



A-1



A-2



A-3



A-4



B-1



B-2



B-3



B-4



B-6



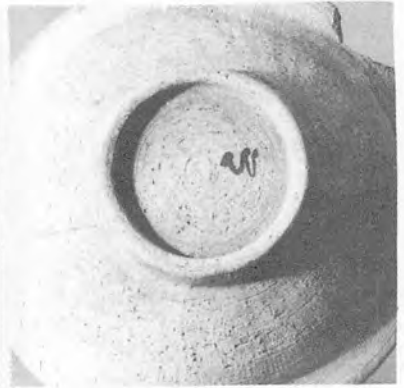
B-7



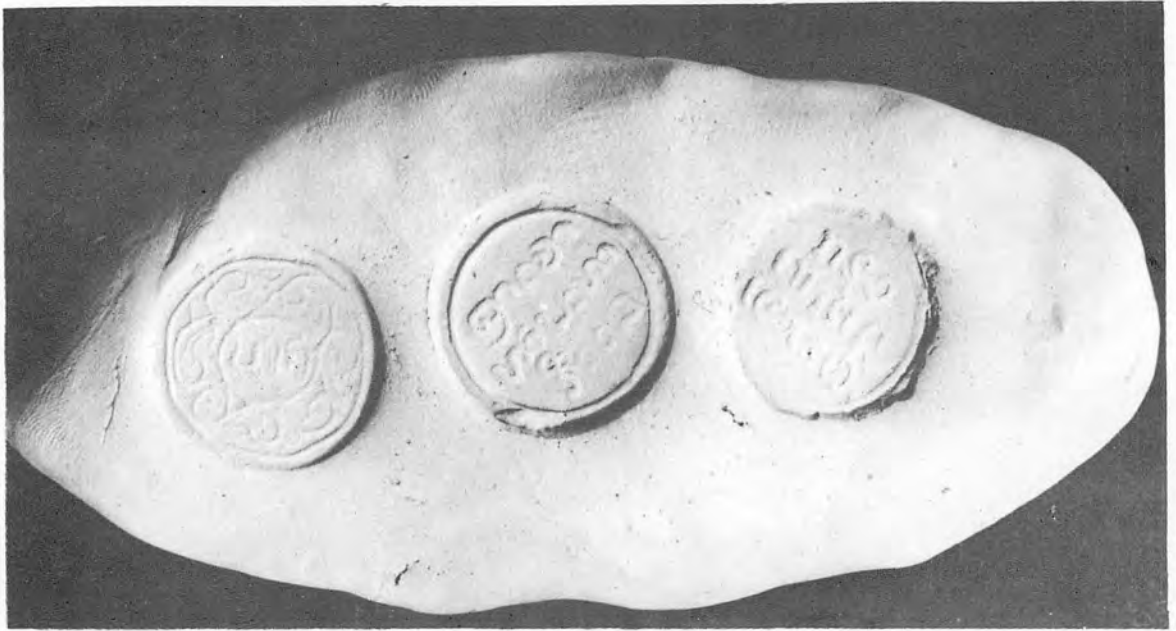
C-1



C-2



C-3



D-1a

D-3a

D-2a



D-16



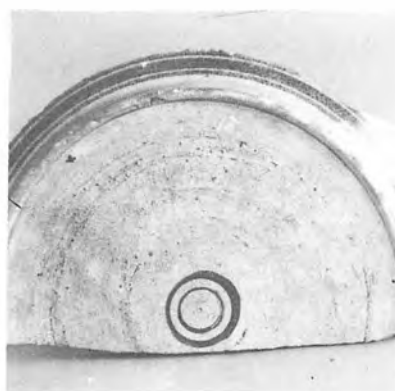
D-26



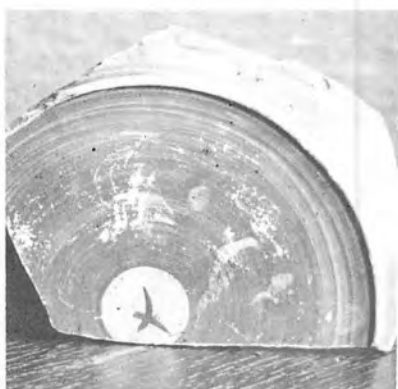
D-36



E-1



E-2



E-3



E-4



E-5



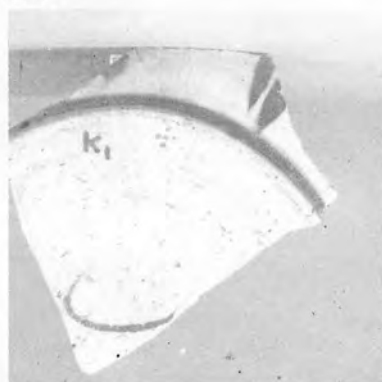
E-6



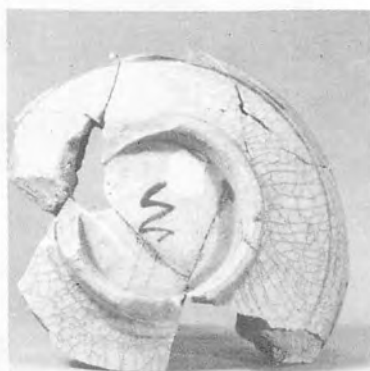
E-7



E-8



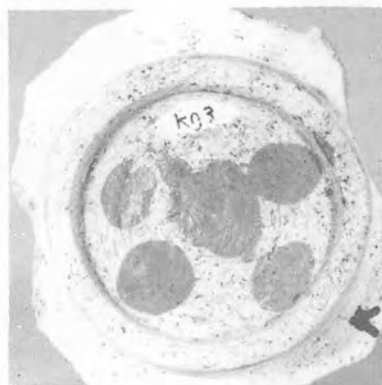
E-9



E-10



E-11



E-12



E-13



F-1



F-2



F-3



F-4



F-5



F-6



F-7



F-8a



F-8b



F-9a



F-9b



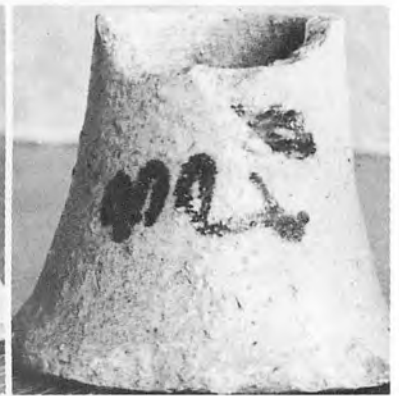
F-10



F-11



F-12



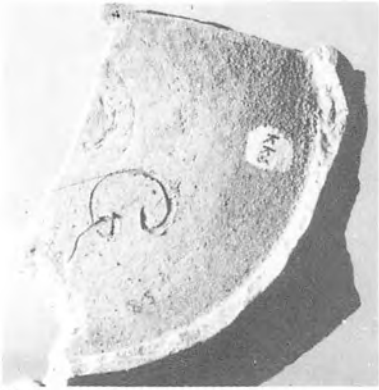
F-13



F-14



F-15



G-1



G-2



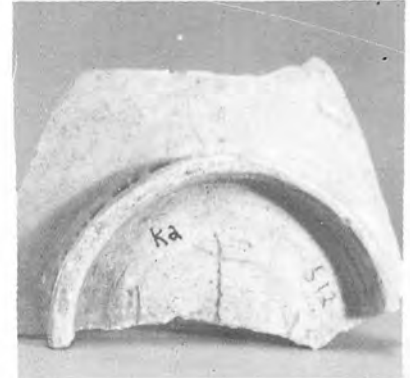
G-3



G-4



G-5



G-6



G-7



G-8



G-9



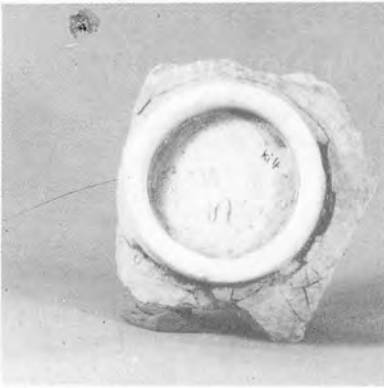
G-10



G-11



G-12



G-13



G-14



G-15



G-16



G-17



G-18



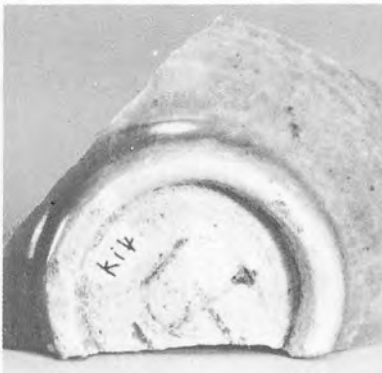
G-19



G-20



G-21



G-22



G-23



H-1



H-2



I-1



I-2



I-3



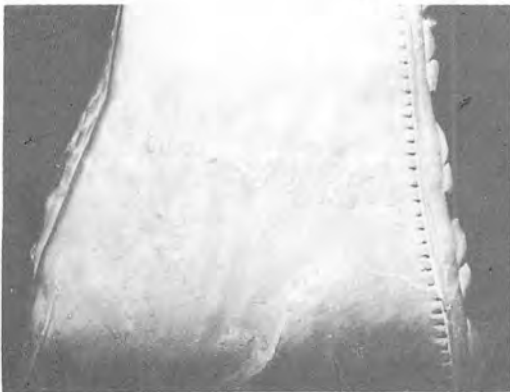
I-4



I-5



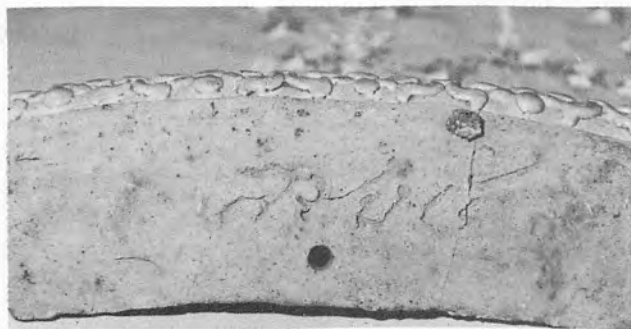
I-6



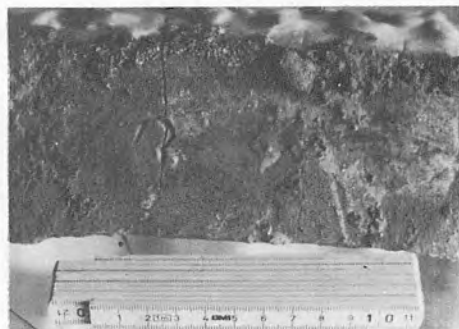
J-1



J-2



K-1



K-2



K-3



K-4



