

Chiang Mai



Nop Buri Si Nakhon Ping



Ministry of Education



CHIANG MAI

Nop Buri Si Nakhon Ping





Chiang Mai: Nop Buri Si Nakhon Ping

Translation Work from Thai to English

No. 5 Literature

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Preface

The Department of Curriculum and Instruction Development (DCID) has pleasure to publish English version of *Chaing Mai: Nop Buri Si Nakhon Ping*. This translation is a part of the Project to Translate Thai Literature into Foreign Languages. The objectives of the project are to disseminate globally Thai culture and national identity. This will make accessible to non-Thai speakers many aspects of Thai culture. The contents consist of information on geography, history, administration, education, religion, public health, economy, tourist attraction spots, traditions and culture of the Lanna people. In addition, it contains information on the lifestyle of various hilltribes and local wisdom on art and culture handed down from generation to generation. The book will also be used as part of our foreign language teaching curriculum as an example when studying translation. It is hoped that this book will aid Thai children living in a foreign country in their learning of Thai and know their mother land better. These objectives are in accordance with the Ministry of Education's policies to preserve, perpetuate and disseminate Thai arts and culture and local wisdom. The translation was entrusted to Mrs. Sudchit Bhinyoying and was reviewed by Mr. Richard William Jones.

DCID would like to extend its thanks to everybody concerned who played a part in this publication. It is hoped that this book will provide a certain amount of usefulness to students and readers alike.

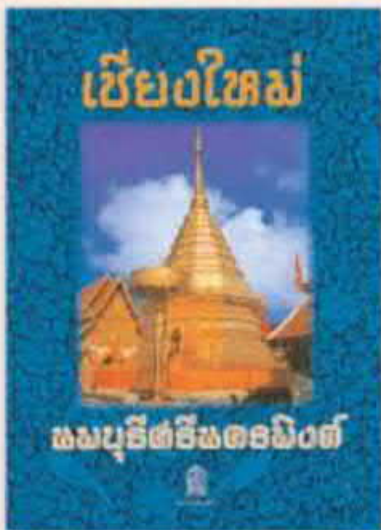
P. . Senarith

(Dr. Prapatpong Senarith)

Director-General

Department of Curriculum and
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August 2, 2002



Front Cover: Wat Doi Suthep Chedi



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Inside Front Cover: Stucco deva in act of worship



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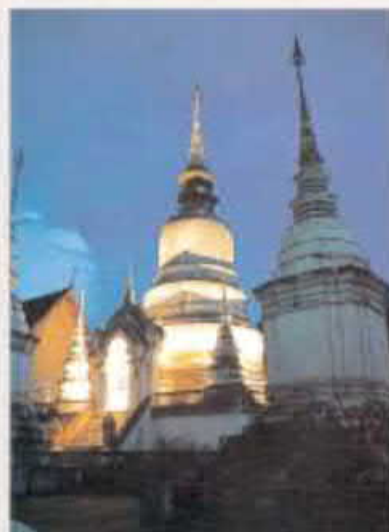
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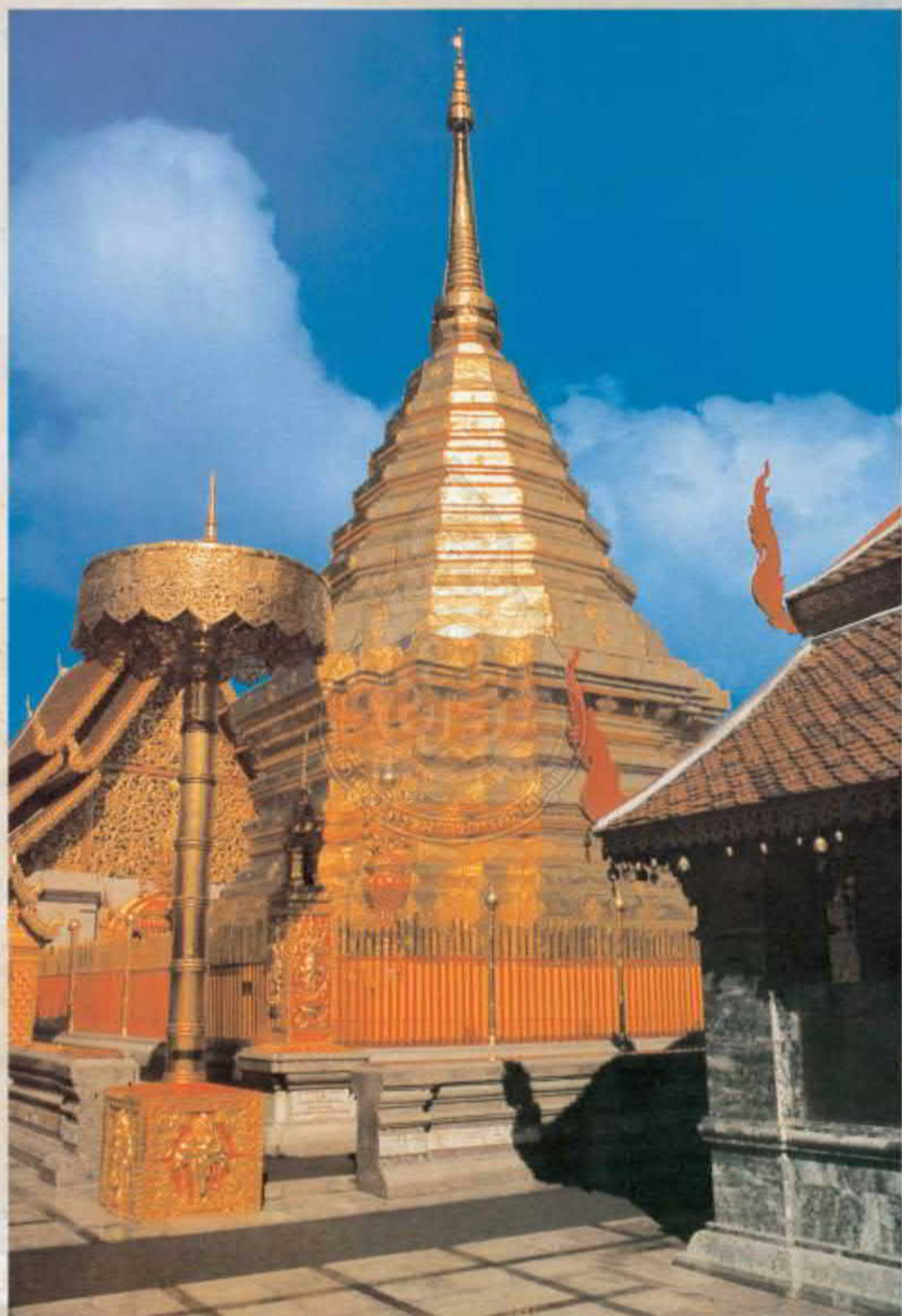


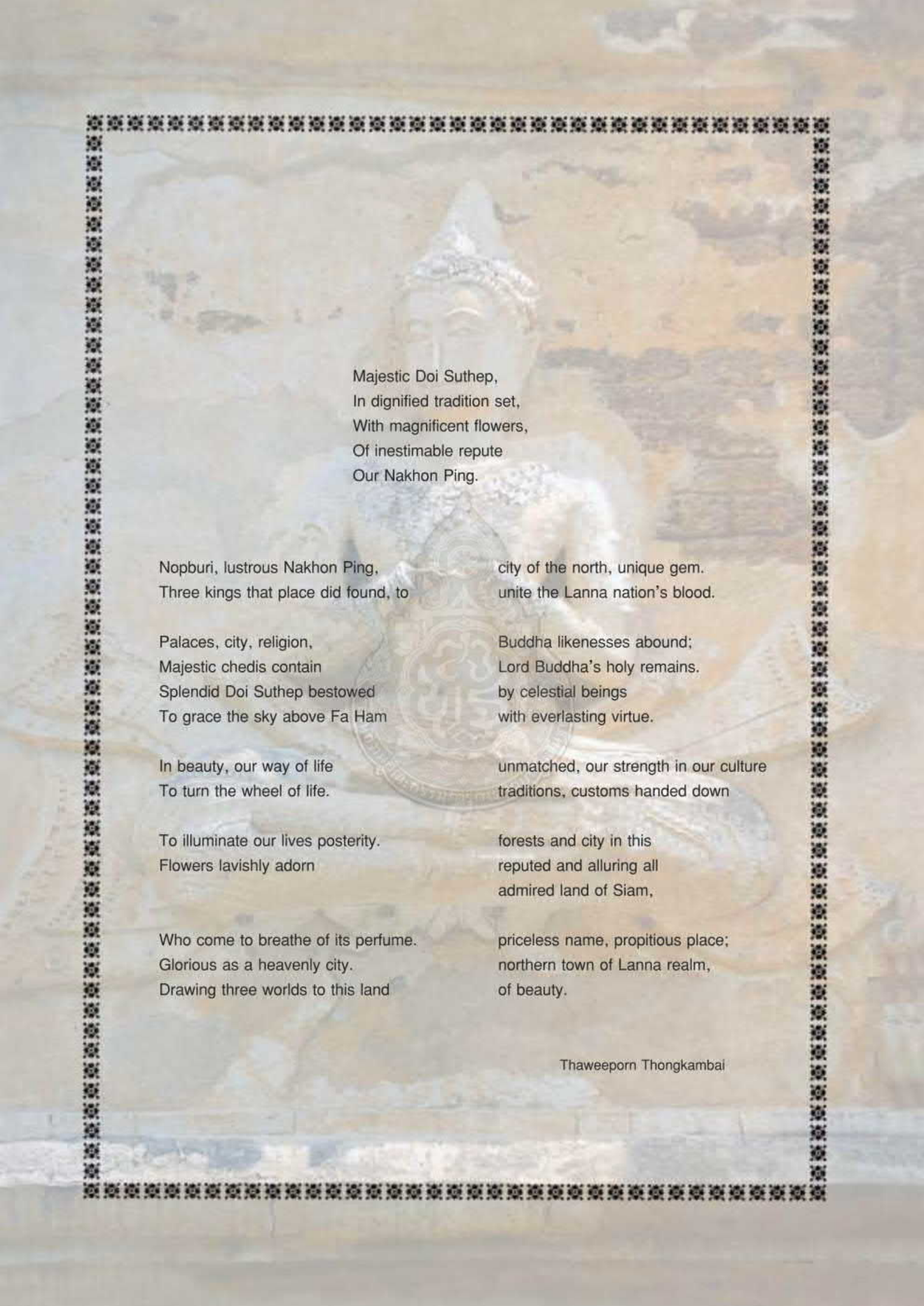
Back cover
The chedi at Wat Suan Dok



Inside back cover
The chedi at Wat Ku Tao







Majestic Doi Suthep,
In dignified tradition set,
With magnificent flowers,
Of inestimable repute
Our Nakhon Ping.

Nopburi, lustrous Nakhon Ping,
Three kings that place did found, to

city of the north, unique gem.
unite the Lanna nation's blood.

Palaces, city, religion,
Majestic chedis contain
Splendid Doi Suthep bestowed
To grace the sky above Fa Ham

Buddha likenesses abound;
Lord Buddha's holy remains.
by celestial beings
with everlasting virtue.

In beauty, our way of life
To turn the wheel of life.

unmatched, our strength in our culture
traditions, customs handed down

To illuminate our lives posterity.
Flowers lavishly adorn

forests and city in this
reputed and alluring all
admired land of Siam,

Who come to breathe of its perfume.
Glorious as a heavenly city.
Drawing three worlds to this land

priceless name, propitious place;
northern town of Lanna realm,
of beauty.

Thaweeporn Thongkambai



Chiang Mai, Nop Buri Si Nakhon Ping



Along the White Elephant Wall

Chiang Mai is an old city – more than 700 years old. It originated the day Phya Maengrai, Phya Ngam Muang and Pho Khun Ramkhamhaeng joined forces to build a city on the bank of the Ping River and called it Nop Buri Si Nakhon Ping. Chiang Mai served as the centre of the Lanna Kingdom.

Chiang Mai was highly advanced in every respect. Its territory once extended as far as Chiang Tung and Chiang Rung. Buddhism was widespread throughout the realm. During the reign of King Tilokarat, the Buddhist canon, called the Tripidok, was revised there. Several major Buddhist literary tracts were created, for instance Chinakanmalipakon, Sihingkanithan and Panyasa-chadok.

About the year 1558, King Burengnong of Burma launched a war against Chiang Mai, causing the Lanna Kingdom to fall under Burmese occupation for more than 200 years.



The Monument of the Three Kings in front of the old Town Hall

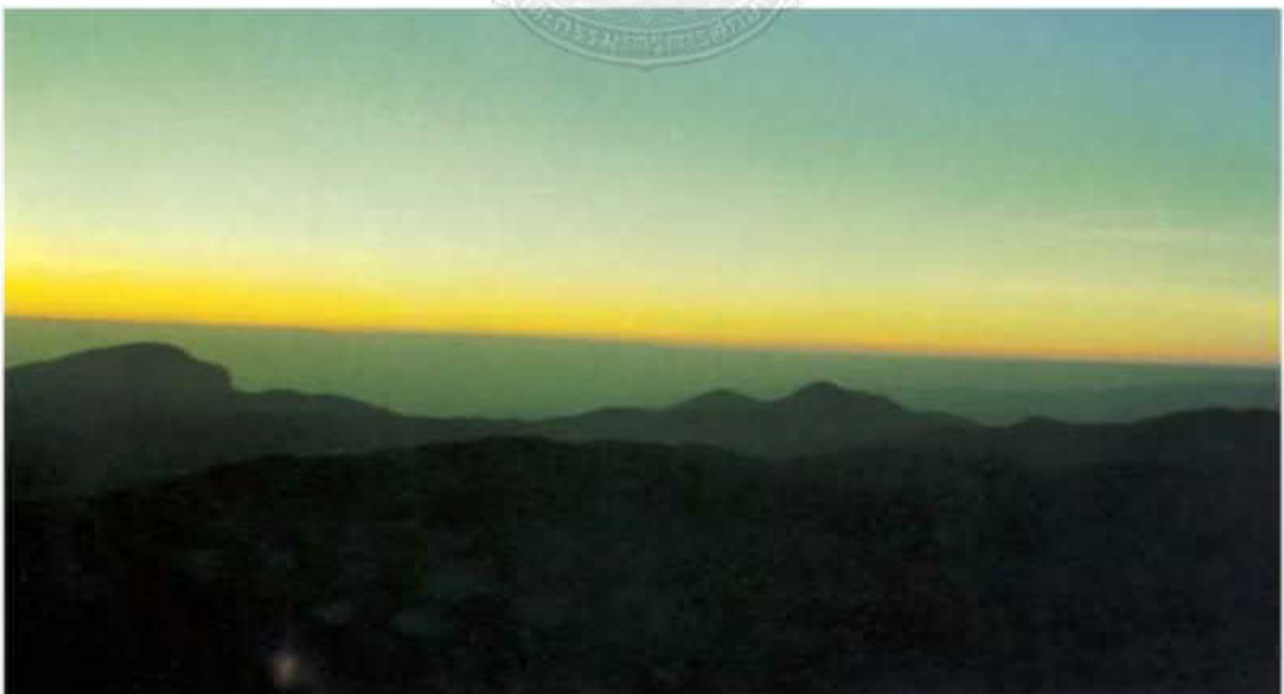
In the reign of King Taksin the Great, when the country gained its independence and Thonburi was the capital, Phya Kawila, the grandson of the ruler of Lampang, and Phya Cha Ban, an official in the Court of Chiang Mai, joined the king's army to drive the Burmese out of Chiang Mai. Later, King Rama I bestowed the position of ruler of Chiang Mai to Phya Kawila. Chiang Mai therefore became a vassal state under Siam with its own hereditary ruler. The last Ruler of Chiang Mai was Major General Chao Kaew Nawarat, who had no direct power over the administration but was honoured by the government as head of the city. Major General Chao Kaew Nawarat passed away in 1939.

After the transformation of the administrative system to a constitutional democracy, the Rassadorn Party abolished the position of Ruler of Chiang Mai. Therefore, Chiang Mai, which was formerly the hub of the Lanna Kingdom, became a province of Thailand.

Chiang Mai nowadays has as its own identity, culture, traditions and dialect (kham muang). It is socially and economically advanced and well developed. It has modern facilities with an up-to-date airport, acting as the centre of trade and commerce, education, medical services and public health of the North.



King Kawila Monument



Early morning sun on Lanna



Map showing the boundaries and districts of Chiang Mai



A Chiang Mai view

In the North, it is adjacent to Chiang Tung in Myanmar. In the South, it shares the boundary with Tha Yang, Mae Ramat and Samngao districts of Tak Province, Li District of Lamphun Province. Its eastern boundary touches Mae Chan, Chiang Rai City, Mae Suay and Wiang Pa Pao districts of Chiang Rai; Muang Pan and Muang Lampang districts of Lampang; Lamphun City, Mae Tha, Pa Sang, Ban Hong, Thung Chang and Li districts of Lamphun Province. In the west, it is connected with Pai, Mae Hong Son City District, Khun Yuam, Mae La Noi, Mae Sariang and Sop Moei of Mae Hong Son Province.



The hills and forests a part of the natural environment

Chiang Mai is the second largest province of Thailand (It is second in size to Nakhon Ratchasima). It has an approximate area of 20,107 square kilometres. About 80 percent of its land is mountainous. The remaining 20 percent is flatland and valleys. Chiang Mai is situated between latitude 17 degrees 15 minutes to 20 degrees 10 minutes to the north and at longitude 98 degrees 5 minutes to 99 degrees 35 minutes in the east.

Chiang Mai is quite cool all year round, with an average temperature of about 25.4 degrees Celsius. On average, its highest temperature is 31.8 and lowest 10.1 Celsius. The weather in Chiang Mai can be divided into three seasons. Summer is from March to May, the rainy season from June to October and the cool season from November to February. During these three seasons, two monsoon winds, the southwestern and the northeastern influence the weather. The latter brings in cold weather from China, giving Chiang Mai a cooler climate from November to



February. Summer and the rainy season are influenced by the southwestern monsoon wind that carries heat and dampness to Chiang Mai.

The topography of Chiang Mai is mountainous with numerous towering peaks encircling the province on all sides with the exception of the Southeast where there is a wide basin of flatland along the Ping River adjacent to Lamphun. Daen Lao, Thanon Thong Chai and Phi Pan Nam mountain ranges encircle Chiang Mai.



Map showing topographical features, mountains, basins and flatlands along hills

The Daen Lao Mountain Range is about 1,000–2,500 metres high. It runs from the Republic of China and stretches across the Thai–Myanmar border. Its total length is about 1,330 kilometres. The part bordering Thailand and Myanmar is about 120 kilometres long. This range lies to the north and north-west of Chiang Mai, covering the districts of Mae Ai, Fang, Chai Prakan, Chiang Dao, Wiang Haeng and Mae Taeng. There are several towering and well-known mountain peaks in Chiang Mai such as Doi Thuay, Doi Un, Doi Ang Khang and Doi Pha Hom Pok. The latter is situated in Mae Ai District and is 2,297 metres above sea level, the second tallest peak after Doi Inthanon.

The Thanon Thongchai mountain range is composed of more than 70 mountain peaks, running south of the Daen Lao Range down to Kanchanaburi. It is about 1,410 kilometres long, divided into 3 sub-ranges called West, East and Central Thanon Thongchai. Two of them run past Chiang Mai: the East and the Central Thanon Thongchai. The East acts as the borderline between Chiang Mai and Mae Hong Son. It runs along the western side of Chiang Mai, passing the districts of Chiang Dao, Mae Taeng, and Mae Samoeng, Chom Thong and Mae Chaem. Its two major peaks are Doi Luang Chiang Dao (about 2,225 metres high and the third highest peak in the country) and Doi Inthanon (2,565 metres from sea level, the highest peak in the country). There are other peaks such as Doi Suthep, Doi Pui, Doi Sam Muen etc.



The Daen Lao Mountain Range at Chai Prakan District



A pine forest on a mountain peak



The forest at Chai Prakan District where the river starts

Thanon Thongchai Klang or the Central Thanon Thongchai range, which is situated slightly below it, runs from the southern part of Chiang Mai and serves as the boundary between Chiang Mai and Tak.

The Phi Pan Nam mountain range lies on the eastern side of Chiang Mai, starting from the Daen Lao range at the Thailand-Myanmar border in the North, passing through Fang District along the Chiang Mai-Fang Road, and cutting through Chai Prakan, Phrao and Doi Saket. This mountain acts as the Chiang Mai-Chiang Rai borderline, with a length of 412 kilometres. Its highest peak is the well-known Doi Pha Cho, approximately 2,012 metres above sea level.

While topographically, Chiang Mai features mountain ranges and rocky outcrops, it is therefore a source of several major rivers and waterways, such as:

Mae Chaem River. Originating from the Thanon Thongchai Mountain in Mae Chaem District and running through Chom Thong District straight into the Ping River at the spot where Chom Thong and Hot districts meet. It is about 170 kilometres long.

Mae Taeng River. Commencing from Doi Buk Pa Faek, a part of the Daen Lao range in the vicinity of Chiang Dao District of Chiang Mai Province, the river runs through the districts of Chiang Dao and Mae Taeng then flows towards the Southeast to join the Ping River there. Its approximate total length is 135 kilometres.

Fang River. Its source is at Pang Hua Tho of the Phi Pan Nam mountain range in Fang District, Chiang Mai. From there, it flows slowly north passing beyond Fang District Office and turning towards the Northeast. It then joins the Kok River at Mae Ai District. Its total length is about 70 kilometres.

Mae Kuang River. It also starts from Doi Nang Kaeo in the Phi Pan Nam Mountain Range of Doi Saket District. It flows towards the Southeast through the districts of San Sai, San Kamphaeng, and Saraphi of Chiang Mai and enters Lamphun Province at Muang and Ban Hong Districts and then joins the Ping River at Pa Sang District. The total length is about 105 kilometres.



Mae Kuang River flows into Mae Kuang Dam at Doi Saket District

The source of the Ping River is at Doi Thuay (1,823 metres above sea level) in Chiang Dao District. It is one of the peaks of the Daen Lao Mountain. From Doi Thuay, the river Ping runs southward through the districts of Chiang Dao, Mae Taeng, San Sai, Mae Rim, Muang Chiang Mai, Saraphi, Hang Dong, and San Pa Tong of Chiang Mai Province, then flows through the districts of Muang Lamphun, Pa Sang, Ban Hong of Lamphun Province. After that, it turns round into Chiang Mai once again, towards the districts of Chom Thong and Hot and proceeds to Tak Province to join the Wang River at Ban Tak District. From there it flows into the provinces of Kamphaeng Phet, Nakhon Sawan to join the Nan River at Pak Nam Pho, City District, Nakhon Sawan Province. It is about 600 kilometres long. The part that passes Chiang Mai is about 335 kilometres long.



A part of the Ping River that flows through Chiang Mai Municipality



The Ping River, while flowing from City District to Saraphi District



Various trees at Doi Inthanon

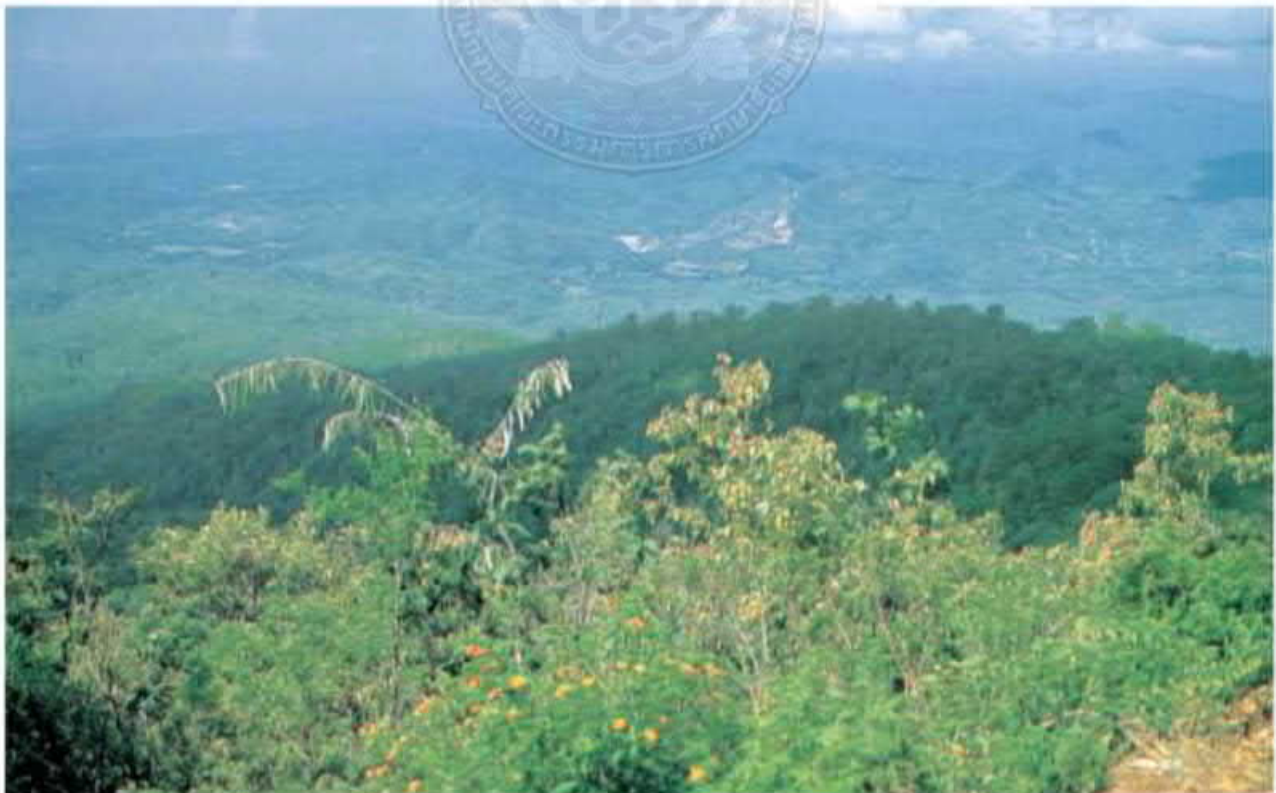
In the past, the people in Chiang Mai relied on the Ping River as a communication route for trade and communications with Bangkok. The river is like the main artery of the province.

The forest area of Chiang Mai, covering about 8 million rai, is still highly fertile. It is composed of mixed forest, mountain pine, mountain jungle and hardwood forest. There are various trees with high economic value, such as teak, rosewood, sal, various hardwoods, pine, *Dipterocarpus optusifolius*, oiltrees, rubber, local chestnuts, etc.

According to Forest Law, the forests of Chiang Mai can be classified into four categories:

National reserved forests. The Department of Forestry declared 25 forests in Chiang Mai national reserved forests, with a total area of about 12 million rai. These include the national reserved forests at Mae Taeng, San Sai, Tha Than and Chom Thong.

National parks. Chiang Mai has 6 national parks with a total area of about 3 million rai, including the national parks at Doi Inthanon, Doi Suthep-Pui, and Si Lanna.



Chiang Mai mountains with their diverse trees and plants



The forest at Doi Suthep-Pui National Park

- Wild animal reservation areas. There are three such areas in Chiang Mai: at Chiang Dao, Om Koi and Mae Lao-Mae Sae

- National horticultural parks. These are at Fang Hot Spring, Ob-Luang, Mae Sa Waterfall, Tat Mok Wang Hang Waterfall, Pong Dueat and Mon Hin Lai.

In area, Chiang Mai is the largest province in the north. It is rich in various minerals, like:

Crude oil. A very valuable fuel with high economic value, it can be refined into fuel to be used in industrial plants and for transportation. Crude oil was discovered in Fang more than a hundred years ago. An oil refinery was built there in 1959 to extract oil for domestic use.

Berlite. This mineral was discovered in the districts of Doi Tao and Hot. It can be made into powdered clay for use in drilling for oil or underground water. It is also used in industries such as glass making and paint manufacture. It can also be used in pills to be taken in preparation for an x-ray of the intestinal tract and stomach.



Minerals can be found in abundance under the soil and in the forests of Chiang Mai



Terraced rice fields in the valley

Fluorite is a kind of mineral that is very useful in the manufacture of aluminium and microscope-related equipment. It is mixed with other materials for steel glazing and steel smelting as well as earthenware and ceramic glazing. Fluorite in Chiang Mai is estimated to be in the region of 200,000 tons. It is found in the districts of Fang, Mae Chaem, Hot and Chom Thong. There is a fluorite mine in Chom Thong as well.

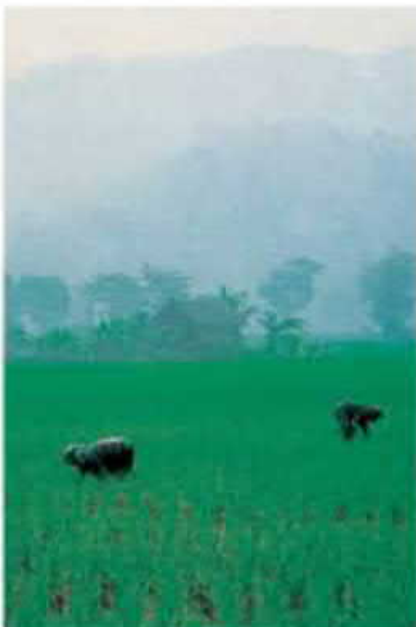
Other minerals have been discovered in Chiang Mai, such as manganese, lead, zinc, feldspar, tin, zeolite and white clay. These minerals are natural resources and underground treasures jealously guarded by our ancestors for posterity. The people of Chiang Mai should make use of them for the development of their homeland, with a full awareness of the effect on the environment of Chiang Mai itself.

Agriculture. This is the main occupation of the majority of the people of Chiang Mai. Approximately 1.5 million rai of land is used in agriculture, producing a huge amount of agricultural crop for home consumption and export. The top ten farm crops planted there in order of volume are rice, longan, yellow bean, garlic, mango, lychee, red shallot, onion, tea and peanut.

The No. 1 crop in Chiang Mai is rice. Every year, about 560,000 rai of land is used for rice cultivation; there are about 920 rice mills ready to serve the harvest from farmers rice fields.

After local consumption, rice is then sold to nearby provinces and Bangkok, as well as exported to other countries.

The regional administration of Chiang Mai is divided into 22 districts, 2 sub-districts, 211 tambons, 1,915 villages with 35 government administrative agencies. Local administration is composed of one provincial administration organisation, one metropolitan municipality, 28 tambon municipalities and 166 tambon administration organisations. There are also 17 government enterprise offices operating in Chiang Mai.



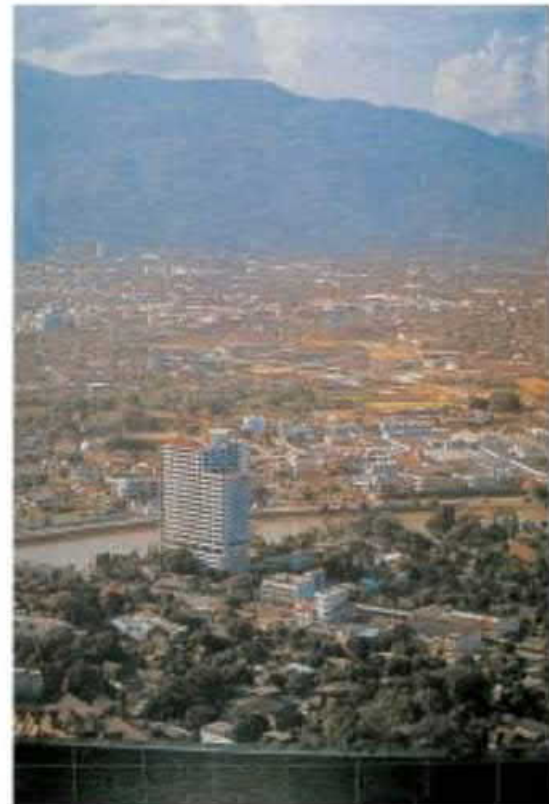
Rice is the number one crop of Chiang Mai



Wat Phra That Doi Suthep, a significant place of worship and a spiritual centre for Chiang Mai people

Chiang Mai has 5 senators and 10 members in the House of Representatives. Formerly, there were 4 electoral constituencies. Constituency 1 and 2 elect 3 members of parliament each while Constituency 3 and 4 elect 2 each. Nowadays, the electoral area is divided into 10 constituencies, each with one Member of Parliament.

The population of Chiang Mai comprises the Thai people from the northern region, the central plain, northeastern people and hilltribes such as Karen, Lahu, Hmong, Lisu, Lawa, Akha and Mien. According to the population census in June 2000, Chiang Mai's population numbers 1,586,723. Out of this, 787,744 are men and 798,979 are women. The most populous district in Chiang Mai is Chiang Mai City District with a population of 257,000, followed by Fang with 103,000 (data from the Department of Local Administration, Ministry of Interior).



