล้ห้ำสิบบา
๒๑. ตร พาทถวนสำรบักับัไทรสงัซทงักริยาบุชาทงัหลายเ
๒๒. ล้วท้านจึงเตงพระทานสบกริยาการฉลองทงัหลา
๒๓. ยคณนาสองรอยล่ำแล้วเสรจท้านจึงอญัชีญพ

๒๔. ระมหาเถรเจ้าตนหนึ่งอนไปนีสัยแห่งพระมหา  
 ๒๕. พุทธสาครมีนามกอร์ชี่สอรณักเถรอนัฏเภาปร  
 ๒๖. ทวยศีลมระยาทวตปรีตบัตตีมาเปนประธานในอโสภา  
 ๒๗. รามนี ฯ ไซ้แต่สำแดงพระราชเทวีสร้างอโศการามอนัตยว  
 ๒๘. นีทั้งทักษิณารามเสดจแม่อยู่หัวกัสังแก่มหาวัน  
 ๒๙. ต้นเถรแล้วท่านปรีตสถานารอัยหนึ่งเปนเข้าสืบกาย  
 ๓๐. (น) ไพรสืบเรือนแต่งพยาบารวตันนัทั้งลังการามกั  
 ๓๑. แล้ว คำนับกับทั้งบุรพารามกัแล้วสำริททิงส์ลวิสุท  
 ๓๒. ธาวาสที่พ้อยหัวเสดจเสวยพระผนวสบวสกาทำร  
 ๓๓. รมในท่งไซ้กเสรงทังที่เสนางที่เสดจพระมหาส  
 ๓๔. วามีเจ้าท่านสัดคักเถิงที่สำริททิงส์ลวิสุทวาสที่สงส  
 ๓๕. การสำแดงพอกท่านกัสำเรจทังพระธรรมราชบุณที่สงส  
 ๓๖. การสำแดงพระราชมาดากัสำริททิงส์แล้ว ฯ อนันว่าผลานิสงส  
 ๓๗. ตังนี้สำแดงพระราชเทวีเจ้าท่านแสงแก้งกลับนาให้เปน  
 ๓๘. โกฎฐาสบุนยโชนาไปแต่สำแดงปุพพญาพอกแม่  
 ๓๙. ออกท่านอีกสำแดงมหาธรรมราชาธิราชพระสรีธรรม  
 ๔๐. ราชมาดาญาติกุลพานภพสบสตัวทังหลายจุให้  
 ๔๑. พันทุกขภยนัทรายแต่ให้ไค้ละแก่สุขขทุกทุกก  
 ๔๒. (น).....อำนาจพระราชกุศลนั ฯ มาตราหนึ่งสำแดงพ  
 ๔๓. ....ท่านอุ้งกกล่าวอนาคตไว้ในจาริก  
 ๔๔. ....ผิมิทานพญาสามครา  
 ๔๕. ....  
 เลื่อมใสแลว  
 ๔๖. ....  
 ..... ไห  
 ๔๗. ....  
 ..... แล

## Face II

- [1.] (1) vatthuttayam namitvāna asokārāmamavhaye  
vakkhāmi puññasambhāram rāja(2)saddhāyimaṃ katam  
suṇātha puññaṃ caritaṃ sādhuṇaṃ rativaḍḍhanam  
silādigu(3)ṇabhūsāya buddhabhāvāya sañcitaṃ//  
katham//
- [5.] timisādhike sattasate (4) sakarāje sulikkhite  
kapisamvacchare y'eva āsādhe subhavārake  
(5) dhammarājādhirājāti mahā . . . . .  
lidayarājino nāma narinda(6)ssa mahesiyā
- [9.] sridhammarājamātā- . . . . .  
sotthi(7)nā mātuyā gabbhā (mahāpuññābhinikkhami)  
soḷasavassiko sippa- nippha(8)ttim pāpuṇāti ca  
. . . . .
- [13.] atṭhatimsāyuva(9)yasā (paripuṇṇa) . . . . .  
. . . . . sattasate sakarāje suddhipite  
(10)ratṭhamandalaṃ viṭṭhāraṃ khemañca . . . . .  
tass'eva puññavantassa ratṭhasimā (11)vi jāniyā
- [17.] pubbe nagaradeyyāti etaṃ ratṭhasimam akā  
purimānudisābhāge (12)vajjarapūranti tamakā  
biṅgāya nadiyā tīre uyyapabbatanāmakō  
dakkhiṇasmim (13)disābhāge etaṃ ratṭhasimam akā
- [21.] dakkiṇāyānudisāya hemapūranti tamakā  
(14)pacchime ṭakapūrañca etaṃ ratṭhasimam akā  
yamunāsākhanadiyā esā (khuddam) (15)nadi'vhayā  
lakkhapūranti nagaram (tiṭṭham) tassā sumāpitaṃ
- [25.] pacchimānudisābhāge e(16)tam ratṭhasimam akā  
uttarekā va ratṭhañca (iṭṭhappattānavhādharāṃ?)  
ratṭhasimam ṭhapetvāna (17)sattānam sukhadāyako  
devehi (ca manussehi) . . . . (18) . . . . .
- [29.] tass'eva dhammarañño . . . . .  
mahesī sundarīkāntā sabbe' (19)laṅkārabhūsitā  
(pañcaviti mahāpaññā mahā)moli mahāyasā  
buddhe dham(20)me ca saṅghe ca pasannā rattanattaye