K-5



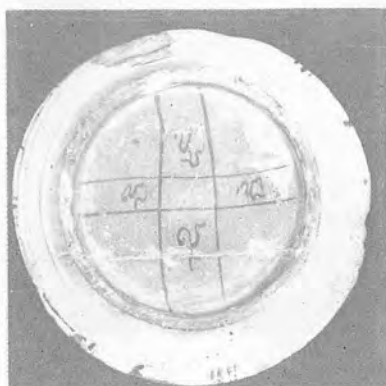
K-6



K-7



K-8



K-9

POTTERS MARKS AND OTHER WRITING ON NORTHERN THAI OR LĀN NĀ CERAMICS

Over the years a number of ceramic pieces and sherds from the northern kilns have been found with marks, letters and writing. All these are chance finds by villagers, so that it is difficult to establish any pattern to indicate when or why the marks were used. They do, however, seem to be very infrequent even at Kālong where most of the pieces have been found.

Simple identification marks were painted onto or incised into the unglazed base of the piece or onto the pontil or support on which it stood in the kiln. Sometimes the mark is a letter or a name. These marks may indicate that in some kilns – most marked pieces have been found at Pā Yum and Pā Dong in the Kālong Complex – and on some occasions, outside potters put their wares into the kiln so that identification of the owner was necessary. The pigment used is iron oxide, identical to that used for the underglaze black decoration.

A few pieces have phrases written on the base or on the outer wall under the glaze. Three seals have also been found at Kālong. La Loubère, writing in 1688, has this to say about seals and signatures : “Moreover, they sign no Writings, neither do they apply any Seal to private Writings. ’Tis only the Magistrates that have a Seal, that is properly a Seal which the King gives them as an Instrument of their Offices. Particular Persons, instead of a Signature, do put a single Cross; and tho, this kind of Signature be practised by all, yet every one knows the Cross which is under his own hand; and it is very rare, they say, that any one is of a Reputation so bad as to disown it in Justice. In a word, I shall transiently declare, that we must not search out any Mystery in that they sign with a Cross; ’Tis amongst them only a kind of Flourish which they have preferr’d before any other, probably because it is more plain.” (*La Loubère*; Kingdom of Siam. London 1693, p. 71)

None of this tells us a great deal although it serves to bring to life these craftsmen of old. We know some of their names, we know that they were literate, that they wrote with ease, and above all we can probably say that they were not Chinese for not one Chinese character has been recorded from the Lān Nā kilns, nor, we believe, from the kilns in the Sukhōthai kingdom where marks and writing are also sometimes found – some of these are here included for purposes of comparison.