Chiang Mai at present

Table 1 Data on administration and area of each district, sub-district in Chiang Mai (2000)

No.	Area District	City (Sq. km.)	tambon	village	Municipality	Tambon Municipality	Provincial Administration	Tambon Administration
1.	Muang Chiang Mai	166.389	23	70	1	1	1	7
2.	Doi Saket	672.276	14	107	-	1	-	12
3.	Mae Taeng	1,362.784	13	114	-	2	-	11
4.	San Sai	285.019	12	110	-	2	-	10
5.	Saraphi	97.457	12	102	-	1	-	11
6.	San Pa Tong	177.188	11	118	-	2	-	10
7.	Phrao	1,148.186	11	103	-	1	-	11
8.	Hang Dong	263.106	11	98	-	2	-	10
9.	Mae Rim	443.634	11	86	-	1	-	10
10.	Mae Chaem	3,361.151	10	116	-	1	-	7
11.	San Kamphaeng	217.513	10	98	-	2	-	8
12.	Fang	888.164	8	99	-	2	-	8
13.	Mae Ai	736.701	7	81	-	1	-	5
14.	Chiang Dao	1,882.082	7	77	-	2	-	7
15.	Omko	2,093.831	6	91	-	1	-	6
16.	Chom Thong	753.529	6	85	-	1	-	6
17.	Hot	1,430.383	6	58	-	1	-	6
18.	Mae On Sub-district	422.583	6	48	-	-	-	-
19.	Doi Tao	803.918	6	42	-	1	-	5
20.	Mae Wang	602.218	5	55	-	1	-	5
21.	Mae Samoeng	898.002	5	44	-	1	-	3
22.	Doi Lo Sub-district	218.900	4	50	-	-	-	4
23.	Chai Prakan	510.851	4	42	-	1	-	4
24.	Wiang Haeng	672.172	3	21	-	-	-	-
	Total	20,107.053	211	1,915	1	28	1	166

In 1903, the Thai Government established the Northern Region Army Command in Chiang Mai with 1,600 soldiers on duty. This was in preparation for the safeguarding of internal and external security. The regiment was stationed at Kawila Camp in Chiang Mai. Later on, the Royal Thai Army set up additional military units and kept developing and readjusting these units on a continuous basis. At present, major military installations in Chiang Mai include the Thirty-third Military District, Seventh Infantry Regiment, Fifth Special Forces Regiment, Second Special Forces Division, First Battalion, Second Battalion, Seventh Artillery Battalion and Forty-first Squadron.



Headquarters of the Thirty Third Military District Kawila Camp



Training and preparation of the First Battalion



Ho Trai or the archive for Buddhist texts at Wat Phra Sing Worawihan. It serves as a place where ancient texts are kept within the boundary of the old wall of Chiang Mai



Dr. Daniel Maquilwary

Education in Chiang Mai began in the temple and at home. The temple or *Wat* served as educational and Buddhist centres, with monks acting as teachers. Subjects taught included dharma, Lanna dialect, religious languages, inscriptions on palm leaves, literature, astrology, traditional medicine, etc. Home-based education conducted at home provides learning that will be useful for a living. Accumulated experience is handed down from generation to generation in a family-based system. Subjects studied range from silversmithing, goldsmithing, lacquerware, pottery, carving, etc.

Later, American missionaries led by Dr. Daniel Maquilwary came to set up a school for religious teaching in Chiang Mai. Many schools were founded, such as the Prince Royal College and Dara College. English and *kham muang* (local dialect) were taught. At the end of the reign of King Rama V, Phraya Surasi Wisithsak and a group of members of the northern royal family, business personalities and the general public joined forces in donating land, buildings, cash and kind for the construction of school buildings. Chao Inthawarorot Suriyawong, the ruler of Chiang Mai, who donated his land to be the site of Yupharat Witthayalai School in 1905, rendered kind

co-operation. It is regarded as the first school constructed by the government for the province of Chiang Mai. Subjects taught at that time were mainly Thai language and general knowledge about the country.

Education in Chiang Mai has undergone a great deal of development. Chiang Mai has now become the educational centre of the North and acclaimed as the province with an excellent standard of education. There are at present about 1,200 places



The former building of Yuppharat Witthayalai School



Prince Royal College



Watthanothai Phayap School



Yuppharat Witthayalai School at present



Chiang Mai University was inaugurated in 1964 with three faculties: Faculty of Science, Faculty of Social Sciences and Faculty of Humanities. There were at that time about 300 students



Ban Ho Mosque, a Moslem religious building

of learning in Chiang Mai, ranging from nursery schools to institutes of higher learning, belonging to the government and non-government sectors. Chiang Mai schools include Chiang Mai Nursery School, Kham Thieng Anuson, Ban Wiang Fang, Ban San Kamphaeng, Wat Phuak Chang Municipal School, Yupharat Witthayalai, Watthanothai Phayap, Prince Royal College, Mae Chaem, Doi Saket Witthayakhom, Chiang Mai Technical College, Chiang Mai Rajabhat Institute, Rajamangala Institute of Technology, Chiang Mai Campus, Mae Cho University, Phayap University and Chiang Mai University.

Religion provides people with awareness of how they should conduct themselves along the lines of good ethics and good deeds. Chiang Mai is a place where several religions are practised: Buddhism, Christianity, Islam, Brahmanism, Hinduism, Sikhism, etc. However, the majority, about 87.33 per cent of the population of Chiang Mai, is Buddhist (the approximate number is 1,370,000), followed by Christian and Muslim.

Buddhism has for a long time been deeply rooted in the mind of Chiang Mai people, starting from the days of Phya Maengrai who built Chiang Mai as the centre of the northern realm. He adopted Lanka-style Buddhism, which is called the Lankawong Sect under his patronage, and donated his palace to be a temple, called Wat Chiang Man. At this temple there can be found the Buddha Image acclaimed to be synonymous with the city itself. It is called Phra Setangkamani or the White Crystal Buddha.

Phya Kue Na built Wat Suan Dok during his reign at a forest full of phayom trees. This has served as the foundation of Buddhism. The king also had the chedi at Wat Phra That Doi Suthep constructed to enshrine the relics of the Lord Buddha. Doi Suthep is therefore the symbol of Chiang Mai and also the spiritual centre of the Chiang Mai people.

Later on, in the reign of King Tilokarat, Buddhism became more prosperous. Monks were very well versed in Pali and the Tripidok. King Tilokarat organised the revision of the Tripidok at Wat Chet Yod. This was ranked as the 8th revision of the Tripidok in the world.



The Church of Christian Region I



Wat Chiang Man with figures of 18 elephants serving as caryatids around the chedi



Phra Chedi Luang, the biggest archaeological construction in the centre of Chiang Mai city, situated at Wat Chedi Luang



In addition, there are many beautiful temples and places of worship in Chiang Mai, signifying the glory and prosperity of Buddhism in the city. Good examples are Wat Phra Sing Woramahawihan, Wat Chedi Luang, Wat Phra That Chom Thong, Wat Ton Kwen, Wat Ku Tao, Wat Phan Tao. There are altogether 1,109 Buddhist temples in Chiang Mai. Of these, 1,103 are public temples while the remaining 6 are royal temples. There are about 14 Islamic mosques and 106 Christian churches (data from the Department of Religious Affairs).



A bell-shaped chedi at Wat Umong Thenchan

Chiang Mai is also famous for being the centre of medicine and public health of the North. The people of Chiang Mai started to obtain western-styled medicine and treatment knowledge from the missionary team led by Dr. Daniel Maquilwary who came to propagate Christianity in Chiang Mai in 1867. Religion was taught at the same time that patients received treatment. The McCain Leprosarium and McCormick Hospital were subsequently founded in Chiang Mai. Public health problems in Chiang Mai at that time included smallpox, leprosy and diarrhoea. There was a severe shortage of doctors. In 1902, the Thai Government set up health stations to deal with the treatment and provide preventive measures for the epidemics. Doctors were assigned to work in tambons, towns and provinces. Health and medicine in Chiang Mai is therefore well-known throughout the northern region.

At present, the number of doctors in Chiang Mai is second only to Bangkok. There are 47 hospitals, 16 of which are privately owned, 31 government-owned and 255 health stations.



Suan Dok Hospital



Leprosy Hospital, 1847



McCormick Hospital



Nakhon Ping Hospital

Maharat Nakhon Chiang Mai Hospital (formerly Suan Dok Hospital) is the largest in Chiang Mai and the North with 1,621 beds. McCormick Hospital is the second largest with 350 beds. There are district hospitals in Chiang Mai such as those in Fang, Mae Taeng and Phrao (data from Provincial Health Office, Chiang Mai).

Business and commerce in Chiang Mai has long been prosperous, since the days when bartering was the norm. Villagers from various villages brought their wares and products for exchange at the marketplace or temporary market. Traders who collected their goods from the villagers and piled them up on the back of cattle and travelled to various places conducted trade and barter of goods among villages and towns or outlying communities in remote places. This type of trading has made Chiang Mai the most important trading and barter centres.

The oldest market in Chiang Mai is Klang Wiang Market, situated near Wat Phra Singh and stretching as far as the banyan tree in the centre of the city. Another market highly popular among the traders is Tha Phae Market.

Subsequently, Chinese, English and French traders came to trade in Chiang Mai. The trade was mostly river-borne. Chinese traders transported their goods by boat from Chiang Mai to Bangkok, travelling along the Ping River. They first settled at Wat Ket, then expanded to cover areas around Ton Lamyai and Warorot markets. English and French traders came to set up timber companies and transported teakwood by river. When the railway lines were constructed as far as Chiang Mai, the mode of inter-city transportation was then shifted to that of railways and motorcars instead of boats.

Nowadays, Chiang Mai serves as the economic centre of the North. Its economy has grown very rapidly. People in Chiang Mai have the highest income per capita, averaging about 54,000 baht per person per year. A great deal of income comes from service and



A locomotive engine used in the first stage of railway service in Chiang Mai



Warorot Market in the old days



The Night Bazaar Market at night-time when tourists come to shop for souvenirs and presents



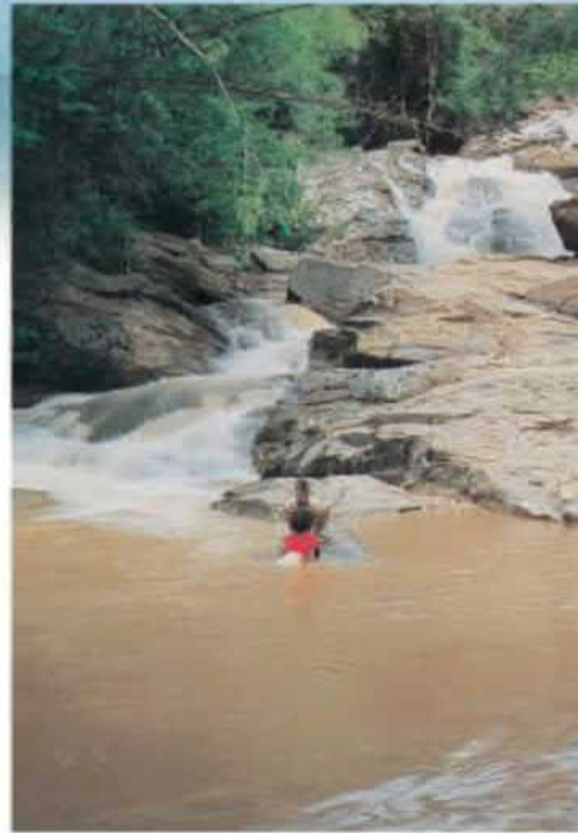
Another view of the Night Bazaar

tourism, which now rank top earners for the province, with revenue reaching as high as 17,000 million baht per year. Industry ranks second, with about 2,300 factories in the province and a total investment of about 17,000 million baht. Industrial factories here manufacture goods both for local consumption and export. They manufacture various types of goods, ranging from processed food, agricultural products, ceramics, carvings, silver, etc.

In Chiang Mai, there are 84 agricultural co-operatives, 48 credit unions, 35 service co-operatives, and 11 retailing co-operatives, 7 co-operatives for land resettlement and one for fishery. The total number of co-operatives in Chiang Mai is 186. There are about 182 finance companies. All these have made a significant contribution towards the constantly growing prosperity and development in agriculture, industry and commerce in Chiang Mai. Major financial institutions operating in Chiang Mai are the Bank of Thailand for the Northern Region, commercial banks, the Board of Investment of Thailand, and many finance companies (source: Bank of Thailand and Department of Co-operative Promotion).

The slogan for Chiang Mai is : The City with Doi Suthep, representing its glory; rich in local customs, traditions and honour; an abundance of beautiful flowers and the precious name of Nakhon Ping. This implies that traditional Lanna culture and tradition, temples, historical buildings, artifacts as well as the beauty of flowers and natural surroundings of Chiang Mai all contribute to draw a great number of tourists to the city. Chiang Mai thus has become the hub of tourism of the North. Here are the major tourist attractions in the city:

To the North, Route No. 107 leads to Mae Rim, Chiang Dao, Fang and Mae Ai Districts. Places worth visiting in this area are Mae Sa Waterfall, Queen Sirikit Botanical Garden at Mae Rim, Pong Dueat Pa Pae hot spring at Mae Taeng, Chiang Dao Cave, Doi Ang Khang, Fang hot springs, etc.



Mae Sa Waterfall



The sea of mists on Doi Inthanon



Khru Ba Si Wichai Monument



The main hall at Wat Ton Kwaen, a Lanna-style architecture



Mae Klang Waterfall

Route 108 leads towards the South, to Hang Dong, San Pa Tong, Chom Thong, Hot and Doi Tao Districts. Places of interest for tourists are Wat Ton Kwaen at Hang Dong District; pottery kilns at Ban Muang Kung and Ban Khun Sae at Hang Dong, Mae Klang Waterfall, Wat Phra That Si Chomthong Worawihan, Doi Inthanon, Ob Luang Gorge and the lake at Doi Tao.

Towards the West, the road out of town is called Suthep Road. This takes visitors to interesting places such as Chiang Mai Zoo, Huay Kaeo Botanical Garden, Khru Ba Si Wichai Monument, Huay Kaeo Waterfall, Wang Bua Ban Chasm, Wat Phra That Doi Suthep, Phuphing Ratchanivet Royal Mansion and the village of the Hmong hilltribes at Doi Pui.

Along route 1006 leading eastward to San Kamphaeng district, places worth visiting are the umbrella-making village at Ban Bo Sang, the mulberry paper making village at Ban Ton Pao, the district of San Kamphaeng, San Kamphaeng hot springs and the Muang-On Cave.

In the city itself, there are also many interesting places to visit such as Wat Kutao, Wat Umong, Wat Chedi Luang, Wat Chiang Man, Wat Phan Tao, Wat Suan Dok, Chiang Mai National Museum, Hilltribe Museum, and the silverware making village at Ban Wua Lai.

There are several ways to get to Chiang Mai.

By car. Take National Highway 1 (Phahon Yothin Road) to Phatunam Phra In. Turn left to Highway 32 (the Asian Highway)



*The lintel at the main hall of Wat Phan Tao.
Ancient Lanna-style architecture*



Queen Sirikit Botanical Garden



*Wat Suan Dok, the temple patronised by the royal family
of Chiang Mai*



The National Museum at Chiang Mai



Chiang Mai Railway Station



The highest peak in Thailand at Doi Inthanon



Chiang Mai zoo



which passes Ayutthaya, Ang Thong, Sing Buri, Chainat, Nakhon Sawan, Kamphaengphet, Tak, Lampang, Lamphun before reaching Chiang Mai. The total distance is about 695 kilometres.

By rail. Since the opening of the Chiang Mai-Bangkok railway in 1921 by the State Railways of Thailand, the trip to Chiang Mai has become an enjoyable and comfortable one. At present, passenger trains depart for Chiang Mai 14 times a day. This does not include several non-passenger trains carrying merchandise and gasoline.

By plane. There is a very modern international airport in Chiang Mai. Several flights leave Chiang Mai for Bangkok on a daily basis. The flight time is about 1 hour. In addition, several international flights land in Chiang Mai directly without making any stopover in Bangkok. Nowadays, it is therefore very convenient to travel to Chiang Mai.





Phra That Doi Suthep

A Highly Prestigious History

Chiang Mai has a noble history dating back 700 years. It was the centre of the Lanna Kingdom. The word “Lanna”¹ means, “the land of a million rice fields”, reflecting the many rice fields there. Likewise, the word Laos, or “Lanchang” means, “the land of a million elephants”. In the past, the territory belonging to Lanna was so vast that it comprised the northern part of Siam, some parts of Myanmar, China and Laos. Traces of the old glory of Chiang Mai can still be seen in the city itself. Its old ruins, art objects and temples, all point to the fact that Chiang Mai was once the place where Buddhism was at its highest peak of glory.

The old Lanna community before the founding of the Lanna Kingdom (before 1296 AD)

Historical and archaeological evidence show that in there already existed some communities in the upper north. These communities can be classified into two main groups: the ones along the upper basin of the Kok River and those along the basin of the upper part of the Ping River.



Map showing the present-day Lanna

¹ The word ‘Lanna’ appears during the reign of King Kue Na who ruled Chiang Mai from 1355–1385 AD. While Phya Maengrai was engaged in uniting the land along the Kok and Ping rivers and establishing Chiang Mai as the centre of the kingdom, no evidence can be found as to the name of this land. To avoid confusion, the term ‘Lanna’ is used here starting from the very beginning of the kingdom.

Communities Along the Kok River

Prior to the 6th Century, there already existed several communities along the Kok River basin. According to legend¹, a city called Suwan Khom Kham was built but it then collapsed. A king called Singhanawat led a group of Thai people from the southern part of Yunnan Province in China to settle here. They built a city called Wiang Yonok near Muang Chiang Lao, close to the Sai and Kok rivers. Several kings ruled that land. Legend has it that the God Indra sent a male angel by the name of Lao Chong to be king. The god had him and his retinue walk down from heaven on a silver staircase leading to the earth. Lao Chong or Lao Chok is therefore regarded the first king of Lanna and the first ruler of the Lao Dynasty or “Lawachangkarat”. In the reign of Lao Khiang, the ninth king of the Lao Dynasty, the centre of the kingdom was moved from Chiang Lao to Muang Ngoen Yang or Hiran Nakhon Ngoen Yang Chiang Saen in Muang Chiang Saen. Several kings of the Lao Dynasty ruled over this land in succession. The major rulers were Khun Chuang who was responsible for the expansion of his territory to reach as far as Muang Kaew (in the northern part of Vietnam) was, Lan Chang, Sipsongpanna, Shan territory and Muang Nan. All of these cities claimed that Khun Chuang was their ancestor. Another famous king is Phya Lao Meng who married Queen Thep Kham Khai. They had a son by the name of Phya Maengrai who founded Chiang Mai and moved his capital from Chiang Saen to Chiang Mai.

Communities Along the Upper Ping River Basin

This land used to be inhabited by an indigenous group of people who called themselves “Lua”. They resided at the foothill of Doi Suthep. Khun Wilangkha, their headman, fought in a battle against Queen Cham Thewi of Hariphunchai but could not gain victory. He had to be the one to pay tributes to her on a regular basis. Nevertheless, the Lua people has had a great deal of influence over the Lanna people in term of culture and belief, for instance, in the veneration paid to the Inthakhin Pillar and to the ghosts of Pu Sae and Ya Sae.

¹ A *tamnan*, or legend, denotes a written record of oral history. It is ancient and its historical accuracy has not been verified. The recording of the tamnan was popularised during the end of the 20th Buddhist Century and most prosperous during the 21st Buddhist Century.



Wat Chedi Chet Yot



A stucco decoration at the wihan of Wat Chet Yot



Wat Umong

As for the story concerning Queen Cham Thewi, an old legend also says that, Wasuthep the hermit built the city of Hariphunchai and invited Queen Cham Thewi, a *Mon* national from Louvo, to rule over it. The queen introduced to Lanna great deal of culture, art and advancement especially in the area of Buddhism of the Theravada Sect. Later, she expanded her power through the founding of Muang Khelang or Lampang nowadays and installed Phra Inthawon or Anantayot her younger son as ruler. Phra Mahanyot of Mahayot the oldest son succeeded to the throne of Hariphunchai. About 1157, during the reign of Phya Athittarat, a successive ruler, Phra That Hariphunchai was constructed to enshrine the Buddha's relics. His queen Pathumwadi Thewi had another chedi built and named it Suwannachedi close to Phra that Hariphunchai. The Kingdom of Hariphunchai came to an end when Phya Maengrai came to occupy it in 1292 during the reign of King Yue Ba. There was a total line of 50 monarchs ruling over this kingdom, starting from Queen Cham Thewi to Phya Yi Ba.



The foothills of Doi Suthep used to be inhabited by a tribe called "Lua"



Lanna at dawn

The Lanna Kingdom during the Maengrai Dynasty (1296-1558)

The Founding of the Kingdom (1296)

Phya Maengrai or Phrachao Maengrai, the founder of the Lanna Kingdom and the first king of Maengrai Dynasty, is a son of Phya Laomeng and Queen Uaming Chom Muang (Nang Thep Khamkhai or Khamkhayai). He was born in Ngoen Yang around 1239 and was crowned the 25th king of the Lao Dynasty in 1261. One of his major tasks is the founding of the Lanna Kingdom. He had to spend nearly all the time of his reign trying to unify various townships and outposts to come under one centre in order to strengthen the Lanna Kingdom.



A Lanna-style house

Unification of the outlying towns under the Yon Region

From the year he succeeded to the throne, Phya Maengrai began to unify towns and outposts of varying sizes situated close to Ngoen Yang. Many townships lying along the Kok River basin, once a united group of townships began to be separated and fought against one another to gain more troops. The townspeople had to suffer. Phya Maengrai therefore started to draw those outposts into his rule, claiming his right as the direct descendant of Lao Chong and the only one to have been bestowed with lustral water and the royal regalia belonging to Lao Chong. These royal items must be handed down to every king in the Lao Dynasty. Unlike him, rulers of other territories were only distant relatives and did not undergo the lustral water bathing ceremony, he said.

The methods by which Phya Maengrai used in unifying his territory are multi-fold. Sometimes he took his troops to overpower the ruler of another land. After the conquest, he would send one of his lords to rule over that land. If any ruler showed willingness to succumb to his power, he would allow that ruler to go on ruling that place. If any territory was huge, he would make an alliance with the ruler. An example of this can be seen in the case of Phayao, which was a very strong city-state under Phya Ngam Muang and was a close ally with Sukhothai.

After having unified many outlying city-states and Muang Ngoen Yang, Phya Maengrai expanded his influence to the south. He relocated the centre of his administration in Chiang Rai in 1262 and used Chiang Rai as the centre of unification with several city-states. Phya Maengrai was successful in unifying various city-states in 1273 into the Yon State with two major cities: Chiang Rai and Fang.

Once the Yon State was firmly established Phya Maengrai planned to take over Hariphunchai, which had long been famous for its progress and economic prosperity. The founding of Fang was the first step of the plan to overpower Hariphunchai since Fang was adjacent to the northern part of Hariphunchai and was strategically located, making it suitable as a stepping stone for further expansion.

The plan set up by Phya Maengrai to overpower Hariphunchai began by dispatching Ai Fa on an espionage mission to create chaos in Hariphunchai. Phya Maengrai made a pact of friendship with Phya Ngam Muang and King Ramkhamhaeng in 1287. The outcome of this “Three-king Pact” made Phya Maengrai feel confident that Phya Ngam Muang and King Ramkhamhaeng would not oppose the expansion of his power to the Ping River in order to annex Hariphunchai to his land.

Phya Maengrai marched his troops down to Hariphunchai and was successful in conquering it in 1292. He then went on to conquer Muang Khelang (Lampang). Hariphunchai was thus annexed to the Yon State. That incident was regarded as the starting point for the Lanna Kingdom.

The Founding of Chiang Mai

After conquering Hariphunchai, Phya Maengrai stayed there for 2 years before handing the administration of the city to Ai Fa. He moved on to build a new city at Wiang Khumkham. While staying at Wiang Khumkham, it was said that the king went to visit the foothills of Doi Suthep and found the place suitable for the construction





The Three-King Monument, featuring Phya Maengrai, Phya Ngam Muang and Pho Khun Ramkhamhaeng



Pratu Chang Phueak (The White Elephant City Gate)



The naga stairway leading to Phra That Doi Suthep

of his capital called Chiang Mai. He invited Phya Ngam Muang and King Ramkhamhaeng to help him making decision in strategic spots finding and town planning of Chiang Mai.

When the city wall of Chiang Mai was built, it was 900 *wah* wide and 1,000 *wah* long. There are now only portions of that wall left: the square wall (inner wall) and the earthen wall (outer wall). Fortresses and moats were made as well as palaces and castles, houses of the lords and ordinary people. The construction of Chiang Mai was completed in 1296 and the three kings in unison called this new city “Nop Buri Si Nakhon Ping Chiang Mai”. A festivity lasting seven days and seven nights was organised to celebrate the new city.

Since the establishment of the capital at Chiang Mai, the Lanna Kingdom was kept on the road to prosperity and fertility. Their people led a peaceful life, filled with cultural activities, art and Buddhism. The Maengrai Dynasty ruled over Chiang Mai for as long as 200 years under the following successive kings:

1. Phya Maengrai (1261-1311)
2. Phya Chaisongkham (1311-1325)
3. Phya Saenphu (1325-1334)
4. Phya Khamphu (1334-1336)
5. Phya Phayu (1336-1355)
6. Phya Kuen (1355-1385)
7. Phya Saen Muangma (1385-1401)
8. Phya Samfangkaen (1402-1441)
9. Phya Tilokarat (1441-1487)
10. Phya Yotchiangrai (1487-1485)
11. Phya Kao (Phra Muang Kao) (1485-1525)
12. Phya Ketchetararat (Phra Muang Ketkiao) (1st term) (1525-1538)
13. Thao Chai (1538-1543)
14. Phya Ketchetararat (2nd term) (1543-1545)
15. Queen Chiraprapha (1545-1546)
16. Phya Uppayao (Phra Chaichettha) (1546-1547)
17. Thao Mae Ku (1551-1564)
18. Queen Wisutthithewi (1564-1578)

(The dates of each reign are based on calculations from the Chinnakanmali and Chiang Mai local tales)

Buddhism during the Maengrai Dynasty

When Phya Maengrai succeeded in annexing Hariphunchai to the Lanna Kingdom, Buddhism, which at that time was flourishing in Hariphunchai, was introduced into Lanna. The hub of Buddhism prosperity was still in Hariphunchai. In summary, major incidents taking place during the reigns of the Maengrai dynasty are as follows:



Lanna-style stucco reliefs



The main Buddha image in the ubosot of Wat Chiang Man



The chedi at Wat Chiang Man

Phya Maengrai's Reign (1261-1311)

There is evidence to show that Phya Maengrai had Wat Kan Thom (Wat Chang Kham) built in veneration of Phra Maha Katsapa. The king also pledged royal service to the monks. He built the square-shaped Chedi Ku Kham, which at present is called Wat Chedi Liam.

After the founding of the city of Chiang Mai, Phya Maengrai had Wat Chiang Man built as well as a chedi astride the plot of land that used to be the house where he used to be his bed tower.

The Reign of Phya Kuena (1355-1385)

After the reign of Phya Maengrai, other kings succeeding him followed in his footsteps, taking up proper behaviour as set as example by Phya Maengrai. Buddhism, introduced to Lanna from Louvo by Queen Cham Thewi, was well preserved and sustained until it became the national religion of Lanna. Until the reign of King Kuena Thammikkarat or Phya Kuena, in 1356, Theravada Buddhism of the Lankawong sect flourished in Sukhothai and spread to the Lanna kingdom, corresponding with the reign of Phra Maha Thammaraacha (Lithai), the 5th king of the Sukhothai Dynasty.

In 1369, Phya Kuena invited Phra Maha Sumanathera from Sukhothai to travel to Hariphunchai, bringing with him the relics of the Lord Buddha. Phra Maha Sumanathera took residence at Wat Phra Yuen (The Temple of the Standing Buddha) in Hariphunchai. Phya Kuena held deep respect in Phra Maha Sumanathera because he believed that the Aranyawasi monks (monks residing in faraway places such as forests) were very pious and knowledgeable in Buddhist scripts and that the Lankawong Sect was a pure branch of Buddhism, practising long-standing proper service. Phya Kuena therefore invited 8,400 monks formerly belonging to the old sect revered during the time of Queen Cham Thewi to be ordained again into the Lankawong Sect.

In 1371, Phya Kuena built a new temple in the *phayom* orchard in Chiang Mai to be the residence during the lent for Phra Maha Sumanathera. He also had a new *chedi* built to enshrine the Buddha relic brought from Sukhothai by Phra Maha Sumanathera. These two chedi were located at Wat Phra That Doi Suthep and Wat Buppharam (Wat Suan Dok).

Wat Buppharam serves as the centre of Buddhism of the Lankawong Sect, which is sometimes called Wat Suan Dok Sect or Raman Sect.



The chapel at Wat Phan Tao

Phya Saen Muangma's Reign (1385-1401)

Phya Saen Muangma is a son of Phya Kuen. He succeeded to the throne at the age of 15. Chao Maha Phrom, his uncle and ruler of Chiang Rai, marched his troops down to Chiang Mai in an attempt to usurp the throne but was defeated by the royal army. Chao Maha Phrom went asking for assistance from King Borom Rachathirat I (Khunluang Phangua) but failed to get it. He soon returned to Chiang Mai to ask for forgiveness from Phya Saen Muangma who kindly granted it. During this trip, Chao Maha Phrom brought with him Phra Phuttasihing, a highly-venerated Buddha image from Kamphaengphet to be presented to Phya Saen Muangma as a token of deep apology. The king ordered the image to be enshrined at Wat Li Chiang Phra or what is now called Wat Phra Sing.



The chedi at Wat Phra Singh



The Chedi Luang or Royal Chedi, a historical monument of Lanna



The Ho Trai (archive for Buddhist texts) at Wat Phra Singh

Phya Saen Muangma held a pious belief in Buddhism. He had a large-size royal chedi built at the centre of Chiang Mai to serve as the moral centre for the people of Chiang Mai. The construction of the chedi was not yet completed when the king passed away in 1401. His queen continued the work until it was completed in later years. The royal chedi serves as the centre of all things sacred and can protect the city from the invasion of its foes in a similar manner to other royal chedi in the capitals of other states such as Sukhothai and Ayutthaya.

Phya Saen Muangma started the practice of offering provisions to monks who passed the *pariyat* examination held in the Lanna Kingdom. He had two sons: Chao Yikhumkham and Chao Samfangkaen. The first one went to rule over Chiang Rai, replacing Chao Maha Phrom who passed away. Chao Samfangkaen succeeded to the throne after his father.

Phya Samfangkaen's Reign (1402-1441)

Phya Samfangkaen succeeded to the throne after his father in 1402. He was an ardent supporter of Buddhism in the same manner as kings who reigned before time. During his reign, there was an active revival of religious studies by the monks. Several Lanna monks went to study Buddhism in Lanka. After a certain period of time of studies in the school of Phra Wannarat, they returned to Chiang Mai and invited 2 Sri Lankan monks to travel in the same junk with them to Ayutthaya. These two Sri Lankan monks were Phra Maha Wikromphahu and Phra Uttamapanya. They came to help teach Buddhism in Lanna and proceeded to do the same work in Lampang, Chiang Saen and Chiang Rai.



Phya Tilokarat's Reign (1441-1487)

At the death of Phya Samfangkaen, Prince Dilok or Tilok, aged 34, his sixth son, succeeded to the throne. He was crowned Phra Maha Sutham Tilokarat or Siritham Chakrawat Tilokarat. During his reign, Buddhism was seriously promoted and knowledge on Buddhism disseminated since it was then the time that Lanna monks were well-educated and knowledgeable in the *Tripidok*.

Phya Tilokarat was a devout Buddhist. At one time, he left his kingship and entered monkhood as a merit-providing gesture for his deceased father Phya Samfangkaen.

In 1456, Phya Tilokarat had a new temple built to enshrine the *banyan* tree brought over from Lanka. He named the temple **Bodharam Maha Wihan** or the present-day **Wat Chet Yot**. Phya Tilokarat built this temple in remembrance of Phra Uttamapanya Thera who travelled from Lanka during the reign of Phya Samfangkaen. The temple was decorated like the place where the Lord Buddha attained his enlightenment. The chedi at Wat Chet Yot is 11.2 metres wide. The total height of the chedi in the middle used to be 20 metres but the top part had crumpled down, leaving only the base with the height of 8.5 metres. Length-wise, the measurement of its wihan from the protruding part of the frontal indented corner to the back is 27.53 metres. The back part that faces the west is 5 metres wide. The wall of the wihan is divided into 8 niches with a round relief figure of *theppanom* enshrined in each niche. Other parts



The chedi at Wat Chet Yot



The chapel of Wat Chet Yot

also contain the figures of *theppanom*. According to the plan, there should have been 70 *theppanom* figures altogether. Nowadays, only 41 are left. Out of these, only 25 are still in perfect state. The adornment worn by the *theppanom* shows the kind of attire and adornment worn by kings and lords of the period. The statutes of the three kings at the old town hall are also made with this same idea in mind.

Phya Tilokarat was a major supporter of Buddhism. He organised the revision of the Tripidok in 1477. More than a hundred senior and highly-qualified monks participated in the revision. They converged at Wat Maha Photharam to compile and check as to the correctness of the Pali Tripidok. This revision process took one whole year to complete. This is the 8th revision of the Tripidok in Buddhism. Phya Tilokarat passed away in 1487 at the age of 78.

Phya Kaeo's Reign (1495-1525)

Phya Kaeo was also highly interested in supporting Buddhism. He had several temples built and renovated all over his realm. He had monk cells and residences built in Wat Padaeng Rattana Maha Wihan. Monks were invited to meet in Wat Padaeng and 255 young men were ordained into monkhood there in the Lankawong-style ordination.

The outcome of the revision of the Tripidok during the reign of Phya Tilokarat played an important part in making monks during the reign of Phya Kaeo to be more knowledgeable. A great number of Lanna monks composed many literary texts in Buddhism. Phra Phothirangsi, for instance, wrote a book called *Cham Thewi Wong* (the Biography of Queen Cham Thewi) and *Sihingkanithan* (The History of Phra Phuttha Sihing)

Phra Rattanapanya Thera wrote *Chinnakanmali* (The History of Buddhism), a very valuable work for the study of Lanna history.

Phra Siri Mangkhalachan composed many literary works such as *Wetsandon Thipani* (Explanation on the Wetsandon Chadok) *Chakkrawan Thipani* (Explanation on the World, the Universe and a Variety of Other Worlds) *Sangkhaya Pakasok* (a handbook on the Sangkhaya Pakasok scripture) and *Mangkalatthathipani* (Explanation on the texts in the Mangalasut).