- [65.] ārāmikaṃ ṭhapetvāna paṇḍitā upatṭhahi//  
           iminā puñña(41)kammena mama māṭāpitā ubho  
 sāmiko me mahādhamma- rājādhirājanāma(42)ko  
 sridhammarājamātā ca ye ca nāti añātikā
- [69.] sabbeva sukkhitā ho(43)ntu niddukkhā nirupaddavā  
 mama puññānubhāvena sabbe te tidivaṇṇatā  
 chasa sag(44)gesu sampattiṃ anubhuñjantu kāmato  
 mama puññānubhāvena puriso hom(45)yanāgate
- [73.] metteyyasseva buddhassa aggadhammaṃ sunāmahaṃ  
 tissāpi puñña(46)sambhāraṃ muddhāraṃ pacināmahaṃ  
 parisāgaṇamaññamhi so maṃ buddho pasamsatu  
           (47)dānādinaṃ samo añño rūpenāpi yasena vā
- [77.] āyunā dhanarāsīhi mā(48)me hotu bhava bhava  
 mesarānādātukāmassa koci sakkotu gaṇhituṃ  
           (49)apīca mama santasaṃ daliddānaṃ payojanaṃ  
 gambhīrāpārādānādi- sāgare(50)hi susitale
- [81.] nimujjitvā munindā va saṃbodhiṃ pāpuṇāmahaṃ  
 imasmim (51) nagare rajjaṃ kāressanti anāgate  
 khattiyā c'eva uggā ca dhammikā (52) ye mahāyasā  
 sabbe te anumodantu puññakamme mayā kate
- [85.] (53)pūjāvattthūni vaḍḍhantu puññakammarattā idhāti//  
           sridhammatrailoka(54)nāmena kavinā rājapaṇḍitena racitamitaṃ//

## TRANSLATION

## Face I

[I-1.] Hail! Good Fortune! Honor to the supremely auspicious Triple Gem!<sup>6</sup>

[I/1-13.] In Sakarāja seven hundred sixty-one, year of the hare,<sup>7</sup> in the month of Phagguṇa, on the seventh day of the waxing moon, at the auspicious moment, hour and day<sup>8</sup> and the favorable conjunction of the planets, Saṃtec Braḥ Rājadevī Śrī Cūḷākṣaṇa Arrgarājamahesī Debadbhōraṇī . . . karatana . . . māda-pravarā<sup>9</sup>, consort<sup>10</sup> of Saṃtec Mahādharmarājadhiraṇī, endowed with the five kinds of beauty<sup>11</sup>, . . . staunch in the religion of the Conqueror, founded a stupa in the Asokārāma monastery; and taking two holy relics that came from Ceylon<sup>12</sup> ——— one middle-sized, as large as a rice-grain broken in half, in color like crystal, one . . . [small, the size of a mustard-seed and in color] like [the dried flower of] a bikula<sup>13</sup> ——— she enshrined them

6) 'nama śrī trīratna namasatu maṅgalotḍrapḍramāna,' apparently for 'namas śrī trīratna namassatu maṅgalottaraparamāna.'

7) i.e. 1399 A.D.

8) *muhūrta*, a period of 48 minutes; *tithi*, a lunar day; *nāḍī*, 24 minutes.

9) i.e. Saṃtec Braḥ Rājadevī Śrī Cūḷākṣaṇa Agrarājamahesī Devadharaṇī . . . karatana . . . mādapravara. The editor of the inscription, Mr Prasāra Puñṇaḥ, restores *-karatana* as *Lokaratana* (Śilpākara, VIII/2, p. 61); but the name appears in Inscription XLVI (I/3) as *Tilakaratana*, where her full style is given as Sāṃtec Braḥ Rājajanaṇī Śrī Dharmarājamātā Mahātilakaratana Rājanātha. See JSS LVI/2, p. 226.

10) sc. widow.

11) *peñcābidhakalyāṇī*, i.e. beautiful hair, flesh, teeth, skin and good health; cf. II/31.

12) *මහලංකා*; though the name looks as if it meant something like 'upper land', it must mean Ceylon, as it corresponds to [Tamba]paṇṇipūra at II/38.

