

THE INSCRIPTION OF VĀT JĀN LÒM (1384 A.D.)

Epigraphic and Historical studies No. 8

by

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An inscribed stone slab, now in the Manuscript and Inscription Division of the National Library at Bangkok, was discovered at an unrecorded date among the ruins of a monastery now known as Vāt Jān Lôm (วัดช้างล้อม), outside the walled city of Sukhodaya. The stone, which is 1.70 m. high, 36 cm. wide and 18 cm. thick, is inscribed on both faces and one of the edges. The text is in Siamese, written in Sukhodayan characters of the 14th century. A transcript into modern Siamese letters by Mr Prasāra Puñpragòñ is published in *Śilpākara*, X/1, together with a version in modernized spelling and a short glossary.

The inscription records the founding of the monastery, and the accomplishment of other meritorious works, by a man called 'the Foster-Father Sai Tām,' พ่โสดำ (I/6, III/12), i.e. พ่อแม่โสดำ. 'Sai' means he was the fourth son of his father, and his personal name was Tām (ดำ), 'black'. Though the expression พ่อ (พ่อ) is unusual, it obviously means 'foster-father', because we are told at II/34 and III/13 that he was the husband of 'the Foster-Mother Det' แม่โสด. The term แม่, literally 'breast-mother', is the usual one for a wet-nurse or foster-mother. Here, since it is used without further qualification, it presumably means that Lady Det had been the wet-nurse or foster-mother of the ruler of Sukhodaya. The reference at II/33 f., in which her spirit is included among those whom the Foster-Father helped (by transferring a share of his merits to them), shows that she died before the inscription was composed. There can be little doubt that it was composed by the Foster-Father himself, though it always refers to him in the third person.

The main purpose of practically all the Sukhodayan inscriptions, no matter how much additional information they may give, is to commemorate a ceremony which accompanied some specific act, such

as the installation of a throne, an oath of friendship between two rulers, the promulgation of a law, the exoneration of a monk who had been falsely accused, the founding or dedication of a monastery or of a cetiya, vihāra or statue, or some other donation to religion. When it was the founding or dedication of a monastery, the inscription would naturally be set up near the entrance, so that anyone entering it would know whose 'meritorious action' it sprang from. The monastery founded by the Foster-Father is of course that in whose ruins it was found, now known as Vāt Jāh Lōm.

The opening date, which comes at I/3 ff., just after the exordium, is Wednesday, the full-moon day of the sixth month, B.E. 1927, year of the rat; in other words the day of the great Buddhist festival of Visākhāpūjā, C.S. 746, year of the rat, Mr Roger Billard of the Ecole Française d'Extrême-Orient, to whom we are indebted for calculating this date, informs us that it corresponds to Wednesday, May 4, 1384 A.D. (Julian).

This is almost certainly the date when the monastery was dedicated, though the text does not actually say so. As we learn at I/36 f., the Foster-Father had founded it in the fifth month in a year of the serpent. No numeral is given for that year, but it must have been the nearest year of the serpent preceding C.S. 746, namely C.S. 739 or A.D. 1377. Seven years is an unusually long time to elapse between the founding and the dedication of a monastery. It may have taken the Foster-Father all that time to finish building and equipping it.

In 1384, in connection with the dedication ceremony, the Foster-Father took the 'great resolve' to attain Buddhahood in some future incarnation. After telling us about this (I/3-8), he says he will give an account of the moral virtues, energy and wisdom which are required to attain such a goal. What he actually gives us from here on is his autobiography, with the chief emphasis on the works of merit he has performed during the course of his life.

First he skips far backward in time to tell us that, when the Mahāsaṅgharāja came to teach (at Sukhodaya), Saṃtec Mahādharr-

marājā gave up his throne and went to be ordained as a monk at the Mango Grove; whereupon the earth quaked (I/10 ff.).

Though no date is given for these events, they are well known to us from other sources.

In 1361, as we know from Inscriptions IV and V, Mahādharmarājā I (Līdaiya, *Lū Tai*) invited an eminent monk from Bann (ဘုၤ, i.e. wu; near Martaban in Lower Burma) to come and settle at Sukhodaya. This monk, who is designated only by his title Mahāsāmī Saṅgharāja, was apparently a Môn. He had studied in Ceylon; he had a thorough knowledge of the Tipiṭaka (Inscr. IV, II/13; Inscr. V, II/20); and his linguistic competence can be judged from the graceful Pali verses he composed in honor of Mahādharmarājā I (Inscription VI). The King received him with great honor, took him to the Monastery of the Mango Grove (No. 26 on Map 3, JSS LVII/1, p. 34) to spend the three months of the rainy season in retreat. At the end of that time, on the evening of Wednesday September 22, 1361 A.D. (Julian)¹, after giving a festival for the inauguration of a great statue of the Buddha at the Royal Palace, the King invited the Mahāsāmī Saṅgharāja and all the monks to enter the palace, where he requested ordination as a samaṇera. Donning the yellow robe, he took the 'great resolve' to become a Buddha in some future life, whereupon the earth quaked in acknowledgment of his vow. After being ordained as a samaṇera, he proceeded on foot all the way to the Mango Grove. There, as we

1) For these events see Griswold, *Towards a History of Sukhodaya Art*, pp. 35-37; a correction is required at lines 19-20, p. 35: instead of 'the 23rd day of the month of kṛtika, M.S. 1283, i.e. in November 1361', read: 'the 23rd day of a month whose designation is illegible, M.S. 1283, corresponding to September 22, 1361.' We are much indebted to Mr. Roger Billard for calculating this date for us. It is given in Khmer in Inscription IV as Wednesday the 8th day of the waning moon, in the ṛkṣa of Punarvasū, 1283 saka, year of the ox (II/11). It is given in Siamese in Inscription V as Wednesday, a 'ryaṇ plau' day in the Tai reckoning, pū (nar) bhasunakṣatra, towards evening, 1905 years or 695, 601 days after the Buddha entered nirvāṇa (III/23 f.). Mr. Billard informs us that all the elements of these dates correspond to Wednesday September 22, 1361 A.D. (Julian), and make the date a certainty. He adds that the conjectural reading of the name of the month as 'kattika' in Inscription VI (I/2) does not fit with the other information.

know from Inscription VI, he received the upasampadā as a bhikkhu the next day. We do not know how long he remained a monk; it was probably at least three months, perhaps six; after that he returned to lay life and remounted the throne.

While the King was still at the Mango Grove, as we learn from the present inscription (I/17 f.), the Foster-Father joined him and had himself ordained at the same place. He too returned to lay life later.

After Mahādhamarājā's death, the Foster-Father again became a monk, this time in a monastery which was headed by the Mahāthera Buddhasāgara,² and distributed the merit accruing from his pious act to his father and mother, his brothers and sisters, and all his deceased relatives (I/20-26). This may give us a clue to his own identity. The recently deceased Mahādhamarājā I would certainly be one of the chief recipients of the distribution; as he is not specifically mentioned as such, we may assume that the Foster-Father was either his brother or his son; and as the inscription seems to imply that he was Mahādhamarājā I's near-contemporary, we are inclined to think he was his brother, or at least his half-brother. It is a pity that no date is given for Mahādhamarājā I's death; we know from other sources that it occurred some time between 1368 and 1374, but it would have been helpful if we could pinpoint it. At that date, whatever it may have been, he was succeeded by his son Mahādhamarājā II, who was probably born in 1352.³

Very likely Mahādhamarājā II was nursed as a child by 'the Foster-Mother Det', and in his boyhood his education may have been taken in charge by her husband the 'Foster-Father', especially during the 'seven years' (beginning some time between 1362 and 1364) when his own father was absent at Biṣṇuloka.⁴

2) Perhaps the same Buddhasāgara who is mentioned in the Asokārāma inscription; see JSS LVII/1, pp. 46 and 55.