Phra Yanwilat Thera composed *Sangkhaya Pakasok* (Explanation of the computation of days, time, measurement of weight, distance, season and money used during the time of the Lord Buddha, etc.).



Stucco high-relief of a theppanom in seated posture above the ground

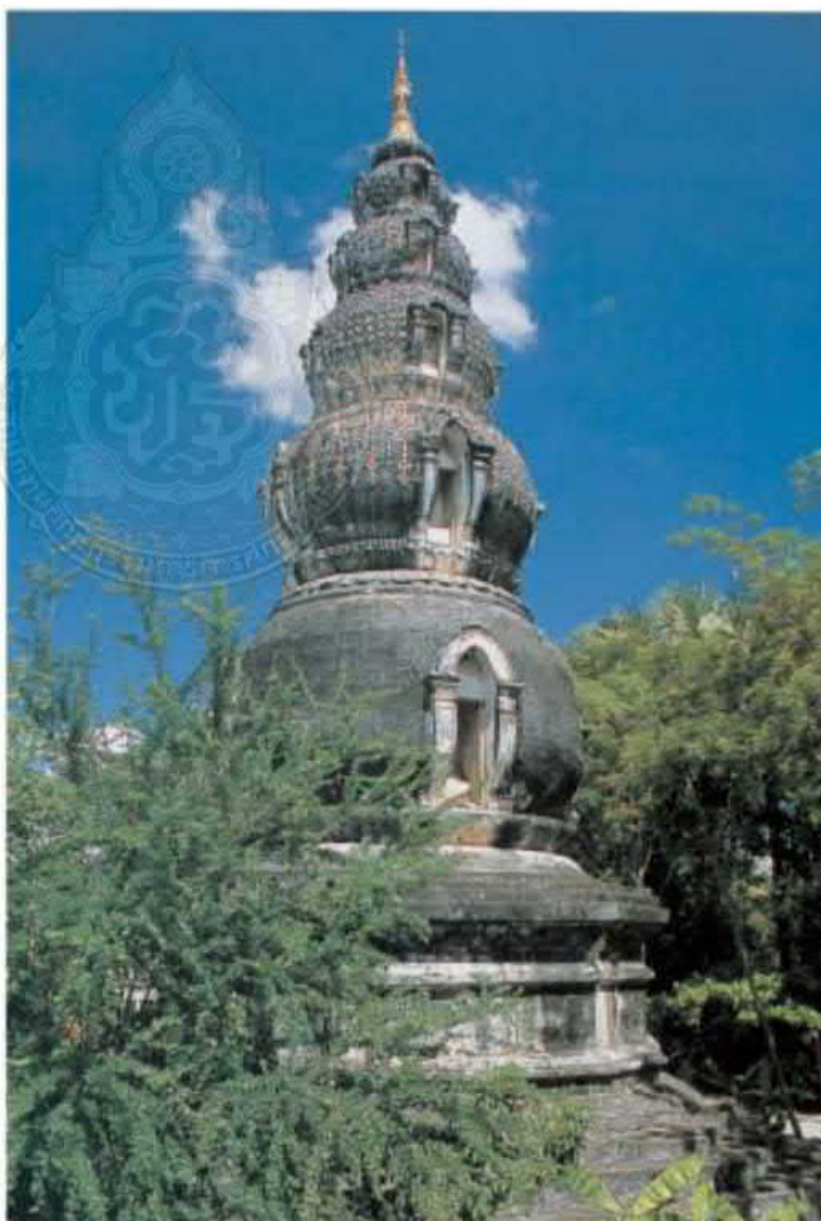
Chiang Mai during the Burmese Occupation (1558-1774)

Chiang Mai began to lose its glory at the end of the Maengrai Dynasty after Phya Kaeo passed away. The main reasons for the decline were political and administrative, and disunity among the kings and his lords. Some of the lords began to accumulate their own power to the detriment of the king's status. A great rift occurred among the king's lords who lived in the capital and those who lived in outlying provinces. Neighbouring states launched their invasion. Chaos ruled the city. When King Bayinnang marched his Burmese troops to attack Chiang Mai, it took him only three days to conquer Chiang Mai in 1558.



A chedi at Wat Umong, Chiang Mai

Having conquered Chiang Mai, Burma did not rule over Chiang Mai directly but allowed Chiang Mai to handle its own administration as a Burmese vassal state with the Burmese as supervisor. In some periods, Burma sent a king to rule over the place. The king in question would come up complete with his lords and troops. During the occupation, the Burmese would recruit a number of people from towns and cities under Burmese rule to join its troops and fight against Ayutthaya. The townspeople all suffered from having to provide military service at a loss of the labour for their own work. They also had to pay heavy duty and taxation on what was called *kha lang*, *kha kho*. Once unrest took place, Burma would manoeuvre its troops and took some people to Burma. During the period of the Burmese occupation, many rebellions were staged but none could evict the Burmese.



The chedi at Wat Ku Tao, Chiang Mai

In 1994, Burma dethroned Thao Mae Ku who colluded with the ruler of Chiang Saen to stage a rebellion. Thao Mae Ku was taken to Hongsawadi, to live there the rest of his life. King Bayinnang appointed Queen Wisutthi Thewi, his own wife and a descendant of the Maengrai Dynasty to rule Chiang Mai until her death. Subsequently, only members of the Burmese or Lanna royal families, Burmese lords, or local royal family members loyal to the Burmese were appointed rulers.

Burma ruled Chiang Mai for over two hundred years. The Lanna people tried hard to drive out the Burmese. Each attempt failed because Burmese tactics to create disunity among the northern city states. Chiang Saen was made to report directly to Burma, bypassing Chiang Mai, and had the right to rule over townships along the flatland of Chiang Rai and nearby. Khelang was put under the jurisdiction of Chiang Mai but the Chiang Mai ruler did not have any authority over it. It was therefore difficult for these city-states to unite.

The outlying Lanna cities had several times tried to unite in order to throw off the Burmese yoke. They were sometimes successful, but at other times such attempts led them to be occupied by Ayutthaya as vassal states.

In 1584, King Naresuan the Great of Ayutthaya declared independence from Burma. He also waged war to expand his territory to parts of nearby states. For a time he was successful in occupying Chiang Mai and Khelang.

After the reign of King Bayinnang, there was an internal struggle for power among the Burmese themselves. They also had to face invasion from China and Yakhai (Manipura) and rebellions staged by the Mon in the South. The Burmese were not as strong as they once were.

Chiang Mai as Vassal State to Rattanakosin (1774-1933)

In 1758, King Taksin the Great was successful in gaining independence from the Burmese in the central plain region. He was also able to unify many townships that used to live separately from one another. He desired to drive out Burmese influence from the North.

In 1774, King Taksin marched against the Burmese in Chiang Mai, however the Burmese defended themselves successfully





and the Thais had to return to their stronghold. At that time, Phya Kawila and his brothers thought it best to pledge allegiance to the Thais. They collaborated with Phya Chaban (Bunma) to inform the Thai troops stationed at Kamphaengphet about the townspeople's desire to fight against the Burmese. King Taksin instructed Chao Phya Chakri and Chao Phya Surasi to advance to Lampang. There, the Lanna army led by Phya Kawila and Phya Chaban joined them in attacking the Burmese and successfully driving them out of Chiang Mai in 1774.

King Taksin bestowed the title *Phraya Wachirapakan*, ruler of Chiang Mai, on Phya Chaban. Phya Kawila was installed as ruler of Lampang. Chao Noi Thamlanka was appointed viceroy of Lampang. While the troops were about to move back to Ayutthaya, Chao Phraya Surasi asked for the hand of Princess Si Anocha, daughter of Prince Fa Kaeo as his bride. Prince Fa Kaeo, founder of the royal family name Chao Chet Ton and father of Phya Kawila, played an important role in restoring the Lanna Kingdom. Prince Fa Kaeo, Phya Kawila and their six brothers Chao Khamson, Chao Noi Thamlanka, Chao Duangthip, Chao Mula, Chao Khamfan and Chao Bunma, all agreed to permit Princess Si Anocha to marry. Princess Si Anocha later became highly instrumental in establishing the fame of the Chao Chet Ton family. She also played a very important role in supporting the Chakri Dynasty, instilling greater charisma and honour to it and establishing a firm link between the Chao Chet Ton Royal Family and the Chakri Dynasty of Rattanakosin. Her name was recorded in a document inscribed on the occasion of the ascension to the throne of King Rama I as "the Royal Consort of Kromphra Ratchawangbowon Mahasurasinghanat Si Anocha".



In 1775, Burmese troops laid siege to Chiang Mai. Phya Chaban sent men to ask Phya Kawila and King Taksin for assistance. Phya Kawila left to save Chiang Mai. Together with the army of King Taksin, they successfully drove out the Burmese. This battle gave rise to a new nickname for Phya Kawila, *Phraya Chang* (the Elephant Lord) – to complement *Phraya Sua* (the Tiger Lord), the nickname of Chao Phraya Surasi.

In 1776, the Burmese again attacked Chiang Mai and Lampang. The seven brothers and members of the Chao Chet Ton family could not withstand the attack. They retreated to Sawankhalok. After the Burmese went back to their country, they moved back to Lampang.



Chang Phueak (White Elephant) Monument

In 1778, the Thai troops sent on an inspection tour up north took to plundering and robbing the properties of the local people. Phya Chaban, the Chiang Mai ruler, and Phya Kawila, the Lampang ruler, were most displeased with the incidents. They took their forces to chase and kill the Thai soldiers. This caused King Taksin to be angry. The King called Phya Chaban and Phya Kawila to a royal audience and delivered a sharp verdict on their wrong-doing. The two royal men were flogged and jailed in prison. Later, Phya Kawila volunteered along with his troops to attack Chiang Saen as a way to make amends for his past deeds. Phya Chaban succumbed to illness and died in Thon Buri.



Phrachao Kawila

Phya Kawila succeeded in conquering Chiang Saen despite lack of food supplies. Phya Kawila took with him the Chiang Saen townsmen, some Chinese and some Thai Lue tribesmen to Lampang. Fortunately, King Rama I was crowned the first king of the Chakri Dynasty in 1782 and Chao Phraya Surasi was installed as Kromphra Ratchawangbowon Satanmongkhon. Phya Kawila presented them with offerings and a number of hostages. King Rama I bestowed the post of ruler of Chiang Mai on Chao Kawila. Chao Noi Lanka was appointed Phraya Thamlanka, *the viceroy of Chiang Mai*. Chao Khamson was made Phraya Nakhon Lampang, *ruler of Lampang with Chao Duangthip as viceroy*. Chao Mula was given the title Chao Ratchawong of Nakhon Lampang and Chao Khamfan Phraya Burirat of Hua Muang Kaeo, Chiang Mai. All of them were bestowed with regalia befitting that of the princes of vassal states.

Chiang Mai had nine rulers in succession.

1. Phra Chao Kawila (Phya Kawila) (1781–1815)
2. Phraya Thamlanka (1816–1821)
3. Phraya Khamfan (1821–1824)
4. Phraya Phutthawong (1824–1846)
5. Phrachao Mahotaraprathet (Phraya Mahawong) (1847–1853)
6. Phrachao Kawilorot Suriyawong (1853–1870)



Chaeng Hualin

7. Phrachao Inthawitchayanon (1870-1897)
8. Chao Inthawarorot Suriyawong (1897-1909)
9. Major General Chao Kaeo Nawarat (1909-1939)

(Sources for terms of office: Chao Luang Chiang Mai)

In the administration of Chiang Mai as a Thai vassal state the central government both at Thon Buri and Rattanakosin had a policy to strengthen it as a northern frontier town strong enough to withstand the invasion of Burma. Chiang Mai received support such as arms supplies, troops and the repatriation of local townspeople to develop their land and protect it. Lamphun and Chiang Rai were established as supporting forces in time of armed conflict. They had autonomy in self-administration with indirect supervision from the central government regarding the granting of rank, title, medals and participation in royal ceremonies such as royal cremations, as well as ceremonial oaths of allegiance, submission of tributes and gifts, etc.

Several major incidents took place after the death of King Kawila.

In 1782, Phraya Thamlanka, the Viceroy of Chiang Mai under King Kawila, played a significant role in taking his troops to assist in the attack of Sad. He captured Racha Chom Hong, the ruler of Sad and took him as hostage to Bangkok in 1802. He also drove the Burmese out of the country in 1804; His calibre was widely recognised. When King Kawila passed away, the people and the lords of Chiang Mai requested that he succeed to the throne in 1816.

Phraya Thamlanka took a white elephant to Bangkok and presented to King Rama II. He was therefore bestowed with the title of Phraya Chiang Mai Chang Phueak. The people there called him "Chao Chang Phueak (The White Elephant Ruler)". During his reign, the region was peaceful and orderly. Major temples, for instance Wat Phra That Chom Thong, were renovated. For the maintenance and development of the city, he ordered the digging of the outer layer of city moats, starting from Chaeng Ku Hueang to Haiya Gate. An outer wall was also built, running from Chaeng Sriphum towards the south. Feeder canals were also dug along the city roads starting from Chaeng Hualin to Chaeng Sriphum and further down to Chaeng Khatham.



*Phraya Thamlanka
(Chao Changphueak)*



Phraya Khamfan



Phraya Phutthawong



*Phrachao Mahotarapraphet
(Phraya Mahawong)*



*Phrachao Kawilorot Suriyawong
(Chao Chiwit Oa)*

After the death of Phraya Tham Lanka, Phraya Khamfan, the Viceroy of Chiang Mai at the time, succeeded as King of Chiang Mai in 1881. He ruled Chiang Mai for three years. His reign was shorter than that of other kings. The old legend of Chiang Mai calls this time “the time of chaos” as there were conflicts between Phraya Khamfan and Phraya Ratchawong Khammun.

After the death of Phraya Khamfan, Phraya Phutthawong, son of Ruean, brother of Prince Kaeo, succeeded as King of Chiang Mai in 1824. His reign was the longest, ruling Chiang Mai for 20 years. At that time, peace was prevalent in Chiang Mai as the Burmese were busy fighting against the English. At that time, a number of Englishmen came to Chiang Mai to make contacts for teakwood trade. This contact continued to grow afterwards.

During the end of the reign of Phraya Phutthawong, who was very old, Phraya Mahawong, son of Phraya Thamlanka and the Viceroy of Chiang Mai, was in charge of city administration. In 1847, he was made Phraya Mahawong, the King of Chiang Mai. During his reign, there were three battles with Chiang Tung: the first taking place in the reign of King Rama III and the other two in the reign of King Rama IV. Phraya Mahawong was promoted to be Phrachao Mahotarapraphet in 1853 as an incentive for him during the third battle against Chiang Tung but he failed to conquer the city.

In 1853, King Kawilorot Suriyawong, son of King Kawila, called by Chiang Mai people “Chao Chiwit Ao”, succeeded as King of Chiang Mai. King Kawilorot was so strict in his rule that the people dared not commit any wrong doing. He undertook the task of law reform and judicial improvements. He had several major temples and places of importance renovated. During this time, more British citizens and people under British rule came to make contact, trade and take up licences to log teakwood. Several logging disputes took place at that time. In addition, Christianity started to be propagated in Chiang Mai.

After the death of King Kawilorot, King Inthawitchayanon, son of Phraya Ratchawong Mahaphrom Khamkhong, who in turn was a son of Phraya Khamfan, succeeded as King of Chiang Mai in 1870. His former name was Inthanon but was called “Chaoluang Ta Khao” by the townspeople. King Inthanon

was a son-in-law of Phrachao Kawilorot by his marriage with Chao Thep Kraison. Chao Inthanon and Chao Thep Kraison had a daughter by the name of Chao Dararatsami who later became royal consort to King Rama V. Chao Dararatsami served as a linkage that united the northern and southern Thais together.

In 1882, Chao Inthanon was promoted to Phrachao Inthawitchayanon of Chiang Mai. During his reign, Chiang Mai became highly prosperous. His queen Chao Thep Kraison was an intelligent lady who was knowledgeable in the art of administration. She assisted him by serving as Regent dealing with general matters.

During the reign of Phrachao Inthawitchayanon, the central government initiated an idea of uniting all vassal city-states with Siam. A governor was sent by them to be stationed in Chiang Mai for the first time in 1874. The administration of the northern provinces was reformed in subsequent years (1884-1933). The power and benefits enjoyed by the king of Chiang Mai began to diminish. After the death of Phrachao Inthawitchayanon, the central government at Bangkok annexed Chiang Mai into Thailand.

The next king of Chiang Mai was Chao Inthawarorot Suriyawong. His former name was Chao Noi Suriya. He was born in 1859, a son of Phrachao Inthawitchayanon and Chao Rincome, daughter of Chao Chailangka Phisankhun. Chao Noi Suriya became Crown Prince in 1889. In 1893, he was bestowed the rank of Chao Ratchawong, serving in the capacity of Minister of Interior and Minister of Defence. In 1897, he was promoted to be the Viceroy and later as Chao Inthawarorot Suriyawong, ruler of Chiang Mai. As a king, he bore no authority in the administration of his land as that responsibility had been entrusted to the governor sent by the central government.



*Phrachao Inthawitchayanon
(Chao Inthanon)*



*Chao Inthawarorot Suriyawong
(Chao Noi Suriya)*





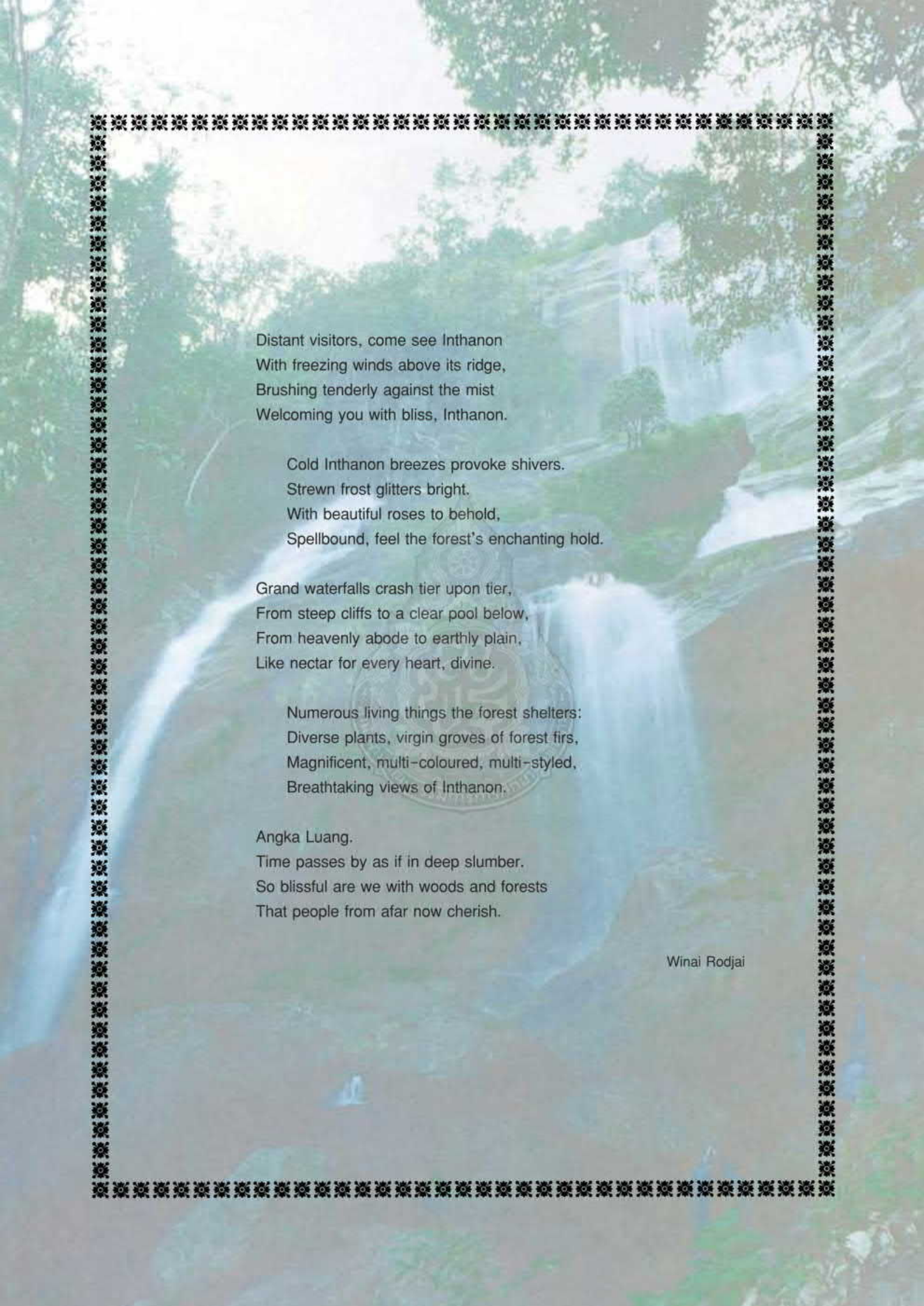
Major General Chao Kaeo Nawarat

When Phrachao Inthawarorot Suriyawong passed away in 1909, Major General Chao Kaeo Nawarat, son of Phrachao Inthawitchayanon, succeeded to the throne to be the last king of Chiang Mai. That period corresponded with the reign of King Rama VII or Phrabat Somdet Phra Pokklao Chaoyuhua. In 1933, the king revised the administration of the Lanna Kingdom and abolished the system of running the province as monthon thesa phiban. *The northern region was dissolved and Chiang Mai, which used to be the centre of the Lanna Kingdom became a province of Thailand.*



Chiang Mai at present





Distant visitors, come see Inthanon
With freezing winds above its ridge,
Brushing tenderly against the mist
Welcoming you with bliss, Inthanon.

Cold Inthanon breezes provoke shivers.
Strewn frost glitters bright.
With beautiful roses to behold,
Spellbound, feel the forest's enchanting hold.

Grand waterfalls crash tier upon tier,
From steep cliffs to a clear pool below,
From heavenly abode to earthly plain,
Like nectar for every heart, divine.

Numerous living things the forest shelters:
Diverse plants, virgin groves of forest firs,
Magnificent, multi-coloured, multi-styled,
Breathtaking views of Inthanon.

Angka Luang.
Time passes by as if in deep slumber.
So blissful are we with woods and forests
That people from afar now cherish.

Winai Rodjai



Mae Pan Waterfall on Doi Inthanon on the way to Mae Chaem District



Vajirathan Waterfall, formerly That Khong Yong Waterfall



Huay Sai Lueang Waterfall, a new tourist attraction

Doi Inthanon National Park

Above the sky-scraping mountain peaks, perpetually shrouded with clouds throughout the rainy season, lies the last mountain virgin forest of Thailand, Doi Inthanon National Park.

It is situated within the Thanon Thongchai mountain range, covering an area of approximately 482 square kilometres. Every inch of it comprise layers and layers of steep chasms and towering peaks. Among the range of gigantic mountain peaks in the national park stands the most majestic, called Inthanon, reaching 2,565 metres above sea level and considered the highest mountain peak in Thailand.

Doi Inthanon is formerly known as Doi Luang or Doi Angka. The word Doi Luang means "Grand Mountain". As for the name Doi Angka, legend has it that, once upon a time, on the top of Doi Inthanon, slightly to the west by about 300 metres from the highest spot, there existed a pool of clear, cool water where birds and crows rallied and regularly splashed playfully. That place was thus called Doi Angka and that massive mountain was called Doi Luang.

In the old days, forests in the north belonged to monarchs of local states. The forest of Doi Inthanon was therefore the property of successive kings of Chiang Mai.

While King Inthawitchayanon was on the throne of Chiang Mai from 1870–1897, he paid particular attention to the care and conservation of Doi Inthanon as he felt a strong desire to protect the Doi Luang forest.

When King Inthawitchayanon passed away, Princess Dararatsami, his daughter and the Royal Consort of H.M. King Rama V, took his relics to be encased on Doi Angka Luang. In 1992, when the Royal Thai Air Force constructed a road leading to Doi Inthanon Peak, a permanent chedi for the king's relics was constructed in his honour.



*A wide area of virgin forest atop
Doi Inthanon*

The park's major features consist of a complexity of multi-layered mountain ridges which create the appearance of a sea of mountain tops, with towering peaks scraping against the vast sky. Down below, little rivulets, streams and fertile pieces of flatland are found in every valley.

A great number of people migrated into the area to settle in the valleys. The first indigenous group of people here is the Karen. *They were the first group who benefited from the virginity of its original nature. They profited from the land's fertility, practising shifting cultivation.*

In 1890, the Hmong hilltribesmen arrived at Doi Inthanon. They settled down permanently and have lived here ever since. The Hmong felled trees and often grew poppies in the cleared areas. Since the arrival of the Hmong at Doi Inthanon, poppies have bloomed on every peak.

Deep, dense forests, ancient and very fertile, were depleted and replaced with opium plants.

With its tall and majestic forests towering over the earth, a living centre for a diversity of lives, Doi Inthanon has become a place that has attracted the interest and the desire for deeper study and survey of many. People have come here in number on expeditions to a land of wonder.



Ku (a reliquary) containing the relics of King Inthawitchayanon



A Karen woman, one among the first group of hilltribe settlers on Doi Inthanon



Seen everywhere atop Doi Inthanon is the deep greenery of dense treetops



Alfred Durr



Dr. Henry Ferit



*The dense forest once
surveyed by Dr. Henry Ferit*

Dr. Henry Ferit and Alfred Durr came to conduct the first survey of Doi Inthanon, making several trips to the peak from 1890–1922 and collecting tropical plants for their study and research.

Dr. Henry Ferit said that his journey took 2 days from Chiang Mai to Chom Thong District and 5 days from Chom Thong District to the top of Doi Inthanon. He recorded the discoveries of many species of wild animals that he encountered on his way to the mountaintop. For instance, he came across a two-horned rhino-ceros, gaurs, elephants and gorillas. Some of these animals are now extinct. Those that still exist are rare.

Dr. Karl Hotsel led another group of surveyors into the inner sanctuary of the forest on Doi Inthanon. He wrote in his diary that he saw tigers and barking deer.

In 1963, E.C. Dickinson came to conduct a survey of birds. He described the condition of the forest, saying that a great deal of shifting cultivation was taking place at the time. However, the forests along the northern and western sides were still so dense that no one had ventured to go inside them.



A cold blanket of haze covers the peak all year round



A benchmark at the highest spot on Doi Inthanon



A fertile forest heavily covered with a diversity of trees



Dense and untidy forest covering the whole mountain ridge provides cool air and natural pleasures for visitors

In 1966, the Forestry Department began a survey of the extent of the forest area on Doi Inthanon and declared it a national park on 2 October 1972.

Under the Trails of Mist and Cold Weather

On top of Doi Inthanon is an assembly point of unspoilt nature. Plants found here range from miniatures, covering the ground in a blanket-like fashion, to towering trees standing menacingly at the highest spot in the forest.

Each tree branch, climber's peak, flower and leaf, joins together to form a wonderful picture of the forest, making it appear breathtaking when viewed in the trails of a cold mist.

The freezing cold weather is hardly absent from this place, even during the summer when aridity and heat permeates every inch of the flatland in the valleys below.

Academicians on surveys and study expeditions to Doi Inthanon's forests have recorded that,

"On the top of Doi Inthanon during December and January, the temperature at noon is as low as 4 degrees Celsius, meaning that at night time, it may be as low as zero degrees Celsius."

Frost is always found on Doi Inthanon Peak from 1,800 metres above sea level.

The fertility of the forests on Doi Inthanon is evident by the humidity and dampness of the land, its streams, climate and relentless coolness. The forests of Doi Inthanon shelter various categories of woodlands, ranging from evergreen mountain forest, pine mountain forest, Siamese sal-cum-pine forest, forest with mixed trees and plants and arid evergreen forest.





A view of dense forest, resembling cauliflower heads

The Wonderland of Evergreen Mountain Forest and Plant Species

After having made an ascent along the steep and tortuous road to a height of 1,500 metres above sea level, one looks down and sees that on both sides of the road are chasms and abysses thick with the trees and plants of an evergreen mountain forest. It is especially fertile with trees growing so close together. Looking down from on high, the tree tops look like a heap of cauliflower heads. Each top tries to stretch itself upward as much as possible to catch a glimpse of the sunlight that shines above the forest.

A natural evergreen mountain forest has a unique characteristic, differentiating it from other types of forest. First, it thrives on higher ground than other forests. This is usually higher than “medium” level, which is about 1,000 metres above sea level. At this level, the average climate is cold with a high degree of humidity all year round. Rainfall is estimated to be in the region of 1,500–2,000 millimetres a year. Most significantly, no trees belonging to the rubber family exist here.



Bushes representing a diversity of plants in the forest



Medium height trees

The grandeur of the Inthanon mountain range is not limited to the fact that it has the highest peak in the country but also in that it is a large evergreen mountain forest with a unique collection of ecologically well-balanced lives. This has been continuing for thousands of years.

The lower levels of Doi Inthanon National Park forest have been largely ravaged by the hilltribes. Only a few irregular patches are left. Looking down from above, the forest does not appear to be very thick. There is no sign of moss patches growing on tree branches. If there is any, the quantity is minimal. Plants found at the lower levels are *lithocarpus elegans* Hatus, *castanopsis tribuloides*, *castanopsis calathiformis* Kurz, *diospyros*, *phalo*, *proteum serratum* Engler, *Eugenia cumini*, *Symplocos theaefolia*, *Styrax apricus*, and *ixora cibdela*.

The vegetation of the higher levels may be classified by their height into three groups:

1. The tallest trees. These grow above other trees in the forest, extending branches and leaves to provide the scene like a sea of greenery. They have big, straight and robust trunks with an average height of 35 metres. Most of them belong to the *Ko botanical* family, such as *castanopsis tribuloides*, *castanopsis purpurea*, *castanopsis ferox* sprach, *lithocarpus auriculatus* Barnett, *castanopsis argentea*, *myrtle*, *olives*, *bamboo*, *Stylax apricus*, *helicia robusta*, *talouma candollei*, *tha-lo*, *Podocarpus pilgeri* Foxw. *Podocarpus imbricatus*, *Podocarpus neliifolius*, *Pinus kesiya* Roy ex Gordon and *Betula alonoides*.

2. Medium-sized trees. These are about 10–17 metres high. Several kinds fall under this category, such as *michelia alba*, *helicia formosana*, *diopyros castanea* Fletcher, *melioma pinnata* Walp, *symplocos laurina* alston, *allophylus sootepensis*, *camellia pleurocarpa* Sealy, and dwarf roses.

3. Shrubbery. A great number grow densely in this evergreen mountain forest: *schefflera bengalensis* Gamble, *hiptage candicans* Hook, *pavetia petiolaris* Wall ex Craib, *Psychotria montecola* Kurz, *Maesa montana*, *antidesma velutinosum*, *Baliospermum siamensis*, Craib, *Hedichium coceineum* and *melastoma villosum* lodd.

The evergreen mountain forest on Doi Inthanon covers a very extensive area indeed. Walking in this forest makes one feel as if one was in the most isolated land in nature while the tops of the pine trees sway in the breeze and the sunlight creates life amid such cold by shining on the leaves.



Mae Klang Waterfall, the first rest area that beckons and welcomes visitors to Doi Inthanon National Park



Boulders of various sizes line up in the stream of Mae Klang Waterfall, creating minor falls within the main waterfall



The Mountain of Waterfalls

As the main topographical feature of the forest comprises a large number of imposing mountains, several types of waterfalls appear along with the passage of water; flowing leisurely and meandering along flatlands and sometimes gushing over deep abysses and chasms.

Mae Klang Waterfall: The Symbol of Doi Inthanon

From the first stop to Doi Inthanon National Park, the majestic Mae Klang Waterfall appears before the eyes of visitors. A huge mass of water pouring over a broad cliff-top and meandering around a number of huge boulders lying at different levels has created a multitude of waterfalls of various sizes along the whole path of the main fall.

The Mae Klang Waterfall is a huge fall covering a spacious cliff area. The clear, clean torrent rushes down to the huge pool below before flowing into the Mae Klang River basin.

The impressively high Mae Klang Waterfall as it appears to onlookers



Another shot of Mae Klang Waterfall. A scenic and photogenic spot for photography enthusiasts



Siribhum Waterfall, formerly known as Lao Li Waterfall

This is an assembly spot for everyone who likes to swim in the falls on a regular basis. The Mae Klang Waterfall serves as an informal meeting place for people from all walks of life and has thus become the symbol of Doi Inthanon.

Two more waterfalls appear running parallel to each other. They are situated higher than the Mae Klang Waterfall but originate from the same source of water. They are secondary in grandeur to the Mae Ya. Each has unique characteristics. They were once called the Tat Khong Yong and Lao Li waterfalls. Later the names were changed, one was renamed the “Vajirathan Waterfall” after the name of His Royal Highness Prince Vajiralongkorn the Crown Prince, and the other “Siribhum Waterfall” after Their Majesties King Bhumibol and the Queen Sirikit.

Mae Ya Waterfall

This waterfall is the largest and the most beautiful in Doi Inthanon National Park. It is 260 metres high, with the origin in the source pool of the Mae Ya River that runs through high cliffs in torrents down multi-levelled passes. Boulders create over 30 steps.



Mae Ya Waterfall, the natural charm of Doi Inthanon National Park that every visitor wants to see



Siva bird, a tiny bird with beautiful feathers, found mostly in the evergreen mountain forests of Doi Inthanon National Park



An unusually beautiful flower that thrives in cold weather. Found on Doi Inthanon

Layers of stone slabs, lying on top of one another, constitute a scene of wonder for onlookers as they watch a colossal bulk of water spewing down from one slab to another. It looks like an unbroken flow of water plunging from heaven to earth.

