

Epigraphic and Historical Studies No. 23  
AN INSCRIPTION OF 1528 A.D. FROM SUKHODAYA

by

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1.

Inscription No. 86, now in the Rāma Gāmhēn National Museum at Sukhodaya, was obtained at an unstated date at the house of Nāy Citra Bvañphēn, the headman of Tāmpal Mōaṅ Kau, Sukhodaya. It was presumably discovered in the ruins of Old Sukhodaya, but its provenance is not recorded. It is published in *Prajum Śilācārik*, Vol. IV, Bangkok, 1970, p. 11 ff., with a reading and glossary by Mr. Prasāra Puñpragōṅ, revised by Prasert ṇa Nagara and the late Mahā Chām Dōngāṃvarṇa.

It is engraved on both faces of a slab of greenish stone 89 cm. high, 26 cm. wide, and 12 cm. thick. The slab is more or less rectangular, with a rounded top which comes to a slight point at the apex. At the foot of face I a row of stylized lotus petals is embossed, with several straight lines of varying thickness below. Face I has 39 lines of writing, and face II has 38. Except for the opening statement of homage to the Three Gems, and a concluding auspicious expression, both of which are in Pali, the language is Siamese. Cambodian script is used throughout.

The earliest date in the text is equivalent to 1 January 1506 A.D. (Julian), and the latest to 4 November 1528 (Julian). The author was at first a government official named Nāy Śrī Yodhā.<sup>1</sup> He was responsible to Brañā Śrī Saiya Raṇaraṅgasaṅgrāma, who was probably the viceroy of the Sukhodayan provinces, ruling at Biṣṇuloka as a vassal or appointee of the suzerain power, Ayudhyā.

Nāy Śrī Yodhā, after being disabled by a painful malady caused by a glow-worm lodged in his ear, resigned from government service on 1 January 1506 (Julian), and was ordained as a monk at Sukhodaya on 29 April of the same year, receiving the monastic name Mahā Saddhāpuṅṅo.

In the remainder of the inscription he usually refers to himself in the third person, but now and then uses the first person (ṇ). In our translation, wherever the author is obviously referring to himself, we have supplied the appropriate pronoun of the first person without enclosing it in parentheses.

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1. In those days the title 'Nāy' had not yet deteriorated to its present lowly status. In the early fifteenth century A.D. it was borne by royal counselors and other high-ranking officials, and it may still have been so used a hundred years later.

Mahā Saddhāpuñño decided to build a monastery in a township named Braḥ Śrī Mahābodhi after a *figus religiosa* which had been brought from Ceylon by the Mahāsvāmī Anurāja and planted there. He obtained a piece of land in this township from Brañā Śrī Saiya Raṇa-raṅgasaṅgrāma. He dismantled his own granary, brought the materials to the piece of land, and used them to build a vihāra on 5 March 1507 (Julian).

The inscription goes on to record a series of benefactions made by Mahā Saddhā to his monastery between 1513 and 1528, including the gift of many images of the Buddha, an image of the Mahāsvāmī Anurāja, and one of Mahā Buddhasāgara.

These two monks should probably be identified with two who are mentioned in the Inscription of Vāt Jān Lòm, which was composed in 1384 A.D. (**Prajum Śīlācārik**, IV, No. 106; see *JSS* 59/1, pp. 189 ff.). The author of that inscription, who calls himself 'the Foster-Father Sai Tām', was probably a brother or half-brother of Mahādharmarājā I. He entered the monkhood temporarily on three separate occasions. The first was in 1361, when he was ordained at the Mango Grove Monastery while Mahādharmarājā I was a monk there. Soon after the death of Mahādharmarājā I, which occurred between 1368 and 1374, the Foster-Father was ordained in the community of the Mahāthera Buddhasāgara, and distributed the merit of his act to his deceased relatives. Later on, probably in the 1370s, he was ordained in the community of 'the Mahāthera Anurādha, who came here from Siṅhala' (*JSS* 59/1, pp. 196, 202, 203). We propose to equate 'Anurāja' of Inscription 86 with Anurādha of No. 106; the names are pronounced the same way in Siamese; and both references show this monk came from Ceylon (Siṅhala). We also propose to equate the Mahā Buddhasāgara of No. 86 with the Mahāthera Buddhasāgara of No. 106, who is linked to the Mahāthera Anurādha by both of them having been held in esteem by the Foster-Father. As a corollary, we suggest that Mahā Saddhā was a descendant of the Foster-Father, who turned his own home into a monastery where he spent the rest of his life. A century and a half later, Mahā Saddhā was perhaps doing his best to imitate the example of an illustrious ancestor.