The haphazard nature of these marks reinforces the general impression that the kilns of Lān Nā were in the nature of free enterprises. The kilns are not organised and planned but widely scattered; the designs are enormously varied and some of the creatures are depicted with a great sense of fun; chess pieces, whistles, pulleys and simple household containers were made as well as the more sophisticated wares for *wat*, palace or burial purposes; experimental wares were made like the Pā Dong celadons and the copper coloured lead glazed wares from Thung Mān both in the Kālong complex.

Sherds, mostly from Kālong and to a lesser extent San Kamphāng, Phān, Phayao and 'Late Hariphunchai' are found throughout the area of old Lān Nā and now in the Tāk Hilltop Burial Sites, particularly to the north in the Mā Tūn - Om Kòì area. This seems to indicate extensive free trade or bartering of goods during 14th - 16th centuries, which may indicate that society was not so rigidly controlled as is sometimes thought.

From a purely formal point of view, the inscriptions can be divided into three categories: (1) Short phrases or at least one complete word; (2) single letters; (3) simple marks like a cross or a circle. From a more technical point of view, the inscriptions can be divided into two categories: (1) inscriptions that are incised; (2) inscriptions that are painted.

With the exception of a few inscriptions that could not be read, such as those on pieces A4 and F8, all inscriptions are in Thai language and in Thai letters, either of the Fak Khām variety, or else of that classical Thai script for which the misleading name "Sukhōthai script" is used. On the present pieces of pottery, it seems impossible to draw an exact line between the use of these two kinds of letters, firstly because they are similar anyhow, and secondly because they occur mixed together. With present knowledge, and in the absence of dates, it has likewise not been possible to date the writings, and that mainly for two reasons: (1) Letters hastily written with awkward writing material such as a piece of wood dipped in paint, look quite different from the regular writings of the past; (2) the alphabets used in the inscriptions were used for centuries with only little variation. Still, it seems that the writings may not be older than about 1400 A.D., and not younger than about 1850 A.D. One item has a secure date, though, corresponding to 1473 A.D. The inscriptions on pieces A4 and F8 mentioned above, appear to be in Thai script too, but they were either hastily written or belong to a Thai script alien to Lān Nā.

In presenting the inscriptions, the following method is used. The first line shows the name under which the inscription is listed in the Archive of Lān Nā Inscriptions (Social Research Institute, Chiang Mai University), for instance: 1.6.4.1 ห้วยป่า (11). Then follow the transliteration of the inscription/ ถวย / with its modern writing ถ้วย and the translation into English, “bowl”. The number of dots indicates roughly the number of letters that have not been read or are missing; three dots indicate an indefinite number of unreadable or missing letters.

Phra Phim

Inscriptions and marks are also found on low fired bricks and amulets, but have not been included in this survey.

J.C. Shaw and Hans Penth

A. Writing on the wall – Kālong (iron oxide)

1. Sherd of bowl, underglaze black decoration and writing, Group I
1.6.4.1 ห้วยป่า (14) /...หนานองพ.../
2. Sherd of bowl, underglaze black decoration and writing, Group I
1.6.4.1 ห้วยป่า (3) /ถาย/ = ถ้าย. “(The) bowl (of. ?)”
3. Sherd of bowl, underglaze black decoration and writing, Group I
1.6.4.1 ห้วยป่า (13) / .รา.. /
4. Sherd of large container, uneven olive celadon glaze, writing in iron oxide on body. Probably, but not certainly, Kālong Group IV
1.4.4.1 กาทลง Tentative /ถายบาน.../ = ถ้ายบ้าน... “Vessel from village.....”