A Diversity of Bird Life

With the fecundity of the forest virtually undiminished and a great diversity of plant categories respective to the type of the forest, Doi Inthanon National Park is full of plants, berries, fruits and shades caused by large and small trees. This provides a highly befitting habitat for various animals. From the survey made, there are not less than 446 species of animal inhabiting Doi Inthanon and of these, birds account for more than 304.

There are 255 domestic bird species, long inhabiting this area, like the Black Eagle, Ground Wagtail, Spotted-necked Dove, Emerald Dove, Grey-headed Parakeet, Grasshopper Bee-eater, Mountain Scopes Owl, Barred Owlet, Long-Tailed Nightjar, White Kingfisher, Bay-Headed Bee-Eater, Woodpecker And Swift.



Long Green-tailed Sunbirds, a small bird ubiquitous on Doi Inthanon



A spider, known as the hunter of the forest, of the type found on Doi Inthanon

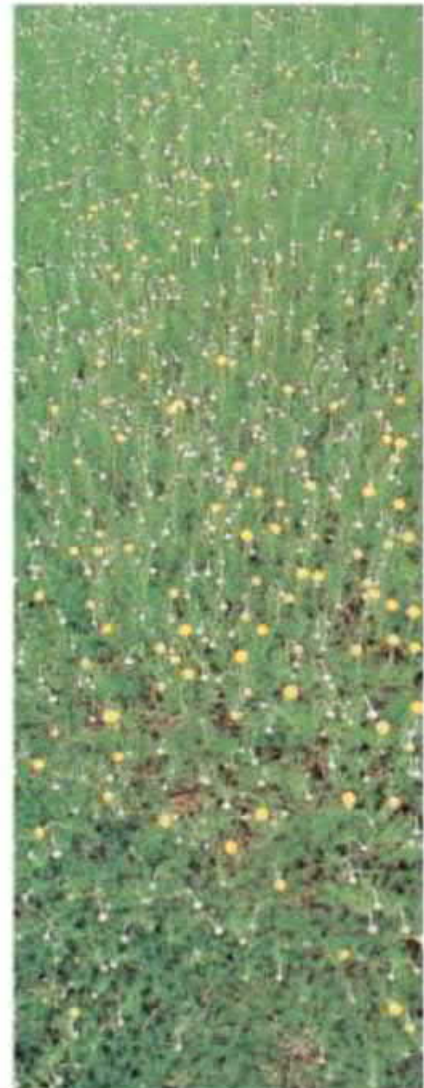
Several wild birds native to evergreen mountain forests are found on Doi Inthanon at over 1,000 metres above sea level in not-so-dense areas of forest where the ground is covered with thickets and the air is rather cool.

Birds found here are usually small but very colourful, such as the Chestnut-tailed Siva, Black-headed Sibia, Chestnut-capped Nun Babblers, Blue Shortwings, Yellow-bellied Fantail Fly-eaters, Long and Green-tailed Sunbirds, Chestnut-headed Yuhinas, and Scaly-Breasted Mountain Bulbuls.

In addition, pools of water, streams and rivulets attract several types of water birds, like Kingfishers, Red-legged Crakes, Slaty-Breasted Crakes and Greater Coucals, which can be found swooping in search of small water creatures.

Wild Animals Still in Existence

The ample forests of Doi Inthanon are the habitat of a diversity of animal species: Leopard Cats, Panthers, Leopards, Tigers, Serows, Gorillas, Barking Deer, Wild Hogs, Banded Linsangs, Large Spotted Civets, Large Indian Civets, Asiatic Black Bears, Yellow-Throated Martens, Hog Badgers, Porcupines, Rhizomys Sumatrensis, Cannonmys Badius, Giant Flying Squirrels, Giant Black Squirrels, Giant Red-bellied Squirrels, Wild Rabbits, White-palmed Gibbons, Stump-tailed Monkeys, Northern Dusky Leaf Monkeys, Slow Loris, Mountain Bats and Angka Badgers.



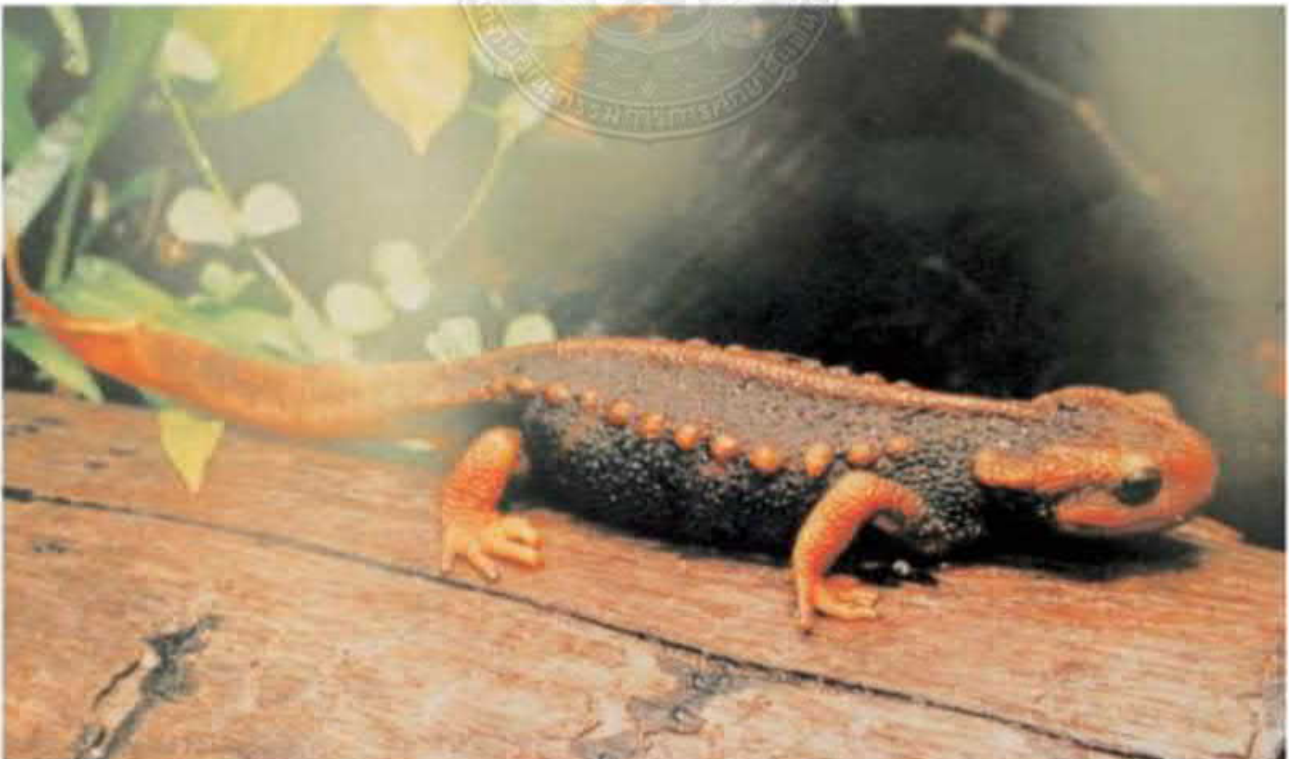
Animals like serows, gorillas, tigers and leopards, panthers, leopard cats and others are under extreme threat of extinction, as Asiatic black bears, Pig-tailed Monkeys, Northern Dusky Leaf Monkeys, White-palmed Gibbons and giant black squirrels.



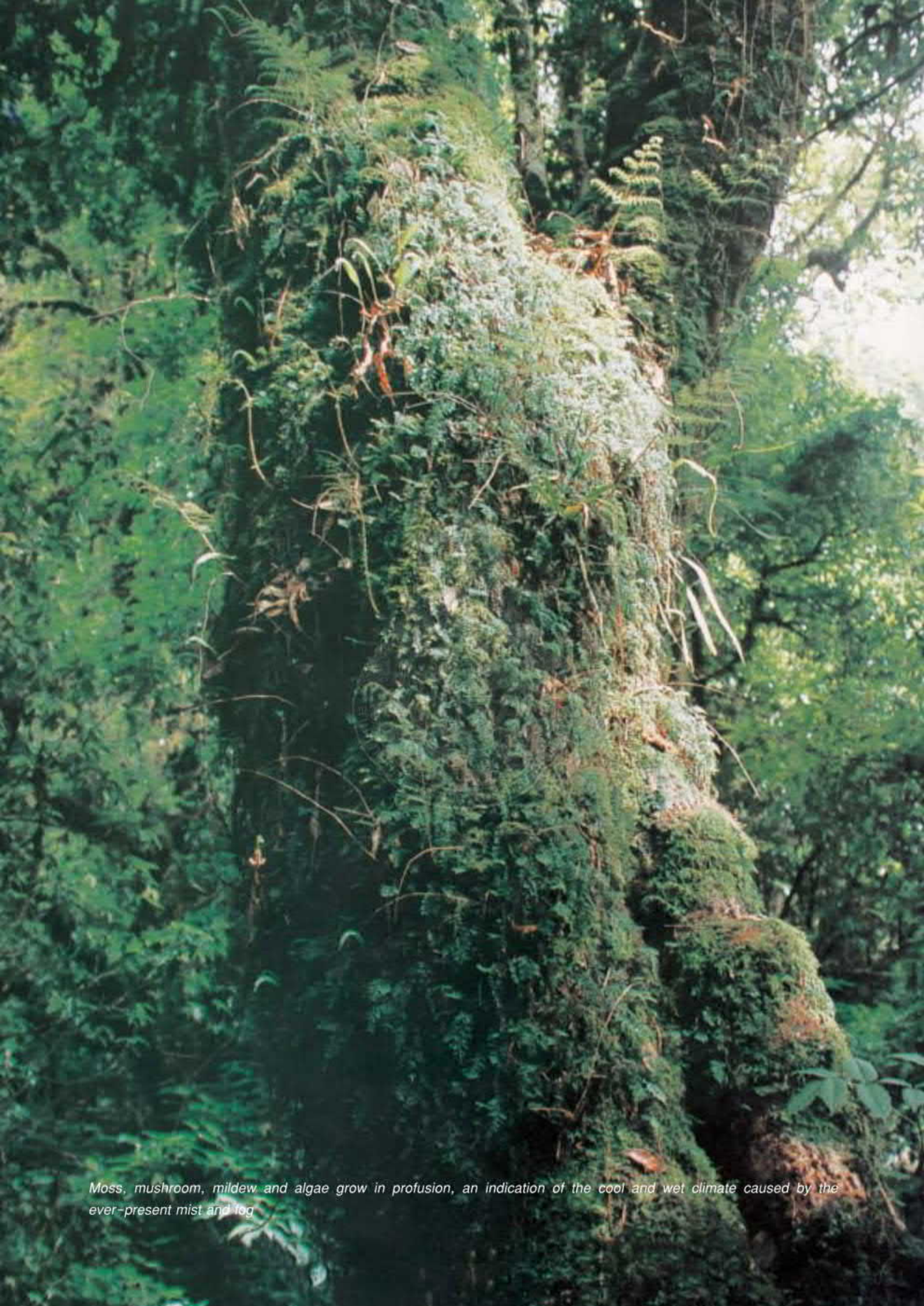
A colourful tree frog

What man has been doing for years has had great impact on the lives of wild animals in the forests of Doi Inthanon today. In the past, Doi Inthanon National Park forests were a rich habitat for numerous types of animals. During the last few decades, intensive deforestation for cultivation has led to the decrease in the number of wild animals living in the forest of Doi Inthanon as there is inadequate living space and livelihood left. Indiscriminate hunting aggravates this. Nowadays, only four species of large animals are left in this forest—wild gorillas, serows, Asiatic black bears and tigers. Medium-sized animals that can still be found include White-palmed Gibbons, Stump-tailed Monkeys, Northern Dusky Leaf Monkeys, wild hogs and Barking Deer. Small animals still in existence are squirrels, *Tupia Minor*, *Cannomys badius*, Bushy-tailed Porcupines and Banded Badgers.

The forests of Doi Inthanon are also the habitat of a certain type of salamander, the only kind found in Thailand. It can only be found in the forests of Doi Inthanon, Doi Chiang Dao and Doi Pui.



A native salamander of the type found only on Doi Inthanon



Moss, mushroom, mildew and algae grow in profusion, an indication of the cool and wet climate caused by the ever-present mist and fog



Small Wonders

Though the primordial forests of Doi Inthanon stretch everywhere, covering lowland and mountain peaks, dense and threatening, below them, nature has created another world of tiny plants. All thrive peacefully under these big trees, each seeking the other's assistance.

The fact is that each huge Inthanon tree is generally covered with tiny plants of the moss, fern, mushroom, and mildew and algae families. They grow in profusion over tree trunks, each vying to display its distinct and attractive leaves or buds.

Multitudes of tiny little living things are born and owe their lives to these big trees in evergreen mountain forests.

For every step made on the ground of the damp and swampy area of the forest, a scene of tiny plants emerges carpet-like before one's eyes, stretching from one tree to the next.

The Land of Wild Orchids

Inthanon's forests are the meeting place for a variety of orchids that grow on the ground, on tree trunks or hang from tree branches. These beautiful orchids become a significant asset to the beauty of forest colours in every season.

More than 90 families of orchid are found on Doi Inthanon. They are the most numerous of all the plants found there.



The ubiquitous eye-catchingly colourful mushrooms



Primordial trees at Angka Luang



Wild orchids, beautiful additions to the colours of the evergreen mountain forests of Doi Inthanon

Several species of orchids grow in this area at different altitudes. For instance, at 1,000 metres above sea level, there are *Dendrobium Draconis*, *Dendrobium Fimbriatum*, *Dendrobium Fomsum*, Lady's Slipper and *Dendrobium Ciliferum*.



Angka Luang, a forest wonderland



Diverse plants at Angka Luang

Angka Luang: The Land of Primordial Forest

About 300–400 metres from the highest spot of Doi Inthanon Peak where the reliquary of King Inthawitchayanon is located, a path leads to what is known in a legendary story as “Angka Luang”.

The multi-levelled route leading down to the large swamp of Angka Luang is verdant and thick with the towering majestic trees of the evergreen mountain forest. They range from depterocarpaceae, sapindaceae, wild magnolia, rhododendron, podocarpaceae, wild thecae, cinnamon and palms.

Each tree now standing in Angka Luang has been there for a great number of years. The cool mists and fog help branches, leaves and flowers look fresh with humidity. Each branch and trunk is thickly covered with bright green moss and algae. The whole forest appears dense with large and small tree branches with moss and fern on them, so much so that none of their outer texture is exposed to human eyes.

The rhododendrons, one of a number of perennials in Angka Luang, start to burst with a profusion of red and white blooms in January. The blooms last all through summer. They provide beautiful summery colours to the forest, attracting birds and insects and contribute to the liveliness of the area.

Red rhododendrons are the national flower of Nepal. The rhododendron bush comes from the Himalayas at a medium-level altitude of about 1,700–4,500 metres.



Rhododendrons, the great charm of Doi Inthanon

The range of mountains of which Doi Inthanon is a part runs from the Himalayas, stretching eastward. It was born as a result of the shifting and upheaval of the earth's crust. During the ice age, animals and plants from the Himalayas fled the mountains for the lower ground. As the earth grew warmer, those animals and plants found they could not thrive on the lowland. The high mountains maintain a cool temperature. Living things that are used to living in temperate climates can flourish on them. In this way, the lifeline continues from the Himalayas to Doi Inthanon.



Phra Mahathat Nopphamethanidon



Phra Mahathat Nopphonphumsiri

The Buddhist Chedi at the Peak

Before reaching the highest point of the peak, turn left and you will come to two chedi standing on a cliff of the peak, containing the relics of Lord Buddha.

These two reliquaries were built in honour of Their Majesties the King and Queen.

One is called Phra Mahathat Nopphamethanidon; the other Phra Mahathat Chedi Nopphonphumsiri.

Inthanon at Present

Though an asphalt road has been constructed, leading to the inner part of the deep forest, the grandeur of Doi Inthanon has not diminished with time.

The grandeur of Doi Inthanon is still evident.

At present, Doi Inthanon is the centre of coolness.

A centre of wind, mists and vapour.

A centre of a diversity for small plants in the forest.

A centre of towering primordial forest.

It embodies every aspect of an ecologically balanced natural site on this earth and will be like this for a long time to come.





Queen Sirikit Botanical Gardens
Contains many species of perennials,
To conserve the forest and the land
With flowers, trunks and roots beside.

A multitude of trees and plants
And orchids trailing serpentine.
Fern, ginger, galangal, anthurium and lotus
Are close neighbours of sandalwood.

Queen Sirikit roses, Chinese water lilies,
A group of donya and erithrina,
Maeng Wai blooms descend to the ground
Their crystalline pollen flies in the air.

Vines trail and dangle to be with cycas.
The lilies miss the summer's warm breeze.
Proud teak, fickle dahlia and lamduan ¹
Playfully tickle Andaman satinwood.

Allamanda, marigold and Indian rose,
Cyperacea, kafak², nipa,
Champaca and scented talauma abound.
Butterflies perch high on shorea bushes,
Then fly around the red clusters of blooms.

The rock garden with streams, caves and flatlands.
Pradu³, champaka and vertiver,
Khaotokdin⁴, water lily, Prayong⁵
Sonklin⁶, all hide their sweet fragrance.

Amidst the valleys, cliffs and vast sky,
Resembling a path to paradise,
An Indian koel twitters from its nest.
Fluff-like, the sun sets itself in haste.

I pay homage to the gods of the forest
To care for the honour and dignity,
The charisma and merits of the
Great Queen of the Chakri Dynasty.

Thaweeporn Thongkambai

¹ A kind of Thai flower

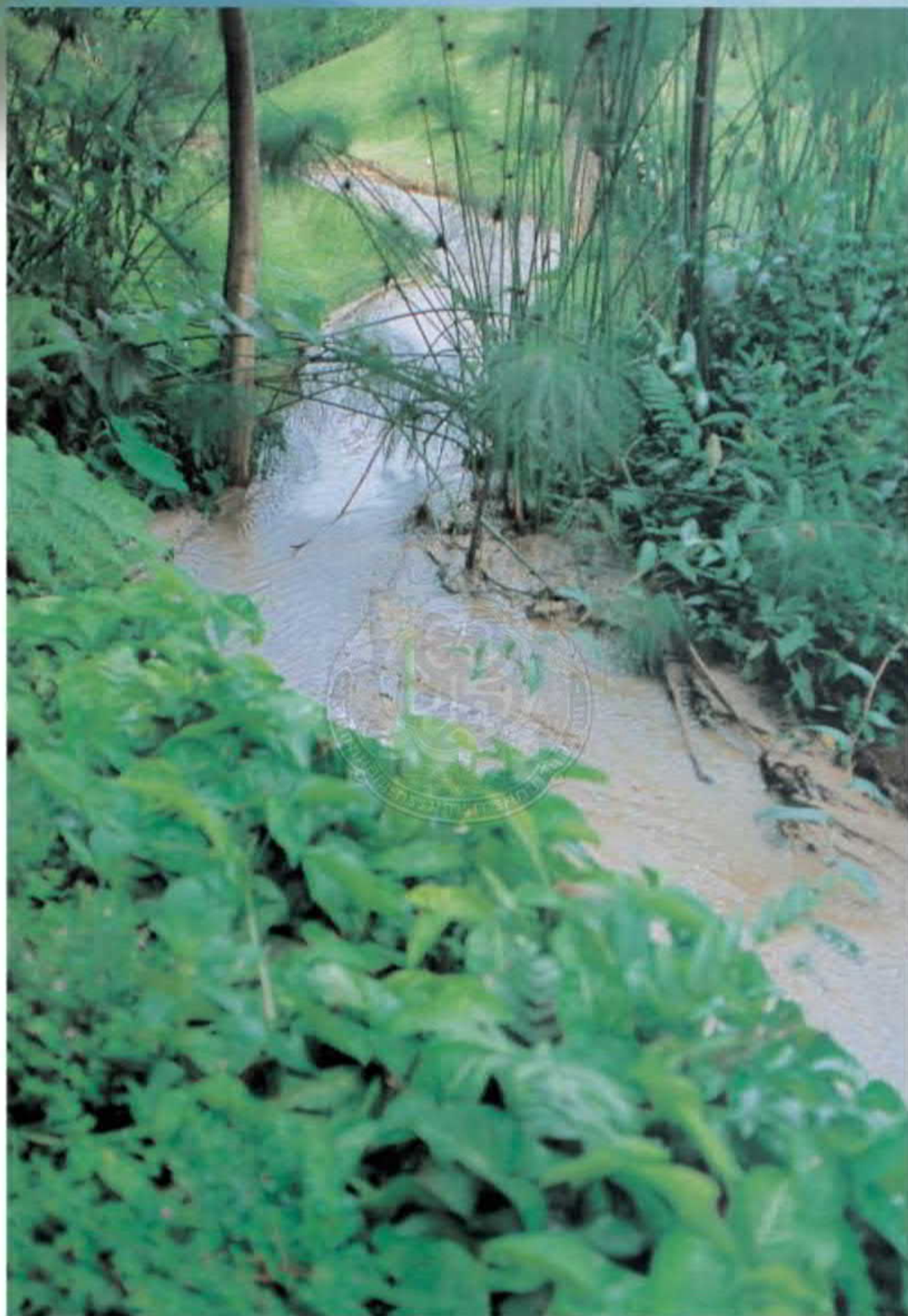
² Parasitosis

³ Crydia chrysanthae

⁴ Serissa foetida

⁵ Aglaia odoratissima,

⁶ Polianthes toberosa



Admiring Queen Sirikit Botanical Garden



The world has advanced technologically. Men are able to go down to the ocean depths or soar high into space with ease.

Nevertheless, man cannot create plants. Not even a tiny shaft of grass can be created.

Plants have a long history of evolution in this world, millions of years. Without plants, other living things cannot thrive. Plants synthesise sunlight into food for other living things.

The evolution of the earth is therefore based on plants.

Thailand is rich in plant diversity. There are in our country about 10,000 plant species here. Several of them are economic crops; others are herbs with medicinal value. However, there has not been any serious study of how to use plants wisely and in a sustainable way, in terms of either conservation or development.



Beautiful flowers

In October 1991, the Committee on Biological Diversity held a meeting on biological diversity in Thailand.

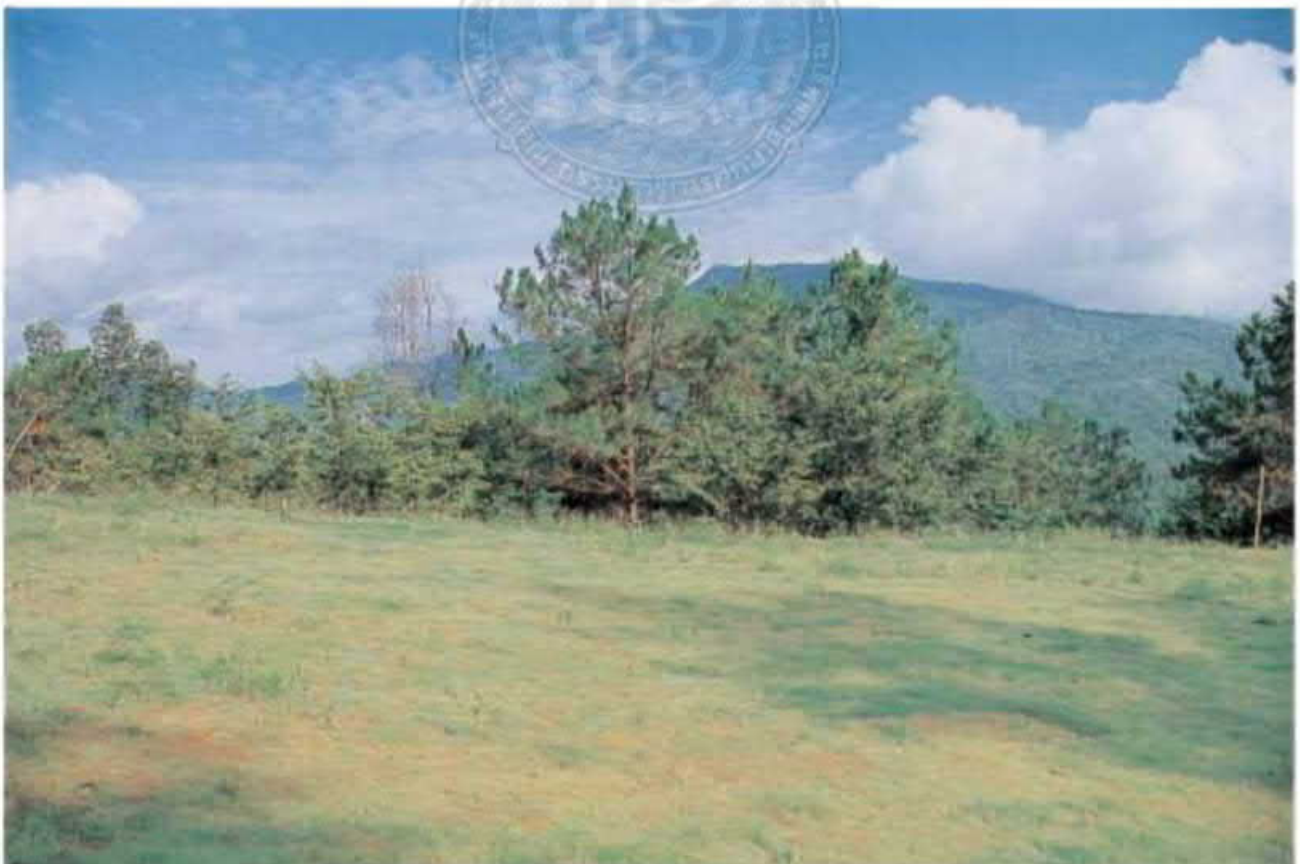
The meeting recognised the increasing significance of plant resources and felt concerned that many plant species may face extinction while they are still unknown to the public. The meeting therefore decided to support activities on plant conservation, especially when it comes to the establishment of botanical gardens.

The Botanical Garden Organisation was subsequently established in accordance with the Royal Decree on the Setting Up of the Botanical Garden Organisation, B.E. 2535. The organisation has the status of a government enterprise under the jurisdiction of the Office of the Prime Minister that is responsible for supervision and policy formulation in collaboration with the committee.

This is to render international standards to botanical gardens in Thailand in order to make known the beauty and value of plants in our gardens for the world to see.



A fertile forest



Beautiful scenery on the way to a garden



The front view of Queen Sirikit Botanical Garden



In 1994, Her Majesty the Queen graciously bestowed the name

“Queen Sirikit Botanical Garden”

to this garden under the supervision of the Botanical Garden Organisation. The garden is situated at Tambon Pong Yaeng and Tambon Mae Raem, Mae Rim District, and is about 27 kilometres from Chiang Mai on Route No. 107.

This area is at the outskirts of Suthep-Pui National Forest. Several streams run from that area into Huay Mae Sa, a wide river with strong currents all year round. The river serves as a major lifeline, providing fertility to the large forest that is richly endowed with a diversity of plants.



The 6,500 rai of Queen Sirikit Botanical Garden covers a wide area consisting of flatland, hilly areas and high mountains. A road runs around the garden, in some parts passing through high and steep places, providing a magnificent view to the whole vicinity.

On both sides of the road, the scenery is fantastic. In some places, one may be able to see the whole vista of the valley. In other places, a verdant prairie or forest may appear before the eyes.

It is a world class botanical garden, located at the most appropriate spot.

Queen Sirikit Botanical Garden is a leading institution focusing particularly on plant science.

It is the centre of a large collection of plants, particularly those of Thailand. Names are carefully checked and displayed. Plants are beautifully arranged in proper groups with names of origin and usage displayed.

It is also a centre for a large collection of native and particularly rare plants including orchids, herbs and economically valuable Thai wood. The garden has the task of preserving, propagating, and conducting research and in-depth study of, these plants.



The lengthy and winding road around the garden



A large wooden board where the names of the plants are displayed.



As a centre for study and research in botany, it co-operates with universities in the country in the training and development of personnel in charge of botanical matters. It also collaborates in the undertaking of high-level research with various national institutes such as the National Centre for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology.



It is a centre for the collection of dried plants, particularly those with their origins in the North and Northeast of the country. The names of the plants have been stored on computer.

It is a major database centre for plants in the country and Southeast Asia.



It is a centre for the study of rural and plant diversity with facilities for visitor recreation and information.

It acts as a centre to strengthen the attitude of young people so that they might develop a love of plants and the strong desire to protect this valuable resource of nature and national culture.

Buildings in the garden





Orchids in the orchid house



Khao Tok Din (serissa foetida)



Japanese impatiens



Cool shade and verdant scenery in the garden



A path in the botanical garden



The minute a visitor steps inside through the front gate, he feels the coolness of the shady grounds, the beauty of the flowers and various ornamental plants with vibrant colours, each of which is vying to attract attention. The combination constitutes the beauty and glory of Queen Sirikit Botanical Garden.



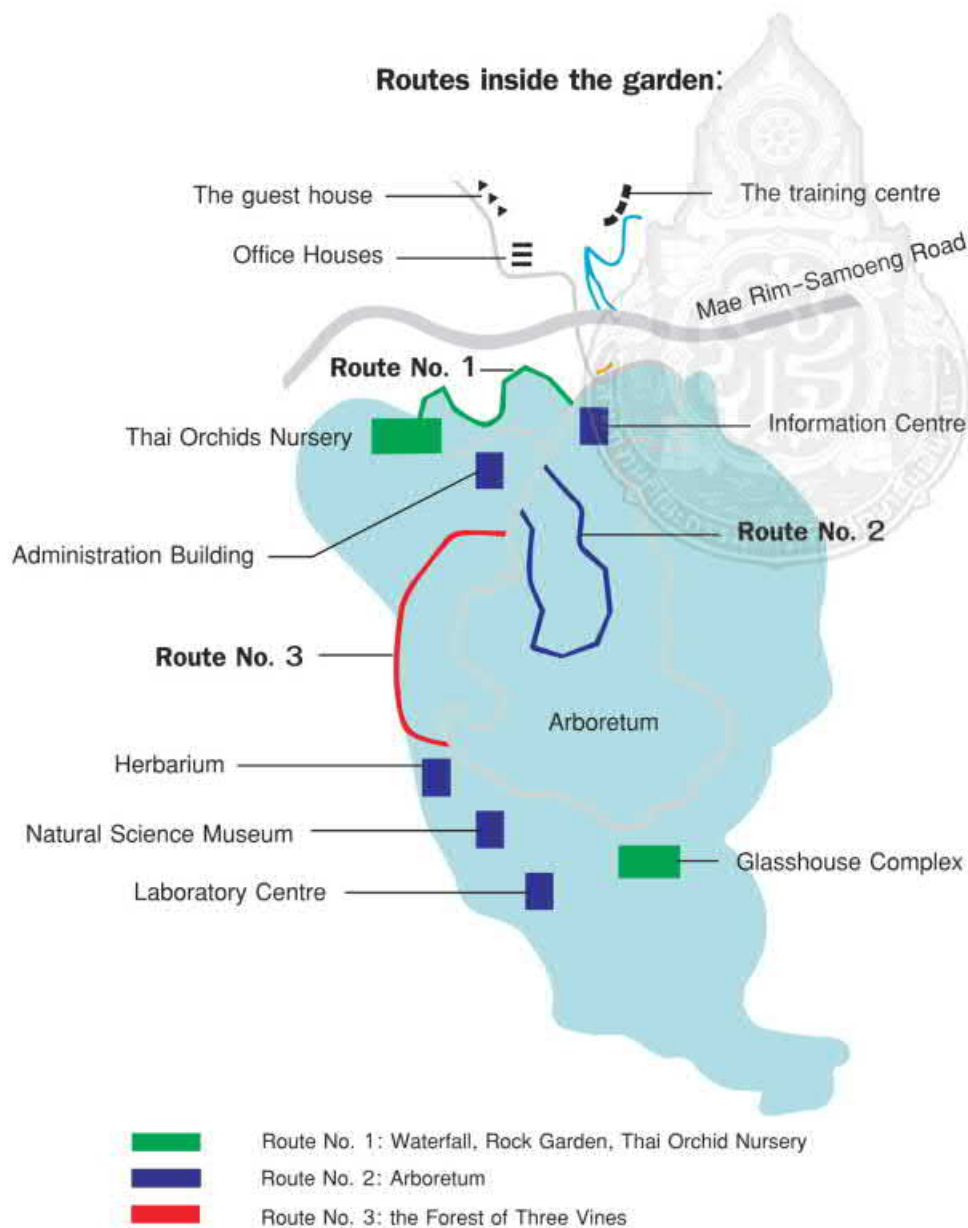
Once inside, a visitor is able to look at various types of plants cultivated in collections according to their families and natural habitat. There are three pathways leading to the plants.

The Rock Garden Route. This route starts from the information centre. It winds down the Mae Sa Noi Waterfall, passes through the rock garden and ends near the Thai Orchid House. The whole route takes about 30–60 minutes to walk.

The Arboretum Route. This route also starts from the information centre and runs a long way passing through places where miscellaneous plants are grown: banana, palm, pandanus, araceae and cassia. Entering the fern garden, one encounters ginger, galangal, cycas and mountain pines. The whole route goes in a circle and takes about 45-90 minutes to walk.

The Vine Route. This one also starts from the information centre but goes uphill, passing the pine grove and turning right before the entrance to the vine route. Approximately 135 species of plants are collected here. The path is quite steep and takes about one to two hours for a return trip.