3) See JSS LVII/1, p. 50, note 54.

4) For the probable dates of Mahādhamarājā I's sojourn at Biṣṇuloka, see Griswold, *Towards a History of Sukhodaya Art*, p. 38.

Upon the death of 'Mahādevī', the inscription tells us, the Foster-Father again entered the monkhood (I/26 ff.), this time at a monastery headed by a Sinhalese Mahāthera named Anurādha (cf. Anurādhapura, the old capital of Ceylon). We are not told who 'Mahādevī' was or when she died. Probably she was Mahādharmarājā I's queen or else his sister, perhaps a half-sister who was also his queen. If she was his younger sister, she may have been the same 'Mahādevī' whom he had named as regent at Sukhodaya when he went to reside at Biṣṇuloka.⁵

We do not know how long the Foster-Father remained at Anurādha's monastery. His sojourn there ended when, as we learn at I/28 ff., 'Brañā Śrī Debāhūrāja took him out (of the monkhood) to help build up the kingdom ... in order that the populace should not be distressed, that their sufferings should be brought to an end, and their desires fulfilled.'

Who was Brañā Śrī Debāhūrāja? 'Debāhūrāja' looks like a deformation of Devabāhūrāja, 'ruler with god-like arm' (?); but apart from this inscription we have no knowledge of anyone with such a name. In this context, however, 'Brañā' certainly means a king, and it is hard to see how any other king than Mahādharmarājā II can be meant, though unfortunately we have no means of knowing whether or not 'Śrī Debāhūrāja' was part of his titulature. The expression about helping to build up the kingdom and relieving the sufferings of the populace sounds as if the Foster-Father were being summoned to act as chief minister, or perhaps as regent; or at the very least as if he were being entrusted with an important political mission.

The inscription goes on to say that the Foster-Father, after due reflection, converted his own home into a monastery in the fifth month of the year of the serpent (I/35 ff.). If this means C.S. 739, as appears likely (p. 190), the date would be in March or April, 1377 A.D. (Julian). The inscriptions of Pagán cite more than one instance of a princely personage converting his home into a monastery in the

5) See Jinakālamāli, in Coedès, *Documents sur l'histoire politique et religieuse du Laos occidental*, BEFEO XXV, pp. 47 and 100.

12th and 13th centuries. The Foster-Father very likely got the idea from some of the Môn monks from Lower Burma, most of whom belonged to sects whose tradition stemmed from Pagán.

Among the ruins now known as Văt Jăn Lôm, where the Foster-Father's home must have been, the most conspicuous feature today is a stupa surrounded by masonry elephants; but the inscription does not mention it when enumerating the Foster-Father's works at the newly-founded monastery; perhaps it was built later. We are told (I/37 ff.) that he founded a statue of the Buddha, decorated the premises, erected kutis for monks, built a library for the Tipiṭaka, installed a Chinese cloth picture of the Buddha, planted a Bodhi tree, and transferred the merit to Saṃtec Mahādharmarājā, i.e. Mahādharmarājā I. He also made a stone statue of the Buddha and transferred the merit to Mahādevī.

Some relics now appeared in the sky and performed a miracle above the monastery (II/6 ff.). It seems they had been enshrined in a cetiya built by Mahādharmarājā I, and, as usual in such miracles, they must have sprung out of it and darted around in the sky. The Foster-Father coiled up his hair and (so it seems, but the passage is not clear) cut it off in token of abandoning the lay life. Then he took a gold necklace and beat it into gold leaf with which to gild the statue of the Buddha.

The miracle apparently reminded him of one he had seen some years earlier, so he digresses to describe it (II/12 ff.). Brañā Śrī Debāhūrāja had sent him to the Court of the Mahārāja, and he saw some relics performing a miracle at Rabūñ. 'Mahārāja' was the usual title of the kings of *Lân Nà Tai*; and we are safe in assuming that the reference is to Kilanā (*Gū Nà*), who ruled that kingdom from 1355 to 1385. Rabūñ is Haripuñjaya (*Lâm bŭn*, *Lampŭn*), which was still the cultural capital of *Lân Nà*, though *Chieng Mai*, was the administrative capital. If the Foster-Father went on a mission to *Chieng Mai*, nothing would be more natural than for him to make the short journey to Haripuñjaya to worship the relics enshrined in the Mahādhātu, the principal cetiya of the town.

Let us see if we can determine the approximate date of the Foster-Father's mission. When Brañā Śrī Debāhūrāja took him out of the monkhood, the Foster-Father was residing at Anurādha's monastery, which he had entered after the death of Mahādevī. Mahādevī was still alive when Mahādharmarājā I died (I/20 ff.), some time between 1368 and 1375; so the date of the mission cannot have been before 1368 at the earliest, and was probably several years later. But as the Foster-Father was still at Anurādha's monastery when he left the monkhood to set out on his mission, it was before 1377, the year the Foster-Father founded his own monastery.

In 1371 Paramarājā I of Ayudhyā began a series of attacks against the kingdom of Sukhodaya, which continued intermittently for the next seven years. It was probably during this period, perhaps around 1375, that the Foster-Father went on his mission to Kilanā. The purpose of the mission was very likely to get help for Mahādharmarājā II against Paramarājā. Kilanā owed a debt of gratitude to the memory of Mahādharmarājā I, who had helped him establish the 'Sinhalese' monastic order in Lán Nā by persuading the Mahāthera Sumana in 1369 to go there to settle.⁶ We do not know whether or not Kilanā actually gave Sukhodaya any help. If he did, it was unavailing, for in 1378 Paramarājā took Mahādharmarājā II prisoner and reduced him to vassalage.

After the digression about his mission to the Mahārāja, the Foster-Father returns to the point where he interrupted himself, repeats the statement about beating the necklace into gold leaf (II/19 f.), and continues his account of his benefactions to the monastery. These fill all the rest of Face II and most of Face III.

6) See Griswold, *Towards a History of Sukhodaya Art*, p. 41.

ด้านที่ ๑

คำจารึก

๑. สิรินโมพุทชายสิทธิ สกกคติเดชะ ทบะพระ
๒. พุทธพระธรรมพระสงฆ์เป็นมงคลบน
๓. นเทาสรรพานคราย ๐ สกราช แต่พระเจ้า้าน
๔. รพานไคพนเก้ารอยญีสิบเจดบีใน
๕. ปี่ชวคเกื่อนหกบวรณมีพุทพา
๖. รพนไสคำเอาใจท่งสบรรธาหรรสา
๗. ทิเรกอนเณกไมตรีศรีสกกยเพื่อจากกไค
๘. รชำมจากสงสารเมื่อนยรพานที่หม
๙. น่อนนพรรณนาถึงสิลพยรปรห
๑๐. ญามหาสงฆราชาสุกัฒมาสงงสอนสำเ
๑๑. กมมหาธรรมราชา มหาธรรมราชาขอรใน
๑๒. สาสนามีใจสบรรธาแก่ไตรสอระนาถว่า
๑๓. บริสุทธิ จิงไปปล้ปะละราชสัคคกพิพส
๑๔. สตรทงหลายเสียแล้วแผวภยานครา
๑๕. ยกลายออกบวสในสุ่ม่วงไคเป็นภิกสุ ๐ เ
๑๖. แผ่นดินอนนหนาคลาสนนปนนเพิน ๐
๑๗. พนัเหนใจชินนกกหนาสรรรหา
๑๘. รสาทิเรกอนเณกไมตรีไมทนิยเคารพย
๑๙. นบเข้าบวสทรงผนวสเป็นภิกสุในสำนัก
๒๐. กมหาธรรมราชาเมื่อสเ็จมหาธรรมรา

