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"A Sangha in Intermittent Service to the Siamese: Reformation, Decapitation, and the Taming of Chiang Rai." [1]

Anthony Lovenheim Irwin
PhD Candidate
Asian Languages and Cultures
University of Wisconsin-Madison
airwin2@wisc.ed

Introduction, or, When A Tree Falls on a Temple, and Everyone is Around to Hear it, What Kind of Sound Does it Make?

For forty years, from 1804-1844, a sandalwood tree shaded the grounds of an abandoned temple, in an abandoned city, on the southern banks of a river cutting through over 100 kilometers of an abandoned valley. As the waters of the Kok river flowed past the abandoned city of Chiang Rai and eventually emptied themselves into the Mekong to the north-east, the sandalwood tree grew just as steadily. Very few people passed by the tree, and even fewer may have paid it any notice. If it had fallen one night in a torrential hailstorm during this time (as it did during the next century), there most likely would have been no one around to hear it. The immense crash would have reverberated off the deteriorating brick archways and crumbling stupas of the city, before expanding outwards in brief and fleeting waves.

Chiang Rai was reestablished in 1844, and the abandoned temple with the large sandalwood tree was occupied and rebuilt by a Shan community (most likely forcible resettled) from Mong Hpayak. These Shan named the newly resurrected temple Wat Chan Lok, after the large sandalwood tree (Thai: chan Pali: candana), and began the process of renovation. The temple name changed again when the city wall was completed in 1889. [2] Wat Chan Lok was in the center of the new walled city (*wiang*), therefore "*klang wiang"* [city center] was added, making the full name "Wat Chan Lok Klang Wiang." This was the only Shan temple within the city, and it enjoyed the prestige of being found in the very

[1] Much thanks to Katherine Bowie for first directing me towards the religio-political fissure in Chiang Rai discussed in this paper, and the constant encouragement and support. I owe an unpayable debt to Aphichit Sirichai who has provided a constant flow of informationon the history of Chiang Rai, and the inspiration to broadcast it. Thanks also to Ajan Charin Chaemchit, whom I had the honor of visiting with Katherin Bowie at his home in Phan district, Chiang Rai. During the visit, Ajan Charin gave me a xerox copy of his *Bantoek Muang Chiang Rai*, without which this history could not have been told. Also thanks to Alexander Hortsman for invitation to participate in this panel. This paper uses the Royal Thai Standard Transcription system for direct transliteration of Thai words.

[2] Chiang Rai's city wall was dismantled in the 1920s. Its bricks were used from everything to filling in swampy areas around the city to construction. The recent renovation to the temple wall of Wat Phra Singh revealed a number of different styles of bricks, many presumably taken from the city wall. These bricks have since been transported to Wat Sri Mongkhon, where they have been used in the construction of a *kampaeng kaew*.

heart of the muang. The sandalwood tree on the temple grounds was honored as a "*suea ban suea mueang,*" the precious protector of the new city, and a sacred palladium of the temple.[3]

When this important tree did fall in 1903, it did not fall on an abandoned tangle of overgrown ruins, but on the roof of the newly rebuilt *vihan* of Wat Chan Lok Klang Wiang that had been sponsored by the first Siamese Kha Luang in the 1890s. Given the power struggles, and violent uprisings between the Shan, locals, and Siamese that marked the decade prior to the tree's demise, the sound of sandalwood breaking its fall on the *vihan* echoed with religious and political significance that was, most likely, too obvious to ignore. How many Shan actually heard the crash, however, is not known. The Shan community of Wat Chan Lok Klang Wiang had recently been exiled south of the city wall, away from their temple as punishment for their plot to burn the city to the ground in October of 1902.[4]

This paper explores the role of the sangha and Buddhist spaces in the period of Chiang Rai's history bookended by the repopulation of the city, and the renovations to Wat Chan Lok Klang Wiang directly after the Sandalwood tree came down. Focusing mainly on the apparent rivalry between Wat Chan Lok Klang Wiang and Wat Phra Singh, two of the most important—but opposing—temples in the city, I investigate how political reconfiguration played out on the grounds of Buddhist temples in Chiang Rai's early modern history.

Explanation of Title Change:

I have changed the title of my paper from the one submitted. The original title, "A Khruba in Intermittent Service to the Siamese: Khruba Pok and the Taming of Chiang Rai," has been changed to "A Sangha in Intermittent Service to the Siamese: Reformation, Decapitation, and the Taming of Chiang Rai." As is common in the research process, new information revealed since submitting the abstract for the paper that has broadened the scope. Initially, it was thought that Phra Khru Methangkaranan Thonapannyo (Khruba Pok Nantharat), the focus of my original abstract, was one and the same with Thu Chao Thammapannya.[5] Until recently, it was believed that Khruba Pok held the name Thu Chao Thammapannya before receiving his monastic rank of Chao Khana Changwat in 1910/2?. It is now clear, however, that these were two distinct, but successive abbots of Wat Phra Singh, Chiang Rai. Thu Chao Thammapannya served as abbot from 1870-1897, and was an important monk in the early history of Chiang Rai. He is most well-known for leading the complete reconstruction of the temple's *vihan* in the 1890s (the building was eventually consecrated as an ubosot in 1940). Thu Chao Thammapannya was also central to establishing the basic laws for the Chiang Rai sangha during a meeting of all sangha officials in 1886.