## TEXT

### Face I

๑. นมตฺถุนโมเมสพฺพุทฺธานิ
๒. นโมเมสพฺพุทฺธมฺมานันนโมเมส
๓. พุทฺธสํ นันรตฺนตฺตยวฺนทามิหิ
๔. ครันฺทกฺกนฺมสฺสการตฺตพระสุริรตฺตุน
๕. ไตรยแกวทงฺสํมปรการแลวกุ
๖. จิงจตงฺสํกกราชมาสเกนทฺรปฺเต
๗. อนวณฺคินฺทกฺกษพานาทิตฺตถึสุพฺพ
๘. มหฺรตฺติจิงนายสุริโยทาหวัวปาก

๕. แมงคาเขาหูกก็ไอรากการบมิ  
 ๑๐. ได้จึงอำลาพระญาสุรีไสยรณรงค์  
 ๑๑. คุรัมโอบบวศในเดือนสามขึ้น  
 ๑๒. แปรค้ำวันพระหสสมดีฉลุณกษัตริ  
 ๑๓. สปตสกเมื่ออุปสมบศศกราชได้  
 ๑๔. แปรรอยหกสิบแปดขาลนก็  
 ๑๕. ขตรอฎฐสกเดือนหกขึ้นแปด  
 ๑๖. ค้ำวันพุทฺธได้ฤกษ์ปุสยะตระวนชาย  
 ๑๗. หกบาดนามซิมหาสุระทุชาปุโนโย  
 ๑๘. จึงมหาสุระทุชาบุญญมีสุระทุชาจไกรสง  
 ๑๙. อารามไนตำบลพระสุรีมหาโพธิธอน  
 ๒๐. พระมหาสวามีอนูราชเอาเตलगาทวิ  
 ๒๑. ปมาปลุกห้วงกลางบานอายรอก  
 ๒๒. เลบานมตเพงจึงมหาสุระทุชา  
 ๒๓. ไปไหว้มหาสวามีสี่ลสาครไห  
 ๒๔. ขอยขอที่แดมหาอุปาสก  
 ๒๕. พระญาสุรีไสยรณรงค์คุรัมจึงม  
 ๒๖. มหาสวามีสี่ลสาครกาวพุทฺธตีกาไป  
 ๒๗. เถิงหมื่นนรินหมื่นรินเอาพุทฺธตีกาไส  
 ๒๘. ชีแดพระญาสุรีไสยจึงพระสุรีไสยมใจ  
 ๒๙. สุระทุชาไซหมื่นตางใจอยบที่ไห  
 ๓๐. เกมมหาสุระทุชาโดยยาวสี่สิบเส  
 ๓๑. นโดยกวางหาเสนจึงมหาสุระทุชา  
 ๓๒. เอาจเขามาทำเป็นพระพิหารเดือน  
 ๓๓. สี่แรมแปดค้ำวันพุทฺธขาลนกษัตริ  
 ๓๔. อฎฐสกแล้วไปบูชาพระเจ้าเถิงพิ  
 ๓๕. สนุโลกสี่พระองคมาประดิสถานไว้ในพระ  
 ๓๖. พินหารปีระกามมหาสุระทุชาบูชาไปส  
 ๓๗. ตถเป็นเงินสี่ตำลึงมาตงเป็น