Routes inside the garden:



Climbing plants in the vines' garden



An elevated walkway in the garden





Palms



Fertile land around the botanical garden



Multi-coloured flowers in the glasshouse complex

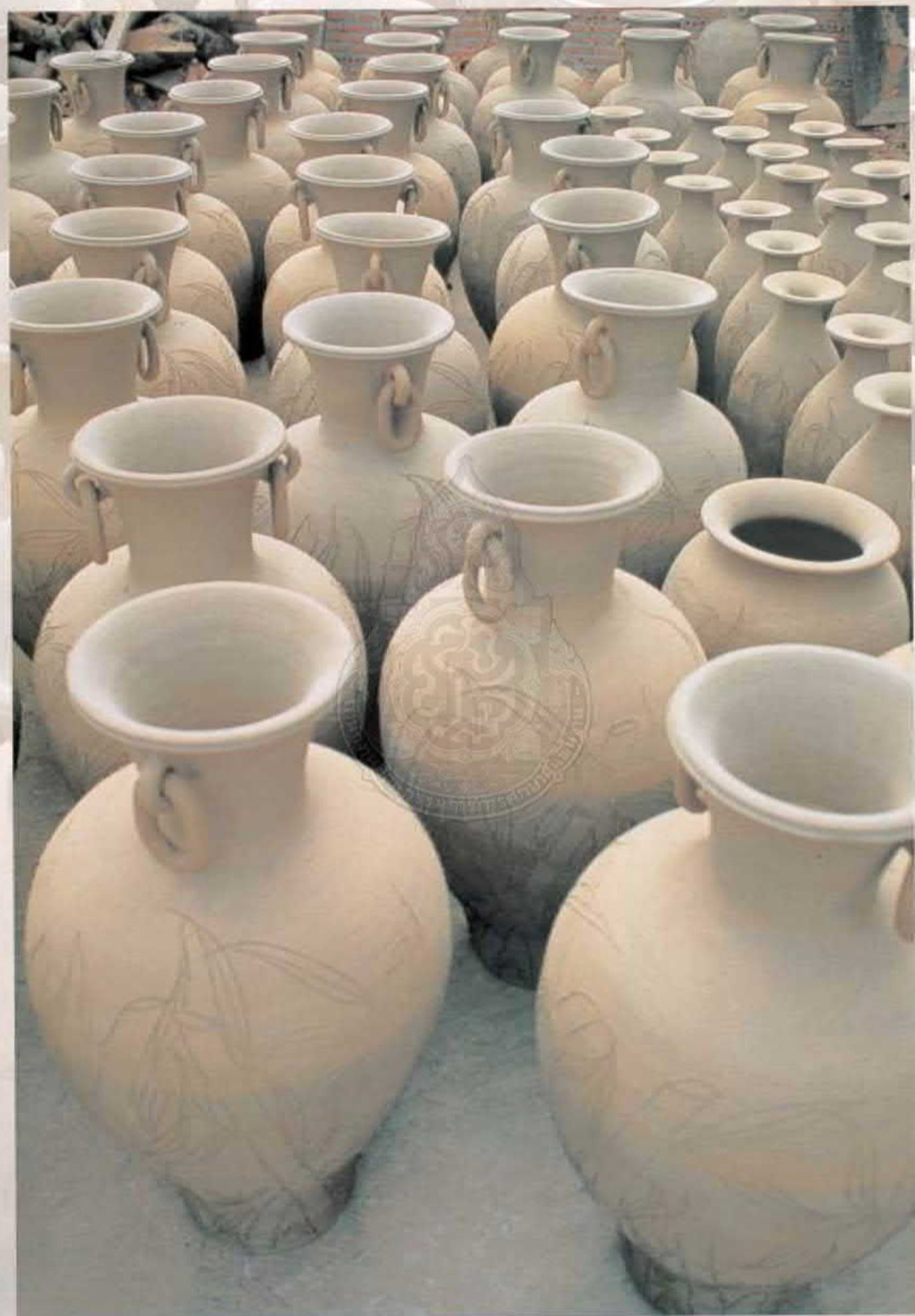
Man's life has to depend on nature at all times. Major necessities in man's life are based on nature, particularly plants. The absence of nature conservation awareness has brought about deforestation and inappropriate development.

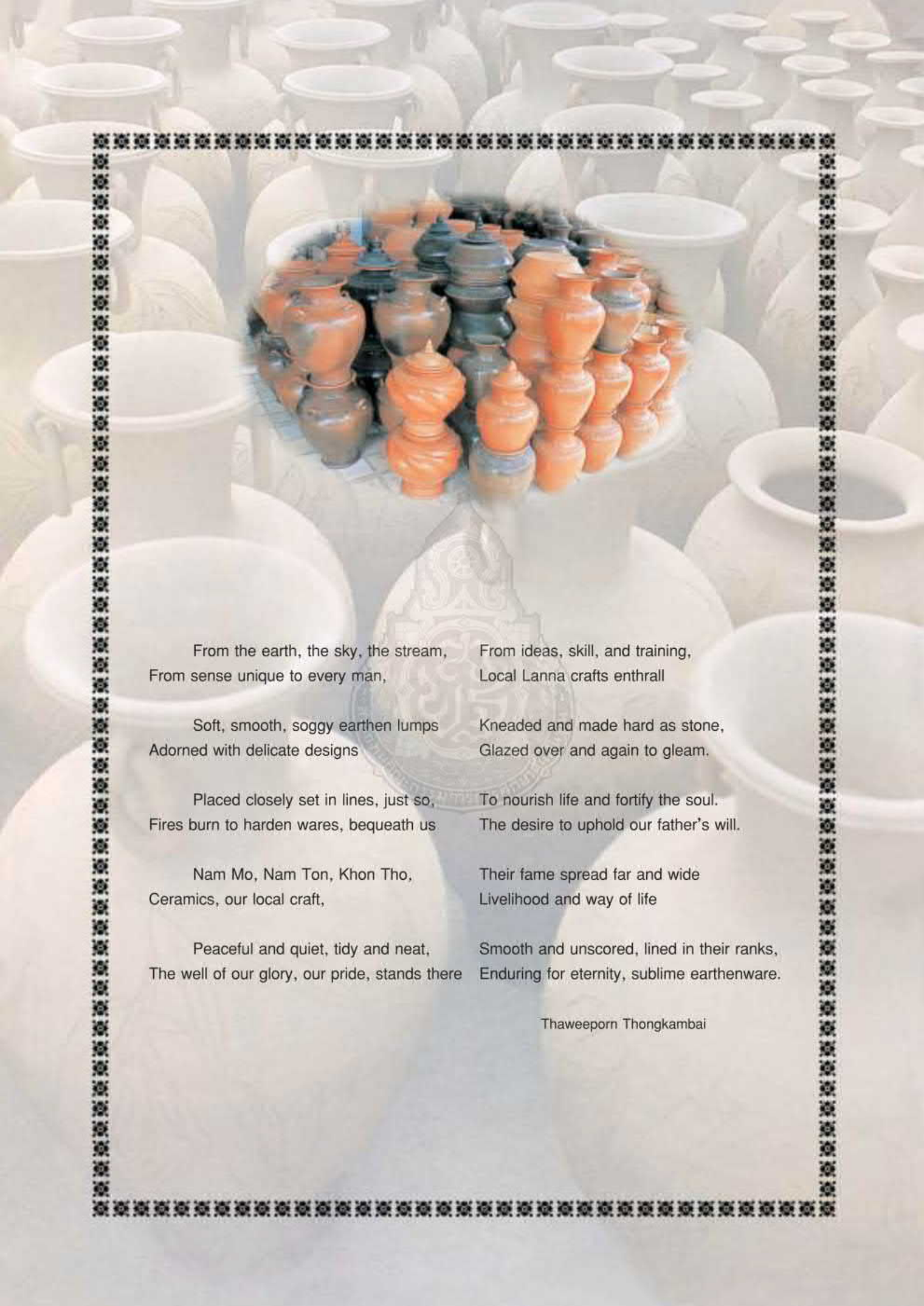
Queen Sirikit Botanical Garden is a leader in forest conservation and has long been engaged in soil preservation for the benefit of our own people.

It has as its motto: "Thailand will survive if our forests thrive".

Queen Sirikit Botanical Garden
Nourishes Man's life, faith and boon.
Maintains the earth with the sun.
Preserves our forests to sustain Thailand.







From the earth, the sky, the stream,
From sense unique to every man,

Soft, smooth, soggy earthen lumps
Adorned with delicate designs

Placed closely set in lines, just so,
Fires burn to harden wares, bequeath us

Nam Mo, Nam Ton, Khon Tho,
Ceramics, our local craft,

Peaceful and quiet, tidy and neat,
The well of our glory, our pride, stands there

From ideas, skill, and training,
Local Lanna crafts enthrall

Kneaded and made hard as stone,
Glazed over and again to gleam.

To nourish life and fortify the soul.
The desire to uphold our father's will.

Their fame spread far and wide
Livelihood and way of life

Smooth and unscored, lined in their ranks,
Enduring for eternity, sublime earthenware.

Thaweeporn Thongkambai

Exquisite Pottery

Thai ceramics can be found in every region of the country. Production is meant for home use and local trade. Its special characteristics have been handed down from generation to generation. Each region has its own unique feature. Locally available materials are used. **In the Northeast**, for instance, potting dates back to pre-historic origins and continues today. The most popular sites of production are Ban Chiang, Nong Han District, Ubon Rachathani Province; Phon Kwa and Phue Pod villages, Tambon Pleuay Noi, Sawannaphum District, Roi-et Province and Dan Kwian Village, Chokechai District, Nakhon Ratchasima Province. **In the Central Region**, pottery making is found in Tambon Khlong Sa Bua, and brick-making at Bang Ban District, Ayutthaya Province. In Nonthaburi and Pathum Thani provinces, pottery production in the Mon-style, which is called 'Kwan A-Man' is found, particularly at



Earthenware products, in use nowadays



Earthenware water container placed in front of a house in the North

Tambon Pak Kret, Nonthaburi Province. The ancestors of the residents here are the Mon whose lifestyle, tradition and culture have been kept intact until today. There is not much earthenware making **in the south** since better income can be earned from growing rubber. Also, the all-year-round rainfall in that region makes it difficult to dry the pottery in the sun. However, ceramic making is found at Tambon Kaluwo Nua, Muang District, Narathiwat Province. **In the north**, pottery making is found at Mon Khao Kaeo, ceramic making at Muang District, Lampang Province; ceramic and celadon making at Muang District, Sukhothai Province, pottery making at Mae Sai District, Chiang Rai Province and pottery making at Hang Dong and Sankamphaeng districts of Chiang Mai Province.

Pottery in Chiang Mai

Chiang Mai or Nopburi Si Nakhon Ping Chiang Mai still retains its role as the centre of Lanna Kingdom up to the present. Although the



Wooden mortar and pestle used in breaking lumps of earth into smaller pellets before grinding and kneading

influx of western civilisation has changed the lifestyle of the townspeople to become more westernized, still a majority of Chiang Mai people prefer to hold on steadfastly to age-old traditions and customs. They, however, have adapted western civilisation to be in harmony with their own lifestyle. This also applies to the application of their arts and crafts, a constant source of pride. Adjustments and improvements have been made over the years, both in terms of production, marketing and management, for the benefit of their own survival and as a source of revenue.

Chiang Mai pottery has undergone a long line of development, starting from the day earthenware was used as home utensils until today when it is used as souvenirs, ornaments, home decorations and for many other purposes. Industrial mass productions, vivid and vibrant colours, unusual shapes and features, have been introduced to meet the demand from tourists. Glazed ceramic pieces have been developed in a diverse style and colour to meet the ever-growing requirements of the buyers.



Moulders



A grinding machine



Man-made and traditionally-produced pottery, retaining folk wisdom and craftsmanship, can be found in the pottery of Ban Kuan Han Kao and Ban Khun Se, and water containers from Ban Muang Kung, Tambon Nong Kwai, Hang Dong District.

Ban Kuan Han Kao Pottery

This is genuine folk pottery-making still undertaken today. The production process dates back to the days when their ancestors – the Lawa tribe – moved southward and carried out their traditional style of pottery. Few households today engage in this craft. This is because the income derived from this endeavour is very little and the material used in the production has to be brought in from other places. In addition, the demand for such pottery is diminishing. At present, this type of pottery still exists only at Ban Kuan Han Kao, Tambon Han Kao, Hang Dong District. The craftsmen engaged in it are mostly senior citizens, such as grandmothers and aunts, who want to have something to do in their spare time. Members of the younger generation rarely take up this occupation.



Earth dug from rice field is used as materials for the pottery

This may be because they prefer to do other jobs that earn them higher income and do not require such meticulous skill and patience. Pottery in the Ban Kuan Han Kao style is made in a traditional way requiring local knowledge, without the help of any modern machinery. The process starts by first immersing in water for a few nights finely crushed earth so that the earth texture will become soft and pasty, ready to be moulded. The mixture is then kneaded until there are no air bubbles left. Moulding is done by placing clay on the casting mould. The craftsman will have to walk several times around the casting mould while it is being turned and formed into the required shape and size. This is the initial stage meant to attain a rough shape. Later, human hands and a flat piece of wood will be used to make the clay into the required shape. Decoration and colouring is done in ochre. Then the finished pottery will be exposed to the sun for drying for some time before it is placed inside a kiln for burning. Pieces of wood used as fuel are placed together to form a rectangular pyre. The pottery is placed inside with a proper space left between each piece and the bulk of the fire. Broken shards of pots, jars and plant pots are piled on top of the pottery to prevent direct contact with the flame. Too much heat may cause the pottery to be cracked or broken.



Casting moulds used in making rough shapes of pottery



Grounded earth is put in the kneading machine

A layer of ash obtained from previous firings is heaped over the broken shards that are in turn covered with a thick stack of hay. When the fire is lit, a huge bonfire can be seen burning on the ground within the house compound. When the fire fizzles out and everything becomes cool, the pottery is taken outside, awaiting the retailers or the buyers.



In olden days, most potters were women. Men served as vendors travelling from one village to another selling their wares and returned home only after their wares were sold out. Sometimes, a long absence from home had to be made. Nowadays, middlemen come straight to the village to buy the pottery. In those days, women were engaged in the production side and men in the sales side. Men did not know how to make pottery. Even now, men still do not want to be engaged in this craft since they can earn more doing other things. Most potters are therefore old women, old enough to be aunts and grandmothers. We rarely see uncles or grandfathers or younger men engaged in this craft. No one seems to want to learn since it is not worth the time and the energy spent. It is quite certain that after this generation of aunts and grandmothers, the art of pottery making at Ban Kuan Han Kaeo may be lost with them. What remains to be heard of will be the legend of the potters and the shapes and looks of pottery as seen in museums and books of illustrations.



Alas, the pottery of Ban Kuan Han Kaeo,
Doomed to vanish in the near future
For the lack of new apprentices!
People see it as sadly cheap in value.

Who will venture to rescue it from that fate?
To perpetuate and brighten this craftsmanship,
To make it last as long as Thailand herself,
And retain its glory along with the country?



Kneaded clay, ready for moulding

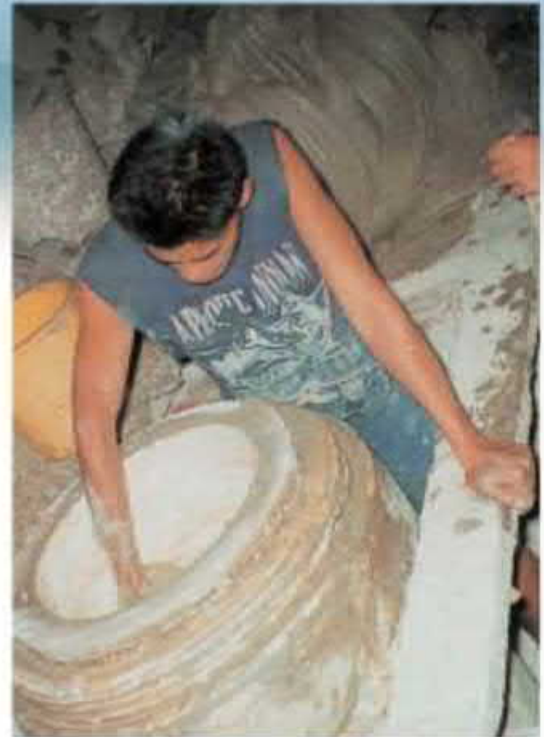
Pottery at Ban Khun Se

Not very far from the Ban Kuan Han Kaeo pottery site, there is another centre for a different style of pottery with an equally old history. The difference is in the introduction of the use of mechanised potting wheels as a tool in making the basic shape. This has resulted in a better-looking shape and a greater capacity for the production of earthenware than at Ban Kuan Han Kaeo. The major component or material used is clay dug from local rice fields.

Formerly, the main occupation at Ban Khun Se was similar to that at Ban Kuan Han Kaeo, i.e. rice farming. Earthenware generates supplementary income between rice farming seasons. Few households now engage in this occupation. Much of the land here has been sold to profiteering entrepreneurs as land-prices around this area keep soaring. Once the money is obtained from the sale of land, it is often spent extravagantly on luxurious items such as electrical appliances that they have never had before. When their money dwindles, the villagers have to look for employment elsewhere such as in town or in other cities. They would come home for a visit only every now and then. Those remaining in the village are mainly old people, women and children who have to stay on to look after their houses, take care of the children or study in schools.

Many kinds of modern technologies were introduced to help keep pottery making at Ban Khun Se in existence. However, its unique attributes, dating back to the time of their ancestors, is intact. Some alteration and adjustment has been made for the sake of modernisation. The potter's wheel, for instance, is now mechanised; the colour variation is greater, making the pottery products more attractive. Shapes and designs are more innovative, appropriate for use in home or as decoration, and more appealing to a much wider market. Nowadays, more and more people become interested and buy these items both as gifts and ornaments, not only as something for practical use. Moreover, the use of a kiln to replace the old-style wood fire has resulted in greater durability and quantity of the products. The old method of burning the products in a large wood fire on the house grounds makes it difficult for temperature control.

Among the four or five households still engaged in earthenware production at Ban Khun Se is House No. 180, Group 8, Tambon Nong Kwai, Hang Dong District, Chiang Mai Province. Mr. Prasit and Mrs. Kalya Fakthong, the proprietors, have been doing this for more than 7 years. At first, everything was handmade, mainly household utensils. As orders came pouring in, they had to industrialise in order to meet the demand from Chiang Mai and Bangkok. Most of the orders are from Bangkok, especially during the Songkran Festival. The customers will come to the village to pick up the ordered goods themselves.



A casting mould is used for moulding the base of a large-size receptacle



A potter's wheel is a major tool used in forming the shape of a piece of pottery



A craftsman gives a final touch to his work before decorating it with the required design



The pottery is exposed to the sunlight before being taken to be fired in the kiln

At present, the proprietors employ about 50 workmen, mostly students, on a daily basis. The daily wage is about 80 baht. The clay used in the production is dug from rice fields in Chiang Mai. The clay obtained is the second layer of soil, consisting mainly of clay mixed with sand.

The process goes as follows: dig up field earth, pile it high and leave it to dry in the sun. Then the dried earth is pounded into fine powder to be mixed with water in a ratio of 1:3 and left for one night to allow the powder to absorb water into its texture. The mixture is then kneaded to rid it of air bubbles and left in the shade in a big pile before moulding it into the desired shape. Most of the earthenware products at Ban Khun Se are medium-size and large-size wares. Earth is put in the casting mould with the base of the required ware on the potter's wheel. Once the lower portion has been moulded, it is left to dry overnight. On the following day, the remaining part will be made by hand, left until nearly dry and then engraved or scratched into various designs which may be either plain engraving or hollowed-out engraving according to the craftsman's imagination or as per the customer's order. A skilled craftsman will be able to go ahead with his sculpting or engraving. Then the earthenware is left for two days more under the shade. After that it will be taken out to be exposed to the sunlight for another 3-5 days until its texture is parched dry. Then it is burnt in the kiln for about a day and a half after which the temperature is increased



The kiln



Logs are used in the burning



Colours are added to make various designs

for about half a day. Then the fire is extinguished. The wares are left inside the kiln for approximately one day before being taken out and dispatched to buyers, or for further decoration. Ordinary house paint is used in painting the earthenware. When the paint is dry, the pottery is then ready for sale. The pottery made here is different from the one made at Ban Khun Se. Here, as the size is usually much larger, the casting mould of the lower part must be made first. This mould is made from white clay that has to be brought in from Lampang. This type of clay, after burning, becomes very tough and can withstand very high temperature. The process of making the mould is simple. First, clay brought must be broken into fine powder and then ground, with sand and pebble filtered out. Afterwards, it is mixed well with water and the resultant mixture



Water containers after the burning

is used in the moulding of the base portion. The inside is hollow, like a water container. The size of each container is varied as desired. When it is nearly dried, liquid made of earth mixed with water is applied to provide it with a finishing touch in order to cover up holes or air bubbles. Leave it to be completely dry and then put it inside the oven. The pottery at Ban Khun Se seems to possess a good future as it is still very much in demand by the public. Raw material is not difficult to find and the production process is not complicated. No overly sophisticated expertise is needed. Simple skill, experience and the fact that the craftsmen receive sufficient wage for a decent living with a little extra for their savings has enticed people of various ages to undertake this occupation. Thus the expertise acquired in the course of the production can be handed down to the younger generation. This is very unlike the situation at Ban Kuan Han Kaeo where the art of making earthenware is fast vanishing. At the latter place, no one plans to continue the work or apply new innovative ideas to the production. This is highly regrettable. Very soon, what is left there will be just a legend to be retold for posterity.

Water Containers at Ban Mueang Kung



*Water containers made at
Ban Mueang Kung*

Not very far from Ban Khun Se, across the Chiang Mai–Hot main Highway, there stands Ban Mueang Kung, a village famous for being the production site of water containers, locally known as ‘Mo Num Ton’, or ‘Khon Tho Sai Nam’ by the general public. This type of water container is typically Lanna, produced by northern people to store their drinking water. In the production process, the temperature used in the burning is not excessively high. The resulted texture is therefore quite rough and thick with a lot of tiny little pores in it. This has given rise to good ventilation, keeping the water in the container rather cool at all times. To prevent leakage, the outer part of the container is painted with a thick fluid mixture made of water and clay. This part is well scrubbed and polished, and decorated with beautiful designs made either by engraving, scratching, graphic printing, pressing or sculpting. Besides serving as a utensil, this type of Mo Num Ton is also the pride of home furnishing items in every home. Initially, it was called Nam Ton Ngiao as the Ngiao or Thai Yai people made it. They were brought into the area as hostages and vassals from the township of Pu and Sad, which are now situated on the eastern bank of the Salaween River in the Burmese Shan State. With the passage of time, integration between the original and the new tradition and culture and ethnicity has brought about innovative ideas and development in terms of shape, design, size and production process. The name of the container has therefore changed from Nam Ton Ngiao to Nam Ton Chiang Mai

because it is the product of Chiang Mai itself. The village where these containers are made is called Ban Nam Ton, formerly known as Ban Mueang Kung. The characteristics of the pottery there are similar to those made at Ban Han Kaeo and Ban Khun Se. Although the main occupation of the people here is rice farming, water container production earns a supplementary income for them. Even with these two sources of income, the people here are not well off. They live at subsistence level. After the completion of the annual rice-farming season, the villagers have to look for short-term work to earn extra income. Production of water containers therefore gives them an opportunity to earn an additional income. After the current economic crisis, most of the farmers sold their farmland, resulting in income less than expenses. They therefore have to look for jobs elsewhere. Few households in the village are now engaged in Mo Nam ton productions. This coincides with the fact that the demand for the product is diminishing due to stiff competition from the same kind of wares made from other materials, such as plastic, ceramics, or even from electrical appliances such as refrigerators and juice mixers, which are alternatives to traditional water containers. The present-day style of production has to be adapted in order to meet such stiff competition. Applied art has to be brought in; production



At Ban Mueang Kung, the pottery is moulded with the use of a potter's turning wheel



processes modernised, so that the products will be better and more attractive to serve as souvenirs or ornaments. However, the production process is mainly manual. The major tool used here is a hand-operated potter's turning wheel for the basic stage. Other tools include a carving tool (usually made of locally available bamboo strips), polishing stones, etc. This is a brief introduction to the production stages.

1. Clay preparation. First, dig some clay from the rice-fields and dry it in the sun. Break dried lumps of clay into tiny pieces. Sieve the finely crushed clay well to eliminate sand or rock particles. Mix it with water at a ratio of 1:2. Put it in the kneading machine. Add a little water to allow it to be mixed properly. Leave it for some time. When required for production, knead it one more time. A little water may be added to allow the texture to be properly soft and elastic.

2. Shaping. Place the mass of prepared clay on the potter's turning wheel. Sticking a sharp iron rod into dried clay can make this easier. Cover the rod with short bamboo tubes. The upper part of the tube is fixed to a round disk of flat wood. Turn the wheel with one hand.

Designs are added on the pottery



Water containers complete with decorating designs

other hand turns the pottery. Generally, the left hand is used to turn the handle while the right hand is used to help form the shape. The size of Mo Nam Ton or this type of water container is normally not very large. If it is a large-size one, the base is formed first and the top portion is made later after the base has been left to dry. For a small container, the whole process can be done simultaneously covering the base and the top, and then the product is left to dry for a while before decorations are added.

3. Decorating. This depends on the imagination of the potter himself or the objective for use according to the buyer's wishes. However, the decorations may be divided into two categories: matt and shiny. The matt ones can be engraved by bamboo strips right after the burning. Experienced engravers can do the engraving without prior sketching. For the shiny type, first, condensed liquid made from earth, water and certain colours (mostly ochre) is applied on the container and left to dry. Afterwards, it is polished with a slab of polishing stone to allow the outer part to glow and become shiny, adding a different look to the ware. Usually, no designs are added to the shiny type, which will be left to dry for a few days before being put inside the kiln for firing.

4. Firing. Containers with the finishing touches already applied are stacked in rows in the kiln with shards of broken pottery covering them and separating them from direct contact with the wood fire. If the temperature inside the kiln is too high, the earthenware may crack or break.

Two firing sessions must be applied. The first one lasts about 6 hours and then the temperature is reduced. The pottery is left for approximately 1 hour before the temperature is raised higher to the maximum level for about 3 hours. They are then taken out of the fire and the kiln is left to cool down.

The final step is to take out the finished pottery and store them in a manner ready to be sold to the wholesalers. More colours and designs may be added to make the wares more attractive to the buyers. At present, the demand is varied. Several additional ranges are produced, such as large containers, vases, candleholders, bathtubs and bowls. With the production of a greater variety of wares, the name 'Ban Nam Ton of Chiang Mai' with its origins in the past, begins to change as not only the Mo Nam Ton is produced here. Only the local people now know about Ban Nam Ton. To the general public, the place is known as the pottery village at Ban Mueang Kung, which is its official name. The future of the pottery here seems to be on the bright side, more or less at the same level as that of Ban Khun Se. Constant upgrading and development has made it possible to meet the demand of the market. New and innovative technologies have been brought in to help with the production on an industrial scale. The level of income derived from such endeavour is reasonable and



Another way of polishing a piece of earthenware i.e. with a polishing stone



After the paint, the earthenware is polished with a piece of stone to render it a shiny look

cost-effective. However, the craft is not as popular as it was 30 or 40 years ago. The new and better educated generation does not want to spend too much time and labour on work that requires a great deal of time and patience. The pay is minimal when compared with what people get if they work in a factory or in town with steady wages and no investment required. They do not have to pay a lot of money as capital; what they pay is only their physical labour. Industrial-scale production requires a considerable amount of capital in order to get a sizeable return. Therefore, at Ban Muang Kung, few households are now engaged in pottery making. Other families with no capital of their own have to make do with being employed by fellow villagers.

The pottery at Ban Kuan Han Kaeo, Ban Khun Se and Ban Mueang Kung still retain their identity as traditional products using folk wisdom and craftsmanship worthy of being the pride of Chiang Mai. This is a heritage handed down from generation to generation lasting hundreds of years. Hopefully, it will continue to do so in the years to come, provided that the younger generation and those connected with this craft make relentless effort and pay attention to the conservation and dissemination of the knowledge about the craft.



Pottery of various sizes is placed in the kiln before the fire is lit

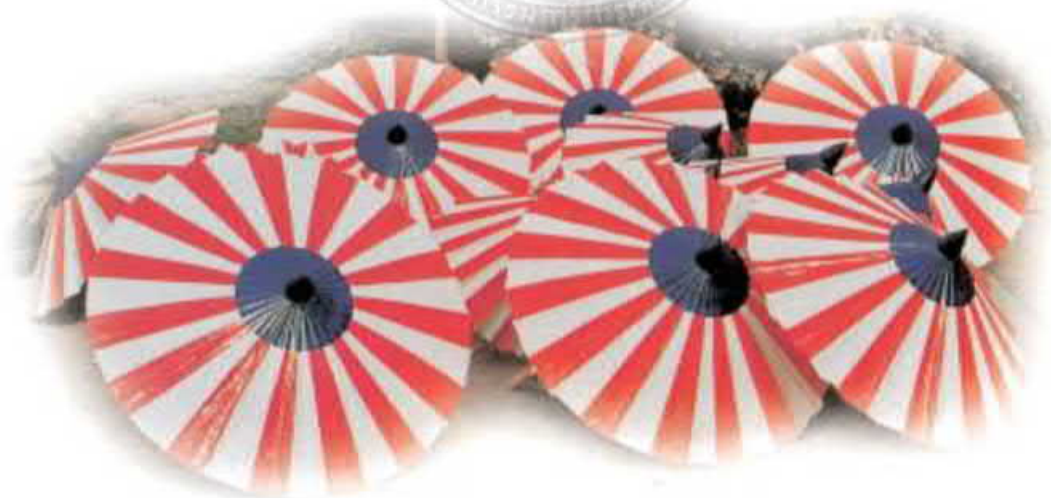




Beautiful Bo-Sang Umbrellas; Exquisite Mulberry Paper

Each province has its own unique characteristics which, may be tourist spots, festivals, industries, fruits, food, sweets or handicrafts. In some provinces, there may be only one outstanding product or characteristic but in others, there may be quite a number altogether.

Likewise Chiang Mai, as in addition to being a large city in the north, famous for being a major tourist destination of Thailand, Chiang Mai also has a great number of attractive features in itself, particularly in terms of craft products made by local people. Such products have undergone a long period of development from generation to generation, giving them unique characteristics most attractive to visitors. Among these are the umbrellas at Bo-Sang village on the Chiang Mai-San Kamphaeng Road and mulberry paper and products made of mulberry paper at Ban Ton Pao, San Kamphaeng District, Chiang Mai Province.



A certain style of umbrellas made at Bo Sang village

Umbrella-making at Bo-Sang Village

The story of Bo-Sang umbrellas began at the same time as that of mulberry paper.

Old villagers recount the story of the origin of umbrella making at Bo-Sang. It began about 100 years ago. Phra In Tha, a monk residing at Wat Bo-Sang, was the first person to initiate this craft in the village. Phra In Tha had the habit of making pilgrimage to many places. At one time, he went near the Burmese border. The Burmese residing there brought out a large umbrella to provide him with shade against the sun and rain. Phra In Tha was very impressed and was most interested in the umbrella as it looked different from others that he had seen before. Learning from the Burmese that such an umbrella was made in Burma, Phra In-Tha crossed the border into Burma by himself and saw that the Burmese there made and used umbrellas a lot. He began to study the art of umbrella making seriously and brought the art back to teach the villagers of Bo-Sang. The temple ground was used as a school and the village women were taught to use mulberry paper as the material for making umbrellas. The men were taught to make the frame for the umbrella using pong wood or bamboo. At first, a few people were interested in learning how to make it. Later, they began to notice that this could bring in better income as a number of people from other villagers came to place orders for these umbrellas. More and more villagers thus joined the class until Bo-Sang village was turned into a famous umbrella-making village.

The material used at the initial stage or at the time when Phra In Tha disseminated the knowledge to the villagers was mulberry paper made from mulberry fibre plants ¹ in the forest. The frame was made of bamboo. The top knob and the adjoining lower ball at the top were made of somhet wood. The rod used as the handle was made of a kind of small-size bamboo called ruak and the resin from the tako tree was used as glue. Oleo-resin is applied on the mulberry paper. Another type of resin called the ba-mue or in Chinese tang-io is used as it provides a softer and more durable texture.

¹ Northern villagers call it Po-sa or po-ka-sa. The plant is known by other names in other regions. The mulberry fibre plant belongs to a family found mostly in the forests and mountains near swampy land with high humidity. Their general appearance is that of a medium-size plant with rough texture covering the trunk. White liquid or resin can be obtained from the trunk. The blooms are in clusters. The fruit at full growth is about two centimetres and found in between the leaves and the branch



Chinese paper umbrella



Silk umbrella



Po-sa or po-ka-sa plant



The Development of Ordinary Umbrellas into the Multi-styled Umbrellas Today

With the passage of time, more and more types of materials are used in umbrella making at Bo Sang. At present, beside mulberry paper, other materials are Chinese paper, cloth, cotton, and silk. More and more umbrella makers at Bo Sang now use Chinese paper because it is cheaper and does not need to be coated with a layer of expensive ba-mue oil. The colour of Chinese paper is originally light brown with printed designs made from the factory. There is no need to add more colours and designs. The production cost incurred in the making of an umbrella with Chinese paper is much lower as the equipment used requires materials of lesser quality and quantity. Only 30 spokes are used in making the frame of the umbrella. This is much less than the original 48-60 spokes. The ba-mue oil used in coating needs to be applied only once, much less than the three coatings needed before. Glue made from rice can be used instead of liquid resin from the tako tree.



Umbrellas produced nowadays are less durable than those made previously. In those days, umbrellas were made with the purpose of protecting one against the strong sun and the rain, unlike the present-day umbrella, which is mainly used for decoration or as souvenirs.

Though more and more people are now turning to making umbrellas with Chinese paper, one can still find an umbrella that is made of mulberry paper as there is still some remaining stock kept in some factories, shops or houses of old families. The price is, however, considerably higher.