B. Writing on the base – Kālong (iron oxide)

1. Sherd of bowl, underglaze black decoration, Group I
1.6.4.1 ห้วยป่า (2) /ถายบานหนอง.../ = ถ้ายบ้านหนอง... “Bowl from/of the village Nong ...” (The first word /ถาย/ “bowl” seems to have received some additional strokes making it look like modern ตัว(อ)ย่าง “sample”).
2. Sherd of bowl, underglaze black decoration, Group I
1.6.4.1 ห้วยป่า (1) /ถายพันแล/ = ถ้ายพันแล “This is the bowl of (Mr.) Phan” (or: “This is the bowl of the *phan*” (*phan* “1000” was a rank of government officials)).
3. Sherd of bowl, monochrome, Group I
1.6.4.1 ห้วยป่า (11) /ถาย/ = ถ้าย “Bowl”
4. Bowl, underglaze black decoration, Group I
1.4.4.1 กาทลง (พ.2/2)
5. Bowl, underglaze black decoration (no photo)
1.4.4.1 บ้านทุ่งมัน (พ.1/5) Tentative /พนา/
6. Bowl, underglaze black decoration, Group II
1.2.4.1 วัดกุขาว The letters /พท/ with the mark X written beneath. Probably the abbreviation for a name. This bowl was found in the ruins of Wat Kū Khāo in Wiang Kum Kām near Chiang Mai.
7. Sherd of bowl, underglaze black decoration, Group I
1.6.4.1 ห้วยป่า (10) Tentative /ถา/ = ถ้าย “bowl” ? Or a personal name?

C. Letters on base (iron oxide)

1. Small dish, underglaze black decoration, Group II
1.4.4.1 บ้านทุ่งม่าน (พ. 1/2) The letter /ฉ/
2. Sherd of tall pot, underglaze black decoration, Group I
1.4.4.1 บ้านทุ่งม่าน (พ.1/4) The letter /ส/
3. Small dish, underglaze black decoration, Group II
1.4.1.1 บ้านทุ่งม่าน (พ. 1/3) The letter /พ/

D. Seals - Kālong (incised)

1. a, b Seal, cloud grey celadon glaze
1.6.4.1 ห้วยปาย (5) /นาก/ “(Mr.) Nāk”
2. a, b Seal, unglazed
1.6.4.1 ห้วยป่าว (7) /ตราเจาปากนาเร็น/ = ตราเจ้าปากนาเร็น “The seal of Jao Pāk Nā Rüan”. The *pāk nā* was a government official mainly concerned with the cultivation of rice. *Rüan* was the personal name of this official. *Jao* does not mean “royalty” here but indicates his importance. 3a, b Seal, unglazed
1.6.4.1 ห้วยป่าว (6) /ตราเจาท้ามะทรี แล/ = ตราเจ้าธรรมทรี แล “The seal of Jao Thamma Thāri”

E. Marks on base - Kālong (iron oxide)

1. Sherd of dish, underglaze black decoration, Group I
1.4.4.1 บ้านทุ่งม่าน (พ. 2/4)
2. Sherd of dish, underglaze black decoration, Group I
1.4.4.1 บ้านทุ่งม่าน (พ. 2/3)
3. Sherd of dish, underglaze black decoration (base covered with pigment), Group I
1.4.4.1 กาทอง (พ. 2/1)
4. Sherd, Group II
1.6.4.1 ห้วยป่าหุยม (พ. 2/3)
5. Sherd of bowl, underglaze black decoration, Group I
1.4.4.1 บ้านทุ่งม่าน (พ. 2/1)
6. Sherd of bowl, olive celadon glaze, Group IV
1.6.4.1 ห้วยป่าหุยม (พ. 2/4)

7. Sherd, underglaze black decoration, Group II
1.6.4.1 ห้วยป่าท่อม (พ. 2/2)
8. Sherd, underglaze black decoration, Group I
1.6.4.1 ห้วยป่า (พ. 2/1)
9. Sherd of dish, underglaze black decoration, Group I
1.4.4.1 บ้านทุ่งม่าน (พ. 2/2)
10. Sherd of bowl
1.6.4.1 ห้วยป่าท่อม (พ. 2/5)
11. Sherd, underglaze black decoration, Group I
1.4.1.1 บ้านทุ่งม่าน (พ. 2/5)
12. Sherd, underglaze black decoration, Group II
1.6.4.1 ห้วยป่าท่อม (1)
13. Broken bowl, underglaze black decoration, Group I
1.4.4.1 กาทอง (พ. 2/2)