๒๑. ชาเสวยพิราโลยไคลยจากพรากเสียพน
๒๒. เข้าบวสในสำนักมมหาเถรพุทธสาคร
๒๓. อนนทนมมอไปคัวยเถรานุเถรทอง
๒๔. หลายให้บุนไปแก้พี่แม่พี่น้องพวก
๒๕. พ้องเผ่าพรรณอนนเหงาเจ้าไทอนน
๒๖. ปสุปรโลกพุน ○ ถกคณนมหาเทวีศว
๒๗. รรกลาไลไปโสค ○ พนเข้าบวสในสำนักม
๒๘. หาเถรอนูราชอนนลูกแต่สิงหลมา ○ พ
๒๙. รญาสรืเทพาหุราชเอาออกมาชอยสา
๓๐. บานสาเมือง ○ ไกบไหเคื่องใจไฟไรผา
๓๑. ข้าคนพลทองหลายไหวายทะละ...
๓๒. นตา ○ พนร่ำเพ็งอนนจกกเป็นบุญคุ (ณ)
๓๓. ปรอยชโปรตทองทานทองคนทอง...
๓๔. ทองผิจงญามีใจหลงในสงสาราพ (รพ)
๓๕. ทธนี ○ พนพิจารณาเนือใจในตนแล
๓๖. จิงแผงที่เรือนตนเป็นพระพิหารในปี
๓๗. มเสณเคือนท่าจิงปรคิสถาพุทธปรคิ
๓๘. มา ○ หาผู้ทวยค่านวรกรรมภพยมารจิ
๓๙. ตเรจนาเทพคาอสุร ○ บวสควยผู้รูปทอง (ง)
๔๐. หลาย พรายงามถวันแหง ○ แถงทองกุตีชี
๔๑. บวสแลวจิงมาตงกท่าพระป็คกธรรม
๔๒. สงวรวใจบูชาพระอิทธิกรรมกบบควยพ

คำานที่ ๒

๑. รบคจันมาไวได้ปลุกทงพระสร้ม (หาไ)
๒. พรือนนเปนจอมบุญจอมสรณ์ ..
๓. พระบคอนนึ่งควยสูงได้สืบสืสอ (กก)
๔. ทำไหบุญไปแก้สำเจมหารธรรม (ราชา)
๕. กทำพระหินอนนึ่งไหบุญไปแก (มห)
๖. าทวี ๐ แลวเหนพระสรืรคคณธาตุอ (นน)
๗. สำเจมหารธรรมราชากกทำปราชิตหารม. ..
๘. ลายเรือนทนกงลงสเงินเทาเณินสาค (เห)
๙. นีอกกลางหาภาวงามทนกกหนามีใจ (ส)
๑๐. บรรธาขอคเณไส.....ถวายเป (น)
๑๑. บุษาจิงมาเอสอยทอ (ง) เถ (ว) นึ่งตีโสรม (พ)
๑๒. อกพระเจ้า ๐ พรญาสรืเท (พา) หุราชไ...
๑๓. ไหไปสุ่มหาราชเหนพรส (วีร) คคณธาตุ (ก)
๑๔. ทำปราชิตหารในรพญพุงออกคองงทา (น)
๑๕. หล่นพนนละออกเทาลูกพนนลบบเทา (ล)
๑๖. กพุทธราดสาใสงามคองผลิตรคตคณ (กว)
๑๗. ขยวไนกลางคองคเณนทานชบกรรมค
๑๘. นนเหนคองอนนมีใจสบรรธาทนกก
๑๙. นาเอสอยทองแถวนึ่งตีพอกพระเจ้า
๒๐. แลวมากทำผกาสะ (ญบ) ผ่าสนับเชิง
๒๑. อาธาร ๐ กบบควยพคคสวคธรรม ๐ แถง

๒๒. ทิ้งงพระเจ้า ◦ จรามขนอนหนึ่ง ◦ พู
๒๓. กอนหนึ่ง ◦ หมอนอนหนึ่ง ◦ บงงานอน
๒๔. หนึ่ง ◦ เตาปูนอนหนึ่ง ◦ สลงอนหนึ่ง ◦ ประที
๒๕. บ ◦ ตินทอน ◦ ประรูป ◦ กตั้ง ◦ ไหหินไศค
๒๖. กไม้ ◦ ไวคนเรือนหนึ่งแดงหุงจงหน
๒๗. พระเจ้า ◦ พาหุหนึ่งไหสาสองเรือนตีบำ
๒๘. เรือแกระเจ้า ◦ กองสองอนนกลองสา
๒๙. มอน ◦ ตแสดงขเขาควายแดงให้ไวด
๓๐. ายแกระเจ้า ◦ แลวบวสเมีย ◦ บวสลูก ◦ บ
๓๑. วสหลาน ◦ บวสข้า ◦ ข้าแสด เมียมกกคนให้
๓๒. ขาแกคนไปเปนไทให้ล้งแม่ผู้ชาย
๓๓. อนนหนึ่งโสทพนไคญผีผีแม่ ผีแม่
๓๔. น้เทคผ้เปนเมีย ◦ อนนเปนอนนคบบ
๓๕. เมต ◦ ไคญผีฟ้ายผีญผีฟ้เอื่อย
๓๖. ญผีลูกผีหลานผ้เก่าผ้แกแห่งตนอน
๓๗. นมาฝากผีตไคญโสคแตอวยทานท
๓๘. งสิบคำลึง ◦ เงินพนนสาม ◦ จีพอรสิบ
๓๙. สามผืน ◦ สลกบาตญีสิบ ◦ บาทสองรอย ◦ ผ (๑)
๔๐. นบพระรอยเก่าสิบ ◦ ตรไลอนนหนึ่ง...
๔๑. แวนหนึ่ง ◦ ขามลายสอง ◦ ขามเลก...
๔๒. อนน ◦ ขลลกินน้ำสิบ ◦ ขลลเชิงท่า...
๔๓. แตอวยทานเบียไคลารสีแสนสี่

๖
ด้านที่ ๓

๑. หมิ่น ๑ แตะฝูงชนผู้
๒. พิเศษใส่ให้ทองถว้
๓. น่ำลึง ๑ เงินทองก่อน
๔. ววทองคู่เข้าแต่่มก
๕. วยณ ๑ ชีสามคั่นแล่น
๖. ให้ทองแล่นลึง ๑ ผู้ส
๗. องบาคก็มี ๑ ผู้บาคปลา
๘. ยกมี ๑ กทำพระสำริค
๙. อนนึ่ง ๑ กบบทงปคา
๑๐. กว้ยทองเล็กใหญ่
๑๑. ยไปแกเจ้าพรไซ
๑๒. สารจาริกพนัใส่คำผ
๑๓. ววแมน้เทศพท
๑๔. นชีเถรเทพเม
๑๕. ลิฝากประเพณี (๑)
๑๖. คิพงสาทงหลาย
๑๗. ไวกบบกุตีพืหารส
๑๘. ถานธรรมอรผู้
๑๙. ทำวพญาอนนมี
๒๐. บุนยสัฟารกริตาธิ
๒๑. การ ๑ แก่ไคขึ้นสว
๒๒. ราชสัคคคิในสุโขไท

๒๓. นี ๑ จุฑยรพราชอาจ
๒๔. อนุโคระโจพะเอากุส
๒๕. ลผลประโยชน์ท่ายพนั
๒๖. อนนผสนุญให้มากบ
๒๗. หลากจากประเพนีแห
๒๘. งสารฐศคบุรฐอนนเล้า
๒๙. ฤคณิกกตยาติการชี
๓๐. งกริการธีการอารยานุ
๓๑. กลทงงหลายท่งงนี
๓๒. จุญญาให้มีว่าคาณกาล
๓๓. เกิดในกรกุลพงส
๓๔. าคนาพนัสกกอนน
๓๕. แก้ว

Translation

[I/1-3.] Good fortune! Homage to the Buddha! May the success, honor, glory and austerities of the Buddha, the Dharmma and the Saṅgha be a charm to relieve us of all danger!