13) We reconstruct the lacuna at I/9 on the basis of the corresponding passage at II/38 f.; the last three akṣara of I/9, now illegible, must have been 𑀭𑀸𑀓𑀺, to be read with 𑀭 at the beginning of I/10, as 𑀭𑀸𑀓𑀺𑀭, 'color'. In neither face does the reference to the bikula (*minusops elengi*) specify whether the fruit or the flower is meant; we follow Mahā Sēṇ Manavidūra in taking it to mean the dried flower (see Śilpākara, IX/3, 77).

in the relic-chamber [of the stupa] ..... this great object of worship.<sup>14</sup> Four months later also an image of the Buddha ..... a kuṭi for Braḥ Śrī Mahābodhivaṅkarmalayāṇa<sup>15</sup> .....<sup>16</sup>, a wall, a bridge, and a road, beautiful with trees of all sorts.<sup>17</sup>

[I/13-23.] Sacred texts she then assembled,<sup>18</sup> a full set of the Three Piṭakas, in the charge of two expounders of the Dharma, one named <sup>2</sup>Cau Nāṇavaṃsa Rājapaṇḍita, and one named <sup>2</sup>Cau Śrī Vaṇṇ.<sup>19</sup> There is also a reciter<sup>20</sup> of the Dharma, to whom she gave the name <sup>2</sup>Cau Saṅkhasār.<sup>21</sup> Then she helped by placing fifty families of people, assigning them all as monastery servants, with Nāy Jyaṇ Śrī Caṇḍa as overseer.<sup>22</sup> She also gave land [worth] two hundred million<sup>23</sup> [cowries] as an endowment<sup>24</sup> ..... twenty-five cartloads of rice at

14) *cetiya* (I/11). Though the word is often used interchangeably with *stupa*, it more likely refers here to the bodhi tree she planted (II/41); we should probably understand that a new sentence began in the lacuna in I/10 telling us she planted the tree.

15) Mahābodhivaṃsa Kamalaṇḍāpa? There is no reference in the legible portions of Face II to this person, or to the kuṭi or the Buddha image.

16) Reference to II/41-49 will help fill the lacuna.

17) ไม้ท้าว appears to mean ไม้ดัด, 'trees in general'; the trees are listed at II/45-46.

18) ลำดับ, 'put in order', must mean she obtained existing copies of some books of the Tipiṭaka and caused new copies of the rest to be made.

19) These two persons are also mentioned at II/48-49, where they are called Nāṇavaṃsa Paṇḍita and Śrīvaṃsa Paṇḍita.

20) สมวต (*smuat*) corresponds to *pāligītāṃ*, 'reciter of Pali' at II/50. Mr Coedès kindly informs us that สมวต is apparently a Khmer word \**smvat*, an agentive noun (derived by the usual means of an infixed -m-) from the verb *svat*, to recite or chant (=Siamese สวด).

21) For Pali *saṅkhasara*, 'having a voice like a conch'. Cf. II/50.

22) i.e. นายเชียงศรีจันทร์ (*Nai Chiang Sī Jan*). The same person is referred to at II/52 as Śrī Canda.

23) Cf. II/61 and note 81. While the reading สองร้อยล้าน at I/18 is conjectural, it is clear enough at I/23.

24) The word อนุ (อัน) in this passage probably means to give as an endowment (is it an abbreviation of อนุบาล?). It is used in this sense in Inscription XLIX at least eight times (lines 20, 24, 27, 29, 32, etc.).

the beginning of each year<sup>25</sup>; she bought garden-land of all sorts for five million [cowries] to provide curry as estimated for fifty almsbowls daily; and [she gave] a full set of musical instruments, with trumpets and conchs, together with persons to play them, for all sorts of **pūjā**. Thus she made gifts amounting to two hundred million for every kind of routine and all sorts of festivals.<sup>26</sup> [All this she] brought to completion.

[I/23-27.] Then she invited a Mahāthera, a disciple of Braḥ Mahābuddhasāgòr, named Sòrabhaṅgàthera, distinguished for his righteousness, his deportment, and his performance of religious duties, to come to this Asokārāma as its abbot.<sup>27</sup>

[I/27-36.] Not only did Sāmtec Braḥ Rājadevī build this Asokārāma, but also the Dakṣiṇārāma<sup>28</sup> which the Queen<sup>29</sup> built for the Mahāthera Vanaratana, presenting one hundred [*rai*] of land yielding ten cartloads of rice [per year?], and assigning ten families as servants for that monastery; the Laṅkāārāma<sup>30</sup> is also to be counted, as well as the Pūrbārāma,<sup>31</sup> and the completion of the Sīlavissuddhāvāsa at the place where the King<sup>32</sup>, while serving as a monk, went to

25) The lacuna can be repaired from II/56 f.: 'she caused a grant of twenty-five cartloads of rice per year to be given to the people in the monastery.'

26) Apparently the endowment was intended to be sufficient to take care of future expenses of all sorts. Cf. below, note 84.

27) The Thera Sarabhaṅga, a disciple of Buddhasāgara (II/63 f.).

28) 'The Southern Monastery', which has not been identified.

29) เสด็จแม่อยู่หัว (II/28); evidently referring to the same lady but at an earlier stage in her career when her husband was still alive; she was already Queen, but (if the reading เสด็จ is right) had not yet received the title **Sāmtec** which was borne by Līdaiya's widow Sāmtec Braḥ Śrī Dharmarājamātā.

30) 'The Ceylon Monastery', also unidentified.

