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Social Strategies in Creating Roles for Women in Lan Na and Lan Sang from the Thirteenth to the Nineteenth Centuries

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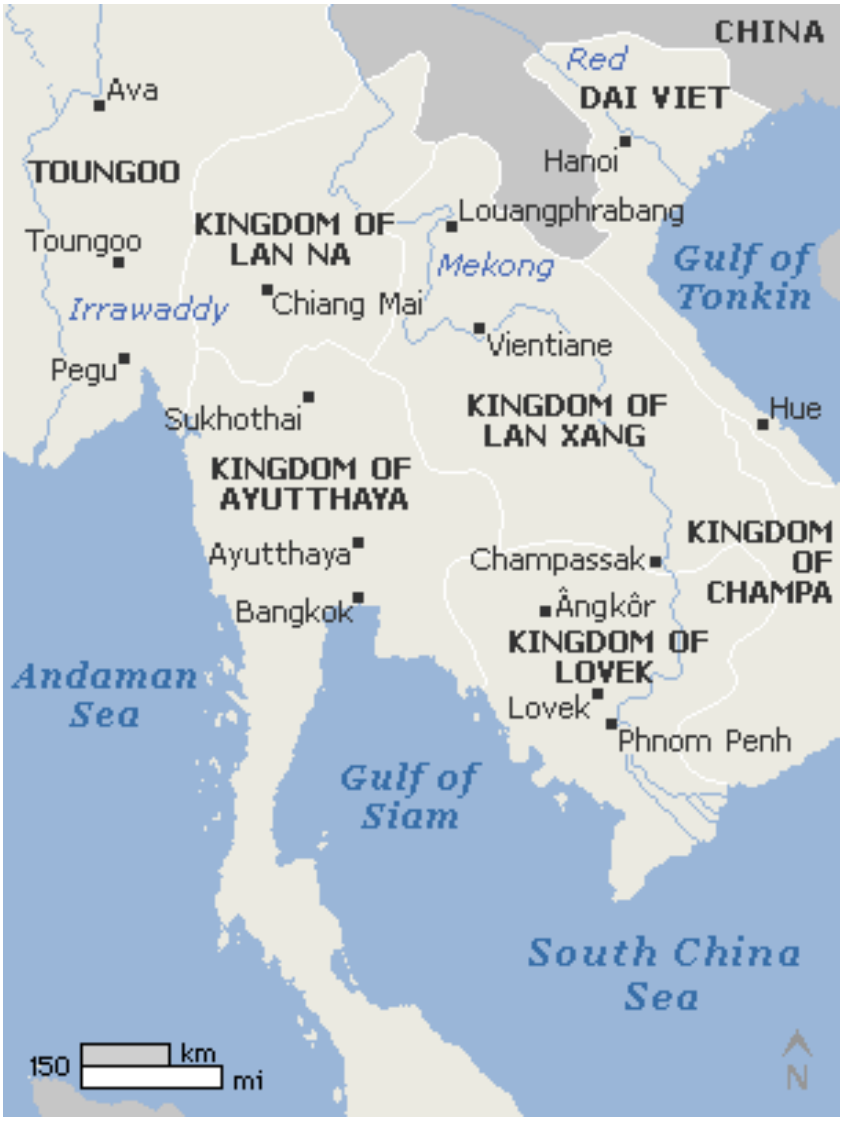
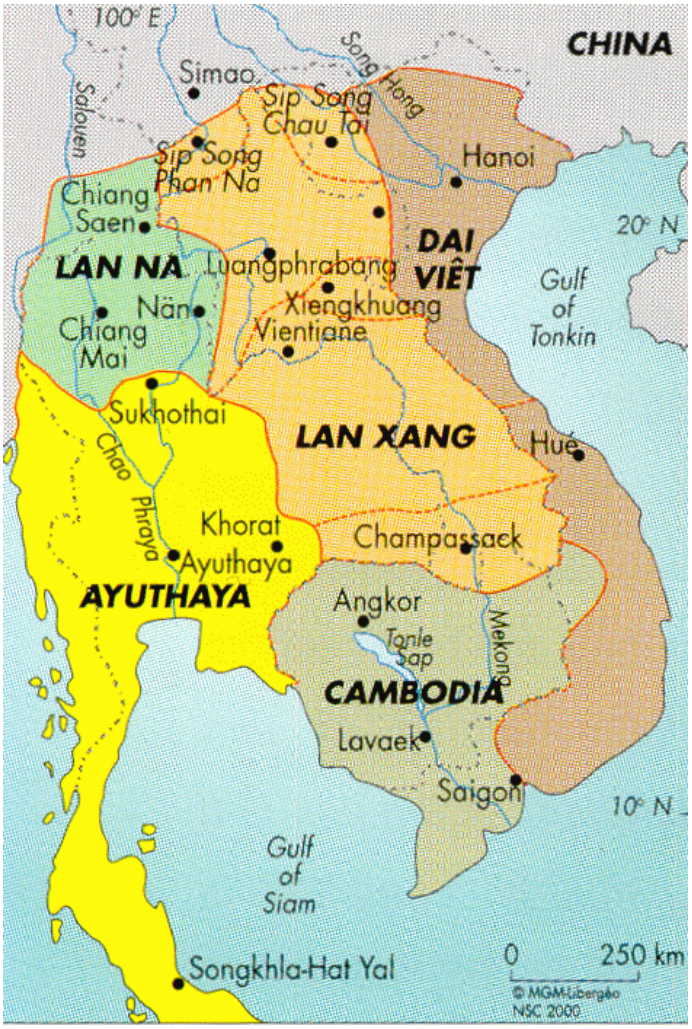


MAP 2.

MAP OF LAN SANG AND LAN NA KINGDOMS



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Preface

Any academic who takes an interest in Lan Na and Lan Sang soon learns that one topic is off-limits: women's studies. One is invariably told that there is nothing more to say about women's lives; that such matters are a temporary issue; that the subject is sensitive and complicated to study; or simply that it is difficult to access sources, especially historical documents.

After several years researching the history of Lan Na and Lan Sang as a PhD student, I began to understand how deeply women and the institution of the family were implicitly contained in these early societies, and how their roles and duties affected public affairs and politics. It became most evident when I looked at sources such as palm-leaf manuscripts, chronicles and other documents, and conducted field research in Thailand and in Laos. The women in those regions and kingdoms throughout the mainland of early Southeast Asia enjoyed much more freedom than women in most other parts of the world. Their freedoms were measured by such worldly factors as being entitled to rule the kingdom, to have some influence in social activities, and to work outside the home in commercial activities such as domestic trade or working at the market.

This was a major spark for this dissertation. In the years that I spent researching it I went through several sharp shifts in my views of women's social roles in those two early Southeast Asian kingdoms between the thirteenth and nineteenth centuries, in particular their "privileged roles", which came about through social processes that allowed them to adopt appropriate social functions and to participate on an even footing with the men in the society.

This dissertation is in no way meant to be the definitive version of that story. Such a project awaits the academics, and the historians conducting women's studies are open to public scrutiny. Instead, my hope is to provide an initial perspective from which Lan Na and Lan Sang specialists can work in the future. Moreover, I hope to offer students of history and women's studies a case study of the social strategies employed in the creation of roles for women in Lan Na and Lan Sang.

The content of this dissertation covers the issues of women's studies in the history of Lan Na and Lan Sang, beginning with chapter 3, which deals with the historical roles and relationships of the Lan Na and Lan Sang kingdoms, and includes some brief examples of important female figures from each kingdom. Chapter 4 concentrates on the influence of Indian and Chinese civilization on women in the Southeast Asian realm. It has been found that most of the kingdoms in mainland

Southeast Asia were founded on Hindu and Buddhist cultural and economic influences, which were dominated by India, while Chinese influence grew with the gradual migration of Chinese traders and merchants who introduced Confucianism into the culture. An analysis of the social strategies exploited in the creation of women's general and privileged roles in terms of a comparative study between Lan Na and Lan Sang is given in chapter 5. This chapter has been expanded to include more detail and analysis of the social structures and early laws that reveal the privileged roles of Lan Na and Lan Sang women.

A note on names and spelling: these occur here in both the Thai and the Lao language. An official system does exist, from the Thai Royal Institution of Romanization, of Thai words and names. However, there is no official system of romanization of Lao words and names, so I have tried to work with commonly accepted English spellings, so that for Lan Xang I now write Lan Sang, *Wiang Can* becomes Vientiane, and *Luang Phra Bang* is now Luang Prabang. In the case of people's names I have tried to use the spelling personal preferred by the people themselves.

Finally, as this is only a preliminary study, I am open to all suggestions for improvement.

Acknowledgements

My journey towards this dissertation started long ago, in my childhood. It was my parents who taught me to follow passions: to dream about things worth pursuing and then to go for them. Without this foundation I probably would not have dared to study history which, at the point I started this work, to use unconventional research methods, or to cross boundaries in order to get where I wanted to be.

While working on a PhD is a lonely endeavour, it is also not possible without others. My PhD work was supervised by my Professor, Dr. Volker Grabowsky who believed that eventually something valuable would emerge from fuzzy pictures presented in various drafts, who asked questions that forced me to define and defend my choices and guided me through the process of developing confidence as an academic. In particular, special thanks go to Acan Aroonrut Wichienkeeo for coaching me through the steps of learning how to be a researcher and being a role model in many other ways.

I am grateful to all my teachers at Chiang Mai University, Yupparaj Wittayalai and Dara Academy who gave me a great knowledge since I was young. I would also thank you to my teachers and colleagues who made my internship at Naresuan University and Chiang Mai Rajabhat University a great learning experience.

I would also particularly like to thank Jettana, Phan, Songsri and Raksasai for picking it up at the finishing stretch, inspiring comments and emotional support. Thank you to Lydia Seibel and Catthiyakorn for being there for me to work out ideas and to get through the process at the toughest times. Chutiporn and my friends in Münster who brightened my anxiety-ridden life in Germany and made it a time of delight to be remembered and I am thankful for many opportunities to share food, thoughts and fun.

I would like to thank Mark Padden, my English friend, who guided, informed and corrected my written English; without him I don't know where I would now stand. In addition, thank you Sura and Natthachai for an encouragement. I am also grateful I had support of librarians back in the Chiang Mai University Libraries and also thank you to all friends along the way in my field research both in Thailand and Laos for their friendship.

I would like to express my gratitude to my family, Phò Insorn, Mae Khaikaeo, Phi Joy, Jom and Jaja, who has been supported and engaged in the successful completion of this work, in particular sustained my strength throughout. I am very thankful Phi Ning Rhatthakarn, my life would be much poorer without your love and patience. I have to thank you for not leaving me and encouraging me while I was writing this dissertation.

Finally, this work would not be possible without the love and patience of Phuwaphat. I guess you will be very happy to have me back from this journey. I would like to tell you that this is your dissertation as well.

Abbreviations

A.D.	*Anno Domini*; the Christian or Common Era
B.C.	Before Christ
B.E.	Buddhist Era
ca.	circa
cent.	century
CMC	The Chiang Mai Chronicle
JKM	Jinakālamālīpakaraṇaṃ
NAT	National Library of Thailand
R.E.	Rattanakosin Era
YC	The Yonok Chronicle

Chapter 1
Introduction
Social Strategies in Creating Roles for Women in Lan Na and Lan Sang from the Thirteenth to the Nineteenth Centuries

Background

This dissertation focuses its attention on the "privileged roles" of women in the two early Southeast Asian kingdoms of Lan Na and Lan Sang. Lan Na was founded by King Mangrai, who united various states in the lowlands of the Kok, Ing and Ping Rivers. He established Chiang Mai as the capital in 1296 A.D. Today, Lan Na is located in upper northern Thailand. Lan Sang was established in the fourteenth century by King Fa Ngum, who led in combining the Lao kingdom with Lan Sang. In the early period the capital of this kingdom was at Chiang Dong Chiang Thòng (now Luang Prabang). Thenceforth, in the middle of the sixteenth century, it was moved to Vientiane in present-day Laos on the banks of the Mekong River.

The premise of this thesis is that women in thirteenth to nineteenth century Lan Na and Lan Sang enjoyed a higher status and played a more prominent role in the economy and politics of their society than they do today. This was the result of a social process that allowed women in Lan Na and Lan Sang to adopt appropriate functions and to participate with the men in the society in a harmonious way. The privileges that Lan Na and Lan Sang women enjoyed were an indication of their position of authority. They were able to work in many areas: for example, in politics they might rise to the throne and govern states or regions; in the area of jurisprudence they might become judges; in medicine they might work as midwives. In addition, they were granted benefits in the form of property and land following divorce.[1] Interestingly, the methods women adopted to create these privileged roles for themselves had some form of social paradigm behind them, that is, they had a vision of what they desired and made a conscious effort to achieve it.

Historically, Lan Na had long been on intimate terms with Lan Sang on political, economic and social levels. Since the main aim of this study is to understand the roles played and the status enjoyed by women regarding both the similarities and the differences between communities, Lan Na and Lan Sang provide excellent models for comparison. Historical evidence such as chronicles and annals, including specifically those of Lan Na and Lan Sang, give us a picture of the relationships between those two

[1] Prasert 1970, Aroonrut and Lamun 1985a and Thin (transl.) 1987.

kingdoms. For example, the *tamnan*[2] sources, such as *Tamnan Ratchawongpakòn*, *Tamnan phün müang chiang mai* (the Chiang Mai Chronicle), *Tamnan phün müang nan* (the Nan Chronicle), and others, tell of the building of the cities and the roles the rulers played in this, and highlight the ancestral relationships of Khun Cüang, or Phraya Cüang Dhammikarāja whom people of Lan Na and Lan Sang and tribal people along the Mekong River regarded as a cultural hero.[3] They also explain the ethnic and cultural unity of the two kingdoms. Politically and economically, Lan Na and Lan Sang shared bonds through marriage, immigration, commerce and even the deportation of people as captives from wars. They also enjoyed religious and cultural similarities. Theravāda Buddhism was the major religion, and a belief in spirits was widespread, so they had many customs and rituals in common. However, it is interesting to discover and investigate the differences that existed between them.

Regarding the similarities, of interest to us are the methods Lan Na and Lan Sang women adopted to develop strategies for stabilizing their power and their social positions, and how women, at a particular period in the past, were able to systematically and without discord establish a social status and function for themselves. But this study will also aim to show that, as time passed, ever more complex circumstances arose which resulted in an imbalance of power between the men and the women of both cultures. I would like to propose that the creation of power through the "privileged roles" of Lan Na and Lan Sang women consisted in the development of effective strategies that resulted in those privileged roles and status.

In order to discuss the origins of these developments I will try to throw some light on the relationships between the women and men in those societies, who accepted each other's positions and were able to work together in all areas of public life. From the fourteenth century onwards the aforementioned developing complexities were accompanied by a devotion to Buddhism in Lan Na and Lan Sang.[4] This combination led to changes in political attitudes and social beliefs and ultimately to a change in the balance of power in men's favour. This change has been maintained ever since. It would

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[2] The term *tamnan* (ตำนาน) and its counterparts *phün* (พื้น) and *ratchawongpakòn* (ราชวงศ์ปกรณ์ or dynastic history) mean 'history'; the Lan Na language calls them 'chronicles'. Grabowsky (2008) states that *tamnan* in a narrower sense are also known by the genuinely Northern Thai term *phün*. Sarassawadee (2005) notes that *phün* and *tamnan* are often used interchangeably and are sometimes even combined, as in *Tamnan Phün Müang Chiang Mai* and *Tamnan Phün Müang Nan*; and some versions of *Tamnan Phün Müang Chiang Mai* are given the name *Tamnan Ratchawongpakòn*.

[3] See studies of the concept of culture heroes like Khun Cüang in the academic research papers of Prakhòng Nimmanheminda (1987), *An Analysis of the Thao Bacüang Epic*, and Doungdeuane Boonyavong and Othòng Khaminchu (1991) in *Hit (ฮีต) and Khòng (คอง): Tradition in the Thao Hung Thao Cüang Epic*.

[4] Srisak 2002.

be interesting to investigate how women, now under the control of men, might enact an amicable revival of those privileged roles and social strategies.

Objectives

This dissertation aims to

1. study the characteristics of the privileged roles of Lan Na and Lan Sang women
2. compare and contrast these privileged roles
3. investigate the "social strategies" employed in creating them
4. compare and contrast these social strategies
5. study the relationships between the social strategies used by Lan Na and Lan Sang women to gain power and develop their privileged roles.

Scope of the study

This dissertation is approached from two viewpoints as follows:

1. The time period covered in the study

The thesis covers the time span from the thirteenth century to the nineteenth century, examining significant aspects of Lan Na and Lan Sang in four important periods:

1.1 The Period of Independence (1296-1558). During this period Lan Na was governed by the Mangrai Dynasty (1296-1551), while Lan Sang was under the reign of King Fa Ngum up to the reign of Phra Sumangalabodhisatta (1354-1575). Both Lan Na and Lan Sang were independent but they had diverse political and commercial ties through intermarriage, military campaigns, trade by land and a river mail system. In addition, there was a social relationship, created by the exchange and intermingling of the arts and of Buddhist and shamanist practices, and the two kingdoms have shared these cultural similarities up to the present day.

Nevertheless, this dissertation will centre particularly on the comparative study of Lan Na and Lan Sang in order to understand the social strategies employed in creating the social roles that interest us. We find that women in the upper classes played a significant role in the government of those kingdoms: women such as Queen Cirapraphathewi (1545-1546),[5] the Queen of Lan Na, and Mahathewi (1428-1449), who was an influential figure behind the throne of Lan Sang.[6]

1.2 The Period of Burmese Domination (1558-1775). Lan Na, with Chiang Mai as its capital, was overthrown and ruled over by Burma from 1558 to 1774. Under

[5] Wyatt and Aroonrut 1998: 114.
[6] Maha Sila 1997: 65-67.

Burmese rule the status of semi-autonomous (mandala) state was done away with and Lan Na became an integral part of Burma. It had a female governor, Queen Wisutthathewi (1564-1578),[7] who was based in the capital Chiang Mai and whose main duties and functions were carried out there. Meanwhile, Lan Sang, after moving its capital from Chiang Thòng (Luang Phrabang) to Vientiane during the reign of King Setthathirat, was also dominated by Burma between 1574 and 1588.[8] But despite being each separately ruled over by Burma, Lan Na and Lan Sang maintained contact with each other. This was demonstrated, for example, when Burma invaded Lan Na in 1595 and the King of Lan Sang provided an armed force to Phraya Nan to repel the Burmese forces. Unfortunately, Phraya Nan was defeated and subsequently escaped to Lan Sang.[9]

1.3 The Period of Siamese Overlordship (1778-1893). Two of Lan Na's local leaders, Phraya Ca Ban (Bun Ma) and Cao Kawila, made a request to the King of Thonburi (Taksin) to be incorporated into Siam, with the aim of securing an armed force to expel the Burmese from Lan Na. In 1775 they succeeded. Phraya Ca Ban was appointed by King Taksin as Phraya Luangwatchiraprakan Kamphaengphet, ruler of Chiang Mai, while Cao Kawila was consecrated as King Kawila, ruler of Lampang.[10] When Siam had a change of rule from the Thonburi Dynasty to the Chakri Dynasty, during the reign of King Rama I (King Phraphutthayòtfaculalok), King Kawila took over the leadership of Chiang Mai from Phraya Ca Ban (1782). This marked the beginning of Lan Na's *Cao Cet Ton* Dynasty. Since then, Lan Na has been a part of Siam.

Subsequently, the kingdom of Lan Sang was divided into the three independent states of Lan Sang Luang Prabang, Lan Sang Vientiane and Lan Sang Champasak. But King Taksin was able to prevail over Burma and sent an army to conquer and burn Vientiane in 1778 (the 'first victory'). He took the Image of the Emerald Buddha from Vientiane to Thonburi. At the same time, he brought a lot of Lao captives into Siam. This led the kings of the three states of Lan Sang to accept the status of 'vassal states' of Siam. Up until the reign of King Rama I, King Taksin continued to demand an annual tribute to Siam from these vassal states, in accordance with Siamese tradition.

Lan Na's and Lan Sang's relationships to Siam as vassal states were maintained on a social and economic basis. One interesting aspect of this is how both communities used their women to develop these relationships. They established affiliations by offering their princesses as consorts to the kings of Siam, as was expected from tributary states. The Lan Na princess Cao Si Anocha (Sirirotcana), for example, a sister

[7] Wyatt and Aroonrut 1998: 127.
[8] Thòngsüp 1985: 118.
[9] Souneth 2001: 6.
[10] Sarassawadee 2001*:* 225.

of King Kawila of Chiang Mai, was given to Krom Phrarachawang Bòwònsathanmongkhon, who was granted the title of Front Palace in 1781.[11] Similarly, Phra Ratchaya Cao Dararatsami, a daughter of King Intharawitchayanon, the seventh ruler of Chiang Mai, was offered to King Rama V (King Phra Culacòmklaocaoyuhua), while the King of Sisattanakhanahut (Lan Sang) offered to King Rama I one of his princesses: she became his concubine and gave birth to Cao Fa Kunthon Thiphayawadi.[12]

1.4 The period of Western colonization (1893-1953). When Laos was colonized by France in 1899, the relationship between Lan Na and Laos cooled. This was partly due to the fact that Lan Na was incorporated into the kingdom of Thailand and the communities were forced apart, because Laos had to contact Lan Na through France while Lan Na had to contact Laos through Siam.

2. The thematic content of the study

The dissertation will focus on three thematic aspects as follows:

2.1 It will look at the political, cultural and economic connections that existed historically between Lan Na and Lan Sang, as well as the familial ties on all social levels, and the practice of Buddhism.

2.2 It will look at the social structures that affected the development of the "privileged roles" of Lan Na and Lan Sang women and their appropriation of power.

2.3 It will also consider the phenomenon of gender from the viewpoint that this is defined by a cultural system through social and historical conditioning. Biological differences apart, people's values, expectations and actions are shaped by the concept of 'gender'.[13] There is therefore a need to discuss the status and the roles that are imposed on women by a society and its culture, whose influence never ceases to affect the social relationships between the sexes.

Research methodology

This dissertation employs a historical approach and is presented in the form of analytical description. The evidence used in the documentary research includes primary and secondary sources. The primary sources are found in ancient laws, legends, chronicles, foreigners' documents, lyrics, sayings, proverbs, folklore and folktales. The secondary sources come from newspapers, journals and periodicals. Furthermore, novels, articles in relevant books and academic theses, as well as articles from journals and related foreign books and other documents have been consulted.

[11] Damrong Rachanuphap, *The Royal Chronicles of Rattanakosin: King Rama II* 1983*:* 710.
[12] Thipakòrawong, Cao Phraya, *The Royal Chronicles of Rattanakosin: King Rama I* 1988: 104.
[13] Pranee 2006: 10-11.

A second important part of the study is made up by ethnographic. This adds support for a better understanding of the thematic aspects of the study. The areas studied include villages in Chiang Mai and Nan, since these two provinces were originally part of the Lan Na polity. Chiang Mai used to be the capital, so it is a mandatory source of data. Nan, which was in Eastern Lan Na, had an intimate relationship with the previous Lan Sang kingdom, since both shared the territory. It is partly through that relationship that this dissertation investigates how female roles in Lan Na and Lan Sang were created.

Further areas studied include villages in Luang Prabang and Vientiane in the Lao People's Democratic Republic. Because both Luang Prabang and Vientiane had an intimate relationship with Lan Na, this makes Laos a significant source of data for this dissertation. This field research contributes greatly to an appreciation of the patterns of social practices that we are concerned with between women and men. It also facilitates a clearer understanding of the conventions and traditional lifestyles of the people in the areas concerned.

I also make use of some women's studies from twentieth century Western societies. These take a female-centred approach, or at least women's concerns form the major issues, in the analysis of the status, roles and other issues of women in society. Generally, women's studies aim to look critically at the patriarchal model and to suggest ways of creating a better society for men and women together, while focusing their enquiries on social structures related to individuals. But to understand the social frameworks of Lan Na and Lan Sang we need to consider the varying, everyday social contexts found in those two kingdoms, and to realize that the time the people lived in influenced their attitudes and social paradigms.

Consequently, this dissertation does not rely too heavily on women's studies. These are applied rather to support the study of how Lan Na and Lan Sang women went about creating their social strategies. As already mentioned in relation to social structures governing the sexes, it is widely believed that the ideals together with the economy and politics of a society influence the creation of gender differences between women and men (who now oppress women). Since, during one epoch in the past, the women of Lan Na and Lan Sang were able at times to contrive equal or even superior roles for themselves, the women's studies referred to in this thesis become valuable in making sense of female gender issues in Southeast Asia in a real context.

Anticipated results

As a consequence of investigating the methods the women of these past communities used to enhance their social status, this thesis should be of benefit to any studies concerning women today and help create policies for women's development in

the future. I expect this study to enhance the knowledge and understanding of the background to those women's efforts, who created their roles spontaneously and without disrupting the holistic societies they belonged to. The cultures of Lan Na and Lan Sang were very similar, and their comparison in terms of the economy, society and politics should throw light on the social processes that enabled the coexistence of, and the development of equal power structures between the sexes.

It should also aid in promoting women's self-esteem as well as their general social development, since a common appreciation of women's values and natural rights and the role they have to play will further the cultivation of women's policies in all cultures. Further to this, it should reinforce those strategies employed in the past, and necessary now and in the future for attaining those goals.

Historical background of Lan Na and Lan Sang

Meaning and origin of the names "Lan Na" and "Lan Sang"

This dissertation deals firstly with two points, namely, the meanings of the names of the two kingdoms, and the orthography. The words *Lan Na* are from an early dialect and refer to a kingdom in an area of what is now northern Thailand. The following words appear on a stone inscription (1553) at the Chiang Sa Temple, Chiang Khong District, Chiang Rai Province: "… Somdet Bòrom Bòphit, who ruled both Lan Sang and Lan Na, followed the Buddhist faith and offered estates for the building of a monastery."[14] The meaning of *Lan Na* has been variously explained at different times by several local academics. For example, Thawi Sawangpanyangkun based his interpretation on the words *Lān* (ลาน) and *Lán* (ล้าน) which differ only on their tones. *Lān* (ลาน), which means "open ground",[15] is *khuang* (ข่วง) in the Lan Na language, or *Kam Müang*.[16] Tai Lü (of Sipsòng Panna) and Tai Khün (of Chiang Tung) also used *khuang* (ข่วง), pronounced *khong* (โข่ง), to refer to an open ground.[17] *Lān* (ลาน) to Lan Na people was actually the name of some varieties of plant, or ear ornaments.[18] Therefore, the name should be *Lán Nā* (ล้านนา), rather than *Lān Nā* (ลานนา).

For Aroonrut Wichienkeeo, *Lán Nā* (ล้านนา) derived from the name of an administrative unit, called *panna* (พันนา),[19] where a hierarchical ranking system based on the possession of rice fields from a thousand fields upwards was practised. The ranking

[14] Quoted from Penth 1983:1.
[15] Thai Dictionary, the Royal Institute Version 2542 (2003): 1007.
[16] Udom 2004: 76.
[17] Thawi 1987: 5.
[18] Udom 2004: 646.
[19] As to *panna* system, see Grabowsky, 2005.

begins with *hua na* (หัวนา), and progresses to *muat na* (หมวดนา) up to *phan na* (พันนา). Large cities like Chiang Saen, Chiang Rai, Phayao and Chiang Mai evidently contained several thousands of rice fields. Thus, the title given to a nobleman who possessed a thousand rice fields was *cao phan* (เจ้าพัน). One who possessed ten thousand rice fields was named *cao mün* (เจ้าหมื่น), and one with a hundred thousand was a *cao saen* (เจ้าแสน). These were noblemen from the lowest to the highest rank respectively.[20]

Hans Penth also interprets *Lan Na* as "a million rice fields". From the stone inscription (1553) at the Chiang Sa Temple in Chiang Khong District, Chiang Rai Province, the words *Lan Sang*, defined by Penth as "a million elephants", were the name applied to the Luang Prabang Kingdom.[21] Further, we see from *The Lan Na-Thai Dictionary, Mae Fa Luang version*, which is based on the Pali language and concords words from the two kingdoms, *Lan Sang*, concorded with *Sattanaganahut*, means "a hundred times ten thousand elephants" (i.e. a million elephants). The words *Lan Na*, concorded with *Dasalakkhakhettanakhara* in Pali, are found to mean "the land with ten times a hundred thousand rice fields" (a million rice fields). This kingdom was regarded as the twin to Lan Sang,[22] and, as we have seen, their names share common features. So the land with a million rice fields became "Lan Na" while the land with a million elephants became "Lan Sang".

Lao academics nevertheless offer a variety of explanations for the origin of the name *Lan Sang*. Firstly, Dr. Souneth Phothisane points out that both Lan Na and Lan Sang were influenced by Brahmanism. Important was the location of the cities: Chiang Dong Chiang Thòng was founded by two hermit brothers and "at the centre of the city, on the peak of the mountain Phusi, stood a holy pillar (Inthakhin). The mountain stood firm, as high as the sky, and stretched out beyond the city. Besides this were two other mountains, Phu Lán and Phu Sáng, which were natural landmarks of the city." This, says Phothisane, accounts for the origin of the name *Lan Sang*. The Pali and Sanskrit languages also played a part in how these names came about: *Nakhòn Sisattanakhanahut* means "a million elephant". The Lan Na polity also had a holy pillar located at the centre of the capital Chiang Mai.[23] One further hypothesis argues that two

[20] Aroonrut 1991: 8.
[21] Penth 1983*: 1*.
[22] Udom 2004: 646-647.
[23] Professor Dr. Udom Rungrüangsri has proposed that the idea did not exist, in the Mangrai Dynasty, of including the holy pillar (Indrakhila) in the building of Chiang Mai. The idea came from Tai Lü (of Sipsòng Panna), not Tai Yuan (of Lan Na). Furthermore, this occurred later, in the eighteenth century. King Kawila (1782-1816) re-established Chiang Mai by bringing people in from cities, under the concept of *kep phak sai sa- kep kha sai müang* ("collecting vegetables into a basket; collecting peasants into a *müang*"). This rebuilt Chiang Mai after the war. See *The Prosperous Lan Na* (*ล้านนาอันอุดม*) 2006.

of Chiang Mai's natural landmarks, Phu Lán ("million mountains") and Nā ("rice fields"), account for the origin of the name.[24]

Secondly, Maha Sila Viravong refers to a Lao folktale called *The Story of Thao Khat Na* when explaining the origin of the name of the country's as *Krung Lan Sang*. The name was derived from a quarrel between Thao Khat Net and Thao Khat Can, two sons of Thao Khat Na. One was transformed into an elephant (*sang*), the other into a lion (*ratchasi*). They flew into the sky to fight, and beheaded each other. The head of the elephant fell into the middle of the Krung, or Phluang (a large timber tree) forest, so that area became known as "Krung Lan Sang". The head of the lion fell through a mountain and was transformed into a *naga* (a king snake), which then crawled away. The route along which the *naga* crawled became a river, which was named *Nam Khan*. The mountain through which the lion's head fell was named "Phu Si".[25] Phu Si and Nam Khan are situated in Luang Phrabang.

Furthermore, the Lao amateur historian Sisana Sisan has postulated that the name of the Lan Sang kingdom might be derived from the Mekong. The river rises in the Tibetan Plateau and runs through China and many other countries in Southeast Asia.[26] Sisana has proposed that *Lān Chāng* means "river". Local people in Talifu[27] use the word *Nān* for "water", based on the language of Northern Tai people living in China. The word *Chāng*, or *Yang*, depending on the dialect, means "river". According to a second hypothesis, *Lan Chang* (as in the *Lan Chāng* polity) signifies a region of steep hills containing rivers. *Lān* is a word derived from a dialect spoken by Chinese people who live in the area through which the Mekong runs, and means "the current of big bubbles". As we have seen, *Chāng* or *Yang* means "river". When we combine these words, *Lān Chāng* means "the dangerous river which is in steep areas and runs forcefully".

Also, it has been argued that the name of the Lao Lan Sang kingdom does not signify a million elephants because it is not customary, according to Lao and Tai tradition, to name a country after an animal. A country or a *müang* should be named after a river. Consequently, the Lao domain may derive its name from the Mekong.[28] The Chinese have called the Mekong the "Lan Cang Jiang" or "Lan Chāng River" since

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[24] Souneth 2001: 1-2.
[25] Maha Sila 1997: 95.
[26] The Mekong has several names based on the areas that the river runs through. In Tibet, it is called *Dza-chu*, while in Yunnan, in China, it is called *Lan Cang Jiang*. In Thailand, Laos and Myanmar, the river is called the *Khong River* or *Mekong*. The Cambodians name it *Tonle Thom* ("Great River"), and in Vietnam it is called *Kil Long* ("Nine Dragons"). Furthermore, in the nineteenth century the Mekong is also referred to as 'Laos River' or 'Cambodia River' in contemporary Western reports.
[27] Talifu was the Nan Cao Kingdom or Nong Sae in earlier times.
[28] Sisana 1989: 126-129.

the Yuan Dynasty (1279-1368); we find in ancient Chinese documents many references to the Lan Cang River. For instance, in the reign of Emperor Xiaowu (140-87 B.C.), in the Han Dynasty, the emperor travelled across the Bonan Hills, the Lan Cang River and the Qi Stream (which is a branch of the Salween River). The Han people once crossed the Lan Cang to conquer the land of Ai Lao.[29] The name *Lan Cang* is not Chinese, but is probably borrowed from the Tai-Lao people, who used it to name their lands, which are situated on the banks of this river. This hypothesis adds an interesting dimension to the discussion of the name *Lan Sang* beside its general definition as "a million elephants".

The second point concerns the way these names are written. In primary documents such as legends written in palm-leaf manuscripts and stone inscriptions from northern Thailand, we have the words *Lān Nā* (ลานนา) and *Lān Sang* (ลานช้าง) mixed up with the words *Lán Na* (ล้านนา) and *Lán Sang* (ล้านช้าง). This once led to a controversial discussion among academic scholars about the names of these two kingdoms. Thai scholars such as Prince Subhadradis Diskul and Professor Dr. Prasert Na Nagara have suggested that the words *Lán Nā* (ล้านนา) might formerly have been written as *Lān Nā* (ลานนา) without a high-pitch tone marker, because there was no tone marker in the early Lan Na script. This style is similar to the Sukhothai script from the reign of King Ramkhamhaeng. Since the beginning of the sixteenth century, the use of tone markers has become more and more popular. However, local documents generally still employ the old methods of writing, so there is a mixture of *Lán Nā* (ล้านนา) and *Lān Nā* (ลานนา). This merely indicates the differences in the rules of orthography.[30]

A further hypothesis, formulated by the Lan Na scholars Thawi Sawangpanyangkun and Thio Wichaikhatkha, holds that these names might be written *Lán Nā* (ล้านนา) and *Lán Sáng* (ล้านช้าง). Thawi Sawangpanyangkun refers to documents by foreigners in which these names appear. For example, in *The Wat Padaeng Chronicle* and *The Chiang Tung State Chronicle*, translated by Cao Saimüang Mangrai, University of Michigan,[31] we find the following words: "Here will be told a little of the chronicle of *Jengmai*, the one million rice fields of fifty-seven provinces."[32] The name *Lan Na* is interpreted as follows:

> Lanna means one million rice fields, and it is the designation of the old domain

[29] *Chinese Sources Pertaining to Laos or Lan Sang, Yuan Period* (1279-1368), translated by Foon Ming Liew-Herres (Hamburg, Germany).
[30] See also Penth 1983.
[31] Cao Saimöng Mangrai once ruled Chiang Tung, which is presently in Myanmar. He was a scholar of Chiang Tung. His main work is *The Shan States and the British Annexation.*
[32] Quoted from Thawi 1987: 221.

> of Chiengmai. In Khun and Chiengmai (Tai Yuan) scripts the word carries the meaning of one million rice fields. A change in the tone of "lan" in the Central Thai dialect gives the meaning of a vast stretch of rice fields to the word, and this is the meaning now taken by Central Thais. "Dau Lanna" means "the King of Lanna". Laos has been known to Kengtung as "Lanjang", (the land of) "one million elephants".[33]
> (underlined by the researcher).

The article *Invasion Thai en Indo-Chine* by Pierre Lefèvre Pontalis in the *T'oung Pao Archives* defines *Lán Nā* (ล้านนา) as follows: "… Ils (les Younes) gagnèrent ensuite, par le Me-ing, le haut basin du Menam, et supplantèrent peu à peu les anciens habitants ou Lawas, dans cette belle région qu'ils appelèrent "Lan-na", le "Million de rizières", comme les Laotiens avaient appelé leur pays "Lan-Chang ..." (p.71). The definition of Lán Sáng (*ล้านช้าง*) is as follows: "… Les Laotiens eux-mêmes, par un jeu de mots très habituel aux populations de l'Indochine, en ont fait "Lan-Chang", que l'on peut traduire par "Million d'éléphants"[34] (underlined by the researcher).

Similarly, Thio Wichaikhatkha refers to legends containing the words *Lán Nā* (ล้านนา) and *Lán Sáng* (ล้านช้าง) written in inscriptions and in palm-leaf manuscripts, which support his hypothesis, as, for example, in The Legend of Cao Suwan Kham Daeng, or the Legend of Chiang Mai ('the mother punishes her offspring' version) (ฉบับแม่ตีลูก). Thawi Sawangpanyangkul has made a copy of the Mün Lan Temple version; the words are used as follows:

> Page 21, line 3 .... If there are a million (ล้าน) rice fields, he will put popped rice, flowers and candles in a hand-sized bucket
>
> Page 21, line 5 .... Prince Cao Suwan Kham Daeng had a million (ล้าน) paddy fields. Then he named his domain Lán Nā (ล้านนา)
>
> Page 23, line 5 .... After Cao Suwan Kham Daeng passed away, his several descendents long reigned Lán Nā (ล้านนา)

Another important source is a book in the Dharma Tai Lü script, "The Saenwi King list". On page 2, line 3, we find the words, "...The person Lao Yüa Rüng ruled the kingdoms Lán Sáng and Lán Nā …"[35]

Additionally, Thawi refers to the writings of Professor Dr. Prasert Na Nagara and finds that the name Cao Kawirorot Suriyawòng means *Lán Nā* (ล้านนา) as written in the Yonok Annals of Phraya Prachakitcakòracak (Chaem Bunnak), First Edition (1898):

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[33] Ibid:153.
[34] Thawi 1987: 9.
[35] Quoted from Thio 1987.

> In the Lesser Era 1218, the dragon year, on the second waning of the tenth month, Phraya Kaeo Suriyawong was knighted Cao Kawilorot Suriyawong Damrong Nabīsīnakònsunthòn Dasalakkhaṇakṣetra Wòraridhidet Mahā Yonāngkharatchawongsadhibòdi, ruler of Chiang Mai" (underlined by the researcher).

Thio has analysed the names of Chiang Mai rulers in the household of *Na Chiang Mai* at the royal tomb in northern Thailand. This tomb is located in the Suan Dok Temple. He found at least two names of rulers that contain the meaning *Lán Nā* (ล้านนา). They are: Cao Indrawarorot Suriyawong Damrong Nabīsīnakònsunthòn Dasalakkhaṇakṣetra and Cao Kaeonawarat Praphanin Nandrabong Damrong Nabīsīnakònkhet Dasalakkhaṇakṣetra.

Taken separately, *dasa* (Pali) means "ten"; *lakkhaṇa* (Pali) means a "hundred thousand"; *kṣetra* (Sanskrit) means "rice fields". Taken as a whole, the word *Sunthòndasalakhanakṣetra* means "ten times a hundred thousand rice fields".[36]

In 1983, Chiang Mai scholars finally reached the consensus that the name *Lan Na* is to be understood as *Lán Nā* ("the land of a million rice fields"), and not *Lān Nā* ("the land of open ground").[37] Similarly, the name *Lan Sang* is *Lán Sang* ("the land of a million elephants") in accordance with Lán Na, due to their relationship and the fact that their names are coupled with each other in the historical evidence.

[36] Thio 1987.
[37] Sarassawadee 2001: 22.

Chapter 2
Studies of Women's Issues (Literature Review)

Of great interest are studies that have been made of women's issues and social circumstances, which can be categorized by their content in terms of politics, the economy and socio-culture, and include studies by women themselves. This area has fascinating and potentially beneficial implications for this dissertation. In particular, in deference to the main theme of this thesis, this chapter pays special attention to the studies that have been made of women and their ideas in Northern Thailand. Studies concerning Lao women have also been included, but unfortunately these suffer from a serious drawback in that there is a limited quantity of material available. Such studies were, furthermore, frequently conducted by the Government, as we will see.

Women and the economy

From studies and surveys concerning women's status and the role they play in the economy, the following features emerge: proposals have been made to promote women's economic roles and status through education; there is an attempt to further equal opportunities for women; women's abandoning of housework and agricultural work to enter employment in the labour market in order to boost the family income renders them labourers who are treated equally to men, but, contrarily, they still get lower wages and fewer chances to get jobs. It is mainly men who occupy officially recognised positions that profit the country's gross domestic product. Traditional women's activities such as housework, menial labouring jobs and farming are overlooked and perceived as constituting the "informal" sector of the economy. Such occupations are not regarded as contributing to the financial development of the country, and women are dismissed as belonging to "the informal sector".[1]

"Women in the economy" is the notion most widely presented, as in the studies of women from Northern Thailand, which provide the example of women working in services such as tourism. The Government set up the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) in 1960, a department for managing, planning and promoting tourism, in order to create an income for the country. The Government calculated that, second after Bangkok, Chiang Mai would bring in the most profit from tourism, being well suited in

[1] Sane 1990: 35. Studies that deal with this include *Women and poverty in the Third World* (BuviniBc 1983); *Women: Home Based Workers in Thailand* (Amara 1991); *The Study of Women* (Chatsuman 1992); *Women's Circumstances Working in Industry and the Changes in Family Relationships* (Waruni and Benca 1994); *Women's Economic Participation in Thai Families Affecting the Development of the Country and Social Welfare* (Carey and Naphaphorn 1995); *Women in the Development of the Lao People's Democratic Republic* (Chagnon 1996); *Women Labourers and Women's Labour: The Multiple Marginality* (Chusak 1999); *Women's Studies 2: Women in Various Aspects* (2001); etc.

terms of its geographic location, climate, rich traditions and culture, various tourist attractions, comfortable tourist accommodation and convenient transport. Since the middle of the 1960s, TAT has been developing Chiang Mai as a tourist destination.[2] This has motivated local investors to back tourism since that time.[3]

The element of female prostitution is explained in most of the studies by the economic changes that have played a significant part in forcing Northern Thai and Lao women to enter into this occupation. The studies also try to arouse awareness of this phenomenon and promote the status of women, offering the explanation that this is a social problem which negatively affects the whole country and urgently needs to be solved.[4]

The preconceptions associated with women in the economy, which are related to those of gender, are employed to indicate the occupations that women and men take up according to the respective status and responsibilities of the sexes.[5] Women are associated with the community: their duties and status are associated with housework, local and communal trade activities and agriculture. They are responsible for running the household: earning and saving for the family and managing the income. Men are associated with the external world of, for example, diplomatic affairs and trade between communities.[6] This leads to women being maltreated through sexual prejudice, but their status is associated with the negative social context which forces them to play their given roles and perform their responsibilities accordingly. Nevertheless, this kind of study places emphasis on the economic changes which drive more and more women into the capitalist economy, and encourage their maltreatment. This gender-related discrimination is, however, not as severe as that in Western countries.[7]

Women and politics

The discussion of politics is usually related to the power of the state and its citizens with an emphasis on the roles played by officials and political parties. Studies of women in politics are always coloured by the debate on the sexual prejudice that

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[2] Tourism Authority of Thailand 1971: 53.
[3] Plai-ò 1987: 147-151. See *Chiang Mai Women* (Nopburi 1986); *Child and Female Labour: the Direction of the Rural Area and the Expansion of Chiang Mai on the Basis of the Tourist Industry: the Research Report* (Benca et al. 1988); etc.
[4] Studies include: *For the Better Life of Prostitutes* (Prakai 1988); *The Report and Summary of the Conference Minutes on Northern Thai Child Prostitutes: Experiences from the Kham La Project* (Foundation for Women 1989); *Female Prostitution: the Way of Thai Society?* (Siriphòn et al. 1997); *The Self-Projection of Identity of Female Prostitutes in Beer Bars in Chiang Mai* (Sophida 2000)**;** *On the Trail of Female Prostitutes in World War II: Research Report* (Sophida 2001)**;** *The Changing Patterns of Female Prostitution in Muang District, Chiang Mai* (Buntham 2003); etc.
[5] Chalidaporn, no date of publication: 4.
[6] Nidhi 1995: 114-115.
[7] Pranee 1993: 88.

leads to political roles being almost exclusively occupied by men while women are prevented from engaging in officially recognised political activities, a fact that is clearly seen in the difference in numbers between female and male political leaders. In the patriarchal political system women are constantly confronted with these double standards.[8]

Additionally, there is the relationship between women and men in political history. The ancient state was built to cater for men rather than women. Men's work was related to feudalism and the administration of the state while women were relegated to the home and community. So the working patterns of the two sexes were different based on the social space each belonged to.[9] This is perhaps explained by the fact that Southeast Asian men were usually brought up with the idea and the expectation that they should study to ensure a promising future in politics. Meanwhile, women were responsible for the housework and providing for the family and for the educational expenses of male siblings.[10] They were thus more politically limited than men.[11]

The studies of women in politics cannot conclude that, because of the political limitations they suffered, women were completely oppressed, since, from the historical evidence of chronicles, inscriptions, annals and ancient laws, we see that women did occupy positions of political influence, from that of Queen to that of the King's mother or his consort (a figure who could also play a significant part in the building of a monastery for the Buddhist patronage, for example) or in politics in general.[12] However, historical studies have limitations. Most historical evidence concerns the lives and activities of the upper classes. Consequently, it is crucial that the evidence be scrutinised and employed together with other documents such as foreigners' documents, works of literature, folklore and folktales and so on, for more precise information.

Women and socio-culture

The social-scientific approach to the study of women's issues lays emphasis on the application of social and cultural models in each area to explain women's social roles and responsibilities. These studies frequently take social norms and thinking, including beliefs that have an influence on lifestyle, as a part of the explanation for the relationship between the sexes. For example, sexual inequalities in Thai society do not

[8] See *Women and Politics: the Alternatives for the Decade 1990 - 2000* (Suthira and Shila 1993); *Women and the Constitution: a Record of the Journey to Equality* (Thicha 2002); *Women and Men: Equal Partners in National Development* (Methini 2004); *Roles of Communication in the Empowerment of Women in Local Politics: the Complete Research Report* (Aòmthip and Naret 2004); etc.
[9] Nidhi 1995.
[10] M.R. Akin 1980.
[11] Sasiporn 2000.
[12] Chiranut 1999.

result in the female oppression that we see in other societies because of the cultural system and the exploitation of ethical values and beliefs as a tool in the specification and management of the various roles and responsibilities that women and men enjoy. This also prevents men from taking firm advantage of women; we see this, for example, in the rituals and matriarchal traditions of Northern Thailand that obliged men to live and work in their wives' families after marriage. As social and economic systems change, lifestyles become more individualistic. This is detrimental to the cultural system and women face ever more severe oppression.[13] The socio-cultural study of women has many aspects relating to women's social functions and duties. This dissertation aims to promote opportunities and rights for women equal to those of men based on the assumption that social change can influence these functions and duties.[14]

Social issues concerning women include prostitution, foreign women's labour, women and violence, women and the environment and resource management, women's health and reproductive rights, and women and religion, among others. Studies of these issues frequently imply a sexual discrimination and subordination of women and explain sexual inequalities by the exploitation of social status in politics and the economy. That is to say, women are disadvantaged in terms of career opportunities and political rights, and this leads to sexual prejudice.[15]

In addition, it is essential to refer to folklore in order to understand the social model of the inhabitants of a society. Folklore reveals women's roles and duties. It also contributes to their awareness of them and ensures they will pass this awareness on to their descendants.[16]

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[13] Pranee 1990. The studies that discuss this include *Family Life in a Northern Thai Village: A Study of the Structural Significance of Women* (Potter 1977); *Women and Kinship: Comparative Perspectives on Gender in South and Southeast Asia* (Dube 1997); *Women in Oriental Manuscripts* (Precha 1998); etc.

[14] See *The Effects on Male Subordinates of Having Been Supervised by Women* **(**Prani 1990); *How Thai Society Expects Thai Women* (Wanthani and Suni 1998); *The Social Network of Women in the Subcontract System: A Case Study of Cloth Production in Sankamphaeng District, Chiang Mai* (Kanokphòn 1999); etc.

[15] de Beauvoir 1993. See *Suggestions for Tackling the Problem of Foreign Female Labour: from the Research Project and Workshop on Female Abuse* (Chutima 1995); *Roles of Women and the Management of Local Forest Resources: A Case Study of Sob Yao Village, Muang District, Nan* (Ratchani 1998); *Domestic Violence: the Perspective of Women: the Research Report* (Awatsada 2001); *Women from the Buddhist Perspective* (Laksawat 2002)**;** *Prostitution: Which Direction is Thailand Going to Take?- A Collation of Articles Addressed in Academic Forums and Media* (Virada 2004); *Women, Grounds for Divorce and Divorce Mediation Systems in the Laos PDR: Case Studies in Six Provinces* (Sukphaphòn 2005), etc.

[16] Of interest here are works such as *The Worldview of the Thai Lan Na People* (Sit 1979); *The Lan Na People's Paradigm* from the *Study of Northern Thai Nursery Rhymes* (Lamun 1984); *Roles and Responsibilities of Sayings Affecting Lan Na Beliefs* (Sawaeng 1993); *The Study of Lan Na Beliefs in Sequences of Violation* (Suwarat 1998); and *Roles of Women in Passing on Beliefs and Rituals in Northern Thai Communities* (Sunan 2002). Furthermore, certain folk stories mention desirable and undesirable characteristics of Northern Thai women and men. The folklore sample is *Lan Na Buddhist Stories and Requesting to Teach Worldly People (คดีโลกธัมม์ล้านนาและวิงวอนสอนโลก); Lan Na Dharma Script,*

Women's studies

The feminist approach originated in Western countries. It centres on women in its analysis and focuses on the various social problems that women experience. It can be split into two periods. The first period examines feminism itself. Feminism takes the view that men are dominant in society and that women are treated as inferior, and with double standards. Feminism does not only provide analytical theories, but aims for them to be employed in the claim for women's rights and equality. Feminism also rejects the spontaneously fixed roles assigned to women and men, which, since they are imposed from without, can be altered.

The feminist approach, which is employed to criticize writings couched in gender prejudice, tends to manifest itself in three major areas. The first puts its main emphasis on the analysis of womanhood and the belief that "women are unique and different from men." The second concentrates on analysing social structures, particularly those in patriarchal societies, which result in women's inferiority. The third employs "Structure Theory". This is marked by multidimensional perspectives and diversity, which illuminate the relationships between social structures and the individual. Academics in this area argue that the relationship is dynamic and not one-sided, but mutually influential.[17]

Studies from the first period tended to apply Western theories and base their conclusions on criteria drawn from Western social models. They supported the struggle, focusing on roles outside the home (บทบาทนอกบ้าน), in politics and the economy as opposed to domestic roles, and aimed at motivating Asian women to follow such an approach. This resulted in a flat image of women and neglected the consideration that Southeast Asian societies might possess the means to prevent women from being taken advantage of by men, means which are demonstrated, for example, in rituals and the matriarchal tradition.

Over the second period, from the 1980's to the present day, feminist academics have generally employed the term "gender"[18] to distinguish the biological condition from the social construction.[19] One important question is increasingly being raised,

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Thao Phromma Edition, San Muang Village, Doisaket District, Chiang Mai, 1279, Revised by Bamphen Rawin; the Analytical Study of Cao Rat's Didactic Songs (Phra Khru Sathitcittasangwòn 2002), etc.

[17] Kanchana 1992: 123-125.

[18] Thai feminists used to variously define this term, at the initiation into academia, as "roles of women and men" (บทบาทหญิงชาย), "gender roles" (บทบาททางเพศ), "the relationship between women and men" (ความสัมพันธ์หญิงชาย) etc. It conveyed the belief that women and men have fixed roles determined by society. Later, they were replaced by other terms such as "gender condition" (เพศสภาพ), "gender state" (เพศสภาวะ), "gender circumstance" (เพศภาวะ), "gender relevance" (เพศสัมพัทธ์), and "gender culture" (เพศวัฒนธรรม). Today, Thai feminists' use of the term "gender" varies according to the ideas of each group.

[19] Suchada (editor) 2004: 6.

namely, whether femininity is archetypical or whether it varies with social class, history, ethnic origin and the specific cultures that women belong to on various parts of the globe. Their works deal with coloured women, looking at and contrasting the various social circumstances that women in developing countries are subject to. This concurs to some degree with the ideas of some groups of anthropologists who take an interest in feminism. They have questioned and objected to Western theories that argue that gender inequalities occur in every culture, and conclude that it is archetypical; all contemporary societies are completely dominated by men. But the anthropologists have also pointed out that the relationships between the sexes in several societies are not archetypical, and the application of Western theories in Southeast Asia should be carefully considered.[20]

Lan Na and Lan Sang women in a historical context

This dissertation will take a historical view of the special functions of the women in these past societies and investigate how they were able to adopt and perform these functions with so little disharmony.

The hypothesis of this researcher is that the relationship between women and the four fundamental elements of shelter, clothing, food, and medicine gives women significant control over a society which expects them, in the role of the mother, to provide these elements. This responsibility cannot be denied, but must be accepted by the society. The woman is the foundation of the household, intellectually as well as materially. Intellectually, because she is responsible for instructing her offspring (and thereby is the source of the gender separation as a matter of custom). Materially, because she provides food and all the household necessities. From weaving, to placing beaten shallots under pillows to relieve colds, to working in the fields, the woman is responsible for all the family's needs. Furthermore, she acts as the manager of the family, being in charge of the financial affairs and household regulations.

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[20] Pranee 2006: 5 Feminist studies include *The History of Thai Women* (Kurap and Cit 1976); *The Science of Femininity* (Kancana 1992); *The Ideology of Women's Development: an Analytical Perspective on Women and Men* (Kònwipha 1995); *The Hind Leg Is Moving: An Academic Anthology of Feminism* (Sinit 1999); *Women and Equality, Development and Peace: a Collection of Articles on Women from the United Nations* (Kiattichai 2002); *Feminism: the Process and the Social Ideology of the 20th Century* (Waruni 2002); *The Biological Gender: the Challenge and Discovery of Identity* (Suchada 2004); *Roles of Women and Men in Development: A Case Study in the Chiang Thong District, Luang Prabang, from 1975 to the Present* (Thanthip 2003); *The Second Sex* (de Beauvoir 1993); *Women in Rice Fields and Offices: Irrigation in Laos: Gender-specific Case-Studies in Four Villages* (Schenk-Sandberger and Outhaki 1995); *Women, Gender Relations and Development in Thai Society* (Virada 1997); *Gender, Sexuality and Reproductive Health in Northern Thailand* (Chiraluck et al. 2000); etc.

Documents concerning these women are fairly scattered. They have not been systematically filed and archived or promoted. Nor is there any clear analytical study of the origin and development of their particular social roles, and none that sufficiently explains them by considering the historical conditions in the various social contexts. The present study attempts to re-evaluate and portray the privileged roles of Lan Na and Lan Sang women and to aid in the understanding of how the social roles of Northern Thai and Lao women changed in relation to the social context.

Studies of Lan Na and Lan Sang women have enjoyed a different popularity from each other and appear in varying quantities. Those from women's academic circles in Laos are, however, on an elementary level. Studies of Lao women from the past are rare because so many historical documents were lost or damaged following the periods of colonization in the nineteenth century and the national revolution in 1975. The study of women's issues is further inhibited by the education provided by the government, which generally promotes only those aspects of women that are associated with the revolution of 1975, such as the foundation of the Laos Women's Union and the empowerment of women in the social and political development of Laos. Private organizations and academics have tended to produce fewer studies on women than on other issues such as political history, economics, social change, etc.

Nevertheless, Lao academics are awakening to this subject more and more, though the majority of their work still deals with the period after colonization rather than before it. Despite their increasing popularity, the studies of women from Lan Na and Northern Thailand are as yet not numerous enough for further study to give an adequate comprehension of women's conditions. It is therefore crucial that we research the history of women and other relevant aspects of Lan Na and Lan Sang for an insight into the contextual relationship of those women and their societies.

When historians research into Lan Na women they frequently centre on the women from Chiang Mai because that was the capital of the Lan Na kingdom. Consequently, we have great quantities of documents and data about this city. On the other hand, other important cities such as Lampang, Nan, Phayao and Phrae have left fewer archives and resources, and most of those were transliterated. Because most of those documents were initiated by the Government, the side of women that we see is usually that of the upper class. An example is to be found in *Khattiyani Si Lan Na (Lan Na royal women)* (2004), edited by Wongsak Na Chiang Mai,[21] which deals with upper-class women from Chiang Mai in the Mangrai Dynasty. Queen Cirapraphathewi and Queen Wisuthithewi exercised political influence in their positions as sovereigns of

[21] *Khattiyani Si Lanna (ขัตติยานีศรีล้านนา)* 2004.

Chiang Mai. Similarly, the marriage of Princess Yòt Kham Thip of Chiang Mai to King Phothisarat of Lan Sang built up a stable relationship between the two kingdoms. This is seen explicitly in the example of their son, Prince Upayao, who later became King Setthathirat and governed both kingdoms.[22]

Moreover, several upper-class women in the *Cao Cet Ton* Dynasty, such as Cao Si Anocha and Cao Thipkesòn, played significant roles behind the throne from the beginning of the dynasty. Cao Ubonwanna had an important part to play in commerce and foreign affairs at that time. Also, Cao Dararatsami, the royal consort of King Rama V, developed the relationship between Lan Na and Siam during his reign. The most significant aspects that these studies present to us are of upper class Chiang Mai women who had close ties with politics.

Because of this emphasis on the upper classes, studies of ordinary women tend to be mingled with records from folklore, such as courtship songs, nursery rhymes, and folktales.[23]

A further role that women from Northern Thailand filled came from a local belief in the "ancestral spirits",[24] which required that women should become mediums in offering tribute to the spirits and performing the necessary rituals in the family. When the medium died, the next female in line, preferably the eldest daughter, would take over. This spiritual role is a good example of the significance of women's influence at the level of the family,[25] and is evidence of a further facet of the power that they held.

For an analytical study of Lan Na women's status we can also consider early laws, such as in the *Mangraisat*, which provided considerable protection to women, especially those who cared for their parents, and ensured that they would profit in their inheritance more than other offspring. To illustrate, where a deceased person left three sons and a daughter the endowments would be divided as follows:

1. Two parts to the one who worked for a lord.
2. Two parts to the one who was a trader.
3. Five parts to the one who entered a monastery.
4. Six parts to the daughter who ministered to her parents.

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[22] King Setthathirat was King of Lan Na from 1546 to 1547 and King of Lan Sang from 1548 to 1571, after the death of his father.

[23] Of interest here are *The archives of Lan Na local tales* (1984); *A Comparative Study of "Kham u bao u sao Lan Na" and "Phaya kiao isarn"* (Songsak 1989)*; Simplicity Teaches the World: an Analysis of Lan Na Didactic Literature* (Prakhòng 1991); *Lan Na Folktales* (Thitinatda and Warapha 2004); etc.

[24] For further information on how Lan Na shamanism influenced northern Thai women's roles and status, see Chalatchai Ramitanon (2002) and *Spirit Cults and the Position of Women in Northern Thailand* **(**1984).

[25] Adisorn 1996: 44.

Alternatively, according to the laws of the division of property, properties other than those obtained after a couple's marriage would be divided into three parts, two for the wife and one for the husband, if the wife was caring for any offspring. However, if the husband misbehaved, abused his wife, or showed a lack of respect for his wife's parents, he would be expelled from the house and all his property would be expropriated, even that obtained after the marriage.[26]

The above examples show that, even in this male-dominated society, Lan Na women enjoyed a high degree of protection from the law. In *A Study of Women's Status in Ancient Lan Na Law* (2005)[27] Atcharaporn Cansawang points out that the status of Lan Na women in the law of that time was very high compared with women in neighbouring kingdoms such as Ayutthaya. Studies of this subject among Lao academics are unfortunately not systematic, and a program of promotion and support to encourage further studies would be desirable. This would also aid in the fostering of women's rights.

Present day studies of Lan Sang and Lao women are rare, and do not distinguish between ordinary women and the upper class, but rather treat the subject holistically. The seminal study *Lao Women: Yesterday and Today* by Mayoury Ngaosyvathn (1993)[28] looks at the inequalities of women and men from a political, economic, social and cultural point of view: men are given rights and opportunities and unqualified power, while women have become "the second sex", treated as a product to be used for reproduction. An interesting aspect of this work is expressed in the idea that the establishment of Buddhism in the Lan Sang polity resulted in the role of women being reduced from their previous powerful position to that of a social mainstay.[29]

Especially now, in these times of change around the globe, this has led Lao women to adhere strictly to new expectations from a government policy which has been endorsing women's social development since 1975. The Laos Women's Union was founded to encourage its members to participate in the country's development, in observation of the new policy. However, women were still expected, because of social norms, to uphold conventional customs as mothers and wives whose duty it was to look after their families. Practically, women have always been disadvantaged in relation to

[26] Lamun 1993.
[27] Atcharaporn 2005.
[28] Mayoury 1993: 120.
[29] In an interview the Lao academic Dr. Mayoury expressed her opinions on Buddhism and women: Buddhism treats women as inferior to men in that women are forbidden entry to monasteries for a Buddhist education; in a Buddhist temple it is obligatory for women to stay behind the boundary markers of an *ubosot* (ordination hall) where monks perform religious rituals; and women are not permitted to participate in religious activities to the same extent as men. Consequently, women act merely as contributors in giving offerings or services to monks (interview, 20 March 2007).

men in the area of career advancement. In her study the writer offers ideas as to how national policy could help in Lao women's social development, in the expansion of educational opportunities to women in rural areas, and in the support of studies which might enhance our understanding of the women of Laos.

A wider review of the sources dealing with the women of Lan Na and Lan Sang brings some very interesting features to light. Many tend to consist of portrayals of women through female characters in literature and are chiefly concerned with feminine beauty and women's place in the social order. A remarkable feature of this literature is that most of it is derived from stories of the earlier incarnations of Buddha in the Non-Canonical Jātaka and treats similar themes to those in, for example, the stories of *Sang Sin Sai*[30]*, Cao suwat*[31]*, Campa si ton*[32]*, Canthakhat*[33] *and Hong hin*[34].

Female characters in these kinds of work fall into two groups. The first comprises those who are virtuous: they tend to suffer at the beginning but overcome their suffering through tolerance and honesty, and eventually attain happiness and prosperity. The others are those who are wicked: they tend to be jealous and malicious, and are defeated in the end.[35] These concepts reflect society's ideological expectations of women to be rational rather than emotional, exercise wisdom and courtesy, exhibit beauty of body and mind, preserve their virginity and remain faithful to their husbands and care for them, just as the literary heroines do.[36] These heroines provide the role model of the upright woman, and offer a contrast to the depraved woman, who is vengeful, envious, idle and promiscuous and wholly unsuitable for marriage.

In *Valuable Images of Female Characters in Lan Sang Literature* (1998)[37] Amphornlak Inthawong describes three characteristics of the Lao female character. The first is a national characteristic: women exhibit beauty and preserve customs and traditions. The second is a universal characteristic: women display courage, generosity

[30] This is an oral traditional folktale which relates to the story of Buddha. It is the story of Sang Sin Xai, who becomes the Buddha. It centres on good and bad behaviour in the main characters and the impact of their actions.
[31] This is also an oral traditional folktale whose main plot is the story of Buddha. The character here who becomes the Buddha is Cao Suwat. He falls in love with Nang Buakham and their story is like a game of hide and seek, as they become separated from each other and are later reunited.
[32] *Campa si ton* is an early literary work found in various versions both in Lan Na and in Lan Sang. The story, by an anonymous author, is based on that of the Buddha in the Jātāka. Four princes, who are persecuted by their step-mother, try to avenge themselves.
[33] *Canthakhat chadok* is an early work based on the Buddhist Jātāka. It is a didactic tale popular in Lan Na. People employ it as an instructional guide for their offspring on morals and gratitude.
[34] The story of *Hong hin* is influenced by the Buddhist Jātāka. The main plot concerns a prince who is persecuted by his father's second wife and her sons. In the end, he defeats them and replaces his father as King.
[35] Sirirat 1986.
[36] Suphin 2002.
[37] Amphònlak 1998.

and honesty. Finally, in a historical characteristic, women are benevolent, tolerant and courteous as well as being the upholders of the customs and traditions of respectability. Lao women in the feudal society before the national revolution nevertheless had to tolerate an inferior status to men. Women were the weak sex; they were basically servants and lacked any liberty within the family. They were even treated as a gift or a tribute, "an extraordinary present for a lord", as exemplified in the case of Phraya Müang Kasi, the father of Nang Butsadi. He gave his daughter to Thao Suriyakhat for successfully treating her for a poisonous snakebite. Since the revolution, women have had equal or superior roles and status to men in every aspect including marriage. Additionally, the Government was made acutely aware of women's issues by the foundation of the Laos Women's Union, which has since become part of the political system.

An article on Lao women in literature "*A Study of Lao Women's Status in Early Lao Society through Literature*" (1997) by Douangdeuane Boonyavong[38] analyzes the roles of Lao female characters in three stories: *The Epic of Thao Hung, or Thao Cüang*, *The Story of Wetsandòn* (a previous incarnation of the Buddha) and *The Story of Sang Sin Xai*. The article argues that, when comparing the social positions and freedoms of Lao women in literature with those in reality from the past to the present, one finds that women are actually well placed socially. They also form part of the cultural dynamic, as evidenced, for example, in the freedom Lao women enjoy in marriage (witness the *long khuang* (ลงข่วง) courtship tradition) or in the collecting of forest flowers to decorate temples in the Thai New Year Festival (*songkran*). The situation changed when Hinduism and Buddhism became more influential in the lifestyles of Lao people. That resulted in the decline of women's roles and their decision-making within marriage, as well as their political significance, as we see in the character of Nang Ngòm Muan in the *Epic of Thao Hung, or Thao Cüang*. This work was presumably written during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, before Hinduism and Buddhism were fully introduced into Lao society.[39] In it, Nang Ngòm is able, on the one hand, to openly make contact with and display her relationship to Thao Cüang, and, on the other, to send an armed force to assist him in battle.

Nang Matsi, however, in *The Story of Wetsandòn*, a Lan Sang poetic work written in 1504 in the reign of King Visun (when Buddhism was on the rise and exerting considerable influence on the lives of Lao people), was not in a position to make decisions in important matters. Her role was restricted to that of the faithful and

[38] Doungdeuane 2004: 349-371.
[39] Ibid: 252.

desirable wife and mother providing for her family for seven months in the woods. Nevertheless, although Lao and Southeast Asian women's status is lower now than it was in the past, it is still considerably higher than that of Indian women.[40]

This survey of the studies of women's issues provides important data for the analysis of how Lan Na and Lan Sang women exploited their privileged positions in accordance with the prevalent social contexts and attitudes of the time. And it helps us to understand the social restrictions that Northern Thai and Lao women experience today as a result of global changes. Women are losing their unique identity. This dissertation aims to show these aspects of women from another angle by investigating women in an earlier period and comparing them to those of today. This should hopefully be beneficial to further studies of women's issues.

[40] Hall 1962: 35.

Chapter 3
Historical Roles and Relationships of the Lan Na and Lan Sang Kingdoms

In the early medieval Southeast Asian world Lan Na and Lan Sang played an important role; they were situated, as we have seen, in the areas of present-day Thailand and Laos. Although they established connections along traditional and cultural lines relating to their lifestyles and livelihoods, the identity of each kingdom nevertheless experienced a long-term evolution from traits both common to and different from its neighbour. This is the area of interest that this dissertation will investigate and describe.

This chapter will analyze three main areas: firstly, the salient characteristics and the historical background of the Lan Na and Lan Sang kingdoms from the thirteenth to nineteenth centuries, a period of time typified by varying kinds of government; secondly, some brief examples of female figures from each time period will be taken to illustrate the advantaged positions women occupied in both kingdoms. This aspect will be discussed in detail in chapter 5. Finally, I will look at the long-term common historical background, including the proximity of location of the two states and their political, economic, and social relationships, which will highlight the reasons for selecting these two areas.

The historical importance and background of the Lan Na kingdom

Lan Na, in Pali *dasa lakkha khetta nagara*, or "country of a million [rice] fields", was made up of city clusters situated around many river valleys in Northern Thailand and may be geometrically divided into two groups. The first comprised Western Lan Na, and consisted of large cities along the Kok, Ing, Ping, and Wang river valleys. These cities - Chiang Rai, Chiang Mai, Phayao, Lamphun, and Lampang - were amalgamated from the beginning of the Mangrai Dynasty. The second group, Eastern Lan Na, extended through the river valleys of the Yom and Nan rivers, and included the cities of Phrae and Nan.[1] These cities became independent states governed by their own rulers until in the fifteenth century, maintaining close political relations with the kingdom of Sukhothai further south. In the reign of King Tilok (1441-1487), both were finally appended to the western Lan Na territory as vassal states.

[1] Suraphon 1999: 20-23.

Furthermore, various cities in Burma, Laos, and southern China, such as Chiang Tung, Chiang Rung, Müang Yòng, Müang Pu, and Müang Sād,[2] were also included in the Lan Na cluster, as evidenced in the Chiang Mai Chronicle, which counts about fifty-seven domains in the Lan Na kingdom.[3] The kingdom is referred to in sources from the Yuan Dynasty as *Babai-xifu*, which means "the country of the 800 daughters-in-law"[4] with the Mekong in the East, the Salween River in the West, Rahaeng (Tak) in the South and Chiang Rung in the North.[5] These cities maintained traditional artistic and cultural as well as economic and political ties.

However, at present, the name "Lan Na" refers to the eight provinces of northern Thailand, Chiang Mai, Lamphun, Lampang, Chiang Rai, Phayao, Phrae, Nan, and Mae Hong Son. Chiang Mai has remained the essential centre of power of Lan Na to the present day.[6]

Lan Na from the thirteenth to the fifteenth century

The Lan Na kingdom as an independent state

The Lan Na kingdom was established around the thirteenth century; however, some ancient states did already exist there. These included Yuan, or Yonok, Hariphunchai and miscellaneous city clusters such as Phayao, Khelangnakhòn (present-day Lampang), Phrae and Nan, which were independent states.[7]

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[2] These cities seem to have formed Lan Na's boundary of authority, as Lan Na opportunistically extended its influence to include them. Some areas were never included in the Lan Na administration. Chiang Tung and Chiang Rung, for example, were merely tributary states of Lan Na.

[3] Quoted from The Chiang Mai Chronicle, Wyatt and Aroonrut 1998: 180-181; it tells us that "King Maha Uparaja of the Front Palace went up to Lan Na, and after waging war against Burma the rulers in each *Müang* of Lan Na pledged allegiance to him. He said that he would develop the land of the fifty-seven domains of Lan Na as the former kings of Lan Na had done." However, concerning "Lan Na's fifty-seven domains," Grabowsky (1999: 186) maintains that evidence is lacking which would clearly define the names of those fifty-seven domains, but assumes that they covered an area of more than eight provinces of Northern Thailand. This would include Chiang Tung, Chiang Rung, and many cities on the present Burma-Thailand border.

[4] In the Ming Dynasty, the Lan Na kingdom was called *Babai-dadian*, or "the country of the 800 stockades". See also Winai 1996 and Liew-Herres et al. 2008: 102.