F. Marked pontils or supports - Kālong

1. 1.6.4.1 ห้วยป่าท่อม (พ. 1/3)
The letters /ไม/
2. 1.6.4.1 ห้วยป่าท่อม (พ. 1/5)
The letter /ม/
3. 1.6.4.1 ห้วยป่าท่อม (พ. 1/6)
The letter /ญ/
4. 1.6.4.1 ห้วยป่าท่อม (พ. 1/2)
The letter /ฟ/
5. 1.6.4.1 ห้วยป่าท่อม (พ. 1/1)
The letters /มา/
6. 1.6.4.1 ห้วยป่าท่อม (พ. 1/4)
Two letters written in conjunction, starting with /ม/
7. 1.6.4.1 ห้วยป่า (พ. 1/2)
The letter /ฟ/?
8. a, b 1.6.4.1 ห้วยป่า (4)
9. a, b 1.6.4.1 ห้วยป่า (พ. 1/1)
The letters /ฟ/ and /ฉ/
10. 1.6.4.1 ห้วยป่าท่อม (พ. 2/9)

11. 1.6.4.1 ห้วยป่าหยม (พ. 1/7) /ทน์/ = ท้น “(Mr.) Than”
12. 1.6.4.1 ห้วยป่าหยม (พ. 1/8) /ทน์/ = ท้น “(Mr.) Than”
13. 1.6.4.1 ห้วยป่าหยม (พ. 1/9) /ทน์/ = ท้น “(Mr.) Than”
14. 1.6.4.1 ห้วยป่าหยม (พ. 1/10) /ทน์/ = ท้น “(Mr.) Than”
15. 1.4.4.1 กาทลง (4) The letters /ป้อย/

G. Marks and letters on base - Kālong (incised)

1. Sherd from the Wang Nūa kiln site, Group IV
1.6.4.1 บ้านวังโป่ง The letter /บ/ or /ค/
2. Sherd, pale celadon glaze, Group IV
1.6.4.1 ห้วยป่าหยม (พ. 2/6)
3. Sherd, pale celadon glaze, Group IV
1.6.4.1 ห้วยป่าหยม (พ. 2/8) The letter /ล/ ? Or a mark ?
4. Sherd, pale celadon glaze, Group IV
1.6.4.1 (พ. 2/7)
5. Sherd of saggar (?)
1.4.4.1 บ้านทุ่งม่าน (พ. 1/1) The letter /พ/
6. Sherd
1.4.4.1 ห้วยป่าดง (พ. 2/4)
- (7 - 23: Sherds from Pā Dong kiln, Group III)
7. 1.4.4.1 ห้วยป่าดง (พ. 1/5) A letter ?
8. 1.4.4.1 ห้วยป่าดง (พ. 1/2)
The letter /ท/
9. 1.4.4.1 ห้วยป่าดง (พ. 1/3)
The letter /ท/
10. 1.4.4.1 ห้วยป่าดง (พ. 1/3)
The letter /ท/
11. 1.4.4.1 ห้วยป่าดง (พ. 1/1)
The letter /ณ/ or /พ/
12. 1.4.4.1 ห้วยป่าดง (พ. 1/10)
The letter /ท/
13. 1.4.4.1 ห้วยป่าดง (พ. 1/9)
The letters /ท/
14. 1.4.4.1 ห้วยป่าดง (พ. 1/8)

15. 1.4.4.1 ห้วยป่าดง (พ. 2/3)
16. 1.4.4.1 ห้วยป่าดง (พ. 1/7)
The letter /พ/
17. 1.4.4.1 ห้วยป่าดง (พ. 1/6)
The letter /ก/ ?
18. 1.4.4.1 ห้วยป่าดง (พ. 2/7)
19. 1.4.4.1 ห้วยป่าดง (พ. 2/6)
20. 1.4.4.1 ห้วยป่าดง (พ. 2/8)
21. 1.4.4.1 ห้วยป่าดง (พ. 2/5)
22. 1.4.4.1 ห้วยป่าดง (พ. 2/2)
23. 1.4.4.1 ห้วยป่าดง (พ. 2/1)

H. From San Kamphaeng near Chiang Mai

1. Probably building decoration with numbers in iron oxide
1.2.4.1 อ่อนใต้ Tentative /53/ “53”
2. Vase with incised writing on base. Photography by courtesy of National Museum Chiang Mai.
1.2.4.1 สันกำแพง 2287/1744
Although many letters in this inscription can be read, others are doubtful and the text does not seem to make sense. There might be a date included, viz. 2287, which would be B.E. 2287, A.D. 1744. But that is only a suggestion; it could be that the “ciphers” are in fact letters. Some of the letters in this inscription look much older than 1744, but on the other hand those archaic forms could have survived in an upcountry area until quite late. On the whole, it would be possible to disregard the dubious “2287”, to take at least part of the outer circle of the inscription as a gāthā that consists of individual letters, and to date the inscription a few centuries before “1744 A.D”.