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[3] Wat Klang Wiang Amphoe Muang Changwat Chiang Rai: Ruam Chalong Worakat Phra Chonmayuk Rop 5 Rob Somdet Phra Nang Chao Phra Borom Rachininat (Chiang Rai: Chiang Rai Advertising and Printing, 1992), 6-7.

[4] Nan Sang, "*Kham Hai Kan Ai Nan Sang* [Nan Sang's Confession]", 26 October 121, in *Bantoek Muang Chiang Rai*, ed. Charin Chaemchit (Chiang Rai: n.d.), 113; Rebecca Weldon, personal communication, June 22, 2017.

[5] "Thu Chao" is the Northern Thai honorific for abbots. This is how Thammapannya is referred to in extant primary source documents.

Khruba Pok (1853?-1933), Thu Chao Thammapannya successor, was the abbot of Wat Phra Singh from 1897-1933. Evidence suggests that upon his promotion to abbot, Khruba Pok was considered the head of the Chiang Rai sangha. According to present-day sangha histories, however, Khruba Pok was installed as the Chao Khana Changwat of Chiang Rai in either 1910 or 1912, depending on the source. Soon after he became abbot, however, Khruba Pok's authority over the Chiang Rai sangha was challenged by a reformist monk, Khruba Khanthiya—the Nan-born, Shan-educated abbot of Wat Chan Lok Klang Wiang.[6] Khruba Khanthiya served the city's Shan community, had been educated in the Shan country himself, and was sponsored by the new Siamese administrators in the city. Possibly because of the non-local, non-Chiang Mai-affiliated nature of Khruba Khanthiya reformation, it was flatly rejected by the Chiang Rai laity. Even though the reformation was a failure, Khruba Khanthiya is considered today to be the first "Chao Khana Changwat" of Chiang Rai—a position he purportedly held from 1902 to the time of his death in 1910/2? When Khruba Pok is said to have been installed in the position.

Regardless of the confusion surrounding the early timeline of Chiang Rai's sangha leadership, the sangha was central to the taming of Chiang Rai during the period in Chiang Rai's history known as "*Yuk Fuen Fu*," or the "Reconstruction Period." *Yuk Fuen Fu* spans from the time of the reestablishment and reoccupation of Chiang Rai 1844, to the early twentieth century. Towards the end of this period, the authority of the local Chao was replaced by Siamese commissioners, Shan rebels advanced on the settlements throughout the Kok Valley, and Christian missionaries began spreading their religion and working with the leadership of the city. Members of the sangha, including Khruba Pok and Khruba Khanthiya, were involved in all of these developments in surprising ways. Other monks, namely Thu Sala Muang Oot, and Thu Mangsa were directly opposed to the changes taking place in the region. These two Mon monks led the second Shan uprising that moved on the settlements at Chiang Saen Luang (present-day Mae Chan) in the early twentieth century. This paper looks at some of the ways the sangha colluded, combated, and cooperated with Siamese and local powers during the process of bringing order to this small city located on the edge of a dangerous no-man's land.

Why a "reconstruction period" in the recent history of a 750 year old city?

The Kok River valley, which includes Chiang Rai and Chiang Saen, was controlled by the court of Ava for almost two and a half centuries (1558-1804). The powers in Chiang Mai, together with forces from Bangkok, Nan, and Vientiane defeated the Ava-affiliated Shan at Chiang Saen in 1804.[7] As was typical of Mainland Southeast Asian military conquest, the population was forcibly resettled in the territory of the victors. A vast depopulated zone then stretched from the Salween river, over the Kok valley, past the Mekong, and all the way to Luang Prabang in the East.[8] This tapestry of river valleys, karst limestone cliffs, and rugged mountain ranges was very lightly populated during the first half of the

[6] William Clifton Dodd. *The Thai Race: Elder Brother of the Chinese*. (Bangkok: White Lotus Press, 1996 [1923]): 318.

[7] Volker Grabowsky, "Forced Resettlement Campaigns in Northern Thailand During the Early Bangkok Period," *Journal of the Siam Society* 87 (1999): 56.

[8] Kennon Breazeale, "Historical Population Movements in North and Northeast Thailand," *Journal of Population and Social Studies* 20, no. 2 (January 2012): 124.

nineteenth century, however Chinese Ho traders passed through on their southern trips between Kengtung and points south, and some independent communities sprang up in regions rich with fertile soil.[9] After a period of forty years of almost complete abandonment, with the go-ahead from Rama III, an extension of Chiang Mai's ruling family, the Chue Chet Ton, was sent into the overgrown backwater of Chiang Rai. These first modern Chao established the city as a military vanguard to prepare for what would be three unsuccessful attacks on Kengtung (1849, 1852, and 1854). When the abandoned city was reoccupied in 1844, it stood as a lone outpost at the edge of a large depopulated expanse. A boundary was established by Thai and British officials from the Salween river to the Mekong in 1893, however, the political incorporation of the area allocated to the kingdom of Siam was not immediate.[10] This border was further disrupted by the strained relations between the Siamese and the French over territories around the Mekong river, which resulted in a large no-man's land flanking the river by 25 kilometers in each direction. This created a significant portion of ungovernable territory in Chiang Rai, including the old walled city of Chiang Saen on the banks of the Mekong River, which at that time was referred to as "Chiang Saen Noi." The old city of Chiang Saen will return later in this paper, during a discussion of the Shan uprisings of the early twentieth century.