[5] This is meant to give a rough idea of the borders of the Lan Na kingdom, since the kingdom's boundary expanded to take in large provinces; meanwhile, there was a reduction of the occupied areas, depending mainly on the period and the king who was in power in a particular area. An early Chinese source, *Yuanshi*, reports that the Lan Na boundary in the mid-fourteenth century reached as far as Laos on the eastern side, the southern side reached the Bole barbarians or Sukhothai, the western boundary reached Pegu and the north stretched to Chiang Tung. Subsequent local documents such as The Chiang Mai Chronicle tell us that by the mid-sixteenth century Lan Na's territory reached as far as Rahaeng (Tak) at its southern border, the western border reached Salween River, and the east reached the Mekong. See also Grabowsky (2005: 4).

[6] Sarassawadee 2005: 13.

[7] It can be observed that migrating *Tai* settlers sought areas of abundance and plenty around the various river valleys, and travelled in small groups. Their leaders were called "princes", and they took their servants with them to seek out the new lands. This is seen in many *tamnan* (chronicles), among them the Chiang Saen Chronicle, which recalls that the leader was called *Singhanawatikuman* or *Cao*

The Lan Na kingdom was founded when states and cities that already existed came together, and Chiang Mai was established as a powerful centre in 1296. The kingdom began with an assembling of two states: Yuan state, which was situated in the Kok and Ing river valleys, and Hariphunchai, in the Ping river valley. Control was then expanded to the north, to states such as Chiang Tung, Müang Nai, and Phayao. In the fifteenth century it was further expanded, when Phrae and Nan were conquered; this was regarded as a stable phase of the kingdom.

From its establishment in 1296 to its decline in 1558, Lan Na passed through a foundation phase, a 'golden age' and a deterioration, divided formally as follows:

- The *formative period* (1296-1355): Chiang Mai was formally established on 12 April 1296[8]; it gathered in the states in the Kok and Ing river valleys, or Chiang Rai basin, and expanded its power to the Ping river valley, or Chiang Mai-Lamphun basin, to include cities such as Chiang Rai, Chiang Saen, Chiang Mai, Lamphun, and Lampang. King Mangrai subsequently created political connections by assigning his sons to occupy Chiang Tung and Müang Nai, and he made alliances with the southern cities of Phayao and Sukhothai. The formative period continued to the end of the reign of King Phayu,[9] the fifth king of the Mangrai dynasty.

  Lan Na's period of prosperity apparently developed during the reign of King Küna,[10] who invited the Buddhist monk Sumanathera from the *Lankawong* sect in Sukhothai to come to the kingdom in 1369 and built the monastery at Wat Suan Dok for him to stay in, thereby establishing the sect's brand of Buddhism as the official religion of the kingdom.[11] He also supported monks from various cities such as Chiang Tung, Chiang Rung and Chiang Thòng who were keen to study Buddhism in Chiang Mai. This support encouraged them to adopt the Dharma script from Lan Na and apply it to their own cultures. All of this led to the spread and popularity of Buddhism.

Suwankhamdaeng; also the Chiang Khaeng Chronicle, in which the leader is referred to as *Cao Fa Dek Nòi* (เจ้าฟ้าเด็กน้อย).

[8] Penth 2000: 41.

[9] The years of his reign are given in The Chiang Mai Chronicle as 1346-1368, but in the *Jinakālamālīpakaraṇaṃ* we find the dates 1336-1355.

[10] The word *kü* (กือ) is a quantity in Lan Na which means "ten hundred thousand". The meaning of Küna is "ten hundred thousand rice fields" which parallels the meaning of *Lan Na*. The Chiang Mai Chronicle reports that he ruled Chiang Mai from 1368-1388, but the *Jinakālamālīpakaraṇaṃ* gives the dates as 1355-1385.

[11] Buddhism in Chiang Mai was inherited from Hariphunchai and drew influence from the cult as practised in Hongsawadi and Ava, which it then combined with Animism.

- The Golden Age of Lan Na (1355-1525): the victory of the Lan Na kingdom in a war with Hò in 1404-1405[12] reflects the stability of Lan Na's political power, which was centred at Chiang Mai after previously being situated sometimes at Chiang Saen and sometimes at Chiang Rai. It can also be seen from the fact that the king's dwelling was usually located in Chiang Rai or Chiang Saen,[13] while the residences in Chiang Mai were reserved for princes;[14] this was probably a strategic measure to create a stronghold to protect Lan Na from the Mongol power which was extending its influence to the southern states.[15] Chiang Mai lay more to the south. Through the victory over the Chinese (Hò), Müang Yòng became directly dependent on Lan Na and henceforth acted as a front barrier city to counter any Hò insurgency.

  The Golden Age of Lan Na concurred with the reign of King Tilok (1441/42-1487),[16] whose faith and support helped Buddhism to flourish. Many monasteries were constructed during his reign, including Wat Maha Photharam (Wat Cet Yòt), where The Eighth World Buddhist Council met in 1477, Wat Patan and Wat Padaeng. Lan Na was by now also strong enough to extend its influence eastwards, and captured Phrae and Nan while lending support to Luang Prabang against a Dai Viet invasion.[17] The kingdom also extended its power to western *müang* in the Shan state, such as Müang Nai and Müang Sipò and to northern cities within the Sipsòng Panna boundary, including Chiang Rung. King

[12] At the time of King Sam Fang Kaen, the eighth king of the Mangrai Dynasty. The Chiang Mai Chronicle and *Jinakālamālīpakaraṇaṃ* both give the year he commenced his reign as 1401. However, his abdication is reported differently: the *Jinakālamālīpakaraṇaṃ* gives 1441, The Chiang Mai Chronicle 1442.

[13] The *Jinakālamālīpakaraṇaṃ* relates that from 1311-1339 the residence of the King of Lan Na alternated between Chiang Rai and Chiang Saen; The Chiang Mai Chronicle reports that this occurred again during 1317-1345. See *Jinakālamālīpakaraṇaṃ,* Saeng (transl.) 1974: 107-108, and The Chiang Mai Chronicle, Wyatt and Aroonrut 1998: 59-65.

[14] The administrative structure of the Lan Na kingdom was divided into three parts: the first was the core, under the king's authority and usually also at the king's residence; the second consisted of the outer zones and comprised many neighbouring cities ruled by governors, who were usually princes; and the third was a vassal *müang* that accepted the sovereignty of the capital and was generally run by local governors, most of whom belonged to the royal family. See also Grabowsky 2005: 4-6.

[15] The expansion of Mongol influence from the late thirteenth to the early fourteenth century encouraged some ethnic Tai states, such as Chiang Mai, Shan, and Chiang Rung, to extend their cooperation to prevent a Mongol invasion. In 1301, for example, Chiang Mai, accompanied by Chiang Rung troops, forced Mongol troops back as far as Yunnan. See Sarassawadee 2005: 72.

[16] The Chiang Mai Chronicle dates his reign between 1442 and 1487; the *Jinakālamālīpakaraṇaṃ* gives 1441-1487.

[17] In fact, the Lao documents do not mention that Nan (and Lan Na) went to Luang Prabang's rescue, but claim that Lan Sang, under the rule of Cao Thaenkham, was able to resist Di Viet troops by itself. See also Sunet 2001: 44.

Tilok's influence thus extended over a wide area. Moreover, during the reign of King Boromtrailokanat of Ayutthaya (1448-1488) he engaged in a battle with that important kingdom. In short, we can say that after King Tilok strengthened his kingdom, he further expanded his power to the south, which led to a collision with the kingdom of Ayutthaya. The Chiang Mai Chronicle reports that this battle lasted for twenty-four years.[18]

In this period of prosperity, many famous chronicles were revised. In 1412, for example, Phra Bhodhirangsi translated the Lamphun Chronicle, now known as the *Camathewiwong* (Cāmadevīvoṃsa), into the Pali language. Hans Penth observes that famous Pali writings, whether chronicles or literary or religious works, were generally composed in Lan Na's late Golden Age. Examples would include the writing of Ratanapañña Thera, who in 1516 composed the first part of *Jinakālamālīpakaraṇaṃ*, or Phra Sirimangalacan, who wrote *Cakkavāladīpanī* in 1520 and *Mangalattadīpanī* in 1524. In addition, it is assumed that the oldest Phra Pathamasambhodi was also composed during this period.[19]

- The decline and fall of the Lan Na kingdom (1525-1558): the demise of Lan Na began during the late Mangrai Dynasty in the reign of King Müang Ket Klao, or Phraya Ket Chettharat,[20] and was due to a splitting up of the royal court and problems caused by the chaotic administration of vassal states, as well as the continual threat from nearby kingdoms such as Ayutthaya and the broad extension of Burmese power under the Toungoo Dynasty. Finally, Chiang Mai was overthrown and rendered a tributary state of Burma in 1558, when King Mae Ku was on the throne.[21] The *Ming Shilu* reports that *Babai-dadian* was appended to Burma during the *Jia-Ching* governance year (1522-1566), while the governor escaped to *Joeng-Sien* (Chiang Saen), also called *Babai Nòi*

[18] The war between Lan Na and Ayutthaya began in 1451 and ended in 1457.
[19] Penth 2000: 164-165.
[20] The Chiang Mai Chronicle dates the first period of his rule as 1526-1538, and the second from 1543 to 1545, when he was murdered by noblemen. The *Jinakālamālīpakaraṇaṃ* mentions only the enthronement year of 1526; the year of his death is not given.
[21] The Chiang Mai Chronicle gives the dates of his rule as 1551-1564.

(Little Babai). From that time onwards, there were no more tributes from *Babai Dadian.*[22]

Some examples of Lan Na women in the era of independence

In Chinese historical documents from the thirteenth to sixteenth centuries the Tai Yuan (Lan Na) kingdom is referred to as *Babai-xifu*, meaning, as we have seen, "the country of the 800 daughters-in-law".[23] The Chinese sources refer to local legends in which the king had 800 wives, each one of whom ruled one *cai* (ไจ้)[24], thus the name *Babai-xifu.*[25] This suggests that elite women took on political and administrative functions which came to characterise them as Lan Na women. We see evidence of this in inscriptions, chronicles and annals. Such evidence portrays women as the participants in power struggles between cities and the expansion of influence through kinship and marriage. It is alluded to, for example, in the *Jinakālamālīpakaraṇaṃ,* [26] where King Saen Phu assigns his mother and son to rule over Chiang Mai while he resides in Chiang Saen.[27] The Nan Chronicle relates how Phraya Kao Klüan (พระญาเก้าเกลื่อน) appointed his wife, Mae Thao Khamphin, to preside over Müang Pua while he himself governed Müang Yang. Shortly after her term in Müang Pua had expired, it was invaded and occupied by Phraya Ngam Müang, who then assigned his wife, Nang Ua Sim, to oversee Müang Pua while he returned to govern Phayao.[28]

The Chiang Mai Chronicle refers also to Mahathewi Tilokcuthathewi, who was instrumental in bringing her thirteen-year-old son Sam Fang Kaen to the throne in Chiang Mai, after which he promoted his mother to *Mahathewi*, or Queen Mother.[29] As he was on the throne at such a young age, it is likely that his administration was instructed by his mother in the manner of a joint rule.[30] Women were also involved in

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[22] Winai 1996: 232 and Liew-Herres et al. 2008: 126.
[23] Although the name of Lan Na changed from *Babai-xifu* in the Yuan Dynasty sources (*Yuanshi*) to *Babai-dadian* in those of the Ming Dynasty *(Ming Shilu)*, the kingdom was still known to Chinese people as "the country of the 800 daughter-in-law". Thus, the change of name probably resulted from political events in Lan Na. See also note 39.
[24] Dr. Winai Pongsripian proposes that *cai* meant "a thousand fields", or a sort of administrative unit of Lan Na, based on the Chinese administrative pattern from the Yuan dynasty. See also Volker Grabowsky 2004.
[25] Winai 1996: 28.
[26] Saeng (transl.) 1974: 103.
[27] Chiang Rai and Chiang Saen were the locations of the king's residences in the early period of Lan Na, from 1317 to 1345; thus, Chiang Mai was governed by the heirs of the king, in particular his sons or other descendants, who sometimes administered the cities together with their mothers or wives.
[28] Sarassawadee 1996: 54-55.
[29] Wyatt and Aroonrut 1998: 70-71.
[30] The Phayao Chronicle 1995: 51.

the military campaigns that went on between cities.[31] According to the Chiang Mai Chronicle, in 1443 King Tilok's mother led Chiang Mai troops against Phrae, while Tilok himself attacked Nan in 1444. Both these campaigns were successful, and the cities were incorporated into the Lan Na kingdom as a result, remaining so for the duration of King Tilok's rule.

We find a further example of the politically privileged roles elite women exercised in Queen Cirapraphathewi.[32] She was the sovereign of Chiang Mai from 1545 to 1546 and was regarded as a very strong sovereign for several reasons. Firstly, Chiang Mai was plagued by wars for the whole of the time she was on the throne, in particular the war with Ayutthaya (under the rule of King Chairacha), and those with Müang Nai and Müang Yòng Huai in the Shan area, which sent troops to attack Chiang Mai in 1545. At the same time, she faced conflict at court through the intrigues of noblemen trying to eliminate each other in the wake of the assassination of King Ket, which had occurred just prior to her coming to the throne. Finally, the most serious natural disaster in Chiang Mai's history happened while she was in power, the earthquake of 1545, which, among other things, damaged many pagoda pinnacles. In particular, "The Big Pagoda", or Phra Cedi Luang, in the centre of Chiang Mai was damaged in the calamity, an event which led to many internal troubles later. Admired today as a sovereign who supported Lan Na in its time of crisis, Queen Ciraprapha ruled Chiang Mai in the interim (1545-1546) before King Setthathirat came to power.

Women were sometimes active in strengthening the relationships among principalities and kingdoms. A certain Nang Paikho played an important part in bringing two states together. When King Mangrai sent his troops to Hongsawadi, the King of Hongsawadi offered one of his daughters, Nang Paikho, or Lady Pegu, in marriage, explaining "…if I do [bestow my beloved daughter] with good will, it will redound to our friendship and to the close ties of our royal lines in the future, to our children and grandchildren."[33] He also provided some elephants and horses, as well as 500 attendants to Nang Paikho. Moreover, when the caravan reached Wiang Kum Kam, he ordered temples to be built and images of the Buddha to be erected for worship, and

[31] An interesting aspect is that Tai people clearly recognized the special role women played in the war and depicted this in a mural at Wat Nòng Bua in the Tha Wang Pha District, Nan Province, in the Tai Lü community. The Tai Lü were persuaded to settle in Nan in the late eighteenth to early nineteenth centuries - the age of *Kep phak sai sa – kep kha sai müang*, or the time of "collecting vegetables into baskets and collecting people into the *müang*" (See Grabowsky 1999). The mural depicts a Buddhist Jātaka, namely, *Cantakhat Jātaka* in *Paññāsa Jātaka*, which reveals Nang Phrommacari standing on an elephant's head, holding her two swords and fighting against Phraya Kawintha's troops.

[32] Two contrasting opinions exist concerning Queen Ciraprapha: Somdet Krom Phraya Damrong-Rachanuphap, Luang Wicit Wathakan and Sanguan Chotisukharat argue that she was the daughter of King Ket Chettharat, while Sarassawadee Ongsakul claims that she was his wife.

[33] Wyatt and Aroonrut 1998: 37.

declared the people of Hongsawadi servants to the Wiang Kum Kam temple.[34] It is assumed that Nang Paikho's new status would also have aided her husband in establishing a new kingdom.

Another example is that of Cao Fa Müang Nai, who offered one of his daughters in marriage to King Tilok when he proceeded to Müang Pan and Müang Nai[35] to establish a connection between the cities. Many Chiang Mai princesses were betrothed to kings from other cities: Nang Kaeo Pho Ta, daughter to King Chaisongkram, was married to Thao Kham Daeng of Phayao;[36] King Kü Na's daughter married Cao Ai Aon of Chiang Tung; and King Müang Ket's daughter Nang Yòt Kham Thip became the wife of King Phothisarat of Lan Sang.

Particularly interesting special functions performed by Lan Na women are to be found in the justice system. Although this seems to have been quite rare, we do have some examples in early law, such as in the first section of the Mangraisat,[37] which recommended the abolition of eight inequitable rulings. It offered as a reason for doing away with these unfair rulings the fact that sentencing could sometimes be made through biased judgment, that is, through *Agati 4* (the "four prejudices").[38] Although the judgment of a woman was included as one of these eight biases (namely, the third, which forbade women to pass judgment), it nevertheless reflected the participation of women to some degree in the judicial process.

Lan Na from the sixteenth to the eighteenth century

Lan Na under Burmese rule

From the foundation of the kingdom in the thirteenth century, Lan Na, with Chiang Mai as its capital, became important as a centre among a group of upper states, for instance as a centre for the dissemination of the Buddhist faith and of trade among the upper and lower states. It was a fruitful trading area where products were brought in from various cities both inside the kingdom and outside, in particular from Burma, Lan Sang and Yunnan. The most significant products were rubies, gum benjamin (benzoin resin, used in the preparation of sealing wax and perfumes), lac (a dark red resin, also used for sealing wax), copper and civet cats (for perfume). Goods were usually sold at the seaports, where other products such as mirrors and textiles were then purchased and

[34] Sarassawadee 2004a: 68.
[35] Prachakitkoracak 1973: 340.
[36] Quoted from Sarassawadee 2004b: 19.
[37] Prasert 1973.
[38] All four of the prejudicing factors, which can cause bias in the judge, were: fondness (i.e. for the accused), malice, fear, and delusion (i.e. an unstable mental condition).

transferred to the north for sale. The early Chinese text *Yuanshi* describes *Babai-xifu*[39] as a country with an abundance of elephants and of fragrances including gum benjamin and sandalwood.[40]

This prosperity seems to have taken a turn for the worse with the developing internal political situation. Although generally business expanded and provided wealth for both king and noblemen, an increase in the nobles' power in Chiang Mai and in other cities led them to control the royal institution. We see this in the late Mangrai Dynasty, where noblemen possessed the power to install or remove the King. The fact that King Ket Chettharat (1526-1545) and Thao Chai (1538-1543) both succumbed to this is a reflection of the weakness of the royal institutions at that time.

In addition, Burma's expansion in the Toungoo Dynasty was aimed at assimilating the adjoining territories in both the north and the south. King Bayin-naung attacked Lan Na and occupied it from 1558, seeing it as a source of corvée and foodstuffs, and because it included the important market in the north. The Burmese historical record relates that he gained a triumph over the states of Shan and Lan Na in that year. Fortunately, the ruler of Chiang Mai surrendered before any actual battle took place.[41] Lan Na was under Burmese administration for more than 200 years over three alternate Burmese dynasties (the Toungoo Dynasty, 1558-1596; the Nyaungyan Dynasty,[42] 1614-1752; and the Konbaung Dynasty, 1763-1774).

Policy in Burma fluctuated according to its internal political conditions. The Toungoo Dynasty regarded Lan Na as a tributary state and granted the former rulers their authority and allowed them to continue ruling their own country. But in return they had to continue paying tributes of golden and silver flowers to the Burmese king.

During the Nyaungyan Dynasty, Lan Na had become no more than a 'district' under Burmese administration. This had a deep effect on Lan Na's internal administrative system because the Burmese royal court not only assumed the power to preside over the Lan Na rulers but also took control of labour and tax collection. The Burmese oppression resulted in many people rising up against Burmese domination, including, for example, the 'holy men' (*ton bun* ตนบุญ, literally "source of merit") who claimed that, as Buddhists, they had the power to draw people to their faith, and, since

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[39] Dr. Winai Pongsripian observes that the name of the Tai Yuan kingdom was changed to *Babai-dadian* in the Ming Shilu because the Ming Dynasty rulers were in power in China after King Mangrai had assimilated Hariphunchai in 1292 and established Chiang Mai as the capital. A changing internal political situation in Lan Na led to a new recognition of China, and the name was changed.

[40] Winai1996: 28.

[41] *Maharatchawong phongsawadan phama*, translated by Tò 2002: 67. The term "Ngiao country" is used to refer to Shan State in this book, and "Lao Yuan Chiang Mai country" is used for Lan Na.

[42] The Nyaungyan period extended from the seventeenth to the eighteenth century. It is sometimes called the "Alaungpaya Dynasty" or "the second Toungoo Dynasty" ("restored Toungoo"). The last king of the Nyaungyan Dynasty was a descendant of King Bayin-naung. See Lieberman 1984.

the Buddha was so intimately connected with all aspects of daily (including political) life, they became local heroes in the fight for freedom against Burma.[43]

Furthermore, Burmese policy around 1700 was to separate Lan Na into two parts by assigning equal status to Chiang Saen and Chiang Mai. This came about through the expansion of Chiang Saen's trade and was related to the administrative policy of the Nyaungyan Dynasty, which placed emphasis on economic and political factors. Economically: the policy in support of trade, illustrated in the moving of the royal residence from Hongsawadi in the south to Ava in the north,[44] led directly to an increase in trading communities in the north. And an increase in demand for products in the southern part of China[45] also gave a boost to Chiang Saen's prosperity.[46] Politically: the Burmese royal court tried to reform the administrative system, and the heads of state who were assigned to govern the area were of the *myowun* rank, the same as those in Chiang Mai.[47]

Meanwhile, Chiang Saen was separated from Chiang Mai and made the administrative centre of the whole upper Mekong region, including several Tai Yai states, such as Müang Kai, Müang Len, Müang Phayak, Müang Chiang Lap, and Müang Luang Pukha.[48] Because of Chiang Saen's importance as a centre of trade and government, the Burmese king tried for a long time to retain control over the city. Chiang Saen was the last city from which King Kawila successfully expelled Burmese troops, in 1804.[49] However, after the administration reform during King Kawila's rulership, Chiang Saen was reduced to the status of a vassal *müang* and the centre of power was retained at Chiang Mai.

The Konbaung Dynasty was faced with internal political problems ranging from a Chinese invasion to the Mon rebellion and King Taksin's expansion of power to restore the Siamese Kingdom, all of which forced Burma to increase the drafting of labour and the transfer of foodstuffs from Lan Na. Also, the arrogant behaviour towards local rulers by Burmese noblemen who, having been assigned to govern Lan Na, were now seeking profits for themselves there, brought the Burmese rulers into conflict with some local governors such as Phraya Ca Ban of Chiang Mai and Phraya Kawila of Lampang. Such disagreements made the local governors turn to cooperation with Siam

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[43] In the early eighteenth century two *ton bun* rebels arose in Lan Na. The first was *ton bun* Thepsingha of Chiang Mai (1727); the second was *ton bun* Nayang of Lampang (1729). See Wyatt and Aroonrut 1998: 134,142.
[44] Lieberman 1984: 49.
[45] Lee 1982: 711-712.
[46] Wyatt and Aroonrut 1998: 132.
[47] Ibid: 133
[48] Ibid.
[49] King Kawila successfully expelled Burmese powers from the Ping River Basin in 1775 but Chiang Saen remained under Burma's influence until 1804. See the Royal Chronicles of King Rama I 1960.

in an effort to expel Burma from the Ping River Basin (from 1775) and they retook the Kok River Basin from Burma in 1804. However, relying on Siam's cooperation in this way resulted in Lan Na becoming a tributary state of Siam and it remained under Siamese domination from that time onwards.

Some examples of Lan Na women under Burmese rule

The distinguished position of sovereign occupied by Lan Na women was represented in particular by Phra Nang Wisutthithewi, Queen of Chiang Mai. The Lan Na scholar Kraisri Nimmanhaeminda has expressed the view that Queen Wisutthithewi was probably a daughter of King Ket Chettharat[50] of Chiang Mai,[51] while Yupin Khemmuk argues that she was Princess Ton Kham, Chettharat's youngest daughter, who had her residence in Müang Nai when King Bayin-naung conquered the city in 1557, and was then taken to Hongsawadi.[52] She reigned as the last sovereign of the Mangrai Dynasty in Chiang Mai, the powerful capital of the kingdom. There is some evidence that she reigned during the Toungoo Dynasty from 1564 to 1578. The Chiang Mai Chronicle mentions Queen Wisutthithewi as occupying the throne after King Maeku was removed by King Bayin-naung, who took him as a hostage to Hongsawadi after he had restored autonomy. The source does not explicitly state her administrative role, but, looking at the case of King Maeku politically, it assumes that she needed to retain her sovereign status under the dominance of Hongsawadi, a point demonstrated in her sending of troops in 1569 to assist Burma in its attack on Ayutthaya,[53] and in the fact that she upheld the status of tributary state by continuing to offer tributes. Whether she planned to retain political stability for personal reasons or whether she saw it as her royal duty, she enjoyed a continuous reign of fourteen years in the last period of the Mangrai Dynasty.[54]

Queen Wisutthithewi is portrayed in the poem *Khlong mangthra rop chiang mai* (The Epic of Mangthra's War against Chiang Mai). This poem by an anonymous Lan

[50] King Ket Chettharat was on the throne twice. The Chiang Mai Chronicle dates the first time from 1526 to 1538, the second from 1543 to 1545, when he was assassinated.
[51] Kraisri 1990: 36.
[52] Yupin 1990: 98.
[53] For this first defeat of a sovereign of Ayutthaya, Burma drafted soldiers from many vassal states including Hongsawadi, Ava, Toungoo, Pruan, Mit, Tala, and Hnai to assist in the campaign. Lao's troops from Chiang Mai, ruled (at that time) by Queen Wisutthithewi, were also sent to join the battle (*Phraratcha phongsawadan krungsi ayutthaya chabap phan canthanumat (coem) kap phra cakaphatdiphong* 1964: 96.)
[54] From the reign of King Müang Kaeo onwards, Chiang Mai's kings were on the throne only for short periods. This may be due to a splitting up of the royal family and conflict between the elite and the nobles: Thao Chai reigned for five years (1538-1543); King Ket Chettharat (the second time) for two years (1543-1545); Queen Ciraprapha was on the throne for a year (1545-1546), as was Phraya Upayao (1546-1547); and King Maeku ruled for thirteen years (1551 – 1564).

Na author describes a Burmese king named "Mangthra",[55] who in 1615 had Burmese hostages in Chiang Mai relocated over an area stretching from Chiang Mai across the Salween River to Burma.[56] Differing opinions have, however, been expressed as to who this king Mangthra was. Tio Wichaikhatkha proposes that "Mangthra" refers to King Ava (King Nyaungyan), who widened his power by attacking various cities outside the vassal states of Ayutthaya. Singkha Wannasai, meanwhile, thinks that, although "Mangthra" could have been King Sutthothammaracha, who had Lan Na people taken as hostages to Burma, he was actually probably not, because the year he conquered Lan Na and removed the King of Chiang Mai to Hongsawadi is given in the Chiang Mai Chronicle as 1631,[57] sixteen years later than the date given in the *Khlong mangthra rop chiang mai*.

The poem tells us that "[the King of Burma] granted the coronation to her (who is his son's mother) as Queen"[58] which can be interpreted[59] to mean that Queen Wisutthithewi was a wife of King Bayin-naung of Hongsawadi and the mother of Mang Nòrathachò, who was assigned by King Bayin-naung to rule Chiang Mai after the death of Queen Wisutthithewi.[60]

Most Lan Na scholars interpret the identity of Queen Wisutthithewi[61] in a similar way. They agree that she was a wife of King Bayin-naung and probably the mother of Mang Nòrathachò. Kraisri Nimmanhaeminda argues that King Bayin-naung's appointment of Mang Nòrathachò was politically motivated, as he desired to gain the loyalty of the Chiang Mai people. Since Mang Nòrathachò inherited the Mangrai lineage from his mother, this accorded with Mangrai tradition, which stated that only people of royal extraction had the right to rule over Chiang Mai.[62]

However, Sunet Chutintharanon[63] suggests that Queen Wisutthithewi was not the mother of Mang Nòrathachò because the Burmese sources confirm that *Mahesi Rachathewi* was one of King Bayin-naung's three principle wives, who bore a son

[55] The common Lan Na word for Burmese kings in general. This word appears in the Lan Na – Thai Dictionary, Maefaluang Edition, as *mang* (n.) (Burma). See Udom 2004: 544.
[56] Prasert 1979: 9.
[57] Wyatt and Aroonrut 1998: 131.
[58] Singkha 1979: 10. See also Yupin 1990: 85-114.
[59] Professor Dr. Prasert Na Nagara understands the twelfth chapter of *Khlong mangthra rop chiang mai* to indicate that Queen Wisutthithewi was Mangthra's mother. It refers to a Mangthra who ruled Chiang Mai (Mang Nòrathachò) and was King Bayin-naung's son. This, then, also suggests that Queen Wisutthithewi was King Bayin-naung's wife.
[60] Singkha 1979: 22.
[61] Scholars including Kraisri Nimanhemin, Chum Na Bangchang, Singkha Wannasai, Prof. Dr. Prasert Na Nagara, Yupin Khemmuk and Thio Wichaikhatkha.
[62] Kraisri 1990: 34.
[63] Sunet 2004: 58-74.

named Nòratha Mengsò.[64] This son was further appointed to rule Chiang Mai. He also suggests that Queen Wisutthithewi may have been the mother of King Maeku because some sources refer to her as "Mahathewi". The fact that she was on the throne for only fourteen years before she passed away indicates, according to Sunet, that she reigned to an advanced aged.[65]

Whatever the relationship between Queen Wisutthithewi and the leaders of Pegu (Hongsawadi), her status reflects the special political role an elite woman in the Mangrai Dynasty could play as ruler of Chiang Mai. In addition, Chiang Mai, as the administrative centre of Lan Na, provided Burma with much needed labour, foodstuffs and tribute, and could even function as a command centre for attacking southern *müang* like Ayutthaya.[66] For this reason King Bayin-naung kept the Burmese troops in Chiang Mai[67] to protect it from invasion from various states,[68] and to strengthen it as a military power, boosting the Chiang Mai ruler's political authority above that of the other cities in the Lan Na kingdom.[69] Perhaps this is why Queen Wisutthithewi remained loyal to Burmese policy; it at least appears that Chiang Mai never raised any rebellion during her reign.

The Lan Na kingdom in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries

Lan Na under Siamese rule

The process by which Siamese authority over Lan Na in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was adopted may be divided into two stages. The first stage covers the period beginning in 1775 when Lan Na became a tributary state of Siam. In the second, during the reign of King Rama V, the Lan Na political and administrative system was reformed with the aim of gradually assimilating Lan Na into the Siamese kingdom. This process took place from 1874 onwards until, by 1899, the Lan Na government had been fully integrated into the *thesaphiban* system, and became known as Monthon Phayap. Finally, Lan Na's status as a northern kingdom was annulled and every city within its boundaries became a province of what is now Thailand.

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[64] The poem *Khlong mangthra rop chiang mai* refers to him as *Nòratha Mengsò,* while *Phongsawadan yonok* (the Yonok Chronicle) call him *Mengsa nòratha mangkhui*.
[65] Sunet 2004: 64-65.
[66] "Relationships with Burma Part--1" *Journal of Siam Society* 1959: 25.
[67] *Maharatchawong phongsawadan phama* (2002) relates that King Bayin-naung assigned Phraya Thalathap to this, and Phraya Cakthap took 50,000 soldiers, 100 elephants and 1,000 horses to protect Chiang Mai.
[68] "Relationships with Burma Part--1", *Journal of Siam Society* 1959: 18.
[69] Laddawan 2002: 81.

In the first stage, then, two Lan Na rulers, Phraya Ca Ban of Chiang Mai and Cao Kawila of Lampang, collaborated to lead a political campaign called *fün man* (ฟื้นม่าน – "rebellion against Burma") which consisted of developing strategic plans to resist Burmese troops, and offering their allegiance to Siam (whose troops were commanded by King Taksin, Caophraya Chakri, and Caophraya Surasi) in order to overthrow Chiang Mai (which was governed by a Burmese nobleman, a so-called *myowun*). Chiang Mai was defeated in 1775.

The significant point is that Siam assisted Lan Na in its conflict with Burma, and later, when the war was over, Lan Na submitted to Siam as a tributary state. This illustrates how the Siamese king was able to both reward and punish Lan Na rulers. For instance, King Taksin issued rewards for personal loyalty by appointing Phraya Ca Ban as Phraya Luang Wachiraprakan, i.e. ruler of Chiang Mai, and Cao Kawila as Phraya Lakhòn, or, ruler of Lampang.[70] Conversely, other examples well indicate that Lan Na was strictly under Siam's authority: Cao Kawila was punished for killing soldiers from the South who had been drafted from Vientiane to stand guard over Lan Na and had refused the summons; while the King sentenced Phraya Ca Ban for executing his nephew, the Uparat Kònkaeo. Both were imprisoned at Thonburi.[71] These incidents are a good illustration of the power that Siam wielded over Lan Na.

Phraya Ca Ban died around the time when King Rama I was instated and the capital was moved from Thonburi to the east side of the Caophraya River; it acquired the new name of "Rattanakosin" in 1782. The King appointed Cao Kawila as Cao Phraya Mangra Wachiraprakan Kamphaeng Kaeo (พระยามังราวชิรปราการกำแพงแก้ว), Cao Müang Chiang Mai, or King of Chiang Mai, in the same year, while he promoted the *Cao Cet Ton* (the Chiang Mai royal family) to govern the main cities of Lan Na.[72] King Kawila's most important mission was to restore Chiang Mai and Lan Na, which had been deserted for more than twenty years. He decided to create a stronghold at Wiang Pa Sang[73] and used the place for the recruitment of troops from 1782 to 1796. It took these fourteen years for Chiang Mai to be restored and re-established. After this, he continued with the given policy and completely did away with Burmese control. In 1804, with the

[70] Wyatt and Aroonrut 1998: 152.
[71] Ibid: 155.
[72] Ibid: 158.
[73] The reason for choosing Wiang Pa Sang as a stronghold was that it was a basin in the junction of three rivers (the Ping, the Kuang and the Mae Tha), which offered rich resources and an important potential for rice production. Furthermore, Wiang Pa Sang was located slightly to the south of Chiang Mai, between Chiang Mai and Lampang, which made it convenient for requesting aid from Lampang, while it lay at a greater distance from Burma than from Chiang Mai, reducing the influence from Burma and the threat of war. See Grabowsky 1999: 52-53 and Sarassawadee 2005: 132.

cooperation of Chiang Mai, Lampang, Vientiane, Nan, and Siam,[74] Chiang Saen, the last Burmese base, was finally defeated when those forces simultaneously attacked it. Chiang Saen was overthrown and the people driven from the city. This was a source of great satisfaction to the King. The benefits gained were not only an increase in the population while captives could be assigned to work on construction in the city, but leaving Chiang Saen as an abandoned town also prevented Burma from drafting more combatants from there or from salvaging any food.

Moreover, it cut transport routes for the army from Burma, preventing it from attacking Lan Na. In 1802 King Kawila had attacked Chiang Tung and other cities nearby, on both the western and northwestern flanks of Chiang Saen. His campaigns were successful and he imported people into Chiang Mai, so that the first king on the throne appointed him *Phracao*, which is equal to *Cao Phraya*,[75] the highest rank of a Siamese vassal ruler, to reward his achievement and to stabilize the governing basis of the Cao Cet Ton dynasty, which had been embraced by the people of Lan Na.

During this period of "collecting vegetables into baskets and collecting people into the *müang*" in the late eighteenth to early nineteenth centuries, the policy was not only to improve, repair, reconstruct and renovate temples and respected holy objects, but also to resurrect the royal ceremonies of the Mangrai Dynasty in order to create a just system of government, and to establish the Cao Cet Ton Dynasty as the rulers of various Lan Na cities and of the tributary states under Siamese authority.

Although a tributary state of Siam, Lan Na was still allowed to manage her internal affairs freely. Self-government was retained, but the supremacy of the Siamese King had to be acknowledged, in that Lan Na leaders had to undergo an appointment ceremony and demonstrate their loyalty to Bangkok, offering gold and silver flowers and tributes according to Siam's requirements. A significant change in the Lan Na government occurred during the reign of King Rama V, whose policy it was to reform all parts of the government system. He set up the *monthon* administration, in which provinces that shared historical or cultural features were grouped together. A governing unit for the group was established and termed *monthon*.

The *monthon* administration thus grouped Lan Na's tributary states around the capital in order to establish a state of absolute monarchy with the Siamese king at its head, and to unite all the states through the centralization of Bangkok. The reform

[74] See Grabowsky 1999: 56. Seen in Chiang Mai sources such as The Chiang Mai Chronicle, which says that the triumph over Chiang Saen was due to the sagacity of King Kawila, but refrains from commenting on the cooperation of Nan, Vientiane and Siam. Others, for example the Nan Chronicle, do refer to the successful cooperation of troops from Siam, Vientiane, Lampang, and Chiang Mai, when Burmese troops persisted in Chiang Saen in 1804.
[75] Brailey 1968: 23.

caused the tributary states[76] to be eliminated and replaced with the so-called *thesaphiban* system, in which central governors, called "special commissioners" (ข้าหลวงเทศาภิบาล), were appointed by the Ministry of the Interior to oversee the provinces. It was a special commissioner's task to direct, control and protect the entire province. In this way, the vassal rulers were gradually dispossessed,[77] and their titles done away with.[78] Owing to conflicts with its Western neighbours, in particular a problem concerning profits from the logging business, and several complications around various border cities,[79] Lan Na's government was first reformed by Siam in the reign of King Rama V, who appointed his brother, Prince Phichitprichakòn, as special commissioner in 1884.[80] Thus it was that Lan Na, under the *thesaphiban* system introduced in 1899, became Monthon Phayap. Finally, a year after the People's Party coup in 1932, which saw the end of the absolute monarchy, Thailand's *thesaphiban* system was abolished. The Monthon system was replaced with provinces, and Chiang Mai, formerly the centre of the Lan Na kingdom, became a province of Siam.

Some examples of Lan Na women during the period of Siamese domination

Lan Na was eventually to become a tributary state of Siam. The changes to the administrative system in the northern provinces of Siam as mentioned above had an impact on the roles women played, particularly the elite, who established important links between tributary rulers and Siam through marriage. A good example is provided by Cao Si Anocha,[81] who cemented relations between states that relied on each other while the country was being rebuilt after war, the country being Lan Na, which had just been relieved of Burmese rule. However, internal weakness and instability persuaded the ruler at the time, King Kawila, to establish firm ties with Siam in order to receive

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[76] King Intrawichayanon was the last ruler of a tributary state because, after his death, Siam appended Chiang Mai to Siam as part of the reformed system. Thus, the next ruler's authority was limited to Chiang Mai only.

[77] National Archives of Thailand, King Rama V, *Bò* (บ) 1.1 *Kò* (ก)/7 *a writing of King Rama V to Phracao Baromwongthoe Kromphrabamrabporapak*.

[78] The last Chiang Mai ruler was Major General Cao Kaeonawarat (1911–1939). Following him, this privilege was reserved for people of 'royal blood'.

[79] National Archives of Thailand, Archives of King Rama V, the Lesser Era 1232, No. 2678, *files concerning several cases of the taxation of teak.*

[80] This was Phracao Nòngyathoe Krommoen Pichitprichakòn, who took up a position as special commissioner to reform the administration. In this position he had the full authority to do anything the King would have done, since he was the King's representative. The king's young brother seems to have been respected by Lan Na loyalists, so there was no direct resistance. However, 'incarcerated with royal spirits' was how people used to refer to the revoking of taxes and the government reform.

[81] Cao Si Anocha, whom the Siamese sources from the reign of King Rama V call Cao Rotca or Cao Sirirotcana, was born in 1750. She was a younger sister of King Kawila and the fifth of Cao Chaikaeo's ten daughters. She was also a granddaughter of Nan Thipchang, or Phraya Sulawalüchaisongkhram, of Lampang.

Siam's permission to govern and to gain its support in his conflict with Burma, which still occupied Chiang Saen.[82] Siam itself also needed to hold Lan Na as a frontline state to protect it against Burmese attack. Thus, it was conjugal connections, especially those of Cao Si Anocha after the rebellion of Phraya San in 1781 that ultimately brought King Kawila to the throne of Chiang Mai.[83]

A rebellion occurred at Thonburi, instigated by Phraya Sing and Phraya San, who assassinated King Taksin, and then, planning to take the throne, persuaded Khun Anurakmontri to plunder the residence of Phraya Suriya-aphai, who had been designated a representative of Cao Phraya Chakri and Cao Phraya Surasi when they attacked Cambodia. When Cao Si Anocha learned of this she collaborated with Phraya Ceng and Phraya Ram, commanders of the Mon forces, to confront the rebels, and they succeeded in killing Phraya Sing and Phraya San and bringing the rebellion to an end. Cao Si Anocha's role in defending Thonburi is regarded as an interesting act of bravery as it occurs in a part of the Chiang Mai Chronicle which also talks about her taking part in the *ngai müang.* There she sent a secret letter to request the men of Ban Pak Phieo in Müang Saraburi[84] to fight the rebels and then invited Cao Phraya Chakri and Cao Phraya Sursasi to take the throne.[85]

At the same time, another Siamese document, "The memorable records of Princess Narinthònthewi and the critique of King Rama V", records the same event as Cao Rotca[86] cooperating with Phraya Ceng, the commander of the Mon forces, to obtain the navy's help in defeating the rebels.[87] The important point is that, although the two sources both name Cao Si Anocha, each one's version of the military force involved is different. One clear aspect, however, is the relationship between Cao Si Anocha and various ethnic groups in Siam at that time.

The attempt during Rama V's rule to follow United Nations government policy,[88] and avoid a threat to Siam through Western domination, led to the application

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[82] As mentioned above, Chiang Saen was a strategically crucial city for Burma in terms both of its abundant trade and its topography, which made it suitable for trading with various states in southern China as well as with some Burmese cities that also traded with other cities along the Mekong. Chiang Saen was split from Chiang Mai by Burma, which assigned Burmese nobles to govern the city and also used Chiang Saen as an administrative centre for some Shan States.
[83] Grabowsky 1999: 52.
[84] These were the Lan Na people who were moved by Siam's command to live in Ban Pak Phieo after the war with Burma. The reason Cao Si Anocha asked for men from there was that they were natives of Lan Na, as she was.
[85] Wyatt and Aroonrut 1998: 156.
[86] King Rama V thought that Cao Rotca was a princess of Chiang Mai and a wife of Krom Phraratchawang Bòwònmahasurasinghanat; further, that she was the mother of Cao Fa Phikulthong Kromluang Sisunthòn, who was alternatively called Cao Si Anocha, the eldest wife of Cao Phraya Surasi, who was appointed Krom Phraratchawangbòwòn, the Front Palace, in the reign of King Rama I.
[87] *The memorable records of Princess Narinthònthewi and the critique of King Rama V* 1983: 13-14.
[88] Tuanjai 1993: 107.

of the *monthon* administration to Lan Na. Aside from the political aspect, Siam also took the opportunity to form relationships with the Lan Na elite. This can be seen in Rama's acceptance of Cao Dararatsami, a daughter of King Inthawichayanon of Chiang Mai, as a consort. Cao Dararatsami had an important role to play in creating an image of the Lan Na woman. Whether this was intended to show that northern women were civilized Lao[89] is not clear, since she considered Lan Na people as Lao.[90]

However, when Rama died she returned to Chiang Mai for good. She imitated the Bangkok elite's ideas and fashions in her house in Chiang Mai by promoting and adapting Lan Na customs, encouraging acting, music and dancing, carrying out her own duties according to the new social expectations, and developing women's social and domestic roles and capabilities.[91] This meant that women should be proficient in needlework and weaving, know how to receive guests at parties and act as their husbands' moral support, and be generally knowledgeable of the arts and sciences.[92] These ideas have underpinned the special roles of northern women until the present day.

An outstanding feature of Lan Na society is the unique blending together of Buddhism and Animism. The resulting doctrine retains the features of the individual faiths, taking in the spiritual and magical elements that mould the particular vision and personality of Lan Na people.[93] Both Davis (1973) and Turton (1972 and 1975) are of the opinion that the social structure of Lan Na is related to the relationships between men and women, and give particular precedence to the matrilineal aspects. Davis suggests that the social structure of Lan Na was controlled by women,[94] since the ancestral spirits were guardian spirits whose responsibility it was to help, protect, and take care of family members, and generally make them happy. The ancestral spirits (*phi pu nya ta yai*)[95] will always be connected with the female line; it is usually the eldest

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[89] Siam recognized Lan Na by the name "Lao" in the Rattanakosin age, which reflects the relationship between the rulers in the tributary states. Lan Na's acceptance of and reliance on Siam's authority made Siamese rulers feel superior to those in Lan Na. This is documented in various literary works of the early Rattanakosin age. The epic *Khun Chang-Khun Phaen*, for example, demonstrates the attitude of the Siamese people to those of Lan Na in its reference to "barbaric Lao," and to Chiang Mai women as "women who take the tree lizard and the frog."

[90] From a telegraph of a consort, Cao Dararatsami, who told this to King Rama V while she proceeded to Lamphun. Quoted from Nongyao 1974: 68.

[91] Sa-nguan 1992: 11-12.

[92] An example of this was the consort Cao Dararatsami, who was knowledgeable about recent developments in archaeology, and demonstrated her knowledge of Chiang Mai's ancient silverware in her reply to a letter from Somdet Krom Phraya Damrong Rachanuphap. She also had a linguistic talent, as we can see from King Rama V's assigning her to the post of translator at the welcoming ceremony of the Saenwi envoy.

[93] Chalatchai 2002: 34-35.

[94] Davis 1973: 53.

[95] Manee Phayomyong assumes that the word *phi pu nya ta yai* ('ancestral spirits') was at some time reduced to *phi pu nya* and has remained so until now.

woman who has to provide sacrifices and offerings for them[96] in the form of pork or chicken, flowers, joss sticks and candles, and *nam som pòi* (a kind of holy water), with which to perform ceremonies and receive their blessings.

A ceremonial offering of food to the ancestral spirits used to be conducted at every meal, but this has changed and is now only carried out once a year.[97] Through such traditions women became a medium between the people and the holy spirits. This earned women great respect in Lan Na society and led to the tradition of a newly married man moving into his bride's house.[98] We see this in the family codes of the *Mangraithammasat,* which concern the division of property between married couples, and which cover the practice of men moving into their partners' houses. As, for example, in the case of the man who stays with his bride-to-be but takes no tray of presents for her (called a *khan mak*); or the man who lives together with a woman but has no property of his own (i.e. the man has no assets, while the woman does); or, on the other hand, the man who lives with a woman, and is himself the only one with any assets.[99]

Turton (1975) observes that it was the women who were responsible for managing family accounts and that they took the leading role in many ceremonies after their marriage (from family up to community levels), while the men, especially those who had had the status of Buddhist monks, always took on a political role (from village to town levels).[100] Presented with different opportunities to gain such experience, men and women thus developed different roles and duties, both in the family and in the community.

The changing status of Lan Na elites (which resulted from the administrative reform in Siam brought about to centralize the power base) seriously threatened their status and authority. Interesting is how the changes in political structure and the economic and social systems were reconciled with the belief system. Witness the case of Cao Ubonwanna, second daughter of King Kawilorot Suriyawong (1856-1870), who was elected shaman (ม้าขี่ - *ma khi*)[101] of the Chiang Mai royal family. As a shaman she

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[96] According to Lan Na tradition, people usually offer food to ancestral spirits around the seventh, eighth or ninth of the month, in the northern calendar (April, May, and June); and it is permissible for food to be offered on any day except on a Buddhist holy day or on a Wednesday.

[97] Kanokwan and Thitinadda 2003: 81.

[98] It is remarkable that Tai peoples who had a culture of consuming glutinous rice (Sipsòng Panna, Chiang Tung, Chiang Rung, Lan Na, and Lan Sang) all shared the characteristic of being matriarchal societies.

[99] Aroonrut and Lamun 1985a: 65-66.

[100] Turton 1975: 206-207, 176-177.

[101] Shamanism is a range of traditional beliefs and practices concerned with communicating with the spirit world. A practitioner of shamanism is known as a shaman. Shamans are intermediaries between the human and spirit worlds. According to believers, they can treat illnesses and are capable of entering

functioned as a medium between human beings and the spirit world. It was she who performed a ceremony communing with a spirit to cure Cao Thepkaison[102] when he was ill, and found that the holy spirits had induced the illness because they were displeased with the monopoly that the Chinese had been allowed to develop in the brewing trade. This persuaded King Inthawichayanon (1873-1896) to abolish the concessions that had led to this monopoly. Also, the incarnation of the Chiang Mai guardian spirits was used as a weapon to resist the expansion of Siam's power because it was believed that Siam's actions, such as increasing taxes (of both the types and the amounts of tax), brought suffering on the people of Lan Na. The belief system was thus used to solve the problem and Cao Ubonwanna was able to exploit her role as *ma khi luang* (shaman) against Siam's efforts to diminish the authority of the Chiang Mai elite.

Carl Bock reports Cao Ubonwanna's role in Siam's power deliberations through the example of Siam's efforts to acquire profits by way of Chinese tax collectors, as in the case of the brewing monopoly, which brought such disadvantages to Lan Na. Cao Ubonwanna's claim that the holy spirits were dissatisfied and that the monopoly should be abolished to avoid disaster[103] must have had a strong effect because such ceremonies were subsequently prohibited by the Siam government (1884), in an effort to prevent Lan Na's leaders from blocking the government's reformation programme.[104]

Prominence and historical background of Lan Sang

Lan Sang was an ancient kingdom of the Lao people located around the Mekong Basin within the territory of Laos in the northeastern part of present-day Thailand. As already noted, the name of the kingdom comes from the Pali *Sattanaganahut* (a "million elephants", or *Lan Sang*). It was regarded as a neighbour of the Lan Na kingdom, and the names of both kingdoms convey a similar meaning, that is, the land of a million rice fields (Lan Na) and the land of a million elephants (Lan Sang). In the "Veritable Records of the Ming Dynasty" (*Ming Shilu)*, a contemporary Chinese source[105], this

supernatural realms to give answers to human beings' questions. In general, the shaman was known as *ma khi* or *khon song* in Lan Na.

[102] Cao Thepkaisòn was the first daughter of King Kawilorot Suriyawong, the sixth *Cao luang* of Chiang Mai (1856-1870) and Cao Mae Usa. She was also the elder sister of Cao Ubonwanna, and was regarded as of direct Cao Cet Ton descent. Her paternal and maternal grandfathers and her father all ruled Chiang Mai.

[103] Bock 1986: 340.

[104] See Grabowsky 2004: 268-278.

[105] The original texts of the *Ming Shilu* and the *Mingshi Gao* is a elaborately annotated translation done by Foon Ming Liew-Herres and Volker Grabowsky in collaboration with Aroonrut Wichienkeeo.

land was called *Laowo* and achieved the diplomatic status of *xuanwei si* (the Pacification Commission)[106] in the reign of Emperor Hongwu (1368-1398).

The Chinese annals tell us that in the year Chenghua 1466, the Pacification Commissioners of Babai-dadian (Lan Na), Laowo (Lan Sang) as well as of Cheli (Sipsòng Panna of Yunnan) sent their representatives to the Ming Court to offer in tribute some elephants and horses. It was thought appropriate to give some travelling expenses to the representatives so that they could offer their tribute in 1480 and return home at double speed.[107] This is a good illustration of how the Lan Sang kingdom evolved parallel to neighbouring kingdoms, although the Chinese source mentions that Laowo was weaker than Burma, Cheli, or even Babai.[108]

Lan Sang from the thirteenth to fifteenth centuries

Lan Sang as an independent state

The earliest Lao legal document and the earliest sociological evidence of the existence of the Lao people is known as "the laws of Khun Bulom" (*Kotmai khun bulom*). This ancient text describes a city named *Thung na nòi aòi nu* and its agrarian society in which life revolved around subsistence agriculture with domesticated water-buffalo. *Thung na nòi aòi nu* was founded by Khun Borom, or Khun Bulom Rachathirat, in the name of the Thaen Kingdom at the same time that the capital Müang Kalong[109] was built. Khun Borom expanded his area of control by assigning his sons[110]

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[106] The six *xuanwei si* were Cheli (Muang Lü), Mupang (Saenwi), Miandian (Burma), Luchuan-Pingmian (Müang Mao), Laowo (Lan Sang) and Babai (Lan Na). These cities were guaranteed diplomacy status, on which the Chinese court issued the *kham hap* (the plate of absolute power) with its emblem. See Wade 2005 and Liew-Herres et al. 2008: 98.

[107] Liew-Herres et al. 2008: 118.

[108] See also Winai 1996.

[109] M. L. Manit Chumsai and Martin Stuart-Fox maintain that Müang Thaen, which was now called Dien Bien Fu, was located in the north-west of Vietnam, while Maha Sila Viravong assumes that Müang Kalong, or Kaolong, which was now called Chiang Rung (also referred to in the Thai book Phra Borihan Thepthani), was in the Hua Fai sub-district, Wiang Papao District, Chiang Rai Province.

[110] Chronicle of Lan Sang (*Phongsawadan Lan Sang*) in *The Collected Annals*, chapter 2: Khun Borom had seven sons. Three were born to Nang Aaek Daeng: Khun Lò, who ruled over Müang Chawa; Yi Phala, who ruled Müang Tae; and Sam Cu Song, who ruled Müang Kaeo. Three further sons were born to Nang Yompla: Sai Phong was the ruler of Müang Yonok; Ngua In the ruler of Müang Ayothaya; and Lok Kom ruled Müang Chiang Khom. The last son, Yò Sam Cet Coeng, who ruled Müang Phuan, was probably Thao Cüang. The document does not specify which wife he was born to. However, the *History of Laos*, by Maha Sila Viravong, referring to a book of stories from Müang Lan Sang, describes the seven sons of Khun Borom as follows:

1. Khun Lò, ruler of Müang Lan Sang
2. Thao Phalan, ruler of Müang Tahò (the Lao people called it Hòtae or Hòtai, later changed to Hòyai)
3. Thao Cu Song, ruled over Muang Cunni, or Vietnam
4. Thao Kham Phong ruled over Müang Yonok, or Lan Na
5. Thao In ruled Müang Lan Phia, or Ayutthaya (the word *Lan Phia* appears in the Nithan Khun Borom, which refers to Chiang Mai as Lan Na, Lao as Lan Sang, and Ayutthaya as Lan Phia)

to build new cities and govern them. Those cities are now located in the Indochina region.[111] In 757, Khun Lò, the first-born son, established Müang Chawa as the capital of the Lan Sang domain; its name was later changed to Müang Chiang Thòng . Simultaneously, he successfully expelled the Lao Thoeng or Khmer people who dominated in this area,[112] and it flourished for over 500 years until King Cao Fa Ngum finally unified it as the Lan Sang kingdom.

Lan Sang was first united in the latter part of the fourteenth century.[113] King Fa Ngum (1353-1393) owed his power to the support of the Khmer empire,[114] which was trying to halt the extreme expansion of Ayutthaya[115] under the reign of King Ramathibodi I (U-thong). This king had established a new kingdom among the declining kingdoms of Sukhothai and Angkor. The Khmer king had a desire to retaliate against Ayutthaya, so he supported King Fa Ngum in stopping the Thai expansion.[116]

King Fa Ngum founded Lan Sang as the "kingdom of the white parasol"[117] (or "a million elephants under a white parasol") in 1353 on the area of land between the Mekong Basin and the Annam mountain range, and named the capital Müang Chiang Dong Chiang Thòng . He developed a broad power base by, for example, conquering Chiang Saen, Vientiane and Roi Et. He also introduced the Lankawong sect from Cambodia and instituted this as the kingdom's main religion, replacing the formal beliefs of Phi Fa, Phi Thaen and Phi Dam.

When Fa Ngum was deposed he was replaced by his son, Sam Saen Thai Traiphouvanath (1393-1416). He formed dynastic relationships with nearby kingdoms by marrying princesses from Ayutthaya, Lan Na and Chiang Rung. In addition, as the Khmer Empire declined the Lan Sang kingdom gained in strength. However, Lan

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6. Thao Kom was ruler of La Khammuan
7. Thao Cüang ruled Müang Pakan, or Chiang Khuang.

[111] Stuart-Fox (1998) proposes that one reason for the success of Khun Borom's expansion through his seven sons' founding of the *müan*g may be found in the close relationship he enjoyed with China, which empowered him. The author observes that the initial parts of the seven sons' names are given in Chinese numbers and are then followed with Lao names, e.g. Yi (two) Phalan, Sam (three) Cu Song, up to Cet (seven) Cüang.

[112] Ibid: 27.

[113] The political chronicles (*tamnan müang*) tell us that the settlement came about as a result of the search for fertile lands along various rivers. Interestingly, it generally began with someone (usually a prince with some strange features or who had committed a serious offence, e.g. Cao Fa Ngum, who was born with 33 teeth, and Cao Fa Dek Noi, son of Cao Fa Chiang Rung, who killed villager's pets because of his preference for uncooked meat) adrift on a raft together with his courtiers looking for a new place to settle. Through this punishment of the floating raft the convicts find their new home lands and settle down, usually by supporting the local autocrats and marrying their daughters.

[114] King Fa Ngum attained the status of son-in-law by marrying Nang Kaeo Keng Ya, the Khmer king's daughter. He learnt various arts and sciences at the Khmer royal court in the thirty-three years he was there, and he then returned with Khmer troops to usurp the Müang Lao throne from his uncle.

[115] See Stuart-Fox 1998: 35-36, and Evans 2002: 9-10.

[116] Maha Sila 1996: 41-42.

[117] A white parasol was a symbol proclaiming military might and kingship.

Sang's power also later declined, with nearly a century of battles against rival states and rebel uprisings. Most important among these were the riots caused by Mahathewi (1428-1438), the rebellion of Cao Mui of Vientiane, and the war with Vietnam in the reign of King Chaiyachakkaphat Phaenphaeo (1441-1478).[118]

Some examples of Lan Sang women during the era of state independence

In the study of the political history of Lao Lan Sang one aspect that should be discussed is the incident that covered ten years of the Mahathewi period (1428–1438), namely, the riots that were caused by her.[119] Everything that occurred resulted from her motivation to be Queen of Chiang Thòng ; she managed to achieve her goal insofar as she got her husband appointed *Saen Luang Chiang Lò*, one of the highest ranks a noblemen could attain. It is believed that her husband was behind the assassination of seven Chiang Thòng kings,[120] a fact which reveals the power that Mahathewi wielded from behind the throne. Considering her cruel behaviour, she perhaps did not stem from the Lao royal lineage: some sources have Mahathewi as a princess from another kingdom who married King Sam Saen Thai. In other sources she was a younger sister of Sam Saen Thai, and since she could not ascend to the throne, she resolved to use her accumulated power from behind it. Historically, Mahathewi was a person who played a great part in determining the administrative direction of the state and it seems that after she was executed by noblemen the riots and the threat to the royal family ceased.[121] However, historians have not been able to determine who Mahathewi was, and her story remains for the most part a mystery.[122]

The question "who was Mahathewi?" has been raised by Lao historians such as Sila Viravong, who in his history of Laos proposes that Mahathewi was a younger sister of King Sam Saen Thai,[123] while the Thai translator of the Lan Sang Chronicle, published in the series *Prachum Phongsawadan* (Collected Chronicles) mentions that Mahathewi was a daughter of King Sam Saen Thai.[124] Martin Stuart-Fox (1993), who is engaged in research into Mahathewi, has gathered material from various sources, and

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[118] In the Ming Shilu it is reported that "… In the year Chenghua 16, the 8th month, on jiayin day (Sept. 1480), on the pretext of pursuing the rebels (pandang), the Kaeo (Vietnamese) people attacked and captured over twenty stockade-villages in Laowo (Laos) and killed more than 20,000 people. Moreover, (the Kaeo) wanted to proceed to the territory of Babai …" (Liew-Herres et al. 2008: 118-119).
[119] Maha Sila Viravong called this period 'the crisis of Mahathewi'.
[120] In his book *History of Laos*, Maha Sila Viravong notes that Müang Chiang Thòng was where the rulers were assassinated under the intrigues of the wicked Mahathewi. The rulers were: Thao Phomthat (reigned ten months), Thao Yukhol (reigned eight months), Thao Kon Kham (one year and six months), Thao Kham Tem Sa (five months), Thao Lüchai (six months) and Thao Kham Koet (reigned two years).
[121] Maha Sila 1996: 67.
[122] See also Stuart-Fox 1993.
[123] Maha Sila 1996: 65.
[124] *Collected Chronicles Vol. 3, Chronicles of Lan Sang* 1963: 156.

has discovered many involved claims. For example, Paul Le Boulanger (1931) proposes that Mahathewi was the eldest daughter of King Sam Saen Thai, while Michel Oger (1972) suggests that she was the principal wife of King Lan Khamdaeng, and Amphay Doré (1987) argues that she was the wife of King Fa Ngum. Unfortunately, Stuart-Fox does not draw any of his own conclusions about who Mahathewi was, but restricts himself to a criticism of each author's point of view.

In terms of Mahathewi being referred to as the king's mother (a position sometimes equal in importance to that of the king) or at least of her exercising power from behind the throne,[125] we have the case of Nang Pong Nòi, or Queen Siriyotsawadi, who was at the side of Phraya Kaeo when he ruled Chiang Mai, and is referred to in several documents as "Mahathewi" or "Queen Mother" after her son succeeded the throne.[126] If the Lan Na and Lan Sang contexts are similar, the word "Mahathewi" can also be interpreted in Lan Sang as "mother of a king" or "being equal in rank to the king's mother". Thus, Mahathewi may well have been one of King Sam Saen Thai's wives, which might then make her Nang Kaeo Yòt Fa, a daughter of the King of Ayutthaya and the mother of Thao Wangburi, who ruled Lan Sang under the name of King Chaiyachakkaphat Phaenphaeo after she (Mahathewi) died. With regard to her cruelty, we have seen that some Lao scholars think she may not have been of Lao dynastic lineage.

Maha Sila Viravong (1959) claims that she may have originated in the Ayutthaya dynastic family, because at the coronation ceremony of King Chaiyachakkaphat Phaenphaeo it is reported that King Intharacha of Ayutthaya sent a large contribution of gifts and other valuables,[127] which would indicate the great respect he held for him. Mayoury Ngaosyvathn has expressed the opinion that because of her brutal behaviour, Mahathewi was probably not a Lao princess, but rather a princess from another kingdom associated with Lan Sang.[128]

The story of Mahathewi has become part of folk mythology, and although it remains historically ambiguous and offers no conclusions about her origins, her actions as a dominant royal figure represent the special role a woman of political determination was able to play.

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[125] Sarassawadee 2004b: 20.

[126] *Collected Inscriptions Vol. 3* 1965: 195,198; *Collected Inscriptions Vol. 4* 1971: 112 and *Collected Inscriptions of Phayao* 1995: 263.

[127] This point reflects the complications in the historical record, because Maha Sila Viravong claims the name of the Ayutthaya king who sent the gifts to celebrate the coronation ceremony of King Chaiyachakkaphat Phaenphaeo as being King Intharacha, but the Ayutthaya Chronicles, e.g. *The Royal Chronicles of Ayutthaya* do not report this event. Furthermore, King Intharacha was on the throne from 1409 to 1424; King Chaiyachakkaphat Phaenphaeo succeeded to the throne many years later, i.e. in 1449.

[128] In an interview with Dr. Mayoury Ngaosyvathn (20 March 2007).

Lan Sang during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries

Lan Sang as a tributary state of Burma

In Lan Sang the reign of King Phothisarat (1520-1548) was a period in which the Lao people adopted new beliefs and came to practise Theravāda Buddhism. The King decided to re-unite the Lao nation after internal weaknesses had begun to arise. He sent envoys to Chiang Mai in 1523 requesting that the Tipitaka and some monks be sent to him,[129] and he himself entered the monkhood, declaring it legal for his citizens to reject the then official religion of *Phi fa-phi-thaen* (ancestor worship). Theravāda Buddhism was thus filtered into the administrative system and used to induce people to practise the one religion, which offered them spiritual instruction while persuading them to remain loyal to the monarchy. But the acceptance of Buddhism also brought with it more complexity in thinking and in the culture, especially concerning the relationships between men and women. This will be described later.

Lan Na had grown weak from the war with Ayutthaya and from failed attempts at invasion in Chiang Tung, so it allowed neighbouring kingdoms such as Lan Sang to influence its internal affairs. When King Ket Chettharat of Chiang Mai died in 1545, rioting erupted. To tackle this problem, the nobility sent an envoy to prince Setthathirat, who was the eldest son of King Phothisarat and whose mother was a princess of Chiang Mai, to have him installed as King of Chiang Mai (1546).[130] Unfortunately, he returned to Lan Sang as sovereign in 1548 when his father passed away. At that time, Hongsawadi, under the rule of King Bayin-naung, was the strongest neighbouring kingdom and was extending its power rapidly. King Setthathirat was concerned at Chiang Thòng being so close to Chiang Mai and at a crossroads on the route to Burma, and that this might prove to be a strategically unfavourable location. Chiang Thòng was also narrow and not built on the fertile land that Vientiane enjoyed. That was a large city with plenty of employment, and therefore a more suitable location for the founding of the capital.[131] He moved people and property, including the Emerald Buddha and Phra Saek Kham, to establish the capital in 1560 and named it *Phra Nakhòn Canthaburi Sisatanakhanahut Uttama Ratchathani*, but the people continued to call it Vientiane.[132] He also built many monasteries along the banks of the Mekong, including Wat Phra

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[129] This was concurrent with the reign of King Müang Kaeo; however, there are some arguments about this, for instance, the *History of Laos*, compiled by Maha Sila Viravong, refers to the royal recruitment envoy sent from Lan Sang with the aim of importing Buddhism from Lan Na. Nevertheless, some Lao scholars, such as Souneth Phothisane, have proposed that these events never appeared in the Lao annals, and existed only in the *Jinakālamālīpakaraṇaṃ* of Lan Na.

[130] Wyatt and Aroonrut 1998: 118.

[131] Maha Sila 1996: 92.

[132] The former capital, Chiang Thòng, was renamed Luang Prabang because the *Phra Bang*, an important image of Buddha, was erected there.

Kaeo, Phra That Luang, That Phanom and Wat Ong Tü, and Buddhism in the Lao kingdom flourished.

The transfer of the capital could not, however, avoid invasion from Burma because when Burma conquered Chiang Mai in 1558 some nobles and members of royalty from Chiang Mai escaped to seek refuge in Lan Sang. King Bayin-naung commanded the leader of the Burmese army to pursue them and attack Vientiane. This was the first war between Burma and Laos, and occurred in 1564. The result of it was that Burma captured Cao Maha Uparat and King Setthathirat's wife and took them to Hongsawadi. In this way, Burma was eventually able to intervene in Lan Sang politics. This event also appears in the Chinese source *Ming Shilu*, which notes that during the reign of Jiajing (1522-1566) Mang Ying-long (Bayin-naug) conquered Laowo (Lan Sang) from the East.[133]

After this, Burma sent its troops to attack Vientiane on two more occasions, in 1569 and 1570. After Ayutthaya had been successfully defeated by King Bayin-naung, Burmese and Lan Na troops were sent to invade Vientiane again. However, this time King Setthathirat managed to defeat the Burmese army. The third attack was initiated in 1574 when King Saen Surindhalusai was on the throne. The Burmese troops subdued Vientiane and took King Saen Surindhalusai and Phra Nò Müang as captives back to Burma. Lan Sang was a tributary state of Burma from that time onwards.

Conditions applying to a tributary state meant that Lan Sang had to send tributes to the Burmese king at Hongsawadi. As for the kingdom's own administration, it was the right of the Lan Sang ruler to govern his own state but the righteous appointment could be decided only by the Burmese king. The first king under Burmese rule was King Maha Uparat Voravangso (1576-1580), a younger brother of King Setthathirat and a hostage at Hongsawadi since the first war had ended. Subsequently, Burma played an important role in Lan Sang politics, including having the authority to appoint or dismiss the Lan Sang monarch.

By the reign of Voravongsa Thammikarat (1598-1624), Burma itself was experiencing internal trouble following the death of King Bayin-naung and the subsequent enthronement of his son, King Nanthabureng. He proved to be incapable of fulfilling his duties, and the knock-on effect was that the tributary states tried to restore their independence through Lan Sang. King Voravongsa Thammikarat made a declaration of freedom on his enthronement and renounced his dependence on Burma. Since Vientiane, the capital of Lan Sang, was further from Hongsawadi than Chiang

[133] Winai 1996: 231. See also Liew-Herres et al. 2008: 126.

Mai and was not on the trade route from Burma, no more Burmese troops were sent to suppress it. Lan Sang had been a tributary of Burma for twenty-four years.

Examples of Lan Sang women during Burmese rule

Two questions present themselves in relation to this topic. The first is "why did Burma never give such precedence to Laos as an area for its expression of power as it did to Lan Na?" The second is "why was the administrative system of Lan Sang not so completely managed as was the case in Lan Na?" The answer probably lies in the fact that Lan Sang was under Burmese rule for only a short time, just twenty-four years. In historical documents that relate to these circumstances we can read that Burma first conquered Vientiane in 1563. Cao Nang Kham Khai, Cao Nang Thaen Kham and Phra Maha Uparat Voravangso were all seized and taken to Hongsawadi, together with many Lao families. Burmese annals give a list of forty-two of King Bayin-naung's wives who gave their sons and daughters to the king, and in which it is revealed that one of those children was Yon Ayonyon from Lan Sang.[134] The identity of this princess is vague; she may have been Cao Nang Kham Khai or Cao Nang Thaen Kham. Further research is needed to clear this point up.

Lan Sang in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries

The Lan Sang kingdom under Siamese overlordship

In the year 1698, four years after the death of King Suriyavongsa, the great kingdom was divided into three smaller kingdoms following a riot that arose during a struggle to seize the throne. The region was divided into three states, with the capitals Luang Prabang in the North, Vientiane in the centre, and Champasak in the South. All three kingdoms were independent and sometimes competition and conflict developed over the expansion of power. As a result they were often driven to rely on external powers such as China, Siam, Annam or even Burma to balance their internal affairs, sometimes even inviting several large state powers at the same time. For example, one conflict was invoked when Luang Prabang was in alliance with Siam while Vientiane was attended to by Burma.

When King Taksin restored power to Siam from Burma after the fall of Ayutthaya (1767), he sent letters to King Suriyavongsa of Luang Prabang and Cao Siribunsan of Vientiane to offer his friendship. Suryavongsa replied with tributes to Thonburi but Cao Siribunsan refused, upon which Taksin sent his armies to invade Vientiane (the first time in 1778), putting all Vientiane dependencies under Siamese

[134] *Hmannan Mahayazawindawgyi*, Vol. III (Mandalay, 1955: 67), quoted from Sunet 2004: 65.

power. In addition, he not only removed the Emerald Buddha from Vientiane and kept it in Thonburi but also drove great numbers of Lao people to Siam. And, furthermore, the Siamese army, passing through Champasak, easily overthrew the city when the Champasak ruler surrendered without conditions. From that time onwards, the three Lao kingdoms were tributary states of Siam.

Thus, in the Thonburi period these three former Lan Sang kingdoms submitted to being administered by Siam. Any Lao intervention or rebellion was avoided by the taking hostage of the sons and daughters of the Lao rulers and keeping them in Thonburi. Up until 1782, when King Rama I, the first king of Rattanakosin, changed the location of the capital from Thonburi to Bangkok, these rulers all continued to offer tributes according to the royal tradition, and so indicated their acceptance of the new king's authority. Their governorship was appointed by the King, who now controlled the tributary states from Bangkok.

The case of King Saya Setthathirat III, or Cao Anu (1804-1828), is an illustration of the different points of view that people had regarding the power relationships between Siam and Lan Sang. Historical studies of Thai and Lao present very different viewpoints of the 1826-1828 war between Bangkok and Vientiane. The Siamese records regard as a "rebellion" Cao Anu's attempt to assemble on the banks of the Mekong Lao people who had been driven out of their homeland in the early Rattanakosin period and take them back to Vientiane. It appeared that he was aiming to strengthen Vientiane, with the possibility of striking Bangkok.[135] The Siamese documents call this the "Anu Rebellion".[136] He was opposed by King Rama III, the third monarch of Siam, who ordered Commander-in-chief Krom Phrarachawang Bòwòn to take troops to conquer Vientiane. He demolished the city walls and burned the city and the temples to the ground, then emptied the city of its nobility. No monarch ever returned to the city; Vientiane was ruined.