[I/3-10.] In the year one thousand nine hundred twenty-seven since the Lord entered Nirvāṇa⁷, a year of the rat, on Wednesday, the full-moon day of the sixth month, the Foster-Father Sai Tām, who [is about to] discuss moral virtue, energy and wisdom,⁸ set his mind upon faith and joy in the immense benevolence of the Sākyan,⁹ because of his desire to cross beyond the round of transmigrations and attain the goal of Nirvāṇa.

[I/10-20.] When the Mahāsaṅgharājā . . .¹⁰ came to teach the Sāṃtec Mahādharmmarājā, the latter, full of devotion to the religion and his faith in the purity of the Three Refuges¹¹, gave up his throne¹², removed his royal attire, and, sweeping way all difficulties, went¹³ to be ordained as a bhikṣu at the Mango Grove. * The dense earth quivered, rumbled, and rocked uncertainly. * The Foster-Father was overjoyed at the sight. Filled with the boundless delight of faith and immense benevolence, he went rejoicing and worshiping to be ordained as a bhikṣu in Mahādharmmarājā's community.¹⁴

7) Written nyarbāna. The date corresponds to May 4, 1384 A.D. (Julian); see above, p. 190.

8) สัจจะปณิธาน (I/9-10); i.e. sīla, viriyā, paññā; the three qualities required to attain Buddhahood. Probably the Foster-Father means his own sīla, viriyā and paññā, though he might be referring to these qualities in a more general way.

9) The Buddha.

10) The word we have omitted appears to be สุกาลม, *sukalum*, the meaning of which is unknown to us. If it were a monastic name, we should expect it to be in Pali. Query: Sukhuma? (= subtle, exquisite).

11) traisāraṇātha, for tisaraṇanātha.

12) rājasampatti.

13) We have omitted from our translation the word นาน (I/15), which signifies a change of condition (in this case, from king to monk); cf. JSS LVII/1, p. 130, note 18.

14) The word สำนัก, which now means a dwelling-place, office, etc., can also mean a place where some particular doctrine is taught. Depending on the context, it could be either a monastery or else an ashram, hermitage or seminary. For want of a better term, we translate it as 'community'. In the present context it of course refers to the Monastery of the Mango Grove.

[I/20-26.] When Saṃtec Mahādharmarājā was separated from him by death, the Foster-Father went to be ordained in the community of the Mahāthera Buddhasagōr¹⁵, where there was a great assemblage of theras and anutheras, and he distributed the merit to his father and mother, his brothers and sisters, and all his relatives of royal lineage who have gone to the other world. *

[I/26-28.] Then the Mahādevī died too. * The Foster-Father went to be ordained in the community of the Mahāthera Anurādha, who came here from Siṃhala.

[I/28-32.] Brañā Srī Debāhūrāja took him out [of the monkhood] to help build up the kingdom. * He did so in order that the populace¹⁶ should not be distressed, that their sufferings¹⁷ should be brought to an end, and their desires fulfilled.¹⁸

[I/32-42.] The Foster-Father reflected on what might be meritorious, useful, and beneficial to others as well as himself, and to [the living] as well as the dead, in order that they might not be lost in this Buddha's saṃsāra.¹⁹ * The Foster-Father, having reflected in his heart, converted his home into a monastery in the year of the serpent, in the fifth month, and then founded a statue of the Buddha. * He summoned a group of persons skilled in designing pictures, to come and compose paintings of devatās and asūras * and of an ordination together with a throng of monks, beautiful in every detail.²⁰

15) Buddhasāgara; see above, p. 192.

16) The expression พระเจ้าคนพลตงหลาย (I/20-21), i.e. พระเจ้าคนพลตงหลาย seems to designate different classes of the population.

17) ทุ (I/31), probably for ทุกข์, dukkha, 'sufferings'.

18) Restoring ... ๑๓๓ (I/32) as จินดา, 'as desired'; cf. cintāmaṇi, 'wish-fulfilling gem.'

19) That portion of the round of transmigration (saṃsāra) that will occur between the present day and the year 5000 of the Buddhist Era, in other words while the teachings of 'this Buddha' (Gotama) are still extant, at least in part.

20) The syntax of the passage I/38-40 is obscure, but the general meaning must be close to what we have given. We assume that ภาพ (I/28) stands for ภาพ, which in Siamese means 'pictures' (rather than the usual senses of bhāva or bhāvya in Sanskrit). At I/28-29, ๑๓๓ is Pali racita, the past participle of racayati, 'to arrange', 'to compose', 'to prepare'; ๑๓๓ may be Pali racanā, 'arrangement', 'composition', or else a mistake for Pali rajana, 'coloring' (in either case, with A altered to E before a palatal sound, as it sometimes is in the Sukhodayan inscriptions, e.g. Sejanālai, for Sajjanālaya). At I/39 ๑๓๓ is the classifier for monks, rather than the word for pictures. The ordination mentioned at I/39-40 seems to be part of the painting, since the reference to it is followed by the words พระงามถ้วนหน้า, for which we have hazarded the translation 'beautiful in every detail'.

* He also erected kuṭis for monks. Then he had a hall built for the Pitakadharmma²¹, concentrating his mind on the worship of the Abhidharmma, and also had [II/1-12] a Chinese cloth picture of the Buddha²² brought and installed; he planted a bodhi tree to be a great source of merit and a great source of good fortune; he raised up . . . cloth picture of the Buddha to a height of 14 cubits; and he transferred the merit [from all these works] to Sāṃtec Mahādharmmarājā. He made a stone statue of the Buddha, transferring the merit to Mahādevī. * Then he saw the holy precious relics, which were [enshrined in a cetiya] built by Sāṃtec Mahādharmmarājā²³, perform a miracle passing over²⁴ his own house²⁵, appearing like silver wire as big as a mat²⁶ in the middle of the sky, crystalline and exceedingly beautiful. [The Foster-Father], with heart full of faith, coiled his hair into a²⁷ and gave it as an offering. Then he took a gold necklace and beat it [into gold leaf] to gild the statue of the Buddha.²⁸

[II/12-19.] Brañā Srī Debāhūrāja . . . sent him to the Court of the Mahārāja. He saw the holy precious relics perform a miracle at Rabūñ, darting out like balls of fire²⁹ the size of persimmons³⁰ and

21) i.e. a library for the Tipiṭaka (Scriptures).

22) We assume that ʔṭṭṭṭṭ (I/42-II/1) is ʔṭṭṭṭṭ (brah paṭa), a painting of the Buddha on cloth.

23) Srīrattanadhātu (II/6) means holy precious relics (of the Buddha) and also the cetiya in which they were enshrined.

24) Restoring ʔṭṭṭṭṭ (II/7-8) as ʔṭṭṭṭṭ (for ʔṭṭṭṭṭ).