31) 'The Eastern Monastery', which must have been somewhere east of the city of Sukhodaya, though its exact location is not known. Perhaps it should be identified with the monument now called Cetiya Sūn (เจดีย์สูง, 'tall cetiya'), which stands to the east of Sukhodaya (Map 3, site number 32). See Griswold, *Towards a History of Sukhodaya Art*, second edition, Bangkok, 1968, pp. 67, 68. The Pūrbārāma is mentioned in two inscriptions on the bases of Buddha images; see *ibid.*, pp. 55, 59, 68 and Figs. 57-b, 68-a.

32) พ่อขุนว, i.e. Mahādharmaṛājā III.



practice asceticism<sup>33</sup> in the Field of Victory; at the Senāñ she finished a residence for the Stec Braḥ Mahāsvāmī <sup>2</sup>Cau<sup>34</sup>; we mention as well her completion of the Śrīcūḷāvāsa at the cremation-place of the father<sup>35</sup>; she also finished the Braḥ Dharmarājapūn at the cremation-

33) กัณฑ์กรรม (kdāṇṇ kamma). As we are informed by Mr Noom Yoonaidharma, Secretary of the Department of Fine Arts in Bangkok, this was a practice, alternatively called Desakāra, which survived up to a generation ago, but is now obsolete. After the rice-harvest, the monks who wished to perform it would go to a field some distance from town, near a charnel-ground, and live in improvised straw huts for several days, practising *vipassanā* all night, and sleeping part of the day. Query: was this not a variant of the 11th *dhūtaṅga* (ascetic practice), that of the 'charnel-ground-dweller' who meditates upon decaying corpses? See *The Path of Purification* by Buddhaghosa, translated by Bhikkhu Ñāṇamoli, Colombo, 1956, p. 76.

34) The meaning of Senāñ (I/33) is not clear; does it stand for Senāṅga, 'the four branches of an army'? Perhaps we ought to have punctuated differently, putting a semicolon after 'asceticism' and then continuing: 'in the Field of Victory she finished a residence for the Stec Braḥ Mahāsvāmī <sup>2</sup>Cau at the Senāñ.' The answers to such questions would be obvious to readers acquainted with the local toponymy; but since these places can no longer be identified our translation is conjectural.

35) สันตจพออก (I/35), i.e. Mahādharmarājā II, father of the reigning monarch and husband of the donor. It might perhaps be supposed that she is referring here to her own father Ḷīdaiya; but she refers to the latter more specifically at I/38 as 'her father Sāṃtec Brañā the Grandfather' สันตเจ้พระญาพออก; and in general the inscriptions of Mahādharmarājā III's reign refer to Ḷīdaiya as 'Mahādharmarājā the Grandfather' or something similar. The Śrīcūḷāvāsa was evidently a building called after the donor herself, part of whose name was Śrī Cūḷalakṣaṇa (I/3). It seems likely that royal cremations were performed in front of the Royal Palace, in or near the precinct of the Mahādhātu. When Fournereau visited Sukhodaya in 1892, he counted the remains of 189 buildings in that precinct, many of which were apparently funerary monuments. See Griswold, *Towards a History of Sukhodaya Art*, second edition, p. 22 and p. 66.

place of Sāṃtec Braḥ Rājamātā<sup>36</sup>; [all these things] she accomplished.<sup>37</sup>

[I/36-42.] The merit resulting from all her good works such as those mentioned, Sāṃtec Braḥ Rājadevī dedicates<sup>38</sup> to her father Sāṃtec Braṇā the Grandfather<sup>39</sup>, to her mother<sup>40</sup>, to Sāṃtec Mahādharmarājādhira<sup>41</sup>, to Braḥ Srī Dharmarājāmātā<sup>42</sup>, to her relatives,

36) i.e. Mahādharmarājā II's mother (Līdaiya's widow), whose title is given in fuller form at I/39 (Braḥ Srī Dharmarājāmātā), and at II/9 and II/68 (Srī Dhammarājāmātā).

37) Assuming the list is in chronological order, we may conjecture the succession of events was something like the following. The donor built the Dakṣiṇārāma, the Laṅkāṛāma and the Pūrbārāma during the lifetime of her husband Mahādharmarājā II. After his death (in 1397 or 1398 ?), their son Mahādharmarājā III entered the monkhood for a time so as to earn merit to transfer to the deceased, presumably in one of the great city monasteries such as the Mahādhātu, and during that time he went outside the city to practice asceticism for several days near a charnel-ground (in the Field of Victory ?); after his return to lay life his mother built a monastery there, the Sīlāvisuddhāvāsa, 'the Pure Abode of Righteousness', where the Braḥ Mahāsvāmī was invited to reside. Meanwhile preparations for her husband's cremation had been going on; and when it was over she erected the Śrīcūlāvāsa on the site. Her next work was to complete the 'Dharmarājapūn', i.e. Dharmarājapūraṇa, which perhaps here means 'founded by Dharmarājā' rather than 'completed' or 'restored' by him (the more usual meaning); it was presumably a funerary monument begun by Mahādharmarājā II in memory of his mother, but still under construction when he himself died, whereupon his widow completed it. Finally in 1399 she built the Asokārāma, dedicating the merit of the work to her husband and other deceased members of the family. It will be noticed that there is no mention of her building funerary monuments for her own father or mother; presumably they had been built by someone else (her father Līdaiya had died between 1368 and 1374; we do not know when her mother died).