As Lao historiography calls this event "the restoration of independence", Maha Sila (1996)[137] argues that Cao Anu's objective was to liberate his kingdom and restore its sovereignty, not to engage in battle or conduct an assault on Rattanakosin to avenge his father.[138] It has also been proposed that the attempt to restore Vientiane's independence came about because Lao was oppressed and overcharged by Siam, as, for

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[135] The Thai documents report that after Cao Anu reached Vientiane he continually planned to re-invade Bangkok. *Anam sayam yut*: *the military relationships between Thailand and Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam* 1971: 170.

[136] An account can be read in "*Cotmai rüang prap kabot wiang can*" (A record of the victorious Vientiane Rebellion) 1936: 3-4.

[137] Maha Sila 1996: 171.

[138] Cao Anu's father was Cao Nanthasen. He was sentenced by King Rama I to execution because he betrayed Siam and then tried to defect to Vietnam.

instance, in its collection of gum benjamin, ivory, and other products, and because of Lao's dissatisfaction concerning the imposition of a corveé (*sak lek* สักเลก), a policy applied to the north-eastern area that resulted in "Lao people" becoming "Siam people" and Laos becoming a "sub-district" of Siam.[139] It is further proposed that Siam's efforts to blockade the Lao economy forced Lao to take up contact with South China instead.[140] Hence, in the Lao perception Cao Anu was a liberation leader who freed them from Siamese domination. However, as a result of this event Vientiane was stripped of its status as a tributary state of Siam and Rama appointed a commissioner (*kromkan müang* กรมการเมือง) to govern the area from Nong Khai, treating Vientiane as a part of Siam from 1829. Meanwhile, the other Lan Sang kingdoms of Luang Prabang and Champasak continued to be ruled by royalty and their descendants.

In the Cao Anu incident, Siam took advantage of the labourers taken from Vientiane, sending them to work in villages in northern tributary states such as Lampang, Chiang Mai, Lamphun, Phrae, Nan and Luang Prabang.[141] Many Lao people were also taken and settled around the Phu Phan valley and central areas, as well as the northeastern part of Thailand. This exodus caused a drop in the Lao population, and the ethnic Lao people in Thailand became more numerous than they are in present-day Laos. Cao Anu is recognised as having had a significant influence on Thai-Lao relations.[142]

In the second half of the nineteenth century, Indochina was threatened by French imperialism. When France occupied the Sipsòng Cu Thai region and settled its army there,[143] it requested permission from Siam to send a survey team headed by M. August Pavie to survey the Lao area, claiming that the information gained would be used to set a boundary between Siam and France. Pavie was later appointed a general consul of Siam. France then argued that since the land on the left of the Mekong had previously belonged to Vietnam and Cambodia, and those two countries were now French colonies, that land must now also belong to France.[144]

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[139] Mayoury and Pheuiphanh 1988: 3-4.
[140] Mayoury and Pheuiphanh 1989: 55-69.
[141] Ibid.
[142] Stuart-Fox 1997: 15.
[143] Sipsòng Cu Thai, or Sipsòng Cao Thai, was located at the eastern end of Laos, in the basin between the Dam and Song Ma Rivers. It is now part of northern Vietnam. France occupied Sipsòng Cu Thai after sending an army to help Siamese troops in the suppression of Chinese (Hò) guerrillas (who were continually plundering around the Siam-Vietnamese border). However, France never withdrew her troops, but tried to claim that this land had previously belonged to Vietnam. Finally, France forced Siam to sign a contract. Siam signed the contract, which covered nine issues, with France at Dien Bien Fu on 22 December 1888 and allowed France to temporarily settle her troops in Sipsòng Cu Thai.
[144] The Lao historical scholar Maha Sila Viravong refutes the truth of France's claim, it having been made, he says, in order to assert France's right to proceed with its colonialist policy. France aimed to

Siam refused to accommodate this and tried the diplomatic strategy of signing a contract with France. But France rejected negotiations and sent its armies in April 1893 from Cambodia and Vietnam to attack Laos on the left flank of the Mekong River. Then, on 13 September 1893, the French armies attacked Siamese fortresses and lines of protection along the Cao Phraya estuary with warships, and followed by closing the Gulf of Thailand with its navy. In the same year, on 2 October, Siam surrendered and gave over to France the land to the left of the Mekong, or 90% of the territory of present-day Laos, as its dependency. At this point Siam lost its influence over Laos, which became a French colony.[145]

Examples of Lan Sang women under Siamese domination

One female role which is related to the political government of traditional states was as a symbol, indicating the authority of the governing king. Such a role is illustrated in the case of Cao Nang Sumangala. The story began with a political crisis after the death of King Suriyavongsa of Vientiane. As he did not leave an heir, a nobleman called Phraya Can took possession of the throne in 1690 and declared himself King. Phraya Can wanted to take Cao Nang Sumangala, Suriyavongsa's daughter, as his wife, because her status would lend support to his claim to the throne.

The relationship between Siam and Vientiane as a tributary state is expressed through a lady, a daughter of the monarch of Vientiane during the period of Siamese domination, King Inthavong[146] (1795-1803). He offered his daughter as a consort to King Rama I. This princess appears in the Rattanakosin archives as Cao Com Manda Thongsuk,[147] who bore a daughter to Rama I: "… royal daughter of a princess named Princess Canthaburi … her mother is a daughter of King Si Sattanakhanahut, who died in the fifth year of the pig[148] when she was five years old. The king is very much pleased with her. This princess has a grandfather who is still alive and is the king of a dependency. She should be afforded a high rank as Somdet Phracao Lukthoe Caofa … and offer an inscription on a gold plate to her and appoint her Somdet Phracao Lukthoe Caofa Kunthon Thiphayawadi..."[149]

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occupy the eastern part of the Indochina Cape and Siam's eastern Cao Phraya Estuary. See Maha Sila 1996: 269.

[145] Lan Sang was a tributary state of Siam from 1779 to 1893 and subsequently became a French colony. Lao was under Siamese domination for 114 years.

[146] When Cao Inthavong died in 1803, King Rama I ordered a cinerary urn to be obtained for the cremation of his remains. Afterwards, Rama appointed Cao Anu, his younger brother, to rule the kingdom of Vientiane.

[147] In the *History of Laos*, Maha Sila Viravong does not reveal her name, only mentioning that Cao Inthavong had a daughter who became a wife of King Rama I of Siam.

[148] 1803 A.D.

[149] Thipakòrawong, Cao phraya 1960.

Although Cao Còm Manda Thòngsuk has been mentioned here as yet only marginally, she was the person who cemented the relationships between Siam and dependencies such as Lan Sang. This was later to reap great rewards. When Rama I died, his successor was ordained, and he appointed Somdet Caofa Kunthon Thiphayawadi as his left principal wife. This was the second highest position of a court lady in the Royal Inner Court of Siam. Furthermore, her son, Somdet Caofa Krom Phraya Bamrapòrapak, held an important position as commissioner in various provinces and managed the Office of the Royal Court and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the early part of King Rama V's reign.

The relationship between Lan Na and Lan Sang

The relationship between Lan Na and Lan Sang is recorded in historical annals and in the chronicles of those kingdoms, as well as in foreign sources such as Chinese historiography and accounts by Westerners. From these we can trace a continuous relationship in politics, economics and traditions between both cultures.

Political roles

Chronicles, folktales, and annals tell us about how Lan Na and Lan Sang people lived, and describe the process of *sang ban paeng müang* (the "establishment of states"). They tell of the leader whose role it was to seek and occupy territory, of the cultural hero who brought people together from various lands. Signs of their relationships can still be seen in the *Nithan Khun Borom* of Lan Sang, which declares that Khun Borom came from heaven to rule over the world and gave his seven sons the task of searching for and occupying new lands. Khun Lò, the eldest son, founded Müang Chawa,[150] and Thao Kham Phong, the fourth son, founded and ruled Müang Yonok (or Lan Na).

The Chiang Mai Chronicle says that the first king of Lan Na was named *Lawa Cangkarat*, or *Lao Cok:* he came from heaven and ruled the lands around the Kok and Sai Rivers. His offspring ruled the city until the Khun Cüang, or Phraya Cüng, period.[151] Here is revealed the cultural hero's role of expanding the early single-clan *müang* along the banks of the Mekong from Sipsòng Panna through Lan Na and Lan Sang. It is also to be found in the folktales and chronicles of the lands in the Mekong Basin that were the foundation of new *müang* linked by ties of Khun Cüang's

[150] Formerly, Müang Chawa was a settlement of the *kha* (ข่า) people. Chronicle of Lan Sang reports that Khun Lò was a leader of the Tai people, who occupied Müang Chawa and changed its name to Müang Chiang Dong Chiang Thòng.
[151] Khun Cüang was called Thao Hung Thao Cüang in Lao.

descendants in the brotherhood states.[152] However, although these sources seem to be mythological, they do at least indicate traces of the relationships that existed between various cities before the thirteenth century, particularly Lan Na and Lan Sang, in the manner of connections through lineage created by sending their clans to rule various lands.

Historically, Lan Sang began as a stable kingdom in the reign of King Fa Ngum. He unified various *müang* into the kingdom of Lan Sang fifty-seven years after King Mangrai founded Chiang Mai and Lan Na. The boundary between Lan Na and Lan Sang was defined thus: the area located below Pha Dai belonged to Lan Sang,[153] while the area above it was Lan Na territory.[154] The Lao annals tell us that "… From that time on, both kingdoms enjoyed a relationship as a brotherhood …"[155] It is stating the obvious that Chiang Mai and Luang Prabang developed a close relationship after Nan was annexed to the Lan Na kingdom in the reign of King Tilok. This brought the Lan Na boundary up to the right flank of the Mekong and close to Luang Prabang. Primary sources such as the Chiang Mai Chronicle and the Nan Chronicle (the Wat Phra Koet version) affirm that Lan Na assisted Lan Sang in repelling the Dai Viet invasion in 1480. The Dai Viet army first conquered Lan Sang and then tried to attack Nan. However, no mention is made in the Lao archives of Lan Na's support. Souneth Phothisane assumes that this may be because the Nan troops were only a reinforcement, and that the main army came from Müang Sai. He also thinks that the Lan Na documents may deviate from each other in the term *Phraya Sai Khao* (พระยาซายขาว) which indeed might come from the word *Phraya Sai Khwa* (พระญาซ้ายขวา), a Lan Sang noble rank.[156]

The political relationships between Lan Na and Lan Sang were continuously developing and had many sides to them.

Concerning the aspect of friendship, relationships arose through the ties of kinship and political alliance that were formed through dynastic marriages. Women played a central role in cementing political relationships between cities. For instance, Nang Nòi Aòn Sò, a daughter of the Chiang Mai king, was married to Phra Cao Aun

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[152] The dynastic chronicle *Tamnan sipha ratchawong* says that Khun Cüng had three sons by Nang U-Kaeo, daughter to Phraya Kaeo. These were: Thao Pha Rüng, who ruled Phayao, Thao Yi Khamhao, who ruled Lan Sang, and Thao Sam Chumsaeng, ruler of Nanthaburi (Nan).

[153] Ban Pha Dai is located in the Wiang Kaen district of Chiang Rai Province. This area is full of rocky isles in the dry season, the most important of which is Kaeng Pha Dai, in the part of the Mekong that flows from Thailand into Lao.

[154] Souneth 2001:3.

[155] Bunheng Buasisaengpasoet, History of Arts and Sim: Lao Architecture (ประวัติศาสตร์ละประ และ สถาปัตตะกำสิมลาว) Vol. 1, 1991, p. 45 quoted from Yupin 1993.

[156] Souneth 2001: 4.

Rüan, or King Sam Saen Thai Traiphuvanath (1373-1416), and bore him a son, Thao Kòn Kham, who later became the ruler of Chiang Sa.[157] Also, during King Phothisarat's term on the throne (1520-1548) the relationship between Lan Sang and Lan Na was strengthened through his marriage to Princess Yòt Kham Thip, a daughter of Ket Chettarat, King of Chiang Mai.

Chiang Mai noblemen invited Phra Setthathirat (Phraya Upayao), the son of Lan Sang's King Phothisarat and Queen Yòt Kham Thip to rule Chiang Mai. He was able to succeed to the throne through his mother's lineage, a blood inheritance from the Mangrai Dynasty. He also took two Chiang Mai princesses[158] as his left- and right-hand wives respectively. He only ruled for two years, and returned to Lan Sang on the death of his father. However, it was regarded that the relationship between Lan Na and Lan Sang had been very strong during his term, through cultural exchange and the development of law between the two royal courts. The introduction of Lan Sang's Khosarat law[159] had made it standard in the Lan Na kingdom while King Phothisarat was still on the throne. In addition, he had sent Lan Sang troops to assist Chiang Mai in its war against Burma. Although Lan Na was under Burmese rule, Setthathirat[160] continued to challenge Burmese power in Lan Na. Both the rebellions in Phrae, Nan, Lampang, Chiang Rai and Chiang Khòng in 1558, and those in Chiang Saen, Chiang Rai, Lampang and Nan in 1564 were all supported by King Setthathirat.[161]

The Chiang Mai Chronicle tells of Ong Nok, or King Ong Kham, who was descended from the Lan Sang Dynasty and came to rule Chiang Mai.[162] During the period of Burmese domination he escaped from Luang Prabang to enter into the monkhood at Wat Suandok in Chiang Mai. It is thought that Chiang Mai was free of Burma's influence during his reign because he was backed by the Mon people in Chiang Mai through their connection with Princess Sa-ingthòng, a daughter of his who married

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[157] Maha Sila 1996: 63-64, and Stuart-Fox 1993: 103.

[158] Yupin Khemmuk proposes that although both Phranang Tonthip and Phranang Tonkham were King Ket's daughters, they were probably born to a mother different from Queen Yòt Kham Thip, the mother of King Setthathirat.

[159] The sections presented in the Khosarat law were grouped according to five Buddhist precepts. For instance, murder came in the section *Pānātipāta (*ปาณาติบาต); theft, fraud, looting and trade were grouped together in the *Adinnādāna* (อทินนาทาน) section; and the class of law applying to spouses and slaves came into the section named *Kāmesumicchācāra* (กาเมสุมิจฉาจาร).

[160] One Burmese document called King Setthathirat "The king of Lao who loves the battle" and "The ambitious adventurer". See Maung Htin Aung 2005: 119.

[161] "Relationships with Burma Part--1", *Journal of the Siam Society* 1959: 19, 20, 35.

[162] After Ong Nok had been usurped from the throne in Lan Sang, he entered the monkhood and later escaped with his family and servants to Wat Suandok in Chiang Mai. At that time Chiang Mai was ruled by Mang Raenra of Burma, who was subsequently killed by Thepsing. However, Thepsing failed to liberate the city because he lacked power. Finally, Ong Nok, still a monk, successfully fought Burma with troops assembled from Chiang Mai and Mon. He was invited to the throne of Chiang Mai and named King Ongkham. See Wyatt and Aroonrut 1998: 135.

Phaya La ("White Tiger") of Mon. Furthermore, Burma's weakness at this time led to Chiang Mai's successfully expelling it, although in 1761 Burma invaded Chiang Mai again and drove King Ong Kham's son and other members of the court and citizens of Chiang Mai to Ava as hostages and for corvée.[163]

The movement of people along the Mekong Basin also put the relationship between Lan Sang and Lan Na on a more civilized level. This movement occurred in times of peace as well as of war. It appears that Lao people settled in Lan Na with the same ease as the people from Lan Na who crossed the Mekong to settle in Lan Sang, coming particularly from the eastern provinces of Lan Na[164] that were geographically related to Luang Prabang. In wartime Burma drove Lan Na and Lan Sang people out of their homes and lands and took them captive.[165] Such movements of people from the two kingdoms have been shown to have occurred at the time when Burma ruled over Lan Na, as is seen in the Phayao Chronicle: "In the Thai Lesser Era 960, in the Year of the Dog, 2141 B.E.[166] (A.D.1598), the people of Lan Sang who had been forced to move to Hongsawadi by the Burmese army were sent back to Chiang Mai and united with the Lao people there. All these Lao travelled through Phayao and robbed the attendant families of King Ton Luang, who were provided for by Phra Müang Tu and Phra Müang Kaeo, and also took the book of the King Ton Luang Legends with them."[167] This led to people from both kingdoms remaining in each other's lands through peacetime.

The relationship between Lan Sang and Lan Na as tributary states of Siam was defined to some extent by the central power of Siam itself. This can be seen from the rebellion of 1827/28 in which Cao Anu tried to persuade some principalities in Lan Na such as Nan, Phrae, Lampang, Lamphun and Chiang Mai to combine their troops

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[163] *Collected Chronicles Vol. 3, Chronicles of Lan Sang* 1963: 414.
[164] Grabowsky 1997.
[165] An interesting aspect of Burmese policy in the mid-fifteenth to sixteenth centuries, or the early Toungoo Dynasty, was the importing of people to replenish the population after a war. It reveals how the population both increases (in terms of labour) and decreases through war, which causes fluctuations on both sides, although many Western scholars have observed that war between the traditional states in Southeast Asia was usually quite bloodless and resulted in relatively few dead. The principle objective of most wars was to increase a country's population, as it gained both labour and tax advantages. Thus, the victors of wars aimed usually not at killing the defeated citizens, but preferred to take them as captives. Quoted after Jon 2005: 366-373.
[166] This is the method for dating the Thai Era. In general, two systems are in use: the "Lesser Era" dating system, found in early documents, and the "Buddhist Era" (or B.E.), which is the one most in use today. To calculate between the Lesser Era and the Buddhist Era: Lesser Era plus 1181 equals Buddhist Era (or, Lesser Era equals B.E. minus 1181). Furthermore, in Thailand we talk about the year of birth, which uses a cycle of animal symbols, e.g. the first year of the Thai animal cycle is the rat, the second is the ox, the third the tiger... up to the last (twelfth), the pig. Actually, early scholars used this "birth year" to confirm "Era" dates in documents. So a tradition has grown up, when recording events, of writing the date in the Lesser Era, the birth year, the Buddhist Era and then the details of the event. This ensures an accurate recording of historical events and their dates.
[167] Wisutthisophòn, Phrarat 1984: 127.

because the Vientiane and Champasak armies were smaller than those of Siam. Unfortunately, a group of Lan Na principalities turned toward Siam and sent their troops to its aid, perhaps because they felt inferior to the Siamese power.[168] In the event, Cao Anu lost the battle.

Grabowsky (1997) points out that this war resulted in great numbers of Lao people immigrating into Lan Na because, having being defeated, they preferred to submit to the Nan ruler who had sent his troops to reinforce Siam in the battle with Vientiane (under the status of tributary state) rather than being forced to settle in Bangkok. He assumes that people preferred to settle in Nan because it was closer to Luang Prabang than to Siam, and they would be on Lan Na territory.[169]

However, the relationship between Lan Na and Lan Sang changed when Laos became a French colony. France got into trouble with Siam over a major incident in R.E. 112[170] (A.D.1894), known as the Gunboat Crisis of the Rattanakosin Era 112, in which the French sent gunboats to block the Chao Phraya River estuary, while Siam itself introduced the policies of administrative reform needed to gain control of Lan Na and put it under the power of the King at Bangkok. This led the previously kindred kingdoms of Lan Na and Lan Sang to lose the liberty of political contact with each other. The relationship continued to flourish at village level, however, as migration for settlement continued between Phare and Luang Prabang. Furthermore, the trade in elephants between these two cities reached into the many tens of elephants per year.[171]

Economic relationships

Lan Na and Lan Sang had a common economic basis in agriculture and forestry. Lan Sang annals report that before Khun Borom came down from heaven to preside over the world, he consulted with his noblemen, saying "… from this time onwards, I will give all people the knowledge of how to earn their living…" Phraya Thaen thus assigned Phra Witsanukam to go down to Earth, as he was well versed in agriculture and farming methods, weaving, and the production of all types of everyday utensils.[172] The Khosarat law alludes to the punishments involved in agricultural misdemeanours: it mentions, for example, the stealing of livestock such as cows, buffalos, ducks or chickens; neglecting one's cattle and allowing them to walk into others' rice fields;

[168] Suwit 2006: 85.
[169] Grabowsky 1997.
[170] This is the Rattanakosin Era (R.E.) dating system from the founding of Bangkok in B.E.2325, or A.D.1779. This means that R.E. 1 is equal to B.E. 2523. The Rattanakosin Era system was cancelled in R.E.131 (B.E.2455, or A.D.1912), in the reign of King Rama VI. The Thai Government declared the Buddhist Era (B.E.) the official calendar for Thailand from that time onwards.
[171] Haut 1996: 172-174.
[172] *Collected Chronicles Vol. 3, Chronicles of Lan Sang* 1963: 140-141.

lending a neighbour cattle to plant rice and then stealing it from him; and planting betel nuts, toddy palm, coconuts, talipot and other crops on a neighbour's land.[173] In the *Tamnan phra mae ku* we read that Chiang Mai prospered through irrigation and farming, as well as its convenient position for trade.[174] All this indicates that the economic basis of Lan Na and Lan Sang was significantly dependent on agriculture.

A further important factor was trade. Both Lan Na and Lan Sang sources repeatedly refer to the trading relationship between these two kingdoms, in particular during the fifteenth to seventeenth centuries, when trade among early Asian kingdoms rapidly spread, and many internal commercial networks appeared which bought in products from the hinterlands of Lan Na and Lan Sang and then exported them through port states such as Ayutthaya and Cambodia.[175] The Khosarat law tell us that Vientiane merchants traded products such as salt and pickled fish with Lan Na[176] and Lakòn,[177] and imported gum benjamin, stick-lac (the twigs of a certain tree, encrusted with a dark red resin, used as a dye), raw silk and fish spawn from Luang Prabang.[178] The most lucrative products for Lan Sang and Lan Na merchants were forest products such as rhino horn, ivory, gum benjamin, lac (a primary form of stick-lac), Sappan trees (as a herb and for furniture), honey and civets.

Lan Na and Lan Sang were situated among mountains and forests, so they became the export centres for these products. In an account by Joost Schouten, a Dutch merchant who came to Ayutthaya to trade in the reign of King Prasatthong, the author reports that the King recruited his representatives to conduct trade among the large provinces of Hongsawadi, Ava, Chiang Mai and Lan Sang, which formed a centre of trade for forest products in the upper states of mainland Southeast Asia. Lan Na and Lan Sang were the sources of these products, selling to various port cities on the Burmese coast, along the Andaman Sea and in the Gulf of Thailand.[179] Furthermore, the Lan Na

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[173] The Khosarat Law 1987: 26-34.
[174] Mala 2002, *Tamnan phra mae ku* (Wat Khuan Kha Ma version, Müang District, Chiang Mai Province, which concurs with the Wat Pangsan version, Dongdam Sub-District, Li District, Lamphun Province).
[175] Masuhara 2003: 72-73.
[176] The Khosarat Law 1987: 68.
[177] Müang Lakòn, or Müang Khelang, was a city in the Lan Na kingdom. It is close to the present-day city of Lampang.
[178] Hallett 2000: 280.
[179] One of Lan Na's more important trade routes that sent forest products to Ayutthaya ports was that from Thoen to Kamphaeng Phet and Nakhòn Sawan. This route connected with the lower Caophraya River, which proved advantageous in the export of goods through the Gulf of Thailand. Lan Sang's routes to other ports, referred to in the Sukhothai stone inscription, were: the eastern route, which connected with Vientiane; and the northern route from Phrae and Nan through the Mekong Basis and extending to Chiang Saen and Phayao, until it reached the eastern *müang* of the Mekong Basin (e.g. Müang Au and Luang Prabang). Maha Sila Viravong mentions in his *History of Laos* that Phitsanulok was an important trading centre which also connected Luang Prabang to the ports at the Andaman Sea and in the Gulf of Thailand. See Maha Sila 1996: 78-90. A further trade route for forest products was Uttaradit playing an important role as Lao's trading centre.

and Lan Sang royal courts themselves used products such as rhino horn[180] and ivory for tribute offerings to the Chinese Emperor.[181]

Nevertheless, both Lan Na and Lan Sang later became tributary states of Burma and Siam, and the economic dealings between these kingdoms were maintained at the previous levels. That is to say, they kept their basis of business relations, in particular the trade with eastern Lan Na. We can see an illustration of this close relationship in Cao Anu's son and the Nan ruler striking an oath to be friends,[182] an alliance which lasted until the period of French colonisation. Pierre Orts,[183] who surveyed Lan Na trade routes in the reign of King Rama V, tells us in his diaries that, while France administered Laos, the migration of people from Lan Na and Lan Sang, and, of course, trade between them, continued. And Phrae and Luang Prabang were still dealing in elephants to the tune of forty to fifty a year.[184]

A survey of Lan Na and Lan Sang economic documents suggests that the role of men was in long-range trading (we know of *nai hòi,* for example, who travelled great distances to set up trade between cities),[185] while that of women was in trading at elite and village levels. On the elite level, a woman might trade in warehouse products. An example of this is provided by Cao Ubonwanna, who conducted business with a British company, buying and selling forest products. She also maintained other long-range dealings including trade in cattle with merchants in Southern Burma, Shan State and Sipsòng Panna, and business with weaving, sculpture and lacquer-ware factories.[186] She had a vision of a logistical trading system, and promoted the "train-to-China" construction project because she knew this would develop huge trade opportunities for Chiang Mai, which would benefit greatly from the new, fast transport to Burma and China.[187] At the village level, women had a role in conducting community trade. We find that market vendors were mostly female and sold all manner of consumer products.

The diaries of Edward B. Gould bear witness to this. He was England's vice consul and arrived at Lan Na in the reign of King Rama V. He describes the Chiang Mai early morning market thus: "… Only the pork shop had a male owner, the female

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[180] The horn of the rhinoceros.
[181] Winai 1996: 223. See also Liew-Herres et al. 2008: 117.
[182] *Historical records of King Rama III Book 3* 1987: 40, 45.
[183] A Belgian law advisor; he served the royal office in the reign of King Rama V. He gave accounts of the trips to the northern and northeastern provinces that belonged to Siam's Lao Chiang and Lao Phuan precincts at that time. The accounts were written from August 1897 to 1898.
[184] Haut 1996: 172, 174.
[185] This sort of trading was usually called "trading with cows and horses." It comprised over-land trading routes that provided kingdom-to-kingdom and town-to-town connections. It was time-consuming, taking up many months of travel, and usually began after the harvest and continued up to the cultivating season.
[186] Wongsak 1996: 240. Volker Grabowsky explains that it was "the foundation of a trading kingdom" of Cao Ubonwanna, a woman who exerted great economic and social influence. See Grabowksy 1996: 270.
[187] Hallett 2000:103-104.

shopkeepers were in the stalls behind … they sold umbrellas, vegetables, cotton, silk, muslin, brass trays, wooden trays and other lacquer-wares …"[188] and "... Some of the market women bring ducks and fowls, others tobacco, areca-nuts, native confectionary, jaggery, rice, wax and flowers ..."[189]

Social and cultural relationships

There were strong social and cultural relationships between the people of Lan Na and Lan Sang, rooted in some shared basic practices. Grabowsky observes that one noticeable feature of Tai culture was that most people consumed glutinous, or sticky, rice as their main foodstuff, especially in the more culturally conscious areas of Laos (Lan Sang), Tai Yuan (Lan Na), Tai Lü (Sipsòng Panna), Tai Khoen (Chiang Tung) and Tai Yai (Shan State). While ethnic groups from Siam, Ahom and Cuang who consumed rice may have taken their influence from Khmer, Indian or Chinese civilization, there are some differences in social culture and tradition, for instance from the perspective of women's roles. He also sees a similarity of culture in a letter containing a Buddhist story written in a palm leaf manuscript and on a Sa paper roll, a feature which also distinguishes them from Siam.[190]

A further prominent point is that, in this "sticky rice culture" the woman took precedence. We have seen this already in the tradition of a couple living on the woman's land or with her family after their marriage, and generally in the matriarchal system. These customs reflect a social structure which was a distinguishing characteristic of the people in this area.[191] The cultural foundation together with the tendency toward precedence of the female motivated the women of both kingdoms to become active in various fields, including the political and economic functions described above.

One more common cultural point was the integration of Theravāda Buddhism with Animism and supernatural beliefs such as Brahmanism, which became the standard doctrine in these people's lives. Their cultures developed along related lines and they inherited similar traditions and rituals connected with the doctrine. For example, in one ritual, respect was paid to the ancestral spirits *pu nyoe nya nyoe* (ປູ່ເຍີຍ່າເຍີ) in Lan Sang and *phi pu nya* (ຜີປູ່ຍ່າ) in Lan Na. The ritual was meant to persuade the spirits to protect, watch over and take care of individuals and prevent them from becoming ill.

[188] Bristowe 1991: 7.
[189] Hallett 2000:100.
[190] Grabowsky 1997.
[191] Davis 1973:53.

However, we have seen that women also played the role of medium between spirits (or supernatural things) and people. The spirit medium was nearly always a woman.[192] This affected how women's roles were perceived by the public. Thus, the woman became the social support for solving problems, whether in the curing of illnesses, forecasting the future both in family life and in the cultivation of the fields, or in the locating of missing persons. It may be said that this privileged role in mediating with the supernatural became a part of the development of women's social functions that ran parallel to that of men.[193]

Lan Na and Lan Sang both being Buddhist societies may have been a factor in the development of creative abilities in the arts and crafts, such as in the Chiang Saen style, which had its influence in Buddhist monasteries, and some aspects of the Luang Prabang style. In this latter we find traces of Chiang Saen art in Lan Sang Buddhist images, in particular the images of Māravijaya and Samādhi, and Lilā postures.[194] It is possible that Chiang Saen-Lan Na art had an influence in Luang Prabang from the fourteenth to sixteenth centuries, that is, it would have entered Lan Sang during the period from King Sam Saen Thai (1378-1416) to King Setthathirat (1548-1571).[195]

However, although women were not permitted to enter the monkhood, the most important role for women in Buddhism was that of religious supporter. Many Lan Na inscriptions refer to female roles in Buddhism, in particular of elite women such as the king's mother or his wife, who devoted land, people and food, utensils and other requisites to the monasteries, or even had permanent Buddhist objects such as pagodas and images of the Buddha erected.[196] As for ordinary women, they donated alms, offered food for the monks, or used their hair to make s*ai sayòng* (สายสยอง) for tying *phuk* (ผูก) or bundles of palm leaves together.[197]

The Buddhist religion and beliefs, which still have an influence on the way of life of Lan Na and Lan Sang people, caused these kingdoms to uphold similar traditions

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[192] Among Tai Yuan or Lao people, or even those in present-day northeastern Thailand, most spirit mediums are women. This is because spirits do not like the hard-heartedness of men. Cò Parian (Date of publication unknown): 111.
[193] Mayoury 1995: 13-15.
[194] Yupin 1993: 97.
[195] Ibid.
[196] A Wat Donkhram inscription (Phayao 2), *Collected Inscriptions of Phayao* 1995: 107-108; and a Wat Changkham inscription at Nan Province from the Thai Lesser Era 862 (1500 A.D.) 72nd stone 1965: 195.
[197] One bundle, called a *phuk*, consisted of about twenty-four leaves bound together with two strings or threads running through holes on both edges of the pages. This thread was called *sai sayòng* or *sai sanòng*. Sometimes, for convenience, only one string was used on the binding edge. For practical purposes, women's hair could be used along with the thread. The mixture of hair, with its smoothness, and thread made it easier for the monks to flip over the palm leaves. Also, the hair and the thread maintained the shape and size of the holes. Local belief held that women might more readily reach heaven, or become more intelligent, if they offered their hair for the ceremony of making *Khampi dharma*.

and rituals. A case in point is the ritual of "good conduct" called the "twelve month tradition" (or *hit sipsòng* -ฮีตสิบสอง),[198] which is still performed. It may differ in detail or practice according to the different social contexts, but the twelve month tradition is regarded as an important cultural instrument, and for Lao and Lan Na people it was a way of life. Moreover, they still hold to the *khòng sipsi* (คองสิบสี่)[199] principle. It is a practical way for individuals, whether ordinary people or monarchs, to pay honour to their family or religion.

From a review of the literature covering the social and traditional relationships of the Lan Na and Lan Sang people we find that women also had a function in social management, for example, in the role of social reproduction, which included giving birth, instructing children and passing on morals and social attitudes from one generation to the next. It was also possible for women to be midwives or judges.

An insight into the social relationships between Lan Na and Lan Sang may be gained from literary works that reveal the social conditions in those times. Regarding the role and status of women, social expectations are to be found in Lan Na and Lan Sang works such as *Campa si ton* (จำปาสี่ต้น), *Canthakhrat* (จันทคราด) and *Thao kam ka dam* (ท้าวก่ำก้ำดำ), all of which portray similar social roles and duties to be fulfilled by the woman who becomes a wife and mother, as, for example, in *Rüan 3 Nam 4* (เรือน 3 น้ำ 4).[200] Such works also clearly reflect the role in trade that women occupied. The story of *Kam ka dam* (ก่ำก้ำดำ) is about a woman merchant in the market;[201] *Canthama* (จันทมา) describes the atmosphere of a market that Canta visits;[202] and further examples come

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[198] The "twelve month tradition" (ฮีตสิบสอง) is comprised of two words, *hit* and *sipsòng* (twelve). *Hit (*ฮีต*)* comes from the word *carit (*จรีต*)*, which means "good behaviour, tradition, custom" while *sipsòng (*สิบสอง) comes from the word for twelve months. Thus *hit sipsòng* refers to the tradition in which people continually do good deeds at various opportunities over the twelve months of the year.

[199] *Khòng sipsi* (คองสิบสี่) is the word and method coupled with *hit sipsòng* (ฮีตสิบสอง). *Khòng* (คอง) is the tradition or way or method of doing something, and the number *sipsi* (สิบสี่) refers to the fourteen steps of a procedure or practice. So, the word *khòng sipsi* is a fourteen-step procedure or practice, and can be applied by anyone, from the king, to government officers, down to the general public.

[200] The three essential duties of the housewife (the short word is *rüan* in Thai) are in the kitchen, in the bedroom and in the care of her hair. The four 'properties of water' (water in Thai is *nam*) i.e. desirable qualities of a woman, are: *nam müa* (which means being a good housewife), *nam kham* (being gently spoken), *nam pun nai tao* (hospitality) and *nam cai* (kindness).

[201] "... a female street vendor who sells all sorts of fruits, such as mangoes, longans, peanuts, mangosteens, water melons, gourds, Burmese grapes, jack fruits ..." See Khao sò (ค่าวซอ), *Kam ka dam* (ก่ำก่าดำ) 1968: 73.

[202] "… there are many market women in the street. They are very busy selling goods such as betel palm, egg plants, Siamese rough bush, loofahs, chillies, salt, gourds, fermented leaves of tea, and cigarettes ..." *Khao sò* (ค่าวซอ), *Thamma cantama* (ธรรมจันต๊ะมา*)* 1968: 37.

from Lao literature, such as *Thao canthakhrat*,[203] which tells the story of Nang Phimmacali, a brave and daring woman who fought her enemies on an elephant's back.[204] She learnt fighting techniques and magic from her stepmother, Maeya Suriyo. We see here how literature can reveal the political roles and administrative abilities of women. A woman might be a commander-in-chief, as seen from the two 'female kings' Maeya Suriyo, who ruled Müang Pengcam, and Nang Phimmacali, who ruled Müang Anurat and engaged in battle with Phaya Phiyasan's army when it blockaded her city.[205]

Furthermore, other literary works such as lullabies, songs, poetry, verse, folklore, proverbs and sayings all reflect images of the roles and duties of women in Lan Na and Lan Sang. The fact that women ran the household economy, earning and collecting the assets, has already been mentioned. It matches with William Clifton Dodd's observation, in which he says "... And in time the mother in this home comes to have more domestic and financial power than the father. She holds the purse in the home; and the husband consults her about every important financial venture …"[206] Then there is the issue of chastity (รักนวลสงวนตัว) and the social pressure to preserve it, as the Lan Na proverb advises: "do not eat before offering (food to a monk), do not get pregnant before marrying."[207] This is similar to the instruction given to teenagers in Lan Sang proverbs such as *Inthiyan sòn luk* (ອິນທິຍານສອນລູກ) about relationships between the sexes and exercising self-control.[208]

The study of the background and the significance of the Lan Na and Lan Sang kingdoms and the relationship between them highlights the important historical context of women's issues from various aspects. The privileged political, economic and socio-cultural roles of women that relate to the study area and surrounding contexts also arise. However, in chapter 5, this dissertation aims to lay its emphasis on the specific identity and characteristics of Lan Na and Lan Sang, examined in a holistic context, which influenced the various attitudes to and expectations of women in their privileged roles.

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[203] This is the same story as of Canthakhrat Jātaka (จันทคราดชาดก) of Lan Na. The tale may be widely spread among ethnic Tai because it appears in the mural at Wat Nongbua, Nan Province. The place is known as the Tai Lü community that was forced from Sipsòng Panna to settle in Nan in the age of *Kep phak sai sa – kep kha sai müang* of Lan Na.
[204] The political image of Nang Phimmacali also appears in the mural at Wat Nòng Bua.
[205] Amphònlak 1998: 21-30.
[206] Dodd 1996: 307.
[207] Udom (editor) 1981: 115.
[208] Thòngkham 1996: 249.

Chapter 4
A Conceptual Study of the Influence of Indian and Chinese Civilization on Women in the Southeast Asian Realm

My research has shown that Southeast Asian states drew considerable social influence from the powerful neighbouring civilizations of India and China. For example, legal concepts from ancient Indian law such as the Laws of Manu[1] and Kautiliya's Arthaśāstra,[2] and the beliefs and religious practices of both Hinduism and Buddhism have exerted their influence over the states. In addition, it appears that Confucianism also filtered into the social belief systems. An interesting aspect of this is that the Southeast Asian states absorbed these influences through a form of integration and adaptation, bringing them into line with the indigenous beliefs and traditions. This resulted in the formation of distinctive identities in each of the Southeast Asian social character types. I have also found that the issue of women was treated in various oriental manuscripts and legal texts. The woman as wife and mother is dealt with in the Laws of Manu and the Tipitaka, and women's roles and rights in general are treated in the Arthaśāstra. In addition, the qualities and duties of good and bad women are portrayed in various works of women's instructional literature influenced by Confucianism, and include the duties of women toward their families as they appear in ancient Chinese law.

This study has already demonstrated that such phenomena have had an effect on the social status and obligations of women and I believe that women's roles in Southeast Asia were also influenced by the civilizations of India and China. This fact may lead us to understand the gender relations and gender roles that have been continuously present up to the present day. However, this study intends to take only a wide perspective view of the influence of ancient oriental civilizations, that is, of India and China, in forming Southeast Asian attitudes towards women's qualities and responsibilities, focussing on the kingdoms of Lan Na and Lan Sang.

[1] Mānava Dharmaśāstra, also known as Manusmṛti, is the most important and earliest metrical work of the Dharmaśāstra textual tradition of Hinduism. It is generally known in English as the Laws of Manu. Manu became the standard point of reference for all future Dharmaśāstras that followed.

[2] The Kautiliya's Arthaśāstra, a Sanskrit work from around the fourth century B.C., is better known for its comments on politics and statecraft. But the book contains information and instructions concerning various other aspects of social life, including man's relationship with animals and plants.

Early influences of Indian and Chinese civilization on Southeast Asia

India has had contact with Southeast Asia for a long time. The archaeological evidence suggests that the presence of Indian civilization (in its broadest sense) in the region that now forms Southeast Asia goes back a long way, dating from around the third or fourth century.[3] The oldest archaeological find there was of a Sanskrit stone inscription and Buddha image in the Amravati style. Traces of the relationships between India and Southeast Asia can also be seen in the ancient Indian laws and religious doctrines that spread into that area. This took place through coastal and ocean-crossing navigation of the Indian people to various lands in the Indian Ocean and the Indochinese Peninsula. The reasons for these journeys ranged from religious pressure to religious dissemination, from trade to adventure.[4] The story of the immigration of Indian people into Southeast Asia,[5] whether for trade or for treasure hunting, appears in various documents, such as the Vikram Vetal tales,[6] Milindapañhā (the debate of King Milinda), Jinakālamālīpakaraṇaṃ, some Burmese folktales[7] and Javan annals.[8] Such relationships led this area to accept the Indian influence and subsequently integrate it into indigenous traditions. This resulted in the formation of new distinctive societies and cultures in the ancient kingdoms of Southeast Asia.[9] Indian civilization made itself felt there in the form of religion, for example, in Brahmanism, Hinduism, and Buddhism; in literature, as in the Rāmāyana and Mahābhārata; in legal texts, as, for instance, in the Laws of Manu and Arthaśāstra; and in the arts, including religious artefacts and works for monasteries.

The cultural relationships between China and Southeast Asia were spread over a long period of time and were usually related to invasion, as in the case of Pagan of Burma and Dai Viet of Vietnam, both of which countries have been governed by China.

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[3] M.C. Subhadradis 1967:10.
[4] See also Eilot 1962; Cœdès 1968; and Brown 1994.
[5] We refer to old documents in which can be recognized the names of Southeast Asian lands, such as "*Suvaṇṇadvīpa*", which appears in the twelfth chapter of the Vetal tales, and may refer to the Malayan Peninsula; and "*Suvaṇṇabhūmi*", which we find in Milindapañhā, and may mean the 'land of six countries' i.e. Burma, Malaya, Thailand, Laos, Cambodia and South Vietnam.
[6] The 'Vikram Vetal Tales' is a collection of tales about King Vikram and a Vampire named Vetal, originally written in Sanskrit.
[7] The documents claim that Indian people travelled across the Indian Ocean in search of riches and settled around the Irrawaddy Valley.
[8] It is also claimed that a prince from Gujarat came to spread Indian traditions to the island before the Christian era. See Majumdar 1963: 10, 14.
[9] The phenomenon of Indenisation and localization is touched on by George Cœdès, who has claimed that all of Southeast Asia was influenced by India in terms of art, political administration and religion through various Southeast Asian rulers (see Cœdès 1964: 1-14). Robert L. Brown cites the proverb "new wine in an old bottle", meaning, "Indian civilization grew well in Southeast Asia because of its own indigenous character" (see Brown 1994: XXVI, and also Wolters 1999).

In addition, Southeast Asian states were tributary states which offered tributes to the Chinese Emperor, as appears in Chinese historiography: "on *xinyu* day, the barbarian of Babai-xifu and of the Greater and Lesser Cheli presented tamed elephants and local products."[10] However, there were also trade relationships with China, such as the land trade between the upper Southeast Asian kingdoms of Burma, Lan Sang and Lan Na and southern Chinese states like Yunnan.[11] Furthermore, some core Chinese cultural features such as Confucianism, ancient Chinese law, literature and the arts had a more prominent influence in Vietnam than the surrounding kingdoms because of China's occupation of Vietnam over two centuries.

Concepts of womanhood in ancient Indian and Chinese manuscripts, and their influence on the formation of social attitudes towards the women of Southeast Asia

Concepts of womanhood in ancient Indian law

The study of the concepts of womanhood presented in ancient Indian manuscripts and which influenced women's social roles in Southeast Asia should be approached from social, historical and cultural viewpoints,[12] because all these factors affected women's roles in various ways. The Indian woman was different from the woman in Lan Na, Lan Sang or even Siam or Mon, owing to the differences in traditional beliefs and lifestyles. The analysis of women's issues in the Laws of Manu applies to the Indian woman in the context of Hinduism. Since early Southeast Asian states accepted that text as their own original law, the concepts concerning Hindu women might thus originate in some legal concepts. However, the prominent traditions, beliefs, and cultures of Southeast Asian society, and hence the concepts of women's status and social roles in Southeast Asia, will in varying degrees resemble or differ from the respective concepts in Indian society.

a. The Laws of Manu and Kautiliya's Arthaśāstra

Dharmaśāstra (ธรรมศาสตร์) or "laws of righteous conduct"[13] is a Brahman instructional text on the subject of "Dharma"[14] which deals with both legal and moral

[10] See Liew-Herres et al. 2008: 83.
[11] Tuan Lisoeng and Usanee 1988.
[12] One of issues that interests cultural feminists is that of gender studies, in the meaning both of sexual behaviours and of gender roles. They note that the differences in gender roles between men and women are a result of culture and social management rather than biological differences. The concepts of cultural feminism are given in some articles, such as: Margaret Mead 1935; Ashley Montagu 1969; and J.S. La Fontaine 1978. See also Pranee 2001.
[13] The Dharmaśāstra scripture on the whole deals with three issues: 1) the principle of behaviour and practice, 2) the power of judgment, and 3) the eradication of guilt.

laws. That is, the Dharmaśāstra advises on the law, customs and human rights of the Indian people, and is regarded as an important legal manuscript that has its origins in Hindu law. However, this Dharmaśāstra does not only propose administrative regulations, but also discusses religious subjects such as rituals, sacrifices, sin and the elimination of sin. There were many significant legal texts in ancient India, such as the Naradsmṛti, Parasarasmṛti and Smṛtikalpataru, but the most well known was Mānava Dharmaśāstra, or the Laws of Manu.

The Laws of Manu expresses the belief that God created all things including the *dharma* (righteous duty, or virtuous path) and human beings. God intended humans to do only good and avoid all wickedness. He hoped that they would live together in peace and finally reach nirvana. He created the four castes[15] to regulate the duties of mankind, and the Laws of Manu was given as a set of instructions to create peace in society by adopting moral and ethical measures rather than punishments[16] (as can be seen in the last two chapters, which discuss punishment).[17] The scripture also reflects Hindu social and cultural conditions, including the reliance on the caste system to regulate social behaviour, and specifies people's rights and duties. It makes clear, for instance, that the King must originate from the royal class of the administrative caste; it shows that the economy is based partly on agriculture, because most people's occupations are connected with agriculture and handicrafts, and partly on a barter exchange system, which deals in both goods and money. This social and economic context was important in forming the stance taken towards women in the Laws of Manu concerning issues such as the division of duties between the sexes, when the woman looked after the home while her husband went away to work, and in specifying the woman's responsibilities in terms of family relationships, such as her duties as wife and mother.

Kautiliya's Arthaśāstra[18] is an Indian bureaucratic text which had an influence on the administrative systems of the Ayutthaya and Rattanakosin kingdoms and other

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[14] The term 'law' in ancient times was coincident with *dharma*. The law and *dharma* were regarded as the same thing and this concept was consistent with that of the Natural Law School in the West.

[15] The four castes consisted of Brahmans (teachers and priests), whose responsibilities were in instruction, the conducting of rituals and the receiving of alms (ทักษิณา); Kṣatriya (administrators and army men), whose duties lay in state administration, ruling people, studying, assisting with money for rituals and studying the Veda; the most significant of these was warfare; Vaiśyas, also called Aryas (traders and herdsmen) worked in areas such as money lending, trading, and other occupations. Finally, the Sudras (servants, farmers and agriculture workers) were the labourers and farm workers.

[16] Winai 2006: 15.

[17] Haughton 1982: 291-364.

[18] It is believed that the Arthaśāstra was written in the third or fourth century (see Krishna Rao 1958). If we accept that the Laws of Manu was written before other Dharmaśāstra texts (see Burnell 1891 and Precha 1986), then the Arthaśāstra was also the later inscript. However, we do not need to know the actual dates of composition of such texts here, but refer to these ancient Indian writings in order to reflect on the social attitudes of the women in those times.

states in Southeast Asia. It recommended modelling the administration on "the King's conduct" and *Thotsaphitratchatham* (Ten Royal Virtues).[19] Although the Arthaśāstra does not give direct advice about women and does not mention the various points of view on women's issues, as does the Laws of Manu text, nevertheless Kautiliya, the author, does express some attitudes and concepts relating to women's responsibilities and rights, as in the right to select a partner, the right to divorce and the right to re-marry.[20]

In principle, the ancient laws of the various kingdoms in Southeast Asia were all influenced by and all referred to the Indian Dharmaśāstra scripture.[21] Local legends report that King Aśoka (273-232 B.C.) commanded Phra Sona and Phra Uttara to introduce Buddhism into *Suvaṇṇabhūmi* and from that time onwards that region was Buddhist. Although there is no evidence to tell us where *Suvaṇṇabhūmi* was, many scholars have proposed that it might have included the Mon kingdom, whose most important port town was Thaton, located in the south of Burma. Although the Mon were influenced by the legal concepts in the Hindu Dharmaśāstra, these concepts were re-defined to agree with Buddhism, which Mon practised, and that text was named by them the *Thammasattham* (ธรรมสัตถัม).[22] After that, the *Thammasattham*, or the Laws of Mon, was spread to nearby kingdoms such as Pagan, where the influence of Buddhism and the *Thammasattham* were well accepted. In the late twelfth century, the King of Pagan removed all decrees based on Brahman religious anecdotes and replaced them with Buddhist anecdotes such as the "Verdict of Phraya Culaphothi".[23]

Although evidence such as the *Cāmadevīvoṃsa* (the Chronicle of Cāma) does not directly specify that the *Thammasattham* had already been introduced into the kingdom of Hariphunchai, royal scholars from Lawo[24] (an important source of Mon culture in Southeast Asia, also called Thawarawadi) had been invited to Hariphunchai since the kingdom was established in the early thirteenth century. Thus, it is possible

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[19] 'Ten virtues of the king', or 'ten moral perfections', for the king to employ as 'personal dramas' (i.e. a kind of royal morality play), suggesting the principle virtues of just rulers with the aim of making the people happy. Comprised ten issues: 1) Dāna (ทานำ): liberality, generosity or charity; 2) Sila (ศีลำ): a high moral character; 3) Paricāga (ปริจาคำ): making sacrifices; 4) Ajjava (อาชชวำ): honesty and integrity; 5) Maddava (มัททวำ): kindness or gentleness; 6) Tapa (ตปำ): restraint in sensual matters and austerity of habit; 7) Akkodha (อกฺโกธ): non-hatred; 8) Avihimsā (อวิหิสา): non-violence; 9) Khanti (ขันติ): patience and tolerance; 10) Avirodha: (อวิโรธนำ) non-opposition and non-enmity.

[20] Kangle 1972.

[21] Hooker 1978: 201-219.

[22] The term *dharma* with the meaning of law was found in Mon inscriptions from the eleventh century. See Nai Pan Hla 1992: xix.

[23] Sommai et al. 2005: 10.

[24] *Tamnan mulasasana* (ตำนานมูลศาสนา) 2001: 129.

that such laws, an important tool for administration, were also applied in this new kingdom.

Ayutthaya was influenced by Mon legal writings from the birth of the kingdom in the middle of the fourteenth century, as evidenced in Pali incantations from the early period of Siam. Ancient law alludes to the worship of the Buddhist Three Gems, and also names an important text, the *Phra Dharmaśāstra*. This text relates that a hermit named Manosan, or Phra Manu, published material from the Phra Dharmaśāstra in Pali. It was translated into the Mon language when it was introduced into the Mon kingdom, and was finally translated from Mon into Siamese when it was brought into Ayutthaya.[25] The text was used continuously until the Rattanakosin era under the name of *Kotmai tra sam duang* (กฎหมายตราสามดวง), or the *Three Seals Code*.[26]

As for Lan Na and Lan Sang, although their administrative laws had the same origins, that is, in the ancient Indian Mānava Dharmaśāstra manuscripts,[27] they seem to have been freely adjusted to fit the social contexts and beliefs of the individual countries, especially in examples that were taken to support legal judgments. These examples included the Buddhist Jātaka,[28] such as *Tamnan culaphothi tat kham* (the judgment of King Culaphothi), and other Jātaka tales. It has also been discovered that the definitions of guilt and punishment were taken from the Buddhist disciplines which appeared in the *Awahan 25* (อวหาร 25) of Lan Na.[29] Moreover, the ancient Lan Sang law *Khamphi thammasat luang* (ຄຳພີທຳມະສາດຫຼວງ) was separated into five precepts along Buddhist lines.[30]

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[25] *Pramuan kotmai ratchakan thi 1* Book 1 [The Three Seals Code] Book 1 1986: 10.

[26] However, Nai Pan Hla, the Mon historian, proposed that the aspects of the Three Seals Code that appear in the King Rama I version were influenced by Burma, and not Mon, as previously thought. See Nai Pan Hla 1992: xxviii-xxix.

[27] Two examples of this would be the *mulakantai* (มูลกันไต) law of Lan Na and the *mulatantai* (ມູລະຕັນໄ) of Lan Sang. Although there were some differences in the details owing to the adjustments that were made to fit the local situations, core content such as the Ten Royal Virtues or the sacrificial ceremony clearly display the same origin.

[28] There are two types of Buddhist Jātaka, the Canonical and the Non-Canonical Jātaka. The Canonical Jātaka comprises 547 Jātaka and is divided into twenty-two groups. Originally, Jātaka in the Tipitaka were composed solely as prayers. Around the mid-fifth century they were adapted into prose for easy comprehension. Non-Canonical Jātaka do not appear in the Tipitaka.

[29] *Awahan 25* is an ancient Lan Na law which discusses stealing and the types of things stolen. See Sommai 1975b.

[30] The section called Pānātipāta (ปาฌาติบาต) relates to the killing and injuring of people, etc. and contains 107 articles. The section, Adinnādāna (อทินนาทาน) is about stealing, cheating, plundering and raiding, etc. and contains 70 articles. The Kāmesumicchācāra (กาเมสุมิจฉาจาร) deals with adultery, misconduct towards another person's daughter or wife, sexual deception, rape, marriage and divorce, etc. This section contains 70 articles. The Musāvādā (มุสาวาทา) concerns lying, deception, cheating, etc. and contains 30 articles. And the Surāmerajamachā (สุราเมรยมัชชะ) deals with imprudence, intoxication, absent-mindedness, obscenity, etc. This contains seven articles. See Samlit 1993.

It can be concluded that, although the kingdoms of Southeast Asia were influenced by the Dharmaśāstra writings, it was more in the principles than in the details, and these principles were also re-interpreted to fall into line with indigenous cultural contexts. An example of this is the aspect of caste in the Laws of Manu, which expressed the concept of retaining possession of parentage from the Mangrai Dynasty during the time that Lan Na was an independent state. This was evident in the succession rights within the Chiang Mai administration which were allowed to be conducted only by people of the Mangrai lineage. However much power noblemen held, they did not dare to violate this principle. In short, the Dharmaśāstra was an indirect influence on the mainland kingdoms of Southeast Asia. Furthermore, most of these kingdoms followed Theravāda Buddhism, while accepting the principles of Dharmaśāstra writings from other kingdoms that had flourished in Southeast Asia, such as Mon, Burma and Khmer, in preference to those from India. This meant that these ancient laws took on an identity that matched local culture and beliefs. One could therefore find, for example, an integration of the *dharma* of Buddhism with Hindu Dharmaśāstra writings appearing in the form of Pali incantations in legal statements, and referring to the Jātaka judgments.

b. Women's rights and responsibilities as represented in ancient Indian and Southeast Asian law

Ancient Southeast Asian law, which drew on the Laws of Manu, Arthaśāstra and other Indian texts, consisted of regulations, or codes, concerning the family, conflicts, property and inheritance.[31] These codes covered aspects of women's status, roles, rights and responsibilities with regard to the family and the community. Their origins lay in three main areas, namely Buddhism, the Indian Dharmaśāstra and local tradition.[32] From this viewpoint, the attitudes to and concepts of women in ancient law might be said to reflect the relevance and influences of Indian concepts which had entered Southeast Asia.

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[31] Such regulation can be seen in many legal systems in the ancient kingdoms of Southeast Asia, such as the Thammasattham of Mon, Mangraisat of Lan Na, Khosarat of Lan Sang, and the Three Seals Code of Siam.

[32] For example, the inheritance code in the Mangraisat arranged the division of property (the process was conducted orally in the presence of an eyewitness). It was a brief process, as each child received a different proportion depending on: 1) whether they regarded their parents as foes, or not; 2) whether they had been given away in sale by their parents, or not; 3) whether they were poor, or not; or 4) whether they showed their gratitude to the parents. If the deceased had three sons and one daughter, for example, the division would be as follows:

1. Two parts for the one who worked for a lord.
2. Two parts for the one who was a trader.
3. Five parts for the one who entered a monastery.
4. Six parts for the daughter who ministered to her parents.

However, this analysis will give precedence to the legal regulations pertaining to women. Moreover, a ruling clearly reflecting the subject of women and gender is the family law. This will be considered through a comparison of the ancient Indian and Southeast Asian laws in each article of the family law.

1. Women's need of guardians

> Their fathers protect them in childhood; their husbands protect them in youth; their sons protect them in age: a woman is never fit for independence.[33]

The Laws of Manu specified that Indian women should have guardians all their lives, and these guardians were always men. This has been interpreted in many ways, not least as a lack of freedom in women's lives. The Kautiliya Arthaśāstra says that a person who protects a woman also protects her property.[34] This might be because women were usually illiterate due to the fact that they matured and had to marry at a young age (twelve years).[35] This bred the need for guardians to look after both their lives and their property. This principle of protecting women also appears in Lan Na and Lan Sang law, but the details are different.

The Mangraisat specifies eight types of women who need guardians[36] and says that the guardians should be family members or relatives. They might include any men, such as the father, eldest brother or younger brother, while the woman might be the mother or the elder sister or younger sister. In the case of relatives, it is assumed that they might be either men or women. The law does not clearly specify the gender. Furthermore, signs of Buddhist doctrine can be found in the cases given, so that a woman might have a monk as her guardian, if such a woman is the monk's servant.[37] Similar cases with the same regulations as in the Lan Na Mangraisat appear in the Phosarat (ໂພສະຣາດ) and Sangkhapakòn (ສັງຄະປະກອນ) scriptures, and ancient Lao legal texts. There we find descriptions of different kinds of wives and the above-mentioned guardians, who could be of either gender. As to the twelve kinds of wife, the Lan Sang Phosarat says:

> The first kind of wife is the married wife, under the consent of both sides. The second kind of wife is the king's provision wife. The third kind of wife is the wife who has been liberated from slavery (*kha*). The fourth kind is the wife taken from another person. The

[33] Manava Dharmaśāstra, chap. IX/3. Haughton 1982: 231.
[34] Kangle 1972: 3.2 / 19.
[35] The man reaches maturity at sixteen years of age. See Kangle 1972: 3.3 / 1.
[36] The eight kinds of woman and her guardian are: first, the woman whose guardian is her mother, second, her father, third, both parents, fourth, her elder brother, fifth, her younger brother, sixth, her clan, seventh, her relatives, eighth, the woman who is the slave of a monk.
[37] Aroonrut and Wijeyewardene 1986: 53.

> fifth kind of wife is the girl raised from when she was young to be treated as a wife when she grows up. The sixth kind is the wife taken from her parents. The seventh kind is the wife obtained from war. The eighth kind of wife is the one who moves in of her own accord. The ninth kind of wife is the woman a man treats as his wife after paying for her treatment for an illness. The tenth kind of wife is the woman obtained from giving help or administering care. The eleventh kind of wife is obtained through gambling. The twelfth kind is obtained by kidnapping a man's daughter or a man's wife and killing her husband.[38]

The ancient society stipulated that a woman must have a guardian, usually one of her family members or relatives. Interestingly, the status of the guardian also affected the social status of the woman, particularly in cases of rape with the imposition of a fine. The guilt of the violated woman was not only regulated by the law, but also indicated the social context. The Laws of Manu noted that the imposition of a fine on the person who copulated with the woman depended on the caste of both the violating man and violated woman, so that "A mechanic or servile man, having an adulterous connection with a woman of a twice-born[39] class, whether guarded at home or unguarded, shall thus be punished: if she was unguarded, he shall lose the part offending, and his whole substance (i.e. his caste and social status); if guarded, and a priestess, everything, even his life".[40] For example, if a man of the Brahman caste copulated with a woman of the Kṣatriyas or Vaiśyas or Sudras caste, he would be fined 500 panas[41] and the untouchable (outcast) woman would be fined 1000 panas[42] in order to control relationships between men and women of different castes, especially untouchables, who were the lowest class of all.

In Lan Sang law, for instance in the Phathammasat Buhan text (ຄຳພີທຳມະສາດ ບູຮານ), mention is made of the penalty known as *khan mai* (ຂັນໃຫ), the fine[43] imposed on a man who rapes a woman under guardianship (of the eight kinds mentioned above), and which is regulated in the *micchācāra* (*mitsacan* - ມິດສາຈານ) section. In a disagreement, if adultery was committed with the woman's consent, the man would not be punished but only pay a "fee of honour" (ຂັນສົມມາ - *khan somma*) to her guardians.[44]

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[38] Samlit 1996: 23-24.
[39] The "stages of life for a twice-born man", or Ashrama, are discussed in the Laws of Manu. This concept says that a member of the twice-born castes (Brahmin, Kṣatriya, and Vaiśya) is to undergo four periods of life: first, as a student (Brahmacharya); then, as a householder (Gṛhastha); then, in retirement (Vanaprastha); and finally, as an ascetic (Sanyasi).
[40] Haughton 1982: VII / 374.
[41] The currency almost always used in ancient India is a *pana*. The Indian *pana* was handful of cowry shells and usually equal to 80 cowries. See Cunningham 2000: 2.
[42] Haughton 1982: VII / 385.
[43] The fine, or *khan mai*, was paid in pieces of silver, cowries or bats. See Mayoury 1996: 76.
[44] The fee of honour comprised a chicken or some cooked ham, four pairs of candles, some beverage, flowers, rice, and a symbolic payment of money. See Mayoury 1996: 76 and Samlit 1993: 129.

The Mangraisat states that if a man commits the violation of a woman of one of the eight kinds mentioned above, he must be fined fifty-two pieces of silver. In the case of the woman who is the monk's servant, the man will not be fined, but only offer a *khan* (ขัน) of flowers, incense and candles to the monk as an apology.[45] But only the man has to be punished in this case, and not the woman, even if she consented to the act. From the cultural aspect, this was regarded in Lan Na as a violation of the woman's guardians, a so called *kan phit phi* (การผิดผี, or violation of the ancestral spirits), which might cause one of the woman's guardians to get ill from the adultery committed on the woman, so the traditional punishment was that the man must perform the ceremony of apology to the woman's guardians and plead his guilt.

2. Betrothal, engagement and marriage

The family, as an institution, was regarded as the smallest social unit, while also being the most important. Therefore, society managed the family through traditions, beliefs, social attitudes and even legal regulations that defined the patterns of family relationships going from betrothal to engagement and marriage up to divorce. The ancient Indian and the early Southeast Asian laws containing such regulations describe types of relationship between men and women in terms of the family, and reveal details of both the similarities and the differences in attitudes towards this.

The earlier Indian betrothal ceremony had a tradition of practice going back to ancient law, namely to the Laws of Manu, which contains regulations stipulating that girls should marry at an early age of around eight years. The person who selected the husband for the daughter was the daughter's father.[46] Even so, the Laws of Manu still gave the girl the right to select her own partner from men in her own caste,[47] but she would not be allowed to take with her any ornaments that her parents or elder brothers had given her, as they would then be regarded as stolen.[48] The traditional practice was that the man would respond with a betrothal gift to the girl in accordance with the regulations concerning nuptial gratuity. But if he should die before the marriage could take place the girl could marry his brother instead, if she wished,[49] and the nuptial gratuity would then be regarded as a symbol of the love and respect that the deceased man had borne her.[50] This means that in the Vedic period people accepted the tradition of betrothal by the man, by which the woman was able to keep the nuptial gratuity from

[45] Aroonrut and Wijeyewardene 1986: 53.
[46] Haughton 1982: IX / 88-89.
[47] Ibid: IX / 90.
[48] Ibid: IX / 92.
[49] Ibid: IX / 97.
[50] Ibid: III / 54.

the marriage as her property.[51] Moreover, she was able to pass this on to her children as an inheritance if she died before her husband.[52] However, it is believed that betrothal was the primary cause and origin of marital domination,[53] by the very virtue of the fact that it was proposed by the man.

Both the Laws of Manu and Kautiliya's Arthaśāstra articulate the objective of marriage, that is, that women and men have a duty to continue the family line. The Laws of Manu compares the woman to a field and the man to a grain. The whole is created by combining these two things.[54] The text also implies that the woman was created to take care of children while the man was created to give children. It was the religious duty of the man and woman to act on this together in accordance with the Vedas.[55] Furthermore, the woman was created to bear sons,[56] because daughters could not support their parents on their journey to heaven owing to the fact that women were not allowed to perform religious rituals or cast spells,[57] but were permitted only to prepare things used in rituals. Thus, sons were more important in a family. This inferior status of the Indian woman in the Vedic age is explained by Luniya as being due to the Aryan society's refusal to allow any domination by women. Matriarchy and the right of women to have several husbands had been accepted in pre-Aryan society.[58] The subsequent decline in women's status in the Aryan era led to women having no right to education and being unable to perform religious rituals. They also lost their honoured status in the home and the community.[59]

As mentioned above, the ancient states of Southeast Asia absorbed the concepts of ancient Indian law and blended them with their own beliefs and culture. The Eleven Mon Dharmaśāstra Texts liken the woman (wife) to the earth and the man (husband) to the rain which waters the earth and brings good yields.[60] Ancient Lan Na law also reflects social attitudes and traditions in partner selection, for example in the Phracao Nan texts which state for instance that a man should be outgoing and not hide away, or that he was not to go armed at night when courting a woman (แอ่วสาว).[61] Such behaviour would earn a punishment of thirty lashes or a fine of 330 pieces of silver. This

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[51] Ibid: IX / 194.
[52] Ibid: IX / 195.
[53] Ibid: V / 152.
[54] Ibid: IX / 33.
[55] Ibid: IX / 96.
[56] Kangle 1972: 3.2 / 42.
[57] Haughton 1982: IX / 18.
[58] Luniya, B.N. 1982: 150.
[59] Ibid: 236.
[60] Nai Pan Hla 1992: 585.
[61] Regarding courting (ประเพณีแอ่วสาว), Lan Na tradition offered the freedom of partner selection to the woman; it was restricted, however, to the boundaries of ancestral spirit tradition.

regulation reveals the open-mindedness of people in matters of courting, that both sexes were able to make decisions concerning partner selection. It also shows how the government enforced the law.

The Eleven Mon Dharmaśāstra Texts declared that a marriage had to be made with the consent of the woman. If she did not agree or was forced the man would be punished by the king according to the law,[62] even though the law stated that it was the parents, as the woman's guardians, who made the decisions concerning the betrothal, and gave her away to be married.[63] Some cases did depend on the willingness of the daughter because the law also allowed the woman (daughter) to determine and demonstrate whether she wanted to marry the man her parents had chosen by going to stay with the man she chose herself. In this event Lan Na law usually stipulated that the woman's parents should pay compensation by returning the nuptial gratuity or by accepting a fine.[64] One particular case, in Siam, was that of Amdaeng Müan and Nai Rit, which resulted in a declaration of the Abduction Act in the Thai Lesser Year or *Cunlasakkarat* (C.E.) 1227 (1865), in the reign of King Rama IV of Rattanakosin.[65]

However, Loos (2002) points out that the Siamese family code tended to accept the tradition of polygamy and this affected not only social values and cultural norms, but also the Siamese political system, because it was seen as a way of stabilizing the king's authority. Loos gives as an example the case of Phra Mongkut (meaning King Rama IV), who admitted that he had many major and minor concubines. Apart from as an expression of his masculinity, this also empowered him on the basis of his kinship with other power groups to maintain his status amid internal arguments, especially between himself and the viceroy (meaning Phra Pinklao). Although the monogamy law

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[62] Nai Pan Hla 1992: 545.

[63] For example, the Three Seals Code, the Law for Husband and Wife (*phua mia*): article 108, Singkha 1980a: 8-9, Prasert 1981: 8, Samlit 1993: 122-123 and Nai Pan Hla 1992: 556, etc.

[64] Mangraisat, Wat Chang Kham Version 1983:12; Prasert (Mangraisat, Wat Sao Hai Version): 1970: 14; and Prasert (Mangraisat, Notton Version, the twelfth-thirteenth leaf) 1981: 7.

[65] In 1865, during the reign of King Rama IV, 21-year-old Amdaeng Müan had fallen in love with Nai Rit, going against her parents' wishes for her to be married to Nai Phu. After being beaten, then finally threatened with death for refusing to enter Nai Phu's house, Amdaeng Müan escaped to be with her lover. Nai Rit apologised to Amdaeng Müan's parents but Nai Phu wasn't letting her go so easily. He took his case to the governor of Nonthaburi, accusing Nai Rit and Amdaeng Müan's parents of stealing his wife. Amdaeng Müan denied she had ever been Nai Phu's wife, but was thrown in jail with the case stalled. Desperate, she appealed to the King. He ruled that she had the right to choose her husband for herself as she was over the age of twenty. Learning that Amdaeng Müan's parents had given permission for Nai Phu to take her in return for a bridal fee, the king pronounced that "children are not animals and parents do not own them nor can they swap them for money against their will." The King had the former law codified (The Three Seals Code); nonetheless, he made clear that the guideline applied only to women of the lower classes, while higher-class women were to remain under their parents' authority, to preserve their status. See *Pramuan kotmai ratchakan thi 1 cunlasakarat 1166 phim tam chabap luang tra sam duang* (the Three Seals Code) 1996.

was brought in in 1935, the tradition of polygamy continues to be practised in Thai society.[66]

A man making a betrothal had to bring the *khan mak*[67] and the nuptial gratuity to the woman's parents in the time that had been agreed. If he brought it too late, the process would be cancelled and the woman's parents had the right to find another suitor for her. They would bear no blame, and the woman could receive betrothals from other men. Lan Na law defined the time period within which a man had to complete the betrothal process as one month for a master or aristocrat or more wealthy persons (beginning with an engagement and following this with a betrothal), two to three months for *nai sip, nai yisip, nai hasip* and *nai kwan,*[68] and one month for laymen.[69] In The Three Seals Code, if he was late the man would forfeit the nuptial gratuity.[70] A man's commitment to betrothal was considered a sign of respect towards the woman's parents and compensated them for the difficulty of raising their daughter from her birth.[71] The nuptial gratuity legally went to the woman's parents.[72]

However, in comparison with Indian society, in which the relationships between men and women were based on the Brahmanist concept that the binding together of a couple was the rule of the gods, Southeast Asian societies took a Buddhist point of view. This had an effect on legal regulations and the principles of sentencing. That is, in the case of Indian people, marriage was regarded as a holy relationship resulting from the will of the gods, and legal stipulations were devised to accommodate this, so that, for example, a man had no right to sell or neglect his wife under that law.[73]

Lan Na law treated the issue of marriage and any sentencing connected with it according to whether the relationship had been broken or not, and followed Buddhist regulations,[74] which also appear in the Three Seals Code, which allowed for divorce between a husband and wife when the breakdown of the relationship had resulted from

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[66] Loos 2002: 100-129.
[67] The trays containing the presents for the bride before marriage.
[68] The early kingdoms in what is now Thailand, such as Lan Na, Sukhothai, and Ayutthaya up to the Rattanakosin all had "the *phrai* system" as their implement of manpower management. The system was a product of each social context and developed from managing and conscripting manpower to govern the kingdom, reaping the benefits and also determining the status of people in the society. The *phrai* system had been the fundament of the Lan Na kingdom since the thirteenth century. The system divided a unit of manpower by a system of *nai sip* (นายสิบ), or "master of ten" or the system of *hua sip* (หัวสิบ) i.e. "head of ten". So, a *nai sip* was a group of ten, *nai yisip* was a group of twenty, *nai hasip* was a group of fifty and *nai kwan* was a group of a hundred. More information on this will be given in chapter 5.
[69] Prasert 1974: 13-14.
[70] The Three Seals Code, the Law for Husband and Wife (*phua mia*): article 107.
[71] Samlit 1993: 123.
[72] Phracao Nan Law 1980: 8-9.
[73] Haughton 1982: IX / 46.
[74] Lan Na law, Wat Chai Phrakiat Version 1975: 9-10, 14.

an end to the bond in their fortunes (*kan sin bun* - การสิ้นบุญ).[75] These regulations were related to the religious concept of the couple's accumulation of merit from their former lives. Moreover, in most Southeast Asia societies, the man traditionally moved in with his wife's family after their marriage.[76] This might be in the same house or just in the same area.[77] This may reflect back on ancient law, which always penalised men and women who neglected their parents by way of, for example, a fine (*prap mai* – ปรับไหม)[78] or through the relatively large proportion of the inheritance parents left to the daughter who did take care them into their old age.[79] The regulations generally stated that a man (son-in-law) who harmed his wife's parents if they tried to intervene in the couple's arguments should provide a fee of honour (*khan khama* – ขันขมา) or be fined.[80] After marriage, a couple lived with the woman's parents and in the event of the wife's death all their property would go to her parents.[81]

3. Adultery

When we look at instructional texts on the subject of women we see that they all share the same aspect of the wife's faithfulness to her husband. A woman committing adultery was regarded as a serious offence. The ancient laws all imposed severe punishments, and they devised many preventative regulations for married couples to deter violation or adulterous actions against married women.