25) The Foster-Father's own house, which has now become part of the monastery.

26) ʔṭṭṭṭṭṭṭ (II/8); presumably the silver wire was thought of as a kind of mesh.

27) We cannot say how ʔṭṭṭṭṭṭṭ should be restored. The sense seems to be that he is preparing to cut off his hair in token of forsaking the layman's life, just as Gotama did after leaving his palace in order to become an ascetic.

28) ʔṭṭṭṭṭṭṭ, for ʔṭṭṭṭṭṭṭ, modern ʔṭṭṭṭṭṭ, 'to coat'; ʔṭṭṭṭṭṭ, 'to cover in layers.' The usual method of gilding an image is to coat it first with adhesive lacquer and then with gold leaf.

29) Literally 'like someone playing with fireworks'; ʔṭṭṭṭṭṭṭ (II/15) is an expanded form of ʔṭṭṭṭṭṭṭ.

30) ʔṭṭṭṭṭṭṭṭ (II/15) is the expanded form of ʔṭṭṭṭṭṭṭ; either *diospyros embryopteris* or *diospyros kaki*.

buddharāthasā³¹ fruits, clear and beautiful like crystals, with blue³² gems in the middle like cloth which has been soaked in indigo. When he saw that, his heart was filled with abounding faith.

[II/19-31.] After taking the gold necklace and beating it [into gold leaf] to gild the statue of the Buddha³³, he made a notice³⁴. Then he sewed cloth to lay over the base [of the image] * together with a fan for reciting the Dharmma³⁵, he provided a seat for the Lord³⁶, * a leather mat³⁷, * a mattress, * a pillow, * an ivory cover, * a jar for lime³⁸, * a bath-bowl, * lamps, * candle-holders, * incense sticks, * bells, * and earthen vases to put flowers in. He assigned a family of people to cook food for the monks. * He provided a pair of xylophones, giving two families of servants to play them in homage to the Buddha, * two gongs and three drums, * conch trumpets and buffalo horns, he placed there as an offering to the Buddha. * Then he caused his wives to be ordained, * his children to be ordained, * his grandchildren to be ordained, * and his servants to be ordained.*

[II/31-37.] When a wife and a servant fell in love, he gave them to each other and set them free to let them³⁹ take care of the

31) Perhaps buddharāthasā (II/16) is put for buddharaksā (*canna* sp.).

32) 青 (II/17), modern 靑. The word now means 'green', but in the Sukhodayan inscriptions it is used indifferently for green or blue. Here we translate it as 'blue', since the color is compared to indigo-dyed cloth.

33) Except for the omission of 佛, the passage at II/19 is a verbatim repetition of that at II/11-12.

34) 告示 (II/20) looks like an equivalent to 告示, 'a notice'; and we have so translated it. If that is right, the Foster-Father must mean a notice regarding the acts of merit he is about to perform. But a tempting alternative is to regard 告示 as a contraction of 黃衣 (黃, cloth; Pali, *kāsāya*, 'dyed with yellow or orange cloth', as for a monk's robes; this interpretation, though linguistically questionable, yields better sense: sc. he made some yellow cloth, and after cutting it into strips in the orthodox fashion, sewed the strips together into a monastic garment to lay over the base of the statue.

35) i.e. he presented the statue with a tālapātra, a monk's ceremonial 'fan' (really an eye-screen) such as is used when reciting the Dhamma.

36) i.e. a pedestal for the statue.

37) 草蓆 (II/22), for *cammakhaṇḍa*.

38) i.e. the lime paste with which areca nuts and betel leaves are chewed.

39) 他, here used as a pronoun of the third person plural.

man's mother⁴⁰. Furthermore the Foster-Father helped the spirit of his mother and the spirit of his father; he helped the spirit of his wife, the Foster-Mother Det, * [and the spirits of those] who were of his mother's rank; * he helped the spirit of his eldest brother and the spirit of his second brather; he helped the spirit of his eldest sister; he helped the spirits of the children and grandchildren of his own ancestors; and the spirits of his relatives by marriage he helped too.⁴¹

[II/37-43.] Of gold, he gave ten tāmlīṇ⁴²; * of silver, one thousand three hundred⁴³; * monastic robes, thirteen; * slings for almsbowls, twenty; * almsbowls, two hundred; * cloths for saluting the Buddha⁴⁴, a hundred and ninety; * a cup for sweets . . . ; a mirror; * two painted dishes⁴⁵; six . . .⁴⁶ small dishes; * ten bowls for drinking water; * five . . .⁴⁷ bowls with pedestals. Of cowries, he gave one million four hundred and forty thousand. * [III/1-11.] As for the group of special artists⁴⁸, he gave them a whole tāmlīṇ of gold, * a

40) The passage at II/31-37 is a digression which, like the one at II/12-19, seems to have been introduced because the preceding sentence reminded the Foster-Father of a remarkable incident in his life. Having just said that he caused his wives, children, grandchildren and servants to be ordained, he recalls that once, when one of his wives fell in love with a servant, he set them both free so that they might marry and look after the man's mother (II/31-33). Normally, it may be guessed, they would both have been punished severely, so the Foster-Father's generous action would be conspicuously meritorious. By a natural transition he then goes on to enumerate acts of merit he performed for the benefit of other relatives (II/33-37). Finally, at II/37, the digression comes to an end, and he goes on listing his benefactions to the monastery.

41) The word we have translated as 'helped' is 𑀘, i.e. 𑀓𑀭, 'to raise up'. The Foster-Father means that all these deceased persons will have their status in future incarnations improved by receiving shares of the merit he has earned.

42) About 600 grams. A tāmlīṇ is a weight equal to 4 ticals; one tical is now standardized at 15 grams.

43) About 1.77 kilograms.

44) Or for saluting the monks?

45) Cf. the painted wares from the kilns at Sukhodaya and Sajjanālaya (Griswold, *Towards a History of Sukhopaya Art*, pp. 13-14).

46) The number, which is truncated, was perhaps more likely sixty.

47) Or perhaps fifty.

48) Those mentioned at I/38 ff.

piece of silver, a pair of cows * and a full cartload of rice. * He made gifts to three monks, to one of them one tāmlin of gold, * to one he gave two ticals, * to one a little over a tical. * He made a bronze statue of the Buddha * and also banners and small flags, * giving the merit to Cau Braṃ Jai⁴⁹.

- 49) Who was this Prince Braṃ Jai? Regularizing the spelling the name is Brahmajaya; and the only person of that name known to us in Sukhodayan history is one to whom *Jinakālamālī* devotes a single sentence. See Coedès, Documents . . . , BEFEO XXV, pp. 47 and 100. No date is given, but it can easily be estimated if *Jinakālamālī* gives the right sequence of events. The passage immediately preceding the sentence in question runs as follows: 'Upon the death of King Rāmādhipati, ruler of Kāmboja and Ayojjāpura, Vattitejo left Suvaṇṇabhūmi and conquered the kingdom of Kāmboja. Then Dhammarāja having died at Jayanādapura, Vattitejo left Ayojjāpura, took Jayanādapura, and removed the statue of Sihaḷa to Ayojjāpura, where he continued to worship it.' In this passage Kāmboja must mean Labpuri; Ayojjāpura is of course Ayudhyā; Suvaṇṇabhūmi is Subarnapurī; and Jayanādapura is Biṣṇuloka (for the last identification, see Griswold, *Towards a History of Sukhodaya Art*, p. 37 note 102); Rāmādhipati is the founder of Ayudhyā; Vattitejo is his brother-in-law Paramarājā, Prince of Subarnapurī (afterward Paramarājā I of Ayudhyā); Dhammarāja is Mahādharmarājā I of Sukhodaya. Rāmādhipati died in 1369. Paramarājā seized the throne of Ayudhyā in 1370, and took possession of Biṣṇuloka in 1375. That would mean that Mahādharmarājā I died some time between 1370 and 1375, and that the action attributed to Brahmajaya occurred after that. Here is the sentence describing it: *brahmajeyyo ca mahāmacco sukhodayaṃ gaṇhī*, 'the Chief Minister Brahmajaya took Sukhodaya.'