The Production Process

Materials

Making an umbrella requires a wide range of materials especially when it comes to the complexity connected with the making of a mulberry paper umbrella. The range of materials required is as follows:

- The knob or head – the top part of the umbrella handle. It is usually made of a wood with a soft texture.
- The hub – the adjoining lower ball near the top. This is used to hold the spokes of the umbrella together. It has the same shape as the knob.
- The spokes – the most important part of an umbrella. This part facilitates the opening or closing of an umbrella. There are two types of spokes in use, short and long. The shorter ones are joined with the hub and act as supports of the longer spokes. Spokes are mostly made of bamboo since it is easier to cut them to the required length and thickness.
- The handle. This is the part that held when in use. It is made of bamboo or other types of soft wood.
- Mulberry paper is used to cover the frame with the spokes underneath.
- Tako or ma-ka liquid resin to be used as glue to join the mulberry paper and the spokes
- Oleo-resin. Used in coating to provide durability against sunlight or rain, or to fill in the pores in the paper texture. Nowadays, ba-mue oil has become more popular.
- Fig oil – to be applied to the knob area for durability.
- Oil colour – to add colour to the paper covering the umbrella.
- Paint brushes – for painting.
- Kerosene – to be mixed with colours



knob and hub

- Unbleached cotton thread - to tie the various parts of the umbrella together. Cotton is first made into threads. Several threads are combined together to get at the required thickness.

- Palm leaves. Used as a thin cover on the knob. A sugar palm leaf or thick paper may be used.

- Bamboo strips. To be made into a loop around the umbrella when it is closed and not in use.

- Small rattan strips. These are used to wind around the lower part of the handle, which is normally made of bamboo. If the handle is made of softwood, the wood will be carved or cut into the desired shape without the help of any rattan strips.

- A drill. This tool is used to bore holes in the spokes.

- A lathe. Provides a finishing touch to the knob and hub.

- A knife. To hone down the sharp edges of bamboo strips

Steps in Umbrella Making

The process of making mulberry paper umbrellas is divided into several stages: making the knob, the hub, the spokes, joining the spokes to the knob and then to the hub, bending the spokes, covering the whole structure of the umbrella with paper, and attaching the handle and drawing designs. Here are details of each stage:

1. How to make the knob and the hub. Cut softwood with a diameter of about 2-2.5 inches into portions, each of suitable length. Bore a hole in each portion to attach it to the handle. Work a lathe on it to get the desired design, which may be tapering, flat, multi-tiered or otherwise. Cut it into grooves the number of which tally with the number of the spokes to be used.



Making a knob and a hub with a lathe



Cutting the hub into grooves. The number of the grooves matches the number of the spokes attached to the umbrella

2. How to make the spokes. Cut a prepared piece of bamboo into portions and slice them to the required size. Polish them well with a knife. Make a mark on each piece by passing the sharp edge of the knife on each one in the same linear level. Cut each rod into four parts. Trim one end to make it smaller than the remaining part. Polish it well with a knife. Cut the top end into spokes, each approximately 0.2 centimetres thick. Tear the rod apart to get the required spokes of considerable length. Polish the spokes well with knife.

Shorter spokes can be made in the same way as the longer ones. The only difference lies in the fact that the bamboo portion after the cutting should be shorter and the top end need not taper. Slice into thin portions to enable them to slip into the grooves of the hub and the hole at the longer spokes.

Use a drill to bore holes both in the shorter and the longer spokes. All holes must be at the same level on each spoke.

3. Fix the spokes to the knob and the hub. Longer spokes are fixed to the knob, shorter spokes to the hub. Tie the spokes together with unbleached cotton string. Take out one groove from the knob or the hub to be used in the tying of the knot of the string.



Cut bamboo rod into portions in preparation for the making of the spokes



Slice bamboo portions into narrow strips for spokes



Tie the spokes to the knob and the hub



Tying the short spokes and the long spokes together

Slide each spoke into a groove at the knob and the hub. Tie them together tightly into each groove, leaving about 1.5 centimetres long string dangling free at the end.

Tie the longer spokes which have been attached to the knob and the shorter spokes already attached to the hub together. Use a long needle to slide through the hole at the end of the shorter spoke to the hole at the middle of the longer spoke until all are completed. Leave approximately 7 centimetres of string or thread dangling at the end ready to be tied to the provisional handle. This work is crucial to smooth operation when opening or closing the umbrella.

4. Curving the umbrella. Connect the handle of the umbrella to the frame already tied with thread. Fix the handle and the knob together firmly with a wooden peg. Spread the frame of the umbrella out and flex it to make it bend down to an appropriate angle. Tie the end of the thread tightly. Arrange each spoke so that it is separated from each other at an equal space. Tie a piece of thread at the end of each long spoke and wind the thread around thrice. This stage involves the tying of the thread at the end of the long spoke.

5. Covering the umbrella frame with paper. Fix the curved umbrella frame to a bamboo pole to make it easy to turn the umbrella

frame around during paper pasting. Apply a coat of tako or ma-ka oil on the back of the long spokes. Cut the mulberry paper into circular shape and paste it to the frame. Take care not to put too much oil on the paper. Paste another layer of the mulberry paper on the first layer. The two layers of paper will be glued together as one. If the thickness is not adequate, more layers can be added. Once the layers of paper glued together reach the required thickness, paste another piece of mulberry paper to cover the thread tied around the long spokes. Apply a coat of oleo-resin. Take it out to be dried in the sun.

After the mulberry paper is completely dry, the next step is to close the umbrella. Take out the wooden peg at the knob and gradually lower the umbrella. Press well the hind side of each spoke and arrange the pleats of the umbrella to turn in the same direction. Tie a loop around it tightly. Leave it like that for a while before spreading the umbrella frame out again for the application of another coat of ta-ko oil. Dry it well and close it. Later, open the umbrella again and apply a coat of ba-mue oil on both the inside and outside to make it waterproof. Dry it in the sun for three hours and apply the second coat. Dry it in the sun for another three hours. Once the umbrella is dry, close it and get it ready to have the handle fixed to it.



Paste the paper on the umbrella frame before drying it in the sun



Umbrella making centre



Painting designs on the paper covering the umbrella frame



At present, Bo-Sang villagers prefer to buy some parts and materials, such as umbrella frames, from other villages

6. How to attach the umbrella handle. The handle must be slightly longer than the spokes to make it easy to hold. Drill some holes in the handle where a wire peg will be put in to hold the spokes in place. The position of the wire peg must match the hub when the umbrella is opened. After that, assemble all parts together with the frame already covered with paper. Remove the provisional handle; replace it with the actual handle in the same slot. The wire peg will hold the umbrella frame open, making it unable to close by itself. Once the handle is properly placed in its rightful position, hammer in a nail to fix the knob to the handle to prevent the handle from sliding away. Cut the end of the handle that juts out over the knob to make it look neat and tidy.

7. Cover the knob well. A leaf of palm, sugar palm or a piece of thick paper may be used to cover the knob. Make the said material into a kind of sheath and put it over the knob. Cut mulberry paper into strips and wind the strips three to four times around the knob. Apply ta-ko oil and cover that part with mulberry paper one more time. Dry it in the sun. Apply fig oil at the knob to add thickness and durability to the mulberry paper.

8. Add the designs. Dip the paintbrush into oil paint and paint designs or motifs on the paper covering the umbrella frame.

Not all components described above are made by the villagers themselves in umbrella making at Bo-Sang village now. Some Bo-Sang youngsters are unable to make some of the parts, such as the frame,

spokes, handles and the mulberry paper. Umbrella makers of Bo-Sang village have to buy some materials from other villages, for instance, the frames are bought from Ban Ton Nae; the handles from Mae Hoi Ngoen village and mulberry paper from Ban Ton Pao.

Although people of the older generation of Bo-Sang are capable of making all components of the umbrella themselves, to produce everything by oneself is time-consuming with very little result, thus making it impossible to cope with the demand. Being engaged in only one particular type of work such as in pasting the paper to the frame can be quite lucrative. The villagers therefore prefer to be engaged in this type of division of work, including the assembly work. Parts are bought from other villages. They also add some designs to the paper covering the umbrella shade. The method of making an umbrella here is now changed. Rice farming, which used to be a major income-generating activity, has given way to umbrella manufacture as the financial reward is higher. This has resulted in the emergence of the umbrella-making centre at Ban Bo-Sang. This is a major centre for both on the retail and wholesale production and distribution.

Sale of the Product

Sales of Bo-Sang umbrellas depend on the number of tourists visiting the umbrella-making site at Bo-Sang village, i.e. the greater the number of tourists, the greater the number of the umbrellas sold. It is quite extraordinary that umbrellas here are not bought by Thai but



The colour, the beauty and the attention put into their manufacture is like a magnet that draws foreign visitors to buy the umbrellas of Ban Bo-Sang



Bo-Sang Handicrafts Centre. A major production and sales centre of the mulberry paper umbrellas



Fans of various designs now in production at Bo-Sang Village

foreign tourists. The reason for this may lie in the range of colours, designs and beauty created by the skill of the local Thai people who painstakingly craft each stage of production, thus drawing a great number of tourists to come and buy them. Although the Bo-Sang umbrellas are not much sought after by Thai buyers, this fact does not discourage the Bo-Sang villagers at all. With great pride, they still continue to make umbrellas to preserve this umbrella-making art typical of the village.



Drawing motifs on the fan

Besides umbrella making, Bo-Sang village also makes oversize fans. The frames for the fans are made of Bong wood. Coloured materials are pasted on the frame and various designs are drawn and then painted on the fans. The fan making was initiated by factories and shops, which brought in examples of various types for the villagers to make. Nowadays, the villagers are turning to making fans more than umbrellas as the first are much easier to make and much in demand by souvenir shops.

Making Mulberry Paper and Products from Mulberry Paper

In San Khamphaeng District, besides the umbrella making village of Bo-Sang, there is another interesting kind of handicraft that is fast gaining popularity among the customers.



Mulberry plant and products made from mulberry paper



Mrs. Fongkham Lapinta

The villagers are making a good living out of it. This is very profitable for the economy and makes the name of Thailand globally well-known as a great number of buyers are foreign tourists.

This craft is the making of mulberry paper and products from mulberry paper at Ban Ton Pao, San Kamphaeng District, Chiang Mai.

The Origin of the Making of Mulberry Paper and Products from Mulberry Paper

Ton Pao Village, San Kamphaeng District, has for more than 100 years been engaged in the making of mulberry paper. Initially, the paper was used for the writing of sacred incantations, as candlewick, and local-style banners called Tung. Later, the paper became used in the making of umbrellas and notebooks.

Mulberry papermaking has been persisting in nearly every household at Ban Ton Pao village. In 1973, the demand decreased. Umbrella makers turned to use other materials such as cloth. The mulberry paper makers had to look for another occupation. Mulberry papermaking had to cease temporarily. The village was nearly devoid of mulberry paper makers. However, Mr. Charoen and Mrs. Fongkham Lapinta, a husband and wife, were adamant and went on making mulberry paper in the firm belief of the value of this traditional village art.

Mrs. Fongkham is a Thai with Burmese ancestors. She was handed down the art of mulberry papermaking from her ancestors in her younger days. Growing up, she made use of the knowledge learnt from them and added the knowledge she learned from foreigners who came to this place in 1983. She started making mulberry paper with colours and designs that then became an instant hit with Thai and foreigners alike. She and her husband therefore felt much encouraged and were willing to produce more artistic works from mulberry paper. She made them into various types of products, calling her own production site **“the mulberry paper preservation house”**. Her factory is situated behind the house. More than 200 villagers joined forces with her in producing the paper. Thus a great number of villagers can find a way of earning their living in the village itself without



Mulberry paper preservation house

having to move out in search of jobs elsewhere. There are two ongoing operations, one is that the villagers take the raw material to be made into products in their own homes and bring them back when finished. Payment is made according to the work accomplished. The second type is that villagers come to work at Mrs. Fongkham's house.

With her love of mulberry paper, Mrs. Fongkham has tried to find new designs and new products made from the paper. Sometimes, she receives advice from foreign buyers to try making other kinds of products such as instead of only notebooks to make letter-writing paper and envelopes also. Besides this, she also receives some advice from the Export Promotion Centre. The Mulberry Paper Preservation House is therefore capable of providing their customers with a large array of merchandise to choose from. Products from mulberry paper have become well known in Chiang Mai thanks to the initiative and developments made by Mrs. Fongkham and her husband. The owners of the Mulberry Paper Preservation House continue to make known their products, making Ton Pao Village the centre of quality mulberry paper once more. They have also expanded the range of their products greatly.

Mode of production

As mentioned, Ton Pao Village is the site of mulberry papermaking and products made from mulberry paper. The following describes how the paper is made, equipment and tools used for the making and steps in the production. As a great variety of products are made from mulberry paper, we will not delve deeply into the details of all production. Only the general methods are described below.

Utensils and tools used

The following materials are required:

- Bark from the trunk of mulberry plant
- Barrels to be used in the boiling of mulberry bark and barrels to immerse mulberry paper in water
- A tool for pounding the mulberry fibre (a wooden hammer and a log used as a chopping block will do). Nowadays, machines have been introduced to replace the traditional tools used during this stage of the production process.
- A wire sieve, a tool with wire stretched over a wooden frame like we see on windows or door screening. Several of them are needed at a time as one sieve can make only one piece of mulberry paper. If various sizes of mulberry paper are required, then the wire sieves will have to come in various sizes as well.



The barks of the mulberry plant



Tool used in beating the fibre



Wire sieves

At Ton Pao Village, there are two ways of making the mulberry paper: the scoop and the touch methods.

How to make the mulberry paper using scoop method.

1. Mulberry stalks are immersed in water for 6–8 hours, then boiled in water mixed with charcoal ashes. (Nowadays, sodium hydroxide is used instead). Immerse again in chlorine for 6–8 hours to bleach them white.

2. Scoop the fibre up. Pound it for about half an hour to soften it.

3. Once pounded and softened well, immerse in water. Stir well to spread the fibre around the barrel.

4. Add the colour to the water (If coloured paper is required).

5. Put the sieve under the water and scoop the fibre up. Dry it in the sun and let the wind pass through the sieve. Once properly dried, peel off the sheet of fibre, which will come off as mulberry paper.

How to make mulberry paper using the touch method

Similar to the scoop method, with the exception of the part during which the sieve is placed in the water to scoop the fibre up. The touch method requires the fibre to be made into round balls, each ball can be spread out to make exactly one sheet of paper. Break the ball of fibre into tiny bits and pat each bit lightly on the sieve. Dry it in the sun. One sheet of paper is obtained from each sieve.

The paper made by the touch method is thicker and more durable than the one made by the scoop method¹. To make one sheet of the touch method, ten times the amount of fibre used in the scoop method must be used. The process also takes longer to complete. Therefore the price of the paper made by the touch method is higher. However, the customers seem to have a preference for it as it is tougher and more durable.



Boil the mulberry stalks already immersed in water



Scoop the fibre up from the water

¹ Paper made by the scoop method is usually used in umbrella making as it is more flimsy.

The weather plays an important role in the making of mulberry paper. If it is hot and sunny, more paper can be made. If it is rainy, it poses a great obstacle as the mulberry stalks cannot be dried. The villagers would eventually lose their income. The solution of the Ton Pao villagers is to store a large quantity of mulberry paper before the rainy season. The paper, once dried, does not absorb the damp and can be stored for a long period of time. During the rainy season when mulberry paper cannot be made, the villagers will go back to cultivating rice, providing enough rice to eat. Therefore, the villagers in Ton Pao Village are engaged in two occupations: one is making mulberry paper, which yields a high income for them, and another is rice-farming which is done in the rainy season.

The raw materials necessary for the making of mulberry paper are the stalks of the mulberry plants. As the plants are rarely grown in Thailand, and imports from Burma and Laos face transportation difficulties, the villagers of Ton Pao Village especially Mrs. Fongkham of the Mulberry Paper Preservation House, have joined forces to cultivate the mulberry plants in an area of 400 rai in Mae Sai District, Chiang Rai Province so that there will be enough stalks to meet future demand.

Products made come in all forms: simple sheets of mulberry paper and other products such as guest books, cards, paper boxes, purses, shopping bags, picture frames, envelopes, etc.

Inside the mulberry paper preservation house owned by Mrs. Fongkham, one often finds products both for household decoration and general usage such as sheets of mulberry paper with motifs in the paper. The motifs are varied, by painting, some sprayed, in batik, in gold and silver. Notebooks (some are completely of mulberry paper, some covered with wood and the inside made of mulberry paper), multi-purpose coloured strings, bookmarks decorated with fragile desiccated flowers, greeting cards, photo frames, shopping bags and ribbons.

The Sale Side

A wide range of markets is available for the sale of mulberry paper products from Ton Pao Village. At Mrs. Fongkham's Mulberry Paper Preservation House, customers come from inside the country and abroad. Local customers come from the Night Bazaar in Chiang Mai and Chatuchak Market, Bangkok. Foreign customers come



Various products made from mulberry paper



Another mulberry paper product



Multi-coloured strings, a product made from mulberry paper

from Japan, the USA, Spain, Belgium, Australia, Taiwan, Canada, and Germany. As demand is greater than supply, Mrs. Fongkham's sometimes runs out of products for sale. Her main customer is Suan Dok Hospital, Chiang Mai. The hospital uses mulberry paper as blotting paper for blood or water and to make supporting splints for patients, particularly lower-income patients with not enough money to pay for the cost of the treatment. At present, Mrs. Fongkham still produces a large amount of mulberry paper for Suan Dok Hospital. Hundreds of thousands of sheets are produced monthly, providing her with stable income and generating income for more than 200 households in Ton Pao Village.

Mulberry paper sheets and other products have received a lot of attention. Delicate paper is the most popular, followed by mulberry paper in flower motifs and then other products. The USA places orders of notebooks and writing books to the tune of millions of baht.

There is a wide range of prices, from 10 baht for small notebooks to 500 baht for a diary. Profits are not much but with the huge volume of sale, this occupation still survives.

September or pre-Christmas time are the periods when the highest number of orders pours in, especially from foreign

customers. With such a large number of orders, those engaged in this occupation can make a reasonable amount of money compared with other occupations, about 5,000–6,000 a month. Manufacturers of mulberry paper products earn more than 10,000 baht a month.

Although there are many mulberry paper producers in Ton Pao Village, the quality of their paper is uneven compared to Mrs. Fongkham Lapinta's Mulberry Paper Preservation House. Their paper is crispy due to incorrect amounts of chlorine in the mixture, making it unsuitable as the base material for any product. The problem of competition therefore does not exist. Mrs. Fongkham is able to attract her customers with her selection of good quality products and reasonable price.

At present, the making of mulberry paper and mulberry paper products, which used to proudly tell the story of a certain place and its origin is no longer limited to local use but has expanded to various places and countries. Mulberry paper and mulberry paper products have become a source of great pride not only to the villagers of Ton Pao Village and Chiang Mai but for all people in the country.



Good quality mulberry paper



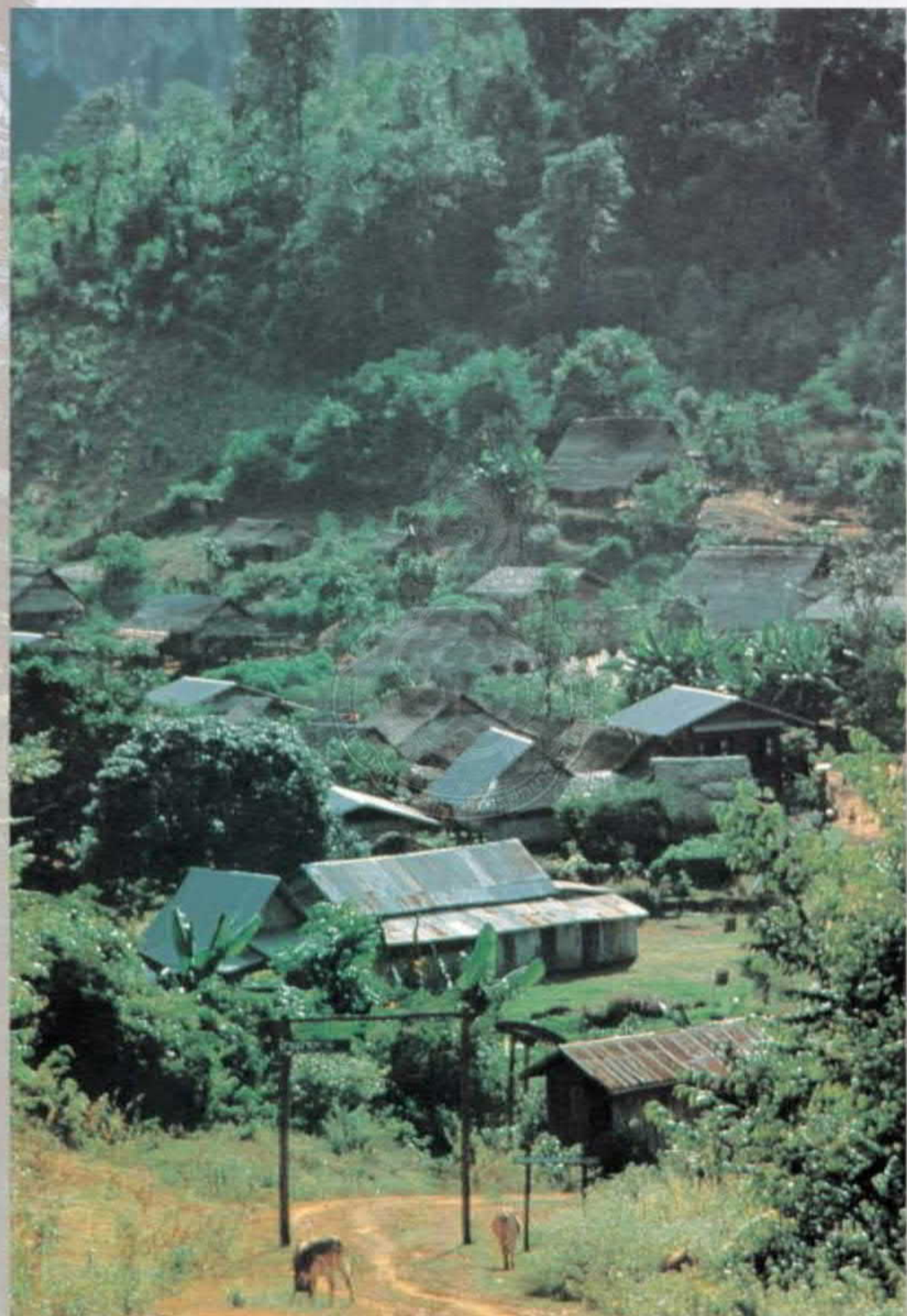
Many types of mulberry paper products



Other varieties of mulberry paper products



Picture frames made of mulberry paper



Birds belong to the air,
Our way of life

The wind always blows,
Streams and forests

Sun-burnt we all are,
Our sweat drips in drops.

We weave, conjure designs,
As cultural heritage

Beating out silverware;
That sparkle in the light.

The pipe plays a sweet tune,
The breeze billows softly through the woods,

In the park of love, we learn love.
In the park we embrace

The moon shines bright above,
Stars glitter and gleam.

Life here is so close to the sky
Side by side with all of us they live

Fish to the water.
Is high on the mount.

Humming the hill's songs.
Ensure our lives go on.

Toiling relentlessly.
We stoop and strive at work.

Embroider them over
From our ancestors.

Embossing subtle motifs
Created with our hearts.

Accompanied by a sueng's¹ clear melody.
Adding enchantment to that heavenly music.

Angels bear witness
Our fantastic customs!

Memory stirs deep in our heart.
Torches light up her name.

Along the path of the hill-tribes.
As dwellers of hills and woods.

Thaweeporn Thongkambai

¹ Classical Thai stringed instrument



The Way of Thai Hilltribes

Chiang Mai is an important tourist destination in the North because of its enchanting natural scenery and numerous tourist attractions. Several minority groups live in the area whose habitation; religion, languages, traditions and culture differ from those of the mainstream population. These people generally live in the highlands and are known as “Thai highlanders” or “hilltribes”.

Scattered around the remote and inaccessible parts of the highland north and some central provinces, historical evidence shows that they have lived amicably with the Thais for up to a thousand years, when the Thais lived around southern China. The hilltribes are classified socially into two groups:

1. The East Asian Group.

This comprises those who migrated from south to north. They had lived in Thailand long before the Thai people moved southward and settled here as a nation. They are the *Lawa*, *Haw*, *Khamu*, *Thins*, and *Mlabri*¹.

2. The Sino-Tibetan Group.

These tribes migrated from north to south – from China, Burma and Laos after the formation of the Thai nation. They are further classified into two groups: 1) The Tibetan–Burmese tribes, comprising the *Karen*, *Lahu*, *Akha* and *Lisu* 2) former Chinese tribes comprising the *Hmong* and *Mien*.

The hilltribes live in societies that are free under their tribal rules and culture. They are self-sufficient agriculturally living a simple and solitary way of life. They prefer to avoid the influence of modernisation and are therefore rather nomadic. Studies of hilltribe lives place the *Karen* as the largest group, followed by *Hmong*, *Lahu*, *Mien*, *Akha* and *Lisu* in descending order.

¹ Called *Phi Tong Lueang* in Thai: “the spirits of the yellow leaves”

As for the Lawa, Thins, Khamu, Leu and Mlabri, there are only a small number left. Here, we will discuss just the way of life, society, administration, economy, customs and cultures of the major hilltribes.



Many hilltribes live on the mountaintops of the north

The Karen

The *Karen* are Tibetan-Burmese group. In the past, they inhabited the land at the source of the Salween River in China. Then they moved to Burma and Thailand. Current conflicts between Burmese and Karen states, involving other minority groups also, turned belligerent due to great pressure to force many Karen to migrate into Thailand. Nowadays, they form the most numerous of all the tribes living in Thailand. There are four distinct Karen groups: *Karen Sako* (or *Chako*), *Karen Pho* (or *Phlong*), *Karen Pa-o* (or *Thong Su*) and *Karen Bawe* (or *Khaya*). The *Karen* inhabit the hills and highlands of the north and central plains of Thailand, around Chiang Mai, Chiang Rai, Mae Hong Son, Lampang, Lamphun, Tak, Kanchanaburi, Prachuap Kiri Khan, Phetchaburi, Phrae, Sukhothai, Suphan Buri and Uthai Thani.



The Karen are the most numerous of the hilltribes



A Karen house

The Karen construct their villages on low hills or along flat land. Each village comprises a small number of about 30-40, households. Their homes are generally made of split bamboo covered with large banana leaves or cogon grass. It is one large, well-ventilated room with a wood burning stove in the centre for warmth and cooking. A unique characteristic of the Karen, which makes them stand out among other hilltribes, is the permanency of their villages due to their ability to conserve the land. They conduct terraced rice farming along the hill slopes using water from streams on higher hills to irrigate the fields. They are the only tribe that does not resort to deforestation.

A Karen village has three administrative groups, the village headman, a shaman and village elders.

The village headman is the *Hiko*. This title is handed down from generation to generation, from father to son. The shaman performs rituals and cures sickness. The elders are responsible for preserving their traditions and culture, adjudicating conflicts and acting as advisers to the village headman.

A Karen society is agrarian and, through rice and rotating vegetable farming on hills, is economically self-sufficient. When rice or vegetables are planted in any given year, they will not be planted



Rice terraces on the low hillslope belonging to the Karen hilltribe

again at the same spot the following year. The land will be left fallow for three to five years to allow the soil to regain its fertility, then used once more. In addition to agriculture, The Karen also raise pigs, poultry and cattle to be used in rituals and as beasts of burden. Elephants are kept so that they can be used to earn cash as well as acting as status symbols.

The traditions and rituals of the Karen are animistic, with house and home spirits particularly respected. By religious persuasion, they are Christian and Buddhist, which has influenced the culture and tribal traditions such as rituals used at New Year, in house warming, courtship, weddings and funerals.

The Karen are normally monogamous. By tradition, a man cannot touch a woman before marriage. Virginity is greatly respected with transgressors subject to a fine. The penalty for adultery is expulsion from the village. Married and single Karen women dress differently, making it easy to tell them apart. An unmarried woman wears a white, one-piece, sack-style dress while a married woman wears a skirt and a blouse.

The Hmong

The Hmong, or Meo in Thai, is another tribe that used to inhabit southern China, Vietnam, Burma, Laos and Thailand. In Thailand, there are three groups: Hmong Dam or Hmong Namngoen (Black or Blue Hmong), Hmong Khao (White Hmong) and Hmong Kua (or *M'ba*). Historical evidence leads us to believe that the old Hmong settlement lies somewhere near The Yellow River close to Yunnan, Kwangsi and Kwang Chao in China. They were there for more than a thousand years, then migrated into Thailand, settling around the northern highlands in Pha Yao, Chiang Mai, Chiang Rai, Mae Hong Son, Phrae, Nan, Lampang, Sukhothai, Kamphaengphet, Tak, Phitsanulok, Phetchabun, Nakhon Sawan and Loei. The Hmong have the second largest hilltribe population after the Karen.



Unmarried Karen girls



Married Karen girls



A Hmong village called Hmong Doi Pui



A Hmong village on Doi Pui

The Hmong favour settling along the slopes of high mountains, with streams and mountain ridges close to the village, in the belief that *'Water belongs to fish, the sky to birds and the mountains to the Hmong.'* Their houses are constructed in clusters with relatives living close to each other. Their villages range in size from small to a hundred households. Houses are built on the ground with the earth their floor. A platform serves as a bed. Their traditional construction material is split bamboo; roofs are thatched with large banana leaves or cogon grass. Today, however, more modern building materials may be used, like corrugated iron sheets, cement blocks, concrete poles and cement.



Houses and shops belonging to Hmong tribesmen

Each village has a village headman as its administrative leader. The headman is selected from the senior members of the most influential or most populous families in the village.

Hmong society is agricultural, using swidden agriculture. Once the soil has been depleted of its fertility in one area, they move on to other places. Major crops cultivated are opium, rice and maize. An increasing amount of contact between the Hmong and the townspeople these days has resulted in the introduction of government influence and development efforts among their



Embroidery is a daily routine of some Hmong women

communities. Opium cultivation in some areas has been eliminated and substituted by other crops that provide them with better income, like vegetables, fruits and temperate climate flowers. These crops do not require shifting cultivation as before.

Besides agriculture, the Hmong engage in household handicrafts, such as weaving, embroidery and silversmithing. These endeavours serve as another source of income for them.

The Hmong strictly adhere to their culture, traditions and beliefs. Several traditional rites and celebrations are still maintained, such as for the New Year, births, deaths and funerals, courting and marriage. They also firmly believe in good and evil spirits, such as sky and house spirits, among others.

In a Hmong family, the male members hold a more superior position than the female ones. Pre-marital sexual relationships are permitted but inter-marriage between those with the same family name is prohibited. When married, the wife takes on her husband's family name. Monogamy is practised, though it is not strictly forbidden for a Hmong man to take several wives to show off his economic status.

The Hmong take greater interest in education than other tribes in Thailand. This has enabled them to be better informed and capable of keeping pace with current world events and progress.

Another special and interesting aspect of the Hmong lies in their skill in playing three particular musical instruments, the *khaen*, the local type of recorder, and another instrument called the *kharen*. In the performing arts, there are dances such as *Ram Thawai*, *Yon Pha* and *Fon Khaen*, which have been handed down generation after generation.



A Hmong child



An old man smokes his pipe while selling his silver artwork



A leisurely conversation among hilltribes women



Hilltribe children and their books



Nature on the high mountains where the Lahu tribesmen live

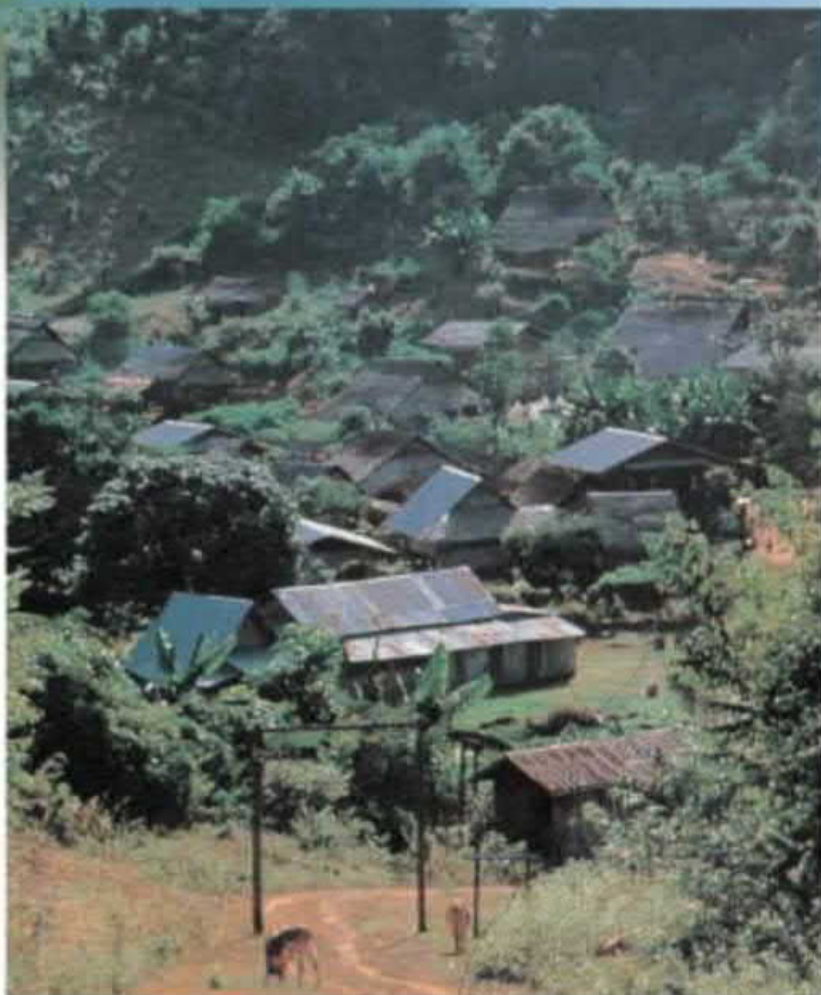
The Lahu

An old legend among the Lahu tribesmen recounts that their ancestors were created by the *Phi Fa* (the spirits of the sky) or the *Ngue Sa*. These are the gods of the Lahu and the creators of the world, soil, water, and wind, fire, plants and animals.