The Laws of Manu contains instructions appertaining to the obligation of a husband and wife to remain faithful to each other until their deaths and to respect this as the uppermost principle,[82] because marriage was regarded as a holy ceremony and could not be broken through divorce.[83] Furthermore, this holy office of marriage could only be entered into once. However, because the woman was not allowed to remarry, persistence of the married status was emphasized in her, as stated in the regulations: "Once is the partition of a heritance made; once is a damsel given the marriage; and once does a man say "I give;" these are, by good men, done once and for all and irrevocably."[84] In addition, as we have seen, the Laws of Manu asserts that a woman

[75] The Three Seals Code, the Law on Husband and Wife (*phua mia*): article 67.
[76] See Pranee 2006 and Davis 1984.
[77] Sommai (Mangraisat, Wat Mün Ngoen Kòng Version) 1975c.
[78] Anan et al. (Thammasat, Wat Pak Kòng Version, eighty-eighth leaf), 1985: 73.
[79] Aroonrut and Lamun 1985a: 88.
[80] The Three Seals Code, the Law on Husband and Wife (*phua mia*): article 57.
[81] Nai Pan Hla 1992: 567.
[82] Haughton 1982: IX / 102.
[83] Kangle 1972: 3.3 / 19.
[84] Haughton 1982: IX / 47.

should have only one husband[85] and be faithful to him. A wife's loyalty also brought respect and reverence with it: the faithful wife would be admired.[86]

On the other hand, a woman who was unfaithful, even if her husband had passed away, would be reproached by society.[87] It might be said that the good wife was expected to respect her husband as though he were a god.[88] A woman could not have children with or even get married to another man. A second husband was forbidden to her.[89] A widow, if she had no children and still remained faithful to her deceased husband, would have the right of disposal of her husband's property for the rest of her life.[90] Ancient Indian law thus laid particular emphasis on the roles and responsibilities of the woman, in particular on her faithfulness to her husband.

On the other hand, the husband was permitted to take a new wife under certain circumstances, such as if his wife died before him,[91] if she was an alcoholic, committed an offence against him, infected him with disease, assaulted or verbally abused him, or was sterile.[92] Although these conditions allowed the man to remarry, divorce was not allowed, as this might have encouraged bigamy.[93]

A relationship with a married woman was regarded as a serious offence in ancient Indian law and adultery is treated in the fifteenth of the eighteen principle titles of the Laws of Manu.[94] However, it is interesting that the penalties for adultery appear to punish only the man who committed the violation and not the woman involved in the same offence. According to tradition, a woman was restricted and gravely instructed to respect and be faithful to her husband, was given away in marriage at an early age, and had no education. She had no choice but to obey her husband. A woman was thus less likely to commit adultery than a man, who had more opportunities in the society at large. Moreover, the Laws of Manu presented such opportunities to men, for instance with women in public occupations such as singing, dancing or acting, because these

[85] Ibid: V / 157.
[86] Ibid: V / 166.
[87] Ibid: V / 161.
[88] Ibid: V / 154.
[89] Ibid: V / 162.
[90] Kangle 1972: 3.2 / 33.
[91] Haughton 1982: V / 168.
[92] Ibid: IX / 80-81.
[93] Precha 1998: 63.
[94] The eighteen principle titles of law were: 1) non-payment of debts; 2) deposits and pledges; 3) sale without ownership; 4) concerns among partners; 5) redemption of gifts; 6) non-payment of wages; 7) non-enactment of agreements; 8) rescission of sale and purchase; 9) disputes between an owner (of cattle) and his servants; 10) disputes regarding boundaries; 11) assault; 12) defamation; 13) theft; 14) robbery with violence; 15) adultery; 16) duties of man and wife; 17) partition (of inheritance); 18) gambling and betting.

types of occupations were thought to encourage sexual activity, those women having to spend their time in the company of others.[95]

The penalty defined for the adulterer as it appears in the Laws of Manu was exile, or tattooing, which would publicly brand the offender.[96] Furthermore, adultery across castes was regarded as a serious breach of one's social responsibility as it could lead to social unrest.[97]

The penalties for adultery, whether copulation occurred or not, were well defined, but varied in severity. For a sexual transgression without copulation there were many levels of sentence: for example, conversing with another person's wife in a secret place such as a place of pilgrimage, a forest or grove, or in the confluence of rivers was regarded as an adulterous offence.[98] The offending man (even if he had already been warned by the woman's husband or parents) would be fined one *suvarṇa* (in gold).[99] However, the outcome of this charge also depended on the man's background. If it was not his first offence, he would be found guilty and be fined,[100] whereas if it were his first offence he would be regarded as innocent and would not be punished.[101] The next level of indiscretion was to do with behaviour which suggested an adulterous relationship, such as giving flowers or perfumes, teasing, touching the woman's personal adornments or her clothes, or sitting on the bed with her.[102] Most serious of all was the touching of a forbidden part of her body such as her breast, even with her consent. All these things pointed to guilt on both sides.[103]

An offence where copulation took place was regarded as very serious. A married woman of any caste was regarded as being under protection, especially against a sexual transgression from another man, but also because the main idea of the Laws of Manu was to regulate people's responsibilities through the caste system. The offence would be punished according to the caste of the culprits, and the severest penalty was dealt to the man from the servile class who committed adultery with a woman from the Brahman class. The penalty in this case was execution.[104] However, allowance was made in the case of a beggar, a bard, or a person who performed religious ceremonies, and an artist could talk to another person's wife without fear of reprisals.[105]

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[95] Haughton 1982: VIII / 362.
[96] Ibid: VIII / 352.
[97] Ibid: VIII / 353.
[98] Ibid: VIII / 356.
[99] Ibid: VIII / 361.
[100] Ibid: VIII / 354.
[101] Ibid: VIII / 355.
[102] Ibid: VIII / 357.
[103] Ibid: VIII / 358.
[104] Ibid: VIII / 359.
[105] Ibid: VIII / 360.

Ancient Southeast Asian legal codes that were influenced by the Indian Dharmaśāstra, such as the Thammasattham (Mon), Mangraisat (Lan Na), Thammasat Luang (Lan Sang) and the Three Seals Code (Siam), all stipulated regulations categorizing and penalising adultery as the origin of many disputes and quarrels.[106] One of many aspects that indicated the seriousness of adultery was the fact that the law allowed a husband himself to punish his wife and her adulterer, without incurring any blame. For example, a man who saw with his own eyes his wife having sexual intercourse with another man was legally permitted to kill the man (this had to occur immediately, when he discovered the adulterous couple). This ruling was the same in all editions of the Thammasattham, the Mangraisat, the Thammasat Luang and the Three Seals Code. The severe punishments for adultery sprang from Buddhist beliefs which were fundamental to Southeast Asian society. Adulterous behaviour not only caused disputes and arguments but also violated fundamental Buddhist precepts. The Thammasat Luang looks at adultery in its *micchācāra* section and finds it identical with what the third precept of Buddhism states about *kamesumicchā*.

Although the principles of law were similar, and most put the stress on punishing the woman, there were differences in detail of interpretation according to the varying social contexts in Southeast Asia. The Laws of Manu put a stress on the aspect of caste, arguing that since it had never changed it delineated the boundary of Indian people's responsibilities. This boundary thus became the connection between the legal regulations defining the characteristics of both law and punishment. However, Southeast Asian society had no tradition of caste, although this was mirrored to a degree in the concept of lineage and rank, as we can see by the instruction given in the Lan Na and Lan Sang proverb *hit ban khòng muang* (ฮีตบ้าน คองเมือง),[107] "if not of royal lineage, do not expect to be king; if not of aristocratic lineage, do not expect to be an aristocrat; if not of the soldierly lineage, do not expect to be soldier; and if not the messenger, do not expect to be a contractor."

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[106] The Three Seals Code and the Mangraisat both give this set of rulings the identical name of *munlakhadi wiwat* (มูลคดีวิวาท), or the "primary cause of quarrels". It was influenced by the Phra Dharmaśāstra. The principle titles of law (มูลคดี) that appear in the Phra Dharmaśāstra consist of eighteen sections, while the Mangraisat contains sixteen, and the Three Seals Code nineteen articles. Despite the differences in the *mulakhadi wiwat*, there is a similarity in terms of adultery, as seen in one section in which three ancient laws are all regulated as the primary cause of quarrel. Thus it was that the origins of criminal cases such as murder, brawling or assault were usually to be found in cases of adultery.

[107] *Hit* is abbreviated from the Thai word *ca rit*, meaning a traditional practice, but northern and northeastern people in Thailand pronounce the letter "H" for "R". *Khlòng* or *khan lòng* refers to the traditional "way of life", but also focuses on traditional moral standards, and whether something is right or wrong, rather than on occupational concerns. People from the north and northeast also pronounce the word *khlòng* without the "L" so that it becomes *khòng*. If someone behaves inappropriately regarding tradition, an adult might say this is "not doing things according to *khòng*" or "When doing anything, one must follow the *hit* and the *khòng*".

The Eleven Mon Dharmaśāstra Texts state that the punishment for a man committing adultery should be a fine, the amount of which depended on the woman's lineage. That is, if the woman was a royal family member the fine would stand at 400 ticals; if she was of a wealthy family, it would stand at 300 ticals; if she was from a merchant family, 200 ticals; if she was from a peasant family, 100 ticals; and if she was from a family of slaves, 20 ticals.[108] In addition, the fine could be paid in the form of slaves, the required number of which depended on the status of the woman's husband. The higher the rank, the higher the fine. For example, the fine for copulating with a poor person's wife would be two slaves, while that with a farmer's wife would cost three slaves. In the case of the merchant's wife, the fine would come to four slaves and for an astrologer's wife seven. The price for sleeping with one of the king's concubines was eight slaves.[109]

In the Mangraisat the legal penalties for adultery depended on the rank of the woman's husband, and, just as in the Eleven Mon Dharmaśāstra Texts, the higher his rank , the more severe the penalty. Here, a man who committed adultery with a nobleman's wife would be executed or sold as a slave and have all his assets confiscated. A nobleman's servant who committed adultery with a high nobleman's wife would not be fined, but executed; whereas if a nobleman slept with a servant's wife the servant would be freed. A servant who committed adultery with another servant's wife would be fined fifty-two pieces of silver, while a creditor committing adultery with a debtor's wife was to be fined 220 pieces of silver.[110] For the village headman sleeping with a villager's wife a fine of 330 pieces of silver,[111] and 1,200 for the governor who committed this offence with the wife of a villager. A man who treated a woman as his wife in the knowledge that she was already married would be fined 2,200 pieces of silver.[112]

The regulation of penalties in the ancient Southeast Asian adultery laws defined the punishment not only for the offending man, but also for the woman. In the Three Seals Code, a woman who committed adultery with two men or more a day was legally branded a "whore", and in this case the men were not fined;[113] or in the case of a woman committing adultery with a man immediately following the death of her husband, before he had been cremated, if his relatives complained and the case was determined to be true, the woman would be publicly condemned and the adulterer

[108] Nai Pan Hla 1992: 570.
[109] Ibid: 572.
[110] Prasert (Mangraisat, Wat Sao Hai Version) 1970: 44, 89-96.
[111] Winai 2006: 124.
[112] Mangraisat, Wat Chang Kham Version 1983: 12.
[113] The Three Seals Code, the Law for Husband and Wife (*phua mia*): article seven.

would have to pay a fine of a million cowries to the relatives of the dead man.[114] The Mangraisat referred to Burmese law,[115] which administered relatively severe punishments to offending women. These consisted of the cutting off of ears and breasts as a public shaming, or the punishment might be commuted to a fine, but this would mean fifty-two pieces of silver for each ear and 110 for each breast.[116] According to The Eleven Mon Dharmaśāstra Texts a woman who committed adultery should have her hair shaved and be sold into slavery.[117]

The law also prohibited adultery within the family or among relatives. Whether a nephew committed adultery with his aunt, his maternal grandmother, his paternal grandmother, his mother's younger brother's wife or his sister-in-law, this kind of adultery would lead to a public shaming, and the perpetrator would be whipped and sent into exile.[118] This point also found expression in the Laws of Manu. There, an elder brother committing adultery with his younger brother's wife, or conversely, was looked upon as reprehensible behaviour.[119] As for a monk, if he committed adultery with a commoner's wife he would be forced to resign in disgrace and fined.[120]

The opposite case is interesting: if a woman committed adultery with another woman's husband the Three Seals Code made it permissible for the wife to scold and beat the guilty woman without fear of reprimand, but she may not injure her, or else she would be fined. The husband would also be fined because he was the cause of quarrel.[121] The example is also found in the Lan Sang Thammasat Luang of a woman who commits adultery with another woman's husband, and who then has to pay a fee of honour, or *khan khama*, as an apology to the wife;[122] while the Eleven Mon Dharmaśāstra Texts state that if a man takes a minor wife, his principal wife may seize all his assets including his clothes.[123]

Sexual harassment and behaviour indicating adultery were both recognized in ancient Southeast Asian law. Such law seems to have been identical to Indian Dharmaśāstra law in many cases. The Mangraisat outlines the penalties for the man who

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[114] The Three Seals Code, the Law for Husband and Wife (*phua mia*): article 30.
[115] It is believed that at the time that Lan Na was ruled by Burma (1558-1774), it was influenced by Burmese law, although Burma allowed Lan Na to go on using its own former laws in its administration. This can be seen from the adoption of Burmese laws in many versions of Lan Na legal texts such as the Mangraisat, Notton Version, the Mangraisat Khadi Lok Khadi Tham, Wat Chang Kham Version, and the Mangraisat, Wat Sao Hai Version.
[116] Prasert (Mangraisat, Wat Sao Hai Version) 1970: 71.
[117] Nai Pan Hla 1992: 610.
[118] The Three Seals Code, the Law for Husband and Wife (*phua mia*): article 35.
[119] Haughton 1982: IX / 58.
[120] The Three Seals Code, the Law for Husband and Wife (*phua mia*): article 40.
[121] The Three Seals Code, the Law for Husband and Wife (*phua mia*): article 34.
[122] Samlit 1993: 125.
[123] Nai Pan Hla 1992: 610.

embraces another man's wife or even touches the outside of her blouse at the breast. Either case would incur a fine of 22,000 cowries or 21 pieces of silver. If the touching was done on the inside of the blouse the initial fine was 11,000 cowries (more may have to be paid later). If the event was investigated and found to be true, and the man was already married, the fine was 110 pieces of silver.[124] The Three Seals Code indicts any man who talks covertly with another man's wife, holds her hand, embraces her, kisses her or touches her breast, or goes to meet and stay alone with her in a secret place such as a bed room, or courts her. These things were all regarded as offences, and would be fined by the appropriated amount.[125] The Eleven Mon Dharmaśāstra Texts say that a man talking to another person's wife and giving her food should be fined half of the value of the food. While a man caught talking to someone else's wife in a secret place such as a forest may be obliged to pay her husband the fine, unless the man was a doctor, since a doctor may freely talk to the wife of a house-owner without fear of reprisals (in the past, there were no hospitals, so a doctor had to go to treat his patients at their homes).[126]

4. Divorce

The ancient Indian Dharmaśāstra made clear legislation concerning the sacredness of marriage, regarding it as the highest duty for a couple[127] to remain faithful to each other until they died, because in marriage they were regarded as one person. It was necessary for them to continually take good care of each other to avoid the temptation of adultery.[128] Combined with the idea that a woman could marry only once, these regulations treated the status of being husband and wife as a permanent condition. That is, even though the husband might neglect or sell his wife, the sacred relationship continued, as it was stated in the regulation: "Neither by sale nor desertion can a wife be released from her husband: thus we fully acknowledge the law enacted of old by the Lord of creatures".

However, the husband's status could be ended under the condition that his wife could not bear him a son, because caring for one's wife was done in order to obtain children, in particular sons.[129] Thus, the conditions for the man's re-marrying were dependent on the woman, and whether she could live up to her duty or not, as was the social expectation and attitude of the time. Both the Laws of Manu and Kautiliya's

[124] Mangraisat, Wat Chang kham Version 1983: 12.
[125] The Three Seals Code, the Law for Husband and Wife (*phua mia*): article two.
[126] Nai Pan Hla 1992: 570-571.
[127] Haughton 1982: IX / 101.
[128] Ibid: IX / 102.
[129] Ibid: II / 9.

Arthaśāstra judged that a woman was created to bear sons, because only a son could help both the husband and his ancestors go to heaven,[130] since only he was allowed to perform religious rituals. Whether the husband and his ancestors reached heaven or not depended therefore on the wife. In addition, just how important it was for a woman to bear a son, her highest duty, can be seen in the Arthaśāstra's allowance that she might have intercourse with a leper or a mad man in order to conceive a son. (The man himself, in contrast, could refuse to have intercourse with his wife if she was infected with leprosy).[131] Furthermore, the Laws of Manu also declared that a man may take a new wife if his wife died without leaving a son, or if she was sterile, alcoholic, beat her husband or verbally abused him, was promiscuous, or bore only daughters.

The Laws of Manu does not contain clear regulations on the aspect of divorce. On the other hand, it continually emphasizes the wife's duty to her husband of strictly guarding her chastity when her husband is away on a trip and preserving herself for him during specified times. This meant eight years if he had gone to perform a religious duty, six years if he had gone to improve his knowledge and three years if he had gone away with another woman, although, even after that she was still expected to remain faithful to him.[132] If a woman hated her husband for any reason, they should nevertheless both be patient and stay with each other until a year had passed, after which the husband could take everything back that he had given her. Even then, they were expected to continue living together, but the husband was no longer obliged to have sexual relations with his wife.[133]

We can see that the Laws of Manu does not offer any solutions for the woman who does not wish to spend the rest of her life with her husband. However, divorce by the woman is dealt with in the Arthaśāstra, which was formulated after the Laws of Manu. Over time, a woman might need to seek practical solutions to a breakdown in her marriage and the law could support her by offering some help through legislation. However, marriage and divorce were regarded from different aspects in ancient Indian law. One aspect proclaimed the sacredness of the marriage ceremony and the importance of a woman's marrying only once, which concurred with the social mind-set that laid stress on a woman's chastity, so that she might divorce her husband but could not engage in a new marriage (as the man could). And even if her husband died a woman may not remarry, because she was obliged to retain her chastity and her

[130] Ibid: V / 150.
[131] Kangle 1972: 3.2 / 46-47.
[132] Haughton 1982: IX / 76.
[133] Ibid: IX / 75.

faithfulness to him so that she may go to heaven and meet him in the next life.[134] Thus, although the ancient laws offered a woman some opportunities for divorce, and even marrying again in some circumstances, the conditions for this might take longer and be more difficult to achieve than they would be for a man in a similar position.

Although the Arthaśāstra clearly specified the sacredness of marriage, and separated it into four kinds,[135] it nevertheless did give legal opportunities to a woman to divorce her husband in some cases. If he was of a bad character, or if he stayed away in other cities for long periods of time, committed treason, threatened her with her life, or if he fell from his caste[136] or became infirm, all these instances would mean that the woman could legally leave her husband. The above examples demonstrate that the Arthaśāstra did encompass additional regulations to include divorce, and while the Laws of Manu regarded divorce as reprehensible, even here divorce was sometimes allowed on the condition that both sides consented.[137]

As mentioned above, the Arthaśāstra did reserve the right for a woman to remarry, but this was regulated according to a time factor. For example, if her husband was away in another city, she had to wait a specific amount of time, depending on his caste, for him to return. The higher his class, the longer she had to wait. If he was a Sudra, she had to wait one year; if he was a Vaiśya she would have to wait for two years; for a Kṣatriya, three years and for a Brahmana, four (this was if there were no children).[138] However, one factor that was considered when a woman wanted to get

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[134] This leads to the concept of the *sati* ceremony in which the woman had to have herself burned and die with her husband. Although its origin is not precisely known and is not to be found in the important Indian scriptures of the Tipitaka, the Laws of Manu or the Arthaśāstra, it was regarded as an inherited tradition dating back a long time. Indian historians assume that it was popular from the eleventh to the seventeenth centuries until it was abolished and declared illegal when the British occupied India in the colonization era in the eighteenth century. See Luniya 1982.

[135] These were the Brahman type, the Barajabuddaya, the Arasa and the Dhiva type of marriage. Divorce was not possible in these four sacred types of marriages because they were consecrated in a sacred ceremony with the agreement and satisfaction of both the woman's parents and the woman herself. See Kangle 1972: 3.2 / 1-9.

[136] In Indian tradition, varṇa, ("complexion") was not the same social system as the caste system, although they shared some related connections. Varṇa was a popular system of separation of Hindu people according to Brahman Hinduism. The people were divided into four "varṇa" depending on which part of Purusha's body they came from. These were: Kṣatriya (who came from the breast), Brahmana (who came from the mouth), Vaiśya (who came from the hip) and Sudra (who came from the sole of the foot). The varṇa was thus a system of social functional hierarchy, or a system for organizing society. Varṇa was dependent on social class and was not always determined by birth, while the caste system, or jāti, was determined by birth. The Varna restricted people's occupations and participation in society. Marriage across the jāti was forbidden. However, the caste, or jāti, could be separated into sub-classes of each varṇa; for example, Valmiki, who wrote the epic of Rāmāyana, was a hunter, and Veda Vyasa, who wrote the Mahābhārata, was born into a fisherman's family. Both were Vaiśya varṇa, but with their intellectual and spiritual prowess they transcended their class and gained respect from the people. In contrast, people could also fall from their class. See Theodore de Bary 1997.

[137] Kangle 1972: 3.3 / 15.

[138] Ibid: 3.4 / 24.

married again was her subsistence, because in ancient India a girl usually got married at an early age, which robbed her of any chance of an education. Moreover, once married, she had to live with her husband's family and could not go out of the house or stroll through the streets as she wished, which would be regarded as an act of disloyalty to the king. All her property would be seized and she would be fined.[139]

A woman thus relied on her husband for everything. The Arthaśāstra states that the waiting period for a husband would be double if he left her money for food, or failing this, his relatives were obliged to take care of her for four to eight years. If the husband did not give her any money, and she was also neglected by his relatives, she could remarry straight away. The reason given for this in the Arthaśāstra was that a new husband could take care of her and free her from her suffering.[140] However, the man who married her had to be one of the husband's relatives, such as a brother, or a relative from the same class as him. Violation of this rule, i.e. the woman marrying someone outside the family, would be tantamount to eloping with an adulterer.[141]

An interesting aspect of the Arthaśāstra is the protection that was offered to the divorcee. The law specified that the ex-husband should continue to take care of his former wife if she did not receive any of their shared property from the nuptial gratuity, or was not compensated for his remarrying, and that she could also be free to stay in his house afterwards.[142] On the other hand, in the case of the husband neglecting her in his new marriage, the former wife had the right to any necessities, assets, or other forms of compensation.[143] This matter hardly appears in the Laws of Manu. Nevertheless, as we have seen, women were heavily dependent on their husbands and their families because of the traditional Indian attitude to marriage, despite the protective measures found in the Arthaśāstra. The exclusion of compensation and maintenance after a divorce, if the woman was still under the husband's family's protection, illustrates this.[144] This meant that a man could marry as often as he wished if he could provide for each former wife adequately.[145]

As previously mentioned, the Indian Dharmaśāstra was interpreted according to the local socio-cultural context in ancient Southeast Asian law, and one aspect, which reflects on the breakdown of marriage, or divorce, was based on Buddhist instruction. Lan Na and Lan Sang law in particular referred to this instruction to evaluate the

[139] Kangle 1972: 3.3 / 32.
[140] Ibid: 3.4 / 25-26, 30.
[141] Ibid: 3.4 / 38-42.
[142] Ibid: 3.3 / 4.
[143] Ibid: 38-41.
[144] Ibid: 3.3 / 4.
[145] Ibid: 3.2 / 41.

breakdown of marriage, accounting for it through the principles of "the craving of desire" (อิจฉาตัณหา - *itchatanha*) and "the craving of sorrow" (อาลัยตัณหา - *alaitanha*).

The craving of desire was the pleasure that the man and the woman had in each other's company. It was thought of as the initial contented and fond emotion that they had for each other, but without any physical contact or the offering of presents, or any pledge of marriage. Stroking and caressing and the giving of gifts were a sign of a binding love, the craving of sorrow. If the craving of sorrow was present, the couple were regarded as husband and wife. A divorce would be considered from these principles if it was determined that the couple's conduct showed that they no longer loved each other and no longer wanted to live together, although that decision had to be made consciously and rationally.[146] Or it might be seen that they no longer gave each other things, or that the man had left. The texts from Lan Na and Lan Sang, and the Eleven Mon Dharmaśāstra Texts, all state that a couple who had been separated for three years gave up their status as man and wife.[147] The craving for desire and the craving for sorrow were broken and the marriage was no longer valid.[148] This idea appears in the Lan Sang Thammasat Luang, which offers the same Buddhist principles to treat the subject of broken marriage.[149] In comparison, the Three Seals Code does not specifically mention Buddhist principles, but claims to "eliminate the merit accumulated on both sides from former lives" between the husband and wife.

As far as divorce was concerned, ancient Southeast Asian law was quite discriminating in its judgments. In the case of neglect, for example, the Three Seals Code stated that if a man left his wife and moved away to a distance of a day's walk, after three months' absence his marriage would count as ended; at a distance of three days' walk it was regarded as ended after six months; at seven days' walk, it would be treated as ended after eight months; at fifteen days' walk, one year had to elapse; and at a distance of one month on foot, one year and four months had to go by. In Lan Na law, if a man neglected his wife and evaded working in royal service for a year, his marriage would be judged ended and the woman could take a new husband without fear of

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[146] The principal Dharma of Buddhism says that if spouses quarrelled for any reason, if the man said "I don't want you" twice, and ran over the first step of the stairs and said "I don't want you" again, or after having an argument the man left his wife in anger, the Buddha did not regard this as counting as divorce, because it stemmed from angry emotions, which could not be used as a criterion for divorce. After recovering from his anger, if the husband still intended with a clear head to divorce his wife, divorce would be granted. See *Prachum kotmai boran phak thi 1 wa duai thammsat pakòn* 1939: 79.

[147] Anan et al. (Thammasat Ratcha Küna, Wat Hua Khuang Version) 1985a: 23; Sommai (Mangraisat, Wat Mün Ngoen Kong Version) 1975a: 7; Samlit (Thammasat Luang, micchãcāra section, 53rd issue) 1993: 148 and Nai Pan Hla (the Eleven Mon Dharmaśāstra Texts) 1992: 578.

[148] Anan et al. (Thammasat Ratcha Küna, Wat Hua Khuang Version) 1985a: 20-21.

[149] Samlit 1993: 148.

reprisals.[150] Further examples come from the Eleven Mon Dharmaśāstra Texts, which proclaimed that if the husband left and stayed with his parents for more than three years, an end to the marriage would be granted. But a woman whose husband went to war would have to wait sixteen years. If he evaded royal service, his wife had to wait seven years; if he left for work, eight years; if he left to study, ten years; and if he did not come back on time, his wife would be allowed to remarry.[151]

Some stipulations were the same in both Lan Na law and Lan Sang law: if a husband went away for three years without giving any information about what he was doing or arranging for provisions or money to be sent to his wife, his marriage would be taken as ended. But if it appeared that he was trying to provide for his wife, there would be no separation.[152] However, a case concerning divorce which was similar in the ancient Southeast Asian laws was that, after their divorce, a couple had to return each other's dowries.

When a couple divorced, their property would be divided. The ancient Southeast Asian laws stated that in the case of a man who had lived with his wife's family during their marriage, the woman would receive a larger proportion of the property. This example can also be found in Lan Na and Lan Sang legal texts such as the Mangraisat and the Thammasat Luang, which also asserted that the woman would receive the larger proportion, except in the case of the woman living with the man (rather than he with her and her family) or if the man had purchased the woman to be his wife. The property from the marriage was usually separated into three parts, one of which went to the man and two to the woman. The Mangraisat explained that since the woman was the house-owner, she, under the control of her family, was the person who created a base of assets by moving the man into her work place, while the man was the one who extended those assets. Thus, the woman should receive more from those assets on their divorce than the man.[153] Moreover, the woman who suffered reduced social opportunities as a result of her divorce should receive more from their assets to support her, as her life would fade with time.[154]

Similarly, the Eleven Mon Dharmaśāstra Texts state that a man who moved in with his wife's parents should divide the assets into three parts, and one of them would be given to her parents on their divorce. Or if the woman's family only rented their land to work on, everything would belong to the woman and her family.[155] This appears to

[150] Prasert (Mangraisat, Notton Version) 1981: 11.
[151] Nai Pan Hla 1992: 578.
[152] Prasert (Mangraisat, Wat Sao Hai Version) 1970: 11 and Sommit (Thammasat Luang) 1993: 121.
[153] Aroonrut and Lamun 1985a: 72-73.
[154] Ibid: 74.
[155] Nai Pan Hla 1992: 556.

have been different, however, in Ayutthayan society under the Three Seals Code, as this prescribed that the husband should be given the higher proportion than the wife when the assets were divided. The property was similarly divided into three parts, but here the man received two parts and the woman got one,[156] even though the tradition in Ayutthaya was also for the man to live with his wife's family. This might be because Ayutthaya favoured the man over the woman, regarding him as socially more prominent than his wife, both at home and abroad. We see evidence of this in the Three Seals Code, which gave precedence to the man by categorizing the division of assets in a divorce case under fifty-one sections. Furthermore, the Three Seals Code branded the widow who remarried more than once as a whore. Such a woman had no right to any inheritance from her husband after he had died.[157] So we see that the regulations presented in the ancient laws were a reflection on the status of women, which varied as the social contexts changed.

5. Inheritance

The code of regulations concerning inheritance in the Laws of Manu reflect the broad view of the Indian Dharmaśāstra that the rule of law might be adjusted to fit the prevailing social attitudes at any time. For instance, on the issue of women's assets, the Laws of Manu says: "What was given before the nuptial fire, what was given on the bridal procession, what was given in token of love, and what was received from a brother, a mother or a father, are considered as the six-fold separate property of a married woman".[158] In other words, an Indian woman at that time had a right to her own property, and the Laws of Manu gave her the right to inherit assets, including ones belonging to her father or mother.[159] Meanwhile, some of the regulations are found to contrast to this: "Three persons, a wife, a son, and a slave, are declared by law to have in general no wealth exclusively their own: the wealth, which they may earn, is regularly acquired for the man, to whom they belong."[160] However, it is assumed that such regulations were probably written later, because in the Mahābhārata,[161] the great Indian epic, Princess Draupadī marries the Pandava (or Pandawa) brothers and is able to own her own property.

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[156] The Three Seals Code, the Law for Husband and Wife (*phua mia*): article 68, 70, 72.
[157] The Three Seals Code, the Law for Husband and Wife (*phua mia*): article 45.
[158] Haughton 1982: IX / 194.
[159] Ibid: IX / 195.
[160] Ibid: VIII / 416.
[161] The Mahābhārata's earliest layers probably date back to the late Vedic period (ca. 8th cent. B.C.) and it probably reached its final form by the time the Gupta period began (ca. 4th ca. A.D.).

Rüang-urai Kusalasai (1973) agrees that it was not the norm for a woman to have many husbands in the former Aryan tradition[162] because Aryan society did not accept the concept of matriarchy.[163] The social status of women declined after the Vedic era; they were no longer allowed to perform rituals and were not given the chance to study.[164] Although some legal rulings might vary in the details, the Indian Dharmaśāstra, both the Laws of Manu and the Arthaśāstra, proposed inheritance not only in the male line but on the female side as well.

As the Laws of Manu claimed the right of a woman to possess her own property, inheritance in India meant that the mother owned the property and could pass it on to her descendants. The Laws of Manu required that a woman should be respected and receive property such as ornaments from her father, elder brother, husband and brother-in-law.[165] This would include items the husband's family and relatives, or even the husband himself, might give her after her marriage. These things would then be regarded as her personal property and would go to her offspring if she died before her husband.[166] The passing down of property could also be done on the female side. The personal property of the mother would be bequeathed to her daughter, unless the maternal grandfather and grandmother had no son, in which case it would go to their daughter's son.[167] If their daughter gave them a female grandchild, she would also have the right to receive property from her maternal grandmother.[168]

In addition, the Laws of Manu specifies that if the mother died, her property would be split equally between the son and daughter if the daughter was single.[169] A woman who married the brother of her deceased husband also had the right to pass her property down to the son who was born with her new husband.[170] The way inheritance was regulated in ancient law meant that it was the absolute right of a woman to bequeath her property to her offspring if she wished. Moreover, while she was alive, her relatives had no right to take her property; this would be treated as robbery.[171]

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[162] "Polyandry" is the name given to this form of polygamy, the practice of a woman being married to more than one man at the same time. Fraternal polyandry was traditionally practised among nomadic Tibetans, in which two or more brothers share the same wife, with her having equal sexual access to them. This tradition would have expanded to parts of northern India. See Rüang-urai 1973: 219.
[163] Luniya 1982: 150.
[164] Ibid: 236.
[165] Admiring and giving ornaments to a woman were thought to make a man prosperous. See Haughton 1982: II / 55.
[166] Haughton 1982: IX / 195.
[167] Ibid: IX / 131.
[168] Ibid: IX / 193.
[169] Ibid: IX / 192.
[170] Ibid: IX / 190.
[171] Ibid: VIII / 29.

Kautiliya's Arthaśāstra does not give specific rights of inheritance to the woman as the Laws of Manu does.[172] On the contrary, it stipulates that women had no possessory rights for managing their property in their own right. Although a widow had the right to get married again, she did not have any right of possession over her ex-husband's property. In addition, she was restricted in the management of her own property and that of her children, which they also possessed in their own right. However, if a woman died before her husband, her portion would be given to the sons and daughters; and if they had no sons, it would be divided among the daughters. If there were no offspring, all the property that the husband had given to her would return to him.[173] In this way, the man could take possession of his wife's property when she died, or could marry again and receive the property as an inheritance. Conversely, the woman who married another man, in particular one who was not a relative of her ex-husband, had no right to her own property and could not bequeath it to the children who were born to her by her new husband, because she legally had to keep this property in the condition it was in when she received it from her husband.[174] Furthermore, the regulation defined by Kautiliya seems to have been a disincentive to a widow to remarry, because if she preserved her single status she would have the disposal of her deceased husband's share of their property as well as her own. On the contrary, if she got married again, she would have to return everything with interest.[175]

It has been discovered that the concepts and rulings concerning women's issues in ancient Indian law were adjusted over time, and an interesting aspect of this is that the trend to give rights and opportunities to women also decreased.

[172] The chronology of the Manudharmśāstra and the Arthaśāstra:

Text name	Manudharmaśāstra	Arthaśāstra
Era	Assumed to be from 2nd century B.C. – 2nd century A.D.	4th century B.C.
Author	Manu	Kautiliya
Main point	Consists of 2,684 verses, divided into twelve chapters, thus offering an interesting, and comprehensive, ideal picture of traditional, social and religious life in India under ancient Brahmin influence.	Known mainly for its utterances on politics and statecraft, the book also contains information on, and instructions about, various other aspects of social life, including man's relationship with animals and plants.

Source: Burnell 1891 and Kangle 1972.

[173] Kangle 1972: 3.2 / 23-37.
[174] Ibid: 3.2 / 30.
[175] Ibid: 3.2 / 19-20, 27.

The regulation of inheritance as it appears in ancient Southeast Asian law is different from that in India, while sharing some aspects of it. Here, the types of relationship between parents and descendants are not specifically defined. We are, rather, presented with the question of whom the offspring would stay with, or what proportion of the inheritance they should receive when a marriage broke down. In ancient Southeast Asian law, the attitude towards inheritance was to divide property equally between the sons and daughters, as we see in the Mon Dharmaśāstra, which says that the division of an inheritance had to be equal whatever the descendant were.[176] The main criterion for dividing an inheritance in the ancient laws of Lan Na was a person's "merit" and how well they cared for their parents: the children who took care of their elderly parents and protected their property, which were usually the daughters, would generally receive a greater share than the others.[177] Lan Sang law also states that the transference of property to the sons and daughters depends on the condition that the children who have "gained merit and brought happiness to their parents" will be given more than the others.[178] In the Three Seals Code we read that offspring who serve their parents well earn the right to a greater share than those who move to live in other cities.

Because traditionally a man moved to live with his wife's family when he got married, parents usually left property such as land and dwellings to their daughters, while the son, who moved to live with his wife's family, received movable belongings.[179] This was also related to Buddhist beliefs, in particular that it was good practice for children to show respect and gratitude to their parents when they were old or suffering. The idea was that passing property to the daughters from one generation to the next, especially land and buildings, would keep this in the hands of the female line and it would not get lost.[180] Furthermore, Lan Sang law also stated that a woman had the right to pass her property on to her offspring.[181] Not only The Three Seals Code, but

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[176] In The Eleven Mon Dharmaśāstra Texts the division of inheritance is illustrated by the "Story of the Snake Child" in which a woman marries a man and has six children by him. She subsequently has a child with a snake. When her spouse dies, the property is divided into seven parts, because the snake's offspring is regarded as a child with the same right to inherit property from its mother as the other children.

[177] For example, Prasert (Mangraisat, Wat Sao Hai Version) 1970: 12, Prasert (Mangraisat, Notton Version) 1981: 12, and Anan et al. (Kotmai Wat Kasa, Wat Kasa Version) 1983: 59.

[178] Thammasat Luang: *micchācāra* section, item 66: 155-156.

[179] For example, the Eleven Mon Dharmaśāstra Texts state that the son should receive items such as weapons (e.g. knives and spears), pets (such as elephants, horses, cows, buffalo and pigs), utensils (rakes and ploughs) and other assets. See Nai Pan Hla 1992: 543-544.

[180] Inheritance through the female line in Lan Na society was possible because the Lan Na woman played a high-status role, according to *phi pu nya* beliefs. She held a core position in the ancestral spirits' structure and played a major role in performing the sacrificial ceremony to them. This belief related to both inheritance and Animism at the same time. See Richard 1984 and Anan 1989.

[181] Thammasat Luang: *micchācāra* section, item 68: 160-163.

also the Mon Dharmaśāstra Texts[182] and the Laws of Manu stipulate an equal division of the inheritance which grandparents bestow on their grandchildren, whether married or single, but on the condition that those grandchildren show the appropriate gratitude and obedience.[183]

Further to this, the division of property could be regulated by considering the status of the mother. This point is clearly represented in the Three Seals Code: in the division of an inheritance, the offspring who were born to the two major wives (the *mia phraratchathan*[184] (เมียพระราชทาน) and *mia klang müang*[185] (เมียกลางเมือง)) would receive the largest amounts. Those who were born to the minor wife, the *mia klang nòk*[186] (เมียกลางนอก), would receive a lesser proportion, and the last in line were those whose mother was a slave.[187]

It is interesting that the status of the wife was considered when dividing property and that an inheritance was dependent on such status. In ancient The Lan Na law children would receive equal proportions, but if the children born to a minor wife were badly behaved, the proportion would be reduced to below that of the principal wife's children.[188] On the other hand, if a woman remarried and had a child by her new husband, the law specified an equal division of the inheritance between the children who were born to both the former and the new husband. The Lao Thammasat Luang specifies that when a man died, children born to different mothers had the right to an inheritance from both their father and their mother, but did not have the right to inherit property from the mothers of the other children.[189] The Eleven Mon Dharmaśāstra Texts mention the right to property of children born to different fathers and mothers in the case of a new marriage. This was: if the parents passed away, the offspring of the former husband would receive their own father's property, while those of the new husband would be given their own father's assets. The property gained from the new marriage would be passed down to the children from the new marriage in a higher proportion.[190]

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[182]Nai Pan Hla 1992: 558.
[183] The Three Seals Code, the Law on Inheritance (*mòradok*): article 33-36.
[184] *Mia phraratchathan*, or a woman given by a king to a man. See Loos 2005: 894.
[185] *Mia klang müang*, or a wife from the capital, given by her parents to a man. See Loos 2005: 894.
[186] *Mia klang nòk*, or a wife from the "outside" or the geographic periphery. A woman becomes a *mia klang nòk* when a man requests directly to take her as a minor wife, which locates her one tier below a major wife (*mia luang*). See Loos 2005: 894.
[187] The Three Seals Code, Law on Inheritance (*mòradok*): article 9-11.
[188] Thammasat Luang, the sixty-fifth leaf: 41-42.
[189] Thammasat Luang: *micchācāra* section, item 68: 160-163.
[190] Eleven Mon Dharmaśāstra Texts: 568.

Thus, we can conclude that the concept of inheritance in ancient Southeast Asian societies was guided mainly by the relationships within the family, including the roles and duties of the children concerned. However, these ancient societies gave the right to both men and women to receive property from their families so that they could live their lives comfortably.

Concepts of womanhood in the religion and the literary epics of India

a. Concepts of womanhood in the Tipitaka

India in 500 B.C. was dominated by Brahmanism and was characterised by complicated rituals and a strict caste system. At that time, two religious leaders were looking for a way to change Indian society. Lord Mahāvira, who founded Jainism, and the Lord Buddha, the founder of Buddhism, introduced alternative concepts of philosophy and religion that were different from the philosophy of the Upanishads of Brahmanism.[191] These philosophies were influential in Indian society, in particular in northern areas, where some people turned to Buddhism and Jainism. These two religions, in particular Buddhism, gave rise to new religious scriptures, the so-called *Tipitaka*, which not only created principles of religious instruction, but also, interestingly, reflected the character of Indian society.

The principles of *dharma* ("righteous duty", or "virtuous path") in Buddhism and Jainism shared some characteristics in relation to the cycle of life, which consists of birth, senility, illness and death, and included the idea that desire, as the origin of suffering, should be completely abandoned, for human beings to find the correct "path" in life. Both religions suggested a path that would lead to *nirvāna* (the state of being free from suffering and the cycle of rebirth). Moreover, both religions completely rejected the caste system. Brahmanism says that both happiness and suffering come from the gods, while Jainism argues that *karma* (one's actions or deeds) is the result of one's performance in previous lives. Buddhism rejects both these ideas and declares that suffering and happiness are the result of one's own actions and those of others.[192] However, the objective of this study is not a religious comparison, but rather to trace the concept of womanhood in Buddhism and the Tipitaka.

Although the Tipitaka is based on a different concept from Brahmanism, it is nevertheless a religious scripture originating in Indian society, so some concepts might have been applicable in a practical way to everyday life in that society. In addition, the

[191] The Upanishads (also spelled "Upaniṣad") are Hindu scriptures that constitute the core teachings of Vedanta. They have exerted an important influence on the rest of Hindu Philosophy.
[192] For more information on the comparative study of religion see Miller 1974, Diamond 1974, and Lessa 1972.

Tipitaka was passed on by memory down the generations and only written down later, after the period of Buddha, so some stories, such as the various Jātakas, were probably invented.[193] Owing to the difference in time and context between Indian society in the time of Buddha and the Lan Na and Lan Sang societies many hundreds of years later, any interpretation of the roles and status of women in Buddhist India, such as those of mother and wife, must also take into account the different concept of womanhood.

This study of the concept of womanhood in the Tipitaka lays emphasis on women's roles that are dependent on their status, especially those arising from relationships within the family such as daughter, mother and wife. The matter of equal rights between men and women from a religious point of view is not the main issue here, because this has already been extensively studied and has raised many arguments which are not in line with the objectives of this thesis. Therefore, in order to keep this fourth chapter concise, a religious comparison has not been included.[194]

- The social position and function of women

Buddhism expresses a variety of attitudes towards women in their varying social status, and these are related to both the level of a woman's social position and the responsibilities connected with that position. Nevertheless, Buddhism completely rejects the Indian caste system, regarding all people as being born equal from their mothers' wombs, only being separated by their *karma* into good and evil when they grow up.[195] Some of the attitudes expressed are, however, based on the social context prevalent in India at the time.

1. The woman as daughter

Hindu society regarded the son as important because his conduct could help his parents reach heaven, and, according to tradition, only a son could perform the religious rites for his deceased parents. Thus, lacking a son could so affect a mother's status that,

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[193] This idea may be seen in the literary work of King Rama V, who explains some of the Non-Canonical Jātaka, such as *Kanthakhalaka chadok* (กันทคลกชาดก) and *Suwannahong chadok* (สุวรรณหงสชาดก), as resembling Aesop's tales, which were widespread in the Buddhist period. Dr. Somphan Phromtha and Prof. Precha Changkhanyün propose that part of the Jātaka were probably composed later to compete with Brahmanism, since the stories usually praise Buddha as a person of even greater merit than a god, being on a level with the Brahman gods, or even higher (see Precha and Somphan 2006). However, Buddhist texts also contain historical information on the development of Indian society, such as countries' names, the names of kings and the Indian administrative system. The Tipitaka reveals, for example, that there were sixteen large countries in the Buddhist period.

[194] However, for anyone interested in the aspect of equal rights in the Tipitaka and Buddhism generally, additional information can be found in Dhammananda 2003, Blackstone 2000, and Chatsumarn 1996.

[195] Varna, in the Buddhist sense, resulted from a person's actions: a person who was celibate and kept the precepts was a Brahman; a person who traded was a Vaiśya; a person who ploughed and sowed rice was a peasant, and the person who plundered for his livelihood was a robber.

as we read in the Indian Dharmaśāstra, it might cause her husband to seek a new wife. However, I have not found that the Tipitaka or any of the various Buddhist accounts specify a gender for offspring, but they do claim that "no affection is equal to the affection for one's child."[196] The Buddha offers a new approach, telling us that, indeed, women and men are equal in their abilities: "whether a person is good or not does not depend on their gender, but on their conduct, knowledge and ability," and: "a daughter may do as well as a son, or better." [197]

Sources show that in the Buddhist period a woman from any caste could enter the monkhood and could achieve the state of nirvana as well as a man. Thus, whether one was female or a male was irrelevant; perseverance and virtuous conduct would lead to a release from the cycle of rebirth.

Such a concept of womanhood was put forward in line with the Buddhist principle of *dharma*, which instructs us that it is *karma*, or actions, rather than birth or gender, that defines human beings' status.[198] Sacrificial worship was an offence; the Buddhist precepts regarded it as execution.[199] Buddhism did not give precedence to the son performing the ceremony for his deceased parents, as son and daughter were equal in terms of beliefs and religious ceremony. Buddhism maintained that preserving religious and social status did not depend on gender. This was a new phenomenon in Hindu society at the time, but because of the Hindu social context, the son would still sometimes be preferred over the daughter. We see this in the story of Princess Manlika, who, because she had failed to provide her husband, Prince Phanthula, with an heir, was to be sent back to her family, so that the prince could take a new wife. Although the Buddha successfully persuaded him to abandon this idea, the story nevertheless indicates the influence of Hindu beliefs on the social attitudes towards sons, and also reflects the struggle the new philosophical concepts of the Buddhist religion had in being accepted in the Brahman-Hindu society.

Buddhism in mainland Southeast Asia is largely of the Theravāda school. Theravāda Buddhism dominates the culture of Thailand, but is also very prominent in Laos and Burma, although Buddhism in these countries has become integrated with folk beliefs such as ancestor worship, and also with Brahmanism, in the form, for example, of rituals and image worship. The framework of ancient Thai beliefs is laid out in considerable detail in the *Traibhūmikāthā*[200] ("The Story of the Three Worlds"), written

[196] Natthiputtasama Suttanta 15 / 28 / 9.
[197] Dhītu Suttanta 15 / 377 / 121-122.
[198] Lakkhana Suttanta: The Marks of the Superman 13/151.
[199] Sigalovada Suttanta, The Sigala Homily 4/182.
[200] *Traibhūmikāthā,* commonly known as *Trai phum phra ruang,* was written in 1345 by King Lithai, the fifth king of Sukhothai. It expounds Buddhist philosophy based on a profound and extensive study with

in the mid-fourteenth century by King Lithai of Sukhothai. This book is a cosmological treatise which articulates the Thai belief of the world as a space not only for physical beings such as human beings and animals, but also for non-physical entities such as spirits, angels, demons, gods and (the impossible to describe) chaos.

The *Traibhūmikāthā* furthermore explores the qualities of "merit" and "sin" which result from human actions, and the idea of favourable and unfavourable reincarnations that men and women undergo.[201] For example, a person who violates the third precept, and commits adultery with another person's wife, will, on his death, first suffer in hell, being reborn as a hellish animal, then be made barren as a hermaphrodite for a thousand lives, after which he will come back as a woman for several lives, and finally be reborn again as a man.[202] The book also explains the idea of accumulating merit and refraining from sin in order to be reborn to a better life, and eventually to reach *nibbāna* or *nirvāna*. This provides a good indication of the diffusion of attitudes at that time concerning morals, heaven and hell, and the cycle of birth and death.[203]

An interesting aspect of this is the attitude towards sons in Southeast Asian Buddhist societies. For instance, in Lan Na, Lan Sang and Siam we find that only a son was allowed to enter the monkhood, and he would pass on great honour to his parents through this.[204] This may be one reason why men had a higher social status than women. It may also have contributed to women deciding to keep to the *dharma* and adopt supporting roles in religion instead. In Buddhist history, an admired figure is that of Nang Wisakha (นางวิสาขา), who had a strong Buddhist faith and devoted herself to the patronage of the religion. She supported and maintained Buddhism by providing large amounts of requisites for rituals of offering, and facilitating the accommodation of Bhikkhu and Bhikkhuni (Buddhist monks and nuns). Even the Buddha expressed his admiration for Nang Wisakha as a great *ubasika* (lay follower, attendant) who patronized the Buddhist *sangha* (community).[205]

In Lan Na society, the woman's role as a patron of Buddhism was regarded as a way of accruing merit in the hope of being reborn as a man in the next life. Then she could enter the monkhood and study *dharma*, and eventually reach nirvana. The idea is

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reference to over 30 sacred texts. The work could be considered the nation's first piece of research dissertation. It was written in beautiful prose rich in allusions and imagery. It is a treatise on Buddhist cosmology, ethics, biology and its belief system. See *Traibhūmikāthā* 1987.

[201] *Traibhūmikāthā* 1987: 28-31.

[202] Ibid: 182.

[203] Phra Thammapidok (Prayut Payutto) (พระธรรมปิฎก) (ประยุทธ์ ปยุตฺโต) 1999: 38.

[204] The son entering the monkhood would earn sixty-four *kappa* (กัปป์) and the parent's would earn half i.e. thirty-two *kappa* (กัปป์).

[205] Laksawat 2002: 52-53.

illustrated in the *Pathamamulamuli script* (ปฐมมูลมูลี), or the "Origin of the World", of Lan Na tradition. It tells the story of Nang Munthida (นางมูลธิดา), a widow, who offered her shawl to the Buddha for him to use as a robe. Such praiseworthy conduct made her lose her female gender and become one of the individual Buddhas.[206] We find this also in a story found in Lan Na stone inscriptions, which tells of an elite woman who *kanlapana*, (i.e. donates land, servants and utensils to the monastery so as to gain merit and be reborn as a man).[207]

2. The woman as wife

The Tipitaka expresses the woman's role and status in terms of the wife, and sees this role as essential. Buddhist texts portray the correct conduct of a wife as "a *dharma* which every person should follow";[208] while the Buddha himself teaches that supporting a wife is one of the thirty-eight blessings that deities and human beings can enjoy.[209] The Tipitaka also says there are ten kinds of wife:[210] the redeemable wife, for whom a man pays money, the wife who gets married by consent, the wife to whom a man gives his assets, the wife to whom a man gives clothes, the wife with whom a man accumulates merit, the wife who has her hair adornment removed by a man who then marries her, the wife who is both wife and servant, the wife who is both wife and employee, the hostage wife and the temporary wife.

The Tipitaka gives a further seven categories of wife,[211] as follows:

1. *Vadhakā bhariyā* (วธกาภริยา) is the wife as killer. She will try to commit offences against her husband;
2. *Corī bhariyā* (โจรีภริยา) is the wife as robber. She wastes her husband's assets;
3. *Vayyā bhariyā* (วัยยาภริยา) is the wife as master. She is lazy and oppresses her husband;
4. *Mātā bhariyā* (มาตาภริยา) is the wife as mother. She loves her husband as a mother loves her child, looks after the assets, and never causes her husband any trouble;

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[206] The *Pathamamulamuli Script*, generally known as the 'manuscript of the origin of the world' in Lan Na tradition. It purports a triadic gender logic between male, female and neuter. The *Pathamamulamuli script*, Wat Tha Kadat Version, Müang District, Chiang Mai Province. Quoted from Suphin 2000: 6-7.
[207] *Prachum silacarük* (Collected Inscriptions) Vol. 7 1981: 174. As to monastic donations see also Grabowsky 2005.
[208] Khuddaka Nikāya 28 / 844 / 256.
[209] Khuddaka Nikāya 25 / 6 / 3.
[210] Vinaya 1 / 429 / 670.
[211] Anguttara Nikāya Sattaka 23 / 60.

5. *Bhaginī bhariyā* (ภคินีภริยา) is the wife as younger sister. She respects her husband as the younger sister does her brother;
6. *Dāsī bhariyā* (ทาสีภริยา) is the wife as servant. She is afraid of and respects her husband;
7. *Sakhī bhariyā* (สขีภริยา) is the wife as friend. She is honest and never neglects her husband.

In addition to this, the Buddha defines five kinds of a wife's duties,[212] namely, properly managing the housework, being hospitable to her husband's friends, being faithful to her husband, protecting the family treasures, and being versatile and skilful. The Buddha defines the wife as being of the "westerly direction",[213] which implies her role to be that of serving, supporting and assisting her husband. A wife was an important person, through whom the husband would flourish and prosper. One woman in Buddhist history who was admired as a good wife was Princess Yasodhara, a wife of Prince Siddharta before he was enlightened and became the Buddha. The Buddha says that Yasodhara was full of loyalty and honesty towards her husband in every life.[214] She has become the model of the ideal wife, from the Buddhist era to the present day.

On the other hand, the Tipitaka also defines five kinds of duty for the husband.[215] These are: being courteous to his wife, not insulting her, being faithful to her, sharing the authority with her in family matters, and supplying her needs. In addition, a man's wife is a person he can confide in and reveal any secrets to.[216] Hence, the Buddhist view of a marriage is of mutual support and cooperation.

Many concepts of what a wife should be and what role she had to play were conceived in ancient Southeast Asian law. Most ancient states adjusted what was stipulated in Buddhism to their own administrative laws, and this led to a harmonization with Buddhist philosophy.

An interesting point is the definition of responsibilities for a married couple as laid down in the Tipitaka. Here, also, five duties are mentioned, the third of which (which is identical with the third of the five Buddhist precepts) is to be faithful to one's

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[212] Sigalovada Suttanta, The Sigala Homily 30 / 190.
[213] The 'westerly direction', or the 'supporting' direction, symbolises the practice of husband and wife supporting each other. Sigalovada Suttanta, The Sigala Homily 27 / 188.
[214] The *Thotsa chat chadok* is the story of the Buddha's cycle of lives. In each life he was faced with both good and bad circumstances but he strove continuously for virtuous conduct, over successive lives, until, in his final life, he succeeded in becoming the Buddha. The story appears in the *Suttanta pidok* (สุตตันตปิฎก) section of the Tipitaka. The *Thotsa chat chadok* actually consists of ten stories, the so-called Ten Lives of the Buddha, the last of which, *Phra wetsandòn chadok*, is regarded as his greatest life. From it stems an important traditional sermon in Thailand, Laos and Burma, the *Thet maha chat* or *Thetsana Wetsandòn chadok*, which is an important ceremony of 'merit' going back to ancient times.
[215] Sigalovada Suttanta, The Sigala Homily 30 / 190.
[216] Khuddaka Nikāya 27 / 2230.

spouse. The meaning is specifically that a spouse should not commit adultery, in order to avoid any family or social disorder. Such an offence would result in both religious and social penalties. For the *Traibhūmikāthā*, adultery, whether by a man or a woman, is a serious offence that will lead to suffering in hell after death. On being reborn, the offender will continue suffering, being recast as animals and hermaphrodites until the sin has been atoned.[217] As for the social penalties, many examples can be found in ancient law, as mentioned above.

Related to this, we can also read in the Tipitaka that a wife should be filled with awe for her husband,[218] and that she should show him respect, satisfy him, avoid annoying him with her jealousy, be diligent, and serve his relatives. Such ideas had an influence on Southeast Asian society, as can be seen in some Lan Na and Lan Sang traditions, such as the *khòng 14*[219] of the northeastern people, named *hit phua khòng mia* (ฮีตผัว คองเมีย). This addressed couples' responsibilities and harmonized them with the Tipitaka. It was the wife's duty to respect and obey her husband, serve his relatives and protect the assets of the family. This would lead to prosperity for the family and the wife alike.

Furthermore, a concept of the woman as wife appears in a work of popular literature that is influenced by Buddhism, the *Wetsandòn chadok*, which is widespread in Burma, Thailand and Laos as part of a religious work known as the *Maha chat* ("The Great Birth").[220] It emphasizes the wife's duty of respect and service to her husband through the example of Nang Matsi and Phra Wetsandòn. This model of the good wife also appears in the *Khlong withun sòn lok* (โคลงวิฐูรสอนโลก),[221] which instructs women by praising the conduct of Nang Matsi, because she served her husband Phra Wetsandòn from dusk till dawn and respected and obeyed him.[222] A further literary work modified from the Buddhist Jātāka, the *Kalae òk nò* (กาแลออกหน่อ),[223] tells the story of Nang Nocha, who acted as a good wife by serving her husband with respect, rubbing his feet with her

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[217] *Traibhūmikāthā* 1987: 62,182.
[218] Khuddaka Nikāya 28 / 393.
[219] This is a set of regulations among northeastern people. It represents the path of goodness, the practice of which leads people to live in peace and happiness. A person who breaks the law must be punished. *Khòng* consists of traditional laws that do not need to be put down in writing. There are many types of *khòng*, each containing fourteen items, such as the *khòng* of instructions for monarchs, the *khòng* for monks and the *khòng* for the people.
[220] Religious works such as the *Maha chat* ("The Great Birth") are generally known as classical literature. The *Maha chat* consists of thirteen chapters, the most popular of which is the *Wetsandòn chadok*, which recounts the story of the future Buddha. See also Prakhòng 1983, and Sommai 2001.
[221] *Khlong withun sòn lok* is an important verse in rhyme from Lan Na. It was inspired by the Buddhist tale *Withunbandit*, and consists of instructions about life and duty for both sovereigns and ordinary people.
[222] *Khlong withun sòn lok* (translated) 1975: 25-26.
[223] See Peltier 1999.

own hair before going to sleep and supporting and assisting him in his business. These qualities brought prosperity to her life. Such stories are a clear reflection of the social attitude to a wife's duties at that time.

3. The woman as mother

Being a mother was regarded as a woman's most important and greatest duty because giving birth was reserved for the female sex by Nature. The woman as mother, that is, the person who gives birth, has been a respected status for a long time and is held in high esteem in every society. According to Kautiliya's Arthaśāstra, a girl comes of age when she is twelve years old.[224] This is because Hindu society considered maturity from the physical point of view and most girls at this age started to menstruate, which was a natural symbol of their readiness for pregnancy and childbirth and entering into the great charge of being a mother. Buddhism regards the mother as a patroness of children because she has the four principles of virtuous existence, namely, of having love for all creatures, refraining from harmful intentions, having a forgiving mind and promoting kindness towards other beings. A mother lends a helping hand to children in times of difficulties, and finds joy in their achievements and is not jealous of them. Also, a mother is a giver who takes nothing from her children.[225]

The Buddha admires the goodness of the father and mother as the greatest patrons, serving their children and teaching them about the world.[226] The mother is not only the person who takes care of her child from the womb to its adulthood, but is also the first teacher in her child's life. She gives it all its basic instruction and introduces it to various aspects of life.[227] In addition, according to the Buddhist view, a mother is her child's best friend.[228] Because of this, Buddhist philosophy says that a child can never completely repay all its mother's kindness.[229] But the Tipitaka does suggest five ways that a child should minister to its parents: my parents have supported me, and I shall support them; I shall do their chores; I shall keep the family tradition; I shall make myself worthy of my inheritance; and I shall offer alms in honour of my departed parents.[230] After his enlightenment, the Buddha considered visiting Queen Sirimahamaya, his mother, who had died in childbirth after taking seven days to deliver

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[224] Whereas, it stipulates that a boy reaches manhood at sixteen. See Kangle 1972: 3.3 / 1.
[225] *Mangalathipani*, book 2 1969: 206-207.
[226] The Sigalovada Suttanta, The Sigala Homily 28 / 188.
[227] Phra Thep Moli (พระเทพโมลี) 1961: 8.
[228] Mitta Suttanta Samyutta Nikāya 15 /163.
[229] Anguttara Nikāya Sattaka 20 / 278.
[230] There are five ways in which parents who have been ministered by their children can show their compassion for them: 1) they restrain them from evil, 2) they encourage them to do good, 3) they train them for a profession, 4) they arrange a suitable marriage, 5) at the proper time they hand over their inheritance to them.

him. Thus, the Lord went to heaven and delivered a sermon to his mother, thereby showing his gratitude to her for giving birth to him.

A mother's responsibilities towards her children are not only natural, biological responsibilities, they are also mankind's supreme responsibilities. The responsibilities children have towards their parents are of paying obeisance, respect and gratitude. Ancient legal regulations in various states in Southeast Asia rewarded children who brought honour to their parents with higher proportions of inheritance, as we have seen. Many works of literature and folklore in Southeast Asia share the storyline of children who show gratitude to their mothers and thereby prosper in their lives. On the other hand, children who do not serve their parents or are disrespectful to them suffer for their sins. The tale of *Kamphra buatòng* (กำพร้าบัวตอง), for example, which was a popular story in Lan Na, is about the rewards that result from gratitude, and the wickedness of ingratitude. It is the story of two sisters whose mother is a dog, and who later both become queens. The elder sister is disgusted by her mother being a dog: she beats her and drives her out. For this behaviour she pays with her life; while the younger sister, who shows her mother her gratitude by taking her in and serving her well, is rewarded with happiness and prosperity for the rest of her life.[231]

Buddhism declares that people who insult and dishonour their parents can never achieve the state of *nirvāna*, and regards murder of one's parents as the worst kind of crime. Parental homicide is equal to killing a Buddhist saint or bruising the Lord Buddha himself. The Three Seals Code treats the subject of the murder of parents and monks in its Law on Treason, regarding it as a crime worthy of extreme penalties. There were fourteen methods of punishment for such a crime, including wrapping the body in oil-drenched clothes and igniting them, and breaking open the head and putting a red-hot iron into it.[232] The *Traibhūmikāthā* claims that for the extreme sin of children killing their parents, they will suffer in hell and become suffering ghosts (*peta*); as for injuring their parents, someone who, for instance, beat their parents on the heads would suffer after death by becoming a *peta*[233] which was continually being hammered on the head.[234] The harming or killing of one's parents or Buddhist monks was considered a serious crime both in the secular world and that of *dharma*. These attitudes were clearly reflected in religious literature, indigenous folktales and ancient laws.

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[231] See *The archives of Lan Na local tales* (นิทานพื้นบ้านล้านนา) 1989.
[232] The Three Seals Code, the Law on Treason: 118-120.
[233] *Traibhūmikāthā* 1987: 70-71.
[234] *Traibhūmikāthā* 1987: 102-103.

b. Concepts of womanhood in the Rāmāyana and the Mahābhārata

- The Rāmāyana and Mahābhārata epics

The royal account of King Rama VI indicates that the Rāmāyana was based on true events in ancient Indian history.[235] Many scholars[236] agree that the Rāmāyana is based on historical events in the war between Aryan and Dravidian.[237] The Rāmāyana is an ancient Sanskrit epic[238] known extensively in India and Southeast Asia. It is attributed to the Hindu sage Valmiki and forms an important part of the Hindu canon. The Rāmāyana is one of the two great epics of India, the other being the Mahābhārata. It depicts the duties connected with relationships, portraying model characters like the ideal servant, the ideal brother, the ideal wife and the ideal king. The Rāmāyana consists of 24,000 verses in seven books and 500 cantos,[239] and tells the story of Rama (an incarnation of the Hindu preserver-god Vishnu), whose wife Sita is abducted by the demon (*Rakshasa*) king of Lanka, Ravana. Thematically, the epic explores themes of human existence and the concept of *dharma*.[240] However, the Rāmāyana is not just an ordinary story: it contains the teachings of ancient Hindu sages and presents them through allegory in narrative and the interspersion of the philosophical and the devotional. The characters of Rama, Sita, Lakṣhmāna, Bharata, Hanuman and Ravana are all fundamental to the cultural consciousness of India and also of Southeast Asia.

The other major epic, the Mahābhārata, is part of Hindu history, and forms an important part of Hindu mythology. With about one hundred thousand verses, or *sloka*, long prose passages, and about 1.8 million words in total, the Mahābhārata is one of longest epic poems in the world. There have been many attempts to unravel its historical growth and compositional layers. Its earliest layers probably date back to the late Vedic period (ca. 8th cent. B.C.) and it probably reached its final form by the time the Gupta period began (ca. 4th cent. A.D.).[241]

The importance of the epic in Indian society may be seen from an article in *The Discovery of India* written by India's first Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru. He

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[235] Phra Mongkut Klao Cao U Hua (King Rama VI) 1961: 996.
[236] For example, Phraya Anuman Rajdhon 1951: 21, Valmiki 1870: XIV, and Williams 1893: 9.
[237] Nevertheless, there are some alternative ideas about Rāmāyana's origin: 1) the Rāmāyana was taken from a Vedic scripture which told the story of a deity; 2) it was an appraisal of natural conditions; 3) it was an appraisal of moral precepts; 4) it originated from collected ancient Hindu beliefs and legends, such as the monkey moral precepts, or the Brahman ethics; 5) it was nothing more than ancient tales. See Somphòn 1977: 24-25.
[238] In the Vedic era, Sanskrit poems involved religious stories but secular stories were written in prose; the Rāmāyana is regarded as the first epic from the post-Vedic Age that was a secular story written in the Sanskrit language.
[239] Dutt 2004:198.
[240] Brockington 2003.
[241] Brockington 1998: 26.

concludes that the Mahābhārata is a mixture of stories from antiquity, from its culture and tradition, which includes stories of ancient Indian society and its political institutions.[242] Hence, it is of immense cultural importance to the Indian subcontinent, and is a major text of Hinduism. Its discussion of human goals takes place in a long-standing tradition, attempting to explain the relationship of the individual to society and the world and the workings of *karma*. Besides its epic narrative of the Kurukshetra War and the fates of the Kauravas and the Pandavas, the Mahābhārata contains much philosophical and devotional material, such as the Bhagavad Gita**,**[243] which has a very high level of philosophical and religious content, and a discussion of the four "goals of life", or *purusharthas***.** The latter are enumerated as *dharma* or "right action", *artha* or "purpose", *kama* or "pleasure", and *moksha* or "liberation".[244]

- Concepts of womanhood in the Indian epics
    1. The mother's duties and roles

The concept of the woman in the condition of motherhood appears in an embedded narrative of the Mahābhārata, that of *Sakuntala.*[245] She was the mother of Emperor Bharata and the wife of Duśyanta, who was the founder of the Paurava Dynasty from which the two families Kaurava and Pandava had descended. The Pandava fought and prevailed in a war against the party of their cousins the Kauravas, the climax of which was the eighteen-day Battle of Kurukshetra.

The concept of the mother portrayed in the *Sakuntala* reflects the Hindu stance on maternity, which says that the mother, as the person who gives birth, should be held in the appropriate high regard. She is compared to a leather bag used for the preservation of seed so that the man can father his children. Since the father is the creator of this seed, he should cherish his children,[246] because they will secure a place for him in heaven.[247] This concept matches the regulations in the Indian Dharmaśāstra; it can be found in both the Laws of Manu and the Arthaśāstra.

The maternal role of Sakuntala also entailed protecting and looking after her child, Bharata, the son of King Duśyanta. Sakuntala was hurt and surprised when her husband did not recognize her, nor recollected anything about her, and also rejected his

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[242] Jawaharlal Nehru 1972: 341.
[243] The Bhagavad Gita, book 6 (Bhishmaparva) tells the story of Krishna, who advises and teaches Arjuna when he is troubled by doubt.
[244] Radhakrishnan 1970: 79, and see also Skilton 2000: 29.
[245] Sakuntala was born to Viśvamitra and Menaka. Rishi Kanva found her in the forest surrounded and protected by birds, or *Sakunton* in Sanskrit, so she was named Sakuntala.
[246] After the word "cherish" (*bhara*), the boy was named Bharata (ภรต). See Winternitz 1972: 377.
[247] See also Winternitz 1972: 377.

son. But she explained to him how important a son was, and although he still refused to recognise her as his wife, he could no longer reject the child. A son brings happiness and praise to his father, and because the son had sprung from the father's loins and soul, he recognised him as a second self when he beheld him in a mirror-smooth lake.[248] This maternal role of upholding the son's rights is also found in the Rāmāyana: Queen Kaikeyi reminded King Dasratha of a favour he owed her, and requested the throne for her son, Bharata, instead of Rama. So Rama was banished from Ayodhya and went to live in the forest for fourteen years with his wife (Sita) and younger brother (Lakṣmāna). This incident was the origin of the Great War between Rama and Ravana, and also led to the destruction of the Lankan territory.

2. The wife's duties and roles

According to the concept of the role of the married woman revealed in the epics Mahābhārata and Rāmāyana, her most important duty was of unconditional honesty and loyalty to her husband, because her status was admired and praised in the three worlds (of natural and supernatural beings, and chaos; see above). Two tales in the Mahābhārata, *Nala and Damayanti* [249] and *Savitri and Satyavan*,[250] reflect this loyalty towards the husband whatever his social class or *varṇa*. The good wife's manner was to be compliant and faithful to her husband. In *Nala and Damayanti*, Nala, under an evil influence, plays dice and gambles with his brother and loses all his wealth and the kingdom to him. Nala and his wife, Damayanti, are separated and have to go and live in the forest. After undergoing many trials, Damayanti goes in search of Nala, as she has sworn eternal fidelity to him and has kept her promise not to speak to any man.

In the story of Savitri, Savitri insists on her choice of Satyavan as her husband even though she knows he is destined to die one year from the day they get married. After the marriage, she goes to live in the forest and lives in perfect loyalty and obedience to her husband. When Yama himself comes to claim Satyavan's soul, Savitri follows him as he is carrying the soul away, offering him wise anecdotes and advice. Finally, Yama grants Satyavan his life and blesses Savitri with eternal happiness.