38) แสดงแก่สิ่งกลับนาให้ไปบุญโลกนาลไปแต่ (I/37 f.) means something like 'aiming it to be given as distributed merit impelled towards'; we have translated the whole expression as 'dedicates'.

39) Līdaiya.

40) The donor's mother, of whom we know nothing except that she was one of Līdaiya's consorts.

41) The donor's husband, Mahādharmarājā II.

42) The latter's mother, who was probably a princess of Nān. (See JSS LVI/ 2, p. 218.) Mahādharmarājā II's father is not mentioned as such, as the donor has already distributed a share of the merit to him as her own father.

and to all creatures<sup>43</sup>. May it make them escape suffering and danger, may it make every one of them attain happiness! ..... the power of this royal merit-making<sup>44</sup>.

[I/42-47.] An[other] article<sup>45</sup>. Sāmtēc B[raḥ Rājadevi] ..... has caused to be stated for the future in the inscription ..... if there are any kings<sup>46</sup> ..... full of devotion<sup>47</sup> .....

### Face II<sup>48</sup>

[II/1-4.] Having bowed down before the Triple Gem, let me speak of this amassment of merit wrought by the royal zeal at the monastery called Asokārāma. You shall hear of the character of [that lady who is an] ornament of good qualities such as righteousness, enhancing the affection of virtuous people, and of the merit earned [by her] for the sake of enlightenment.

How [did she do it]?

[II/5-12.] In the year seven hundred thirty of the well-recorded<sup>49</sup> Sakarāja, a year of the monkey<sup>50</sup>, on an auspicious day in the month of Āsādha<sup>51</sup>, Dhammarājādhirāja<sup>52</sup>, great .....

43) พานภพสบสัตว์ทั้งหลาย (I/40), 'to reach every creature, all of them'.

44) The Pali passage corresponding to this paragraph is at II/66-71.

45) Very little survives of the last five lines of Face I, but their contents can be guessed by reference to II/72-85.

46) cf. II/82 f.

47) cf. II/85.

48) For help in the interpretation of the Pali face, we are indebted to Professor S.W. Karunatilake of Cornell University and to Professor Visuddhi Puṣyakula of Cūḷālaṅkaraṇa University. The reader will note that there are many abnormalities of spelling in the text, including several Sanskritisms or semi-Sanskritisms (for example the form *sri*, constantly used in place of Pali *siri*).

49) *sulikkhite*, for *sulikhite*.

50) 1368 A.D.

51) *āsādhe*, for Pali *āsāḷhe* (Skt. *āṣādhe*), corresponding to June-July.

52) *Mahādharṃarājā* II, the donor's husband.

the son of King Lidayarāja's Chief Queen Sridhammarājamātā<sup>53</sup>, being sixteen years of age, attained excellence in the branches of knowledge<sup>54</sup> .....

[II/13-28.] When he was thirty-eight ..... in the year seven hundred and .....<sup>55</sup> of the well-estab-

- 53) We might translate more literally: 'Dhammarājādhirāja, [ who ] because of the great merit [ he had accumulated in past lives ] was born safely from the womb of his mother Sridhammarājamātā, the Chief Queen of Lidayarāja King of men.' **Rājino** (I/8), a genitive sometimes used in place of the more usual **rañño**, is evidently used here for metrical reasons. **Sridhammarājamātā**-(I/9), though it looks like a nominative, is doubtless part of a compound whose genitive case-ending occurred in the lacuna. Lidaiya's Chief Queen Śrī Dhammarājamātā was probably a princess of *Nān* (see supra, note 42).
- 54) i.e. completed his education. The lacunae make the text ambiguous; as it stands, it could be interpreted to mean either that Mahādharmarājā II was born in CS 730 (AD 1368) or that he completed his education in that year. For reasons which will be stated below (note 55), it seems to us certain that it was the year in which he completed his education. If it is asked why that event should take so prominent a place in the inscription, the question is easily answered. In accordance with Indian tradition, sixteen was the age at which a prince completed his education and took a wife. Cf. the account in **Paṭhamasambodhi** of Gotama's demonstration of his attainments as a preliminary to his marriage at the age of sixteen (see Alabaster, *The Wheel of the Law*, London, 1871, 120 f.). An example nearer in time and place to the events of our inscription is the marriage of King *Fā Ngum* of *Lân Chàng* at the age of sixteen in 1332 (see Finot, *Recherches sur la littérature laotienne*, BEFEO XVII/5, p. 165). It seems likely that in our inscription the actual reference to Mahādharmarājā II's marriage came at I/12, which is now illegible; in any case, in his widow's allusions to her husband's biography the event which would naturally be uppermost in her mind would be his marriage to her.
- 55) How should the lacuna at II/14 be restored? Mahā Sēn Manavidūra, taking the statement at II/5-11 to mean that Mahādharmarājā II was born in CS 730, conjecturally restores the missing word at II/14 as **atṭhasatṭhī**, 'sixty-eight' (Śilpākara, IX/3, p. 76). He arrives at the conjecture by adding 38 to 730; and **atṭhasatṭhī** is metrically satisfactory, though there is admittedly nothing visible in the stone that looks like that word. But as Mahādharmarājā II was already dead in CS 761 when the inscription was composed, we do not see how the date at II/14 can possibly be 768. If, on the other hand, the King was 16 in 730, as we believe, the date when he was