๓๘. พระพิหารเล่ากาวบุริบวรแลวสา  
๓๙. งพระพุทธรูปใหญ่พระองค์หนึ่งอีกพระ

### Face II

๑. (แร่) เลกเงินทองสำริดดีบุก (หิน)  
๒. สีลาไมปูนทงปวงไว (สีลีส)  
๓. พระองค์พระเจดีย์พระองค์หนึ่งรูปมหา  
๔. สุวามือนุราชองค์หนึ่งรูปมหา  
๕. พุทธสา (ค) อรองค์หนึ่งหนักทองเจ  
๖. ตตุตไวกปป์พระเชตุพลอาราม  
๗. นามชื่อองศาสดอันพระเจาตุร  
๘. สุตในพระมหาโพทธิเจานี้ไห้ขึ้นกปป์พระ  
๙. เชตุพล (อาราม) แต่พระญาสุริไสยรนไว  
๑๐. นากปป์ (หน) หุ้วนอรวดร้อยแปดสิบ  
๑๑. ไรฝ้าย (ป) ล (า) ยตีนเจาเมืองรามราชไว  
๑๒. รอยแปดสิบไรพระญาสุริหมมไวคนครวั  
๑๓. ึ่งชายหนึ่งหญิงสามไวกปป์พระเจา (พระ)  
๑๔. มหาสุรทษาจิงจกาวปป์ระนิชานปฺราถหุนาว  
๑๕. ดวยผลอานิสู้ สอนักุโกลเกลาเขาปว  
๑๖. พุสในสาสุสหนาพระเจาคืออนึ่ง  
๑๗. ูกุไตสางอารามพระเจาคืออนึ่งก  
๑๘. ไตสางรูปพระพุทธรเจาควยคำดวยเงิน  
๑๙. ดวยทองสำริดดวยบุกดวยหินสีลา  
๒๐. ทงหลายนี้กดีชอกจิงไคเป็นพระเจา  
๒๑. ่องค์หนึ่งในอนาคตกกาลจมาพวยพาง  
๒๒. ุหนาโพนแลจเอาสทวทงหลายขาม  
๒๓. โพนจากโอคคส์สารอนาจพวยต  
๒๔. อาพาทุธิอนฺตรายจุงยาไคมีอา  
๒๕. ญศุณินไคญิบแสนป้จมี

๒๖. ไจ (คำ) รมไนพระสุริรัตนไตรแก้วทง  
 ๒๗. สยามประกานโพระเจาทูยจเอาสตวทง  
 ๒๘. หลายเขาสูนिरพานปลุกไม  
 ๒๙. ไผรอบตันทานลอนไมสาตสร  
 ๓๐. พทุกอนัจพรนาบมิไคเล  
 ๓๑. ย กูทวาริกไวตงนี้เกดี่ขอสง  
 ๓๒. แลอุปาสกอุปาสีกาจงอนุโม  
 ๓๓. ทนาด้วยกูเทินสเดจพระสง  
 ๓๔. คราชกอนุโมทนาด้วยกุนัก  
 ๓๕. หุณาแลเมือตองจาริกน  
 ๓๖. ชวสุสนกษัตริสาริทธิสกเดือนสิบ  
 ๓๗. สอแรมแปดคำวนัพุทธิการ  
 ๓๘. ย แล ๗๗๗

## 2.

## Translation

[I/1-3, in Pali.] I salute all the Buddhas, I salute all the Dhammas, I salute all the Saṅghas. I venerate the Three Gems.

[I/4-13.] After I saluted the Brah Śrī Ratanatraya, (namely) all the Three Gems, I determined the (combination of) sakarāja, māsaḅḅḅḅḅḅ, <sup>1</sup> year, month, day, night, ṛkṣa . . . ., <sup>2</sup> tithi<sup>3</sup> and moment (which would be) auspicious. Then I, Nāy Śrī Yodhā, (with the rank of) Hua pāk, <sup>4</sup> suffering from a glow-worm<sup>5</sup> lodged in my ear and unable to remain in the King's service, gave my resignation to Brañā Śrī Saiya Raṅaraṅgasaṅgrāma, and left on the eighth day of the waxing moon of the third month, Thursday, in the year of the ox, seventh of the decade, <sup>6</sup> to be ordained as a monk.

[I/13-31.] I was ordained in the year sakarāja eight hundred sixty-eight, year of the tiger,

1. The māsaḅḅḅḅḅḅ (I/6) is the number of months elapsed since the beginning of the culasakarāja.

2. The word ṛkṣa (ṛkṣa) is followed by the word พานาฑิ (bānāḅḅḅḅḅḅ), the meaning of which is uncertain.

3. The tithi (I/7) is the lunar day.

4. Hua pāk means the 'head of 100', perhaps 100 persons of a particular rank, or 100 units which we cannot determine.

5. แมงคทา (II/9), 'luminous wood-louse' or 'luminous millipede', a small creature about the size of a match-stick. If it lodged in someone's ear before the days of modern surgery, it was impossible to extract it.