The Lahu belong to The Tibetan-Burmese branch of hilltribes. They are descendants of the Lolo, who called themselves 'Lahu,' and were formerly of Tibet. Later, they moved down southward and settled in scattered areas in Yunnan Province in the South of China, Burma and Laos. They migrated to Thailand roughly following the end of World War II. They are third largest group, following the Karen and the Hmong. Their spoken language is monosyllabic with no consonants at the end. They are classified into seven groups, depending on their spoken language and dress: *Lahu Daeng* (or *Lahu Yi*), *Lahu Dam* (or *Lahu Na*), *Lahu Chele* (or *Lahu Namue*), *Lahu Leuang* (or *Lahu Yi Bala*), *Lahu Kui* (or *Lahu Yi Bakeow*), *Lahu Khao* (or *Lahu Fu*) and *Lahu Laba*.

The Lahu tribesmen in Thailand live in Chiang Rai, Chiang Mai, Tak, Mae Hong Son, Kamphaengphet, Lampang and Petchabun





A Lahu village

The Lahu, more than other hilltribes, like to be on the move. They believe that they should not be settled in any place for more than 5-10 years. After that, it is time for them to move to a new place. Their villages are mostly situated on the highest flat piece of land, a hillslope surrounded by mountains, or else by a riverbank so they have a water source and fertile soil to exploit and grow opium.

There are about 15-20 households in each Lahu village. The characteristics of the house lie in the fact that it is raised high above the ground. The gabled roof is thatched with cogon grass. The house itself and the floor are made of split bamboo. The pillars and beams are made of hard wood. Nowadays, in some villages, the roofs of some houses are made of corrugate iron sheets and the house is built with concrete and cement. The Lahu will not build a house astride a white ant hill, and the construction of the house must be completed within one day.

There are three leading figures in the administration of a Lahu village: the village headman, the religious leader and the elders.



Poppies bloom on the hill



Land suitable for opium growing



A spacious ground at the village centre reserved for ritualistic functions



A Lahu dance



Fertility at a river source

Economically, the Lahu depend on shifting cultivation. Crops consist of maize and opium. The Lahu are also engaged in other types of cultivation such as economic crops, fruits and vegetables like tomatoes, ginger, red kidney beans, sugar pea (mange-tout), lettuce, passion fruit, apricots, lychees, peaches and pears. They also raise poultry, pigs, oxen, buffaloes and horses. These are used in religious rituals, or as beasts of burden for transporting farm produce.

A Lahu's lifestyle is simple. He holds the belief that the god *Kue Sa* created the world and all good deeds. He also believes that there are good and bad spirits and souls. The Lahu keep a village spirit shrine called *Sae Mue* and a place where rituals are performed called the *Ho Yae*. They also have a highly revered dance performance area from which outsiders are prohibited to enter unless accompanied by locals. If entry is permitted, the outsider should not touch any offering to the gods. Cutting down trees near the shrine is strictly prohibited.

Traditional festivals held by the Lahu include those on the New Year, at the consumption of a new crop of rice, *Kwan*-calling and life-related festivities.

The Lahu believe in monogamy. If a new spouse is required, then a divorce from the old one must be completed first. Any violation will result in a fine or eviction from the village. Both partners get equal share of conjugal property in case of divorce, with members of the whole village acting as witnesses.

The Mien

According to Mien history, the tribe belongs to an ancient Chinese group. They prefer to call themselves Mien, but the Chinese pronounce it in a slightly different way so it sounds like *Maen* or *Maew*, meaning the descendants of dogs. Legend has it that the ancestors of the Mien were descendants of a yellow dragon-dog called *Fan Hu*. Therefore, The Mien do not normally eat dog or certain other kinds of meat.

The Mien as a race have been in existence from as long ago as 2,000 BC. Their former settlement was in the South of China near the provinces of Kwang Si, Kwang Chao and Yunnan. Due to the eruption of civil war in China, the Mien had to move southwards to Vietnam, Laos and Thailand before World War II. Unlike other tribes, there is only one group of the Mien tribe. They are not sub-divided into smaller groups. The Mien love people belonging to the same tribe. They are very diligent and like to trade. They are often called "the traders of the hills".



A hilltribe home

The Mien who migrated to Thailand can now speak the northern Thai dialect and can therefore communicate with lowlanders quite easily. Mien settlements are found scattered all over Chiang Mai, Chiang Rai, Pha Yao, Nan, Lampang and Phrae.

Generally, a Mien tribesman builds his home on a high mountain or a fertile valley near a river source and always facing east. The back of the house is set against the ridge of the mountain. The house is built on the ground or perched higher up on stilts and is made of locally available materials. The inside of the house is divided into rooms with a furnace or stove at the centre. There is a shrine on a shelf for the spirits, no windows, and a door at the front called the 'ghost door.' Normally, this door is kept closed, opened only on certain occasions, such as when a daughter is leaving as a new bride to the bridegroom's house, or when a new daughter-in-law is brought into the house, or when a corpse is taken outside. Doors used for regular entrance and exit are usually set at both sides of the house.

Each Mien village has a village headman who serves as administrator, decision-maker in disputes, taking a position of authority at any religious rites and adviser to village opinions. Another leading figure in the village is the shaman, who plays a leading role in any rituals as part of their everyday life. Village elders' counsel village activities.

In the past, the Mien engaged in shifting cultivation. Rice, maize and a variety of vegetables were planted for home consumption and opium for sale in exchange for cash. Today, the Mien have turned to other economic crops, like maize, beans and cotton instead of opium. Permanent agriculture is increasingly undertaken, with the planting of long-living plants such as lychees,



Mien girls





A Mien woman demonstrates her embroidery skill

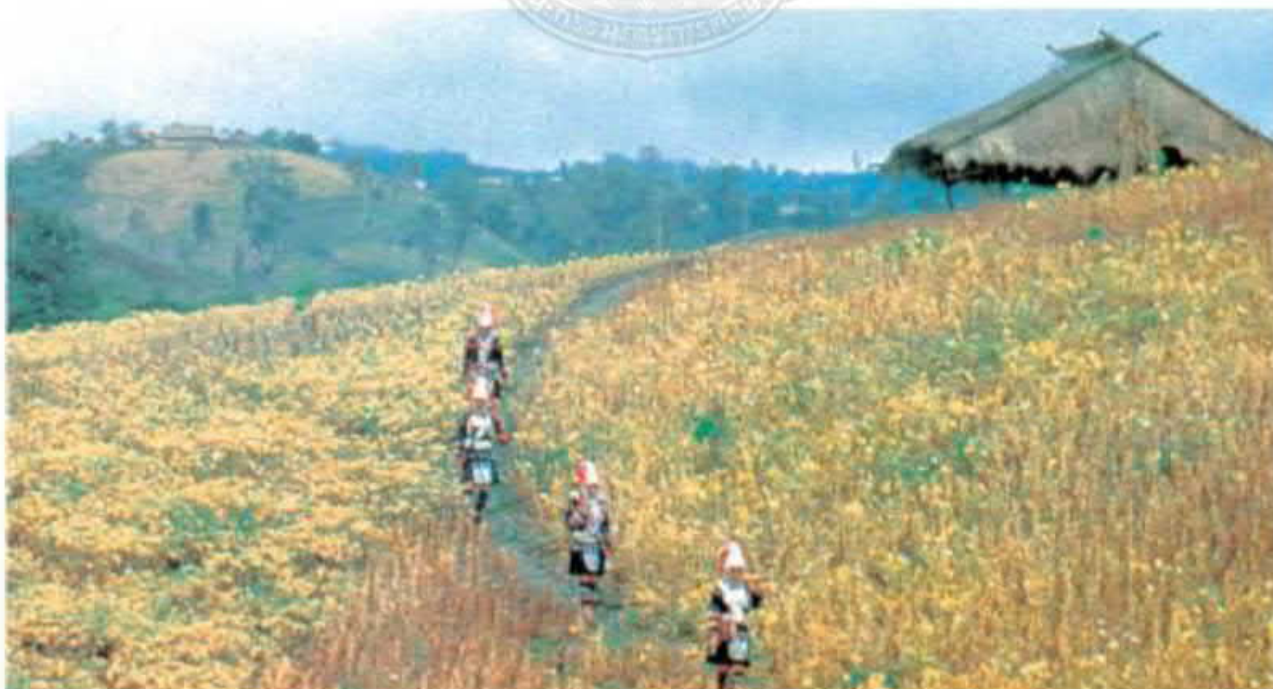
tea, coffee, oranges etc. In addition to agriculture, men and women are skilled in handicrafts, embroidery, weaving and silversmithing.

The Mien have been greatly influenced by the Chinese. They hold their ancestors and spirits in great reverence. A Mien lifestyle is involved around a great variety of cultural and traditional activities for the New Year, Buddhist Lent, the worship of elephant spirits, ordinations, weddings, etc.

The Mien have a nuclear family culture which dictates that, once the son is married, his wife will be brought to live with the bridegroom's parents for a while before a new house is built. When completed, the newlywed couple must leave the parents' home and move to live in their own home. The Mien prefer a monogamous marriage with a spouse from the same race. It is not strictly forbidden, however, to marry outside the race or to have more than one spouse should economic status enable a man to do so.

Akha

They call themselves *Akha*. The Thai and Burmese call them Akha or Kha-Ko. The Laos and Northern Indo-Chinese people call them *Koh*. The Chinese call them *Woni* or *Ha-ni*. This name also includes the Lolo language speakers in the south of Yunnan province.



Akha hilltribes people at work on their farm

The Akha belongs to the Tibetan-Burmese group. They are divided into three sub-groups: *Ulo Akha*, *Lomisa Akha* and *Lomue Akha*. They were formerly the inhabitants of high mountains in the northeastern and southwestern parts of China, in the provinces of Yunnan, Kwang Chao and Sipsongpanna. As China turned to Communism, a large number of Akha migrated to Chiang Tung in the Burmese Shan State, and Hua Khong and Phong Sali in Laos. The Akha living in Thailand are mostly those who have migrated from Burma and Laos because of an invasion by the Haw. They came to settle first near Doi Tung in Chiang Rai Province, though now settled also in a number of other provinces including Chiang Rai, Chiang Mai, Lampang, Phrae and Tak.

The Akha or Akha hilltribesmen prefer temperate climates, therefore they build their villages on mountains usually as high as 3,000-4,000 feet above sea level. On the peak or slopes the land on which the village is situated must be large enough to allow for a space for assembly or rites, and to serve as a playground for their children. Most important of all, an Akha village must not be too far from streams or water sources.

Each village must contain the following : firstly, an entrance gate to the village, called a *Lok Kho*, which faces east and features a carved wooden statue of a man and a woman engaged in a sexual act. This is done with the purpose of chasing away evil spirits. Every year, the Akha will have a new Lok Kho gate constructed to mark an additional year in which the village has been situated here. How long the village has been in at a particular spot can be ascertained by counting the number of



Akha children at play



Akha women return from work



Lok Kha or entrance gate of the village



Lan Sao Khot, a courting place for young men and women

these Lok Kho gates. Secondly, there must be a spirit shrine or *Misa Lo-oe*. This is constructed in order to provide shelter for forest spirits, thus preventing them from entering the village. Thirdly, an open space called *Lan Sao Khot* or *Tae Khong* must be made. This is a unique feature of an Akha village. It is a meeting and courting place for Akha youngsters. A giant swing, or *Lo Sa*, is constructed as a means to worship the Goddess of Fertility who provides fertility to the crops. Every year, there will be a swing ceremony in honour of the Goddess of Rice. There must be a village water source, or *La Du*. This is kept both for use during rites and for home use and consumption. It is normally situated hidden in a nearby forest. There must be a community or reserved forest called *Ya Khum Ti*. This is generally divided into two sections, one marked as the village's sacred forest and the other for general usage.

A headman, called the *Yue Ma*, who acts as leader, takes care of village administration. His task is to maintain public order, rules, regulations, traditions and good governance. He also maintains the standards of justice in the village. This position runs in the family or is hereditary. Should there be no one to succeed to this post, the village committee, consisting of the shaman, the elders and the village blacksmith will jointly select the name of the person to succeed. That person will later be approved of and adopted by village members and will then serve as village headman.

A major occupation among the Akha is highland farming. They cultivate maize, rice, sorghum and vegetables such as pumpkins, potatoes, Thai melons, cucumbers, winged beans, lettuce, etc., as well as opium for commercial purposes.



Akha girls at the village swing

The Akha lead a peaceful and contented life and are very obedient of their leader, particularly in regard to tradition and rituals. They believe that the spirits of their ancestors and all the sacred beings in the forests and mountains will safeguard and protect them to live peacefully. To commit any wrongdoing or an insult against the spirits of the ancestors and may bring in sickness or suffering. The Akha tribesmen therefore have to organise rituals to ask for forgiveness and provide a feast to these spirits. Rituals are staged in celebration of New Year's Day, the installation of the village gate, for the swing ceremony, when harvesting a new rice crop, for the feast of the spirits of ancestors, expulsion of unwanted spirits, etc.

The main characteristics of an Akha family are that there are several members in one household and the male members receive greater respect than the females. Sexually, an Akha society is quite open. Pre-marital courting or sexual relationships are accepted. Akha men do not regard virginity as a pre-requisite of any eligible girls. An Akha tradition dictates that any courting should not be performed at home as that may offend the spirits of their ancestors. A special place for courting called *Lan Sao Khot* or *Tae Khong* is therefore provided to allow the young to come and express their love to each other.



Lisu

The *Lisu* belong to the Tibetan-Burmese group. They call themselves '*Lisu*'. The word '*li*' is derived from '*e-li*' and '*su*' means man. Together, the term means 'man who is endowed with culture, tradition and pride in his own life. The *Lisu* are classified into two sub-groups called *Lisu Lai* and *Lisu Dam*. Their former home lay along the source of the Salaween and Khong rivers, north of Tibet and Yunnan Province in China. They migrated into Thailand and settled first at Ban Doi Chang, Mae Suay District in Chiang Rai Province.

Nowadays, *Lisu* tribesmen in Thailand live in villages around Chiang Rai, Chiang Mai, Mae Hong Son, Pha Yao, Tak, Phetchabun, Sukhothai and Lampang.

Generally, a *Lisu* village can be found located close to *Akha* and *Lahu* villages since these three tribes can speak each other's language. They are always generous to one another. Their village is generally located on mountain slopes, stretching in a horizontal line along the mountain ridge in order to be protected from strong winds and storms. They prefer to build houses in clusters. A particular characteristic of the house is that it is built rather low and close to the ground



A *Lisu* village



A Lisu festival



The inside is partitioned, with a shrine on a shelf for the spirits and their ancestors called a *Ta Bia*. There is a small stove at one side where tea or alcoholic drinks may be sipped.

Administration of the village is the responsibility of several people. The *Khua Tu Pha* or headman, the *Moe Mue Pha* or *Mo Muang* is the shaman for beliefs and rituals, the *Ni Pha* or *Mo phi*, or witchdoctor, through his service as a medium, acts as a healer of diseases believed to be caused by spirits. The *Nae Chue-chue Chu* or herbal medicine healer provides treatment for sickness caused by natural causes and a group of village elders called *Cho Mo Cho Ti* serve as senior representatives of each family in the community. They counsel or advise on matters concerning traditional rules and regulations and mediate in disputes among villagers or relatives in the community.

The *Lisu* in Thailand today have learned to live in unity, relying on each other and adopting people in the same village as leaders, not seeking outside assistance. *Lisu* villages today are much more peaceful than in the past.

Lisu tribesmen are often engaged in shifting cultivation. Environmentally, their forests are sub-divided into two categories: a cool area and a warm area. The cool area includes a damp primary forest with a greater degree of plant diversity and high level of moisture. It is cool throughout the year. This area is suitable for the cultivation of opium, maize and various vegetables. The warm area comprises a virgin forest and a mixed forest. It has low level of moisture. The temperature is rather high. This is suitable for field rice and crops belonging to the bean family. In addition, the *Lisu* engage in animal husbandry, particularly swine and poultry. These animals are used in rituals. Household handicrafts include making silver ornaments, weaving and embroidery. The *Lisu* may make these handicrafts for home use or for sale to supplement their income.

Rituals are major social activities in the life of any *Lisu*, who rigorously reveres spirits. These spirits may be divided into good and evil, residing in several places.

Generally, in the routine life of a *Lisu* tribesman, there always exists a close contact and exchange of goods or trade with people from other tribes. The *Lisu* people therefore have similar traditions and culture as other tribes. Their festivals range from those held during the new year, for courting, funerals, offerings to ancestral spirits and at the village spirit shrine.

Traditionally, *Lisu* men are forbidden to court women inside the compound of the house as it would offend the spirits of the household. It is therefore preferable that courting is done when the girls come out at night to pound their rice. *Lisu* men and women are free to choose their partners. Marriage is considered an activity in which the groom buys his wife and takes her away from her parents. If what he has paid for her is not sufficient, he will have to go and live with his wife's family and pay for the remaining portion through labour. After the completion of his labour, he can take his wife and live in a separate house. Another unique practice is that, before the marriage, the groom will present to the bride's family some gifts as a deposit. Later, she will be taken away by force with the full knowledge of her family who will keep quiet and do nothing. After that, the groom will send his parents to ask for his bride's hand in marriage. A *Lisu* man can have more than one wife but formalities must be complied with in accordance with age-old tradition. A *Lisu* father prefers sons to daughters, similar to Chinese tradition.



A Lisu girl works in her vegetable patch.





A hilltribe house



Products of the hilltribe

Current Hilltribe Development

Current hilltribe development efforts started in 1959 with four responsible ministries, Interior, Education, Public Health and Agriculture and Co-operatives. Their efforts have so far achieved satisfactory results. Nearly all hilltribe groups under the care of the Department of Public Welfare have been able to permanently settle without further migration. This is the result of the full-scale and concrete social and economic implementation of projects. The pattern of development has been properly formulated, pinpointing each particular group and introducing conservation of agricultural activities to hilltribe communities. The hilltribesmen earn more income while at the same time assist in natural environmental conservation. This is in line with His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej the Great's royal speech delivered in 1974 which says:

"Assistance to the hilltribes and projects for the hilltribes will deliver direct benefits to the hilltribes in a way that will help support and promote the betterment of their lives. They can find ways to grow things that are useful and earn some income for themselves. Another objective of this project is concerned with "humanity" – which means that those living in remote and sometimes inaccessible area can afford to be well-informed and capable of upgrading their lives to a prosperous level. Another objective of the assistance is to provide assistance in the elimination of the crucial problem of addiction to drugs. If the hilltribes are assisted in the cultivation of beneficial crops, they will give up planting drug plants – the opium. The policy on suppression of opium smoking and opium trading will achieve good results. Another



important result is that the hilltribes have for a long time been engaged in improper cultivation methods, which may be perilous to us—that is they use slash-and-burn agriculture. If we assist them, it means we are assisting our own country to achieve nation-wide prosperity, a good standard of living coupled with security. The success of this programme will enable the hilltribes to be settled permanently and capable of attaining a considerably good standard of living. The programme will also support the policy in sustainable forest and soil conversation.”

Besides government agencies and non-government organisations that have joined forces to help the hilltribes in various ways, there are other agencies directly related to the hilltribes, like the Hilltribe Research Institute and Hilltribe Museum.

The Hilltribe Research Institute is located in the campus of Chiang Mai University. It was founded in 1984 with the co-operation of Chiang Mai University, the Australian Government and New Zealand anthropologists from the Southeast Asian Treaty Organisation (SEATO). They collaborated in setting plans and a structure for the Institute. The objective is to have the institute serve as a database station for social and cultural matters in support of the government's development and assistance projects for the hilltribes. It also serves as an ethnology study centre for Southeast Asia.



The building of the Hilltribe Research Institute on the campus of Chiang Mai University



A hilltribe home on exhibit at the Hilltribe Museum



The Hilltribe Museum building



The Hilltribe Museum was formerly under the Hilltribe Research Institute in Chiang Mai University. Due to inconveniences in term of space, it had to be relocated to Ratchamongkhon Garden on Chotana Road, Chiang Mai. The Hilltribe Museum has a good display of art objects relating to traditions, culture, and way of life of the hilltribes, including exhibits of utensils, ornaments, music, clothing and various types of



A replica of the interior of a hilltribe kitchen, displayed for the benefit of enthusiasts



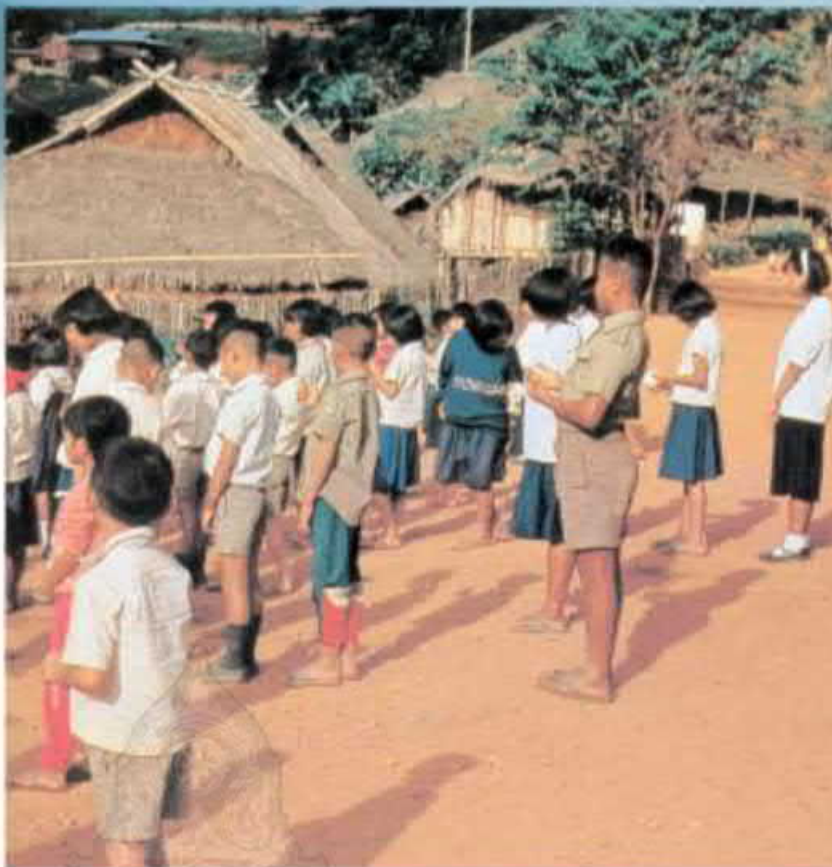
Replica of figures of hilltribes men and hilltribes women on display at the Hilltribe Museum



Hilltribes are more interested in learning



Hilltribes at trade



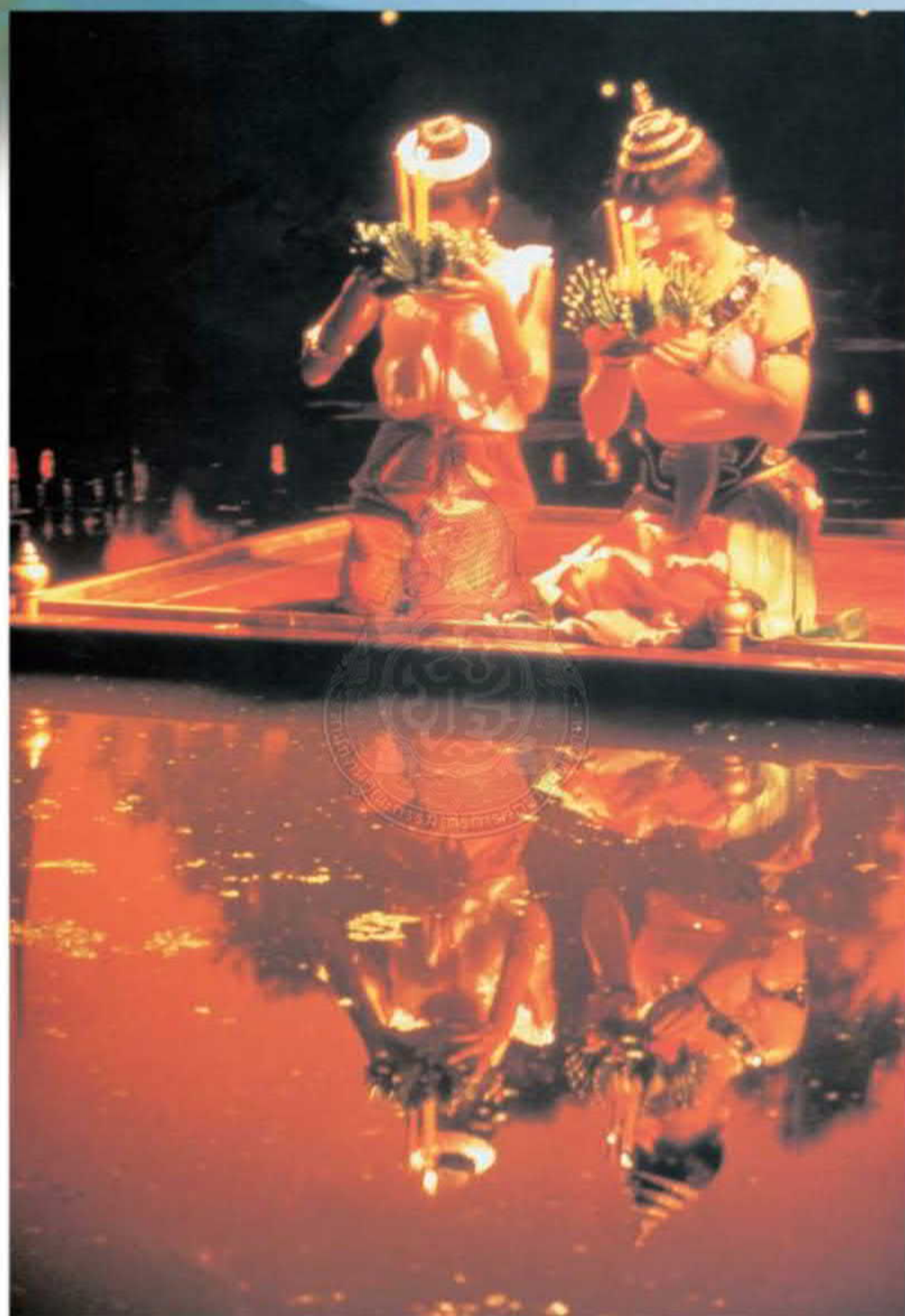
A hilltribe school



Hilltribe shops on Doi Pui

rituals. In addition, the museum has facilities for showing slides and videotapes concerning the lifestyle of the hilltribes.

Tracing back the conditions of the hilltribes, it can be seen that urban culture and progress are threatening their development. Their former way of life—of shifting cultivation—is changing into that of settled agriculture with permanent cultivation on hill slopes. They are now engaged more in rice farming, and the cultivation of technology-based rotation crops. Farmer's groups have been formed, and these have changed from farmers to intermediaries. They have become more interested in education. They accept modern medicine, which has now replaced their traditional faith healing. Electricity and water are available in many villages. Strict adherence to age-old traditions is being relaxed. The traditional lifestyle of minority ethnic groups living on cold mountaintops will eventually fade out of the memory of urban people. A new way of life will emerge in its place.





Under the Cool Shadow of the Lanna Tradition

The age-old tradition of the North has long been in practice, kept as a national identity and handed down from previous generations to the present generation. Several ceremonies and traditions of the north are mainly connected with local ways of earning a living, local beliefs and faith in religions. These cultural and traditional aspects constitute major attractions that draw a great number of tourists to come for a visit and take a glimpse at this age-old culture with its unique character.

Loi Krathong

Loi Krathong is an old Lanna Thai custom. It is called *Loi Khamod* or *Loi Fai* by the Lanna people and is the origin of the *Loi Krathong* festival in Thailand. Offerings are put in leaf-cups floating down the river to remind one of relatives who live faraway.

A northern legend tells the story of Lanna-styled *Loi Krathong* festival that was launched in 1053 during the reign of King Kamonrat who ruled over Hariphunchai, a very prosperous city-state during that period. After King Kamonrat passed away, his people were afflicted



Loi Krathong Festival in Chiang Mai, a tradition handed down by Lanna people

with a cholera epidemic that erupted suddenly and spread all over the city causing a large number of deaths among its citizens. The remaining Hariphunchai people had to be evacuated from the city, leaving it deserted. They relocated to Pagan, Sutham Nakhon and Hongsawadi. Wherever they went, they were warmly welcomed by the locals because of the similarity of their spoken language with that of the host country. The language is called 'Meng' or 'Mon'. After a certain period of time, the epidemic died down. The Hariphunchai people moved back to their homes. Some, however, remained behind for they had already settled down with their own families. People in Hariphunchai therefore arranged for some offerings to be placed in the leaf-cups and floated down the river in remembrance of their relatives who were left behind in those places. Subsequently, the activities became an established custom known as the *Loi Krathong* festival. However, *Loi Krathong* rites in those days were different from now. Then, the Lanna people usually made their floats in the shape of a house or a junk inside which were a number of items such as clothes, foodstuffs, edibles and utensils needed for everyday life. With lights aglow inside the miniature house or junk, the float was allowed to glide downstream in the belief that it would take these things to their relatives in Hongsawadi. In another way, it may be interpreted as an expression of gratitude made to those people.

The Lanna-style *Loi Krathong* Festival in Chiang Mai is held as a gesture to let go of all unhappy and unlucky things in life as well as a plea to the River Goddess for forgiveness for any wrongs made against the river. It is also an occasion to ask for blessings. The leaf cups made by Chiang Mai people are usually small. They are floated downstream from any spot close to their home on the *Yi Peng* night or the 14th or 15th night of the waxing moon. Chiang Mai natives used to make their small cups or *Krathong* from coconut husks, using the curved husk as the body of the cup and filling the inside with oil paper folded into the shape of birds with lights and flowers placed inside. Today, these small cups have undergone a steady modification; materials commonly used in the making of the *Krathong* may be banana leaves or bark or paper folded into a lotus shape.

Large *Krathong* made co-operatively among villagers is normally floated on the first night of the waning moon. During this period, temples and houses will be decorated with banana tree trunks, sugar cane, coconut fronds, flowers, hanging or standing lamps containing animal figurines. Called '*khom phak*' in local dialect, the figurines are silhouetted against the lampshade once the lamp is lit. The surrounding area will be decorated with candles or lanterns in reverence to the Lord Buddha. Merit making is organised at various



Ping River where Lanna people float their junk-shape leaf-cups downstream





Lanterns at temples

temples in the morning. Villagers bring rice, fish and food for the monks, a gesture said to be a means to convey those things to their ancestors. This is called '*than khan khao*'. The Mahachat sermon will be recited in the afternoon. The monk who delivers the sermon must do so in an entertaining and instructional manner. The popular cantos recited in the sermon are *Mad-Si*, *Chuchok (Jujaka)*, *Kuman*, *Maharat* and *Nakhon Kan*. Sometimes all 13 cantos are recited. At twilight, the villages bring small lamps (*pang patid*) to the temple to pay homage to The Three Gems and listen to the sermon. Lanna people believe that lighting these lamps will bring them a great deal of merit. Afterwards, they fly hot-air balloon-like lanterns and the whole fair ground is ablaze with bright light.

There are two categories of lanterns, day and night. **The one released during the daytime** is called *wao khwan* and is made of multi-coloured paper into a shape similar to that of a balloon. To allow the lantern to rise up from the ground, a fire is lit and the smoke billowed from it is allowed to go inside the balloon, which then soars high in the sky. The night balloon is called *khom fai* or *wao fai*. It is made of bamboo tubing with a wide mouth at one end. A piece of wood wrapped with a round ball of cotton soaked with oleo-resin is then tied to that end. When lighted, heat derived from it will send the balloon or lantern into the sky. At night, these beautiful lanterns flying against the dark sky will glitter like stars. Lanna people believe that the release of these lanterns represents the act of reverence to the Buddha's footprint and Phra Ket Kaew Chula Mani in heaven.



A Loi Krathong (Yi Peng) procession

The Entrance into the Inthakhin Pillar Rite

Inthakhin is the name of the city pillar of Chiang Mai. It is believed among Chiang Mai people that a rite to worship the Inthakhin Pillar must be performed every year to render moral support to the people who are about to embark on their annual cultivation of crops. *Phra Chao Fon Saen Ha* (the god of a hundred thousand rainfalls) is invited to preside over the ceremony. There will be a procession and chanting of prayers in reverence to Inthakhin by monks. Chiang Mai people stage this Inthakhin ceremony at the end of the 8th and the beginning of the 9th lunar month (end of March and beginning of July). The ceremony starts on the 13th night of the waning moon of the 8th lunar month, called the entrance to Inthakhin and finishes on the 4th night of the waxing moon of the 9th lunar month, called the exit from Inthakhin. Sometimes it is called in brief “the 8th month entry and the 9th month exit.”

Phra Maha Muen Wutthiyano of Wat Ho Tham, Chiang Mai recounted of the history of Inthakhin or Suwan Kham Deang that Chiang Mai was formerly the centre of the Lawa settlement. Spirits and ghosts there haunted the townspeople so much that people felt greatly disturbed and could not function properly. They all became impoverished. The God Indra then created 3 deep wells filled with silver, gold and gems in the town. Nine Lawa families (this gives rise to the origin of the word ‘Wiang Nopburi’ – the city of the nine families) were entrusted with the task of caring for these wells. Each well was under the care of 3 families. The Lawa people would swear to abide by their words. Then whatever wish they would like to request would be fulfilled. The Lawa people obediently kept their words and prosperity befell them.