Supposing that this mysterious person who 'took Sukhodaya' is the same as the Cau Braṃ Jai of our inscription, which is plausible enough but not certain, he must have been a Sukhodayan patriot, for otherwise the Foster-Father would not have offered him a share of merit. Though we do not know what really happened, it is quite possible that Paramarājā, after seizing Biṣṇuloka in 1375, organized a *coup d'état* to seize Sukhodaya, but that Brahmajaya foiled it by quick action. If so, the Foster-Father would have good reason to remember him with gratitude for saving the throne for Mahādharmarājā II. Alternatively Brahmajaya's action may have occurred later, resulting in a restoration of *de facto* sovereignty for Mahādharmarājā II some time after he had been forced to submit to Ayudhyā in 1378.

[III/12-35.] In this inscription the Foster-Father Sai Tām [who was] the husband of the Foster-Mother Det, [and who now, as] Abbot of the monastery⁵⁰, is named Thera Debamoli, entrusts all his descendants⁵¹ to this monastery⁵² and this chapter of monks⁵³. Whatever kings who have stored up merit from past deeds * shall succeed to the throne of this [land of] Sukhodaya, * may they reign for a long time⁵⁴, sharing the benefits of the merit which the Foster-Father has stored up in abundance! May they not differ from the dynasty of upright men who ruled [the kingdom] in the past and gained the devoted loyalty [of their subjects]! Of all noble persons like this, may none ever have cause to be vexed or angry with the Foster-Father's family or descendants!

50) พจน (II/13-14), for พ่อจ๋าน or ปะจ๋าน 'Abbot'. Apparently when the monastery was dedicated the Foster-Father became its Abbot, with the monastic appellation Thera Debamoli (Devamoli).

51) ปะเพนุญตพงศา (III/15-16), for Skt. praveṇī-jñāti-vamśa or Pali pavenī-nāti-vamśa (Pali: pavenī, 'tradition,' 'succession,' 'lineage'; nāti, 'kinsmen'; vamśa, 'dynasty').

52) ลูกพหรรตถนรรน

53) Perhaps the Foster-Father means he hopes his descendants will be protected by the beneficent influences of the merit he has earned by founding and equipping the monastery.

54) จงกขรหารา (III/25); dyargharāja is for Skt. dirgharāja, 'a long-lived king'.

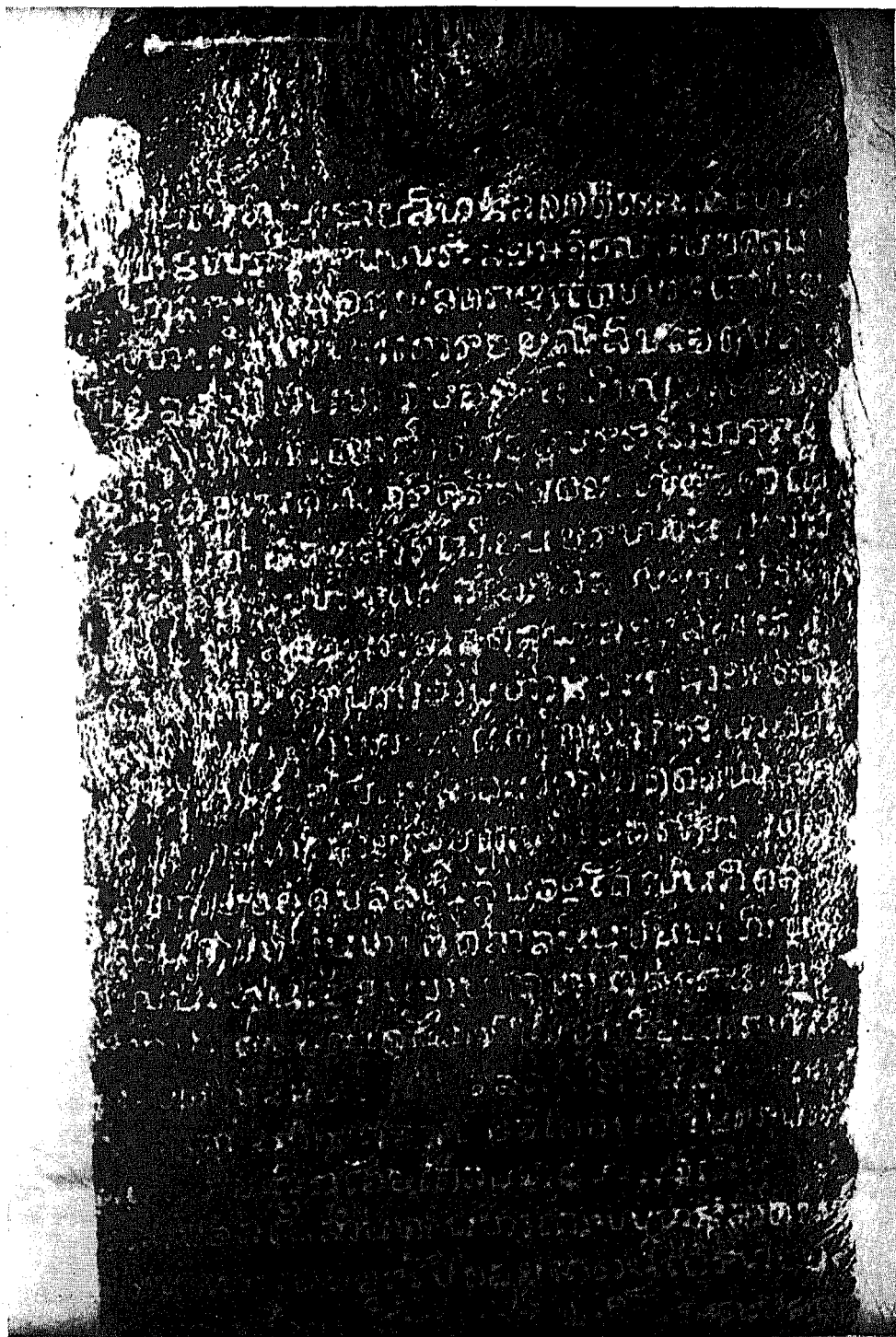
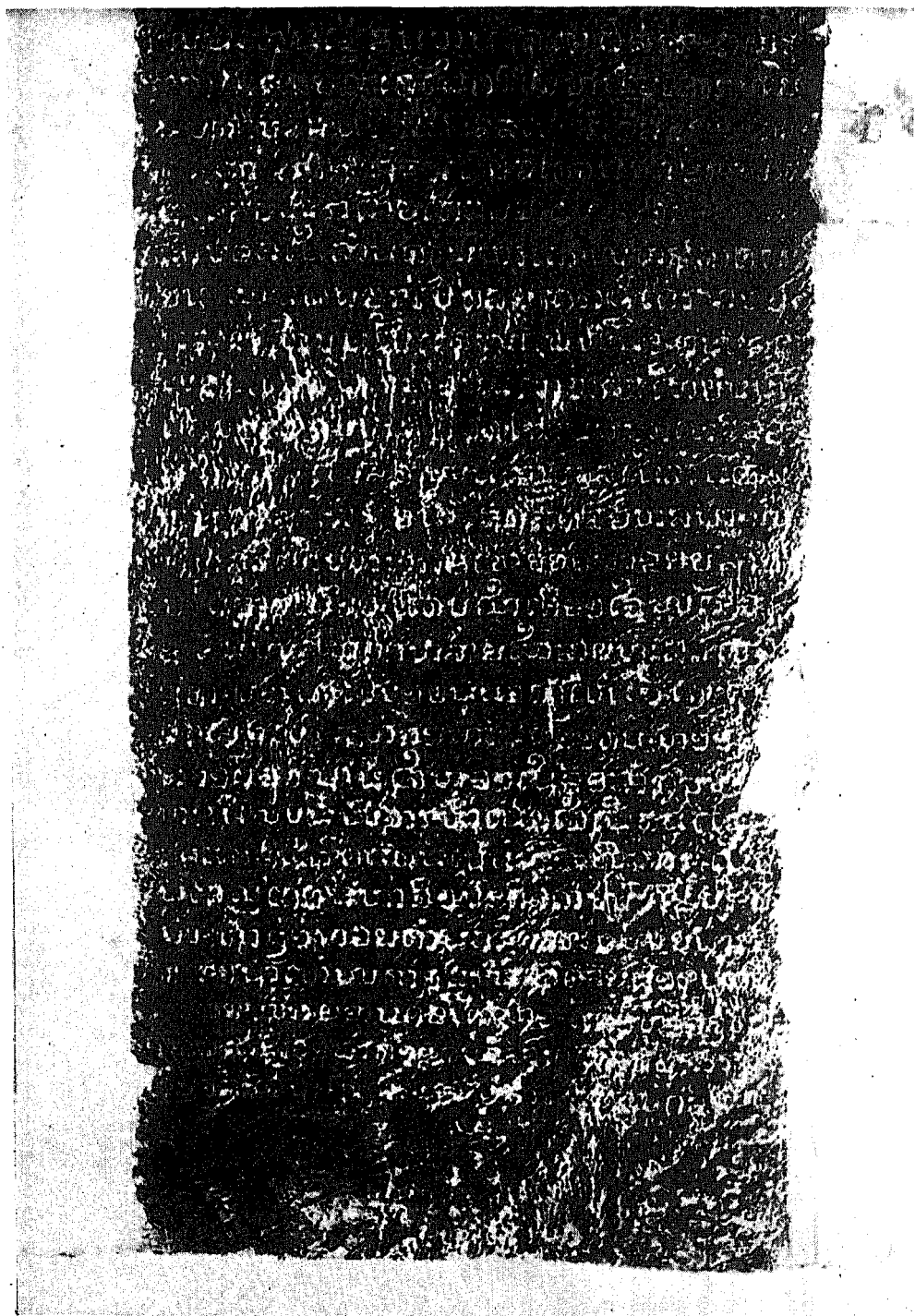