A further example is that of Sita in the Rāmāyana. She performs her duty as a good wife to her husband, Rama, by abandoning her life of luxury in the palace and following him to live in the forest when he is sent into exile. This show of submission and integrity earns her great admiration. The Rāmāyana reveals Sita's faithfulness by

[248] Ibid: 377-378.
[249] The story of Nala and Damayanti is the longest story in "The Book of the Forest" in the Mahābhārata.
[250] The story of Savitri and Satayavan is also found in "The Book of the Forest" in the Mahābhārata.

means of a fire: she walks through the fire without any injury as a proof of her devotion to Rama.[251]

But a man's wife also had an obligation of perfect obedience and respect to him because he was equivalent to a god for her. A case in point is Queen Gandhari, who married Dhṛitarāṣtra, the eldest prince of the Kuru Kingdom. She voluntarily went through her married life blindfolded. Her husband Dhṛitarāṣtra was born blind, and on meeting him and realizing this, she decided to deny herself the pleasure of the sight that her husband could never relish. The gods rewarded her virtuous conduct by blessing her with a hundred sons (collectively known as the Kauravas) and one daughter.[252]

A married woman had to make a conscious effort to serve her husband well because this was seen as a prerequisite of a good spouse. In the Mahābhārata, Draupadi devoted herself to serving her husbands, the Pandava brothers. Draupadi was a good wife to her five husbands, carrying out her duties and attending to all their needs, taking care of them and bringing them happiness, providing their food and clothing, and paying them respect and obeying them.[253]

The Mahābhārata shows great admiration for the married woman. It sees her as one half of the husband and regards her as a companion who shares his destiny with him. She brings happiness and prosperity into her husband's life, and deserves to be admired in the same way as a mother because in times of trouble and suffering, she is the one who can help him and bring him happiness.[254]

As well as in the two ancient Indian epics, we find these ideas in the Dharmaśāstra. For instance, in the Laws of Manu a claim is made for treating a woman with respect and admiration because it brings the family happiness; taking good care of her keeps one's ancestors from harm, and gives protection to the family as well as making one aware of one's own duties.[255] As for the wife's responsibilities, the Laws of Manu states that for a man's wife to gain social respect and approval she must surrender herself to him in word, deed and spirit.[256]

It must be noted that the two great Indian epics were modified over time and new material and concepts were introduced which varied from the original, and in places the plot was modified. For instance, the *sati* ceremony[257] was embedded in the

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[251] Rāmāyana 1972. 307.
[252] Mahābhārata (Karuna and Rüang–urai translation) 2005: 20, 112.
[253] Ibid: 69.
[254] Winternitz 1972: 377-378.
[255] Haughton 1982: IX / 5-7.
[256] Ibid: V / 166.
[257] Sati was a Hindu custom in India in which a widow was burnt to ashes on her dead husband's pyre. Basically the custom of Sati was supposed to be a voluntary Hindu act in which the woman decided of her own free will to end her life with her husband after his death. But there were many incidences in which

Mahābhārata, and the concept of Rama's and Vishnu's reincarnation was added into the Rāmāyana.[258] Nevertheless, the concept of the good woman as mother and wife in the Mahābhārata and Rāmāyana still shows its roots in the original characters. The more these two epics influenced Indian society, the more the concepts of womanhood became important as tools for instructing about and affirming the image of the good wife.

3. The spread of Indian epics to Southeast Asia

Indian civilization spread to Southeast Asia over a long time, and the Rāmāyana and Mahābhārata, the two most important epics of India, also spread to this region. However, the Rāmāyana was more popular and widespread there than the Mahābhārata because of its tightness of theme, its unity, and because it was a romantic work.[259] This is clear from the abundance of versions that can be found in various Southeast Asian countries such as Indonesia, Malaysia, Laos, Thailand, Burma, Cambodia and Vietnam,[260] as well the eastern Asian countries of China and Japan.[261]

Furthermore, it is represented extensively in the performing and graphic arts in various places in Southeast Asia, examples of which include the bas-relief of the Churning of the Milk Ocean, which depicts the story of Vishnu, at Angkor Wat in Cambodia, the mural of scenes from the Thai version of Rāmāyana mythology, the Ramakian, on the wall surrounding the Wat Phra Kaeo in Bangkok.

In addition, the Rāmāyana was also spread in oral form to Southeast Asia, which resulted in a modification and augmentation or shortening of the story contents. Each country thus has many versions of the Rāmāyana, often with indigenous beliefs and traditions embedded within them.[262] Thai society, for example, has various versions, including the Ramakian of Siam, the non-canonical Jātāka, the *Phrommacak* (พรหมจักร) of Lan Na and the *Phra lak- phra lam* (พระลัก-พระราม) of northeastern Thailand. On the other hand, the Mahābhārata, which was less widely represented, in Thailand at least, contained some narratives which formed the inspiration for Thai literary works such as *Phra nala kham chan* (พระนลคำฉันท์), the dramatic script of *Sawittri.* Some were translated from the English versions into Thai for dramatic performances, such as the *Sakuntala*, or adapted as instructional poems, as in the *Kritsana sòn nòng*.

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women were forced to commit Sati, sometimes even being dragged against their wishes to the lighted pyre**.**

[258] Winternitz 1972: 501-507.

[259] Somphòn 1977: 9.

[260] Precha 1981: 68-151 and Sarkar 1986: 58-68, from the second International Rāmāyana Conference 1986 Thailand.

[261] Hara 1986: 69-80 from the second International Rāmāyana Conference 1986 Thailand.

[262] Sakar 1986: 66.

Although some details were modified, the main ideas were not significantly altered from those in the Rāmāyana.[263] For instance, Sita, the main character, was still an attractive woman from the point of view both of her conduct and her property. Furthermore, the role of the wife that we have already seen in the Rāmāyana, that of the good-mannered woman who is honest, respectful and obedient to her husband while preserving her chastity and protecting his dignity, continued to be represented in Sita in all versions of the work. Sita's status and character made her a role model of the good wife.

Lan Na and Lan Sang developed codes of conduct for women based on a concept of virtuous behaviour as found in the Indian epics, and which were expressed in Lan Na, for example, through *Khlong withun sòn lok* (โคลงวิฐูรสอนโลก), which maintains that a married woman should take care of her family and household and be obedient and respectful to her husband.[264] Lan Sang, meanwhile, articulated such ideas through its literature, as in *Inthiynan sòn luk* (ອິນທິຍານສອນລູກ), which says it is a woman's duty to keep any unsatisfied emotions and feelings of anger to herself and only show her husband deference.[265]

Social attitudes to women's qualities, roles and duties as derived from the concepts found in the Indian and Chinese civilizations.

A comparison between ancient Indian and Chinese laws relating to women

a. The properties of the ideal woman in the Laws of Manu

Womanhood is not only defined by gender differences, but also by the cultural dimension which gives form to good and bad characteristics in women. Issues of femininity were treated in the rulings of various ancient oriental laws. Looking closely at ancient Indian and Chinese law has revealed that it did examine these good and bad characteristics, and that they were related to the social attitudes and concepts prevalent in Indian and Chinese society at the time. However, owing to the limitations of this study and the diversity of ancient laws in both India and China, the author will restrict the scope of the comparative analysis, and refer only to the Laws of Manu to verify the main aspects of female characteristics against the ancient Chinese law of The Tang

[263] The main idea here was of a prince who came to the throne when his father, as a result of conflicts within the royal court, was sent away in exile. While the prince was travelling in a forest with his wife and younger brother, the giant who ruled the island kidnapped the prince's wife in revenge for his sister. The prince, with the help of a monkey, followed the ogre to try to get his wife back. After some clashes, the prince killed the giant and was reunited with his wife. He then returned to the throne in his kingdom.
[264] *Klong withun sòn lok* (translated) 1975: 25.
[265] Thòngkham 1996: 169-170.

Code. The Tang Dynasty (A.D. 618-906) was a historically important period in China: it was a golden age of Chinese culture; China was developing prosperous diplomatic relationships with other countries, and it was absorbing the Buddhist influence from India.[266] These two ancient legal codes were of fundamental importance and their contents clearly reflected female issues.

1. The qualities of the good woman

In Hinduism, the *puruṣarthas* are the four main aims in life. In living tradition, the notion of the four *puruṣarthas* represents a comprehensive approach to the satisfaction of a man's physical, emotional, and spiritual needs. Conventionally, the *puruṣarthas* are listed as follows, from the lowest to the highest: 1) *karma* is sensual pleasure or love; 2) *artha* is wealth; 3) *dharma* is righteousness or morality; and 4) *moksha* is liberation from the cycle of reincarnation. However, sometimes the first two aims are switched, with *artha* being placed first. The *puruṣarthas* are based on the presupposition that life should be enjoyed in all its aspects at the appropriate times, including sexual pleasure and material enjoyment, but that eventually some goals, such as righteous living and the pursuit of liberation, transcend others, and ought to be one's highest calling in life.

The *Bhagavad Gita* reflects Hindu ideals, instructing that in life one should not refrain from all *karma*, and points to the ideal of pure love, which can be attained through karma without neglecting *dharma*, moral principles and material prosperity.[267] In addition, Hinduism recognizes that stability in life lies in the balance between passion and joy which derives from a persistence in family life in the household, which in turn also goes through four main stages, as in the goals of life mentioned above.[268] Managing the household in a well-disciplined and orderly way is thought to be of benefit in the preparations for the last stage of one's life.[269] These ideals helped to form social attitudes towards women, and especially the idea of the "good woman", who is expected to marry according to the criteria for a man's selection of a spouse as laid out in the Laws of Manu, as we shall see.

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[266] Reischauer and Fairbank 1958: 176.
[267] De Bary 1997: 216-217.
[268] Hinduism recognizes four main stages of life. These can be divided into three plus one, with three deriving from the strand of Hinduism that says, "life is good", and one from the "life is bad" strand. The first three are those of the student, the householder and the retired person, while the fourth is of the ascetic.
[269] De Bary 1997: 262.

1.1 The caste system

In Hinduism, the precedence of the Vedic and other ancient scriptures stamped the social regulations, which people could not infringe, and gave rise to the caste system and a strong family structure with a sense of obligation in binding people and society together.[270] The Laws of Manu itself lay great emphasis on marriage within castes. A woman could only marry a man from the same caste. Marriage across castes would lead to a decline in one's status and prosperity, in particular for the man, who would be humiliated and socially ostracised. For example, if a man got married to a woman from a lower caste, he would be regarded as destroying the dignity of his ancestral line and his offspring would be relegated to the Sudra caste. This is given in the Laws of Manu: "Twice-born men[271] who, in their folly, wed wives of the low (Sudra) caste, soon degrade their families and their children to the state of Sudras".[272]

Then, a man from the Brahman caste who persuaded a woman of the Sudra caste to his bed as his first wife would fall into suffering. If she bore him a child, his caste would be immediately terminated.[273] A man or a woman who conducted a sexual relationship with a person from a lower caste than themselves would be punished. If a woman from the highest caste (the Brahman caste) had sexual intercourse with a man from a lower caste, she would be confined to her house and the man would undergo a severe physical punishment. On the other hand, if a man from a high caste had a sexual relationship with a lower-caste woman, the woman would be counted innocent.[274] In addition, a virtuous marriage within the caste not only affected the descendants, but also imparted a respectable status on the wife in relation to the sacred rituals of Hinduism.[275]

1.2 Age

In the Laws of Manu we can see that Hinduism lays emphasis on the age of a married couple. It defines the proper ages for groom and bride thus: a man of thirty years should marry a girl of twelve; a twenty-four-year old man should take an eight-year-old spouse.[276] The law also states that if a man gets married to a woman over the stipulated age, he doesn't need to offer a nuptial gratuity to her father.[277]

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[270] Kane 1973: 857.
[271] The twice-born were generally the first three varṇa groups (Brahman, king, and merchant), who were allowed to study the Vedic scriptures.
[272] Haughton 1982: III / 15.
[273] Ibid: III / 12-17.
[274] Ibid: VIII / 365-366.
[275] Ibid: IX / 86-87.
[276] Ibid: IX: 94.
[277] Ibid: IX / 93.

In comparison, in Kautiliya's Arthaśāstra a girl reached her legal age at twelve years of age; here, a girl over the age stipulated for marriage would be upwards of thirteen. The issue of marriage at a young age was supported by the custom that only a virgin should become a (first-time) mother. This was echoed in the Laws of Manu, which said that the legal recognition of a woman's right to marry rested merely on her being a virgin: "The holy nuptial texts are applied solely to virgins, and nowhere on earth to girls who have lost their virginity, since those women are in general excluded from legal ceremonies."[278]

In addition, the law stated that the father had to arrange a wedding ceremony for his daughter at a suitable age as a display of her valued status. The equivalence of the concept of womanhood in both religious and legal terms supports the idea of a virgin making a virtuous wife. Thus, society placed more value on a woman or girl of a young age being a virgin than an older one. Further to this, the law required all fathers to see that their daughters married at a suitable age,[279] in order to sustain the model of the good woman.

1.3 The qualities of the good woman

The qualities of an ideal woman according to the Laws of Manu were physical beauty, a good demeanour and an auspicious name, swan-like or baby-elephant-like movements, sleek hair, healthy teeth, and a supple body. These properties were regarded as desirable features, which a man should seek in a prospective wife: "Let him choose for his wife a girl whose form has no defect; who has an agreeable name; who walks gracefully like a flamingo, or like a young elephant; whose hair and teeth are moderate respectively in quantity and in size; whose body has an exquisite softness."[280] This social observation in the Laws of Manu may reflect the Hindu attitude towards these things. In short, a man should seek virtuous qualities in a woman, and a woman's appearance and behaviour were a physical expression of her personality.

Also significant, as expressed in the Laws of Manu, was the traditional view of a woman's name, because in Hinduism a woman's title was an indication of her virtue. The law declared that a woman's name should be soft, not hard, with a simple meaning, full of charm, auspicious, and should end in a long vowel sound like a word in an incantation.[281] According to the Laws of Manu a father had a legal right to select a male partner for his daughter. In the legislation covering the criteria for selecting a son-in-law

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[278] Ibid: VIII / 226.
[279] Ibid: IX / 88.
[280] Ibid: III / 10.
[281] Ibid: II / 33. "The name of a woman should be agreeable, soft, clear, captivating the fancy, auspicious, ending in long vowels, resembling words of benediction."

the conditions related not only to caste, but also to a man's economic status, because a husband should have more assets than his wife.[282] The law also said that, when a girl reached marriageable age, her father should rather let her remain single until she died than get married to a man without adequate property.[283]

b. Women and the traditional Chinese law of The Tang Code

The powerful empire of the Tang Dynasty lasted for three centuries, from A.D. 618 to 907. With its large population base, the dynasty was able to raise professional and conscripted armies of hundreds of thousands of troops to contend with nomadic powers dominating in Inner Asia**,** such as those in Korea and Japan. Various kingdoms and states paid tribute to the Tang court, while the Tang also conquered or subdued several regions which it indirectly controlled through a protectorate system. Besides political hegemony, the Tang also exerted a powerful cultural influence over both neighbouring states and Southeast Asia as a whole. There were lucrative trade routes along the Silk Road and prosperity from maritime trade with various countries such as Arabia, Persia, Israel and India. These gave the Chinese civilization a position of dominance and made it influential in many oriental countries. At the same time, Chinese culture flourished and further matured during the Tang era; it is considered the greatest age of Chinese poetry.[284] Judicially, the Tang also made many advances. They first compiled the Tang Code in 624. It consists of a continuous scale of penalties based on both the crime and the degree of relationship between the criminal and the victim. This was measured by the amount of time that would be spent in mourning if the person died. The Tang Code had more than 500 articles divided into twelve sections.

Historically, the traditional Chinese legal system, as a tool of the sovereign, never encountered strong counterparts, and therefore never tolerated the existence of any alien powers or legal rules other than those of the emperor. The Chinese never attributed their laws to a divine lawgiver. The purpose of traditional Chinese law was to devise rules which would be applicable through the whole of one's life, and which therefore might legitimately be called "laws".[285] Furthermore, Confucianism exerted a strong influence on Chinese society, of which the basic teachings stressed the importance of education for the moral development of the individual so that the state could be governed by moral virtue rather than by the use of coercive laws. Moreover, relationships were central to Confucianism. Particular duties arose from one's particular

[282] Ibid: III / 6.
[283] Ibid: IX / 89.
[284] See also Reischauer and Fairbank 1958: 158-182, and Fitzgerald 1966: 57-66.
[285] Johnson 1979: 9-10.

situation in relation to others. The individual stood simultaneously in several different relationships to different people: as a junior in relation to parents and elders, and as a senior in relation to younger siblings, students, and others. This resulted in every individual knowing their place in the social order, and playing their part well, and led to a strong awareness in Chinese society of the importance of family lineages and ancestry.

The Tang Code synthesized Legalist and Confucian interpretations of law, as can be seen from the regulation of penalties, which were dependent on social status.[286] If a young person or a servant committed an offence against his senior or his master, he would be subject to more severe penalties than the elder would, committing the same offence. For example, if a servant broke his master's arm or blinded him he would be executed,[287] while a master killing a servant without an official ruling from the state would be condemned to one hundred lashes of the whip. (If, however, it was subsequently proven that the servant had been innocent, the master would then serve a prison sentence of up to one year).[288]

In addition, some regulations reveal the perception of one's individual place in the social order, and of playing one's part in it. The sixth section of the Tang Code, for example, required that a wife pay respect to her husband's senior relatives and strictly observe the conventions of mourning in equal measure to her own relatives.[289] The 120th section says that concealing the death of one's parents or husband and refusing to observe the mourning procedures was regarded as an offence for which one would be sent into exile to a distance of 2,000 *li* (1,000 kilometres).[290] And removing one's mourning dress before the mourning period of twenty-seven months was over, or breaking this mourning period with activities of entertainment, would be punished with three years penal servitude.[291] Nevertheless, the Chinese society of the Tang Code was heavily influenced by the Confucian doctrine.

Moreover, the Tang Code laid importance on the concepts of *yin–yang*[292] and the five elements,[293] which is evident from the fact that it was always divided into five sections, such as five levels of importance in the family, or the five kinds of exile for

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[286] The social structure of China according to the Tang code consisted of three classes; the privileged classes, the commoners and the inferior classes, which could be further divided into three subgroups of personal retainers, bondsmen and slaves. See Johnson 1979: 28.
[287] Johnson 1979: 28.
[288] Article 320-321; Johnson 1979: 29.
[289] Johnson 1979: 66.
[290] 1 *li* equal to 500 metres.
[291] Article 120, Johnson 1997: 88.
[292] *Yin* and *yang* are the alternating negative and positive forces in the universe, for example, the sun, man, imperial grace, spring and summer are dominated by the yang principle, while the moon, woman, death penalties, autumn and winter are under the yin influence. See Johnson 1979: 10.
[293] The five elements are earth, wood, metal, fire and water.

serious crimes. The influence of the five-elements theory can be seen in the five kinds of punishment in penal law, which comprised the so-called "light stick", the "heavy stick", penal servitude, life exile and death.[294] These penalties could be redeemed with brass, for example, ten heavy sticks could be redeemed with six kilograms of brass and execution could be redeemed with ninety-six kilograms of brass. Only serious crimes, in particular rebellion, could not be reprieved in this way.[295]

Comparing this with the Laws of Manu, we see that social status was an essential factor in regulating crime and punishment in both these traditional legal systems. But the Laws of Manu's immutable rules were connected with caste. The upper castes were allowed to carry out lower-caste duties, but the lower castes were not allowed the same privilege. Transgressors would be exiled and expelled from their caste.[296] Furthermore, the caste system was a factor in regulating legislation on penalties. Penalties for members of the Brahman caste were few and could be carried out by the offenders themselves by conducting a religious routine in the forest.[297] The Brahman would be whipped once in a secret place.[298] On the other hand, the punishments for people from the lower castes committing offences against members of the upper castes were severe. If, for instance, a lower-caste person caused injury to an upper-caste person's body, the lower-caste person would have the corresponding part of his own body cut off.[299] If a lower-caste person tried to sit beside someone from an upper caste, he would be branded on the hip and sent into exile, or he would be sentenced to having his back sliced off.

Similarly, the concept of cross-class marriage as represented in the Tang Code echoes the caste concept in the Indian Dharmaśāstra. The code decreed that a general bondsman (a male slave) may not marry a commoner; if this rule was violated the violator would receive one hundred lashes of the whip. Neither could an official bondsman (a male slave in service to the Crown) marry a commoner: he would receive the same punishment. On the contrary, if a commoner married an official bondsman's daughter the commoner would receive double the penalty.[300] This meant that general bondsmen had the right to get married only to people of their own class.

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[294] Of the five punishments, at least three consist of five sub-classes, e.g. 1) light stick: 12, 20, 30, 40 and 50 blows; 2) heavy stick: 60, 70, 80, 90 and 100 blows; 3) penal servitude: 1, 1½, 2, 2½ and 3 years; (the next two sub-classes also contained two further sub-level classes); 4) life exile: 2,000, 2,500, and 3,000 li; 5) death: strangulation and decapitation. See Johnson 1979: 14-15.
[295] Liang 1973: 145.
[296] Haughton 1982: X / 96-97.
[297] Ibid: XI / 194.
[298] Ibid: XI / 100-101.
[299] Ibid: VIII / 279.
[300] Article 191-192, Johnson 1997: 169-172.

However, the Tang code was composed of twelve sections, which contained thirty chapters and 502 articles. This study is mainly concerned with the concepts of womanhood as they appear in the code, and will look at how it represented the roles and obligations of Chinese women that were related to the family and social relationships.

1. Family law

The Chinese lay great importance on the family and its patterns and structures and lay great emphasis on the fifth generation of kinship, whom they regarded as ancestors of the same lineage[301] and therefore of the same family. Chinese family structure was also very hierarchical and authoritarian. The status of a person within the family depended on their position in it: their gender, their age and their relationship, whether husband or wife, father, mother, child, or a relation by marriage. Generally, the head of the family was the father. He was regarded as the centre of power and authority in the family and was responsible for managing the family property and arranging the marriages of his offspring.[302]

Such ways of thinking could be traced back to the traditional laws of the Zhou Dynasty (1100-770 B.C.). The father legitimately held the authority over the child in the same manner that the village leader held the authority over the villager. The divorce code ruled that if a parent-in-law was dissatisfied with a daughter-in-law, the daughter-in-law's husband could send his wife away. On the other hand, if the parent-in-law found the daughter-in-law to their liking,[303] then the husband could not expel his wife, even if he was no longer satisfied with her. Subsequently, in the Han Dynasty (206 B.C. - 220 A.D.), additional divorce regulations appeared. The husband could divorce and oust his wife under certain conditions. Of these conditions there were traditionally seven: the wife had borne him no son, she was of poor morals, she did not serve her mother-in-law, was fussy, was a gambler or a thief, was jealous, or she had a serious disease that could not be cured.[304]

This idea also appeared in the Tang Code.[305] The law here stated that if any man neglected or divorced his wife without one of the seven reasons previously described, he would be legally guilty of an offence and would be put in prison for from one to one

[301] Ancestors of the same lineage count from great-great-grandparent to great-great-grandchildren.
[302] Reischauer and Fairbank 1958: 28-29.
[303] The conditions for this were that the daughter-in-law gave a son to the husband's family, served and took care of the parents-in-law and relatives, was diligent in her housework and was respectful and humble.
[304] In all cases of casting a wife aside, there had to be one of the seven causes for repudiation: the first was not to have any children; the second was immoral behaviour; the third, not serving her parents-on-law; the fourth, loquacity, or fussiness; the fifth was committing robbery or theft; the sixth was jealousy; the seventh was an incurable disease. Ibid: 18.
[305] Article 189, Johnson 1997: 167.

and a half years.[306] And, to protect vulnerable women, both the Han and the Tang Codes set out regulations prohibiting divorce: if the woman had no relatives who could look after her, if she had been in mourning for a parent-in-law for three years, or if her husband wanted to remarry but was poor,[307] then the offending man would be sentenced to one hundred lashes and be obliged to take his wife back in.[308]

In the traditional Chinese laws we can also see signs of the social attitudes towards what a good wife should be like. For example: the Tang Code penalised a woman who neglected her husband with two years in prison. If such a woman remarried, the punishment would be increased by two degrees (i.e. doubled),[309] because a good wife was expected to remain loyal to her husband and not neglect him for any reason. If a woman beat her husband, she would be sent to jail for one and a half years; on the other hand, a man who beat his wife would go unpunished, as he was not considered guilty of any offence. A woman who injured her husband could expect a prison sentence of four and a half years,[310] and if she beat or injured one of her parents-in-law she would suffer the severest penalty, namely, execution by hanging.[311] But merely a prison sentence of three years awaited a parent-in-law who killed his or her daughter-in-law. Finally, if a husband was sent into exile, his wife would have to follow him even though she did not share his guilt.[312]

Thus, it may be said that the Tang Code was a tool for defining a woman's qualities and duties as a good wife, which consisted chiefly in providing a son to continue the husband's family line, and being not only loyal to her husband, but also respecting the senior members of her husband's family, especially the parents-in-law, by serving them and devoting her life to the housework. As it says in the royal decree of the Qin Dynasty (221-206 B.C.) about social ethics: "Men should be satisfied with their work in the fields and women should be content with their duties in the home."[313]

China during the Tang Dynasty was also deeply influenced by social concepts from the Han Dynasty, especially the norm of marrying at a young age in order to have more children. A royal decree declared a five-fold tax for girls over fifteen who were still single. On the other hand, the Government would support a couple having children

[306] Ibid.
[307] Tan 1993: 18.
[308] Article 189, Johnson 1997: 168.
[309] Article 190, Johnson 1997: 169.
[310] Tan 1993: 22.
[311] Article 329, Johnson 1997: 366.
[312] Article 24, Johnson 1979: 33.
[313] Ibid: 17.

by reducing their tax or giving them a higher proportion of agricultural products.[314] Pamela Tan (1993) notes that in the year 627 the Chinese preferred to get married when a man was twenty years old and a girl was fifteen. Later, in 716, the marrying age was reduced to fifteen for a man and thirteen for a girl.[315] A Tang poem, in which a girl who gets married at fourteen bemoans the anguish of waiting for her merchant husband while he travels the seas for trade, illustrates this trend.[316]

2. The engagement code

Chinese society in the Tang period was marked by patriarchy and the tradition of Confucianism, which laid emphasis on family relationships dictated by gender and rank. In the Engagement Code an engagement was legally valid if put down in writing by both sides of the family, and it could not be recanted under any circumstances if the woman had agreed to the conditions. For anyone violating this, the punishment was a "heavy stick" of sixty blows. Such agreements were created in order to bring both sides to acknowledge the suitor's personal qualities, such as his age and maturity, any illnesses he might have, and whether he was an adopted son or the son of a minor wife. Because it took immediate effect, it was important for the legal status of the wife-to be and of any future child in matters such as inheritance.[317] According to tradition, a man had to offer a dowry to the woman's family.[318] This dowry was a symbol of the social status of both husband and wife, so a high-value dowry signified a high social status, and the woman who received it would be seen as the principal wife.[319] If a woman refused to marry after receiving a dowry, she would receive eighty lashes, or if she got engaged to another man while still being engaged to the first, she would receive one hundred lashes. A woman who actually married another man, going through the wedding ceremony, would receive a sentence of one and a half years in prison.[320] Otherwise, if a man's family retracted the marriage agreement they would not legally receive any punishment but the dowry would pass to the woman.[321]

[314] Nevertheless, it is highly possible that there were various wars during the Han Dynasty, such as the war with Korea and some other states in the southern area in the reign of Emperor Buti. These events led the government to promote a policy designed to increase the population. Tan 1993: 19 and Liang 1973: 68-69.
[315] Tan 1993: 21.
[316] "Ballad of a Merchant's Wife", 300 Tang Poems: A New Translation 1987: 96-98.
[317] Article 175, Johnson 1997: 152.
[318] In the Tang Dynasty, food and beverages were not regarded as part of a marriage dowry.
[319] Johnson 1997: 153.
[320] Ibid: 153.
[321] Ibid: 152.

3. Adultery law[322]

As with its counterpart in India, ancient Chinese law underwent developments and conceptual modifications with each dynasty. For example, in the Qin Code (Qin Dynasty: 221-206 B.C.) execution entailed disembowelment of the offender plus the execution of three lines of his or her relatives, that is the father's relations, the mother's relations and the wife's relations. Their successors, in the Han Dynasty, reduced this penalty. Reischauer and Fairbank (1958) suggest that the combination of Confucianism with the rulings of the Han Code mollified the brutality of punishments in the Qin Code. In particular, the Confucian moral concepts and values of loyalty to one's parents which dominated the official administrative system of the Han era led to an adjustment of this legislation.[323] So, tattooing of the face was done away with, and an offender was now sentenced to cleaning the city wall for four years; the amputation of the nose was changed to three hundred lashes of the whip; and instead of having one's leg cut off, one was given five hundred lashes.[324]

In addition, the Tang Code laid down special regulations ensuring reduced penalties for children, pregnant women, the elderly and the blind, disabled and retarded people, and people of stunted growth.[325] The former Zhou Code had penalised adultery with castration for a man[326] and imprisonment for a woman. The Tang Code subsequently brought in legislation covering forbidden sexual activities such as intercourse between unmarried people of different classes, or marriage between a commoner and a general bondsman, or sleeping with another person's wife.

For an infringement of this kind both the woman and the man would spend between one and one and a half years in prison. If one of them was already married the penalty was two years in prison. If a commoner had sexual intercourse with the personal general bondsman of an official bondsman, the culprit would receive ninety lashes of the whip. Furthermore, having sexual intercourse with one's husband's relatives, or committing adultery with the wife of one of the relatives within the five levels of family relationships described above, or sleeping with the daughter of a wife's ex-husband were all punishable by three years in prison. In the case of rape, the penalty was exile to a distance of 2,000 *li*. Bodily harm and injuries such as breaking a woman's teeth in a

[322] It may be noted that the Chinese Tang Code does not have the term adultery code, but since the purpose of this study is a critical analysis of women's issues in ancient Chinese law, the author has allowed this term to replace the legal terminology of the Tang Code involving sexual harassment.
[323] Reischauer and Fairbank 1958: 107.
[324] Thawip 1995: 174 and Liang 1973: 87-88.
[325] Johnson 1979: 29-31.
[326] In the penal legislation we see that castration was an early punishment; the castration of noblemen was also found in the Han Dynasty, only to be abolished in the Sui Dynasty (589-618). Then, it was adapted as a service to the emperor at the palace, creating so-called eunuchs.

beating brought the death penalty.[327] We also find rulings covering the punishment for a man intending to marry another person's wife. The law set the penalty for both the guilty man and the matchmaker who introduced him to the woman to two years in prison. And if a husband arranged for his own wife to get married to another man, not only would he serve two years in prison, but the marriage would be immediately annulled.[328]

4. Inheritance law

China in the Feudal Age (1100-211 B.C.)[329] was characterised by a distinct male dominance. A man's wife had an important duty providing for her family because the success or failure of the family was perceived as largely depending on her. Despite this responsibility, the law gave an unmarried daughter no right to an inheritance from her own family. Instead, most of the property would go to the wife of the eldest son,[330] which indicates the significance of the male line in matters of inheritance in China at that time. The family line was continued by the eldest son, who was the main heir on his father's death. The law consequently laid down guidelines concerning the status of women, since this played an essential part in defining the inheritance rights of their offspring. It said that the eldest son of a principal wife had the legal right to an inheritance, and not following this rule would lead to a year in prison. On the other hand, if the principal wife was over fifty years of age and had no children, the inheritance went to the eldest son of a concubine or of a minor wife instead.[331] Nevertheless, the Tang Code still held that only the male side of the family had the right to continue the family name, and a man who had no offspring would not only spend a year in prison, but also forfeit his family name.[332]

Subsequently, the Tang Code reformulated the inheritance code. Now an unmarried daughter also had the right to receive something, but only half of what her elder or younger brother would get.[333] It can be concluded that the relationships that operated between husband and wife in Tang Dynasty China chiefly depended on matters of rank, economic standing and moral principles on both sides of the family.

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[327] Article 410, Johnson 1997: 473-474.
[328] Article 187, Johnson 1997: 166.
[329] This was a period in which China was divided into many small states; it covered three periods: the Zhou Dynasty (1100-770 B.C.), the Qun-Qi Dynasty (770-476 B.C.) and the period of the warring states (476-221 B.C.).
[330] Tan 1993: 15.
[331] Article 158, Johnson 1997: 131.
[332] Ibid.: 132.
[333] Tan 1993: 22.

Indian and Chinese attitudes to the qualities of the ideal woman

The expectations that society placed on a woman's responsibilities and obligations contributed to its image of the ideal woman. The notion of good and bad female qualities was mainly related to the relationships between the woman and the family, and the woman and society. The ideal woman in Indian, Chinese and Southeast Asian societies was graceful both in body and in mind, elegant, well mannered, softly spoken, and was a good daughter to her parents. As a wife, she was obedient, respectful and faithful to her husband and was diligent in her housework. In particular, the ideal Chinese woman was also expected to be a good daughter-in-law to her husband's parents and amicable to his relatives. Although there were differences in background and tradition, the expectations in Southeast Asian societies were roughly the same as those in China: a woman should preserve her chastity, take care of her husband, be faithful to him, be responsible for the housework, care for and instruct the children, be grateful to her parents and be well-mannered. The qualities of the ideal woman will be further discussed below.

Beside the Dharmaśāstra and important scripts such as the Tipitaka, another work of literature that gives us a good portrait of Hindu life was concerned with the practical duties between men and women, especially in their intimate life. This is the Kamasutra.[334] The Kamasutra mentions unfavourable female characteristics which a man should avoid at all costs. So it was forbidden for a man to have intercourse with a leper, a lunatic, a woman turned out of her caste, a woman who publicly expressed her desire for sexual intercourse, a woman who was extremely white or a woman who was extremely black.[335] It goes further, to say that a man should never marry the likes of a jealous woman, a covetous woman, an immoral woman, or a barren woman; nor a woman who was lazy, cowardly, hump-backed, dwarfish, deformed, or vulgar, nor if she was foul-smelling, or was sick or old.[336] The Laws of Manu, meanwhile, advises against women with brown hair, as well as bald women and women with too much hair, women of over-large proportions, sick women, talkative women, and red-eyed women because these are the unusual characteristics of women. Also included are women with

[334] *Kama* is the Hindu god of love and "sutra" means "textbook" or "treatise". Kamasutra, a Sanskrit text, was written by the Indian scholar Mallanāga Vātsyāyana. Dating from around 400 A.D., the Kamasutra is a treatise on Hindu philosophy. *Dharma* is obedience to the command of the Hindu Śāstra, or Holy Writ, to do certain things. *Artha* is the acquisition of the arts, land, gold, cattle, wealth, horse carriages and friends. *Kama* is the enjoyment of appropriate objects through the five senses of hearing, feeling, seeing, tasting and smelling, assisted by the mind together with the soul. An ingredient in this is a peculiar contact between the organ of sense and its object; the consciousness of pleasure which arises from that contact is called "Kama".
[335] Vatsyayana's Kamasutra 1982: 45.
[336] Ibid: 116.

animal names (such as 'bird' or 'snake') or names from Nature (for example, 'star', 'river' or 'mountain'), and frightening names.[337]

Character traits and habits which might lead to undesirable behaviour are also mentioned. According to the Kamasutra, a man should marry neither a widow nor a woman who reveals secrets, nor an unchaste woman, or one who stands at the door of her house or sits conversing in the house of her neighbour.[338] The Laws of Manu connects a bad female personality with alcoholism and contact with undesirable people, as well as with women who are separated from their husbands, wander the streets or loaf around, have no permanent residence or stay at other men's houses, and with those who are lustful or of an unsteady mind.[339]

The fact that these notions concerning undesirable features are to be found in all these major Indian sources is a clear indication of their presence in Indian society as a whole. An important objective of marriage was to have children, and such women were in danger of being barren or raising children who turned out to be dangerous, or producing no sons, or may just not be able to raise their children well. As a result, a couple may end up in hell because they had no son to perform the necessary rituals for them. A woman of bad qualities could cause many problems in the family and could not be a good mother to her children.

These attitudes were mirrored in Southeast Asian society. In Lan Na, historical sources such as palm-leaf manuscripts list a masculine face, large hands and large feet among features not suitable for a female marriage partner. Furthermore, emphasized in both law and literature were the woman of unsteady mind and the adulteress. To take one example, *Phra lò sòn lok* says, "A woman's mind is like lac which lies near a fire. It promptly acquiesces to a man's words."[340] In the Mangraisat a bad woman was one who committed adultery, and she would at least be fined, but could also be sold into slavery or publicly shamed in various ways, such as having her hair shaved, her ears cut off or being tattooed on the forehead.[341] Interestingly, Lan Na society not only regarded adultery as immoral, but also saw it as affecting a family's economy because in that society she was the person who managed the assets, and an adulterous affair might tempt her to pass these assets on to her accomplice.[342] Various Lan Na literature deprecates a woman who does not preserve her chastity,[343] especially one pregnant by

[337] Haughton 1982: III / 8-9.
[338] Vatsyayana's Kamasutra 1982: 42.
[339] Haughton 1982: IX / 13-15.
[340] *Khlong Phra lò sòn lok*, the fifty-fifth verse.
[341] Aroonrut and Lamun 1985a: 25-47.
[342] *Khlong withun sòn lok*, translated version, 1975: 21.
[343] *Kham sòn Phaya Mangrai* 1976b: 11.

an unknown father. This circumstance was particularly looked down upon by society. Some works of Lan Na literature even heralded such conduct as a portent of disaster.[344]

Instructional literature from Lan Sang, such as the *Yot kham sòn buhan*, identifies women of bad character as lazy and neglectful of their housework,[345] who roam around, are of low morals, and who associate with allurements such as drinking and the taking of opium.[346] As for the attitude of Siamese society, a bad woman was one who was not appreciative of her husband, used threats rather than obeying him, and had wicked intentions towards him. She was lazy and spent her time making friends,[347] or she was promiscuous, had sex before marriage, ran away with men, boasted, gossiped, flirted and was adulterous.[348]

The reason for laying stress on these models of behaviour and character was to preserve the family order. The woman in the role of wife and mother had a responsibility towards the other members of her family. Thus, she needed to have the appropriate qualities to maintain the system of virtue and be accepted by society, acting as a role model for her offspring. The outlook towards adultery in Southeast Asia related to the Buddhist concept of controlling people's behaviour through morals, and instruction for women in such matters created a gender boundary, because women were thought to have a sensitive and unsteady mind.[349] Since society expected a woman to be faithful to her husband; she had to stay within the boundary of chastity in order to be seen as suitable for marriage.

The perfect wife in the Kāmasutra was beautiful and healthy. She had normal hands and feet, nails, teeth, eyes and ears, and not too large or too small breasts, came from a family in which the parents were still alive, was rich or famous or had rich friends or relatives.[350] As a wife she was conscious of her responsibility to the family, working with diligence and patience, and was economical and thrifty. Most important in the ancient Indian documents was that a woman should be faithful, loyal and obedient to her husband and should take care of him.

Such attributes were also commonly found in various sources of law and literature in Southeast Asia. The social expectations on the roles and obligations of the wife and mother may stem from the fact that all societies contained the tradition of offering the family roles and household activities to the woman. Thus, the image of the

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[344] Khao sò, *Chioha lin kham* 1968: 60-61.
[345] *Yot kham sòn bulan* 1973: 20.
[346] Ibid: 22.
[347] Krom phra Poramanuchitchinorot 1984: 8-9.
[348] *Suphasit sòn satri* 1977: 520-528.
[349] Prakhòng 1974: 153.
[350] Vatsyayana's Kamasutra 1982: 45-46.

good woman was a tool to convey a model of a virtuous person to family members, especially to the daughter. The good woman was the woman who took responsibility for her family, in particular the internal family organization, in which she played a central role. In this way, society could pass these concepts and traditions on from one generation to the next.

In China, the conceptual and spiritual basis came through two main routes: Taoism and Confucianism. These models were the chief philosophies governing the way of life of the Chinese people. The founder of Taoism is believed by many religious historians to have been Lao-Tse (604-531 B.C.), who lived roughly at the same time as Confucius (551-479 B.C.).[351] The main concept of this doctrine involved living in harmony with Nature, and the way to human happiness lay through intuition. Tao was the highest goal. It taught one to understand that in Nature everything is always changing, and that the changes fluctuate between two opposite extremes known as *yin* and *yang*. Woman occupied an important place here because the relationship between man and woman could be seen as forming two extremes of a moving whole.[352]

The Tao universe connected the unity and infinity between man and woman, thus they could be simultaneously different and harmonized, and, in effect man and woman were two aspects of the same thing. The man belonged to the strong force of Nature, while the woman belonged to the gentle force. An important idea in Tao philosophy was that life was sustained by the gentle force rather than by the strong one, thus softness would counter harshness, and weakness and strength could enhance each other.[353] As expressed in the *Tao Te Ching* (chapter 61): "A great state is the world's low stream (to which all the rivers flow down), the world's field and the world's female. The female always conquers the male by quietude, which one employs as a means to lower oneself."[354]

The gentle force of Taoist philosophy influenced Chinese women to adopt a posture of composure and humbleness in their social roles and obligations, believing that in this way they might prevail over men; as the *Tao Te Ching* says: "Calmness is the controlling power of hastiness."[355] When considering the duties of husbands and wives in the light of *yin-yang*, it could be said that the husband embodied *yang*, the harsh force equal to the power of heaven. Heaven had the function of protecting and ruling over all things beneath it. The wife, on the other hand, was *yin*, the receiving force equal to the earth, which was the basis of heaven. It had the function of giving

[351] See Ch'en Ku-Ying 1977, Kaltenmark 1969 and Lao Tzu (Ch'uta-Kuo (transl.) 1976.
[352] Ch'en Ku-Ying 1977: 201.
[353] Lao Tzu (Ch'uta-Kuo (transl.) 1976: 108.
[354] Ibid: 88.
[355] Ibid: 46.

birth to all things beneath heaven. Following this thought through, it was the husband's duty to protect and take care of his wife and family, as he enjoyed the higher status, and the wife's duties consisted in showing her husband devotion and obedience. In this sense, the social role was equivalent to an inescapable law of nature, the violation of which was regarded as an offence.

The Confucian outlook was that all natural things, including human beings, were related to one another, and underlying this relationship were certain natural laws that controlled their behaviour. The Confucian philosophy laid emphasis on a responsibility to forming good relationships in society. Relationships are central to Confucianism. As we have already seen in the context of Buddhism, obligations are a result of a person's situation with regard to others, and each person forges relationships with different people: as a junior in relation to superiors and vice versa. While juniors are considered in Confucianism to owe their seniors reverence, seniors also have duties of benevolence and concern toward juniors. This theme of mutuality is prevalent in East Asian cultures even today.

However, in this study I give precedence to the relationship between the husband and wife because, apart from it being the topic objective, it was also the source of social relationships as related to five interpersonal patterns that began with this relationship. Although ancient Chinese laws such as the Tang Code[356] dealt with the equality of husband and wife,[357] in practical terms the man was more highly respected than his wife by reason of the fact that the man was heaven's representative. Thus, the woman had to obey the man; she could not make any decisions by herself. She was furthermore governed by three principles of obedience, that is, she had to: 1) obey her father and elder brother when she was young; 2) obey her husband when she was married; and 3) obey her son when her husband had died, and not remarry.[358] In addition, all household duties were relegated to the wife, from cooking, to serving the husband and parents-in-law, to taking care of the children.

When we look at the Confucian dialectics on women collected by Graham Brash[359] we see that the ideal wife was expected to tend to the needs of her husband and

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[356] The Tang Code was a penal code that was established and used during the Tang Dynasty in China. Supplemented by civil statutes and regulations, it became the basis for later dynastic codes not only in China but elsewhere in East Asia. The Code synthesized Legalist and Confucian interpretations of law. It is composed of twelve sections that contain a total of more than 500 articles. It was created in 624, modified in 627 and 637, and enhanced with a commentary in 653. Considered as one of the greatest achievements of traditional Chinese law, the Tang Code is also the earliest Chinese Code to have been transmitted to the present in its complete form.

[357] Article 177-178, Johnson 1997: 154-155.

[358] Legge 1960: 103-104.

[359] Brush 1987: 168-170.

family by preparing and providing their food and wine, and keeping the domestic materials, utensils and tools in order, from dusters and handkerchiefs, to knives and whetstones, to the needle box with its thread and silk. As for her behaviour, she should be diligent, clean in her habits, neatly dressed, and softly spoken. She should not make any decisions herself: all activities were decided by the husband. In addition, her position as daughter-in-law was similar to that of a child in relation to its parents, because, according to Confucian philosophy, the wife was expected to serve her husband's parents as if they were her own. Thus, the "child" in Confucianism was not only one of the offspring, but also the daughter-in-law living with family. Therefore the children's and daughter-in-law's duties were identical, namely, showing gratitude to the parents through respect and obedience, serving them in various ways, and sacrificing to the ancestral spirits in accordance with tradition. Her duties were to be carried out willingly and without any arguments. These duties were, however, limited to the house.

Furthermore, the Confucian moral principles of gratitude, faithfulness, submissiveness and compassion[360] underlined the essential virtues found in ancient Chinese works of literature, in which such qualities also played a part. Faithfulness and obedience, for example, featured in the likes of "The tale of the cowboy and the weaver girl", which told of a beautiful weaving woman (she was an angel) who was also a faithful wife and mother;[361] or in "The tale of seeking the husband at the vast wall", in which a woman went to look for her husband, who had to build a giant wall, in order to give him a coat. The image was of a wife who was not only physically beautiful, but also loyal to her husband. When she found out that he had died, she committed suicide by jumping into the river, and rejoined him in heaven.[362] A wife's loyalty was a quality common to much Chinese literature.

Another ancient Chinese literary form, that of Tang poetry,[363] portrays a good woman as not only beautiful in appearance, but also as being fashionably dressed and practised in the art of cooking.[364] She should be faithful to her husband and wait in patience for him[365] if he went off to war[366] or to seek knowledge,[367] or went to trade in a faraway place for a long time.[368] Serving a husband meant providing him with all

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[360] Üancit 1981: 264.
[361] Wanthip (transl.) 1985: 17-37.
[362] Ibid: 55-71.
[363] The Tang period was a golden age of Chinese literature and art. There are over 48,900 poems penned by some 2,200 Tang authors that have survived into modern times.
[364] "A Song of Fair Ladies", *300 Tang Poems: A New Translation* 1987: 144-145.
[365] "A Faithful Wife Longing for Her Husband in Spring" Ibid: 128.
[366] "Alone", Ibid.: 6.
[367] "Sorrow of a Young Bride in Her Boudoir", Ibid: 48.
[368] "Ballad of a Merchant's Wife", Ibid: 96-98.

necessary food and clothing, and managing all the housework.[369] At the same time, the duties of the daughter-in-law were also represented in many works. In one poem, a mother is worried about her daughter, who is getting married, and instructs her to be modest, thrifty, gentle and deferential, to be careful in her speech and to be conscious of her appearance, while avoiding disreputable company in order to be a good daughter-in-law when she moves in with her husband's family.[370] Another poem expounds on the responsibilities involved in taking care of one's mother-in-law, including preparing her food.[371]

Chinese proverbs also reflect the Confucian and Tao concepts of the roles and duties of men and women in various forms: the father played an important decision-making role within the family, the daughter was respectful and obeyed her parents, and the decisions concerning her marriage were made by her parents.[372] A good society was founded on training in the family, so the most important thing for a parent was to be upright and provide a good model for the children so that they would not become lazy in their habits.[373] The wife should respect and serve the husband, and make him happy with her sweet speech or her tailoring skills.[374] The husband and wife also had lifelong responsibilities towards each other: a good wife should admire and honour her husband, while the good husband should take care of and protect his wife.[375] The daughter-in-law's most important and unavoidable duty was to tend to and serve her parents-in-law and relatives. Some Chinese proverbs portray this duty as not only serving the husband's family but also remaining composed in all situations so as to maintain the family relationships.[376]

The influence of Chinese thought, especially Confucianism, in Southeast Asia found particular prominence in Vietnamese society, which developed a similar social system to the Chinese. In particular, they took into consideration the above-mentioned five kinds of family relationships, the seniority system, and the relationship between husband and wife in which the husband made the decisions and was the head of the family. Here again, the wife's duty was to serve, obey and respect her husband and his family. The Vietnamese family structure gave priority to the male lineage; in particular, a married woman was regarded as a family member and had to perform as a good

[369] "To My Deceased Wife", Ibid: 306-307.
[370] "To My Daughter, on Her Marriage into the Yang Family", Ibid: 239-240.
[371] "A Bride", Ibid: 261.
[372] "Uncle Huong's Daughter gets Married" and "Wedding of a Teenage Girl to an Old Man", Kò Kunnathi (transl.) 1990: 115, 137.
[373] "Killing the Pig to Teach the Son", Ibid: 184.
[374] "Zhouzhi Assesses Beauty" and "Grandfather Zhue's Wife Tailored the Trousers", Ibid: 233, 243.
[375] "Deceived Himself, Deceived the Wife", Ibid: 329-330.
[376] "The Waitress Smashed the Jar", Ibid: 373-374.

daughter-in-law.[377] This can be seen from the Vietnamese conventions concerning names, which were influenced by the Chinese idea that the family name could only come from the father's side, in other words, only the father's family name would be used by the child.

Furthermore, in Vietnam there are only around 100 family names, which is not regarded as very many. This took its influence from the Chinese custom of including people who possessed identical family names in the same group.[378] The importance of the family name in the Chinese perception lay not only in the ancestral process itself, but also in the fact that the family inheritance could only be passed down through the male line. On marrying, a woman had to change her name, adopting either her husband's family name or a number denominating his position in the family in relation to the other children. For instance, if her husband was the fifth son of the family, the wife would be called "fifth elder sister"; or if he was the fifth uncle, the wife would be called "fifth aunt". She might also take a name denoting both her husband's position and his name, such as "elder sister (teacher's wife) A" or "aunt (doctor's wife) B."[379]

Vietnamese poetry also reflected the concept of gender and wife-and-husband relationships, such as in *Luc van tien,*[380] which was extremely popular in Vietnam during the nineteenth century. This poem says that a good man is loyal to his wife and appreciative of her, while a woman's task is, of her own choosing, to safeguard morals and be faithful to her husband. She is also to remain chaste, a concept which is followed through in the personalities of major actors in the entire story.[381] The northern Vietnamese popular poem *Thuyw kieu,*[382] written by Nguyen Du, proclaimed the properties of the ideal woman to be physical beauty, such as a glowing face, curved eyebrows, an elegant smile, a well-proportioned figure, snow-white skin and a sweet voice, but she should also have a good mind, preserve her chastity and have a talent for drawing, singing and writing poetry. In addition, a daughter should show her gratitude to her parents, and respect and obey them, while serving them in order to make them

[377] Gammeltoft 2002: 123.
[378] Sophana 2000: 98.
[379] Hucker 1975: 105.
[380] *Luc van tien* is a nineteenth century Vietnamese epic poem. Written by Nguyen Dình Chieu (1822 - 1888), it is perhaps one of the two most recognizable and influential epic poems in Vietnamese history. The poem praises the power of true love and applauds bravery and fair justice. This poem was very popular among southern Vietnamese people. It was adapted into lullabies, songs and verse. The popularity of "Luc van tien" also helped concepts of the qualities of the ideal woman to spread extensively in Vietnamese society.
[381] From an article on Vietnamese-Tai & Thai-Chan Studies by Thawi Swangpanyangkoon. www.thawi-swang.com
[382] It is assumed that it was written during the lately eighteenth century.

happy. Importantly, the father, as the head of family, made any decisions concerning her marriage.

Traditionally, marriage in Vietnamese society was similar to the Chinese practice, and relied on a matchmaker to manage and prepare the wedding ceremony. The duties of the Vietnamese wife were essentially the same as in the other cultures of Southeast Asia. There was an emphasis on loyalty and obedience, as she was bound to rely on her husband for the rest of her life.[383]

Although Vietnam was more greatly influenced by Chinese civilization than other countries in Southeast Asia, the Vietnamese woman was more accepted in term of her roles and status than in China. For example, a case of historical note was that of two sisters of the Trung family (Trung Trac and Trung Nhi) who were praised for their brave actions in resisting the Chinese during the first century; as was the political role played by elite Vietnamese women such as the empress Ly Chieu Hoang during the late Ly Dynasty (1010-1225).[384]

Although Southeast Asia was located nearer to China than to India, it has been observed that the influence of Chinese civilization on this region (with the exception of Vietnam) was less than that from India. One possible reason for this was that the geographical closeness of China and India resulted in their spheres of influence expanding in different ways. For example, the Chinese generally came into Southeast Asia with force, either in an invasion or by sending a governor to take over (in the case of Vietnam), so all the kingdoms there were mistrustful of any Chinese relationship. Moreover, the Southeast Asian states were regarded as tributary states of China, and were required to pay tributes to it. On the other hand, the relationship with China was to a large extent affected by trade, because the Southeast Asian countries needed goods from China both for domestic use and for trade with merchants abroad.

Furthermore, the influence of Chinese civilization spread into Southeast Asia in various concentrations in different places. The influence on Vietnam was the most potent, in particular in the Tang Dynasty, which had the policy of encouraging Chinese people to emigrate to Vietnam, a move regarded as Chinese domination. This resulted in an influx of the Chinese arts, various styles of Buddhism, and of the Chinese scripts into this area. This cultural trend has continued up to the present day. Because the Indian relationship had more of a character of compromise, this may have led to the other Southeast Asian states having more opportunities to absorb Indian culture through the spread of trade and religion. The Indian civilization reached into many ancient

[383] From an article on Vietnamese-Tai & Thai-Chan Studies by Thawi Swangpanyangkoon. www.thawi-swang.com
[384] See Ananthana 2005: 94.

kingdoms, especially on the mainland of Southeast Asia. This can be seen in the adoption of Buddhism and Indian literature and law, and various other cultural phenomena in Lan Na, Lan Sang, Siam, Burma and Cambodia.[385]

In conclusion, most of the kingdoms in mainland Southeast Asia owe their identity largely to Hindu and Buddhist cultural influences from India. Hinduism and Buddhism found acceptance because of the cultural preferences of Southeast Asian societies' rulers. Meanwhile, Chinese influences grew with the gradual migration of Chinese traders and merchants who introduced Confucianism into the Southeast Asian culture. Chinese influence dominated mostly in Vietnam because the Chinese ruled that country for a long time. The influence of Indian culture is visible in the script, grammar, religious observances, festivities, architecture and artistic idioms in Myanmar, Thailand, Laos and Cambodia to the present day.

Traditional Vietnam (i.e. in customary law and customary family values) was dominated by Chinese culture, together with Confucian moral rules and Buddhism (Mahāyāna). Female roles were defined by women's desirable and undesirable qualities. Moreover, the relationships between men and women were influenced by Indian and Chinese culture, as in an instructional manual on feminine behaviour, the Dharmaśāstra, and Confucianism and Chinese traditional values.

The ancient Southeast Asian kingdoms were privileged societies because they were able to blend the influences of civilization from abroad, in particular Chinese and Indian culture, with their own cultures and beliefs. This created a new synthesis. Despite the fact that Southeast Asian rulers imported the Indian and Chinese legal codes, the equal roles and rights of women in the family continued to be respected in these societies. This was due to the important economic role of women in agriculture, commerce and other occupations. For example, in the Lan Na kingdom, there was a code for women who may be taken as a wife and a code for women with guardians, which were influenced not by the Indian Dharmaśāstra but by the Buddhist *vinaya*. It is assumed that the Buddhist influence manifested itself in legal texts because monks were the scholars in society at that time and acted as official scribes commissioned by the royal household to document important events and decrees.

In addition, Vietnamese women still had property rights, something Chinese women did not have. The maternal authority was prominent in domestic relations, owing to the husband joining the wife's family, rather than the wife moving to the husband's village or tribe, such that she was supported by her extended family, and

[385] Wolters 1999.

husbands tended to be more socially isolated. When a wife became a widow, she would continue administering the family estate even after remarriage.

This is an interesting point, hence, this examination of women's roles in the Southeast Asian states that were influenced by those great civilizations is an attempt by the researcher to understand women in the light of the unique social context in which these oriental concepts had such an effect on their functions and duties, and on their relationships to their families.

Chapter 5
A Comparative Study of Women's General and Privileged Social Roles in the Kingdoms of Lan Na and Lan Sang

For us to gain an understanding of the roles women played in the Lan Na and Lan Sang societies, it is essential that we investigate the social attitudes to, and the expectations placed in, those roles. This includes the expectations pertaining to a woman's functions within the family, especially those of mother, wife and daughter, and to her roles and responsibilities outside the home, in society, the economy and politics. We have found that certain social attitudes and expectations allow the fulfilment of privileged roles beyond what society had expected. Nevertheless, the intention in this chapter is to continue from chapter 4, which looked at the influence of concepts from external civilizations. The roles and responsibilities of Lan Na and Lan Sang women will now be elaborated within that context.

The definition of "roles" and "privileged roles" in relation to the women of Lan Na and Lan Sang

In the *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*, "function" (n.) is given as "a special activity or purpose of a person or thing".[1] The word "role" (n.) is defined as the "function or importance of somebody or something".[2] *Webster's Dictionary* gives the definition of "function" (n.) as "the action for which a person or thing is specially fitted or used, or for which a thing exists".[3] And the word "role" (n.) is defined as "a socially expected behaviour pattern, usu. determined by an individual's status in a particular society".[4] The *Royal Academy of Thailand Dictionary* (1999) states that a "role" (n.) constitutes "carrying out a fixed activity".[5] The word "duty" (n.) is here defined as "an activity which has to be carried out according to certain responsibilities".[6] The *Lan Na-Thai Dictionary, Mae Fa Luang Edition*, defines the word "role" (n.) as "a matter, or some affair" and gives the meaning of the word "duty" as "an activity which one is obliged to carry out".[7] The *Lao Language Dictionary* (Watcananukom Phasa Lao), 1992 Edition, has words with similar meaning: "*bot"* (ບົດ) (n.), which means "ways of

[1] *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* 1994: 501.
[2] Ibid: 1096.
[3] *Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary* 1988: 498.
[4] Ibid: 1021.
[5] *Thai Dictionary, the Royal Institute Version* 2542 2003: 602.
[6] Ibid: 1247.
[7] Ibid: 778.

behaving according to *kammabot* (ກຳມະບົດ) (that is, types of action)".[8] "Duty" (n.) is "a thing which should or must be done".[9]

In general social use, the words "role" and "duty" are associated with women's functions within the family, particularly those of mother, wife, and daughter, which are regarded as natural female roles. The young woman's role is that of the daughter; when she marries, her role becomes that of the wife; and when she herself has a child she takes on the role of the mother. In other words, a woman naturally and inevitably takes on these responsibilities at successive periods in her life. It is nevertheless the case that the political, economic and socio-cultural contexts of Lan Na and Lan Sang drove the development of the attitudes to and the expectations placed on women in those societies. It is interesting to see how, when these natural functions were relevant to the social contexts, the patterns of expectation, both idealistic and practical, arose as an automatic consequence of those functions. Therefore, this study of Lan Na and Lan Sang women is in the first instance the study of their roles within the family.

A definition of "privileged roles" might be derived from *The Concise Oxford English Dictionary* as follows: "privilege" (n. & v.) is 1. "a right, advantage or immunity, belonging to a person, class, or office", 2. "a special benefit or honour".[10] *Botbat* (ບົດບາດ) (n.) means "role, part, or action".[11] This study will restrict its definition of "privileged roles" to the framework of the roles played by women in the relevant social contexts. From documentary sources we find that the women in Lan Na and Lan Sang enjoyed "privileged roles" which were symptomatic of the authority they held, whether political, in the role of sovereign, or legal, as judges, or medical, as midwives, and through which they acquired other property and land benefits after divorce. It is interesting to study the strategies adopted in, and the social ideas behind, women's creation of a power space for these roles.

One approach of women's studies is based on a classification of women's and men's social responsibilities. Here, the social space is divided into two components. The first, public component, which pertains to 'external' i.e. economic, social, and political affairs, is that of the male world. The other, 'private' component is that of domestic affairs, looking after the house and family, and is the female space. This minimizing of the role of women to trivial matters in the home degrades their power and limits their

[8] *Kasuang süksathikan* 1992: 480.
[9] *Kasuang süksathikan* 1992: 716.
[10] *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Current English* 1990: 950.
[11] *Lao-English Dictionary* 1992: 744.

roles to within the family, while men work outside the home and participate in public life, creating an "ideology of domesticity".[12]

Nevertheless, this dissertation does not agree with all the ideas expressed in women's studies because female roles in the family were developed from the naturally created gender-related functions of mother, wife and daughter already mentioned. The relationships created from this natural gender basis led women to become the producers and regulators of the four fundamental elements (food, clothing, shelter and medicine). Therefore, although this study employs the idea of dividing the social space into domestic and external spaces for the sake of a clearer picture, its major principle is to analyse the natural roles of women in relation to the family, which transcend the purely economic factors. Moreover, the intention of examining their "privileged" roles at this point is to investigate the further social functions they were engaged in beyond those associated with the family, and how they performed them. For this I use the words 'external roles'; however, this term refers rather to the relationship between Lan Na and Lan Sang women and other members of society.

Social processes and characteristics of the roles and responsibilities of women from Lan Na from the thirteenth to the nineteenth century

The study here is divided into two parts. The first part concerns itself with the social strategies adopted by Lan Na women that influenced society's ideas, attitudes and expectations towards their roles and duties regarding the family. The second part looks at how Lan Na women utilized social strategies between the thirteenth and nineteenth centuries to create "privileged roles" for themselves outside the family context.

Social strategies for creating female roles in Lan Na

To explain the origins of social attitudes to Lan Na women in the past we need to understand the relationships in society, and people's lifestyles and ways of thinking, since these have influenced their attitudes to women. We also need to explore the conditions that influenced the creation of expectations towards women and their responsibilities at a particular moment. Besides this, we find that political, economic and socio-cultural contexts incessantly affected the creation and the determination of these functions and women's status.

[12] Liberal Feminism is the first institution and is regarded as the major approach. The ultimate desire of this type of feminism is the equality of gender, and female liberation from the oppression that limits women's engagement in the public space. The solution is to be found in an adjustment of the biased legal system and the eradication of discrimination. See Friedan 1963, Mill 1970, Tong 1989, Wollstonecraft 1992 and Eisenstein 1993.

In chapter 3, I discussed the patterns of state establishment and the structure of government administration in the kingdom of Lan Na from the period of independence under the Mangrai Dynasty (from the thirteenth century), over the period of Burmese rule in the sixteenth century, to the Siamese period from in eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Chapter 5 constitutes an additional consideration of the economic and socio-cultural contexts of Lan Na, aimed at gaining an understanding of the attitudes and expectations relating to the roles and duties of both sophisticated and common women. It seems evident that people associated those roles and duties with the production of food and goods, and with social relationships in both the family and the community.

This study has revealed that the economic and social characteristics of Lan Na changed little from the time of the Mangrai Dynasty to the early Rattanakosin period in terms of production and social lifestyles. Change did occur after the intensive political association with Siam following the administrative reform, in which, from 1884 to 1899,[13] that country's administration was changed, and which affected Lan Na in many areas, bringing it new systems of administration, tax and education, and resulting, in effect, in a reformation in Lan Na. However, in the period between the early administrative reform and the arrival of the northern route train,[14] Lan Na people, especially commoners, still followed lifestyles and production patterns similar to those in the period before the reformation, that is, of an agricultural society with a subsistence economy. Farming was for rice and other plants in the areas around the city. The rice fields in the city belonged to the King. Outside the city, citizens had the right to utilize the areas called "civil rice fields" (นาเมือง – *na müang*). Here, all the rice fields belonged to the city ruler who granted rights for citizens to utilize those fields, but also had the power to confiscate them.[15] The production pattern relied on nature according to rice field traits, and was regulated by ancient laws. The fields were divided into two types. The first were called the "rain fields" because they depended on the rain. The others, which relied on the irrigation system, were "irrigation fields".[16] The production process

[13] Sarassawadee tells us that Siam's reform of the administration in Lan Na was a gradual process. Eventually, it succeeded in changing Lan Na's social and economic status. For further study of the Siamese government's ideas and methods of administrative reform in Lan Na, see Sarassawadee 1980: 1-312, and also Sarassawadee 2005: 183-213.

[14] Chatthip Natsupha proposes that the administrative reform of Siam in Lan Na in 1899 caused only minor economic and social changes in the villages of Upper Thailand when compared with the construction of the railway to Chiang Mai in 1921, because the railway led to changes in the value of consumer goods, commercial patterns, product styles, and to the extent of trade and the quantities of goods traded between Bangkok and several cities in Northern Thailand. Significantly, the changes did reach the villages, which have become more and more intensively capitalist and consumer-orientated. See Chatthip 2007.

[15] Brailey 1968: 25.

[16] In the ancient Mangraisat the tax rate for rice fields was different for the two types of field. For the rain rice fields, if the forest was cleared to make way for the fields, half the amount of tax had to be paid. But

was simple: men and animals were employed for the labour, and they used basic tools such as hoes, spades, *phra* (พร้า - a "big knife" used as a household and farm tool), ploughs, etc.[17]

Living according to these production methods led people in this society to develop family and community relationships; members of the community had to assist one another with the work and the social structure was one of supportive relationships and kinship. This can be clearly seen in the tradition of *ao mü ao wan* (เอามื้อเอาวัน),[18] or in the provision of water for farming through irrigation,[19] which was of quite significant importance to the economy, society and politics. Irrigation was the essential element for increasing rice production to supply the kingdom in peacetime and in times of war. It was also employed as a tool for controlling people in the hierarchical system,[20] as we can see in the enactment and enforcement of the law. For instance, citizens took part in the construction, maintenance and reparation of the irrigation works, and the law punished anyone who damaged them,[21] while requiring noblemen to support and maintain them.[22]

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after four years of farming on those fields, the full tax was to be paid. Also, the right to farm on the fields lasted for ten years. For the irrigation rice fields, the law stated that in the first two-five years half or no tax was to be paid. After that, the full tax was to be paid annually. See Prasert (Mangraisat, Notton Version) 1981: 51 and Prasert (Mangraisat, Wat Sao Hai Version) 1970: 103.

[17] In the many copies of the ancient law we find mention of the punishments for stealing farming tools. For instance, in , it is stated that if anyone steals a hoe, a spade, a yoke or a large knife and then returns it, he will be fined two *bat* in pieces of silver. If he cannot return the item, he will pay the exact price of the thing or replace it (The Khosarat Law 1987: 125). Similarly, in the Wat Kasa, it says that stealing a cart, a yoke and a bell (for binding round an animal's neck) will incur a fine of 9,900. (Each object was valued at 1,100 cowries, so he would be fined nine times altogether. For stealing a bamboo fish trap, a fine of 3,300 cowries, and for stealing a fishing net, a fine of 11,000 cowries (The law of Wat Kasa 1983: 36).

[18] In the *ao mü ao wan* tradition, labour in Lan Na was bartered by the day and by the meal. In this way people helped one another in farming, harvesting, constructing irrigation works, and in the irrigation itself. So there was the *ao mü ao wan* for harvesting rice and the *ao mü ao wan* for digging channels for irrigation.

[19] The words *müang* (เหมือง) and *fai* (ฝาย) are used for the system of reserving and discharging water. This system was created to allocate water in domestic agriculture because of Lan Na's flat valleys. The route of the river which flowed from the upland to the flatland was blocked and a *fai* was built to hold the water back. The water that overflowed over the *fai* was thus forced to flow along dug-out routes called *müang* and led to the rice fields for farming. The words *müang* and *fai* (the irrigation system) are widely found in Lan Na documents such as chronicles, historical records and several legal documents in the periods before and after the Mangrai Dynasty.

[20] Songsaeng 1986: 46.

[21] For instance, in the Mangraisat it is stated that if water is stolen and the owner of the rice fields apprehends the thief, he has the right to kill him. Alternatively, if arrested, the thief may be fined 1,100,000 cowries (Prasert, Mangraisat, Wat Sao Hai Version 1970: 107). Anyone who damages a dam, for instance by pushing a raft into it, will either have to repair the dam or be fined. If the irrigation works is very big, the fine will be 110 pieces of silver. If it is small, the fine will be fifty-two pieces of silver. See Prasert (Mangraisat, Notton Version)1981: 47.

[22] The Law of the Nan King gives the positions of officials who are responsible for the irrigation of rice fields. The positions are *hua sip*, *nai fai*, and *luk sip* (ลูกสิบ). They look after and repair *müang* and *fai* (Singkha, The Law of the King Nan 1980a: 14-15). In *Khlong phitcarana taeng thòi chon kham*, it is

This production method and the accompanying lifestyle did little to change the similarity of the daily activities of noblemen and commoners, as these were determined by the subsistence economy. So consumer products were generally made in the home. For instance, clothes were woven by upper class women in Lan Na as well as by villagers.[23] The heavy social expectations placed on women in their roles as wives and mothers resulted in their status relating mainly to their place in the family.

In addition, the market was the important centre for the exchange of products in Lan Na. We see this in the fact that merchants from Chiang Saen,[24] Lan Sang,[25] *Man* (Burma), *Meng* (Mon), *Siam* (Thailand), *Hò* (China) and *Kulawa* (India)[26] all ran their businesses there. This may have led to women working and contributing to the family economy, especially through trading activities in the community which were a significant mechanism in that economic micro unit, driving the exchange of products between various communities. Obviously, people on the plains exchanged products with those in the mountains (whom they named *Lua*[27]*).*[28] The role of women in trade is evident in many works of Lan Na literature, which often present a remarkable image of the merchant. This is discussed in detail later in the section on the "privileged roles" of women in Lan Na.

Lan Na society was made up of a ruling class, comprising the king, the royal families and noblemen, and a ruled class, which consisted of commoners, servants and slaves. Ancient Lan Na law documents indicate a social organisation based on a system of controls, the responsibility for which lay with controllers recruited from noblemen. This hierarchical system was known as *nai sip* (นายสิบ) or "master of ten", or *hua sip* (หัวสิบ), i.e. "head of ten". Thus, ten commoners were in charge of a *nai sip*. Two *nai sip* were in charge of a *nai sao* (นายซาว - master of twenty). Five *nai sip* were responsible for a *nai ha sip* (นายห้าสิบ - master of fifty). Two *nai ha sip* were responsible for a *nai ròi* (นายร้อย). Ten *nai ròi* were in charge of a *khun phan* (ขุนพัน), or *cao phan* (เจ้าพัน). Ten *khun phan* were responsible for a *khun mün* (ขุนหมื่น). Ten *khun mün* were in charge of a *cao*

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stated that the positions in charge of the irrigation are *mün nam* (หมื่นน้ำ), *mün tang* (หมื่นต้าง) (*Khlong phitcarana taeng thòi chon kham* 1975: 6).

[23] Phannipha 1992: 55.

[24] *Khlong phitcarana taeng thòi chon kham* 1975: 6.

[25] The Khosarat Law 1987: 34.

[26] The Law of Lan Na, Wat Chai Phra Kiat Version 1975: 6.

[27] *Lua* or *Lawa* is one of the important ethnic groups that have been frequently mentioned in palm-leaf manuscripts and a few stone inscriptions within the boundaries of northern Thailand. In addition, there are other sources that either mention or give evidence of the *Lua* inhabiting this area. There are a number of important folk tales that show the close relationships between both the *Lua* and *Tai Yuan* tribes (Lan Na people) in ancient times. See Aroonrut 2000: 132.