lished<sup>56</sup> Sakarāja, his kingdom was broad<sup>57</sup> and free from danger..... The boundaries of that meritorious man were known to be [as follows]: in the east, he made his boundary Nagaradeyya; in the southeastern part, he made it Vajjarapūra; he made his boundary in the southern part a place called Uyyapabbata on the bank of the River Biṅgā; in the southwest he made it Hemapūra; and in the west he made his boundary Tākapūra; the well-built town of Lakkhapūra standing on the branch of the Yamunā which is called the Rivulet he made his boundary in the northwest; and in the north the district bearing the name Itṭhipaṭṭana [?].<sup>58</sup> Having established the boundaries of his

38 would be 22 years later, i.e. 752, plus or minus one to allow for unknown fractions of a year. Yet it is hard to see how the illegible word can be equivalent to 51, 52 or 53; and in any case the limits of possibility would be between 51 and 61. Judging from the rubbings, Dr Prasert thinks that part of the word may be -uttar-. To read paññās'uttare (taking -uttare as a Sanskritism equivalent to -ādhike at II/5) would give a date of 750, which would improve the arithmetic without entirely correcting it, but at the same time do violence to the metre (unless -ttare could be counted as a single syllable). On the other hand saṭṭh'uttare would accord better with the metre; but while a date of 760 (AD 1398, one year before the inscription was composed) is not impossible in itself, it is difficult to see how the King could have been 38 in that year, as it cannot be reconciled with any interpretation so far proposed for the statement at II/5-11. We therefore leave the question of the reading undecided and tentatively accept a date around 752 (1390) as that when the King was 38.

56) suddhipite, for suddhāpīte?

57) viṭṭhāraṇ, for vitthāraṇ.

58) The names on the list are all attempts to render real place-names in Pali, either by translation or by approximation. Nagaradeyya is Nagara Daiy, *Nakòn Tai*, probably somewhere not very far away from the district which now bears that name, in Biṣṇuloka province, northeast of Biṣṇuloka itself. Vajjarapūra is Bejrapūrṇa *Petchabūn*, on the Sak. Uyyapabbata on the Biṅgā must be *Dòl U* on the Ping; its exact location is uncertain, but it was probably between *Gampèng Pet* and Nagara Svarga. Hemapūra is *Chiang Tòng*, a riverine port on the Ping, a little below the present town of Tāk (*Đàk*, 𑀅𑀲𑀭). Tākapūra is Old Tāk, on the Ping about 20 km. upstream from the present town. Lakkhapūra on the lesser branch of the Yamunā must be something like *Müang Sèn* on the lesser branch (*Kwè Nòl*) of the *Yom*, but the location is not known. Itṭhipaṭṭana must be *Tā Il* (𑀅𑀲𑀭𑀢𑀺𑀭), probably at or near the place of that name at Uttaratiṭṭha. As we have remarked in our article *A Declaration of Independence and its Consequences*, the list shows Mahādharmarājā II in possession of all the territory that was subject to his father Ḷidaiya at the height of his career except Nagara Svarga; cf. JSS LVI/2, pp. 213-215. None of Ḷidaiya's known inscriptions lay claim to Tāk, which he seems to have recovered under curious circumstances at the very end of his life; see Griswold, *Towards a History of Sukhodaya Art*, p. 41.

kingdom, he who gave joy to [all] creatures ..... [was honored ?] both by gods and by men.

[II/29-34.] The Chief Queen of that Dhammarājā ..... beautiful and beloved, adorned with all embellishments, possessing the five-fold happiness<sup>59</sup>, great intelligence, great authority and great renown, rejoicing in the Three Gems, the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Saṅgha, had two sons, Dhammarājādhirāja<sup>60</sup> of great renown the elder son, and a younger son named Asoka.<sup>61</sup>

[II/35-42.] In the year of the hare, seven hundred sixty-one of the well-recorded Sakarāja<sup>62</sup>, on the seventh day of the waxing<sup>63</sup> half of the month of Phagguṇa<sup>64</sup>, an auspicious day, the stupa was entirely completed in which she had deposited in the relic-chamber two relics brought from [Tamba]paṇṇipūra<sup>65</sup>, [one of them] middle-sized like a broken rice-grain<sup>66</sup> [and in color] like crystal, [the other] small as a mustard-seed [and in color] like [the dried flower of] a bikula<sup>67</sup>; and having erected a vihāra and a maṇḍapa, and planted a bodhi tree as an object of worship,<sup>68</sup> she dedicated the monastery in its entirety.<sup>69</sup>

59) cf. above, note 11.