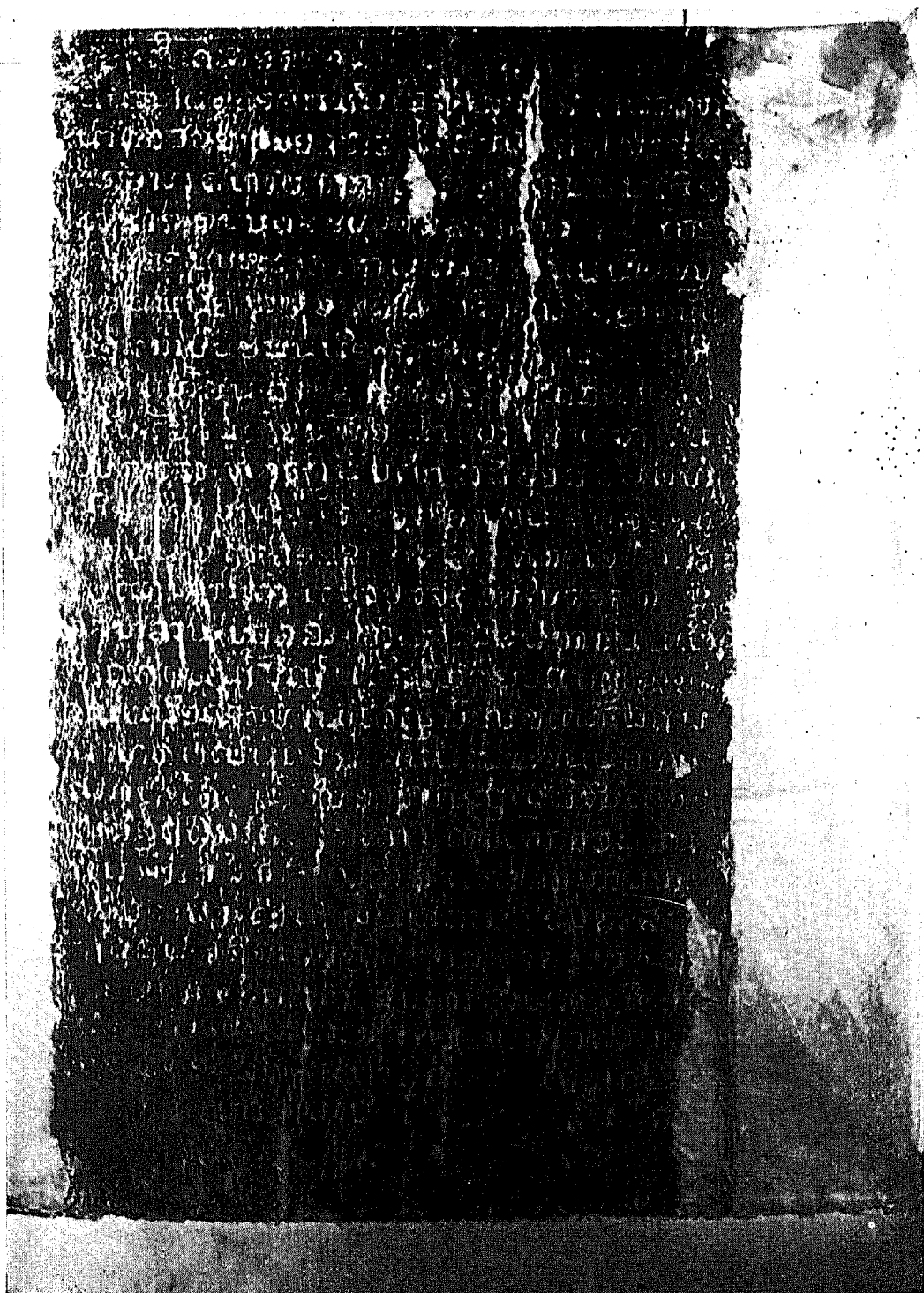
Fig. 1. The Inscription of Văt Jăh Lôm, Face I.
1 a. Upper portion.



1 b. Lower portion.



Fig. 2. The Inscription of Văţ Jăni Lôm, Face II.
2 a. Upper portion.



1 b. Lower portion.