[28] Phraya Pracha Kitkòracak 1972: 135.

saen (เจ้าแสน). A *cao saen* was under the control of the king, who had ultimate authority.[29] Grabowsky (2005) relates that the system of *nai sip*, or the "system of the master of ten", was applied in Chiang Mai and Lan Na from the period of King Mangrai's reign to the mid-nineteenth century. Furthermore, it was practised in other polities neighbouring Lan Na such as Sipsòng Panna (southwest China) and Chiang Khaeng (northwest Laos).[30]

The administration was operated in this way for its convenience and its effectiveness in governing citizens. However, although this system was not as strict as that in the Ayutthaya kingdom, we find that the general circumstances of citizens in both kingdoms were similar, since the condition of either soldiers or citizens was dependent on the circumstances prevailing in the kingdom. In addition, commoners made up most of the work force. Every male commoner was conscripted into government service. Each would be assigned to a particular job. A man would work for the Government for ten days and then on his own private work such as irrigation construction or farming for the next ten days.[31] He would do this until he was fifty, when his government service ended.[32] For this government service, each man was stationed in a department. Ten men might be stationed at a *nai sip*. The conscription of commoners in each department was under the control of *khun müang* (ขุนเมือง) and *phan na* (พันนา)[33] respectively. Those who were not stationed in any department were *kha* (ข้า), or servants. Presumably, the Lan Na word *kha*, "servant", has the same meaning as the word *khòi* (ข้อย) in Lan Sang.[34] These people were regarded as the property of the ruling class[35] and therefore had a value. As a

[29] Prasert (Mangraisat, Wat Sao Hai Version) 1970: 2; Sommai (The King Mangrai Sermon) 1976b: 6 and Sithon (Mangraisat, Wat Chai Sathan Version) 1986: 4.
[30] Grabowsky 2005: 15-19. See also Liew-Herres et al. 2008: 66-69.
[31] Prasert (Mangraisat, Wat Sao Hai Version) 1970: 5. However, details of the duration of the male commoner conscription are found in the Mangraisat, Wat Sao Hai Version, but not in other ancient legal manuscripts.
[32] Mangraisat, Nai Sak Rattanachai Version, quoted from Yupin 1988: 93.
[33] Wyatt and Aroonrut 1998: 61.
[34] In Khosarat Law, this group of people is called *khòi* and is divided into five categories. The first is that of the female *khòi* who is born into a house where both her mother and her eldest sister or brother must be a *khòi*. The second is that in which a master frees a *khòi* with money. In the third category a *khòi* who is born to a commoner asks a nobleman to look after him. In the fourth is any commoner who is sentenced to a punishment and is freed on condition of becoming a *khòi* to a nobleman. In the last category is the commoner who gets a severe illness and is cured by a person who subsequently asks him to be his *khòi*. See The Khosarat Law 1987: 68.
[35] *Kha*, or 'servant', are divided into three categories. The first is the *kha* of the King (there are two types of this first category, namely, the *kha* who was born in the city and who has been forced from another city in warfare; and the *kha chaloei*, or the hostage). The second is the *kha khun nang*, or the servant of a nobleman. The last, the *kha wat*, is the servant to a monastery (this last category of *kha* devotes himself or herself, or is offered by his or her master, to serve Buddhism).

consequence, they were able to trade or liberate themselves.[36] Nevertheless, the Government did not want large numbers of commoners as *kha* since commoners constituted a human resource for the state in times of peace as well as war: "… a Thao Phraya could rule a city through its commoners, and they were not easily obtained, so commoners should not be forced to become *kha* …"[37]

Later (1558-1774),[38] Chiang Mai was ruled by Burma. The economy of Lan Na under Burmese domination was similar to that during the Mangrai Dynasty. The subsistence economy persisted and Lan Na continued to undertake trade by boat with the lower northern cities and by land with the upper northern cities. However, in war time the economy suffered. This situation encouraged people to avoid conscription and to desert. It also led to the forcible emigration of people as hostages, and because of Burma's need of provisions in its fight against Ayutthaya, Lan Sang and other polities, Lan Na citizens could not conduct commercial business to the same extent. It has been assumed that from the end of the seventeenth century, in the Nyaungyan Dynasty, the Burmese court joined with the administration of Lan Na to create a unique Burmese system, introducing its own tax collection scheme into Lan Na in an effort to intervene in the tax collection system, and issuing a royal order for Lan Na to increase its tributes of cotton, charcoal, animal skins, etc.[39]

This policy was aimed at exploiting Lan Na for its products so that the Burmese governing group could share the benefits. On the other hand, it was part of the commercial expansion that occurred between Burma and India in the seventeenth century.[40] This made the Burmese court need more money and products.[41] Through this policy the economy recovered to a certain level in the areas of trade and agriculture, and even though there were still some wars between Burma and certain cities, trade continued. For instance, King Sutthothammaracha,[42] the Burmese king in the early Nyaungyan Dynasty, attacked Chiang Mai and forcibly moved people to Burma through Müang Hòt. One hostage described the trade at Müang Hòt and how merchants from

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[36] In the Khosarat Law, it is stated that any commoner or any servant of a nobleman who raises a loan for 300 can pay the debt with one *khòi*. See The Khosarat Law 1987: 70. This indicates the status of *kha*, which was dependent on the master, who had a right to transfer, to change, or to make payment of the *kha*'s debt.

[37] Prasert (Mangraisat, Wai Sao Hai Version) 1970: 8.

[38] Nevertheless, the influence of Burma was felt in Lan Na for at least three decades up to 1804. Afterwards, Chiang Mai and Siam were able to take Chiang Rai back from Burma. Burmese influence gradually diminished and finally disappeared.

[39] Than 1985: 66.

[40] Laddawan 2002: 112.

[41] Than 1985: 49.

[42] This king may have been King Anaukpetlun (1605-1628), grandson of King Bayin-naung, who ruled Burma during the early seventeenth century, and who reunified the Burmese kingdom in what is known as the Nyaungyan Dynasty, or the Restored Toungoo Dynasty.

Ayutthaya, Lan Sang and Mottama ran their business there.[43] Other evidence comes from the *Khlong mangthra rop chiang mai* [The Epic of Mangthra's War against Chiang Mai]. General cargo ships from Ayutthaya frequently docked in Lan Na, bringing plenty of goods with them.[44]

The former social structure of Lan Na disappeared through this warfare and was reformed and reorganized by Burma with a new administrative configuration. In the end, the Lan Na Government was meddled with and taken over by Burmese royal family members and noblemen. Laddawan (2002) says that Burma's main mission in the Toungoo Dynasty was to invade Lan Na in order to replenish its army and attack Ayutthaya, which was giving support to the Mon people in their rebellion against the Burmese Government. Also, it has been found that the Lan Na people were the most important source of labour for Burma throughout the period of Burmese rule. The Burmese court may have relied on the "master of ten" system in Lan Na for its own earnings.[45] The policy of conscription into the Burmese army was similar to that adopted in the Nyaungyan Dynasty, when Lan Na labour was employed to catch wild elephants, which were a major means of transport for the king in both war and peacetime.[46]

Another example is found in the employment of the commercial skills of Lan Na merchants for the benefit of trade for the Burmese court.[47] Beliefs, customs and traditions did not change so much, since the Burmese people practised Buddhism and spirit cults, as did the people of Lan Na. The two peoples shared similar ideological dimensions of Buddhism and spirit cults such as the belief in the consequences of accumulating "merit" in the present and following lives. However, it seems that Burma replaced certain Lan Na customs with Burmese customs, such as the *khwak hu tü lan* (ขวากหูตือลาน), that is, how young people wore earrings, and the emphasis on the ordination of *luk kaeo* (ลูกแก้ว - novices).[48] Above all, the Toungoo Dynasty saw the introduction of the Burmese Lesser Era dating system (จุลศักราช - *cunlasakkarat*) in Chiang Mai[49] for inscribing and recording chronicles.

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[43] Yupin 1992: 73.
[44] Singkha 1979: 59.
[45] Laddawan 2002: 99-109.
[46] Than 1985: 88.
[47] Ibid: 105.
[48] *Kan buat luk kaeo* (การบวชลูกแก้ว), or "the ordination of the crystal child", i.e. the candidate for ordination, in northern Thailand in the process before the ordination. A person, the "crystal child", is dressed in silk trousers and sunglasses. He applies white powder heavily to his face, wears lipstick, blackens his eyebrows and rides on a horse through the village to the temple where the ceremony takes place. Afterwards, he exchanges his dress for a yellow monk's robe. See also Potter 1977: 96-98.
[49] *Phachum phongsawadan* (Collected Chronicles, vol. 61) 1973: 17.

Historical evidence shows that Lan Na attempted several times to resist Burmese rule, but each time Burma used armed force to violently suppress the rebellion, burning down cities in the wake of its victory[50] to prevent the formation of any force that might further rebel against it. With Burma's need to extend its power to Ayutthaya during the Konbaung Dynasty, Lan Na became a source of human resources and provisions. Burma forced Lan Na cities to provide them to Burma's armed forces.[51] This resulted in Lan Na, under the leadership of Phraya Kawila, accepting the patronage of Siam in a war to liberate itself from Burma. This was a complete success when, in 1804, Chiang Saen was seized. This cooperation with Siam to expel Burma led to the formation of a group of leaders who were dependent upon the power of Siam in creating stability and extended power in other cities. They established themselves as a new group of governors and named themselves the "Cao Cet Ton clan" (กลุ่มเจ้าเจ็ดตน).[52] They appointed the King of Siam to the overlordship. The governor of Lan Na had to present himself at Bangkok to be anointed by the King of Siam and agree to provide a tribute once every three years.[53]

Nevertheless, the social and economic conditions in Lan Na under Siamese domination in the early Rattanakosin period did undergo a slight general change. The agriculture- and trade-based subsistence economy continued as the major driving economic force, while, on the level of Lan Na's social structure in the early stages of the reform, a king who governed a city would retain his authority. The social classes also hardly altered when compared with those of the Mangrai Dynasty. Aroonrut (1977) assumes that there was a continuity in the Chiang Mai legal system before and during the Rattanakosin period, in the sense that it changed slightly through being reinforced.[54]

In contrast, to take a comparison with Siam, we find that Siam, early on in the Rattanakosin period, began to undergo economic and social changes as the Siamese ruling classes absorbed ideas and experiences through exposure to new knowledge from Western countries as a result of the expansion of trade. This led to a readiness for the centralization of the absolute monarchy in the reign of King Rama V, which we can see in the policy that was adopted to extend the Siamese government's authority to Lan Na and other cities in the vassal states. This terminated their status as cities and brought about the *monthon* administration. This chapter of the dissertation will limit the scope of the study to before Siam's administrative reform in Lan Na. It is implied, then, that the

[50] Harvey 1967: 251.
[51] The royal chronicles of Burma 2007: 289.
[52] The Chronicle of Ayutthaya, Luang Prasoet Version 1967: 429.
[53] Sarassawadee 1996: 299.
[54] Aroonrut 1977: 109.

economic and social circumstances of Lan Na in the nineteenth century changed very little from those in the Mangrai Dynasty.

a. Lan Na women's strategies for the creation of roles associated with functions and duties in the family.

1. Lan Na society's influence on the creation of roles for wives and mothers.

The lifestyles associated with the prevailing methods of production engendered social attitudes which, when applied to the portrayal of respectable or depraved women, were employed as a tool to fix the roles and the duties of the woman in the family. We see this in the expectations people had of the functions of women as wives and mothers, such as looking after the house, educating the children and producing goods and materials for the house through weaving, basket-making etc. The roles and responsibilities that arose from those social expectations resulted in particular images of respectability and depravity in social attitudes.

In chapter 4, which dealt with attitudes to women in Indian and Chinese societies, it was demonstrated that women's roles and duties were connected with the contentedness of the family. If we consider their roles as being based on gender relationships, then those attitudes become general in every society. Similarly, Lan Na society expected women to contribute to maintaining the happiness of their families. A wife should take care of, respect and obey her husband; she should see that all the housework was done, appropriately manage all other household affairs and respect her husband's relatives. As a mother, she was expected to cherish and educate her children and be a role model for all the members of her family.

Consequently, social values determined that women were usually educated to be humble, to speak mildly, to avoid gossip and violent outbursts, and to have polite manners. These desirable female characteristics became the model to be passed on through teaching, to help foster a mind-set of the respectable woman responsible for her family. Society demanded that the upright woman was conscientious in her duties toward the family, particularly in managing family relationships, which was regarded as her principal role. Interestingly, the roles and duties assigned to a wife and mother were inevitable for any woman, no matter what her position in society, because, as this study has found, the social expectations on women in those roles from class to class were hardly different. The role of mother and wife in any class was nurtured by the same concept of responsibility toward the family.

In Buddhism, the mother is praised as the creator (or Brahma) of a son or a daughter (พรหมของลูก) because she is the person who nurtures her children and educates them to be upright people. This has been the most important responsibility that women

have had to bear since early times. In ancient law we see the acceptance of the role of the mother in regulations covering the sharing out of inheritance. For instance, in a case of the division of inheritance between offspring born to one mother from two successive marriages, the law would always favour the offspring from the second or current marriage over those from the first or earlier marriage. The proportion of inheritance going to the offspring from the earlier marriage would depend on the condition of the current marriage, whether the mother owned the house, and the extent of her dependence in her current husband's house. If the mother owned the house, the offspring from both marriages would inherit equal amounts.[55] If she lived in her latest husband's house, the children from the current marriage would get more than half of the inheritance.[56]

However, as the person who nurtured both her male and female offspring, the mother had the right to leave her property to any children from any marriage. It was highly probable that a Lan Na mother played a very significant role in her family, according to the record of one American missionary who came to spread the gospel in Lan Na in the nineteenth century. McGilvary made the observation that a mother played an important decision-making role in the family, especially in passing on ideological concepts to her children through instruction, as the following states:

> A mission church is sure to be greatly handicapped whose young men must either remain single - which they will not do - or be compelled to take ignorant non-Christian wives. Such are a dead-weight to the husband, and the children almost surely follow the mother.[57]

My studies have shown that social attitudes towards women in roles associated with the family were augmented through the portrayal of virtuous and immoral women as heroines and anti-heroines in Lan Na literature. Through this medium such concepts were spread in society, particularly those concerning the woman's role as spouse. For instance, one Lan Na literary work, *Phrommacak* (พรหมจักร), which was influenced by the Indian epic Ramayana, carries the title "Ramayana, Lan Na Edition". Although some details in this work are different from the original Indian epic, it does relate that the Buddha was a person who was enlightened and taught his apostles about good and evil. The sequence of the story is also different. But one feature that *Phrommacak* shares with the Ramayana is the role of Sita, who is continually praised for her fidelity to Rama, her

[55]Prasert (Mangraisat, Wat Sao Hai Version) 1970: 26, Prasert (Mangraisat Notton Version) 1981: 13 and Sithon (Mangraisat, Wat Chai Sathan Version) 1986: 16.
[56] Prasert (Mangraisat, Wat Sao Hai Version) 1970: 27, Prasert (Mangraisat, Notton Version) 1981: 13, Sithon (Mangraisat, Wat Chai Sathan Version) 1986: 11 and Anan et al. (Thammasat Rat Kü Na) 1985: 31.
[57] McGilvary 1912: 178.

husband. It seems that there were many versions of this work in Lan Na, each of which may be different. However, the one common element is to be found in the qualities of the respectable wife, personified in Sita and her admiration, respect, servitude and fidelity to Rama.[58] If the purpose of composing this Lan Na edition of the Ramayana was for its instruction in moral conduct and its use in preaching or for reading at diverse occasions,[59] the characteristics of the virtuous wife, such as in Sita, become those of the ideal spouse, which stamp the social view as to what makes a respectable woman.

Another character who portrayed the idealised upright wife as seen in Lan Na society was that of Matsi in *Wetsandòn chadok* (Vessantara Jātaka), a Lan Na literary work which tells the story of a former incarnation of Buddha. The significance of Matsi is in her conduct towards her husband, Phra Wetsandòn, whom she respects and serves.[60] Crucially, *Wetsandòn chadok* is a Buddhist work which Lan Na people usually employed in the principal sermon, called the "Great-Birth Sermon", or the "sermon on the great birth of the Bodhisattva Vessantara". In Lan Na this was known as *Tang tham luang* (ตั้งธรรมหลวง).[61] Additionally, Lan Na people customarily chose this story for inscription on palm leaves or in manuscripts for dedication to monasteries. They believed that a significant accumulation of merit would result for those who produced the manuscripts.[62] Through the popularity of *Wetsandòn chadok*, the character of Matsi became by social consensus the image of the ideal wife, and was referred to in Lan Na didactic literature such as the poems *Khlong withun sòn lok* and *Phra lò sòn lok*. Both of these argue that a respectable spouse would take Matsi as an example for the respect she shows her husband, Phra Wetsandòn, and that they consider this a morally appropriate manner.[63] This might also be a practical model for the family; one Lan Na saying tells of how couples need to respect each other in order to bring about happiness and prosperity in the family and in their lives in general.[64]

Another observation is that, in the relationship between a woman and a man, especially husband and wife, the attribute of the wife that is always stressed, apart from the ultimate virtue of loyalty, fixed by the Buddha as an item in the Tipitaka, is that she should not be unfaithful.[65] This is because, as the "westerly direction"[66] which supports

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[58] Singkha 1979. See also Phichit 1984.
[59] Phichit 1984: 246.
[60] Udom 2002: 362-364.
[61] The sermon *Tang tham* (ตั้งธรรม) is generally conducted in the middle of the lunar twelfth, third and fourth months (November, February, and March). The Dharma or the Buddha's teachings which are used in the sermon may be in the groups of *Thotsachatchadok*, *Paññasachadok*, *Mahachatchadok*, or the Non-Canonical Jātaka. Frequently, the most popular one is the story Wetsandòn chadok (Vessantara Jātaka).
[62] Udom 2003: 199-200.
[63] *Khlong withun sòn lok* 1975: 24 and *Khlong phra lò sòn lok* 1959.
[64] Samòn 2004: 118.
[65] Sigalovada Suttanta The Sigala Homily 30 / 190.

and promotes the husband on his path to prosperity,[67] a married woman is expected to demonstrate upright qualities and conduct. In Buddhism, a wife's unfaithfulness to her husband is considered immoral and such a woman will be condemned to suffer in hell without being reborn.[68]

Moreover, Lan Na society laid stress on the respectable woman avoiding adultery and licentiousness because ancient family law punished the adulterous woman more severely than the man, just because of this moral dimension. The woman in this case would be harshly disciplined in this life, being fined, sold as a slave, or publicly shamed by having her head shaved, or an ear cut off, or being tattooed on the forehead.[69] Furthermore, it was believed that she could not be reborn in the next life as a man.[70]

This belief was also to be found in sayings and didactic works, such as the poems *Khlong withun sòn lok* and *Khlong phra lò sòn lok*. These portray the virtuous wife as gently spoken and serving her husband in a pleasant manner. The most important thing for a wife here is her respect for her husband. Her responsibilities are to look after the house, love and care for her husband like a mother who loves her children, and be patient and faithful to him, show compassion towards her servants and slaves, and be generous to her husband's relatives. One Lan Na saying is as follows: "you should not sleep in a higher position than your husband and should walk on tiptoe when you leave the bedroom".[71] Similarly, in the *Khlong withun sòn lok* we find this stanza:

บางญิงใจอ่อนน้อม	จาหวาน
บ่สวกสงสาคราน	อ่อนเอื้อ
นอนคืนคืดเทิงกาน	คองรุ่ง ก็มีเหย่
รักเผ่าพันธุ์ชั้นเชื้อ	สิ่งนี้ควรเอา
She is modest,	gently spoken
she is not hot-tempered,	but meek and mild
she attends to her chores	from dawn till dusk
she cares for family and relatives;	these are desirable [qualities in a woman][72]

[66] As mentioned in chapter 4.
[67] Sigalovada Suttanta The Sigala Homily 27 / 188.
[68] *Traibhūmikāthā* 1987: 62, 182. Adultery by either a man or a woman was regarded as extremely sinful in ancient Lan Na law. According to the *Traibhūmikāthā* (ไตรภูมิกถา), anyone who committed adultery would go to hell. A man, after his period in hell, would be reborn as a hungry ghost for 500 lives. After that, he would be reborn as a castrated pet for 500 lives. After this he would be reborn as a woman for 500 years, and finally he would be reborn as a hermaphrodite.
[69] See Aroonrut and Lamun 1985a: 31-35.
[70] Anan et al. (The Law of Wat Kasa) 1983: 21.
[71] Yut 1997: 40.
[72] *Khlong withun sòn lok* 1975: 24.

The undesirable wife is unfaithful, never fulfilled sexually, nor faithful to her husband; she steals her husband's property to lavish on a secret lover, schemes to harm him, and neglects her duties and responsibilities.[73] A stanza of a Lan Na proverb says that the man who loses at gambling, is fooled by other people, and whose wife commits adultery is in a terrible situation.[74] Also, a woman who habitually goes to bed late is thought to be fond of infidelity.[75] Her adultery may result from her husband ignoring her, as it is said that a wife often takes a lover because of her husband's lack of attention.[76] Alternatively, a woman may engage in adultery while her husband works on a farm a long way away or in a rice field on the mountain.[77] The *Khlong withun sòn lok* compares the depraved woman who is never sexually satisfied with a bonfire, as follows:

กองไฟอันใหญ่ได้ แสนเตา
บอิ่มด้วยหลัวเผา ชู่มื้อ
ประดุจดั่งญิง บอิ่ม ชายนั่น
แม้นมากมื้อติ้วตื้อ โลกเฮยฟังนิยาย

An enormous bonfire heat like a hundred thousand stoves
is never stilled by firewood on any day
like a woman who can never find sexual satisfaction in men
she has many sexual affairs people, take heed! [78]

I think that social attitudes towards women, particularly concerning their roles and duties as wives and mothers, are to a certain extent archetypal but vary slightly with time. This is a consequence of the central role the woman plays in the family, especially in managing family relationships. Also, society makes special demands on her because she is responsible for maintaining the family's existence. We see this when we compare this ideology of female qualities with that found in the period from the Mangrai Dynasty to the Cao Cet Ton. For example, in *khao* literature,[79] the ideology of the good woman rested on her owning a house, being faithful to her husband, and serving and respecting him. This remains the social ideal. It accords with the roles and responsibilities of the woman in the family.

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[73] *Khlong withun sòn lok* 1975: 24-28 and *Khlong phra lò sòn lok* 1959.
[74] As seen from "แม่ญิงหลับดึก ช่างหุมมีชู้". See Samòn 2004: 112.
[75] Kam Ba Kao Lao Wai (Khon müang proverbs) 1996: 201.
[76] From the words "เมียมีชู้เพราะผัวใจดี". See Yut 1997: 39.
[77] From the words "เยียะไร่ไกลตา เยียะนาปลายดอย เมียไปปอยเล่นชู้". See Yut 1997: 41.
[78] *Khlong withun sòn lok* 1975: 23.
[79] Singkha Wannasai (1980) says that the origin of *khrao* or *khao* literature might be traced back to the Thonburi period or the Rattanakosin. Prakhòng (1974) points out that there is no clear evidence to point to when this kind of literature emerged. However, most Lan Na literature written in the early Rattanakosin period was obviously *khao*.

Another work of *khao* literature, the Cao Suwat,[80] shows society's expectations when it came to methods of manufacture in the family. Nang Bua Kham's hermit father teaches her to recognize respectability in a woman by her weaving skills and her treatment of her husband. Treating her husband properly means looking after the house, serving her husband, cooking, being well-mannered and gently-spoken.[81] Several other pieces of literature from the period of the Rattanakosin, such as *Khao utthahòn* (ค่าวอุทธาหรณ์),[82] *Khao sò phaya prom* (ค่าวซอพญาพรหม)[83] and *Khao sò hong hin* (ค่าวซอหงส์หิน)[84] portray the revered wife as loyal and caring.

However, although generally the woman's role in the family was created by social attitudes with a similar basis to those in India, China and other Southeast Asian countries, the structure of the social relationships in Lan Na, which was distinguishable and different from Indian and Chinese societies, influenced the creation of the respectable woman's family obligations. In Lan Na, women's link in kinship structures was associated with the role they played in the family because of their relevance to the household. This can be explained by looking at the ancient social structure, in which the conscription system required all male commoners to serve the country and noblemen of each station in periods of war and of peace. Female conscripts were the exception and rarely found. Meanwhile, the men being on government duty left the women with the principal task of taking care of all the family business, including earning the family's living. The law stated that while a man was on government duty, his wife was obliged to provide for him: "the wife must provide packed food for her husband when he is on duty to his lord".[85]

On the other hand, besides being conscripted to serve the country, men had a commercial role, particularly in long-distance trade by land by means of the cow caravan.[86] This is described in the work *Ai ròi khòt* (อ้ายร้อยขอด), in which the protagonist

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[80] Prakhòng (1974) assumes that the oldest *khao sò* was composed by Phraya Lomawisai, a poet in the Lampang royal court, in the period from King Rama III to King Rama V of the Rattanakosin.
[81] *Khao sò Cao suwat* 1968.
[82] This is a form of didactic literature presumably written in the reign of King Kawilorot Suriyawong (1801-1870).
[83] *Khao sò Phaya phrom* 1985.
[84] *Khao sò Hong hin* 1968.
[85] Prasert (Mangraisat, Wat Sao Hai Version) 1970: 7-8.
[86] The research of Chusit Chuchat reports that trade by land in Lan Na from the period just before the Mangrai Dynasty to the mid-twentieth century was done by cow caravan. Goods were carried by cows to be distributed to places in the upper part of the kingdom. Lan Na is in the highlands, and trade was born out of the necessity of cities in the valleys for consumer goods that individual villages could not produce by themselves. Furthermore, it has been observed that the cow caravan was a part of the culture of Lan Na and Tai Yai people. The Hò (Chinese) people in Yunnan frequently used horses or mules to deliver goods. The goods traded by land with the upper cities of the kingdom were forest products, rice, and minerals. See Chusit 2002: 1-13.

travels with a caravan for his trade and is charged with looking after the cows.[87] The cow caravan allowed trade with cities in the upper areas, such as the city of Tai Yai. Several groups of Tai Yai merchants brought forest products and slaves to sell, according to the so-called *Klòng phitcarana khadi tat thòi chon kham* (คลองพิจารณาคดีตัดถ้อยชนคำ), or "Lan Na Law". It says, "... a merchant of Mün Phai Lam bought a *kha* from a Tai Yai merchant".[88] The translated document also cites the example of a Hò merchant from Yunnan. Even though the time is not given when the Chinese merchant was there, commercial dealings had certainly been carrying on for a long time because of the relationship between the kingdoms and the necessity for trade. The continuity of the commercial relationship between Lan Na and Yunnan was remarkable in that, in the nineteenth century, Hò merchants from Yunnan still brought steel and copper vessels to barter for cotton at Nan.[89] The journey made men leave their homes for long periods. Frequently, they left after the harvest and returned in time for the next sowing season.

From the above we can see that a woman's role as a wife lay not only in looking after the house, but she was also in charge of all the family affairs, including making all the decisions and providing food during the husband's absence. In other words, a married woman in Lan Na controlled the fundamental elements of food, shelter, clothing and medicine in her family life. She created the family's fundamental knowledge by providing these elements. Many nursery rhymes tell of the mother who has to do all the work indoors as well as outdoors on the farm, growing vegetables and fruit for the family to eat or to sell at the market, and looking for medicines when her children are ill.[90]

Also, as we have seen, property in Lan Na was passed on by inheritance through the women, especially through the youngest daughter in charge of caring for the aged parents. It was decreed by law that she would gain the largest proportion.[91] It was also stated in ancient law that this daughter would receive the parents' house as her inheritance.[92] At the same time, this law prohibited any right in the house being passed from the wife to the husband. To clarify, the law forbade the wife's parents granting possession of the house to the son-in-law, who merely lived there.[93] Furthermore, after the marriage, if the wife who owned the house died before her husband, he was obliged to leave and return to his previous home. Regarding the property that they shared, the

[87] Khao sò, *Ai ròi khòt* 1968.
[88] *Klòng phitcarana khadi tat thòi chon kham* 1975: 51.
[89] McCarthy 1994: 161.
[90] Phanphen 1997: 10-23.
[91] Prasert (Mangraisat, Notton Version) 1981: 12.
[92] Anan et al. (The Law of Wat Kasa) 1983: 12-13 and Anan et al. (Thammasat Rat Kü Na) 1985: 38-39.
[93] Anan et al. (Thammasat, Wat Pak Kòng Version) 1985: 63.

law allotted to the wife's parents the same proportion as in a divorce settlement.[94] Generally, the wife got two parts and the husband got one.

Missionaries who went to spread the gospel in Lan Na in the early Rattanakosin period made some interesting observations about family patterns there. For example, McGilvary notes that "after marriage, the almost universal custom of the country has been that the husband lives with the wife's family. He becomes identified with it, and for the time a subordinate member of it, almost to the extent of becoming weaned from his own family …"[95] Similarly, Dodd, who conducted evangelical work in the contemporary period, that is, around the nineteenth century, states that "… when she marries, she does not leave home for the sake of her husband. He has to sacrifice his home and come and cleave to her and her family, to serve her very much ..."[96] Generally, the husband moved into the wife's house and then worked or farmed the wife's land. He had to live with her family until another woman in the family got married. When a new son-in-law moved in, he and his wife were able to move out to a new place, which might be nearby.

It is interesting that the instruction of sons- and daughters-in-law who moved into the houses of their wives or husbands reminded them to take care of their parents-in-law as though they were their own parents. This was regarded as fitting according to tradition.[97] The idea of sons-in-law looking after their wives' parents is seldom seen in Indian or Chinese societies because there the wife would live in the husband's house. Lan Na society was more flexible, and this flexibility allowed the Lan Na husband to compromise with and adjust to his wife's family. Several folktales called *cia kòm* (เจี๊ยก้อม) illustrate this: they are joke tales that mock the conduct of and the relationship between the son-in-law and the parents-in-law.[98] Legal regulations and patterns of social structure in Lan Na led to the female role of "taking care of the house", which entailed not only running the household, serving the husband, fostering children and cooking, but also made her the *Mae cao hüan* (Thai: แม่เจ้าเรือน) (the female owner of the house),[99]

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[94] Prasert (Mangraisat, Wat Sao Hai Version) 1970: 14-15, Prasert (Mangraisat, Notton Version) 1981: 8-9 and Anan et al. (Thammasat Rat Kü Na) 1985: 27.
[95] McGilvary 1912: 178.
[96] Dodd 1996: 307.
[97] The teachings or instructions can be found in the document "The Six Traditions", which has been accepted and practised since ancient times. They are also employed to regulate legal judgments in the community. See Sommai 1978: 11.
[98] Lan Na society had a tradition of oral literature, including short folktales, legends, myths, proverbs, and riddles. *Cia kom* (เจี๊ยก้อม) was one of those Lan Na oral literatures and its meaning is the short stories (*cia* means "the stories" and *kom* means "short"). See Udom 1985.
[99] The words *mae cao hüan*, found in many Lan Na legal texts, such as Mangraisat, Wat Mün Ngoen Kòng Version, Mangraisat, Wat Sao Hai Version, Mangraisat, Wat Chai Sathan Version, Mangraisat, Wat Chiang Man Version, Mangraisat, Notton Version, Thammasat Rat Kü Na, etc. refer to the laws of

which brought with it the obligation of maintaining the inheritance and passing it on to the descendants.

A further important quality of the respectable woman was her chastity. Lan Na society focused on women's chastity because people's lifestyles there were connected with Buddhism, and religious teaching was exploited for running the kingdom and overseeing people's conduct on a moral basis. Also, the instruction (and warning) of women on such issues framed gender relationships, and was particularly evident in teaching, literature, proverbs and epigrams, which commonly compared the promiscuous woman, as well as the fickle woman, to a candle whose form is easily changed by heat,[100] or to cotton fabric that has no weight.[101] This framing of the gender relationships with reference to women's capriciousness, and the creation of literature to dictate the practice of chastity to women was, at the same time, a warning to men not to abuse women, and was designed to prevent them from committing adultery with other men's wives.

It seems to me that the concept of chastity in Lan Na was different from the idea of "purity" or "virginity" as expressed in Chinese and Indian societies, which regarded purity and virginity as superlative attributes of femininity, on which men laid ultimate importance. The perception of "chastity" in Lan Na society was not relevant to virginity or to the value of a woman's purity, but was thought of as a right that all women had, especially married women. Interestingly, this right was based on a woman's own right to decide. The right of a woman to preserve herself would be mainly relevant to one who had been married. It was forbidden for a man who was not a woman's husband to sexually harass her. Since this was not explicitly relevant to virginity, it enabled a married woman to remain chaste for the rest of her life.

During my research I have found that this idea is explicitly expressed in the literature and the ancient law of Lan Na. For instance, the non-canonical Jātaka *Utsa Barot chadok* (อุสสาบารสชาดก)[102] tells the story of Nang Utsa, who could not be touched by any man other than her husband, Phra Barot, because as soon as a man approached her he would feel as though she were surrounded by fire.[103] Alternatively, in a Lan Na

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inheritance. The words indicate a woman's state of ownership, which has an influence on the proportions of inheritance in her family. For instance, in the division of inheritance between the offspring from a previous marriage and that from the present marriage, the offspring from the previous marriage would always have the right to inherit from the mother who was the owner of the house. See Prasert (Mangraisat, Notton Version) 1981: 13, or Anan et al. (Thammasat Rat Kü Na) 1985: 30-31, etc.

[100] *Khlong withun sòn lok* 1975: 19-20.

[101] Prakhòng 1974: 153.

[102] The Informal Chadok Utsa Barot had been a popular work since the reign of Phraya Kü Na (about the fourteenth century) according to references in other documents such as the *Laksana kan tat thòi tò kham* and the *Khlong nirat hariphunchai*.

[103] *Utsa Barot: Lan Na-Thai literature in the reign of King Kü Na* 1976.

Jātaka, the *Suphròm mokkha ma khon kham* (สุพรหมโมกขะหมาขนคำ or *Suphròm mokkha*: a dog with a golden hair),[104] the King wanted to kill Suphròm Mokkha and take possession of his wife, but continually failed because the woman had a magical item which shielded her and her husband against evil.[105] In contrast, in *Kalae òk nò* (กาแลออกหน่อ) Nang Nocha provides the example of a women who decides to abandon the right to "preserve herself" by casting lots to find a new husband after her previous husband failed to treat her with respect. This results in a catastrophe for her family and her banishment from the house.[106]

In didactic literature, men are instructed not to commit adultery with other men's wives. A man should not stare at a married woman, should not sit too closely to a married woman, nor, to avoid any gossip or violation of the law, should he take another man's wife to accompany him on a long journey.[107] Many Lan Na proverbs warn against sexually pursuing other men's wives, for example: "thou shalt not take another man's wife by force", or "thou shalt not commit adultery with another man's wife" (อย่าเล่นชู้เมียท่าน) or "thou shalt not cast a love spell on another man's wife" (อย่าใส่มนต์เมียท่าน).[108] Chastity was the right of all married women of every social status,[109] and it was encased in law to protect them against male abusers. Additionally, this protection encompassed all kinds of violation, from the touching of a woman's hands or breasts to touching her clothes or the flowers in her hair,[110] and even to speaking to another man's wife to sexually arouse her.[111]

All such acts counted as harassment and were a violation of the law. If, for instance, the governor of the city slept with another man's wife he would be fined 3,300 pieces of silver.[112] Just drawing her hand towards his would cost him 700. For speaking in such a way as to sexually arouse her he would incur a fine of 400.[113] If a nobleman of high rank such as a *hua saen* (หัวแสน), *thao* (ท้าว), *phraya* (พระยา) or *cao hua mün* (เจ้าหัวหมื่น) committed adultery he would have to pay a fine of 2,000 pieces of silver. Pulling a

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[104] This Lan Na Jātaka might have been in oral form before appearing as a written form in inscriptions.
[105] Udom 2003: 263-276.
[106] Peltier 1999: 144.
[107] Such as *Khlong withun sòn lok, Khlong phra lò sòn lok, and Khlong cao withun sòn lan*.
[108] Samòn 2004: 193, 202-203.
[109] The Law of Kasa states that every female status is protected. Interestingly, the classification of women's status in Lan Na society is similar to that in the Thammasat in India. For the household of a Phraya, the fine was 5,000 pieces of silver. For the household of a Brahman, the fine was 300 pieces of silver. For the household of a merchant, the fine was 200 pieces of silver, and for the household of a citizen, the fine was 3,000 pieces of silver.
[110] Prasert (Mangraisat, Notton Version) 1981: 47.
[111] The Khosarat Law 1987: 12.
[112] Prasert (Mangraisat, Wat Sao Hai Version) 1970: 92.
[113] The Khosarat Law 1987: 12.

woman's hand towards his would cost him 600. And the fine for him talking to her to sexually stimulate her would be 300.[114] A man in the position of *nai ma* (นายม้า – cavalry man) committing adultery would have to pay 550 pieces of silver. For touching her (covered) breast a fine of 11,000 cowries; for touching her naked breast, 55,000 cowries.[115]

The commoner, on the other hand, would incur a fine of 110 pieces of silver for adultery.[116] Embracing another man's wife would mean a fine of 55,000 cowries. The touching of one of her breasts would cost 11,000 cowries, both breasts 22,000 cowries.[117] Drawing her hand to his meant a fine of 100.[118] It is clear from this that the punishment for a man abusing a married woman's right to chastity varied according to his social status. The higher his status, the more severe was the punishment. This contrasts with the law of the T'ang Dynasty in China, which distributed punishment in the opposite way: the lower the status of the offender there, the more serious was the punishment.[119]

The concept of chastity continued in Lan Na into the period of Burmese rule. In Lan Na law we find a regulation that is not given in the *Khlòng mangraisat* (คลองมังรายศาสตร์), also known as *Khlòng ba yi man* (คลองบายีม่าน – the law of Burmese master), which was adopted from Burmese law and modified by new conditions. The Burmese law accepted and defined the right of chastity in Lan Na women. If a man committed adultery he would be fined on the basis of the previous regulations. Interestingly, Burmese law stressed punishing a woman who denied her chastity and committed adultery in the knowledge that the man was married. The harsh punishment for this was public humiliation, and included the cutting off of ears, hair or breasts, or the imposition of a fine of 52 pieces of silver, or 110 pieces of silver for each ear, or 52 pieces of silver for the hair.[120] Conversely, the severe penalty bestowed on an adulterous woman was meant not only as the punishment of a depraved woman, but also of the female abuser of another woman's marriage.

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[114] The Khosarat Law 1987: 12.
[115] Prasert (Mangraisat, Notton Version) 1981: 45.
[116] Sithon (Mangraisat, Wat Chai Sathan Version) 1986: 54.
[117] Sommai (Mangraisat, Wat Mün Ngoen Kòng Version) 1975c: 13.
[118] The Khosarat Law 1987: 12.
[119] Johnson 1979: 28.
[120] Anan et al. (Mangraisat, Wat Chai Sathan Version) 1986: 56, Prasert (Mangraisat, Notton Version) 1981: 46, Prasert (Mangraisat, Wat Sao Hai Version) 1970: 94.

2. Lan Na society's influence on the creation of roles for the adolescent daughter.

As already mentioned, manufacture and production in the subsistence economy of Lan Na created strong family and community relationships. Significantly, this kind of economy had the potential to create a unity among the members of a family as they worked for their living. A woman therefore became responsible for the household economy and the production. This had an effect on the development of social concepts of what constituted the respectable woman. She would, for example, be a hard working person, not lazy in maintaining and supporting her family in the subsistence economy, and this would in turn help other members of the family. The social expectation on a woman's diligence in her work is portrayed in an observation by Dodd:

> I have noticed that the best-looking young women go oftenest to market. They rise before daylight; put their wares into two baskets hung on the ends of a flexible bamboo pale ... She swings the pole on her shoulders and starts off before daylight in company with others from her village. She meets many people before she gets home again, sometimes before noon.[121]

There is still some doubt as to whether the influence of Buddhism in the Ping River basin began in the seventh century, when the city of Hariphunchai was founded. Coedès points out in one study that Queen Camathewi established a kingdom in the seventh century with a tribal group from Lawo, which was the centre of the Mon civilization.[122] Lawo, a city in the Central Plains of Thailand, played an important part in the history of the region. The Dvaravati kingdom (sixth to eleventh centuries) of the Mon civilization can be traced back there, as evidenced in Mon inscriptions on octagonal pillars discovered at Lop Buri and Nakòn Pathom, the most important Dvaravati sites in Thailand.[123] Moreover, a statement in the fifteenth century Pali chronicle *Camathewiwong* (Cāmadevīvoṃsa) reports that a group of nobles was attached to the train of Queen Camathewi as it arrived from Lawo to take up governorship of Hariphunchai in 658. Queen Camathewi was accompanied by several groups of her fellows. There were 500 people in a group, plus senior monks, each equipped with a Tipitaka. It took seven months to travel by boat along the Ping River.[124]

Further to this, the *Jinakālamālīpakaraṇaṃ,* written in the Pali language in 1516, talks of the establishment and continuous upholding of Buddhism in Hariphunchai from the reign of Queen Camathewi onwards. The shrine Phra That Hariphunchai, for

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[121] Dodd 1996: 306-307.
[122] George Cœdès and Oriental Studies: Selected Articles in Thai Translation 1999: 168.
[123] Cœdès 1961: 8-9.
[124] Phothirangsi, Phra 1967: 89.

example, was built in the reign of King Athitayarat (1585-1591).[125] It can be assumed that Buddhism spread to the low lands of the Ping River in parallel with the expansion of the Mon groups who settled in the area from the seventh century onwards.

Nevertheless, although there is no documentary evidence of the arrival of Buddhism in the Ping River basin, it can at least be assumed that the Hariphunchai kingdom was influenced by Buddhism and the Mon people. The kingdom may have had a strong relationship with the Mon kingdom, as shown in such sources as the Camathewiwong, which relates that, in the eleventh century, the citizens of Hariphunchai deserted their city because of a cholera epidemic and migrated to lower Burma. They first settled at Thaton and then moved on to Pegu.[126] The mutual relationship also led to an expansion and thriving of Buddhism in those two kingdoms.

Later, Lan Na absorbed Buddhism from Hariphunchai after its political extension into Lan Na in the reign of King Mangrai, and also Theravāda Buddhism from the Lankawong *nikāya* (sect) by way of the Sukhothai Kingdom. Remarkably, the senior monk Phra Sumana Thera was invited together with a company of monks to spread the Buddhist doctrine in Chiang Mai in 1371.[127] Buddhism not only played an important part in the administrative organization under the leadership of the King, and in propagating the ideology through the framing of a Buddhist government[128] (the state administration required the monastic institution to take part in the legal process[129] and to uphold the concept of the royal legitimacy),[130]but it also had a significant role in the social organization, the regulation of daily life, the formation of a social model, and the fostering of beliefs and rituals to establish them as customs and traditions, and as part of the culture.[131]

Through Buddhism, therefore, the concepts of *pāpa* (sin), *puñña* (merit) and *kamma* (action) were introduced into the social consciousness.[132] The religious beliefs of course also influenced the expectations people placed in women's roles and obligations. A respectable woman was required to adhere strictly to the teachings of Buddhism by performing good deeds, observing the precepts, supporting the faith and showing gratitude. The Tipitaka makes mention of five duties that a child has to fulfil,[133] and the Six Traditions, according to which parents expect their children to take care of them

[125] Rattanapañña Thera, Phra 1967: 98-102.
[126] Phothirangsi, Phra 1967: 192-195.
[127] Phra Puttha Phukam and Phra Puttha Yan 1976: 343.
[128] Smith 1978: 20.
[129] *Khlòng phitcarana taeng thòi chon kham* 1975: 31.
[130] Rattanapañña Thera, Phra 1967: 153-155.
[131] Swearer 1970: 35-36.
[132] Keyes 1973: 82-83.
[133] Siglalovada Suttanta: The Sigala Homily 28 / 188.

when they are old.[134] The resulting attitude towards the virtuous daughter is reflected in the inheritance law, which decreed that such a daughter would receive the largest proportion of the inheritance, even more than the son who had entered a monastery, despite the fact that the merit of being a monk would lead to the salvation of his parents from all suffering.[135] Furthermore, it was stated in the law that a person who had no faith in the Three Jewels, did not obey his parents and neglected taking care of them forfeited his right to an inheritance.[136] Tradition also considered it immoral, and such a person would be doomed to ruin in the present and future lives.[137]

A further demand that Lan Na society made of its women was that they be virtuous. This entailed exercising patience and remaining chaste until marriage, and behaving morally. In literary works and didactic sayings the virtuous woman is required to preserve herself according to the teachings of Phraya Mangrai, which regard a woman who first makes advances a man as depraved.[138] Similarly, in *Phra lò sòn lok*, the unchaste woman is unfit to be a man's life companion.[139] Meanwhile, the social concept of women's duty to remain virtuous led to them being instructed to practise chastity; proverbs decried a woman who approached a man herself or was easily taken in by a man wooing her.[140] And because it was immoral not to practise chastity and preserve oneself until marriage women were ashamed of committing improper acts. A pregnancy without a husband would be the cause of suffering for a woman's parents and a loss of property.[141] In many examples of Lan Na literature we find the assertion that a woman who becomes pregnant before marriage insults society and will bring disaster on the city. The punishment for this might be banishment from the city.[142] Even Lan Na proverbs offer this counsel: "thou shalt not eat of food before offering it to a monk and shalt not become pregnant before marriage".[143]

But at the same time society protected women against people who intended to abuse their chastity. The law was explicit in its judgment of, for example, the nobleman who, exploiting his prestige, took advantage of a woman, without even consulting her parents. To illustrate, a *khun* inspects the city and becomes infatuated with a woman. However, the woman's parents do not give their consent for his marriage with their

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[134] Sommai 1978: 15.
[135] Prasert (Mangraisat, Notton Version) 1981: 12, Prasert (Mangraisat, Wat Sao Hai Version) 1970: 24, Sithon (Mangraisat, Wat Chai Sathan Version) 1986: 15, and Anan et al. (The Law of Wat Kasa) 1983: 59.
[136] Anan et al. (Thammasat Rat Kü Na) 1985: 40-41, and Anan et al. (The Law of Wat Kasa) 1983: 12-13.
[137] Sommai 1978: 16.
[138] Sommai (The King Mangrai Sermon) 1976b: 11.
[139] *Khlong phra lò sòn lok* 1959.
[140] Udom 1981: 108, 120.
[141] Sommai 1978: 15.
[142] *Khao sò chioha lin kham* 1968.
[143] Lan Na vernaculars (courting verses, riddles, and proverbs) 1981: 115.

daughter. Then, calling upon his social standing, he forces them to surrender. In this case, the *khun* will be fined 1200 pieces of silver.[144] Similarly, any man who infringed upon a woman in one of eight categories of 'guardianship'[145] would be considered guilty of an offence; the woman would be innocent,[146] and he would be fined 55,000 cowries.[147] If he touched one of her breasts that was covered by her blouse, he would be fined 22,000 cowries. If he touched both breasts, he would be fined 33,000 cowries.[148] The punishment awaiting parents who forced their daughters to marry was given in the engagement law. This stated that if parents gave their daughter away in marriage without her consent, and she ran away, they would be fined 11,000 cowries.[149]

In Lan Na every household had a long tradition of a belief system called *phi pu nya* (ancestral spirits). This had a considerable influence on people's behaviour, particularly in the relationships between men and women. In this system, the spirits of ancestors influence the descendants' conduct. For example, a female descendant insulting the spirits through unchaste actions will incur the spirits' dissatisfaction and they will punish her with illness, the loss of belongings or damage to things her family has made or produced.[150] *Phi pu nya* therefore sets the limits on the relationships between men and women. But certain traditions had led Lan Na society to be quite liberal. For instance, *Prapheni aeo sao* (ประเพณีการแอ่วสาว) was a courting custom in which, after work, a bachelor, or *bao* (บ่าว), would invite his friends to go out and court an unmarried woman. They would frequently be equipped with a musical instrument and would sing songs called *còi* (จ๊อย) to unmarried women in various houses. While listening to the songs or words uttered by the men, the women would continue their work ginning cotton, spinning thread, weaving, or doing embroidery or housework.[151]

This practice of bachelors going out and courting women is seen in the heroes of Lan Na literature, such as in the *khao sò* stories of *Kam ka dam* (ก่ำกาคำ), *Saeng müang long tham* (แสงเมืองหลงถ้ำ), *Cao suwat* (เจ้าสุวัตร), and others which explained the heroes spend days and nights on journey and finally they found their wives somewhere out there. This tradition defines the roles of men and women in the selection of a partner in

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[144] The Khosarat Law 1987: 79-80.
[145] The eight types of woman in the Mangraisat, Wat Mün Ngoen Kòng Version are as follows: 1) a woman under the guardianship of her mother; 2) a woman under the guardianship of her father; 3) of both parents; 4) of an elder sister; 5) of a younger sister; 6) of a relative; 7) a woman under the guardianship of her ancestral sphere; and 8) a woman under the guardianship of *Dharma*.
[146] Anan et al. (The Law of Wat Kasa) 1983: 21.
[147] Sommai (Mangraisat, Wat Mün Ngoen Kòng Version) 1975c: 13.
[148] Ibid: 13.
[149] Prasert (Mangraisat, Wat Sao Hai Version) 1970: 14, Sithon (Mangraisat, Wat Chai Sathan Version) 1986: 9, and Prasert (Mangraisat, Notton Version) 1981: 7.
[150] Mala 2001: 33.
[151] Songsak 1989: 22.

marriage, under the control of parents and within the bounds of *phi pu nya*, by which the ancestral spirits guard women against any abuse from men. Consequently, although a woman might be with a man without any other people being present, which might be seen as liberal according to the traditions of courting, they were nevertheless limited to conversation; they could not touch each other. A transgression of this would be considered *phit phi* (ผิดผี).

But *phit phi* did not have to mean secretly having sexual intercourse; it could merely be the touching of bodies and hands. The limitation of gender relationships on the basis of women's chastity through the regulations in *phit phi*, which was a customary tool, was linked to statements in law. The penalty in law concerning the abuse of a woman's chastity was a fine, depending on the degree of the act and the social status of the woman or the man. Insulting the spirits of the ancestors on the woman's side would be penalized depending on the seriousness of the offence. For instance, a man just touching a woman's body was considered *phit phi* and some way had to be found of expressing regret to the spirits. If the man embraced and kissed the woman, it counted as *sia phi* (เสียผี) or *sai phi* (ใส่ผี), in which case he would be obliged to pay with money or belongings.[152]

The belief system surrounding women in Lan Na society is connected with *phi pu nya*. Cohen and Wjieyewardene (1984) state that, in the Lan Na context, *phi pu nya* encompassed practices involving one's ancestral spirits,[153] which were passed down on the woman's side, as well as the household system, where the daughter was the guardian and heir of the family inheritance. As for the matriliny, when a man moved into his wife's house he initiated his membership into the household by making offerings to the ancestral spirits. The implication of this was that he accepted the ancestral spirits from his wife's side as a part of the family and her household.

Davis (1984), Cohen and Wijeyewardene (1984) and Turton (1984) all admit that *phi pu nya* affected the status of Lan Na women, especially in relation to kinship through the female line (from mother to daughter). As a consequence, women played a considerably important role in the family. Concerning the roles and the responsibilities of women and men in Lan Na society, Potter (1977) asserts that the family relationships

[152] In *sia phi* a man paid a fine by taking some things to offer the spirits of the woman's ancestors at her house. These offerings may be such things as a pig's head, a duck, a chicken, a bottle of some beverage or some money. For *sai phi* an offering would be made to the spirits of the woman's ancestors for them to accept the man's living in the house that the spirits were guarding, or becoming a member of the family, or marrying the woman. Also, *sai phi* meant offering things to the spirits to inform of the marriage of a woman in the family. From an interview with Mrs. Cannuan Wongsri, seventy-one years old, a villager in San Pong Village, Mae Rim District, Chiang Mai on 18 February 2006.
[153] Cohen and Wjieyewardene 1984: 249.

between a man and a woman started with the marriage, when the husband moved into his wife's house and was accepted into her clan.

However, the succession of authority could be divided along two lines. The first comprised the succession of authority on the male side. This was conferred by the wife's father, and was regarded as the formal authority in the family. If there was more than one son-in-law in the family, a priority in the relationships would be created, so that the younger son-in-law would have to surrender to the authority of the older one. On the second, female, line of succession, authority was conferred only on the wife's side.[154] There is an interesting aspect to this. Although Lan Na society laid stress on the roles of women in the context of the belief system, women still, of their own accord, respected their obligations towards their husbands and families, particularly their duties as wives and mothers. There was another ideology, which determined the limits of the relationships between men and women through beliefs, proverbs and many kinds of literature. Nevertheless, the ideology we have discussed was continually passed down through instruction in the households of women from one generation to the next, and was regarded as the duty of every woman as the mother of the family.

b. Lan Na women's strategies in creating privileged roles

Among the studies of Southeast Asian women's social roles conducted by Western academics, Reid, for instance (1988), mentions that the high status of Southeast Asian women were an indication of a quite outstanding social mindset. In this social system women had functions that were different from those of men, in particular through their reproductive role. The ideology empowered women in matters of ritual in ways men never enjoyed. The interesting issue that Reid proposes is that, in this relationship between women and men, women were not seen as equal to men because Southeast Asian societies rarely had that directly competitive space between the sexes.[155] Meanwhile, Andaya (1994) states that a significant variable lessening the status of Southeast Asian women was the introduction of the world religions. The religious beliefs and domestic rituals that were being practised focused on the unity between men and women, but the spread of the new religions into the region changed them, and they came to stress the differences between gender-related roles. Men came to dominate religious beliefs and state organisation. Consequently, women's status was lessened.[156]

I would like in this dissertation to propose that the background of the Lan Na society from the thirteenth to the nineteenth century, the methods of production in the

[154] Potter 1977: 100.
[155] Reid 1988a and see also Reid 1988b.
[156] Andaya 1994.

subsistence economy that influenced the relationships in family and community, the social structure combined with customs, traditions, ideas, and beliefs, which influenced the lifestyle, social activities and political configurations - all this can be traced back to the political participation of women. Taken in context, I believe that this had an impact on the attitudes to, and the social expectations on, several of the social roles played by women. On the other hand, that context was employed by Lan Na women to create privileged roles for themselves.

The privileged roles enjoyed by Lan Na women discussed in this dissertation have a political dimension and were generally the dispensation of upper class women who played an important role in politics inside and outside the kingdom, such as in the office of sovereign or in enhancing the power of the dynasty through marriage. Similarly, in the economic context of Lan Na's subsistence economy, women played an important part in managing economic business, including agricultural and commercial affairs. As a result, society came to imbue Lan Na women with the image of the "female merchant". In the socio-cultural context, patterns of Lan Na family life, where women played a remarkable role in managing and organizing the family and its internal relationships, coupled with social principles combined with Buddhism (which were a distinguishing characteristic of Lan Na) endowed women with privileged roles on the community level, from working as a midwife to acting as a spiritual medium, and enabled them to influence the continuation of the society.

These privileged roles are manifested in both the ruling classes and the ruled classes in the status of mother, wife and daughter. Certain privileged roles, particularly those of a political nature, customarily belonged to upper class women. Others, which women from both groups shared, included the patron of Buddhism, the female merchant and the spiritual medium. One role that is frequently mentioned in documents, with relation to female commoners, is that of the midwife.

- Privileged roles of Lan Na women in politics

In Lan Na history, two sovereigns played special roles in politics. These were Phranang Cirapraphathewi, who governed Chiang Mai from 1545 to 1546, and Phranang Wisutthithewi, who ruled there from 1564 to 1578. These two queens belonged to the Mangrai Dynasty, and their accession to the throne was made possible by the politics of the period (as discussed in chapter 3). This phenomenon resulted from the political ideas of the Mangrai Dynasty, according to which only someone of Mangrai dynastic blood could succeed to the throne. It was obligatory that a descendant have both parents in the line of descent from the Mangrai Dynasty. Therefore, a nobleman had no right to

become king, whereas upper class women belonging to the dynasty were able to gain access to privileged positions in politics.[157]

Further, I believe that, in the political sphere, the court approved the eligibility of a woman to rule according to the royal title "Phranang" and the ending "Thewi", both of which indicated the status of a female governor.[158] A good example of the force of such privileged positions is provided by King Suthothamaracha,[159] who took his armed forces to attack Müang Fang, Chiang Mai and Lamphun in 1632 because he needed to import people into Burma. He was obliged, however, to pay respect to the silver plate of Queen Wisutthithewi, called the *Lap ngoen carük* (หลาบเงินจารึก),[160] which had been invented in 1567. This silver plate symbolised the protection given to citizens who devoted themselves as servants at the Wisuthitharam Temple.[161] Through this plate those citizens were also forbidden to move or to migrate to any other place. Consequently, they were not forced to move and remained as servants at the temple.[162]

In the administration of Lan Na, the royal institution and the religious institution were closely related. The kings and the governors of Lan Na patronized Buddhism according to ancient law. The law of Phra Cao Nan, for example, stated that the city governor, officials, noblemen and citizens had to maintain the Buddhist faith.[163] Similarly, the Mangraisat ("the law of Mangrai") sentences to death a person who destroys a monk's cell or steals a monk's belongings, damages an image of the Buddha or a hall containing Buddha images.[164]

On the other hand, Buddhism supported the administration to a great extent. For example, Buddhist priests were invited to take part in the legal process together with the

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[157] When compared to the societies in the lowlands of the Cao Phraya River, such as the kingdom of Ayutthaya, where women played an important role in politics (witness the part played in the war by Queen Suriyothai), it is interesting that this role was taken up in a pause in men's political activities, such as of King Phra Maha Cakkraphat (Suriyothai's husband), because the Ayutthayan society was influenced by Khmer culture, which laid stress on the political role of men.

[158] When compared with female sovereigns in other states, such as the Queen of Nakhòn Patani (Patani) in the seventeenth century, the queen's accession to the throne here might be found in the male line of descent, because the cause of Princess Hicao coming to the throne lay in the death of men in the royal family who had the right to succeed to the throne according to the royal tradition of the kingdom. Then Princess Hicao was crowned "Raja Hicao". Additionally, the queen's title was "Raja", which meant "king" (a man). The names of the queens of Nakòn Patani that were accompanied by "Raja" in the title are: Raja Hicao (1584-1616), Raja Biru (1616-1624), Raja Ungngu (1624-1635) and Raja Kuning (1635-1646). In this regard, Supattra (2007) refers to the chronicle of Nakhòn Rat. The title of the ruler of the kingdom and the state, "Raja", was used for women and men. Later, in academic documents and writings after the twentieth century, a female ruler who governed the state was referred to by the title "Ratu", which means "the queen". See Supattra 2007: 78-88.

[159] This may have been in the reign of King Anaukpetlun of the Nyaungyan Dynasty.

[160] *Lap* is a long thin silver sheet like a palm leaf with an inscription.

[161] Today, this temple is in Pae Village, Ban Pae Sub-district, Còm Thòng District, Chiang Mai.

[162] Kraisi 1978: 52-54.

[163] Singkha 1980a: 8.

[164] Prasert (Mangraisat, Wat Sao Hai Version) 1970: 10.

noblemen appointed by the king. Moreover, Buddhist regulations were used as a reference in evaluating the law of the state.[165] Apart from this, Buddhist legends in Lan Na prescribed venerable practices for the king to perform, particularly the Ten Royal Virtues (ทศพิธราชธรรม - Thotsaphitratchatham), which would bring peace and prosperity to the city. If he neglected to carry them out, it was believed that the city would know no peace and would encounter disaster.[166] This idea is stated in the Six Traditions; one of them deals with the royal tradition concerned with practices considered appropriate for a governor.[167] This mutual support of the royal and the religious institutions also meant that a female governor would inevitably have to apply Buddhist regulations to the administration. I believe, therefore, that the acceptance of Lan Na upper class women in the special political role of city sovereign made the queens of Lan Na conduct themselves according to moral considerations and to apply the teachings of Buddhism to the administration.

Nevertheless, if we consider the idea that anyone could become king through the accumulation of great merit from previous lives,[168] this would imply that, quite apart from the considerable amount of merit one would have to accumulate to become King, the fact that a woman could become Queen represents a state beyond gender, since, in a system containing gender, the birth of a female would automatically indicate an inadequate accumulation of merit (at the point of their birth, anyone who had accumulated enough merit in the previous life to become King would have been reborn as a man).[169] The birth of a woman in the status of queen can therefore also indicate an extraordinary accumulation of merit.

These two queens' authority in governorship are one case indicating the privileged roles of women in Lan Na history. Meanwhile, another interesting example of Lan Na upper class women in politics is that of *Mahathewi*, or the Queen Mother, who played a political role as the patroness and supporter of the King. For example, Mahathewi supported her son King Sam Fangkaen in his rule in Chiang Mai. Also, the Chiang Mai Chronicle reports that the Chiang Mai armed forces under King Tilok's

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[165] Aroonrut 1996: 34-37.
[166] Phra Phuthaphukam and Phra Phuthayan 1976: 122.
[167] Sommai 1978: 9-10. The administration of Lan Na employed the teachings of Buddhism as regulations of practices for the prosperity of the kingdom. The governor was required to practice the Six Traditions, which comprised Buddhist tradition, religious tradition, ancient tradition, royal tradition, secular tradition and vassal tradition. These six traditions were seen as laws or regulations to be practised for the promotion of peace. Neglecting them would lead to disaster and suffering in the present and future life. See also Yupin 1984: 145.
[168] According to the belief in the consequence of *karma*, a person who accumulates a lot of merit will be reborn with a high status, fully equipped with all comfort and fortune.
[169] Andaya 2006: 15. The ideas in *Traibhūmikāthā* and the law of ancient Lan Na show a similarity in the punishment of men who committed adultery. Such a man, when he died, would first suffer in hell and then be reborn as a woman for several hundred lives before his eventual rebirth as a man.

mother attacked Phrae to rescue the king's soldiers[170]. This is a good illustration of a woman's political role as supporter of the king based on the natural circumstance of a mother being bound to support her children.

In the case mentioned here the prince was young: King Sam Fangkaen succeeded to the throne when he was thirteen years old.[171] Then there is the further political aspect of maintaining peace in the country. For instance, the *Mahathewi'*s prestigious role at the Chiang Mai royal court in supporting King Sam Fangkaen was aimed at ascending the throne herself as regent,[172] even though there was an older prince, Cao Yi Kum Kam, born to another of the king's consorts. But this led to the rebellion of Cao Yi Kum Kam. Apparently, there was some cooperation with the Queen Mother of King Tilok in the war to extend power to East Lan Na.

The privileged role of *Mahathewi* is quite outstanding in its patronization of Buddhism, especially through the donation of common labour, lands and other benefits. Andaya (2006) says that in Theravāda Buddhism it is the duty of a well-known woman to be a patroness of Buddhism, particularly if she is a mother, since she not only patronizes the faith herself, but further supports it when she permits her son to enter the monkhood.[173] The role of the woman here is through her support of the religion by reason of her faith and devotion. Written evidence from Lan Na clearly states the religious roles of women. For example, in stone inscription no. 67 at the San Ma Kha Temple in Lamphun Province, written in 1488, we learn that Mahathewi Cao had an order to build Wat Weluwan Aram in Lamphun and had a strong desire to devote all the merit she had earned from the construction of the temple to the protection of "Maharacha" and "Mahathewi Cao" (herself). Also, she offered four families of her servants to serve the monks in the temple and prayed for the temple to last for 5,000 years.[174] Furthermore, in stone inscription no. 72 at Chang Kham Temple in Nan Province, dated 1500, it is written that Phra Mahathewi Cao ordered the boundary

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[170] Wyatt and Aroonrut 1998: 84.
[171] Stone Inscription no. 301, *Phrachum silacarük phak thi 7* (Collected Inscriptions, vol. 7) 1992: 95.
[172] Stone Inscription no. 301, *Phrachum silacarük phak thi 7* (Collected Inscriptions, vol. 7) 1992: 95-96.
[173] Andaya 2006:18.
[174] Stone Inscription no. 67, *Phrachum silacarük phak thi 3* (Collected Inscriptions, vol. 3) 1965: 160-161. See also Grabowsky 2005: 37. This is based on the Buddhist belief of Maitreya, or Buddhist Prophet. The prophecy given by Buddha gives a nearly exact date of when the Maitreya will come. The clue that helps us to understand when the Maitreya will be manifested is: "... when the Dispensation of the perfect Buddha is 5000 years old". Buddha would halve the time to the Dharma's expiration from five periods of one-thousand years (5,000 years), to five periods of five-hundred years (2,500 years). According to Buddha, the Dharma would disappear 2,500 years after His Dispensation began (1957) and shortly after the five disappearances, the Maitreya would come.

marker of the temple to be buried at Wat Phra Koet in Nan, and devoted rice fields, rice and twenty-nine families of servants to the temple.[175]

The most interesting aspect of this is that, if Lan Na politics is closely linked to Buddhism, the significant role played by Lan Na upper class women in patronizing Buddhism may be an implication of their creation of politically privileged positions. Kroek (2007) states that the role of upper class women in patronizing Buddhism was associated with the accumulation of power to fashion a political role. He mentions the example of the mother of King Tilok who, with an armed force, prevailed over Phrae. She could not succeed to the throne because of her gender.[176] Her desire for an accumulation of merit so as to be reborn as a man is alluded to in an inscription on the base of the Buddha image Mae Sri Mata, which was created between the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. It is assumed that *Phra mae cao sri mata* of the inscription means "Cuthatilok Mahathewi", or the mother of King Tilok, because the words *two kings* and *Mae phra philok* are written on the base of the image. According to the inscription, Phra Mae Cao Sri Mata was ordered to build a Buddha image, and made a wish to be reborn as a man and an apostle of Sri Ariya Bodhisattva.[177] Similarly, even though the *Mahathewi*, the mother of King Sam Fangkaen, held a significant political position, there is no doubt that, according to the same beliefs that the mother of King Tilok was subject to, she could not, herself, ascend the throne. Therefore, after helping her son to succeed the throne, she became the influential figure behind the throne as the regent.

It is quite interesting to observe in the political evidence from fifteenth century Lan Na that there was an occurrence of the belief that women could hold privileged political positions. It was related to the patronization of Buddhism and was reliant on the idea of gender, as previously stated. Then, in the sixteenth century, we find the new phenomenon of two female sovereigns in the political world of Lan Na. Regardless of the fact that Queen Ciraprapha and Queen Wisutthithewi both prayed that they might be reborn as men, the interesting point is that they were able to go beyond the limits of gender and create politically privileged roles in their period.

Nevertheless, after the sixteenth century there is no record of any other queens in Lan Na. But we do find upper class Lan Na women fulfilling special political functions in other dimensions connected with domestic and foreign politics, particularly in forging relationships in terms of kinship. Sunet (1984) points out that, in early Thai society, a man had the right to have several wives. The people of the ruling class, especially the

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[175] Stone Inscription no. 72, *Phrachum silacarük phak thi 3* (Collected Inscriptions, vol. 3) 1965: 195-196. See also Grabowsky 2005: 39.
[176] Kroek 2007: 70.
[177] *Carük samai sukhotai* [Instriptions of Sukhothai] 1984: 197-198.

King, could employ marriage as a tool for creating political relationships.[178] Yos (1997) mentions that endogamy, marriage between people in a household frequently found among ruling class people, was practised to maintain the pure blood and hence the political power of the members of their household. This was the origin of the stability of royal authority.[179] The evidence suggests that the responsibility for creating connections of kinship rested solely with women. This would often involve aristocratic women such as a daughter and a younger or elder sister of the king, and take the form of a marriage between the royal family and a noble family or the royal family of another kingdom. This arrangement existed from the Mangrai Dynasty until the period of Siamese rule (see chapter 3).

If literature is a reflection of society, the privileged political positions that Lan Na women held are portrayed in many literary works, where they emerge as leaders in politics and warfare and as the medium in the development of family bonds between cities. It is interesting that in the content of literature we find the assertion that women's possession of political authority originated from their family relationships with men. For example, the wife who inherits administrative authority from her husband can be seen in the character of Nang Suphathita from the work *Chang nga diao* (ช้างงาเดียว) and in Nang Yasawatti from *Wanna phram* (วรรณพราหมณ์)[180]. The daughter of the city's ruler is illustrated by the character of Nang Canta Kesi in *Suwanna mekka ma khon kham*.

In literature, the right to succession of authority can be obtained through the family lineage and the relationship with the king. As Sirirat (1986) states, the political role of the aristocratic woman was regarded her right by status.[181] And there is a further interesting aspect to literature. In a similar fashion to the male leaders, women in leading political positions employed ideas such as rulership based on the Buddhist teachings and the Ten Royal Virtues, in the belief that they brought peace to the city, a belief that was personified in the characters Nang Phrom Cari, in *Canthama* (จันทมา), and Nang Yasawatti, in *Wanna phram*. On a practical level, male and female governors shared the characteristic of clinging to Buddhist teachings in their administration.

- Privileged roles of Lan Na women in the economy

Another observation that I have made from studying the Lan Na economy is that some work that people did in that economic system was connected with the gender-related roles of men and women. To clarify, in the subsistence economy of Lan Na from

[178] Sunet 1984: 23.
[179] Yos 1997: 106.
[180] *Wanna phram* is a sort of *khao tham* or the Jātāka literature. See khao sò *tham wanna phram* 1968.
[181] Sirirat 1986: 390

the thirteenth to nineteenth centuries, women and men were heavily reliant on one another in the production of everything they needed. Furthermore, while the conscription system required men to work as prescribed by the state, women were responsible for all the family matters in their absence. The work that men and women did in the economy was often actually an indication of their social roles. While men's economic activities comprised services for the state or other communities in the form of trade, women, because they gave birth, nurtured the family and generated the fundamental elements of survival,[182] were naturally bound to the house and the family. Together with the family patterns in Lan Na in which a woman was the *mae cao hüan* (the ruler of the house), women were responsible for all economic production related to the family and the community.

Academic proposals such as the work of Andaya (1994), Reid (1988) and Van Esterik (1995) argue that women in Southeast Asia played an important role in the economy. For instance, Reid has observed (1988) that the vigorous influence of Islam, Christianity, Buddhism and Confucianism in Southeast Asia over more than 400 years have not been able to diminish the economic importance of women; women still have economic liberty.[183] Additionally, in the subsistence economy of Lan Na, the woman held a privileged position as society's producer in both agricultural and commercial activities. This role endowed women with an authority in the family system and activities, including those connected with shamanism and rituals, superior to that of men. The role of the producer and the important role in the family economy that women played emerge in many works of Lan Na literature about female merchants.

In one example from *khao sò* literature, *Kam ka dam,* she is referred to thus: "... the female merchant sells sweets and fruits, such as mangoes, longans, beans, mangosteens, langsads, pumpkins, rambeh, jackfruit ... "[184] Similarly, in *Cantama* the author describes the female merchant in the market where Cantama goes: "… these mean that the female merchants are merry while there are many people crowding in the market. The old female merchants sell many things such as raw betel nuts, tomatoes, chilli, salt, pumpkins, salted tea leaves and tobacco …"[185]

Through the literary record we can clearly perceive the role played by women in commerce at the local level, that is, in trade in the community. A large number of consumers and traders would be found in the local and nearby communities. This kind of commerce would entail trading at the market, or *kat* (กาด), of the village where people

[182] Van Esterik 1995: 253.
[183] Reid 1988b: 629.
[184] *Khao sò Kam ka dam* 1968: 73.
[185] *Khao sò Tham cantama* 1968: 37.

bartered their goods. For instance, in *Khlòng phitcarana tat thòi chon kham*, we read that people from other *müang* came to buy rice at the Chiang Mai market.[186] The condition of commercial dealings at the market (*kat*) is reflected in the Khosarat Law, which alludes to the commercial space in a society where there are lots of sellers. In the regulations concerning the theft of goods such as raw betel nuts, coconuts, sugar palm fruit or clothes and taking them to sell at the market, we can see how disputes can arise. A person who commits such an offence will be fined and forced to return the stolen goods.[187]

This accords with the regulations in the Law of Sommuttirat, which fixed the prices of vegetables and fruit in market trading. The fixing of stable prices aimed to prevent disagreements arising through competition over products after the harvest (literary sources indicate that most products were agricultural). For example, if a certain amount of rice cost one silver piece, a person who stole it would be fined three times that. Similarly, the thief of some cotton to the value of 1,200 *masok*,[188] would incur a fine of six times that value. Prices of other products included: a green pumpkin, 1000 *masok*, a bottle gourd or a large cucumber, 1,300 *masok*, a small cucumber, 1,200 *masok*; sesame cost 1,300 *masok*, ginger 1,300, galangal 1,200, and turmeric 1,200 *masok*.[189] The law refers to the position of the local official known as *kwan luang* (กวานหลวง), who was in charge of all trading activities in the community.[190]

In commercial activities, in which various people were engaged, women managed to carve out a dominant role for themselves as the main traders in the system. This is well documented in foreigners' records. For example, the company of the English vice consul Edward B. Gould, who resided in Lan Na in the nineteenth century, describes the morning market in Chiang Mai in this way: "... every day, there are young and old women carrying bamboo baskets. They bring, across the bridge, vegetables and fruits together …" It goes on to say that the majority of trading in that market is through female merchants; and, further, that "... there are only pork merchants who are male. Behind the male merchants, there are stalls where the female merchants sell umbrellas, cotton clothes, silk clothes, muslin clothes, brass trays, and lacquer wares …"[191] A similar picture of female merchants bringing vegetables and fruits to trade in the market appears in the record of Holt S. Hallett, an English explorer, as follows: "Some of the

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[186] *Khlòng phicarana tat thòi chon kham* 1975: 26.
[187] The Khosarat Law 1987: 123.
[188] *Masok* (มาศก) is an early monetary measurement. Five *masok* was approximately equal to one *bat.* See Aroonrut et al. 1981: 31.
[189] Aroonrut et al. (The Law of Sommuttirat, palm leaf page 45) 1981: 31.
[190] The Khosarat Law 1987: 123.
[191] Bristowe 1991: 77.

market-women bring ducks and fowls, others tobacco, areca-nuts, native confectionary, jaggery, rice, wax, and flowers; oranges, citrons, pummeloes, mangoes, tamarinds, plantains, cocoa-nuts, and melons, and any other fruit that may be in season."[192]

Another interesting aspect of community and village trade was the occurrence of bartering between the inhabitants of the lowlands and those of the mountains (called *Lua* by the flatlanders).[193] They always carried their produce down from the mountains to trade in the village market. We can assume, from the Law of Sommutirat, that the people who were engaged in farming for beans and sesame and brought their produce to market were female, because they customarily wore red clothes together with wrap-around skirts parted at the thigh, and wrapped rattan around their thighs for convenience in the long journey from the mountains to the flatlands. While in the mountains, as a protection against tigers, they disguised themselves by wearing striped tops and striped wrap-around skirts.[194]

The economic role played by Lan Na women is clearly illustrated in the literature and many proverbs of the period which allude to their role in the management of commercial activities. This seems to have been a custom in Lan Na society which became part of the lifestyle, and was mirrored in nursery rhymes which related the economic activities of women and men such as their work on the farm.[195] Furthermore, some nursery rhymes explicitly indicate that women ran commercial affairs at the market (*kat mua* (กาดหมั้ว) - fresh-food market).[196] As we have already seen, several female merchants would sit in a line at the market to sell pork, vegetables, fish, corn, sweets and clothes.[197]

Within their economic function, another privileged role that Lan Na women exercised was connected with the economic potential in the family. Among foreigners' records from the nineteenth century, those of William Clifton Dodd, for example, note that the mother played an important part in the decision-making in a family and was a source of considerable economic potential for it:

> And in time the mother in this home comes to have more domestic and financial power than the father. She holds the purse in the home; and the husband consults her about every important financial venture. He is the one who gets the "allowance", and he accounts to her for the spending of it![198]

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[192] Hallett 2000: 100.
[193] Phraya Pracha Kitkòncak 1972: 135.
[194] Aroonrut et al. (The Law of Sommuttirat, palm leaf page 47) 1981: 31.
[195] Phanphen 1997: 41.
[196] Phanphen 1997: 49.
[197] Phanphen 1997: 62-63.
[198] Dodd 1996: 307.