The news of the prosperity of Wiang Nopburi spread far and wide. Other cities marched in with their troops and demanded the share of the prosperity. The Lawa people were frightened. They asked a hermit to take a message to the God Inthakhin who ordered two giants to dig up the Inthakhin (the nail pillar of Indra) and carry it on iron basket to be buried in the centre of Wiang Nopburi. The Inthakhin pillar was so powerful that all enemies were transformed into traders who demanded something from the wealth at the three wells. The Lawa people advised the traders to abide by their *sila*, keep their word and refrain from greed. In so doing, their wish would be fulfilled. Some traders followed the advice; some did not; some showed even greater greed. The two giant guardians of the Inthakhin pillar were furious. They carried the pillar back to heaven. The three wells – with gold, silver and gems in them respectively – lost their magic spell and existed no more.



The Inthakhin pillar



The front gate of the wihan enshrining the Inthakhin Pillar



The main Inthakhin temple building

An aged Lawa man who kept on a regular worshipping the pillar heard that the two giants had taken the pillar back to heaven. He felt so grieved that he left a layman's life, went into a hermit's life, wearing white robes. He sat meditating under a rubber tree for 3 years. One day a monk predicted that the kingdom would soon face calamity. The Lawa people, scared, asked the monk for assistance. The monk then ordered the people to make a large pan the inside of which contained figurines of pairs of animals together with figures of men and women from 101 nations. Then the pan was buried underneath the ground. An Inthakhin pillar was erected on top above it. A rite of worship must be organised. The city would then be free from disaster. The act of worship has thus been continuously organised and has become a tradition up to the present.

Formerly, the Inthakhin pillar was situated at Wat Sadue Muang or Wat Inthakhin at the centre of the city of Chiang Mai (or at the present site of Tilokarat Assembly Hall, near the old town hall). Legend has it that the old Inthakhin pillar was made of metal. In 1800, during the reign of King Kawila, it was transferred to Wat Chedi Luang and was renovated as a concrete pillar. Veneration has been performed and has become a tradition ever since. At the present, The Inthakhin pillar is situated inside the wihan. It is made of concrete and decorated with coloured glasses. On the top there stands a small busabok (a podium with roof) containing a Buddha statue in meditating posture. The pillar is 1.30 metres high with a circumference of 67 metres. The raised platform where the statue is seated is 0.97 metres high and 3.40 metres in circumference.

Veneration ceremonies in those days differed from the present ones. In the olden days, the city-state ruler started the ceremony by paying offering to guardian spirits, deities and giants. Spirits of members of the royal family were invited to be in the body of a mediator and questions as to the future of the land were asked. Also asked were questions on rainfall and fertility. If the mediator uttered words signifying unfortunate events, a ceremony to prolong the destiny of the state would be organised in order to alleviate the effects of the omen. In addition, there would be string instrument performance and sword dance as forms of worship to the spirits of ancestors. This ceremony had been going on for some years and was stopped after World War II.

Nowadays, Chiang Mai Municipality is organising the Inthakhin ceremony incorporating Buddhist rites. On the first day of the entry to Inthakhin, the statue of Phra Chao Fon Saen Ha or Khanthararat Buddha statue is carried in a procession around town to allow the townspeople to pour and scatter white rice pops over the statue. Inside the Inthakhin temple, nine monks perform sacred ceremony with mantra chanting in veneration of the Inthakhin.



An Inthakhin Veneration Festival



Songkran Festival, Chiang Mai

Songkran Festival in Chiang Mai

Pi Mai is the word in northern dialect depicting the New Year's Day or Songkran Day. Songkran Festival has been held from time immemorial. New Year's day is the day most revered by Chiang Mai people. This is the day that is regarded as the start of a new day and a new life in a new year. On such a day, people have their dwellings thoroughly cleaned. They take a bath and wash their hair. New clothes are worn. This signifies the beginning of a new phase in life.

Songkran Day starts on the 13th of April. It is colloquially called Wan Songkran Long. New Year starts on this day. Early in the morning, gunfire and firecrackers are heard throughout the city, as a gesture of welcome to the new year. There is an age-old belief that firing guns and lighting firecrackers to cause a loud noise is a gesture to help Grandparents Songkran to move along more swiftly. Wan Songkran Long, according to the belief among Chiang Mai people, means that every passing day signifies our increasing and fading age. It is a reminder to us that another year has passed by and we are older by one more year. On the 14th of April, called in Chiang Mai 'Wan Now' –pronounced with a high pitched tone–Chiang Mai people prepare rice, fish and cooked food to be presented at the temple as a form of merit-making. Cakes and sweets are made to complement the alms of the rice bowl, which is a gesture of exchanging sweets.



A procession held during Songkran Festival, Chiang Mai



Building the sand chedi

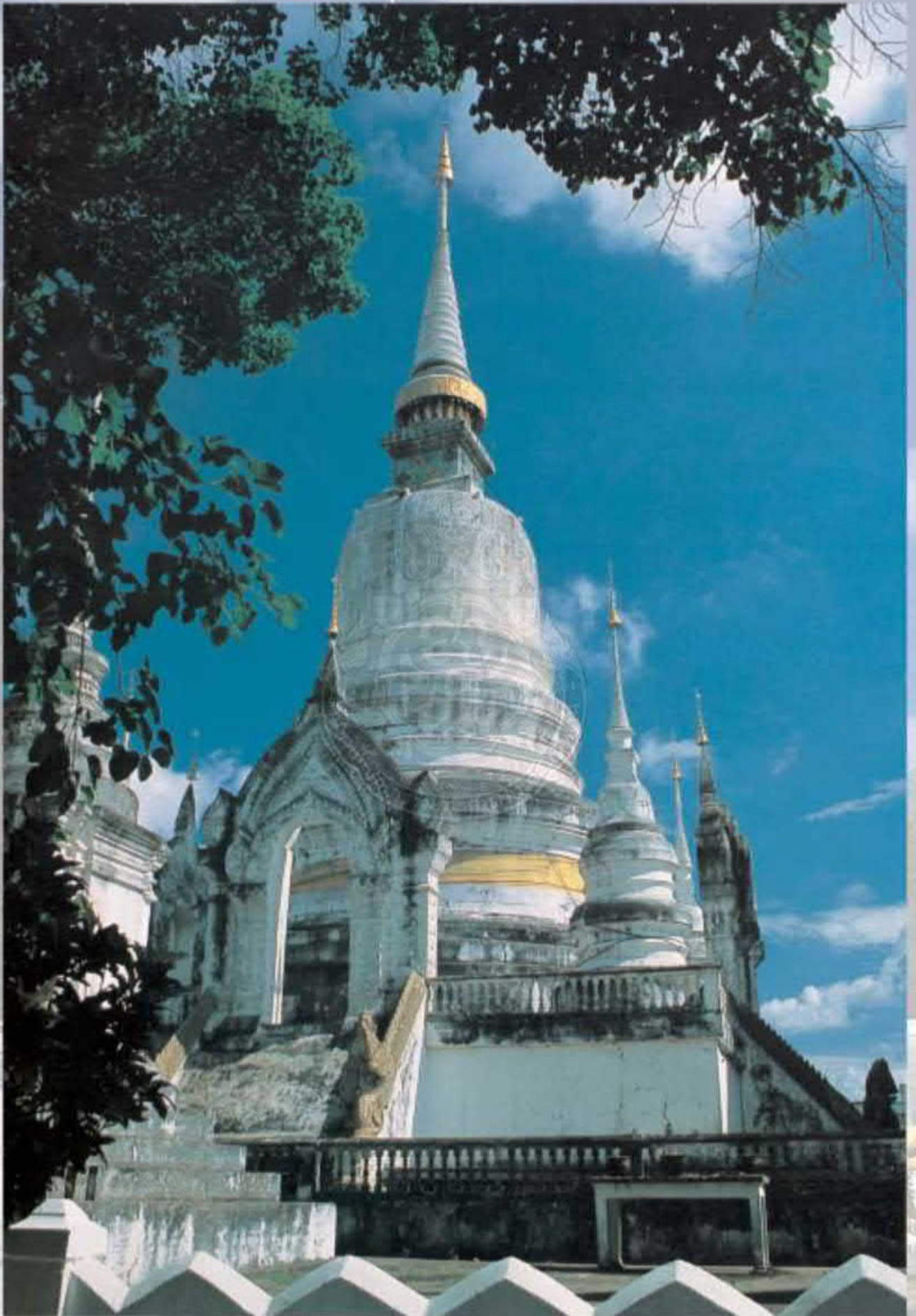


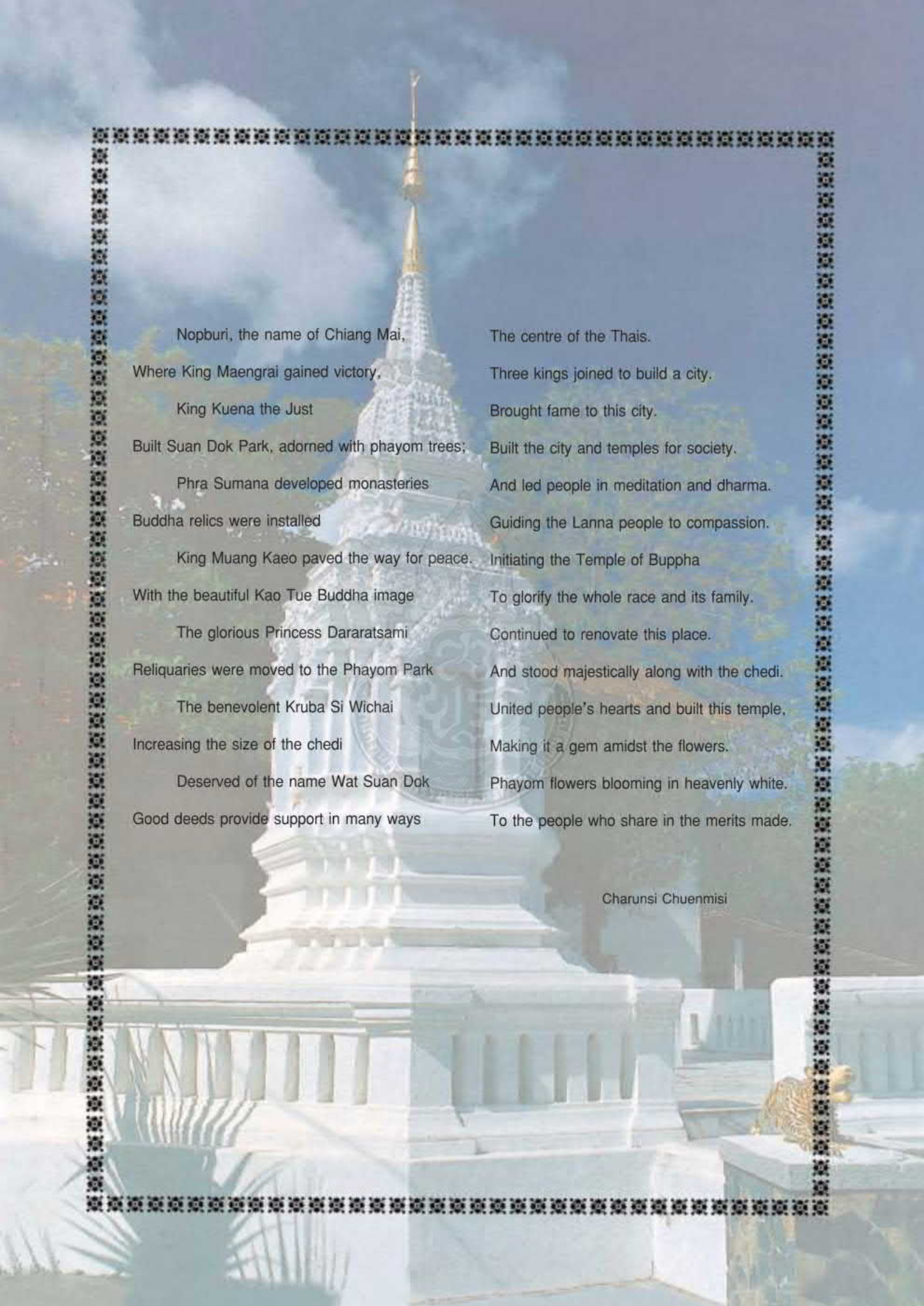
Rot Nam Dam Hua ceremony



Popular cakes and sweets made for the occasion are *khanom thian*, *khanom chok*, *khao tom mat*, or anything favoured by the cook. In the afternoon, sand is carried into the temple to be used in the piling of *Chedi Sai* or *Chedi* made of sand as a homage-paying gesture to the temple. This is called 'presentation of sand or *waluka chedi*' to the temple. Regarding this event, legend has it that in a life of the Lord Buddha during which he was born a very poor common man, he earns his living by serving as a paid logger. He was nevertheless a decent man with proper conduct. One day, he saw a place with white sand in a forest. He piled the sand up into a chedi, tore a piece of cloth from his attire and made it into a flag. He then made a wish that in his rebirth, let him be Lord Buddha to preach to other beings in the world. After his death, he was reincarnated as Lord Buddha. This is the belief held by common people of the Buddhist faith that, to decorate the sand chedi and present it to the temple is tantamount to accumulation of greater merits in following lives. In reality, it is a subtle way used by people in the old days to entice temple visitors to bring in sand for use in replenishing the ground at the temple. Every year, large crowds of people visit the temple, sand and earth from the temple sometimes is unwittingly attached to the soles of the shoes of the visitors and is thus taken outside. Also when it rains, the flood caused by the rain sweeps a great deal of the temple sand into the river. The level of the ground of the temple therefore becomes lower and lower. More sand is needed to fill the ground. Thus is the origin of the sand chedi initiative. On the 15th of April – Wan Phya Wan Day, the day of the New Year or the beginning of the New Year – people visit the temple in the morning to make merits. After that they will take the flags or pennants (called 'tung' in the northern dialect) to fly on the sand chedi that they have already made. In the afternoon, they will go to perform a lustral-water-pouring ceremony on the palms (called '*rot nam dam hua*') of respected elders. To perform such ceremony, the following must be prepared: turmeric, *som poi* pods (a tamarind-like fruit), *khao tok* (fragments of popcorn), flowers, candles and incense sticks, clothes, *pha khao ma* (a rectangular piece of cloth to be used as a wrap-around) or any available materials. All these things will be placed on a raised tray to be taken to the house of the people we respect. We then pay homage in veneration of the elders, dabbing fragrant water on their hair. The remaining water will be used in hair washing as a good blessing. After the *wan phya wan* day, the 16th of April is called *wan pak yam*. This whole period is regarded as the New Year Festival.

On Songkran Day, or *Pi Mai Muang Nua* as called by the northern people in some areas, people start throwing water at each other. It may start from the 10th or 12th until the 18th of April, totalling seven or eight days. A Nang Songkran procession is staged, featuring a major festivity and a very interesting tradition among the Thai and foreigners alike. Highly-revered Buddha images of Chiang Mai will be carried out in the procession to allow the people to sprinkle lustral water over them. On this Songkran Day, Chiang Mai people will adorn themselves with traditional costumes, making it a memorable and fantastic scene for spectators.





Nopburi, the name of Chiang Mai,
Where King Maengrai gained victory,
King Kuena the Just
Built Suan Dok Park, adorned with phayom trees;
Phra Sumana developed monasteries
Buddha relics were installed
King Muang Kaeo paved the way for peace.
With the beautiful Kao Tue Buddha image
The glorious Princess Dararatsami
Reliquaries were moved to the Phayom Park
The benevolent Kruba Si Wichai
Increasing the size of the chedi
Deserved of the name Wat Suan Dok
Good deeds provide support in many ways

The centre of the Thais.
Three kings joined to build a city.
Brought fame to this city.
Built the city and temples for society.
And led people in meditation and dharma.
Guiding the Lanna people to compassion.
Initiating the Temple of Buppha
To glorify the whole race and its family.
Continued to renovate this place.
And stood majestically along with the chedi.
United people's hearts and built this temple,
Making it a gem amidst the flowers.
Phayom flowers blooming in heavenly white.
To the people who share in the merits made.

Charunsi Chuenmisi



The reliquary enshrining the fragments of bones of Chao Dararatsami, a royal consort of King Chulalongkorn



Khru Ba Si Wichai

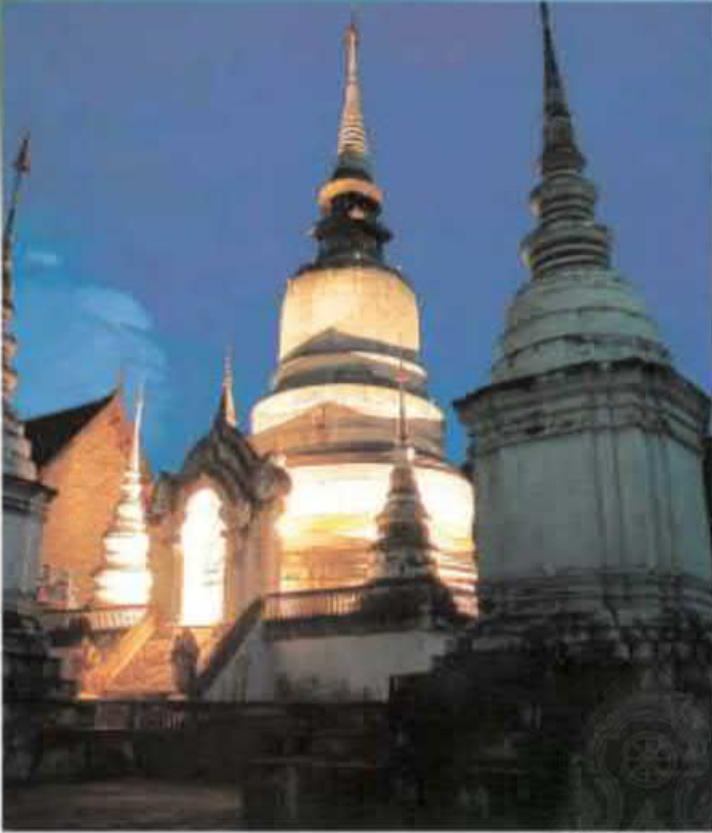


Chao Dararatsami

Beautiful Flowers at Wat Suan Dok

Wat Suan Dok is a royal monastery. It covers 35 rai about one kilometre to the west of Suan Dok Gate on Suthep Road, Tambon Suthep, Amphoe Muang, Chiang Mai Province. It is under the Mahanikaya Sect. Wat Suan Dok was built sometime around 1371 in the reign of King Kuena the Great or Phya Kuena, the 6th king of the Maengrai Dynasty of the Lanna Kingdom. He had a deep faith in Buddhism. He appointed Muen Kong Ngoen, his religious envoy, Pa Khao Yot and Pa Khao Sai to take his royal invitation and some presents to the ruler of Sukhothai requesting the kind assistance of a monk called Phra Maha Sumana and a number of other monks to propagate Buddhism in Chiang Mai. Phra Maha Sumana brought along with him Buddha relics found in the excavation at a deserted chedi in the town of Pangcha. The Buddha relics would serve as a monument of the prosperity of Buddhism on Lanna soil. When the religious envoy team arrived in Lamphun in the Kingdom of Lanna, Phya Kuena travelled to welcome Phra Maha Sumana at tambon Saen Khao Ho Chiang Ruean, Lamphun, and arranged for the monks to reside at Wat Phra Yuen in that province. During his stay for two seasons during the Buddhist Lent at Wat Phra Yuen, Phra Maha Sumana acted as upatcha¹ and presided over the ordination of Lamphun men into the monkhood in the Lanka style. Phya Kuena appointed Phra Maha Sumana the first Supreme Patriarch of Lanna with the title of “Phra Maha Sumana Rattanabuppha Swami” and Phra Maha Sumana

¹ Upatcha: preceptor, ordainer



The Mahathat Chedi at dusk



The arched gate of Wat Suan Dok

presented the Buddha relics to Phya Kuena. When the king poured lustrous water on the relics, a miracle occurred. The relics floated up to the surface of the water and whirled around in a *prathaksin*¹ circle. It also rained despite the fact that it was not the rainy season. King Kuena and his subordinates saw the miracle and shouted praise and respect in unison.

Later, King Kuena wanted to build a temple for Phra Maha Sumana. He allotted a piece of land which was a garden full of phayom (shorea) trees situated in the west of Chiang Mai. It was a quiet place suitable for meditation. After the completion of the construction, King Kuena called this temple “Wat Buppharam.” The name is in the Pali language. In Thai, it means “The Temple of the Phayom Trees.” Villagers always called it Wat Suan Dok in short. Phra Maha Sumana was invited to serve as abbot of the temple.

¹Prathaksin: moving in a circle, clockwise



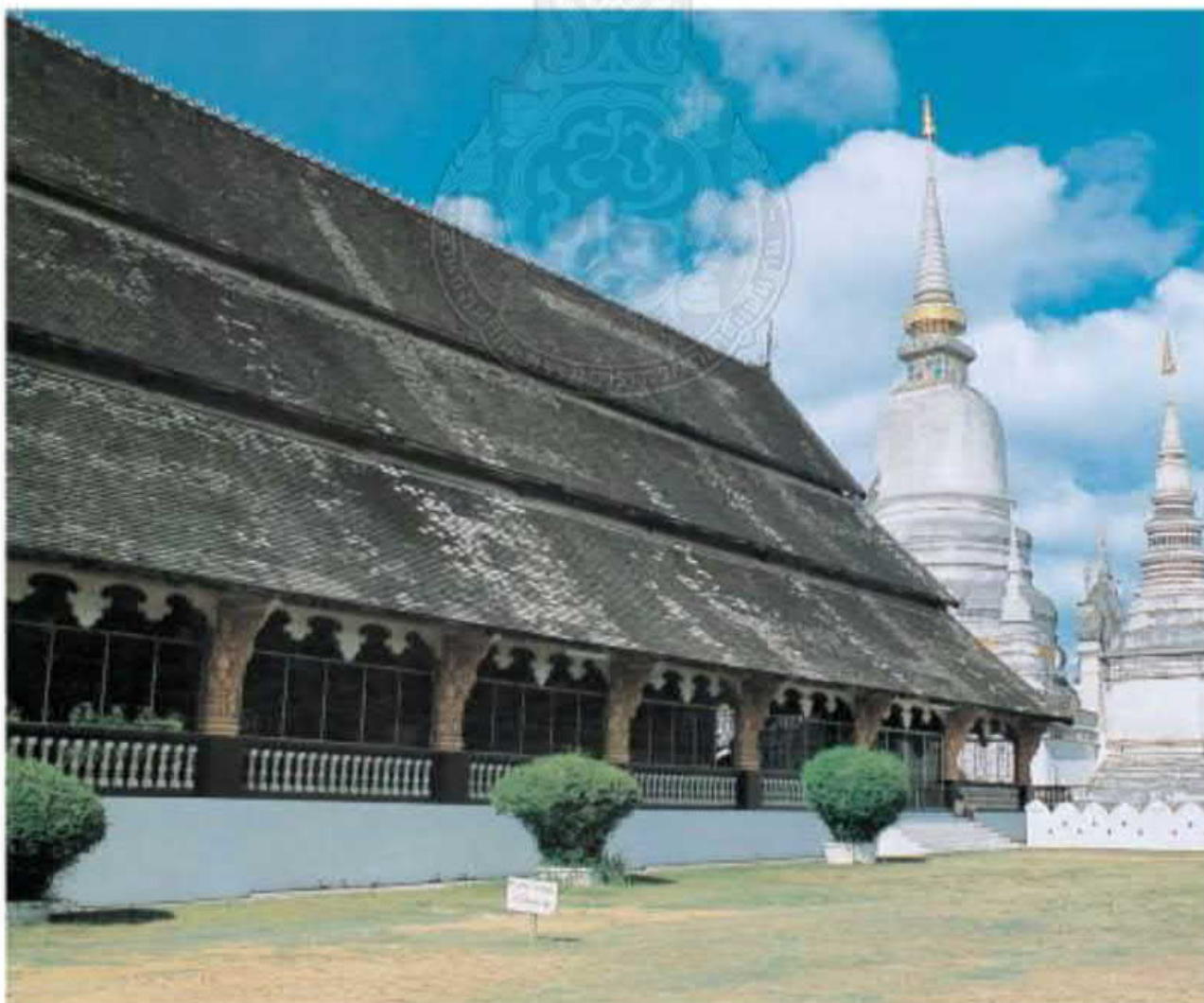
A phayom tree at Wat Suan Dok



Two years later, King Kuena presided over the construction of Phra Mahathat Chedi enshrining the Buddha relics brought by Phra Maha Sumana. Seven smaller chedi were built around the main one. In addition, the following structures were also built: the Pratu Khong Gate, several chedi situated in the inner circle, outer canal walls and ramparts.

Wat Suan Dok was very prosperous during the Maengrai Dynasty. As the dynasty ended, Lanna fell under Burmese influence for 200 years. There was chaos and disturbances in the land. Wat Suan Dok was left dilapidated, deserted, and the chedi descended into a sad state.

Following this phase, Chiang Mai became a vassal state of Siam. King Inthawitthayanon, the King of Chiang Mai, launched renovation work on Wat Suan Dok. The building, called *Ho Mothian* belonged to Chao Luang Khamfan, his grandfather. It was pulled down and the great hall known as the wihan of Wat Suan Dok was built the same spot.



The royal wihan, a place for dharma discourses in Wat Suan Dok



The reliquaries enshrining the bone fragments of the kings and princes of Chiang Mai

Later, in 1909, Chao Dararatsami, King Chulalongkorn's royal consort, returned to reside in Chiang Mai. She found that the shrine containing the relics of the kings of Chiang Mai and her royal relatives were scattered along the bank of the Ping River to the west of Chiang Mai (on the ground which is at present the site of Warorot Market. It was formerly an area reserved as the cremation ground and for reliquaries of members of the royal family). The princess therefore expressed her wish to have them relocated together in one place. She ordered a chedi containing fragments of bones of her ancestors to be built at Wat Suan Dok. This type of chedi is called by northerners a *ku*.

In 1931, Major General Chao Kaeo Nawarat, the last king of Chiang Mai and Chao Dararatsami invited Kruba Si Wichai to be chairman of the construction and renovation of the wihan, chedi and gates of Wat Suan Dok. He also had two Buddha images cast in brass. They now stand on pedestals called *Than Chukchi*¹ in the wihan.

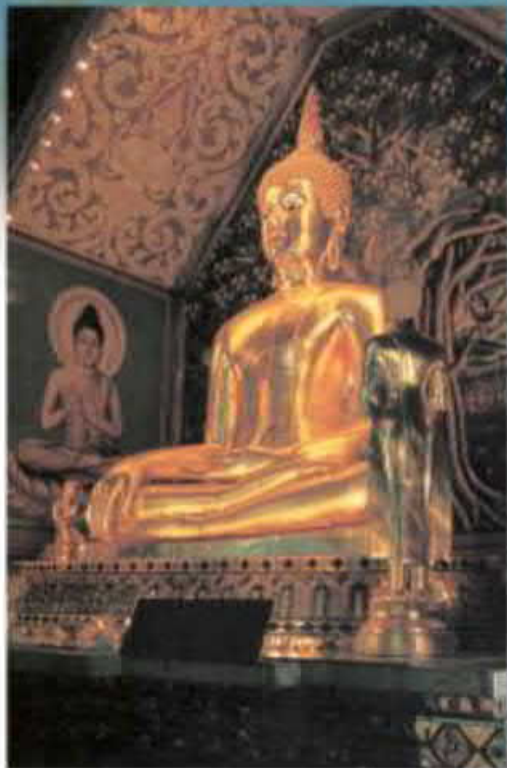
At present, Phra Khru Tham Senanuwat serves as abbot of Wat Suan Dok. He is a highly knowledgeable monk, well versed both in Pali and dharma. He has conducted a number of renovation works on old monuments, antiques and *senasana*² in the ground of the temple. He has also developed education at Wat Suan Dok. His works have been widely acclaimed by Buddhist devotees.



Phra Khru Tham Senanuwat, the Abbot of Wat Suan Dok

¹ *Chukchi*: a pedestal built of lime on which the main Buddha image is placed.

² *Senasana*: a raised platform used for sitting or reclining.



Phra Chao Kao Tue Buddha Image

Important objects at Wat Suan Dok

There are several very old, beautiful and important objects and structures at Wat Suan Dok. These have been renovated and handed down from generation to generation. Their beauty is still kept intact today. They are as follows:

Phra Borom That Chedi. Built in the reign of King Kuena in 1573 to enshrine Buddha relics. Its style is that of Lankawong integrated with Lanna. It was built on a square-shaped platform with steps leading to the top on all four sides. The middle portion looks like an upside down bell, similar to the Lanka style. Twenty-four wah in height, it was registered as a national historic monument by the Department of Fine Arts in 1935.

Phra Putthapatima Kaking (as broad as the body). Cast in 1473. King Kuena had the craftsmen of Lanna cast it in bronze in a meditative posture. Its width is nearly equivalent to the height. The lap is 2 metres wide while the height is 2.5 metres. In Lanna dialect, the image is called *Phra Chao Kaking*.

Phra Phuttharup Kao Tue. Cast by the best Chiang Saen craftsmen in 1504, this Buddha image is in a meditative posture contemplating the conquest of the Mara. The style is a mixture of Lanna and Sukhothai. The width of the lap is 3 metres. From the pedestal to the crown it is 4.7 metres high. This Buddha image is a



Phra Putthapatima Kaking Buddha Image, Lanna style, in bronze

large sculpture and the most beautiful in the Lanna Kingdom. Most people call its *Phra Chao Kao Tue* in accordance with the weight of copper used in the casting (“Tue” is a measurement of weight used in Lanna. The words used in weight measurement range from a hundred, thousand, ten thousand and then kot, kue, tue, tieo and asonkhai). There are 8 joints in the whole image, 9 portions altogether. That gives rise to the name of the temple “Wat Phra Chao Kao Tue” where the image is enshrined. There used to be two adjoining temples. One was called Wat Kao Tue with walls connecting with the southern side of Wat Suan Dok. At present, these two temples have merged into one. The walls separating Wat Kao Tue were demolished and the building where the image was enshrined is now the chapel. The Phra Chao Kao Tue image therefore has served as the main image of Wat Suan Dok ever since.

The monument called *Ku* serves as the reliquary containing bone fragments of the rulers of Chiang Mai. This was built around 1909. Chao Dararatsami, daughter of King Inthawiththayanon, the 7th ruler of Chiang Mai, herself a royal consort of King Rama V, transferred all the remains of the rulers and members of the Chiang Mai royal family to Wat Suan Dok. The bone fragments were formerly entombed in the chedi situated on the western bank of the Ping River. In 1934, upon her death, a part of her bone fragments was also kept in a reliquary at Wat Suan Dok.



A Buddha image in a Buddha-conquering-Mara posture, enshrined inside the ubosot of Wat Suan Dok



The monument (Ku) containing bone fragments of the northern rulers



A Lanna-style pulpit for sermons



Vine-motif stucco at a gable-end of the royal wihan, Wat Suan Dok

The monument enshrines the fragments of bones of Kruba Si Wichai, the Buddhist saint of Lanna. Built in 1957, it serves as a monument in commemoration of the renovation of Wat Suan Dok and as a place of public veneration of the Kruba.

The Lanna-style pulpit for sermons. Carved in 1931. There are three arched entrance gates into the temple. These arches are Lanna-style and quite large. They were erected during the renovation of Wat Suan Dok, supervised by Kruba.

The Wihan. A building used as assembly hall where discourses and instruction on dharma are held. Built in 1931 by Kruba Si Wichai and Major General Chao Kaeo Nawarat, the ruler of Chiang Mai. It is 25 metres wide and 66 metres long. A reinforced concrete building, it is characterised by the fact that it is open on all sides, with a cloister surrounding the structure. There is beautiful Lanna-style stucco work featuring vine motifs on both gable-ends of the building.



The reliquary enshrining the fragments of bones of Khru Ba Si Wichai

The ubosot. An assembly hall for the monks. Used during religious functions. Built in 1504. It is a Lanna-style building made of reinforced concrete mixed with lime. Its width is 12 metres and length 27 metres. The last renovation took place in 1962. Mural paintings painted by contemporary painters inside the ubosot tell the story of the life of the Lord Buddha and Vetsantara Jataka.

Pariyattam School Building. Built in 1976. A seat of learning and meditation for monks, it is a two-storied modern-style reinforced concrete building, 8 metres wide and 20 metres long.

The dining hall or ho chan. A one-story building, 8 metres wide and 12 metres long, with mural paintings by contemporary artists featuring the story of “Phra Chao Sipchat” decorating the inner walls. It was built in 1976.

The Sala Kanprian. A building dedicated to Phrakhrusukhanthasin (Khamseen Inthachakko). Built in 1989, it is a Thai-style reinforced concrete building with a spacious hall, 7 metres wide and 27 metres long.



The ubosot



Maha Chulalongkorn Ratchawithyalai Building



Suan Dok Gate



Temple dining hall



Ancient well and Lanna arched entrance

In addition to major structural antiquaries and antique objects, Wat Suan Dok has always been a centre of education dating from the Lanna Kingdom time during the religious leadership of Phra Maha Sumana. The highly-venerated abbot undertook the task of propagating the Lankawong Sect of Buddhism so ably that it was highly acclaimed and accepted by monks from other lands. A large number of monks came to study the Pali Buddhist text here. At present, Wat Suan Dok still serves as a centre of education for Buddhism. Classes are held at the temple and several educational institutes are situated here. These include Pariyattam School, Pali and dharma sections, Maha Chulalongkorn Ratchawitthayalai, under Royal Patronage, Chiang Mai Campus; The Pali Demonstration School; The Centre for Sunday classes in Buddhism; the centre for meditation and Aphithampidok studies and Wat Suan Dok Primary School.

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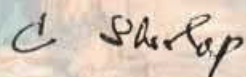
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