I. Marks on base - Phān (incised)

1. Sherd of celadon bowl
1.4.4.1 บ้านโป่งแดง (พ. 1/1) Several letters
2. Sherd of celadon bowl
1.4.4.1 บ้านโป่งแดง (พ. 1/2) The letter /พ/

3. Sherd of celadon bowl
1.4.4.1 พาน /ถายน้อย/ = ถายน้อย “Little vessel” or “The vessel of Nòi”
4. Sherd of celadon bowl
1.4.4.1 อ.พาน (2) The inscription has not been read.
5. Sherd of celadon bowl
1.4.4.1 อ.พาน (3) The inscription has not been read.
6. Sherd of celadon bowl
1.4.4.1 อ.พาน (4) The inscription has not been read.

J. Others

1. Roof finial with incised date under the glaze. Earthenware with brown glaze. Photography with courtesy of National Museum Lamphun.
1.6.4.1 วัดพระธาตุเสด็จ 2189/1646/1003 ปีเบิกเสท/ “(C.S.) 1003, a year Pök Set”. C.S. 1003 corresponds to A.D. 1641; however, that year was not a year Pök Set but a year Luang Sai. Assuming two errors or inaccuracies in the inscription, namely that the cipher 3 represents a hastily written 8 and that Pök Set stands for Ruai Set, the scribe would have meant “C.S. 1008, a year Ruai Set” which would correspond to A.D. 1646. In the case that the name of the year, Pök Set, was correctly indicated by the scribe, one can argue that the nearest year Pök Set was C.S. 1020 which corresponds to A.D. 1658. It therefore seems reasonable to assume that the inscription means a date around 1650 A.D. This roof finial, probably a *chò fā* ช่อฟ้า, is from Wat Phra Thāt Sadet, about 20 km north of Lampāng.
2. Building material. Earthenware with brown glaze.
1.6.4.1 วัดพระธาตุลำปางหลวง /มั่วหลัง [8] / = มั่วหลัง 8 “Rear porch 8”. The cipher 8 could also be a 3. This piece is in the museum of Wat Phra Thāt Lampāng Luang.

Note : Nos. 1 and 2 are not from any of the known Lān Nā kilns, nor are they in the same tradition.

K. Sukhothai Kingdom marked ceramics

1. ‘Sukhōthai’. Building material.
2.3.4.1 สวรรค์โลก 2016/1473 /[ศ] 835/ or /[ส] 835/ “C.S. 835”. C.S. 835

comspouds to A.D. 1473. Our attention was kindly drawn to this piece by Mr. Dick van Oenen. The item was published in: The Toyama Museum of Fine Art (ed.): Thai Ceramics from the Sōsai Collection. Japan 1984, p. 65.

2. 'Sukhōthai'. Building material. Found at Phitsanu Lōk.
2.3.4.1 พิษณุโลก The letter /ก/
3. 'Sukhōthai'. Underglaze black plate. Found at Tāk hilltop burial site.
/นายทิ้งอายุเขง/ "Nāi Thīng and Āi Kheng (are the owners/made the vessel)"
4. Sawankalōk underglaze black covered chicken box. Found in Indonesia.
2.3.4.1 ศรีสังขนาลัย /มานี้/ Probably the personal name Mānī or Maṇī.
5. Sawankalōk pontil.
2.3.4.1 ศรีสังขนาลัย (พ. 1/1) Twice the letter /ก/
6. Sherd from Pā Yāng, Sī Sachanālai kiln site.
2.3.4.1 ป้ายาง (พ. 2/1)
7. Sherd from Sī Sachanālai kiln site.
2.3.4.1 เกาะน้อย (พ. 2/2)
8. Sherd from Sī Sachanālai kiln site.
2.3.4.1 เกาะน้อย (พ. 2/1)
9. Sherd.
2.3.4.1 สุโขทัย (3)