This economic potential resulted from the responsibility that a Lan Na woman bore towards the entire family economy. She was the breadwinner, earning the family income through her work, and she was the treasurer and the manager of all the family expenses. This is clearly evident from several didactic documents which depict women's duties in economic terms as earning and allocating expenses.[199]

These duties were accepted in society as constituting a special female role, according to didactic poems from Lan Na which also teach that a married woman should look after all the property in her house carefully; and if some of the family's belongings were stolen without her knowing, she would be treated in the same way as the thief who had done the stealing.[200] Similarly, a Lan Na proverb asserts, "husbands are as fishnets, wives are as creels" (ผัวเป็นหิง เมียเป็นข้อง),[201] meaning that men are the breadwinners and women the treasurers. I believe that the expectations that society placed on the respectable woman on the one hand were created in relation to the lifestyle of the subsistence economy, which required hard work and a sense of thrift, and on the other were an acceptance of the significant role and responsibility she enjoyed in the family and the community; she was the family's producer and supporter, operating in an administrative system which conscripted its men, and a system of productivity which demanded mutual reliance. If women rejected that role, serious problems of production in the family and the country might ensue.

- Privileged roles of Lan Na women in socio-culture

Tai ethnic groups in Southeast Asia before the advent of Buddhism also indulged superstition and a belief in spirits. Renu Atthames (1994) refers to the indications of such beliefs found in a folktale from Tai Yai, called *Ngiao khai phi* ("Tai Yai sells ghosts"), which was widely known in Lan Na. In short, this tale relates that in Lan Na, which incorporated Tai Yuan, Tai Lü and other hill tribes, people purchased several kinds of spirit in Tai Yai. These spirits included ancestral spirits, house spirits, spirits of the dam, spirits of the farm, spirits of the field, and so on, and were considered auspicious for the family and the community.[202] Surviving traces from rituals attest to the Tai ethnic groups' belief in house and city spirits; there was a spirit chamber for the village spirits in every village in the Tai community. The Tai Yai people called the house spirits' chamber the "chamber of the spirit of the city" (หอเจ้าเมือง).[203]

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[199] Davis 1984: 68.
[200] *Klong withun sòn lok* 1975: 21.
[201] In the case of the husband being expected to be the breadwinner through farming, trading in distant cities, etc., and gives money to his wife to run and manage the family's financial affairs.
[202] Renu 1994: 3.
[203] Chaichün 1994: 2.

Similarly, there were spirits of the sky, guardian spirits of the city pillars and spirits of the local rice fields in Laos.[204] The Tai Lü people also had their ancestral spirits and house spirits, as well as court of justice spirits and tree spirits. Additionally, there were the domestic myths of the origin of beings found in folktales from northeast Thailand, Laos and Tai Dam, according to which every human being possessed an invisible thread of fate. This long thread was connected to a hook in heaven, and was watched over by the gods, or *thaen* (แถน).[205]

The principal belief in the agricultural society of Lan Na was that of *phi* ("spirit"), which was a symbol of the supernatural powers influencing all beings. Anan (1992) states that Animism was related to other belief systems such as fertility and moral beliefs. Emphasis was laid on the spirits and they were continually alluded to with respect to nature, people's ancestors and the fertility of the community, and they eventually came to form the principal ideology of Lan Na, covering all dimensions and levels of society. This has been accompanied by Buddhism for a long time.[206] The belief in spirits became concrete with respect to Nature in offerings to the "powers" that dwell in natural phenomena, such as *phi khun nam* (ผีขุนน้ำ), or the spirit of the river, *phi cao pa* (ผีเจ้าป่า), or the spirit of the forest, and the spirit of the mountain *phi cao khao* (ผีเจ้าเขา). Ekawit (2001) argues that this belief in spirits is associated with the belief in ancestors that was a significant characteristic of a society whose values were based on kinship.[207] Above all, the belief in spirits is connected with the privileged roles of Lan Na women in their building of relationships in the family in accordance with *phi pu nya,* and with their status as the medium of society, through whom, by way of fortune telling, treating illnesses etc., the spirits exercise their power .

Andaya (1994) proposes that the indigenous beliefs and rituals of Southeast Asia strengthened the bond between men and women, whereas the spread of religions from outside led to a separation between them.[208] Interestingly, Lan Na society managed to reunite the differences in their relationships. *Phi pu nya,*[209] in which ancestral spirits were regarded as household spirits of the same clan, called *sai phi* (สายผี), or the spiritual lineage, played an important role in harmonizing relationships and settling arguments between people of the same lineage. The belief in ancestral spirits was linked to the

[204] Humphan 1995: 1.
[205] Srisak 1991: 12-35.
[206] Anan 1992: 61.
[207] Ekawit 2001: 61.
[208] Andaya 1994: 110.
[209] *Phi pu nya* belonged to Tai culture, which included not only Tai Yuan in Lan Na, but also Tai Lü in Sibsòng Panna and seven other ethnic groups: Tai Ya, Tai Yang, Tai Cung, Tai Lai, Tai Nüa, Tai Dam and Tai Nam. They all believed in *phi pu nya*.

continuity of the ancestral line and kinship,[210] and was therefore only passed on to the women in the household. The heir might be the eldest or the youngest daughter, called *kao phi* (เก๊าผี). This word refers to the most senior woman eligible to perform rituals, who was usually a spirit medium.[211] The idea of *kao phi* highlighted the role of women in supervising and conducting rituals related to the ancestral spirits, and was connected with their authority. This was their internal authority, and is considered to have been a privileged role of women in Lan Na.

Davis (1973) asserts that the family system in Lan Na was based on the principal ideology of *phi pu nya,* an important factor of which was a women's lineage. In this ideology, a matter of great consequence was that when a couple got married the husband was obliged to move into his wife's house, because the wife living in the husband's house would cause the coexistence of two different lines of ancestral spirits, which would lead to quarrels among those spirits.[212] Whereas the husband's living in the wife's house bestowed important roles on the women in the family, which the man would accept.

The occurrence of Theravāda Buddhism in Lan Na was relevant to the kingdom's administrative structure[213] in terms of the mutual benefits reaped by Buddhism and the kingdom. Additionally, Buddhism was compromising in nature and harmonized with the indigenous beliefs. In a research paper with the title *Phi cao nai: the spirits in northern Thailand* (2002), Chalatchai suggests that although the community accepted Buddhism, the new religion had little effect on the religious practises that were already in existence there. On the contrary, it recognized them and made compromises. Furthermore, the belief in spirits was a social phenomenon affecting every level of Lan Na society, from the city to the community level and from the king to the villager,[214] so that, while the people of Lan Na accepted and rigorously practised

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[210] In a household with relatives of the same spiritual lineage, there was a spirit chamber in the family's main house or the house of the woman who performed the rituals for the ancestral spirits. The chamber would be at the top corner of the bedroom, or at any corner inside the fence of the house. In some houses there were no spirit chambers, but shelves for the ancestral spirits in the top corners of the bedrooms. (From an interview with Ms. Daeng Duangcan, fifty three years old, a villager at San Pong Village, Mae Rim District, Chiang Mai, 25 July 2008.

[211] My own family belongs to a group which worships the ancestral spirits through the grandmother. The heir who passes on the ritual of offering food to *phi pu nya,* or the ancestral spirits, is the grandmother's youngest sister. Every time a female descendant gets married, there has to be an offering of a pig's head, desserts, flowers, scent sticks and candles as a declaration to the spirits of the commencement of the new family. Neglecting this offering would cause someone in the woman's family to become ill. Apart from this, there are many traditional occasions when one can make offerings to the ancestral spirits, such as the day of the Thai New Year (the Songkran festival - the eighth (May) or ninth (June) month according to northern beliefs). The descendants in the household frequently attend the ritual.

[212] Davis 1973: 59.

[213] Andaya 1994: 113.

[214] Chalatchai 2002: 34.

Buddhism as the fundamental model for teaching and for building their world, they continued to believe in spirits as a significant factor in supporting and merging with the Buddhist philosophy. This led to a change in lifestyle and in the arts and architecture, which represent the distinguished characteristics of Lan Na.

Buddhism in Lan Na laid emphasis on the man as the inheritor of the faith. Men entered into the faith when they were young and when they turned twenty-one years of age they were ordained as monks. Being monks allowed them to study at an academic level the *Phra Pariyattitham* (พระปริยัติธรรม - Scriptures) and the Pali language, and to carry out routine religious disciplines (or the *vinaya*, which were rules of conduct binding for members of the *Sangha*). The monkhood also allowed them to acquire other knowledge in areas such as medicine, craftsmanship, politics and education, and was therefore a path not only to knowledge but also to promoting the social status of the monk and his parents. Lefferts (1999) states that ordination at a young age was popular among people in Lan Na and that this indicates the important Buddhist role mothers played in giving support and encouragement to their sons in entering the monkhood, because it was an educational opportunity and had the purpose of spreading the doctrine. The profit and merit gained by entering the monkhood would be of great value in this life and the next.[215]

Accordingly, Andaya (2006) has observed that the spread of Theravāda Buddhism in Southeast Asia ensued partly through the factor of motherhood and the accumulation of merit which provided chances for women, who themselves could not be ordained, to represent their faith in Buddhism by permitting their sons to enter the monkhood.[216] For example, in the case of Lan Na, a record exists of Mahathewi's devotional and merit-accumulating support of Buddhism. Alternatively, mothers of commoners played a considerably important role in supporting their sons in becoming novices at an early age. They believed that a person entering the novicehood was the saviour of a mother, while a person who entered the monkhood was the saviour of the father.[217] Having a son to be ordained was regarded as a great source of merit. Furthermore, an older man should not enter the monkhood because it was believed that men should be ordained from novices, who were innocent and without any blemish. The ritual for entry into Buddhist novicehood was, therefore, considered more important than that to become a monk.

According to Dhammanandha Bhikkuni (2007), women's reproductive function was seen as a natural social role. This was pertinent to the existence of social values and

[215] Lefferts 1999: 218.
[216] Andaya 2006: 42.
[217] Srilao 1995: 33.

led to expectations being placed on women associated with domestic affairs in the family and the home.[218] However, I as the researcher believe that, in the natural role, the women of Lan Na were socially important as the producers and the reproducers of beliefs and traditions in line with the supportive role they played in their sons' entering the monkhood.

On the other hand, the social ideology which required men to enter the monkhood in order to further Buddhism led them to become the spiritual leaders because ordination gave them the chance to learn dharma from the Tipitaka, which was thought of as the ultimate knowledge in Buddhism. Meanwhile, ordination gained a man acceptance in society as a scholar and a person of maturity.[219] This can be seen from the norm of women's selection of a life companion. Men who had previously been monks were considered more preferable in the eyes of a woman's parents than those who had not. The favoured type (called *nan*, หนาน) was regarded as mature (*khon suk*, คนสุก), having been educated through ordination,[220] was very patient, cautious, of high morals and with a strong sense of responsibility towards the family.[221] A man's ordination was not only aimed at furthering the Buddhist faith, but it also earned him social acceptance and status as an educated person. Darunee and Pandey (1987) conclude that the duties of a man were applicable to both secular and religious affairs, and were therefore associated with the external social authority that promoted the acceptance of their external role.

Interestingly, the relationship between women and men in Lan Na society was rooted in the acceptance of their parallel social roles. Davis (1974) asserts that a central aspect of Lan Na society was that the female gender dominated the social structure through factors such as reproduction, the household and inheritance, while the male gender dominated ideology. In addition, Davis believes that, at the village level, the division of authority between male and female amounted to an equality of the sexes.[222] This recognition of the parallel roles makes itself evident in Lan Na proverbs, such as, "The husband is costly, the gem-wife is a precious jewel" (*Phua kaeo mia kaeo* - ผัวแก้ว เมียแก้ว), which refer to the cohabitation of the husband and wife who respectively accept each other's roles. Not only social but also religious functions in Lan Na society

[218] Dhammanandha Bhikkhuni 2007: 50.
[219] Andaya 1994: 109 further argued that women were not able to be spiritual leaders because they could not pass through that stage of life. Although some aristocratic women could read and write, they usually did this as a pastime, favouring stories about romantic love and life in the palace rather than religious stories.
[220] In Lan Na, any man who had been a monk was called *nan* (หนาน), while any boy who had been a novice was called *nòi* (น้อย).
[221] Srilao 1995: 46.
[222] Davis 1974: 79.

operated in parallel and were accepted and supported by each party. While men were the inheritors of Buddhism by virtue of their entry into the monkhood, women were its patronesses in that they instructed their sons and encouraged them to be ordained, offered food to monks, accumulated merit and donated to the temple.[223]

Pranee Wongthes (2006) makes the observation that women as mothers played a significant role in Buddhism because they gave birth to sons, thereby enabling them to reach nirvana. Also, Pranee contends that mothers contributing sons to Buddhism caused society to admit the importance of the woman's role as mother as being parallel to the man's Buddhist role, although the woman was not absolutely equal to the man.[224] At the same time, Dhammanandha Bhikkhuni (2007) concludes that women played the part of guardians and promoters of Buddhist culture, as, for example, through the tradition of weaving. It was they who were responsible for designing patterns based on animals from the Tipitaka, or from Buddhist manuscripts, such as the pattern of the naga-mythical snake and lion.

In early manuscripts we find mention of women's duties being granted by Nature, such as the biological role of giving birth, and the analogous reproductive role pertaining to ideas and ideology, both of which arose through raising and educating children.[225] It has been found that one of the most important roles in early society, a very significant role reserved for women, was that of the midwife, or *mae chang* (แม่ช่าง).[226] The *mae chang* was a woman trained to assist in childbirth. Considering that in early societies medical technology was not advanced, childbirth was a very important event in a woman's life. A northern Thai proverb says, "going to war and childbirth are equally dangerous, so take care". In Lan Na, a pregnant woman was traditionally treated with great care, as evident in the commitment devoted to a pregnancy from the earliest stages to post-birth. For instance, a pregnant woman was advised about appropriate nutrition and forbidden to eat certain types of food both during and after the pregnancy.[227] The dangers involved in the delivery resulted in the midwife being the most vital person present, as we can read in *Khao hong hin*[228] (ค่าวหงส์หิน), when Wimala gives a birth to a son, and six midwives assist at the birth.[229]

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[223] From my observation, there are many women's names on the walls of various temples in Thailand, who patronised Buddhism by donating money and valuable things. This was common in the society of the time.

[224] Pranee 2006: 107.

[225] For details see chapter 4.

[226] As to the etymology of the word *mae chang*, from the *Lan Na-Thai Dictionary, Mae Fa Luang Version*; *mae* is a noun with the rendering of endearment to a person who is respected, but also 'mother'; and *chang* is a colloquial word meaning, to be capable of doing something or skilful in something.

[227] See Srilao 1995: 1-29.

[228] This was composed by Phraya Loma Wisai, who was a poet in the Lampang royal court in the mid seventeenth century. It is the story of Prince Hong Hin, who was persecuted by his stepmothers and their

A midwife, or *mae chang*, was responsible for the birth process from just before until just after the delivery, including cutting the umbilical cord, and showering and wrapping the infant. Basically, the *mae chang* used her medical knowledge to take care of the pregnant mother and the new-born baby. For example, she would apply coconut milk if there was not adequate amniotic fluid as a natural lubricant. In addition, I believe that the *mae chang* also acted as a psychiatrist, providing moral support to the woman giving birth because, at the most important moments, comforting words and physical contact, as well as the splashing of holy water on the woman's head, were essential. This helped to sustain her and promote a smooth and safe birth.

Alternatively, the *mae chang* would use her hands to lift up or push the woman's belly to adjust the position of the infant and ease its passage through the birth canal.[230] The important mental and physical responsibilities of the *mae chang* towards mother and infant in childbirth earned her great respect and a high status in society. Her importance can be seen in the fact that, a month after the birth, when the woman had rested and recovered from the birth, she would pay a visit to the *mae chang* as a mark of respect to her. She would prepare some money and consumable goods to take with her, according to her financial status.[231] Being a *mae chang* was considered a privileged female role in Lan Na society.

I have observed that in the Buddhist society of Lan Na women were instrumental in uniting the beliefs of Animism, particularly as a shaman or a spirit medium in fortune-telling and treating illnesses. Considered in terms of anthropology, this can be seen as taking a leadership role in beliefs associated with the supernatural, and can be so interpreted that communication with spirits was for a woman a tool with which to rebel against her inferior status in the religion. Ritual endowed women with authority in their own world. Communication with spirits gave them a function and status equal to that of men.[232]

Moreover, our picture of Lan Na society and its women is marked by their belief in *phi pu nya*, the descent in the household through women's family lines. This society gave women control over their inheritance and made them the centre of family relationships on the mothers' side. As a consequence, I believe that this gave women and mothers the freedom to adopt important roles, and to develop their self-esteem and their

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sons. They tried to harm him and his mother, Nang Wimala, in many ways. In the end, Hong Hin defeats them and becomes king.

[229] *Khao sò Hong hin* 1968: 3.

[230] Manee 1986: 147.

[231] Manee 1986: 143-153.

[232] Sered 1994: 1-12.

willingness to participate in rituals other than the Buddhist rituals. Being a spirit medium was probably also an indication of the freedom that women enjoyed in their social roles.

From surveying documents and interviews, we may conclude that the role of the spirit medium was generally related to being a healer of illnesses. I believe that the belief in healing was associated with the natural role of the woman as the birth giver and chief carer in the family. The opportunity that women had to unite Buddhism with Animism, which was the fundamental ideology, led them to create their role of healer. One interview that I conducted has revealed that the spirit mediums who performed this role were usually women.[233] In addition, they were frequently occupied with taking care of patients such as mothers who were responsible for their family. In contrast to these female spirit mediums, male mediums were generally mediums of the likes of guardian spirits or the spirits of the city, and royal spirits[234] such as *Phi Cao Luang Kham Daeng* (ผีเจ้าหลวงคำแดง), the great guardian spirit of Chiang Mai (see Chalatchai 2002).

Nevertheless, this is merely an observation, because there were female spirit mediums that represented the dominant spirits as well. Conversely, the approach of women's studies on the issue of women and health is to propose that the state of the female spirit medium was created because the inferior status of women in the patriarchal society caused women to suffer more than men. Women had to work hard and tended to get ill more readily. Consequently, they sought a solution to the dilemma of their health. Ultimately, a lot of women became spirit mediums after having suffered the symptoms of illness.[235]

In conclusion, the privileged roles of Lan Na women provide a picture of a society where women played a dominant role in significant areas such as the workplace, the home and the family, whose structure emphasized the status of motherhood and gave precedence to the relatives on the mother's side. This resulted in the high status that women enjoyed in the family, clearly seen in the society of Lan Na. Nevertheless, these special female roles occurred in a parallel relationship with and a negotiable acceptance between men and women because, although society followed a religious ideology that adulated men, women still took part in the religion. That is to say, family and religion were mutually related, particularly with regard to Theravāda Buddhism as practised in Southeast Asia, which worshipped motherhood to a considerable extent. This is evident in stories of the former incarnations of the Lord Buddha, which focus on the gratitude of

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[233] From an interview with Daeng Duangcan, 23rd August 2008.

[234] Chalatchai (2002: 38) refers to an interview with Sagnuan Chotisukharat, who states that the royal spirits were not the spirits of the kings of the city. The words *Phi Cao Nai* (ผีเจ้านาย) (*cao nai* (เจ้านาย) means a royal person) are a distortion of the words *Phi Cao Tham Nai* (ผีเจ้าทำนาย) (*tham nai* (ทำนาย) means foretelling) which refer to someone who can foretell a person's fate.

[235] Whelehan, Patricia et al. (1988), cited in Pranee Wongthes 2002: 128.

the Bodhisattva to his mother, or in examples from literature such as the *Lilit phra lò,* in which mention is made of the greatness of the mother, in the words, "a hundred mistresses cannot be compared to one wife, and a hundred wives cannot be compared to one mother".[236]

Even in the role of uniting Animism with society through communication with the spirits, women applied the major teachings of Buddhism: to obtain the best results in healing the sick they would observe the precepts, only do good deeds, avoid all forms of sin and encourage their patients to follow their example, preserving the precepts, offering food to monks, and showing gratitude to their parents.[237] Similarly, the woman's role as spirit medium concentrated on the mother who helps and nurtures sick children. This was related to Buddhist beliefs which greatly admire the mother who raises her son to enter the monkhood.

The social procedure pertaining to the roles and duties of women in Lan Sang from the thirteenth to the nineteenth century

To study social procedure as it influenced the roles and duties of women in Lan Sang, we need to compare the similarities of the Lan Sang situation with that of Lan Na by looking at two areas. The first area comprises a study of the social strategies that effected the development of beliefs and attitudes of Lan Sang society and influenced the expectations it placed on the female roles and responsibilities associated with family roles. The second area is concerned with Lan Sang women's roles in employing these social strategies to create privileged roles connected with the community.

Social strategies for creating female roles in Lan Sang

To understand the obligations placed on those women it is necessary to consider the social, economic and political contexts that were significant in the development and determination of their roles and duties. This part of the study of the Lan Sang kingdom over the given period will focus mainly on its social and economic circumstances, since the political situation was partly dealt with in chapter 3. In this chapter, therefore, it will be necessary to cover the attitudes and social expectations related to the economic and political context, and how they influenced the performance of family-related and privileged female roles.

The social structure of the Lan Sang kingdom had remained unchanged from its time of independence up to when it became a tributary state of Siam. From the Phra

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[236] From the Thai rhyme, "ร้อยชู้ฤาเท่าเนื้อ เมียตน เมียแล่พันฤาคล แม่ได้". See *Lilit phra lò* 1971: 79.
[237] An interview with Daeng Duangcan, 23 August 2008.

Thammasat manuscript, the ancient law of Laos,[238] we can gain a picture of the social structure of Laos from punishments it ordered, which were determined by the offender's place in the social hierarchy. The system of punishments was similar to that in Lan Na: the higher the person's status, the more severe the punishment. Consequently, the severity of the punishment was also indicative of the person's social status.

In the ancient laws of Laos, such as the Law of Thammasat, edited by Aroonrut et al. (1986),[239] the sentencing of an offender who had committed adultery with another man's wife had three possible outcomes, depending on the nature of the offence. Firstly, in the case of actual sexual abuse (ມິດສາຈານ - *mitsacan*), the level of punishment known as *khan kha khò* (ຂັນຄ່າຄອ) would be called for.[240] Secondly, taking the hand, holding the fingers or touching the body of another man's wife required *khan mai* (ຂັນໄໝ). Finally, a man courting another man's wife, that is, seducing her with words, would incur the punishment of *khan paeng* (ຂັນແປງ). But the severity of punishment also varied with the social status of the offender. *Kotmai phosarat* (ກົດໝາຍໂພສະຣາດ), or the Phosarat Law, edited by Samlit (1996),[241] determines the level of severity of the punishment for adultery in according with *khan mai,* or a fine, the amount of which was based on the social status of the male offender.

It might be said that the higher the offender's status, the more severe the punishment. In any case, whatever the punishment, men were always fined more than women. To illustrate, a man of high rank, for example a patriarch, commits adultery with a woman of a lower rank, such as the wife of a nobleman. In this case, the patriarch is fined forty-five ticals of *khan mai,* while the woman is fined fifteen ticals of *khan mai*. Alternatively, a nobleman commits adultery with a commoner's wife. Here, the nobleman would to be fined forty ticals of *khan mai* while the woman would pay four ticals. Conversely, if a man of low rank committed adultery with a woman of a higher rank, the man would still incur a more severe punishment. To take another example, a commoner commits adultery with one of the King's mistresses. The man is fined forty-five ticals while the woman has to pay fifteen. (In this case they are also punished by *khan ti* (ຂັນຕີ), or flogging: the man receives 500 lashes, and the woman 250. Then they

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[238] See Samlit (1996) and Aroonrut et al. (1996).
[239] Aroonrut et al. 1996: 113.
[240] *Khan* (ຂັນ) is the degree of punishment according to the ancient law of Lan Sang. The Lao Language Dictionary states that *khan* was divided into four levels, *khan kha khò* (ຂັນຄ່າຄອ), *khan mai* (ຂັນໄໝ), *khan paeng* (ຂັນແປງ) and *khan somma* (ຂັນສົມມາ). In the Law of Khun Borom, *khan* is divided into five levels, namely, *khan kha khò* (ຂັນຄ່າຄອ), *khan mai* (ຂັນໄໝ), *khan ti* (ຂັນຕີ), *khan paeng* (ຂັນແປງ) and *khan somma* (ຂັນສົມມາ). Besides this, there is an absolution clause in the Law of Khun Borom (see Mayoury 1996: 76). *Khan kha khò* is the most severe degree of punishment, the death penalty through decapitation. Khan mai is a monetary penalty – reckoned in pieces of silver, cowries or *bat*. *Khan ti* is a beating or a flogging. *Khan paeng* is a fine. *Khan somma* is a fee of honour, comprising a chicken, or a cooked pig, four pairs of candles, beverages, flowers, rice and a symbolic amount of money.
[241] Samlit 1996: 24-28.

are imprisoned for three months, after which they are assigned as *kha taphun ya chang* (ข้าตะพุ่นหญ้าช้าง) to feeding grass to elephants. Only then will they will be released. As to committing adultery with *sao sanom* (ສາວສະໜົມ), or the King's concubines, Mayoury (1996)[242] says that the Law of Thammasat concurs with the Law of Phosarat. It was prohibited for *sao sanom* to commit adultery, in fact it was forbidden for any person even to take a glance at a *sao sanom*. Anyone who did would suffer *khan ti*. Moreover, a noble was appointed to the position of *khun kham* (ຂຸນຄຳ) to guard the *sao sanom* and, if they went out without the king's consent, confine them to the palace.

The Nithan Khun Borom also gives us a picture of the social structure in Lan Sang. The ruling class consisted of the king, the royal family and noblemen such as *cao hua saen thao phaya mün* (ເຈົ້າຫົວແສນທ້າວພະຍາ ຫມຶ່ນ), *khun phan* (ຂຸນພັນ), *khun kwan* (ຂຸນ ກວານ) and *thao phia* (ທ້າວພຽຍ).[243] The ruled class were the common people, comprising the *phai* (ໄພ່), or *phai müang* (ໄພ່ເມືອງ)**,** who were found throughout the Mekong River system. The *phai* were expected to work for the ruling class but were also allowed to farm their own land.[244] The ruled class also contained the *kha* (ຂ້າ), or *khòi* (ຂ້ອຍ), who formed the lowest class in Lao society.[245]

Souneth (1996) mentions that there was not a struggle between classes in Lan Sang society because of the Buddhist belief in *karma*, merit and fate.[246] Moreover, the codes of law such as the Thammasat Luang regulates the rulers should offered *phai* and *khòi* a better life.[247] The Suvannamukha Law says that the rulers (*cao* and *khun*) who ruled the *müang* must not exploit and fine the *phai* and in time of cultivation the rulers must have leave them to tend to their own farms and rice fields.[248] In case of *khòi* the Suvannamukkha law warns the rulers that "do not take *phai* to be *khòi*. If [you] want to take *phai* to be *khòi*, then only select them in four cases."[249]

A study of Lan Sang economic history by Masuhara (2003) proposes that class status and groups in various societies have effects on a range of economic roles. The higher a person's social status, the more affluent they will be. For instance, of all social

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[242] Mayoury 1996: 75.
[243] See Aroonrut et al. 1986: 113 and Mayoury 1996: 75.
[244] Souneth 1996: 414-415.
[245] Souneth 1996: 416.
[246] Ibid: 417.
[247] Samlit 1993: 65, 89.
[248] Samlit 1994: 58.
[249] These four cases are listed as follows: those indebted to someone and unable to pay back what was owed; those convicted of killing someone and who could not pay the fine imposed; those who deserted in war and were recaptured; and those who were conscripted to fight, lost their weapons and could not pay the cost. All inhabitants of neighbouring kingdoms captured in war were reduced to *khòi* immediately, but people of Lao society could become *khòi* only in one of the above four cases. See Samlit 1994: 58.

classes, the king in Lan Sang possessed the ultimate economic status. He took every available opportunity to maintain this status. Meanwhile, members of the royal family and noblemen tried to share in the economic benefits in forms of levy, taxes and profits from trade with other cities.[250] At the same time, the ruled class, who were freemen, were controlled by the government. They were the economic producers for the state. The freemen were responsible for giving levies and were conscripted to serve the royal family and the state. It can also be said that the freemen were significant producers of the consumable goods that fed all the people in the ruling class.

The Suvannamukha Law prohibited a *cao khun* (ເຈົ້າຂຸນ) in charge of a *müang* from exploiting freemen or from collecting farm taxes from them in the first three years of his career. Furthermore, it was compulsory that he collect interest on borrowed money only after three years. This was because of the dwindling numbers of citizens (a common occurrence in cities in the Southeast Asian region) which had demanded a relaxation of the law.[251] This was similar to the regulation in the Mangraisat, which advised avoiding collecting taxes and interest in the first three years. Here too, also because of the falling numbers of citizens, the freemen were vital to the existence of all state systems.

It is generally accepted that the duties of men in this early society arose from being conscripted to serve the state and the royal family. Freemen in Lan Sang were conscripted by order of the King at least once a year. The duration of their conscription was clearly prescribed, as we see, for instance, in the ancient documents classified as *lai cum* (ลายจุ้ม), or *bai cum* (ใบจุ้ม),[252] which relate that, in the reign of King Sethathirat (1548-1571), the King gave the order for two provinces, Müang Waen and Müang Khwang, to conscript freemen (in the original *lai cum*, this is ກວດເສັນເອົາລູກໝູ່ຄ້າ ຕາແສງ). According to the law, if any person violated the stated regulations, he could be punished with any penalty except death. At the end of conscription a freeman could go back to his own work.[253] Also, to give another example, the Lao Thammasat Bulan Law mentions entrusting one's house to relatives for safekeeping while away working for the

[250] Masuhara 2003: 122-126.
[251] Samlit 1994: 58.
[252] The *lai cum* or *bai cum* is a kind of documents made from cotton or silk woven into a long rectangular shape. The majority of its contents refer to royal assignments or the administrative circumstances in the Lan Sang kingdom. The *lai cum* was written with a "crow's beak" pen, i.e. a fine metal nib, in the Tai Nòi script. At the end is the seal of the King or other officers. This researcher has used the *lai cum* comprising sixty-nine copies which are preserved in the National Library of Thailand. These copies were written in the Tai Nòi language and were official documents concerning the administration of Lan Sang from the seventeenth to the mid-nineteenth century. See Phimphan 2000.
[253] *Lai cum* no. 5 *The king of Canthaburi (Vientiane) confered on the rulers named Si Bulom and 4 noblemen of Müang Van in 1800* and *lai cum* no. 6 *The king of Canthaburi (Vientiane) confered on the rulers named Kaeo Bunmi and Sai Sumphu of Müang Khwang Ma in 1800*. See Phimphan 2000: 87, 93.

state (which might include conscription). In the event of an unexpected incident, such as a fire, the relative would be responsible for the damage.[254]

Another of the freeman's duties was to provide levies (ส่วย).[255] Masuhara (2003) explains that there were two levy systems in Lan Sang. In the first, freemen gave levies to their masters. In the second, the tributary governor gave tributes, called *ratchabannakan* (ราชบรรณาการ), to the king as a sign of his loyalty.[256] Which products were to be given in the first system was stipulated in the Law of Suwanamukha. This gives a list of products that freemen were obliged to offer to their masters as levies. They included gold, silver, spears, bangles, chillies, garlic, ginger, onions, rice, honey,[257] etc. Tributes to the king, as stated in *lai cum*, consisted mostly of agricultural and forest products. Masuhara thinks that these products were important in supporting the economic status of the king and the noblemen and would be beneficial for trade. For example, in the reign of King Phothisarat (1520-1548) a royal command was issued ordering tributary states throughout the west, the east, the north and the south to offer tribute in the form of agricultural and forest products such as honey, rhinoceros horn and ivory, as well as other appropriate tributes.[258] In the reign of King Sethathirat (1548-1571), the royal command was given for Müang Waen to offer tribute. They gave agricultural products, animal horns, rhinoceros horn, elephant tusks and elephants. This was collected over a year and then presented to the king,[259] as was the royal custom.[260]

The economic system of the Lan Sang kingdom between the thirteenth and nineteenth centuries was based on agriculture and commerce. The Adinnādāna section of the Law of Thammasat Lao gives a picture of the situation in the agricultural society. Water was essential for production and it was expected that in Lan Sang a functioning irrigation system was in place for agriculture. This is illustrated in the regulations ordering a fine for people who stole water. The severity of the punishment depended on the intention. Stealing water in the daytime, for example, cost five pieces of silver. For stealing at night, on the other hand, the fine was 100 pieces of silver.[261] Stealing agricultural products was also penalised. For example, any person stealing vegetables from a garden, such as cucumbers, betel or sugar cane, would have to pay a fine of five

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[254] Aroonrut et al. 1986: 59-60.

[255] In Lao ancient law and the *lai cum*, we find the word, *nguat nga* (ງ໋ວດງາ - levy) rather than *suai* (ส่วย - levy).

[256] Masuhara 2003: 139.

[257] Samlit 1994: 65,109.

[258] *Lai cum* no. 4. *The king of Canthaburi (Vientiane) confered on a viceroy, 4 rulers and 8 noblemen in 1806*. See Phimphan 2000: 83.

[259] *Lai cum* no. 5. See Phimphan 2000: 91.

[260] In the tradition of offering royal tribute, in the reign of King Sethathirat, it was stipulated that, besides the tribute, honey, silver and three bowls (ຂັນ) of consecrated water were required.

[261] Aroonrut et al. 1986: 63.

pieces of silver.[262] Alternatively, for stealing fish trapped in another person's bamboo fish trap the fine was two pieces of silver.[263]

Moreover, the penalties would increase for stealing agricultural equipment. The thief of a bamboo fish-trap would pay an additional ten pieces of silver. Stealing a plough incurred an extra fine of ten pieces of silver.[264] If a boat was stolen, but then returned to the owner, the thief would have to pay 200 pieces of silver. However, if the boat could not be returned, compensation in the form of another boat in similar condition would be demanded. Alternatively, stealing a boat pole meant a fine of five *bat*, and one *bat* for a paddle.[265] The theft of a knife, an axe, a weeding tool or a spade, with the subsequent return to the owner would mean a fine of two *bat*. If the thief could not return the stolen item he paid an amount equal to the value of the item.

Masuhara (2003) suggests that the establishment of Luang Prabang in the late thirteenth century to early fourteenth century was the result of the economic potential of Lan Sang and some external factors which caused Müang Sawa, or Luang Prabang, to develop into a commercial state. The internal potential of Luang Prabang lay in its being a source of some important goods including valuable metals such as silver, steel, lead and tin, plus some forest products such as gum Benjamin, sealing lac, rhinoceros horn, ivory, deerskin and civet. According to the Lao Thammasat Law, the penalty for stealing bees or honey, which were regarded as a highly valuable forest product, was a fine of five pieces of silver and the return of the stolen beehive to the owner.[266]

Another internal factor of the commercial status of Luang Prabang was that it lay at the transition of the internal transport routes and was the collection centre for all products from northern Laos. The most significant external factor lay in the geographic characteristics of Luang Phabang, which was located between Yunnan, the coast of the Andaman Sea and the Gulf of Thailand. This made it convenient for trade with neighbouring cities. The economic growth of Yunnan during the Yuan Dynasty, in the thirteenth century, the development of transport routes, the stimulation of agriculture and internal and external commerce, as well as the growth of the population in Yunnan caused by the immigration of Chinese people from Central China and Muslims from Central Asia from the mid-thirteenth century onwards, had all stimulated commercial growth in Southeast Asia.[267]

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[262] Samlit 1996: 31.
[263] Aroonrut et al. 1986: 63.
[264] Samlit 1996: 31.
[265] Aroonrut et al. 1986: 63.
[266] Aroonrut et al. 1986: 65.
[267] Masuhara 2003: 13-19.

Later, in the Ming period (1368-1644), we find that Lan Sang was associated with China through being a tributary state and running commercial business.[268] Besides its commercial relationship with China, Lan Sang conducted business with neighbouring kingdoms such as Sukhothai, Ayutthaya and Lan Na. The main feature of this commerce was the bartering of goods, particularly forest products, along the internal transport routes that linked important commercial centres such as the routes from Sukhothai to the coast of the Andaman Sea, from Martaban to the coastal areas of the Gulf of Thailand, and from Ayutthaya, which was the most important port transiting the route from China to India and several states in the West.[269]

The commercial trips of Lan Sang people in the form of long-distance wholesale trade are referred to in the Micchācāra section of the Lao Thammasat Law. It takes the example of the man whose wife has to wait for three years while he is away on a commercial venture. If at the end of these three years he has not contacted her or sent her anything, the marriage will be annulled. The woman may remarry without reprisal. If, however, there is any contact or anything is sent, their commitment stands.[270] Also, in Lao didactic literary works such as *Inthiyan sòn luk* there is mention that a woman should pay respect and give blessing to her husband before he leaves on such a trip. This is believed to ensure his safety and success in his work.[271]

Nevertheless, an interpretation of the commercial pattern of Lan Sang as having been related to the roles between the genders would point to an acceptance of prescribed occupations based on the given roles and duties of each gender. I believe that such an interpretation is not sufficient if there is no consideration of the attitudes and ideas of Lan Sang society concerning women's roles in particular. Walker, in a study (1999) which concentrates on the roles of Lao women in north-western Laos in 1994-1995, argues that women play a major role in the long-distance wholesale trade of goods and produce between the borders of Thailand, China and Laos. He proposes that the mere consideration of gender identities might lead to a misunderstanding of the privileged roles of Lao women and thinks that there should be a parallel analysis of the fundamental ideas of Lao society.[272]

Lifestyles in Lan Sang between the thirteenth and nineteenth centuries were similar to those in Lan Na in the same period. To clarify, Lan Sang's lifestyles were linked to its economic circumstances as an agriculturally subsistent society, which caused the relationships between people in the society to be family and community

[268] Ministry of Information and Culture 1997: 33.
[269] See details in Masuhara 2003: 25-34.
[270] The Lao Thammasat Bulan law 1986: 123 and the Phosarat law 1996: 38.
[271] Thòngkham 1996: 249.
[272] Walker 1999: 95.

orientated. All the members of the community had to help one another in their work. Also, the social structure was one of patronage and kinship, and we can see this in the way *hit sipsòng khòng sipsi*, the customs and traditions of Lao people, reveal the relationships of people in the society. *Hit sipsòng* refers to the traditions which Lao people annually practised on several occasions spread over twelve months. These traditions were created through the cooperation of all the people in the society in their social activities. Alternatively, this may be called *khòng sipsi,* which is a reference to the customs or ways that all people in all classes, including the king, officials, governors and commoners, should practise those traditions. There are fourteen items. They are the duties which every person in the society should adhere to.

a. Lan Sang women's strategies for creating roles related to functions and duties in the family

Lan Sang people spent their lives within a subsistence economy, which moulded their attitudes to and ideas about women's roles and responsibilities. Mayoury (1995) says that Lan Sang was known as "the kingdom of the flirts", and that the original tradition of Laos allowed young people who were over sixteen years of age to openly contact each other at the girl's place of residence, particularly inside the house. Young men would gather at the terrace of a girl's house under the candle light while she was spinning thread, pounding rice or binding tobacco into cigarettes to offer to monks.[273] Etienne Aymonier, who was a member of a French exploration team visiting Laos in the nineteenth century, made some observations about the courtship of women in Laos. In the evening, particularly on a night of the waxing moon, men would gather at a woman's house to pay courtship. They would hop into one house and then another while dancing and singing to the attractive women. This was regarded as a custom by which women's parents allowed their daughters an opportunity of finding a match. However, Aymonier thought that such behaviour posed a risk to women of being harassed by visiting men.[274]

Nevertheless, Lan Sang society expected its women to remain chaste, while still having the above-mentioned opportunities to choose their prospective husbands, just as in Lan Na. A young couple may not do anything to offend *phi hüan* (ຜີເຮືອນ) (the spirit of the house), or, as it was called, *phit phi hüan* (ຜິດຜີເຮືອນ) (to offend the spirit of the house), whether words or deeds that might offend, or getting the woman pregnant. For such a misdemeanour a ritual would be necessary to apologize to the spirit of house and the woman's parents, because it not only negatively affected the woman's family, but also offended the spirit that guarded her house. The penalty, therefore, in the early law,

[273] Mayoury 1995: 45-46.
[274] Aymonier 1996: 107-108.

was determined as a fine, called *paeng hüan* (ແປງເຮືອນ), which was calculated according to the severity of the offence and the social status of the woman. If the man made the woman pregnant during their courtship and the woman sued him, he would be required to marry her (ແຕ່ງດອງ), and if he refused he would have to pay a fine.[275]

Aymonier states that in the nineteenth century the amount of a fine, or *paeng hüan,* varied in each *müang*. Generally, there were three levels of fines. For a female commoner, the man who committed the offence would have to pay one *bat* if he touched her arm or her hand, two *bat* if he touched her waist or breasts, and four *bat* if he did anything beyond this. A woman in a noble household would be of more value, depending on her parents' sense of dignity. In addition to the fine, the man would be required to bring candles and flowers as an offering and to ask the woman's ancestral spirits for forgiveness. As in Lan Na society, we find that Lan Sang women's chastity was protected by the state because, if a woman's parents sued a man who denied the act, the state was able to issue a warrant for the man and force him to pay the determined fine, because this was an accusation that he was not at liberty to deny or resist. Aymonier concludes that this behaviour was beneficial to a woman's family and satisfied the ancestral spirits. The man's improper conduct deserved the given punishment, since not only the spirits of the house might be displeased, but the dignity of the woman would also be diminished.[276]

From fieldwork at Ban Luang, Müang Ngoen, Laos P.D.R.[277] it has been found that a similar tradition of courting existed for at least 100 years.[278] In this tradition, after work on the farm, and having finished dinner, men would go to sing or sometimes to play on wind instruments and visit the houses of women who were working at weaving clothes or spinning cotton thread. The courtship of women was done from 8.00 to 10.00 p.m., or until 12.00 midnight. Courtship among Lao people in Müang Ngoen was similar to that in Lan Na. It was the golden opportunity for young couples to meet and talk; the woman's parents would permit this by staying in the house. Although Lao society believed in the guardian spirits of women, this was not as clearly defined as in Lan Na, with its belief in the ancestral spirits *phi pu nya*.[279]

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[275] Mayoury 1995: 47.
[276] Aymonier 1996: 108.
[277] Müang Ngoen, Xayaburi Province, Laos P.D.R. is a border city connected to Huaikon District, Nan Province, Thailand. Some part of all the citizens in this city are descendants of the Tai Lü people who were forced to migrate when the armed forces of Siam attacked Chiang Tung in 1852. They went from Müang La in Sipsòng Panna. From there, some Tai Lü people settled in the area of Pua District, Nan Province and Chiang Kham District, Phayao Province, Thailand.
[278] From an interview with Phò Nòi Thòng Phommasen, 71 years old, in Ban Luang, Müang Ngoen, Xayaburi Province, Laos P.D.R., 20 September 2008.
[279] From an interview with Ms. Douangdeuane Boonyavong, a Lao academic, 14 February 2008.

From an interview I conducted to collect data for this dissertation I found that Lao people generally call a woman's ancestral guardian spirits *phi hüan* (the spirits of the house and family). *Phi hüan* in Laos, or *phi pu nya* in Lan Na, concerns spirits on the woman's side which observe the behaviour of a young couple for the parents. This places controls on the relationships between women and men with the aim of preventing any abuse. Commonly, people called such abuse *kan phit phi phit sang* (ການຜິດຜີ ຜິດສາງ - offending the spirits) and a man who had done this would have to seek the forgiveness of the spirits and the family of the offended woman by offering flowers, scent sticks, candles, chicken or pork, and a certain amount of money.[280] The social principle connected with the framing of the relationships between men and women, and based on the woman's lineage through a belief in house spirits, is clearly represented in the records of foreigners who visited the kingdom of Laos in the seventeenth century. For example, in reference to marriage among Lao people, Marini expresses the idea that their open contact and liberal cohabitation demonstrate their freedom in selecting their life companions. He further observes that, in spite of the opportunities that society provided, abuse rarely happened.[281]

This courtship tradition provides a picture of the family structure of Lao society, and shows up in the beliefs concerned with women's ancestral spirits. According to the ancient law of Lan Sang, the Lan Sang family was an extended family, and included grandparents, parents and offspring in the same house. The inheritance section of the Phosarat Law regulates the division of inheritance in a family by priority among the relatives. For instance, a person who was related to the grandparents and their relatives would gain one half of the inheritance (50%). This included the offspring of an uncle, an aunt, or a grandparent; relatives of the dead person by another father would receive one half of the first half (25%).[282] Owing to the family structure and its emphasis on the woman's family, a man in Lan Sang had to move into his wife's house when they got married.

The tradition of *kwai phi* (ໄຂ່ຜີ), which was found in both Lan Sang and Lan Na, dictated that the woman had to make the marriage proposal to her prospective husband. This amounted to an invitation to the man to be united with her ancestral spiritual line, and it gives an indication of the role the woman played in the organisation of the family structure. The man as a new member of the family needed to be accepted by the woman's relatives and spirits. The woman making the proposal of marriage to the man implied his formal membership in her family. In the Lao community of Müang

[280] From an interview with Mrs. Samòn Inthasuphan, 45 years old, Ban Hongsa, Xayaburi Province, Laos P.D.R., 19 September 2008.
[281] Marini, Gio. Fillipo de 1998: 16-17.
[282] Samlit 1996: 5-6.

Ngoen, Xayaburi Province, it was the new husband's responsibility to provide the nuptial gratuity.[283] After the marriage, before the man moved into the woman's house, he had to make offerings to her ancestral spirits to ask for permission to dwell in her house.[284]

In the community of Lao people who migrated from Luang Prabang to live in Nam Pua Village, Wiang Sa District, Nan Province,[285] we find traces of this tradition of women making marriage proposals to men. The woman had to prepare some items to pay respect to the man's parents and seek their forgiveness for any misdeeds she may have committed or intended to commit. Then she would ask him to come and live in her house, which was to announce his membership in her household. She had to respect him, because he was responsible for earning the family's living.[286] Nevertheless, the Lao tradition of proposing to the man is rooted in different ideas from those in India, because the family structure there was based on the man's descent, and therefore tended to pay respect to his ancestors. Also, the woman was the one to be accepted by the man's ancestral spirits on moving into his family's house and becoming a member of his household. This Indian tradition is contrary to that found in Southeast Asian societies (for additional information, see chapter 4).

Another interesting aspect that has emerged from this study of Lan Sang society is the way women's and men's duties within the family structure were accepted and shared. In the Lao community of Müang Ngoen, Xayaburi Province, despite the house spirits belonging to the women's ancestral line, the men were allowed to perform the rituals of spirit offering just as the women were. This was different from Lan Na, where the only people with access to these roles and duties were the women. Nevertheless, although this represented an opportunity for men to share in this activity, it was still reserved for the sons-in-law because only they were accepted as members of the woman's ancestral spiritual line. The process of selecting the person to perform the ritual of offering to the house spirits was as follows: first, a random amount of rice was poured onto the prospective person's palm. Then he had to count the grains of rice. If the number was even, he would be asked to conduct the ritual.[287] Traditionally, the offering

[283] From an interview with Phò Nòi Thòng Phommasen, 20 September 2008.
[284] From an interview with Mrs. Samòn Inthasuphan, 19 September 2008.
[285] Nam Pua Village, Wiang Sa District, Nan Province, is a village to where some Lao people from Luang Prabang migrated to settle, while others were forced to move there in the war during the late Ayutthaya period. Later, in the period of Thonburi, five families first settled there, and were then followed by many more. 2009 is the 240th anniversary of people from Luang Prabang migrating to Nam Pua Village. Some attitudes and traditions of the Lao people such as the use of their own language and certain customs still exist there.
[286] From an interview with Phra Khru Wirotnanthakhun, the abbot of Nam Pua Temple, Nam Pua Sub-District, Wiang Sa District, Nan Province, 18 September 2008.
[287] From an interview with Phò Nòi Thòng Phommasen, 20 September 2008.

was performed annually at the time of the New Year (Songkran Festival). The items offered might be pork or chicken, depending on the spirits.[288]

In Lan Sang society, because of the importance of the ancestral line on the woman's side, she played a very important role in the family. As a wife, she was the person who looked after the family finances. How important the wife was can be seen in ancient law, where the qualities of the ideal wife were put into twelve categories. Any man other than her husband who abused any of these qualities would suffer a penalty depending on the qualities in question. For instance, if a man offended a woman in the category of wives who were married officially and within the tradition, he would be fined 122 *bat*. If a man offended a woman in the category of wives bestowed by the king, he would pay twelve *bat*.[289] In the proverbs of *Inthiyan sòn luk*, which say that the relationship between husband and wife should be mutually supportive, the husband is compared to an ox-train and the wife to a cart pulled by the ox. These two things are reciprocally related and sustain the prosperity of the family. Alternatively, the wife is compared to a scented flower and the husband to an insect flying around the flower. This represents the love and nurturing nature of the couple. The work also reminds us that a wife should take care of and serve her husband and be faithful to him.[290]

Similarly, in the Lao work *Thao hung thao cüang*, which Douangdeuane (2004) assumes to have been written by a Lan Sang poet some time between the fourteenth and sixteenth centuries,[291] the character of Nang Sumontha, forced to become the wife of the demon Kumpakan after he has kidnapped her, behaves as a proper wife to him, remaining loyal him to and serving him.[292] This was the attitude of society regarding the obligation of a wife to her husband. Interestingly, this attitude, that wives should respect and be faithful to their husbands, is archetypal in most societies. It was the principal outlook in both Lan Na and Lan Sang.

As a mother, a woman had an important, privileged role as the reproducer of the population and of its ideology. In this early society, where labour was in short supply, just how crucial human resources were can be understood when we look at the law, which determined penalties for the kidnapping or the escape of a servant, and ranked them according to the qualities of the *kha* or *khòi* (servant), and whether he was repossessed or captured, dead or alive.[293] This principle was passed on to following generations, as we can see in a document from the Lao Women's Union, which

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[288] From an interview with Ms. Samòn Inthasuphan, 19 September 2008.
[289] Samlit 1996: 23-24.
[290] Thòngkham 1996: 106-110.
[291] Douangdeuane 2004: 10.
[292] Douangdeuane 2004: 28-30.
[293] See the ancient laws of Laos, such as the Lao Thammasat Bulan Law, the Phosarat Law, the Sangkhapakòn and the Suvannamukha Law.

describes a "motto of three good things and two duties" (ຄຳຂວັນ 3 ດີ 2 ໜ້າທີ່). In the first item, it is the role of women, who comprise half the population, to give birth to the next generation and to tend to family affairs.[294] This is the current policy of the state.[295]

An interesting point of this is that we see the family relationships of Lao people reflected in their acceptance of the respective roles of women and men. Women were the spirits' heirs and were vital for carrying on the matriliny. Even though, in the family setting, it was up to women to provide an income and organise the home economy, there was a harmonious two-sided relationship between men and women, in the case both of the married partners and of their fathers and mothers. In an interview, Phò Nòi Thòng Phommasen (2008)[296] explained the structure of family roles and relationships as follows: basically, in any family, there was a family leader, who was the *phò thao,* or an old man[297] regarded as the senior and most influential person in the family. He oversaw and prescribed the responsibilities of all the members of the family, and particularly determined the household tasks of each son-in-law. This gives a good picture of the circumstances in a society which existed through the influence of matriliny. I have used here the term *phò thao,* which generally refers to an old man who is the father of the wife (i.e., the father-in-law) but in Lao society the words *phò thao* and *mae thao* were commonly used for any old people in the family.

A further feature of this arrangement, where the husband lived in his wife's house, was that he was able to play an existential role in the family's life by working on his wife's land. Particularly in the case of the youngest daughter, who looked after her aged parents and would later inherit the main part of their property, her husband would share in those assets. Other, more senior, daughters and sons-in-law would leave the main house when they were ready. Sometimes, the *phò thao* might not wish them to leave early. Generally, in the interests of family stability, it took something more than five years for a couple to leave the main household.[298] Aymonier (1996) states in his account that the culture of Lao people and those of Southeast Asia meant that a newly

[294] Lao Women's Union 1989: 5.
[295] Lao Women's Union 1989: 1.
[296] From an interview with Phò Nòi Thòng Phommasen, 20 September 2008.
[297] In the Lao language, the word ພໍ່ຖ້ຳ (*phò thao,* or "the old man") means a father-in-law or a wife's father, and the word ແມ່ຖ້ຳ(*mae thao,* or "the old woman") means a mother-in-law or a wife's mother. For a husband's parents, there are ພໍ່ປູ່ (*phò pu,* or the "grandfather") and ແມ່ຍ່ຳ (*mae ya,* or the "grandmother"). However, people in Lao society call old people generally *phò thao* and *mae thao*. When we consider the use of these words, they seem to indicate that Lao society is influenced by the structures of female ancestry. The society also accepts this kind of structure.
[298] From an interview with Thao Humphan Sangmani, 40 years old, Müang Ngoen, Xayaburi Province, Laos P.D.R., 20 September 2008.

married man would remain in his wife's house until the couple had a child or adequate stability.[299]

Tasks frequently assigned to the son-in-law by the *phò thao* included working on the farm and taking care of the family. It was highly probable that a man moved as an outsider into his new wife's house, so he was expected to be considerate towards her and her family and to be diligent in his work. A Lao proverb says: "an outsider who becomes a son-in-law, must be industrious on the farm and in trade", which implies not only that he should not be lazy, but also that he should support his wife's family.[300] The role of the *phò thao* and *mae thao* with regard to their daughter's and son-in-law's relationship is also represented in the Thammasat Luang Law, which recommends diligence and hard work on the man's new wife's land. If he is idle and neglects the work assigned to him by his in-laws or their relatives, then, according to a law known under the heading "the wife's parents and relatives", the wife's parents have the right to send him away and to regard him no longer as their son-in-law.

In the event that a man did not behave as a good husband, in keeping with the expectations of Lao society, that is, "the man has been doing useless work that is unfavourable to living together as a couple", or if he abused his wife by hitting her on a part of the body between the knee and the collarbone, which was regarded as serious, the woman's parents or relatives would first of all have to give him a warning, and then, if he did not improve, but insisted on continuing in his cruel ways, they or the village headman or the sub-district headman would be at liberty to banish him and request the couple's divorce. A punishment might also be ordered, which would be based on the severity of the offence. This was done to prevent repetition of the cruel behaviour or any imitation of it by other people: "the man's punishment is required before banishment; if this is not done, other men will commit such improper acts". When the *phò thao* of a family passed away, his authority was passed on to the eldest son. If there were no son, it would be passed on to the eldest son-in-law.

Furthermore, in Lao didactic literature, such as the *Inthiyan sòn luk* (a father named Inthiyan teachs his offspring), we can read of the roles between husband and wife in relation to the economic situation in Lan Sang society. Here, men and women are shown to accept each other's gender-related functions, the function of the husband (i.e. the son-in-law) being to earn his family's living by, for example, going on trading or commercial trips, or on governmental business abroad. As for the wife, besides taking care of the family, looking after the house and the children, she was expected to perform certain functions which were symbolic of women's special position. The *Inthiyan sòn*

[299] Aymonier 1996: 109.
[300] From an interview with Phò nòi Thòng Phommasen, 20 September 2008.

luk, for example, defined a woman's paying respect to her husband and giving him encouragement in the following terms:

> If the husband travels to trade, the wife should prepare the necessary items [301] and then pay him respect.[302] This will be a great blessing,[303] and bring him good fortune in his business; he will recoup the capital and make a profit. If the wife does not do this,[304] the husband will lose the capital and his profit.

In the social context, this is a reflection of the woman's status as supporter of the family because her actions might be understood as a strategy for maintaining the family relationship between herself and her husband. For example, the conditions of time and distance involved when a man was on a long-distance business trip arise, as we have seen, in the regulations determining divorce. Normally, in both Lan Na and Lan Sang, divorce was granted if there was a break of three years after the husband had left. Hence, it is very probable that the expression of respect and fidelity was a reminder to the husband not to forget his family.[305]

Moreover, didactic literature pertaining to the proper conduct of women points out the characteristics of a good wife in her not only having a beautiful physical appearance, with symmetrical, rounded arms and delicate skin, but also being conscientious in her housework;[306] and, most importantly, she should be kind-hearted, honest and strict in her morals, which was seen as typical of a virtuous and meritorious person who would bring good fortune to her husband and the family.[307] She should be skilled in the management of housework and in production, that is, in the feeding of silk worms, weaving, trading, pottery, making mats, farming, etc. In the Nithan of Khun

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[301] This means, items which, in the wife's opinion, were necessary and appropriate for her husband to take for his consumption during the trip.
[302] This means pressing her palms together as a mark of respect.
[303] This means a great blessing for the husband, to bring him good fortune and success.
[304] In Lao, the word ຄະວ໋າ (*kha lam*) refers to the prohibiting or tabooing of certain things in order to deter people from committing inappropriate acts, either physically, verbally or spiritually. Not adhering to this would bring inauspicious, sinful karma together with disgrace and danger to the doer and his community. Therefore, *kha lam* is a form of prohibition controlling the conduct of people in the society and a criterion for managing their relationships. This is very similar in meaning to the word ขืด, or *khüt,* from northern Thailand. Both ideas can be generally divided, according to related or associated things, into three categories. The first is prohibition associated with people. The second is prohibition associated with places. The third is prohibition associated with time. For instance, taking *kha lam* as applied to a pregnant woman from Lao and *khüt* for a pregnant woman from Lan Na, there are many sayings, such as, "thou shalt not sit in the doorway of your house. This causes a pregnant woman difficulties in childbirth"; and "thou shalt not sit on the steps to the house, nor do embroidery; the result of this is the same as sitting in the doorway of the house".
[305] From an interview with Acan Somcet Wimonkasem, a teacher at Satri Sri Nan School, Müang District, Nan Province, Thailand, 17 September 2008.
[306] Ariyanuwatkhemmacari Thera 1970: 6.
[307] Ariyanuwatkhemmacari Thera 1970: 31.

Bulom, the most important aspect of a woman's education for her married life was maintaining the relationships in the family and accepting the roles of married partners. To illustrate, the wife should serve her husband, should be mature in that she spoke and behaved in a proper manner, should assist her husband on the farm and do the housework, offer food to monks, accumulate merit, and preserve the five precepts, which meant avoiding the following: killing other living things, stealing her husband's property, committing adultery, telling lies, and drinking.

A further interesting aspect to this is found in the teachings of Khun Bulom, which caution against killing a woman, no matter what her crime, referring to a saying from ancient times by a deity called *Thaen fa khün* (ແຖນຟ້າຄື່ນ), which warns that if a king ever kills a woman, the deed will adversely affect the city's stability and prosperity.[308] In this connection, Douangdeuane (2008)[309] points out that, in pre-Buddhist society, women held a considerably high status. Similarly, Mayoury (1995) proposes that pre-Buddhist women were people who integrated human beings' past, present and future with the supernatural. This was accepted by society and became part of the everyday life of the Lao people, manifesting itself in the likes of the worship of ancestral spirits and the woman's role as shaman.[310]

Nevertheless, Douangdeuane (2008) also expresses an opinion about why the Lao feudal society distorted Buddhist teachings to serve the administration and the needs of the ruling class rather than restricting their use to social areas. Douangdeuane does not believe that Buddhism alone could effect a decline in women's status and social roles, and refers to penalties administered in the Adinnādāna section (the section dealing with theft) of the Lao Thammasat Bulan Law: a woman and a man committing the same offence would incur different penalties, that is, a warning for the woman but a flogging for the man. This was so because women were the gender of motherhood, and therefore did not deserve such a severe punishment. This is associated with the instruction given by Khun Bulom to his son and daughter-in-law, that women have been involved in the foundation of society from times past.[311] This aspect will be discussed further below.

Looking at accounts of foreigners who visited the Lao kingdom in the seventeenth century, we find that Marini, for instance, expressed his belief concerning marriage among Lao people that they were at liberty to divorce even for trivial reasons, and were free then to seek new partners. Marini observed that intemperance and libertarianism were inborn in Lao people.[312] Similarly, Aymonier states in one account

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[308] Douangdeuane 1997: 110-113.
[309] From an interview with Douangdeuane, a Lao academic, Vientiane, 14 February 2008.
[310] Mayoury 1995: 9-15.
[311] Douangdeuane 1997: 111.
[312] Marini, Gio. Fillipo de 1998: 16.

that divorce in Lan Sang society was normal and mutually instigated by the husband and the wife.[313]

The reference to such behaviour in the records of these foreigners, considered from the point of view of Europeans observing the culture of Southeast Asian societies (which accepted the roles and decisions in family relationships that could be insinuated from the regulations in divorce law in both Lan Na and Lan Sang, and which also indicated an acceptance of *kham phua kham mia khat* (ຄຳຜົວຄຳເມັຍຂາດ), or the final decision of the couple in the case of, for example, more than three years separation)[314] might lead to the judgment that such conduct led to instability in marriage. However, considered in the social context of Lan Sang, this behaviour indicates how flexible the relationships between men and women were. In reality, divorce in this early society was not easily achieved, owing to the complicated process of negotiation and compromise that the couple had to go through. Just living in the house of the wife and her relatives could lead to a compromise at a certain level.

This can be seen from ideas that have been passed on even to the present day in Lao society concerning the solution of a divorce. There were several steps involved in solving the problem. Firstly, parents and relatives would talk to the couple to try to find a compromise in the serious situation. If they were unsuccessful, some senior villagers, called "the village compromise division" (ໜ່ວຍໄກ່ເກ່ຍຂອງບ້ານ - *Nuai kai kia khòng ban*) would come to talk to the couple. Then, if the situation was still unresolved, the matter would go through the legal system of the city court, or further to the court of the province. However, the problem was generally solved and a compromise found at the first step, or at most at the second step.[315] This shows how, in difficulties in the relationship between a husband and wife, the family and the community placed importance on, and assisted in, solving the problem. Consequently, in reality divorce was no easy matter; at the same time, we see how strong the relationships between married couples were.

Nevertheless, in Theravāda Buddhist societies like Lan Na, Lan Sang or even Siam, Buddhism played an influential role in the determination of roles and functions of women of every status. For example, it was the function of the mother to give birth to and raise her son and support him on the way to entering the monkhood, where he would be educated and pass on the Buddhist doctrine. This was regarded as the ultimate that a

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[313] Aymonier 1996: 109.

[314] See the Phosarat Law, "ຄຳຜົວຄຳເມັຍຂາດ ແລະບໍ່ຂາດ" (the final decision of the couple and the ongoing decision) and the Suvannamukha Law "ຕຳນານຜົວເມັຍຫຍ່ານກັນ" (record of a divorce).

[315] From an interview with Mr. Bounkhong Khuthao, Deputy Director, Department of Information and Culture, Luang Prabang Province, Lao P.D.R., 20 February 2008.

woman could do in her patronage of Buddhism for the accumulation of merit for a better status or to be reborn as a man in the next life.[316]

Andaya (2006) proposes that Southeast Asia was the region that established the mother-child link as the drive of a religious symbolism[317] in which the relationship between mother and child could ensure the further existence of Buddhism. Buddhism did, however, affect the commercial patterns of women limited to short-distance trade.[318] The economic role of women was in the form of petty and localized economy, and resulted from a belief in Buddhism associated with the role of the wife and mother.[319] The woman merchant was a role which showed woman in Buddhism as the nurturing mother of the family. The mother (or the wife) was the producer of goods in the family, such as farm produce or basketwork, which were utilized in the family or sold at the communal market.[320] A woman in the status of mother and wife was therefore the driving force of Theravāda Buddhism in society.

b. Lan Sang women's strategies for creating privileged roles

Although there is some interest in the study of the social roles of Lan Sang women, it is not sufficient when compared to the study of Lan Na women. The problem is the lack of documents and other evidence, especially from the period before the revolutionary changes in Laos in 1975, which had a moderate effect on studies of this subject due to this study concerns about Lao women from history. However, my concern is with the dimension of "privileged roles" that Lan Sang women enjoyed. In part, I have employed a comparative study of the same roles of Lan Na women. I have found that they shared several features because of the similarity in context of these two kingdoms. This I presented in chapter 2. In this section, I would like to demonstrate the characteristics of the privileged roles of women in Lan Sang that show the relationships between those women and society. I have also found that these privileged roles had an effect on the society's existence.

- The politically privileged roles of Lan Sang women

Female characters are represented in many literary writings from Laos, one example of which is *Phün thao hung thao cüang*. The word *phün* may come from a Tai dialect such as Tai Yuan, or the Lao language, where it has the meaning of background, history, or legend.[321] Instances of this are the *Phün Khun Bulom,* or the Chronicle of Lan

[316]Lefferts 1999: 224.
[317] Andaya 2006: 27.
[318] Walker 1999: 81.
[319] Kirsch 1982: 29.
[320] Keyes 1984: 229.
[321] Isan-Thai-English Dictionary 1989: 570, 63.

Sang, the *Phün müang chiang mai*, or the history of Chiang Mai, and the *Phün kò müang*, the legend of the creation of the world, of the Tai Yai (Shan people). Douangdeuane (2004) gives another definition of *phün* from the Lao language: it is a story concerning the lives of people and their city, and contains within its frame of fiction some elements of the truth.[322] If this is so, the subject of women's roles in *Phün thao hung thao cüang* might, interestingly, give us a picture of the privileged roles of Lao women in politics. For example, the case of Nang Meng, who was the *mae phaya*, or ruler of Müang Chiang Khrüa,[323] demonstrates how the legitimate right to govern could be passed on from the husband to the wife because, in this case, the ruler of Müang Chiang Khrüa died and his wife (Nang Meng) acceded to the throne as *mae phaya* (female ruler), going on to rule with absolute authority. If *Phün thao hung thao cüang* is a reflection of the flexibility in the politics of the early period of the Lao establishment, it might offer a significant explanation for the political authority that women held.

Interestingly, in a Lao literary work entitled *Canthakhat* there is a portrayal of several aristocratic women in political positions, such as Mae Nya Suriyo, who was the ruler of Müang Peng Cam, and Nang Phommacali, who governed Müang Anurat. When she was queen, Nang Phommacali went to war, driving fighting elephants against the elephants of Phaya Phaiyasan, who was leading an armed force to attack her city. The queen won a victory over him. Interestingly, this work accepts the woman's political role as queen, as shown in the defiant words, "How dare he attack me with elephants! I was born a mere woman. I am not a man like this king." It also tells us that "the queen swings her halberd and chops on the right".[324] Such examples point to the queen's sound ability as a warrior.

The politically privileged roles of Lao upper-class women in history have two aspects to them. The first is of a political role which differed from that in Lan Na. An aristocratic woman in Laos could not ascend the throne as queen. Women tended to exert their influence from behind the throne or in political movements. For instance, Thòngsüp (1985)[325] and Maha Sila (1964)[326] both report that King Fa Ngum (1353-1373) led an armed force, one year into his rule, to attack Chiang Saen. This took two years, and in the meantime he assigned Kaeo Kengya, his wife and a daughter of the Khmer king, to govern the city. At the time, she was three months pregnant.

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[322] Other words composed with *Phün* include *Phün wiang can*, *Phün phra bang*, and *Phün müang sua.* Douangdeuane says that these also provided historical information. See Douangdeuane 2004: 13.
[323] It may be assumed that this is the Chiang Rai or Chiang Saen of present-day Thailand.
[324] Amphònlak 1998: 22, 29-30.
[325] Thòngsüp 1985: 45.
[326] Maha Sila 1964: 30.

There is a similar incident in the history of Laos from the fifteenth century. This is the case of *Mahathewi*, who was politically influential from 1428 to 1438. Although there have been questions concerning her identity, as we have seen,[327] whoever the person behind the political chaos was, she seriously impacted the administration of Laos. Accordingly, Stuart-Fox (1993) refers to the indigenous chronicle of Laos in connection with Mahathewi's interference in the male world of politics. This interference had such a serious effect, that it almost brought down the kingdom's administrative system. It left an indelible mark on history, and the period has become part of the oral tradition of folktales and legends. *Mahathewi* has been identified with the evil crone or the legendary demon *phi kong kòi*, who killed a royal descendant and destroyed his government.[328] She was sentenced to death.[329] In a similar case of female political interference, during the rebellion over the throne on the death of King Phothisarat, the mother of Phra Lan Sang (another prince) conspired with noblemen to seize the throne from King Sethathirat; she was, however, defeated. From these events we can see that, although in Lao history there were no queens as there were in Lan Na, aristocratic women did figure in royal court proceedings, particularly *Mahathewi*, or the Queen Mother, who held a significant position in the politics of the two kingdoms.

The second feature, which is a female political role reported in the histories of Lan Na and Lan Sang, has to do with the part played by aristocratic women in forming bonds of kinship between states. In the case of Lan Sang, from the first founding of the kingdom in the reign of King Fa Ngum, the king established a relationship with his powerful neighbour, the king of the Khmer kingdom, by marrying his daughter, Princess Kaeo Kengya. Documents from the reign of King Sam Saen Thai tell of the offering of the daughters of the kings of several cities to cement relations of kinship with Lan Sang. The Lao documents also inform us that the King of Chiang Mai, in the reign of King Ket Chettharat, needed to establish a relationship with Lan Sang (then under King Phothisarat). The King offered his daughter, Princess Yòt Kham Thip, as a consort to the King of Lan Sang, together with servants and slaves.[330] There were many similar cases, such as that of Cao Còm Manda Thòng Suk, the daughter of King Inthavong (1795-1803); or of the king of Vientiane's daughter when it was a tributary state of Siam, who formed an alliance of kinship with King Rama I of Siam; and of Princess Duang Kham (a niece of Cao Anu), who was a concubine of King Rama IV at the time that Vientiane was a Siamese tributary state.[331]

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[327] See Stuart-Fox 1993, and see also Souneth 1996.
[328] Stuart-Fox 1993: 107-108.
[329] Maha Sila 1964: 55.
[330] Ukham 1958: 66.
[331] Samlit 1971: 133.