60) Mahādharmarājā III, the reigning monarch.

61) Of whom we know nothing.

62) 1399 A.D.

63) -sukkha-, for -sukka-.

64) February-March.

65) Ceylon. See Malalasekera, *Dictionary of Pali Proper Names*, London, 1960, I, p. 995, *sub verbo* Tambapaṇṇi.

66) bhinnataṇḍalā, for bhinnataṇḍulā.

67) cf. above, p. 44 and note 13.

68) cetiyam; cf. above, note 14; as the stupa was mentioned earlier (thūpo... māpito, II/40) it seems best to take **cetiyam** as being in apposition to **bhodipādapam**, and to give it the more general meaning of 'object of worship'.

69) Such must be the sense of the conjectural reading **sammabbakari** (II/42, > **sammā** + **avakaroti** ?); or perhaps we should read **sammabbakiri** (> **sammā** + **avakirati**), 'poured out [the water of dedication] entirely.' In neither the passage II/35-42, nor the corresponding passage in Siamese, I/1-11, is it perfectly clear which of the various actions occurred on the 7th day of Phagguṇa 761, and which ones had been done beforehand. Since it is named as an auspicious day, we are probably to understand that it was the day when the finishing touches were put on the stupa, the bodhi tree was planted, and the monastery was dedicated.

[II/43-47.] [She dug] a moat<sup>70</sup> [around the precinct] on the inner side, and [built] on the outer side this long high wall of splendid appearance .....<sup>71</sup> By planting surabhināga, punnāga, bikula and mango, jackfruit, elephant-apple and cocoanut ..... and double jasmine<sup>72</sup>, she made the monastery called Asokārāma lovely.<sup>73</sup>

[II/48-50.] ..... in this place<sup>74</sup> she appointed a paṇḍita named Nāṇavaṃsa and a paṇḍita named Srivaṃsa ..... — I speak here of the meaning — and a person named Saṃkhasara as reciter of Pali.<sup>75</sup>

[II/51-57.] She gave monastery slaves, comprising fifty families, under the supervision of a man named Sri Canda<sup>76</sup>, .....

70) parikkhañca, for parikhañca.

71) We have omitted the second half of II/44, as the lacuna makes it unintelligible.

72) There is a little ambiguity in some of the plant-names at II/45-46. If we take the words in the sense given in the Pali dictionaries, we should understand **surabhināga** as 'fragrant nāga' (*mesua ferrea*), **punnāga** as *calophyllum inophyllum* (or possibly *areca catechu*?), **bakula** as *minuspops elengi* (𑀧𑁆𑀭𑀸𑀓), **amba** as mango (*mangifera indica*), **panasaka** as jackfruit (*artocarpus integrifolia*), **kapittha** as elephant-apple (*feronia elephantum*), **nālīkera** as cocoanut, and **mālīkā** as double jasmine (*jasminum auriculatum*?). But if the author had in mind plants with similar names in Siamese the meaning would be a little different: **punnāga** would be *mesua ferrea*; **surabhināga** would be a compound in which **surabhī** would be equivalent to **sārabhī**, *ochrocarpus siamensis*, and **nāga** would probably be *callophyllum inophyllum* (unless it stands for **nāgalatā**, betel-vine, *piper betle*). There is no such ambiguity regarding the other names.

73) The wall and 'trees of all sorts' are mentioned at I/13, and the moat may have been mentioned in the lacuna at I/12. There does not seem to be enough room in the lacuna at II/44 to list the other things mentioned at I/11-13 (Buddha image, kuṭi, bridge and road) as having been made four months after the events of the 7th day of Phagguṇa.

74) Literally 'in which place' (yamhi, I/48), i.e. the Asokārāma.

75) Apparently the author injects the parenthetical remark 'I speak here of the meaning' in order to emphasize the contrast between the two expounders of the Dharma, who explain the meaning of the texts, and the conch-voiced reciter, who chants them in the original Pali; cf. I/14-16.

76) cf. I/17 f.

and players<sup>77</sup>, together with persons who perform the five kinds of music, for example percussion instruments, the conch, the flute, the big drum and the big gong.<sup>78</sup> She gave a field four hundred fathoms in length and two hundred fathoms in width<sup>79</sup>, she caused a grant of twenty-five cartloads of rice per year to be given to the people in the monastery<sup>80</sup>, she bought garden-land and property in the amount of five crores<sup>81</sup> and caused it to be given to the people here to provide suitable curries<sup>82</sup>, and she caused almsfood to be given regularly to the fifty monks who live here<sup>83</sup>, her munificence at this place amounting to two hundred crores.<sup>84</sup>

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77) natthumad si s , for na amad sis , 'she gave (ad si) players.'

78) cf. I/21.