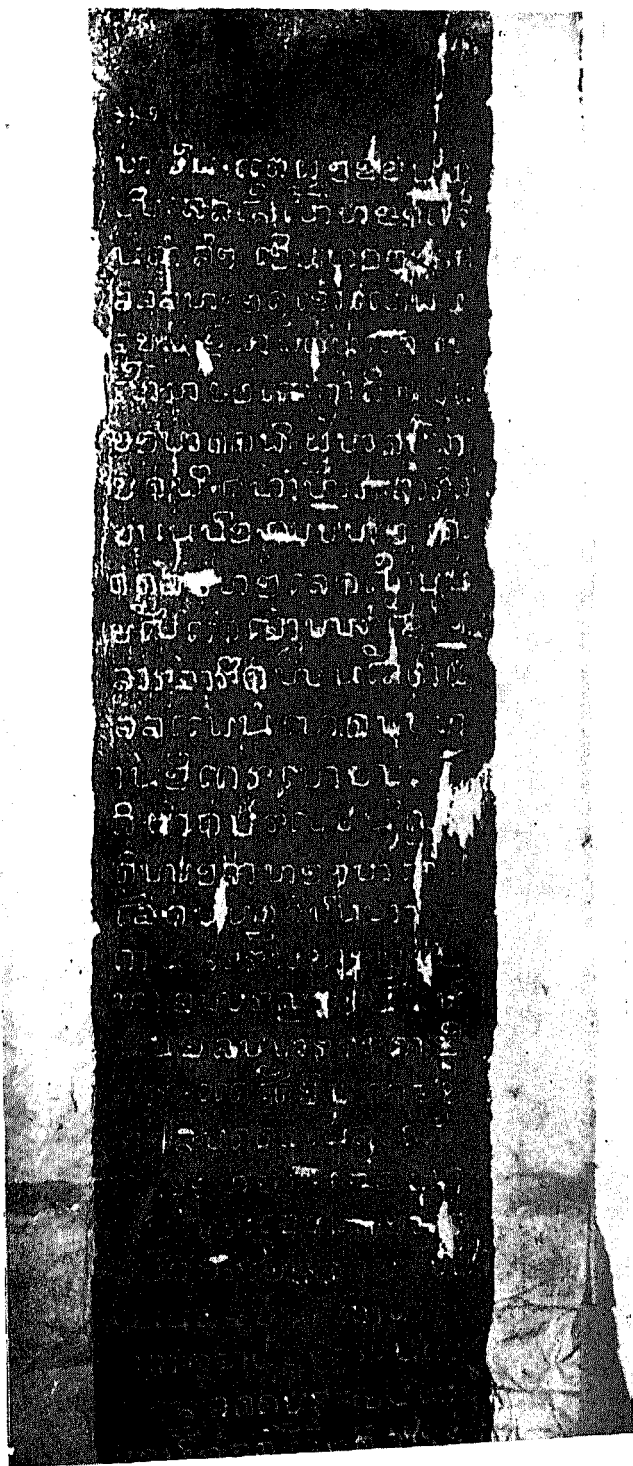
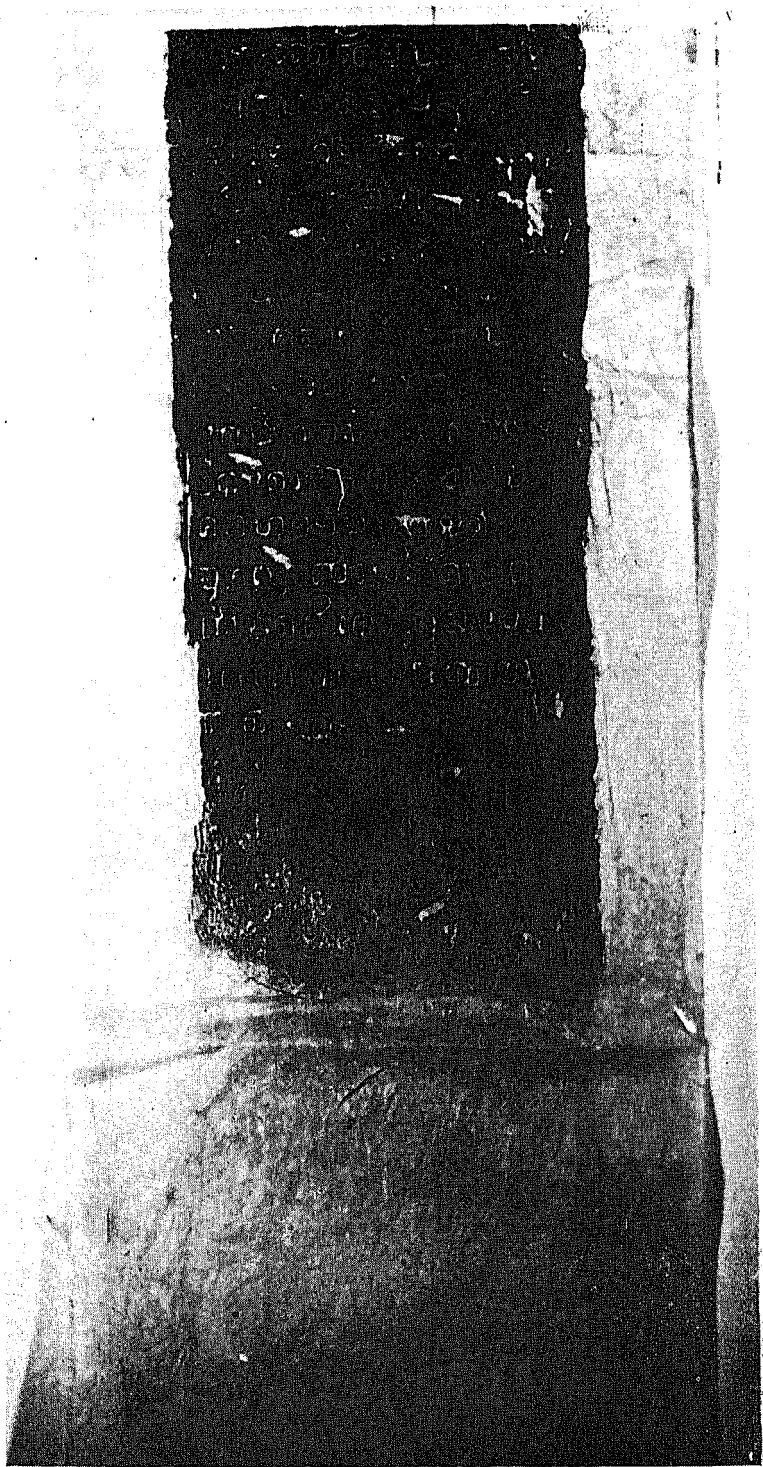


Fig. 3. The Inscription of Văţ Jân Lôm, Face III.
3 a. Upper portion.



3 b. Lower portion.

CORRIGENDA

In our article on Vāt Pā Mok in the Siam Society's volume, *In Memoriam Phyu Anuman Rajadhon* (Bangkok, 1970), two changes should be made. On page 187, วาตพม in the first line of Stanza 2 should be corrected to วาตพม. On page 199, the translation of Stanza 2 should read :

2. But the river-current is cutting into the west bank, eating it away here and there so that it is collapsing into the water. Weirs are built to divert (the current) from the edge of the foundations, but the walls break apart repeatedly and the statue is cracking.

In the same article, several of the photographs are printed with the caption at the wrong side of the picture. In Figs. 11-1, 11-b and 13-c the bottom of the picture, and hence the caption, should be at the left; in Figs. 12 and 13-d the bottom of the picture, and hence the caption, should be at the right; in Fig. 13-e the picture is correctly printed, but the caption should be at the bottom of the page instead of on the right.

In our *Epigraphic and Historical Studies* No. 5, JSS LVIII/1, the photograph in Fig. 1 (following p. 113), is printed upside down.

A.B. Griswold and Prasert na Nagara