Nevertheless, it has been found that there was an adjustment of attitude toward the political role of Lao aristocratic women, which seems to have led to an emphasis in their role in family care. In an interview in 2008, Kongdeuane Nettavong described the role of aristocratic women in Laos during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. It was a tradition that aristocratic women in the inner part of the palace, everyday from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m., would attend a monk's sermon in the temple (ฟังไธฯ). Through this, women acquired knowledge and memorized the sermons to pass on to their children.[332]

This is found in statements in didactic documents about women in Laos that were written in Lan Sang from the fourteenth to the late seventeenth century. These were literary writings concerned with the precepts of Buddhism, written with the purpose of spreading ethical principles in society. Didactic literature concerning women focuses on female functions and roles in terms of housework and taking care of the family. Because this kind of literature was widely represented and accepted in society, as seen, for example, in *Inthiyan sòn luk*,[333] it is most likely that the ideology regarding women and their social roles and functions in the family was widespread and defined the social expectations placed on women of every class and status.

The above-mentioned female political roles indicate how authority was established in an administrative system which bestowed power on the king through Buddhist beliefs, especially among the diversity of previous groups and beliefs such as Animism. The employment of Buddhism as a tool was necessary in the centralization of beliefs and for the establishment of authority in the king's administration during the early period of the kingdom. Most of the historical evidence places emphasis on the role of Queen Kaeo Kengya, the Khmer consort of King Fa Ngum, who introduced Buddhism from Khmer into Lan Sang by denying the existing indigenous rituals and Animism while establishing herself as a patroness of Buddhism.[334] This was similar to the way administrative devices were created in the founding of the Hariphunchai kingdom. The Camathewiwong (the Chronicle of Queen Cāma) reports that the queen of Lawo came to govern the local people in Hariphunchai. Queen Camathewi employed Buddhism as a tool to unite various groups of people and, because she was an outsider, established it as the official religion to support her authority. She ruled using Buddhist discipline and built monasteries in order to centralize the religion and support her administrative authority. Aristocratic women also played a role in patronizing Buddhism through donating land and servants to monasteries and erecting Buddhist temples and images. Because of the important role Buddhism played in creating the king's

[332] From an interview with Mrs. Kongdeuane Nettavong, the Director of the National Library, Laos P.D.R., 13 February 2008.
[333] Nu 2000: 68.
[334] Souneth 1996: 193-194.

legitimacy and the administrative system, Queen Kaeo Kengya is considered to have played a significant part, politically, in maintaining the institution of kingship.[335] In return, the royal institution patronized the *Sangha*.[336]

Women even made an important contribution in establishing and supporting the political and religious stability of Lan Sang through their patronage of Buddhism. On the other hand, Mayoury (1995) expresses the view that Buddhism, which was firmly established in Lan Sang by the fourteenth century, adversely affected women, particularly in the degradation of their status, seen explicitly in the regulation of the laws, customs and traditions.[337] In her investigations of examples from Lao literature such as Nang Mathi [338] in the *Wetsandòn chadok* (Vessantara Jātaka), assumed to have been written in the fifteenth century in the reign of King Wichunrat, Douangdeuane (1994) proposes that that century was the golden age of Chiang Thòng. It was a time of feudal expansion, which also resulted in a degradation of women's roles, and these were reflected especially in social attitudes which did not admit the status of a divorced woman. A young divorced woman walking in the street would be insulted. In Douangdeuane's analysis this attitude was the reason for Nang Mathi going on a journey with Phra Wetsandòn when he was banished from the city, because she could not live in the city as a divorcee. She concludes that the status and the roles of women were dependent on men.[339]

Nevertheless, I believe that the absolute acceptance of Buddhism in Lan Na and Lan Sang from the fourteenth century was a kind of social complication which may have effected an alteration in the natural balance between the sexes, based on men's creation of power through the devices of Buddhism and the administration. This alteration can be clearly seen in the present day.

- Privileged roles of Lan Sang women in the economy

Related documents have shown that, in general, the part women played in the economy of Southeast Asia was regarded as a distinguished and privileged role. Some observations have been made with regard to the fact that ethnic Tai women tended to dominate the household economy. The role they played here was to save money, earn extra income by trading household products, work on the farm, do the housework, and instruct the children. Formoso (2007) refers to accounts of foreigners who travelled to Southeast Asia in the nineteenth century and makes the point that Westerners thought of

[335] Grabowsky 2007: 127-128.
[336] Grabowsky 2007: 133.
[337] Mayoury 1995: 9-10.
[338] Also called LadyMatsi in Thai.
[339] Douangdeuane 1994: 23-26.

women in this region as having a sense of responsibility and being docile, shrewd and diligent, while men had the opposite characteristics of indolence and ignorance.[340]

The Lan Sang economy between the thirteenth and nineteenth centuries was one of production for the subsistence of the family and the community. Surplus products were sold to the state or paid as tax. The main products came from agriculture, the forest, handicraft and fishing. We can gain a picture of this production from the regulations in Lao legal writings such as the Thammasat Bulan Law. This mentions, for example, the employment of children or servants (*khòi*) to climb coconut, sugar palm and orange trees, etc.[341] It also mentions penalties: a person who steals a big knife (*phra*), an axe, a weeding tool or a spade will be fined two *bat*.[342] It also gives regulations for the hiring of animals such as elephants, horses, cows, buffalos, etc.[343] In the Suvannamukha Law the following regulations appear: if someone steals cattle he will be imprisoned for thirty days. For the theft of pigs, dogs, ducks, chickens, birds, fish, rice from farms, rice from the field, raw betel nuts, betel or coconuts, he will spend thirty days in jail. Alternatively, someone stealing a harrow, a plough, a weeding tool, a spade, a big knife or an axe will go to prison for twenty days.[344]

Such regulations can be seen in all ancient laws in Laos, which clearly portray the lifestyles and economic systems associated with agriculture because offences in those areas directly affected people's lives and the government was bound to enact laws to deal with them. Also, there were large amounts of agricultural and forest products in the kingdom, as demonstrated in "The Universal History". This relates that, while Chiang Mai had lots of copper and gum benjamin and ordered precious metals, silk clothes, musk and peppers from Chinese merchants, Lan Sang had a reputation for its production of gum benjamin, insect lac, ivory, rhinoceros horn, fish, honey, wax, cotton, gold, iron, lead, salt, silver, tin, timber, "excellent rice", fruit, buffalo, oxen, etc.[345]

Commerce and bartering in the Lan Sang kingdom might be divided into the long-distance wholesale form and the communal wholesale form. The long-distance form consisted of trade with other kingdoms. Chinese historiography, referring to this,

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[340] Formoso 2007: 56.
[341] Aroonrut 1986: 51.
[342] Ibid: 64.
[343] Ibid: 86-88.
[344] Samlit 1994: 69-70.
[345] *The Universal History*, or *The Modern Part of a Universal History*, was a 65-volume history of the world published in London between 1747 and 1768. Contributors included George Sale, George Psalmanazar, Archibald Bower, George Shelvocke, John Campbell and John Swinton. Although limited to the point of view of the European imperial powers at that time, it was one of the first works to attempt to unify the history of Western Europe with the stories of the world's other known cultures. The purpose of the part published in 1759 was to re-examine the notion of Universal Historiography with a focus on the reaction between Europe and the mainland of Southeast Asia by collecting documents of European merchants who travelled Southeast Asia and publishing them. Quoted from O'Donovan 2002: 151,162.

mentions relations between Laos, Müang Cam, and Jiao Jou,[346] It explains that Laos had rhinoceros, elephants, gold mines, silver mines, and "fierce people".[347] There was also trade with Khmer, Siam, and Burma. In the seventeenth century, when King Suriyawongsa Thammikarat was on the throne, an initial group of merchants went to trade with Laos, led by Van Wuysthoff, a Dutch merchant from Batavia, the capital of Indonesia in the colonial period. The group went to trade and to investigate the commercial situation in Laos. In his account of the trip, Van Wuysthoff says that Vietnamese merchants brought silk clothes to sell in Laos, and purchased horses, deer horn and rhinoceros horn to sell in Vietnam.[348] The merchants who conducted the long-distance trade were generally male. One party on a trip to purchase elephants from Laos, which they needed for such purposes as dragging logs and carrying rice, consisted only of men.[349]

Suvannamukha Law decreed that if a man left his wife to go on a long-distance trip and did not return, or took another wife, his wife could marry another man, who could help with her parents' work without blame.[350] This is reported in the Thammasat Law, which also cites the similar case of the husband who leaves his wife on a long-distance business trip and neither returns nor takes another wife. In this case, after three years without any notice from the husband, the wife is permitted to remarry.[351] At the same time, it is generally accepted in the academic field that women in Southeast Asia played a considerably important role in the communal wholesale business. To illustrate, European and Chinese merchants who came to trade in Southeast Asia frequently conducted their trade with female domestic merchants.[352] Even in Laos, women played a vital role in domestic trade,[353] since they frequently did not travel outside the village, but would do their trade in the community instead. This can be seen from the presence of female merchants at any village market.[354] Some female merchants did, however, also take part in long-distance trade.[355]

Forest products were usually collected for trade or for paying tributes. Some were for household consumption.[356] The most important forest products were

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[346] The official documents of the Ministry of Information and Culture (1997: 48) assume that this would be in the area of Yunnan, closed to the border of Laos at present.
[347] Ministry of Information and Culture 1997: 33.
[348] *Le Journal de Voyage de G. Van Wuysthoff et de ses Assistants au Laos (1641-1642)* 1986: 124-125.
[349] From an interview with Mr. Bunlert Khamrüang, 87 years old, Nam Pua Village, Wiang Sa District, Nan Province, 16 September 2008.
[350] Samlit 1994: 91.
[351] Aroonrut et al. 1986: 123.
[352] Reid 1988b: 634.
[353] Mayoury 1995.
[354] From an interview with Mrs. Douangdeuane Boonyavong, 14 February 2008.
[355] Walker 1999.
[356] Suwit 2000: 142.

cardamom,[357] wax, lac, ivory, animal horns, rhinoceros horn, animal skins such as rhinoceros, deer, tiger and elephant, and peacocks' tails.[358] The importance of forest products may be deduced from the taxes collected from the tributary states of Siam. Evidence shows that tax collecting had been carried out since the late Thonburi period in 1781. King Thonburi put the governor of Müng Attapü in charge of the Lao *kha* to get them to create a royal tribute of gold costing six *chang*[359] for presentation to Siam.[360] The forest products that Siam always demanded as a tribute from Laos were cardamom, lac and wax,[361] but they also took hemp, silk, teak logs, silver, and other things.[362]

Besides materials, tribute could also be paid in labour, which was rendered in the Siam document by the term *phrai suai* (ไพร่ส่วย).[363] As stated in the Historical Record of King Rama III, a census revealed that there were 1,280 *phrai suai* in the Lao area of Attapü in 1830.[364] Also, in Champasak in 1832, for example, 3,203 men were engaged in the farming of rice.[365] Furthermore, documents like the Nithan Khun Borom cite the demand of corvée from the cities that were defeated by King Fa Ngum. These cities included Müang Prommathat, Müang Krabong, Müang Champa Nakhon, Müang Hin Bun, Müang Phra Nam Hung and Müang Phuan.[366] Conversely, the tributary states had to send men and women as hostages to the overlordship. This was a kind of conscription since the men were used as troops in warfare. The ruler of Müang Wiang Can conscripted two hundred thousand men to fight against the army of King Fa Ngum.

In addition, ancient law such as the Lao Thammasat Bulan alludes to the conscripted person who asks a relative or neighbour to look after his belongings in his absence. In the case of a fire, the responsible person would not be blamed for the loss.[367] Similarly, in the case of state conscription, a man could order a servant who was in debt

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[357] Cardamom (เร่ว) is called *mak nang* (ໝາກຫ່ງ) in Laos. The fruit of the cardamom comes from the tree of the same name. The tree grows in the forest. It is a medicinally beneficial plant, common in Laos and northeastern Thailand. Siam therefore ordered Laos to offer cardamom as tribute together with silver and honey as a priority (see Suwit 2000: 74).
[358] Mouhot 1992: 112.
[359] A unit of Thai weight equal to 600 grams.
[360] Toem 1987: 62.
[361] *Cotmai het ratchakan thi 3* [The Historical Record of King Rama III], lesser year 1198 (1836) No. 38, 39 cited in Toem 1987: 73.
[362] *Cotmai het ratchakan thi 3* [The Historical Record of King Rama III], lesser year 1195 (1833) No. 19, 28 and Còtmai het ratchakan thi 3 [The Historical Record of King Rama III], lesser year 1198 (1836) No. 8, 11 cited in Toem 1987: 73.
[363] Those who pay a tax and gain exemption from military service to the Crown.
[364] *Cotmai het ratchakan thi 3* [The Historical Record of King Rama III], lesser year 1192 (1830) No. 14 cited in Toem 1987: 82.
[365] *Cotmai het ratchakan thi 3* [The Historical Record of King Rama III], lesser year 1194 (1832) No. 46 cited in Toem 1987: 82.
[366] Souneth 1996: 161-165.
[367] Aroonrut et al. 1986: 59-60.

to him to fight in the war in his stead.[368] The Suvannamukha Law also has references to men being conscripted to royal business or affairs of state, such as going to war or serving as corvée. Here, if at the end of the conscription period the man did not return nor had taken another wife, his wife would not be allowed to remarry, and would be fined if she violated the regulation, because her husband had been involved in state business. On the other hand, if he did marry another woman within the three years, the wife was permitted to remarry.[369]

The conscription of freemen in the above-mentioned cases led them to be dependent, and to migrate to other areas where they were stationed. Conversely, women were independent and settled. Therefore, they were mainly in charge of the production and earning the family's living, paying the taxes and conducting trade. Inevitably, the charge of women was therefore to take care of the family during their husbands' absence on conscription or on long-distance business trips. State conscription for labour such as the building of facilities might take fifteen to twenty days. For long-distance work the men would have to make overnight stays. They would have to bring their own provisions. Sometimes, if the place where they worked was not too far away, their wives would bring them food.[370]

The role of the female merchant (แม่ค้า) was associated with Buddhism. The woman in Buddhism had the image of the nurturing mother; and the mother was responsible for family matters and production.[371] Communal trade therefore became the economic role associated with this image, and, as in Lan Na and Siam, the social attitudes towards this image may have led Lao women, within the concept of Theravāda Buddhism, to take on this important economic role.

Nevertheless, Lao women's special role in the economics of the country was portrayed from a different perspective by Walker (1999) in his discussion of the long-distance business trip in northeastern Laos. Women played a considerably significant part in this kind of commerce. In spite of the picture that we have of women in business in contemporary times, we may believe that Lao society in the past allowed women this privilege. Walker explains this phenomenon as the effect of cultural spaces. For example, on long-distance business trips women generally had fewer problems with alcohol, gambling and infidelity than men. This is evident from the divorce sections of

[368] Ibid: 1986: 97.
[369] Samlit 1996: 38.
[370] From an interview with Mr. Bunlert Khamrüang, 16 September 2008. He said that in his father's generation the state annually collected a capitation of four *bat* from commoners. If a man could not afford that amount of money, he would be conscripted to public work for a designated duration.
[371] Keyes 1984: 229.

early law documents. A condition for divorce was that a husband had departed on a long-distance trip, taken another wife and not returned home after three years.

Apart from this, and the conscription of men as mentioned above,[372] there was another problem which had an economic effect on the Siam government when collecting taxes from able-bodied males.[373] The problem was that able-bodied men would get married to women in other *müang*, where the citizens paid lower taxes. This was called *khoei su* (ຂ ີ ຍ ່) because of the Lao tradition, similar to that in Lan Na, of a new son-in-law, or *khoei*, moving into his wife's parents' house. A lower-tax-grade *müang* would be attractive for an able-bodied male, who would benefit from marrying and settling there (to the Government's disadvantage).

So the numbers of able-bodied males in some cities declined and the amount of tax collected declined accordingly.[374] Sometimes, a lot of able-bodied males who became *khoei su* escaped the system and could not be found, so the state was not able to retrieve its estimated amounts of tax. Furthermore, because women were better at organising the family finances,[375] and because of their qualities as providers, they were the more appropriate choice for managing home economics. Otherwise, because of certain limits, women rarely engaged in long-distance business. Walker thinks that the most important factor in those limits was the nature of motherhood, particularly the mother's concern for her offspring if she had to leave her family for a long period on such a trip. There were also the factors of inconvenient transport, such as sleeping on a ship, and the general dangers of travel.

Besides this, from data collected at Müang Ngoen, Xayaburi Province, Laos, it has emerged that, in the commercial undertakings on the borders of Thailand and Laos, the majority of merchants were women, both youngsters and adults.[376] The products in this area were hand-woven clothes, agricultural products and manufactured goods. Mrs. Samòn Inthasuphan, a Hongsa villager, explained in an interview how she herself has made the trip from Müang Hongsa to trade at the border of Nan Province in Thailand since 1994, when the commercial borders between Thailand and Laos were opened. In 2008, she opened a guesthouse to accommodate tourists and foreign businessmen,

[372] From an interview with Mrs. Douangdeuane Boonyavong, 14 February 2008.
[373] "Able-bodied males" here meaning taxpayers with exemption from recruitment.
[374] Suwit 2000: 87-88.
[375] From data collected in interviews with people in some provinces in northern Thailand, such as Chiang Mai and Nan, and some in Laos, such as Vientiane, Luang Prabang and Xayaburi, it seems that most men accepted the role of women in taking care of and running the family economy, and they believed that this was normal in family life and in society.
[376] From an interview with Thao Humphan Saengmani, 40 years old, Xayaburi, Lao P.D.R. , 20 September 2008.

especially Thai people visiting Müang Ngoen and Müang Hongsa. Her husband and two daughters assist her in the business.[377]

Observations by Western travellers on the qualities of Southeast Asian women in their economic role explicitly refer to the economically privileged positions of Lao women.

- Socio-culturally privileged roles of Lan Sang women

The social dimension of Lan Sang women's privileged roles presents some interesting aspects. Perceived through literature, the woman holds the supreme position in the family as the person who unites all family relationships. For instance, works such as Campa Si Ton and Sinsai project the role of the mother who reconciles the status of her own children with the rest of the family. This becomes evident in the plots of these two stories. A mother is expelled from the city because she has given birth to an animal. In Campa Si Ton this is a dog; in Sinsai it is a conch and a lion. This results in a difficult life for both the mother and her offspring. In the end, these offspring overcome some predicament and return to the city. The mother is also asked by her husband to return.[378] Alternatively, Nang Phawadi is the role model of Lao women in a didactic work for women written in the period of colonization[379] which offers another function of the good housewife. This is to develop relationships between her own relatives and those of her husband. In this case, Nang Phawadi unites her and her husband's families through generosity, service and her utmost respect to them.[380]

Another socially privileged role of Lao women lay in the important cultural skill of weaving. This was a typically female characteristic. Lefferts (1993) proposes that a special function of the women of Tai culture who practised Theravāda Buddhism also lay in their ability to weave. Lefferts goes on to illustrate this with the example of woven clothes employed at funerals, which reflected the social and financial circumstances of the deceased person's children. Above all, weaving could determine a family's status because only the women practised it.[381]

Data collected from an interview at Tha Fa Tai Village, Chiang Muan District, Phayao Province, Thailand,[382] revealed that Tai Lü women enjoyed a distinguished

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[377] From an interview with Mrs. Samòn Inthasuphan, 45 years old, Hongsa villager, Xayaburi, Laos P.D.R., 19 September 2008.
[378] Somsanouk 2000: 43-59.
[379] From an interview with Ms. Kongdeuane Nettavong, 13 February 2008.
[380] P.S. Nginn 1967: 11.
[381] Lefferts 1993: 123.
[382] An interview with the abbot of Tha Fa Tai Temple revealed that Tai Lü people in Tha Fa Tai Village, Chiang Muan District, Phayao Province, moved from Sipsòng Panna to Nan. Tai Lü people migrated to Tha Fa Tai Village in 1768 because of the fertility of the region around the Yom River, which crossed over the area. A great deal of Tai Lü culture is preserved in this village, such as the teaching of the Lü

position by virtue of their skill in weaving clothes. When a couple got married, the women of the village wove items such as blankets, mattresses, pillows, bed sheets and mosquito nets for use in the house of the newly-wedded couple. They also wove clothes for the other members of the family. Another important matter was the weaving of flags. This is considered to have been the most important tradition of the Tai Lü people in Tha Fa Tai Village, where the people still make flags for monks to use in important religious ceremonies.[383]

I observed in the Tha Fa Tai Temple that there were hand-made flags with Tai Lü patterns. These patterns were reminiscent of animals such as peacocks and elephants, and palaces. Great numbers of flags were hung in the Buddha image hall. Weaving is symbolic of women's socially privileged status. Clothes are one of the four fundamental elements in human beings' existence, and in the past women dominated the production of those four fundamental elements. Hand-woven clothes were used at many special occasions such as wedding ceremonies, offerings of food to monks and the ceremony at a person's entry into the monkhood, where the mother was in charge of weaving her son's monastic robes and other necessary items. This was regarded as a source of great merit for the mother in her promotion of Buddhism.[384]

In the case of Laos, we find instructional works of literature for women on the subject of weaving, such as a story in *Inthiyan sòn luk* which instructs women to make cotton clothes while men court them.[385] Similarly, other Lao teachings concerning married women not only require them to have good manners, be softly spoken and run a tidy house, but they also have to know how to gin cotton and push it into neat threads, after which they have to take those threads and weave them into various patterns.[386] Similarly, in Nam Pua Village, Wiang Sa District, Nan Province, Thailand, to where many Lao people from Luang Prabang migrated from 1768 onwards, it has been found that it was women's responsibility not only to work in the rice fields but also to grow cotton trees and feed silk worms to produce silk for the family's upper and lower garments, loincloths and other clothing.[387]

Language at Ban Tha Fa Tai School on Tuesdays, and the weaving of Tai Lü patterns on clothes. Above all, the architecture of the temple contains Tai Lü Sipsòng Panna patterns. From an interview with the abbot of Tha Fa Tai Temple, Tha Fa Tai Village, Chiang Muan District, Phayao Province, 10 March 2007.

[383] From an interview with Mrs.Cam, a Tha Fa Tai villager, Chiang Muan District, Phayao Province, 11 March 2007.

[384] From an interview with Mrs. Bua, a Tha Fa Tai villager, Chiang Muan District, Phayao Province, 11 March 2007.

[385] Naphaphòn 2005: 19.

[386] Thòngkham 1996: 6.

[387] From an interview with Mr. Bunlert Khamrüang, 16 September 2008.

The socio-culturally privileged roles of Lao women are frequently presented through the image of a person who unites supernatural power and human beings. For example, *nang thiam,* or shamans, are important in healing and fortune telling.[388] In Laos, before the introduction of Buddhism, women were looked upon as goddesses, particularly guardian goddesses. To illustrate this, in the chronicle of Luang Prabang, fifteen naga (serpent deities in Buddhist mythology) are charged with protecting and guarding the city. There are many female naga households such as Nang Dam and Nang Phomfüa.[389] Field research has revealed a statue of Nang Phomfüa; she was one of the guardian naga who protected Luang Prabang in the area close to Luang Prabang city hall. Moreover, in the Lao belief system, women were employed as symbols of protection through goddesses such as Nang Kosop, the guardian goddess of rice. Considering that Lao society was an agricultural society and rice was the main product for survival and commerce, we can see an acceptance of women's status and the worship of them as the protectors of society. Importantly, the belief in the female agricultural protector was typical of agricultural societies along both sides of the Mekong River and some ethnic groups in Vietnam.[390]

I think that the role of women is naturally associated with the function of nurturing and protecting society. That role can be seen in the beliefs and rituals of Lao people concerning birth through the principle of *khwan* (ຂວັນ) or "morale". *Khwan* is believed to be inborn in everyone from their time in the womb. During pregnancy, regulations known as *khalam* guide the pregnant women and her husband, and others guide them in the period after the birth and when the infant is being nurtured. These are meant to protect and maintain the confidence and self-esteem of the child until it is grown up.[391] I believe that it is quite plausible that the natural function of the woman as mother is to nurture and protect, and that this concurs with the ideas and beliefs of society concerning the goddesses who carried out this role. In Laos and the surrounding areas these ideas and beliefs continue to be practised.

Further social roles of women are that of the midwife, the medicine woman and even the patroness of Buddhism through the support of their sons in entering the monkhood, offering food to monks, and providing assistants to help in religious ceremonies, etc.[392] A woman's privileged roles are connected with her social functions.

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[388] Mayoury 1995: 13 and Andaya 2006: 39.
[389] From an interview with Mr. Bounkhong Khutthao, Deputy Director, Department of Information and Culture, Luang Prabang, Lao P.D.R., 20 February 2008.
[390] Mayoury 1995: 16-17.
[391] Platenkamp 2007: 3-4 and see details in Platenkamp 2007.
[392] From field research conducted in Vientiane, Luang Prabang, Müang Ngoen, Müang Hongsa, Laos, such as that at the Amphai Temple, Luang Prabang on Makabucha Day (a Buddhist holiday which takes place annually on the night of the full moon during the third lunar month of the year), or *Bun Khao Ci* in

For instance, if we take the role of the medicine woman, in Luang Prabang it seems the majority of people responsible for healing the sick were women. Furthermore, these practices were passed on by women. The mother of the vice director-general of the Department of Culture in Luang Prabang, for example, is a medicine woman, and treats people's common complaints with herbs in recipes that have been passed down in the family.[393] Alternatively, the midwife's important role, bestowed on her by society, consists in the function, particular to women, merely of assisting at the birth of a new member of society. Society accepts not only the role of the woman as a skilled practitioner, but also her social relationships. In the context of Theravāda Buddhism, the image of woman as the giver of birth and nurturer of her offspring is manifested in her social roles in healing and assisting at birth as a midwife. It seems that these privileged roles were reserved for women in Lan Sang and Lan Na.

One thing, however, demonstrates the importance of women's roles in society more than any others. Mayoury (1995) argues that a woman's task of uniting the spiritual world with the actual world in her role as shaman was regarded as the most significant for society. It led the Lao woman to become a symbol of the supernatural, and it was a most effective strategy for creating privileged social roles because a woman's power in healing and foretelling the future gave her a role in establishing social stability. To clarify, a shaman's foretelling of the future is not only a psychological therapy against the suffering in life which Buddhism aims to avoid, but it also the creates a continuity in the belief system and gives people an appreciation of their place on the historical time line.[394] Since people are usually concerned with the future, a shaman can be seen as playing a part in establishing psychological stability in society.

Although the privileged role of women in bringing the supernatural and the actual world together tended to be outside mainstream beliefs and the doctrine of Buddhism, there was, on a practical level, an attempt to compromise between the two. In her role as a shaman, a woman also had to know and maintain the Buddhist precepts. For example, in Nam Pua village (Wiang Sa District, Nan Province) there was a belief (still practised today) in a spirit cult worshipping spirits of female ancestry called *phi hüan*.

Laos (*khao ci* is roasted sticky rice and *bun* is merit, so that people make merit by roasting sticky rice and offering it to monks on Makhabucha Day). Women get everything ready on the evening of the day before, fetching the food, cleaning the temple, preparing the food and the fuel for roasting. On the day, the women roast the rice and listen to the preaching in the temple, and then wash the dishes. All the while, there are fewer men than women. Interestingly, at Amphai Temple, the person who initiates the chant is a woman. Nevertheless, the seating arrangement for the sermon is by gender. Men sit in front of the women, who sit at the back of the hall. 21 February 2008.

[393] From an interview with Mr.Bounkhong Khuthao, 20 February 2008.

[394] Mayoury 1995: 14-15.

Phi hüan, or the spirit of the house, protected and guarded all the members of the family who believed in it. Similarly, in the Lao community of Huai Kaeo Village (Wiang Sa District, Nan Province), people believed that the improper acts of a couple before marriage would be punished by the spirits. When they got married, they had to practise *khün phi,* that is, conduct a ceremony to the spirits of the house, about ten days in advance. Only then could the man can go and live in his wife's house. If he neglected this he would be forbidden to live there.

Nevertheless, it was a tradition among the Lao people of those two villages to offer food once a year to the *phi hüan* and the head of the ancestral spirits, called *Phi cao luang bua ban*. The shaman who performed the ritual asked the spirits to communicate with her by possessing, or haunting her. Although the function of communicating with the spirits was carried out by a woman, the shaman still had to adhere to the Buddhist precepts.[395]

A further interesting aspect of this is seen in the woman's role as senior female leader in a village, which meant being a mediator and adjudicator for the people of the community,[396] and is thought of as another privileged role that women enjoyed in society. Lao women had such a position. Interestingly, my field research has shown that the pioneers who migrated to Nam Pua Village (Wiang Sa District, Nan Province) came from five households, one of which was led by a widow called Yüng, who had migrated with her family. She was persuaded by the four other families, whose leaders were all male and related to each other, to go and live at the village, for reasons of progenity. In numerous interviews the descendants in this village passed on to me the stories of their ancestors' settlement, using the expression *si khom phra ha khom siam* (สี่คมพร้า ห้าคมเสียม - four *phra* (big knives) and five spades).[397] This refers to the migration and settlement of the five families. The words *si khom phra* mean the four families, whose leaders were male. They used big knives to work their living. *Ha khom siam* was the family of the widow (a female). She used a spade to work her living. A spade requires less energy and is more comfortable to use, so it is a suitable tool for a woman. The people of this village used this story to pass on to their descendants a sense of brotherhood and community spirit, by reminding them of the ancestors who first settled there and helped one another build up and expand the community. On the other hand, a further interesting

[395] From an interview with Phra Khru Wirocnanthakhun, the abbot of Nam Pua Temple, Nam Pua Village, Wiang Sa District, Nan Province. 18 September 2008.
[396] Andaya 2006: 38.
[397] The expression *si khom phra ha khom siam,* or "four big knives and five spades", to describe the settlement of five initial families in Nam Pua village, was echoed in similar terms in various interviews with the old people of the village and the abbot of Nam Pua Temple. From an interview with Mr. Bunlert Khamrüang, 16 September 2008 and Phra Kru Wirocnanthakhun, the abbot of Nam Pua Temple, 18 September 2008.

point, which demonstrates the harmonious coexistence of gender roles in that period, is how women were accepted and given the opportunity to apportion resources.

Conclusion

When we compare the roles of women from Lan Na and Lan Sang in the period between the thirteenth and nineteenth centuries, we find that there were several similarities. These resulted from the political context, which was that of a monarchy connected with Buddhism; the economy, based on the given agricultural circumstances; and the social relationships coupled with Buddhism, the spirit cult and the supernatural. In this context, the factor of people's personal beliefs also had a significant part to play. This all led to the development of attitudes and beliefs concerning the roles women played in the society. Interestingly, it also influenced the creation of privileged roles among the women of Lan Na and Laos.

The first role of Lan Na and Lan Sang women that needs to be mentioned is that connected with the natural function of women, their role within the family. These women's roles and functions were associated with nurturing and taking care of people in the family. The role of the mother was important as it had a considerable effect on the family status, the woman being the main pillar, bringing the family together. We see this in law, literature and even Buddhist teaching, in which the responsibilities of the wife toward her husband and of the mother toward her children are examined. Furthermore, women controlled the four fundamental elements of shelter, clothing, food and medicine, because they were the producers and the users of those elements, and they were even the owners of their houses (*mae hüan*), running and maintaining the household and the family unit.

I believe that the role of women associated with the family was defined by their natural instinct, which was highlighted in their education through the belief system. Eventually, such roles in the context of all social systems drive society to make appropriate advances, since, if the smallest social unit, i.e. the family, is stable, the whole society will be accordingly robust. This demonstrates the acceptance and approbation of the roles of the wife and mother in the societies of Lan Na and Lan Sang.

Secondly, we have the privileged roles of Lan Na and Lan Sang women. Clearly, women in those kingdoms were able to develop their privileged roles by employing the political, economic and social contexts as tools to promote their status. Such privileged positions were allied to their natural functions. For example, the role of women in the political administration was associated with motherhood, as demonstrated by Mahathewi, who was a very influential figure in Lan Na and Lan Sang. The only difference there is that there is no evidence of aristocratic Lan Sang women ascending

the throne, whereas some does exist in Lan Na. Nevertheless, the role of Mahathewi influenced aristocratic women in Laos to assume a significant responsibility behind the throne.

Women in Lan Na and Lan Sang were able to create privileged roles for themselves based on a harmonization of Animism and Buddhism which came to be the spirit cult that distinguished Lan Na and Lan Sang society. Although women were limited in their religious space, they were nevertheless able, interestingly enough, to create their own privileged roles, such as that of the spirit medium or the shaman operating under Buddhist precepts, and the socially accepted roles of the midwife and the fortune teller. Although a belief in the ancestral spirits on the woman's side of the family was not expressed as explicitly in Lan Sang as it was in Lan Na, a trace of the acceptance of, and attention paid to, women's lineage can be clearly seen in the tradition of *kwai phi*, through which a woman would make a proposal of marriage and invite her husband to live in her house and worship her ancestral spirits. Conversely, living in her husband's house would create two spiritual lines in one house, which was regarded as inappropriate. Taking the husband to live in the wife's house not only maintained the spiritual descent of the household, but also gave him a part in her family.

The most obvious privileged role of women in Lan Na and Lan Sang was in the economy, and this has been extensively investigated by academics. Additionally, it is generally accepted that women in Southeast Asia played a considerable role in the financial system at that time. They were both producers and traders in the economic system. Also, they dominated family financial affairs at home, being responsible for earning and managing all the household living expenses. All this can be clearly observed in the indigenous evidence and foreign documents that refer to the privileged roles of Lan Na and Lan Sang women.

Chapter 6
Conclusion

When comparing the roles of Lan Na and Lan Sang women in the period between the thirteenth and nineteenth centuries, we find several similarities that resulted from the political context of an absolute monarchy associated with Buddhism, from an economic system based mainly on agricultural production, and from social relationships that integrated Buddhism, the spirit cult and the supernatural. These circumstances had a considerable effect on the intellectual instruction of people in the society and led to the development of certain ideas and attitudes towards women's social roles. Remarkably, the given circumstances also resulted for Lan Na and Lan Sang women in the creation of privileged roles.

Their primary role was related to their natural function as women. This was the role of the woman with her family. Lan Na and Lan Sang women held positions and functions that were connected with taking care of and being responsible for the family and all its members. The woman as wife and mother made a tremendously significant contribution to the status of the family, and could be compared to the main pillar, uniting the family members as one unit. This can be clearly seen in legal policy, literature and even Buddhist teachings, which deliberate on the woman's functions within the family, as a wife towards her husband and as a mother to her children. Additionally, the woman controls the four fundamental elements of shelter, clothing, food and medicine (ปัจจัยสี่ - *patcai si*) because she produces and the employs those elements. This can also be perceived in the role of the *mae hüan,* who looks after and protects the household. I am of the opinion that the role a woman plays in the family is created by her nature as a woman, who is also trained and instructed in this through the spiritual beliefs and social contexts of the time. In the end, these roles are connected with and act as a positive driving force on all social systems because, if the family, the smallest unit of society, is vigorous, then the whole society will echo this. This idea is represented in the way the roles of the Lan Na and Lan Sang woman as wife and mother were accepted and admired.

The second important aspect that we considered was that of these women's special, or privileged roles. The women in those two kingdoms were able to create privileged roles for themselves by utilising the political, economic and social contexts of Lan Na and Lan Sang as tools to promote their status. I have found that this was connected with women's natural functions and obligations. For example, a woman's political role was associated with and pertinent to her role as mother, as demonstrated in the case of Mahathewi, who represented the ultimate political role in both kingdoms.

The only difference between these kingdoms was that no aristocratic woman from Lan Sang ascended the throne as queen, as was the case in Lan Na. However, in the role of Mahathewi Lao elite women did exert an important influence from behind the throne. In Lan Na, at least two female sovereigns acted as administrative rulers of Chiang Mai. Queen Ciraprapha reigned from 1545 to 1546. She was admired as a strong queen who was confronted with problems of warfare during the whole period of her office. In the midst of a chaotic situation after the Burmese conquest in the sixteenth century, Queen Wisutthithewi was appointed Queen and ruled Chiang Mai as a tributary state of Burma from 1564 to 1578. She carried out the duties of ruler by sending troops to assist Burma in its invasion of other kingdoms and continuously offering tributes. She was the last of the royal lineage of the Mangrai Dynasty, and was on the throne for fourteen years.

Besides this, women in these societies were able to develop special roles based on the harmonious integration of Animism and Buddhism into a spirit cult which came to be a distinguishing characteristic of Lan Na and Lan Sang. Although they were limited in their religious spaces, women were remarkably successful in creating special roles in this area, such as those in Laos of the fortune teller and the spiritual medium or shaman, who adhered strictly to Buddhist precepts and moral principles and acquired the acceptance of society as the healer of sickness. Even though, in Lao society, the belief in female ancestral spirits was not as explicit as it was in Lan Na, there were traces of it, and a certain importance was placed on a woman's lineage, as was evident in the tradition of *khwai phi* (ไขว่ผี), in which a woman proposed to her prospective husband and requested that he come to live in her house and adopt her ancestral spirits. A woman who moved into the house of her husband-to-be would create two spiritual lines in the same residence, which would be regarded as unfitting. Her proposing to him not only preserved the spiritual lineage within her household, but also brought him into her family.

The most obvious privileged role that Lan Na and Lan Sang women enjoyed was in the economy. This has been widely investigated in academia, and it is generally accepted that Southeast Asian women played a considerably important role here, as a producer and trader in the economy of the country, and in coordinating the economic system within the family, providing for and controlling all its expenses. All this has been recorded in domestic documents and those of foreign visitors.

This study has shown that the kingdoms of Lan Na and Lan Sang were influenced on a social level by the Indian and Chinese civilizations. However, the observation was also made that the influence of China was less than that of India. One possible reason for this was that Southeast Asia was located nearer to China than to India, and that this led to these two large neighbours expanding their spheres of

influence in different ways. Because of its geographical closeness, China tended to come into Southeast Asia with force and regarded Southeast Asian states as its vassal states. Furthermore, Chinese influence grew with the gradual migration of Chinese merchants, who introduced their culture and beliefs into Southeast Asia, especially in Vietnam. While Indian influence spread in a manner of compromise, it nevertheless became widespread on the Southeast Asian mainland. The Indian influence is visible in the script, religion, law, architecture and various other aspects of the culture.

Interestingly, the early Southeast Asian kingdoms of Lan Na and Lan Sang were distinguished societies because they were able to blend the influences of civilization from outside, in particular from India and China, with their own cultures and beliefs. Lan Na and Lan Sang imported principles of law, religion and other aspects of culture from India and China. These exerted an influence on female social roles through their ideas on the agreeable and disagreeable qualities of women and the relationships between the sexes, which were manifested in instructions on women's behaviour, for example, in didactic literature, law and traditional values.

To illustrate, the social expectations of what women's duties and roles should be contributed to the image of an ideal woman, in particular the image of desirable and undesirable qualities in a woman, which were related to the relationships between men and women, and between the woman, the family and society. The ideal qualities of a woman in Indian and Chinese societies, as well as in Lan Na and Lan Sang, appeared in models of gracefulness, both physical and of the mind; of attractive appearance, good behaviour, and being well spoken; they also included being a good daughter to her parents through obedience and a show of gratitude, being a good wife to her husband by obeying, respecting and being loyal to him and being diligent in her housework. Conversely, historical sources such as legal documents, palm-leaf manuscripts and early literature cite inferior female qualities such as large hands, large feet and a masculine face, or having an unsteady mind and being adulterous.

Although the Indian Dharmaśāstra had an influence on both Lan Na and Lan Sang customary laws, there were differences in detail, such as, for example, the code concerning women and their guardians. The Laws of Manu specified that Indian women had to have guardians for the whole of their lives, and these guardians were always men; but the Mangraisat and the Phosarat both assert that her guardians could be of either gender. And the regulation dealing with women considered suitable as a marriage partner that appeared in the Mangraisat seems to be similar to that in the *Tipitaka* of Buddhism, which classified the sought-after characteristics of a wife into seven groups. It is assumed that Lan Na and Lan Sang integrated the Buddhist influence into its legal texts for administrative purposes.

Furthermore, the roles and rights of women continued to be respected in society. This was due to the fact that women played a continuous political, economic and social role in Lan Na and Lan Sang, which, it seems to me, represented their privileged roles. This is revealed in certain sources and evidence, in particular early laws in Lan Na and Lan Sang. For instance, the marriage law decreed that a spouse should live with the woman's parents, which meant that the man usually had to move in with his wife's family. It was usually stated in the regulations that the son-in-law would be fined if he hurt his parents-in-law while they tried to stop a quarrel between him and his wife. And if the woman (his wife) died, all the married couple's property would go to her parents. Furthermore, the divorce laws stated that a woman could make her own decisions concerning the status of her marriage, so that, if a woman's husband lacked a sense of responsibly in family and work, she could expel him and would not be obliged to return his property. Another case of this would be, if the man neglected his wife and at the same time left state service for a year, the marriage would be regarded as annulled and the woman could remarry without fear of reprisals.

The distinguished roles of women in Lan Na and Lan Sang are shown in early inheritance laws. According to the marital tradition in which a man moved in with his wife's family, parents usually passed their property, in particular their land and dwellings, on to their daughters, because they accompanied and took care of their parents when they grew old. For this reason, a son would receive the movable goods such as weapons, cattle and farming utensils. This was also connected with the Buddhist belief that children should show their gratitude to their parents by taking care of them when they were old or suffering. This was regarded as good practice. Furthermore, it was considered that the passing down of property, especially land and dwellings, to the daughters would ensure that the inheritance remained on the female side of the family down the generations.

An explicit challenge to the existence of, and an adjustment in, the status and social roles of women in northern Thailand and Laos occurred when, in the 1980's, Asia's economic prosperity led to a dramatic alteration in social attitudes in those two countries. Particularly in Thailand there was an enormous change owing to the unceasing growth rate in the economy, especially through the use of a policy to promote industry and replace imports, which the Government had operated continuously since 1960. Apart from this, the Thai Government promoted free trade and provided more opportunities to the private sector to play an important part in the economic development of the country. This instigated the idea of the small business promoted by the Government, which grew to become the medium-sized and then the large-sized business that could export goods to the world market. These businesses dealt in fabrics, plastics, steel, jewellery and gems, etc. Thailand therefore developed a capacity in

manufacturing, creating skilled labour in industry,[1] and has continually grown economically and developed in the direction of capitalism ever since.

This prosperity and unceasing economic growth caused an increase in the middle classes, who were extremely numerous and supported the economic changes, and then led to a claim for rights and liberty through democracy. The ultimate development of Thailand towards capitalism made Thai people adjust and alter their attitudes towards themselves and society. Another interesting aspect of this is the change that came about in the status and the social roles of women in Thai society. In this dissertation, the investigation of women in the upper part of northern Thailand revealed that the developments which aimed to highlight industry and tourism as the major policy in the development of that part of the country resulted in an increasing adherence to the economic system of northern Thailand, especially Chiang Mai, and to the external economy, as well as in a change in people's lifestyles, including those of women.

A great number of women offered themselves as labour in industry and services and the jobs in these areas became the sources of their careers. Although women did work outside the home in the past, the majority of this was agricultural work and communal trade. The new careers challenged women to combine the patterns of work and survival with the natural functions of women that are connected with family life, namely housework and looking after children and other family members. This made the women of northern Thailand adjust their roles in accordance with the existing circumstances, especially with Capitalism which has flooded and been profoundly absorbed into people's lifestyles.

Nevertheless, Thailand's economic changes and political ideas as mentioned above also had a significant influence on Laos because of the long historical, social and cultural relationships between the two countries. Remarkably, in 1997, Laos was economically and politically united in its cooperation with other countries in the Southeast Asian region. It also became a member of ASEAN, through which it developed a substantial relationship with other Southeast Asian countries. In particular, the idea was put forward through ASEAN to construct a transport system to link road and rail routes in a cooperative project involving a number of countries in the Greater Mekong sub-region, including the Economic Quadrangle.[2] Evans (2006) agrees that, through its cooperation with its neighbouring countries, Laos came to perceive itself as a

[1]Harada 1990: 146-147.

[2] The economic Quadrangle is a sub-regional project, which, before its foundation in 1992, was an economic cooperation of four countries in the area of the upper Mekong River. It comprised the southern Chinese provinces of Yunnan, the upper part of northern Thailand, the north-western provinces of the Lao People's Democratic Republic and the Shan State of Myanmar (Burma). The project's major principle is to link the transport systems of those countries for benefits in the transferability of goods, services and people with convenience, rapidity and thrift as the foundation of economic development in the region.

"land linked", not a "land locked".[3] In addition, it estimated that it would gain economic profits from the growth of the region and launched policies of economic extension to develop the country, such as a project to construct hydroelectric dams to vend electricity to neighbouring countries, especially Thailand. It also promoted commerce and trade with other countries in the region, which have continued since then to increase.

Nevertheless, the presence of Laos in the regional alliance and the construction of the convenient transport network resulted in a transfer of labour, including illegal labour and child and female labour, as evidenced in the abundant flow from Laos to Thailand of people seeking work.[4] One issue concerns female labour in industry, services and prostitution. The problems usually found in illegal transnational female labour are those of health and the quality of life, especially the spread of HIV (AIDS) connected with prostitution.[5] In the case of Lao women who migrate to work in Thailand, it has been found that great numbers of them come to work in bars and nightclubs offering prostitution and other services. Even in Laos, the expansion of the network of international commerce and the promotion of tourism to create a national income resulted in several small cities becoming tourist attractions, and the subsequent emergence of prostitution to respond to the needs of the tourists. Consequently, women from marginalised tribes got caught up in prostitution without the necessary awareness of sexually transmitted diseases, especially AIDS.[6] This is presently the circumstance of most concern in Laos.

Globalization is leading Thailand and Laos to adjust their foreign relationships and those with neighbouring countries in the Southeast Asian region. As previously mentioned in the context of geography and the economic realities between Thailand and Laos in the past, although there have sometimes been breaks in contact, since the late 1980's the relationship between these two countries has flourished. Another issue of importance is the economic influence that Thailand exerts on Laos, which can be traced to the growth of capitalism in Thailand in the period when Laos was developing socialism. That inevitably led Laos to be swayed by Thailand in its economic cooperation and investment in manufacturing. Aside from this, as long as Laos maintains its form of socialism, the Lao government will have to try to figure out ways of developing opportunities for economic prosperity, even to the point of spreading the

[3] Evans 2006: 261.
[4] 80% of the illegal transnational labour in Thailand comes from Myanmar while 20% comes from Laos and Cambodia. The majority of workers are unskilled; therefore, they work laboriously and are always low-paid. The jobs they do are in agriculture, construction, fishing and manufacturing.
[5] Mingsarn and Dore 2003: 181-182.
[6] Evans 2006: 262.

ideas of the new culture of capitalism, including political ideas, from Thailand. This situation makes Lao people feel distrustful towards Thailand. They admire the modernity and sophisticated ideas of the Thai people but they are acutely aware of the outcome of Thailand's rapid economic growth, which has resulted in the proliferation of drugs, gangsters, prostitution, corruption and other social problems. The feeling of Lao people was expressed by a Lao woman in Müang Ngoen Village. She described the characteristics of these two countries in the following words: "Thailand is civilized, but not at peace. Meanwhile, Laos is not civilized, but is at peace."[7] However much this may be in the minds of Lao people, in the future an agreement between Thailand and Laos in some form of economic union will be inevitable, as has been estimated since the beginning of the FTA (Free Trade Area).

In the complex modern world, which is dominated by the global economy and profoundly infused with Capitalism, the study of the "privileged roles" of women in the Greater Mekong sub-region, seen through the specific cases of women from northern Thailand and Laos, uncovers the characteristics of and the adjustment made in the status and roles of those women in the presence of capitalism. My work has revealed that women in both areas possessed remarkable privileges in their status and social roles in early times, when those areas went under the names of Lan Na and Lan Sang. The investigation of the status and privileged roles of women in the past might provide an explanation of the continuity and the changes in the status and roles of women in Thai and Lao society after the Cold War, when Capitalism became the major factor in the country's development. This was particularly the case in Thailand, where it has become a part of life, but also in countries under socialism such as Laos, which made an adjustment to the overflow of Capitalism, with a consequent adjustment in women's roles. It may also contribute to our understanding of the changes in the status and the roles of women occurring in the Mekong sub-region today.

[7] From an interview with Mrs. Samòn Inthasuphan, 45 years old. Hong Sa Village. Xayaburi Province, the Lao P.D.R., 19 September 2008.

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Mr. Bunlert Khamrüang. 87 years old. Nam Pua Village, Wiang Sa District, Nan Province. 16 September 2008. พ่ออุ้ยบุญเลิศ คำเรือง อายุ 87 ปี ชาวบ้านน้ำปั้ว อ.เวียงสา จ.น่าน วันที่ 16 กันยายน 2008.

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Mr. Somcet Wimonkasem. 55 years old. A teacher at Satree Sri Nan School. Muang District, Nan Province, Thailand. 17-18 September 2008. อาจารย์สมเจตน์ วิมลเกษม อาจารย์ประจำโรงเรียนสตรีศรีน่าน อ .เมือง จ.น่าน วันที่ 17-18 กันยายน 2008.

Mrs. Samòn Inthasuphan ນາງສະໝອນ ອິນທະສຸພັນ. 45 years old. Hong Sa Village. Xayaburi Province, the Lao People's Democratic Republic. 19 September, 2008.

Mr. Thòng Phommasen. ພ່ໍຫນ້ອຍທອງ ພົມມະເສນ. 71 years old. Luang Village, Muang Ngoen, Xayaburi Province, the Lao People's Democratic Republic. 20 September 2008.

Mr. Humphan Saengmani ທ້າວຫຸມພັນ ແສງມະນີ. 40 years old. Luang Village, Muang Ngoen, Xayaburi Province, the Lao People's Democratic Republic. 20 September 2008.

Appendix I

The purpose of this appendix is to explain the meanings and relationships of the Thai words and Lao words to the research account and data found in this dissertation.

English	Thai	Description
ao mü ao wan	เอามื้อ เอาวัน	a tradition of labour in Lan Na which was bartered by the day and by the meal
bat	บาท	the weight of a one *bat* coin in the past equal to 15.2 grams. Gold and silver were measured in *bat* weights
cai	ไจ้	"a thousand field" or a sort of administrative unit of Lan Na based on the Chinese administrative pattern from the Yuan Dynasty
cao mün	เจ้าหมื่น	a man in charge of 10,000 commoners
cao phan	เจ้าพัน	a man in charge of 1,000 commoners
cao saen	เจ้าแสน	a man in charge of 100,000 commoners
chang	ชั่ง	a unit of Thai weight equal to 600 grams or a monetary unit equal to 80 *bat*
fün man	ฟื้นม่าน	a rebellion against Burma
hua na	หัวนา	a head of the people's irrigation system in Lan Na
hit sipsòng	ฮีตสิบสอง	a twelve-month tradition
kan phit phi	การผิดผี	an abuse of the ancestral spirits
kep phak sais sa *kep kha sai müang*	เก็บผักใส่ซ้า เก็บข้าใส่เมือง	a time of "collecting vegetables into baskets and collecting people into the *müang*" in the reign of King Kawila to rebuild Chiang Mai after the war
kha	ข้า	a servant
khan mak	ขันหมาก	a tray containing presents for the bride before her marriage
khòng sipsi	คองสิบสี่	"The fourteen customs", a practical way of living
kwan luang	กวานหลวง	a local officer in charge of all trading activities in the community
long khuang	ลงข่วง	a custom of courtship in Lan Na and Lan Sang tradition
mae cao hüan (rüan)	แม่เจ้าเรือน	a woman as head of the household
mae chang	แม่ช่าง	a midwife (Lan Na)

mahathewi	มหาเทวี	Queen Mother
ma khi	ม้าขี่	a shaman or a spirit medium
monthon	มณฑล	a Siamese administrative circle comprising a number of *müang*
masok	มาสก	an early monetary measurement. Five *masok* approximately equaled one *bat*
muat na	หมวดนา	an office of administration for irrigation in Lan Na
müang	เมือง	city-state; autonomous or semiautonomous principalities that varied greatly in size and influence. The müang was centred on a town or city and included the surrounding rural areas
müang fai	เหมืองฝาย	an system of irrigation management for agriculture in Lan Na
myowun	เมียวหวุ่น	Burmese governor
nai hòi	นายฮ้อย	a man in charge of cattle merchants in land trade routes from Lan Na to Burma and Yunnan
nai sip	นายสิบ	a man in charge of ten commoners
nai yisip	นายยี่สิบ	a man in charge of twenty commoners
nai hasip	นายห้าสิบ	a man in charge of fifty commoners
nai ròi	นายร้อย	a man in charge of 100 commoners
nam som pòi	น้ำส้มป่อย	a kind of holy water
nan	หนาน	a man who had been a monk
nòi	น้อย	a boy who had been a novice
panna	พันนา	an administrative division of a *müang*; literally “one thousand rice fields”
phi pu nya	ผีปู่ย่า	ancestral spirits in Lan Na
pracao	พระเจ้า	king
prap mai	ปรับไหม	a fine
rüan 3 nam 4	เรือน 3 น้ำ 4	the three essential duties of a housewife and the four desirable qualities of a woman
sai sayòng	สายสยอง	a thread for tying a palm-leaf together. Made from the hair of a woman
sang ban paeng müang	สร้างบ้าน แปงเมือง	the founding of states or polities

tang tham luang	ตั้งธรรมหลวง	the great-birth sermon or the sermon on the great birth of the Bodhisattva Vessantāra
ton bun	ตนบุญ	“holy man”; literally “source of merit”

English	**Lao**	**Description**
bai cum	ใบจุ้ม	a sealed document made from cotton or silk and woven into a long rectangular shape
kham phua kham mia khat	ຄຳຜົວຄຳເມັຍຂາດ	a couple’s final decision
khan	ຂັ້ນ	a degree of punishment out in the ancient law of Lan Sang
khan mai	ຂັ້ນໃຫມ	a fine
kan phit phi phit sang	ການຜິດຜີ ຜິດສາງ	an offending of the spirits
khan soma	ຂັ້ນສົມມາ	a fee of honour
khoei su	ເຂີຍສູ່	an able-bodied male who gets married to a woman in another cities
khòi	ຂ້ອຍ	a servant
khwan	ຂວັນ	morale
nang thiam	ນາງທຽມ	a shaman
phi hüan	ຜີເຮືອນ	a spirit of the house
pu nyoe nya nyoe	ປູ່ເຍ້ຍ່າເຍ	ancestral spirits in Lan Sang

APPENDIX II

The Mangrai Dynasty (1261-1578)

Name	Reign		Notes
	CMC	JKM	
1. Mangrai	1259-1318	1261-1311	Mangrai was born in Ngoen Yang (present day Chiang Saen) as the son of the local ruler Lao Meng and his wife Ua Ming Chommueang, a princess from the Tai Lue city of Chiang Rung, now in Yunnan, China.
2. Chai Songkhram	1318-1328	1311-1325	son of Mangrai
3. Saen Phu	1328-1336	1325-1334	son of Chai Songkhram
4. Kham Fu	1336-1345	1334-1336	son of Saen Phu
5. Phayu	1345-1367	1336-1355	son of Kham Fu
6. Küna	1367-1388	1355-1385	son of Phayu
7. Saen Müang Ma	1388-1401	1385-1401	son of Küna
8. Sam Phraya Fang Kaen	1401-1442	1401-1441	son of Saen Müang Ma
9. Tilokarat	1442-1487	1441-1487	son of Sam Phraya Fang Kaen
10. Yòt Chiang Rai	1487-1495	1487-1495	grandson of Tilokarat
11. Kaeo	1495-1526	1495-1526	son of Yòt Chiang Rai
12. Ket Chettharat	1526-1538	1526-?	son of Yòt Chiang Rai
13. Thao Chai	1538-1543		son of Ket Chettharat
14. Ket Chettharat (second time)	1543-1545		son of Yòt Chiang Rai
15. Queen Ciraprapha	1545-1546		daughter of Ket Chettharat
16. Setthathirat of Lan Sang	1546-1547		son of Thip (daughter of Ket Chettharat) who got married with King Phothisarat (Lan Sang)
Interregnum	1548-1551		
17. Mae Ku	1551-1564		descendant of Khun Khrua (son of Mangrai), in Müang Nai.
18. Queen Wisutthithewi	1564-1578		may be a daughter of Ket Chettharat and a queen of Bayin-naung (Wyatt and Aroonrut 1998: 127)

Source: CMC = The Chiang Mai Chronicle

JKM = The Jinakālamālīpakaranam

APPENDIX III

Burmese Rulers of Chiang Mai (1578-1774)

Ruler	YC	CMC
1. Nòrathamangò	1579-1607	1578-1607
2. Phra Chòi	1607-1609	1607-1608
3. Phra Chaithip (Mongkoito)	1609-1611	1608-1613
4. Phra Chòi (second time)	1611-1614	1613-1615
5. Nan Ruler	1614-1631	1615-1631
6. Phraya Lüang Thipphanet	1631-1650	1631-1655
7. Phra Saen Müang	1650-1663	1655-1659
8. Phrae Ruler	1633-1672	1659-1672
9. Uparat Ungsae (Ava)	1672-1685	1672-1675
10. son of Ce Ku Tra (Ce Phu Trai)	1685-*	1675-*
11. Mang Raenra	1707-1727	1707-1727
12. Thep Sing	1727-1727	1727-1727
13. Ong Kham	1727-1759	1727-*
14. Cao Can	1759-1761	-1759*
15. Cao Khihut (former monk of Düang Di monastery)	1761-1763	1761-1763
16. Po Aphai Khamini (Po Akia Khamuni)	1763-1769	1763-1768
17. Po Mayu-Nguan (Po Hüakhao)	1769-1774	1768-1774

Note: YC = The Yonok Chronicle

CMC = The Chiang Mai Chronicle

*unrecorded

APPENDIX IV

Cao Cet Ton Dynasty (1782-1939)

Name	Reign	Sources
1. Kawila	1782-1816	Chiang Mai Chronicle
2. Thammalangka	1816-1822	Chiang Mai Chronicle, Yonok Chronicle
3. Kham Fan	1822-1825	Chiang Mai Chronicle, Yonok Chronicle
4. Phutthawong	1825-1846	Yonok Chronicle
5. Mahotara Prathet	1846-1854	Yonok Chronicle
6. Kawilorot	1856-1870	NAT, *ro.*5, *mo.* 58/191
7. Intha Wichayanon	1873-1896	NAT, *ro.*5, *mo.*58/40
8. Intha Warorot	1901-1909	NAT, *ro.*5, *mo.*58/143
9. Kaeo Nawarat	1911-1939	NAT, *ro.*6, *mo.* 27/3

Note: NAT = National Library of Thailand

APPENDIX V

Kings of Lan Sang

Name	Reign	Notes
1. Phraya Lang	1271-1316?	son of the last king of the Thao Dynasty
2. Suvanna Khamphong	1316-1344?	son of Phraya Lang
3. Khamhiao	1344?-1353	son of Suvanna Khamphong
4. Fa Ngum	1353-1373/74	grandson of Suvanna Khamphong
5. Sam Saen Thai	1373/74-1416	son of Fa Ngum
6. Lan Kham Daeng	1416-1428	son of Sam Saen Thai
7. Phommathat	1428-1429	son of Lan Kham Daeng; ruled 10 months
8. Kham Tem	1430	son of Sam Saen Thai; ruled 5 months
9. Meun Sai	1430	son of Sam Saen Thai; ruled 6 months
10. Fa Khai	1431-1434?	grandson of Sam Saen Thai
11. Kon Kham	1435	son of Sam Saen Thai; ruled 7 months
12. Yukhòn	1436	son of Lan Kham Daeng; ruled 8 months
13. Kham Koet	1436-1438	not of royal descent
14. Maha Thevi	1438	queen of Sam Saen Thai
15. Interregnum	1438-1442	---
16. Saiyachakkaphat Phaen Phaeo	1442-1479/80	son of Sam Saen Thai
17. Suvanna Banlang	1480-1486	son of Saiyachakkaphat
18. La Saen Thai	1486-1496	son of Saiyachakkaphat
19. Samphu	1496-1501	son of La Saen Thai
20. Visun	1501-1520	son of Saiyachakkaphat
21. Phothisarat	1520-1547	son of Visun
22. Setthathirat I	1548-1571	son of Phothisarat
23. Saen Surin (1)	1571-1575	not of royal descent
24. Vòravongsa I	1575-1579	son of Phothisarat
25. Saen Surin (2)	1580-1582	not of royal descent
26. Nakhòn Nòi	1582-1583	son of Saen Surin; not of royal descent

Name	Reign	Notes
27. Burmese Interregnum	1583-1591	---
28. Nòkaeo Kuman	1591-1596	son of Setthathirat
29. Vòrarongsa II	1596-1622	nephew of Setthathirat
30. Upayuvarat	1622-1623	son of Vòravongsa
31. Phothisan	1623-1627	son of grandson of Saen Surin
32. Mòmkaeo	1627-1633	son of Vòravongsa
33. Visai/Tònkham	1633-1638	son of Vòravongsa
34. Suriyavongsa	1638-1695	son of Tònkham
35. Praya Müang Can	1695	not of royal descent; ruled 6 months
36. Nantharat	1696-1698	cousin of Suriyavongsa
37. Sai Ong Ve = Setthathirat II	1698-1735	nephew of Suriyavongsa

Kings of Vientiane

Name	Reign	Notes
1. Sai Ong Ve	1698-1735	nephew of Suriyavongsa
2. Ong Long	1735-1760	half-brother of Sai Ong Ve
3. Suribunyasan	1760-1779	son of Sai Ong Ve
4. Nanthasen	1779-1794	son of Siribunyasan
5. Inthavong	1794-1804	brother of Nanthasen
6. Anuvong	1804-1828	brother of Inthavong

Kings of Luang Prabang

Name	Reign	Notes
1. Kingkitsarat	1707-1713	grandson of Suriyavongsa
2. Ong Kham	1713-1723	son of the ruler of Chiang Rung
3. Inthasom	1723-1749	brother of Kingkitsarat
4. Inthaphom	1749-1750	ninth son of Inthasom
5. Sotika	1750-1771	first son of Inthasom

Name	Reign	Notes
6. Suriyavong	1771-1791	son of Sotika
7. Interregnum	1791-1795	---
8. Anuruttha	1795-1816	brother of Suriyavong
9. Manthaturat	1817-1836	son of Anuruttha
10. Interregnum	1836-1839	---
11. Sukkhasoem	1839-1850	son of Manthaturat
12. Cantharat	1852-1871	brother of Sukkhasoem
13. Un Kham	1873-1894	brother of Cantharat
14. Kham Suk (Sukkarin)	1894-1903	son of Un Kham
15. Sisavangvong	1904-1959	son of Kham Suk
16. Savangvatthana	1959-1975	son of Sisavangvong

Kings of Champasak

Names	Reign	Notes
1. Sòisisamut Phutthangkun	1713-1737	grandson of Suriyavongsa
2. Saiyakuman	1737-1791	son of Sòisisamut
3. Fai Na	1791-1811	son of Phra Vòrarat; not of royal descent
4. Nu	1811-1813	son of Fai Na
5. Manòi	1813-1819	nephew of Saiyakuman
6. Ngo	1819-1827	son of Anuvong, King of Vientiane
7. Hui	1828-1840	great-great grandson of Sòisisamut
8. Nak	1841-1850	brother of Hui
9. Bua	1853-1855	son of Hui
10. Kham Yai	1855-1862	brother of Bua
11. Kham Suk	1863-1900	brother of Kham Yai
12. Ngui (Rasadanai)	1900-1946	son of Kham Suk

Note: See Stuart-Fox (1998).

APPENDIX VI

King List of Lan Sang, Lan Na, Sukhothai and Ayutthaya

Lan Sang	Lan Na	Sukhothai	Ayutthaya
Lang Prabang Khun Borom – Thao Vang 18 rulers	**Hiranyanakhòn (Ngoenyang)** Lawa Cangkarat –Lao Meng 29 rulers	Phò Khun Si Intharathit (1149)	
Phraya Lang (1271-1316?)	Mangrai (1261-1311) Founded Chaing Mai (1296)	Phraya Ban Müang (1279) Phò Khun Ram Khamhaeng (1279-1298)	
Suvanna Khamphong (1316-1344?)	Chaisongkhram (1311-1325)	Phraya Loe Thai (1298-1347)	
	Saen Phu (1325-1334) Kham Fu (1334-1336)	Phra Maha Thammaracha I (Li Thai) (1347-1373)	
Fa Ngum (1353-1373/74)	Pha Yu (1336-1355)		Ayutthaya founded (1350) U-Thòng (1349-1369)
Sam Saen Thai (1373/74-1416)	Küna (1355-1385) Saen Müang Ma (1385-1401)	Phra Maha Thammracha II (1373-1399) Phra Maha Thammaracha III (Sai Lü Thai) (1399-1419)	Ramesuan (1) (1369-1370) Khun Luang Pha Ngüa (1370-1388) Thòng Lan (1388) Ramesuan (2) (1388-1395) Ram Racha Thirat (1395-1409)
	Sam Fangkaen (1402-1441)	Phra Maha Thammaracha IV (Borommapan) (1419-1438)	Intha Rachathirat (1416-1428)
Lan Kham Daeng (1416-1428) Phommathat (1428-1429) Khamtem (1430) Münsai (1430) Fa Khai (1431-1434?) Kòn Kham (1435) Yu Khòn (1436) Kham Koet (1436-1438) Maha Thewi (1438) Interregnum (1438-1442)		Sukhothai was part of Ayutthaya in 1438	Cao Sam Phraya (1324-1448)

APPENDIX VII

King List of Lan Sang Lan Na and Ayutthaya

Lan Sang	Lan Na	Ayutthaya
Saiyacakkaphat Phaen Phaeo (1442-1479/80) Suvanna Banlang (1480-1486) La Saen Thai (1486-1496) Sum Phu (1496-1501) Visun (1501-1520) Phothisarat (1520-1547) Setthathirat I (1548-1571) Founded Vientiane (1560) Saen Surin (1) (1571-1575) Vòravongsa (1575-1579) Saen Surin (2) 1580-1582) Nakhòn Nòi (1582-1583)	Tilok (1441-1487) Yòt Chiang Rai (1487-1495) Phraya Kaeo (1495-1525) Ket Chettharat (1) (1525-1538) Thao Chai (1538-1543) Ket Chetthrat (2) (1543-1545) Queen Cirapapha (1545-1546) Setthathirat (1546-1547) Interregnum (1548-1551) Maeku (1551-1564) Queen Wisutthithewi (1564-1578)	Borom Trai Lokanat (1448-1488) Borom Rachathirat III (1488-1491) Rama Thipbodi II (1491-1529) Borom Rachathirat IV (1529-1533) Phra Ratsadathirat (1533-1534) Chai Rachathirat (1534-1546) Phra Yòt Fa (1546-1548) Phra Maha Cakkaphat (1548-1568) Phra Mahinthrathirat (1568-1569) Phra Maha Thammarachathirat (1569-1590)
Burmese Interregnum (1583-1591)	**Burmese Domination**	
Nòkaeo Kuman (1591-1596) Vòravongsa II (1596-1622) Upayuvarat (1622-1623) Phòthisan (1623-1627) Mòmkaeo (1627-1633?)	Nòrathaminsò (1578-1607) Phra Chòi (1) (1607-1608) Phra Chaithip (1608-1613) Phra Chòi (2) (1613-1615) Nan Ruler (1615-1628) Phraya Luang Thipphanet (1628-1655)	Phra Naresuan (1590-1610) Phra Ekathotsarot (1605-1610) Phra Si Saowaphak (1610) Phra Cao Songtham (1610-1628) Phra Chetthatirat Phra Athitayawong (1628-1629)

Lan Sang	Lan Na	Ayutthaya
Visai (Tònkham) (1633-1638) Suriyavonsa (1638-1695) Phraya Müang Can (1695) Nantharat (1696-1698) Sai Ong Ve (1698-1735)	Phra Saen Müang (1655-1659) Phrae Ruler (1659-1672) Uparat Ungsae (Ava) (1672-1675) son of Cao Cekutra (Ce Phutrai) (1675-?)	Phra Cao Prasat Thòng (1629-1656) Cao Fa Chai Phra Sisuthammaracha (1656) Phra Narai (1656-1688) Phra Phetracha (1688-1703)

Three Lan Sang Kingdoms, Lan Na and Ayutthaya

Vientiane	Luang Prabang	Champasak	Lan Na	Ayutthaya
Sai Ong Ve (1698-1735) Ong Long (1735-1760) Siribunyasan (1760-1779)	Kingkitsarat (1707-1713) Ong Kham (1713-1723) Inthasom (1723-1749) Inthaphom (1749-1750) Sotika (1750-1771)	Sòisisamut Phutthagkun (1713-1737) Saiya Kuman (1737-1791)	Mangraenra (1707-1727) Thepsing (1727) Ong Kham (1727-?) Cao Can (?-1759) Cao Khihut (1761-1763) Po Aphaikhamini (1763-1768) Po Mayu-Nguan (1768-1774)	Phra Phetracha (1688-1703) Phra Cao Süa (1703-1708) Phra Cao Thai Sa (1708-1732) Phra Cao Borommakot (1732-1758) Phra Cao Uthumphòn (1758) Phra Cao Ekhathat (1758-1767)

APPENDIX VIII

Three Lan Sang Kingdoms, Lan Na and Siam

Thonburi	Vientiane	Luang Prabang	Champaksak	Lan Na
King Thonburi (1767-1782)				
	Nanthasen (1779-1794)	Suriyavong (1771-1791)		
Rattanakosin				
King Rama I (1782-1809)	Inthavong (1794-1804)	Interregnum (1791-1795)	Fai Na (1791-1811)	Kawila (1782-1816)
King Rama II (1809-1824)	Anuvong (1804-1828)	Anuruttha (1795-1816)	Nu (1811-1813)	Thammalangka (1816-1822)
	war with Rattanakosin (1826-1828)	Manthaturat (1817-1836)	Manòi (1813-1819)	Khamfan (1822-1825)
		Interregnum (1836-1839)	Hui (1828-1840)	Phutthawong (1825-1846)
King Rama III (1824-1851)		Sukkhasoem (1839-1850)	Nak (1841-1850)	Mahotaraprathet (1847-1854)
King Rama IV (1851-1868)		Cantharat (1852-1871)	Bua (1853-1855)	Kawilorot (1856-1870)
		Un Kham (1873-1894)	Kham Yai (1855-1862)	
	end of Vientiane royal lineage			
King Rama V (1868-1910)		Laos as a French Colony (1893-1945)	Laos as a French Colony (1893-1945)	Inthawichayanon (1873-1896)
		Kham Suk (1894-1903)	Kham Suk (1863-1900)	Inthawarorot (1901-1909)
King Rama VI (1910-1925)		Sisavangvong (1904-1959)		
King Rama VII (1925-1934)			Nyui (1900-1946)	Kaeonawarat (1911-1939)
King Rama VIII (1934-1946)				end of Cao Cet Ton Dynasty
King Rama IX (1946-present)		Savangvatthana (1959-1975)		
				Lan Na becomes a part of Thailand
	revolution in1975 establishes the Lao People's Democratic Republic	revolution in 1975 establishes the Lao People's Democratic Republic	revolution in 1975 establishes the Lao People's Democratic Republic	