6. 1 January 1506 A.D. (Julian).

eighth of the decade, on the eighth day of the waxing moon of the sixth month, Wednesday,<sup>7</sup> (when the moon was in) Puṣyarka, at six pādas<sup>8</sup> after midday. I was given the (monastic) name Mahā Saddhāpuñño. I, Mahā Saddhāpuñño, being full of faith, wished to build a monastery in the township of Braḥ Śrī Mahābodhi, (which is named for the tree) brought by Braḥ Mahāsvāmī Anurāja from Laṅkādvīpa<sup>9</sup> to plant between the villages of Āy Rōk and Mat Beṅ. So I, Mahā Saddhā, went to salute the Mahāsvāmī Silasāgara,<sup>10</sup> to ask him to help obtain a piece of land from the Mahā Upāsaka Braṅṅ Śrī Saiya Raṅaraṅgasāṅgrāma.<sup>11</sup> The Mahāsvāmī Silasāgara sent a letter<sup>12</sup> to Hmīn Narin.<sup>13</sup> Hmīn [Na]rin took the letter, added his (own) name to it, and (presented) it to Braṅṅ Śrī Saiya. Bra[ṅṅ] Śrī Saiya, having faith, commanded Hmīn Ṭāñ Cai<sup>14</sup> to measure a piece of land, forty sēn long and five sēn wide,<sup>15</sup> for a deed to give to me, Mahā Saddhā.

[I/31-34.] Then I, Mahā Saddhā, brought my granary<sup>16</sup> to make into a vihāra on the eighth day of the waning moon of the fourth month, Wednesday, in the year of the tiger, eighth of the decade.<sup>17</sup>

[I/34-39.] I went to Biṣṅuloka to obtain<sup>18</sup> four images of the Buddha, and brought them back to install in the vihāra in the year of the cock.<sup>19</sup> I, Mahāsaddhā, gave four tāmlīn of money in homage to the uposatha (hall). After telling all about building the vihāra, (I state that) I founded a big statue of the Buddha, and also images of the Buddha [II/1-9] of iron, silver, gold, bronze, tin, stone, wood or plaster, totaling forty altogether, (as well as) a cetiya, an image of the Mahāsvāmī Anurāja, and one of Mahā Buddhasāgara, (containing) seven catties' weight of gold,<sup>20</sup> and presented them to the Jetubanārāma.<sup>21</sup> (The monastery I built) at the

7. 19 April 1506 (Julian).

8. Thirty-six minutes (one pāda = six minutes).

9. Ceylon; the tree was presumably grown from a seed or cutting of the *ficus religiosa* at Anurādhapura, the old capital of Ceylon. The *ficus religiosa* at Anurādhapura was an object of intense worship as it had been grown in ancient times from a layering of the great Bodhi tree at Bodhgayā in India under which the Buddha Gotama had attained Enlightenment.

10. มหาสุวามีศีลสาคร (I/23), evidently a monk of high rank.

11. This person, who is mentioned at I/10-11, I/25, and several other places, was probably the ruler of the Sukhodayan provinces, residing at Biṣṅuloka as a vassal of Ayudhyā.

12. กาวพุทธคึกา (kāv buddhatīkā, I/26); กาว = กล่าว, 'to say', 'to relate'; the term buddhatīkā, a 'sub-commentary on a Buddhist text', can be used by extension for any official communication from a high-ranking monk.

13. ทัมน์นริน (I/27), a government official.

14. ทัมน์ตางใจ (I/29), another government official.

15. One เส้น (I/30-31) = เส้น, now 40 m., was probably 10 or 15 per cent less in the sixteenth century.

16. Presumably he dismantled his granary, brought the materials to the piece of land he had received, and used them to build a vihāra.

17. 5 March 1507 (Julian); 'Wednesday' is a mistake for Friday.

18. บูชา (I/34), the Pali noun pūjā, 'worship', is used in Siamese as either a noun or a verb; as a verb, it can be used to mean 'to give something in homage', or, for example in the present instance, as a polite expression meaning 'to buy or to commission (a holy image)'. At this time Biṣṅuloka was the seat of the Ayudhyan viceroys of the Sukhodayan provinces; as such it was a more important city than Sukhodaya, and very likely possessed better workshops of image-makers.