79) vi  h rato (II/55), for vitth rato. The Sukhodayan fathom (v ), at least in the late 13th century, seems to have been about 1.86 m. (see Griswold, *Towards a History of Sukhodaya Art*, p. 8), which would make the field about 744 m. by 372 m.

80) cf. I/19.

81) cf. I/19. f., where     corresponds to    amavattu  at II/58. The word ko i (II/58) properly means a crore, i.e. 10 million, which would make the sum named here equal to 50 million; but it is obviously the same sum named at I/19 as 5 million. We think the Siamese face gives the right amount; and as ko i is often used in a loose sense to mean 'a large sum' we believe that ko i (or crore) must here be understood as one million.

82) kappiyabya janatth ya, in which atth ya (dative) means 'for the sake of', i.e. 'to provide'. Cf. I/20.

83) cf. I/20 f.

84) cf. above, note 81; properly 2000 million, but here corresponding to 200 million at I/18 (conjectural reading) and at I/23. The financial arrangements as given in the P li face tally reasonably well with those in the Siamese. The field 400 fathoms long and 200 fathoms wide at II/55 seems to correspond to the endowment of land at I/18 (worth 200 million, if the conjectural reading is right). The 25 cartloads of rice per year (I/19, II/56) presumably came from the harvest of this land. Other food would come from the garden land mentioned at I/19 and II/58. Together these sources would supply food for the 50 monks who were expected to reside at the monastery regularly, and for their servants, etc. Probably the income from the endowment would be sufficient to provide for any other sort of 'routine' expenses, and for festivals as well.



[II/58-65.] When everything was completed, including the construction of the stupa, she held the dedication ceremony for the Asokārāma. Having appointed as chief of the monastery a disciple of Buddhasagara, the Thera named Sarabhaṅga, abounding in righteousness and other good qualities, she supports him and his retinue of followers with the [four] requisites.<sup>85</sup>

[II/66-81.] By the action of this meritorious work of mine<sup>86</sup>, may my father and mother both, my husband Mahādharmarāj-ādhirāja, and his mother Sridhammarājamātā, as well as everyone else whether kinsmen or not, be made happy, free from misery, and free from affliction!<sup>87</sup> By the power of my merit, may all those who have died<sup>88</sup> enjoy bliss in the six heavens<sup>89</sup> according to their desires! By the power of my merit, may I be reborn as a male in the future, may I listen to the excellent Dhamma of the Buddha Metteyya, may I retain this woman's accumulated merit . . . . .<sup>90</sup>, and may that Buddha commend me in the midst of his assembly! May no other be my equal in any existence, in almsgiving for instance, or in beauty, renown, longevity or riches! May no one be able to deprive me of those things which I wish to give away, and may my possessions<sup>91</sup> be useful to the poor! Having plunged into the cool ocean of almsgiving,

85) cf. I/23 f.

86) The concluding passage of the Pali face, I/66-85, in which the donor is made to speak in the first person, corresponds to the concluding passage of the Siamese face (I/36-47), in which she speaks in the third person.

87) cf. I/36-40.

88) *tidivaṅgata* (II/70), lit. 'those who have gone to the Tidiva heaven', i.e. the *Tāvatiṃsa* (see Malalasekera, *Dictionary of Pali Proper Names*, sub verbo **Tidiva**); cf. Siamese *divaṅgata* (ทิวงคต), 'to die' (used for a certain rank of royalty).

89) The six deva-worlds (*kāmaloka*, 'worlds where desire exists', in contrast to the higher heavens in which it has been extinguished).

90) We have not attempted to translate **muddhāraṃ**, the meaning of which is uncertain. 'This woman' is of course the donor herself in her present existence, referred to in the deictive form instead of the first person because she is here speaking as if she had already been reborn as a male and were viewing the present events in retrospect.

91) As **santasaṃ** (I/79) is apparently meaningless in the context, we conjecture that **santakaṃ** ('property') was intended.

which is deep and limitless, may I attain perfect Enlightenment like the lord of ascetics !

[II/82-85.] Whatever kings and great men, righteous and of much renown, may rule this land in the future, may they all rejoice in the meritorious work done by me<sup>92</sup> ! May the places of worship prosper here, as well as the persons who take delight in merit !

[II/86.] Composed by the poet and royal paṇḍita named Sridhammatrailoka.<sup>93</sup>

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92) cf. I/42 f. The wish the donor expresses here may indicate her concern for the future of the dynasty. In 1378 her husband had been forced to acknowledge the suzerainty of Ayudhyā : during the second reign of Rāmeśvara of Ayudhyā (1388-95) the suzerainty seems to have been allowed to lapse; but in 1397—two years before the present inscription was composed—King Rāmarāja of Ayudhyā (r. 1395-1409) visited Sukhodaya and reasserted his suzerainty. At the time of writing, Mahādharmaṛāja III and the Queen Mother were no doubt planning the campaign against Ayudhyā which they undertook the next year, and the Declaration of Independence that followed it. Some time between 1409 and 1412 the dynasty was again reduced to vassalage. See our article *A Declaration of Independence*, JSS LVI/2, p. 230.

93) cf. above, p. 38.