19. 1513 A.D.

20. About 4.23 kilograms.

21. Jetubanārāma (written 'Jetubalārāma' at II/6 and II/9) is the Siamese form of Pali Jetavanārāma, a monastery in India where the Buddha spent much time. Its namesake, referred to here, stood south of the walled city of Sukhodaya, where its ruins can still be seen.

holy Mahābodhi tree (that is descended from the tree) under which the Lord Buddha attained Enlightenment,<sup>22</sup> (was given) the name Aṅgā Svastī and made a dependency of the Jetubanārama.

[II/9-13.] As for Brañā Śrī Saiya Raṇa(raṅga), he gave a hundred and eighty rai of rice-fields south<sup>23</sup> of the monastery, (while) Cau Mōaṅ Rāmarāja<sup>24</sup> gave a hundred and eighty rai to the north.<sup>25</sup> Brañā Śrīdhamma gave a family (of slaves, consisting of) one man and three women, to (the statue of) the Lord.

[II/13-28.] I, Brah Mahā Saddhā, made an earnest wish,<sup>26</sup> saying: 'By virtue of the merit I (earned) by having my head shaved and by being ordained (as a monk) in the Buddha's religion, as well as building the monastery for the Lord, and founding all these images of the Lord Buddha, of gold, of silver, of bronze, of tin, and of stone, I pray that I may be a Buddha in the future, to come in that future time to lift all creatures out of the sea of saṃsāra.<sup>27</sup> May disease, sickness and danger have no power over me! May my life last two hundred thousand years!<sup>28</sup> May my heart be filled with reverence for the Brah Śrī Ratanatraya, (namely) all the Three Gems, so that I, as a monk, may lead all creatures to Nirvāṇa!'

[II/28-38.] I planted bamboo trees around sugar-palms,<sup>29</sup> sāla trees,<sup>30</sup> and countless trees of all kinds.<sup>31</sup> In making this inscription I ask monks, upāsakas and upāsikās<sup>32</sup> to join in rejoicing with me. The Samtec Brah Saṅgharāja also joins me in rejoicing greatly. This inscription is engraved<sup>33</sup> in the year of the rat, tenth of the decade, on the eighth day of the waning moon of the twelfth month, a Wednesday.<sup>34</sup> (May there be) success!

22. See above, note 9 to section 2.

23. ห้วนนอร์ (II/10) = ห้วนอน, the usual Sukhodayan term for 'south' (based on the position of a man's head when he is sleeping on his right side facing the east).

24. Probably the ruler of Sukhodaya under the supervision of Brañā Śrī Saiya Raṇaraṅga.

25. ปลายตีน (II/11) = ตีนนอน, the usual Sukhodayan term for 'north'. These rulers were presenting the Aṅgā Svastī monastery with rice-fields whose revenues were to be used to maintain it.

26. I.e. an 'act of truth', consisting of a premise and a wish. If a man who has earned sufficient merit makes such a declaration, then, if the premise is true, the wish will automatically come true too.

27. The round of rebirths.

28. According to Indian belief, the human life-span slowly diminishes from an 'incalculable' length to ten years, then slowly increases again until the cycle is repeated. Among the 24 Buddhas of the Past discussed in the Buddhavaṃsa, several lived for 100,00 years. If Mahā Saddhā is reborn in the future at an appropriate phase of the cycle, there is no reason why he could not live for 200,000 years.

29. ตาลลอน (II/29) is a kind of palmyra (*borassus flabelliformis*). The fruit, which is divided into compartments (ลอน), is used to make sugar.

30. สาล (II/29), *shorea robusta*.

31. สรรพทุกอนันต์พรรณามิได้เลย (II/29-31) = สรรพทุกอนันต์จะพรรณามิได้เลย. Our translation is conjectural. The passage could equally well be translated: '(The acts of merit) of all kinds (which I have performed) cannot be counted at all.'

32. Upāsakas and upāsikās are laymen and laywomen who have undertaken to observe the first eight of the ten rules of monastic discipline, and signify their undertaking by wearing white robes.

33. ตอง (II/35) = ตอง, a word still used in *Lân Nâ Tai* to mean 'engrave'.

34. 4 November 1548 (Julian).