From the repopulation of the city in 1844, to the early twentieth century, a number of powers converged to tame what had been a depopulated borderland. Man eating tigers and bandits wove tracks through the landscape of abandoned temples overgrown by jungle while new settlers (some forcibly moved), Christian missionaries, and Siamese transplants carved out a place to live. The earliest official resettlement campaign occurred during the turn of the years 1843-44. At this time 1,000 families were forcibly resettled into and around the abandoned city of Chiang Rai. These families were moved from Chiang Tung (Kengtung), Muang Sat (Mong Hsat), and Muang Phyak (Mong Hpayak), in present-day Shan State, and Muang Len in present-day Chiang Mai Province[11] Another group of families moved to Chiang Rai from Lampang—these were the descendants of a group of refugees who had fled Chiang Rai after an unsuccessful uprising against the Burmese in 1787.[12]

Monastic Law in a Backwater Outpost.

The sangha was central to the repopulation of Chiang Rai from the beginning. The city was formally reestablished in a ceremony on February 26, 1844 at 12 noon. 108 monks journeyed from

[9] Two verified community that settled in the area during this time are located in present-day Tambon Pa Oo Ton Chai, in Amphoe Muang, Chiang Rai. The congregation of Wat Pa Fai, founded in 1825 traces their origins to Tai Lue peoples who migrated from Sipsongpanna. The nearby community at Wat San Mana, founded in 1832, was settled by people who fled Chiang Saen after the Chiang Mai invasion in 1804.

[10] Breazeale, "Population Movements," 124.

[11] Khruba Pannyalankan, "Jotmaihet Muang Chiang Rai [The Chiang Rai Annals]," in Jotmaihet Muang Chiang Rai: Yuk Fuen Fu Muang Chiang Rai Ph.S. 2386-2446 [The Chiang Rai Annals: Reconstruction Period BE 2386-2446], trans. and ed. Aphichit Sirichai (Chiang Rai: Lo Lanna Press, 2015): 44

[12] Grabowsky, "Forced Resettlement," 62.

Chiang Mai to perform the ceremony sponsored by Chao Phimphisan, who also invited an important Buddha image, the Phra Saedang Khamani[13] to preside over the ceremony. After the ceremony, Wat Phra Singh, which, like all the temples in the region, had stood abandoned for at least 40 years, was formally occupied by two monks: Khruba Buanpannya and Khruba Ariya.[14] Other abandoned temple sites were occupied by monks in the same year: Khruba Khanthiya (not to be confused with the Khruba Khanthiya mentioned earlier) became the first abbot of Wat Chet Yot in 1844, and remained in the position until his death in 1886.[15] It is not clear, however, if all 108 monks who traveled to Chiang Rai for the ceremony remained to repopulate the many abandoned temples dotting the city, or if some of them followed the Phra Saedang Khamani Buddha image back to Chiang Mai. Another wave of 100 monks relocated to Chiang Rai from Chiang Mai in 1849.[16] Throughout the next several decades the chao and new residents of Chiang Rai took to renovating certain temples within the city, as well as organizing the large civil building project of erecting the city wall. Construction of the wall began in 1858, and was completed in 1889, at which point a city completion ceremony was held.[17]

In 1886, before the city wall was completed, the complete sangha of Chiang Rai assembled at Wat Chet Yot to formalize specifics of monastic decorum. The details of this reformation are recorded in Lanna script in a combination of Northern Thai and Pali on a palm leaf manuscript held at the manuscript library at Wat Sri Bun Ruang, in Chiang Rai. The palm leaf manuscript is possibly missing some sections, and is not properly collated. My research of this document heavily depends on the transcription into central Thai provided to me by Aphichit Sirichai, who is still working on a full transliteration and translation of the manuscript into central Thai.

Katherine Bowie shows that one of the major differences between the Lanna sangha and the Siamese sangha throughout the nineteenth century was the Lanna sangha's independence from the court.[18] The 1886 manuscript from Chiang Rai supports this view in its introduction. The document opens by announcing that the three abbots who led the meeting: "Thu Chao Khanthiya of Wat Chet Yot, Thu Chao Chaya of Wat Phra Kaew, and Thu Chao Thammapannya of Wat Phra Singh have come together and discussed back and forth independently and freely, and have come to their rulings."[19]

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[13] The Phra Saedang Khomani (พระเสตังคมณี) resides at Wat Chiang Man, Chiang Mai,

[14] Khruba Pannyalankan, "Jotmaihet Muang Chiang Rai [The Chiang Rai Annals]," in Jotmaihet Muang Chiang Rai: Yuk Fuen Fu Muang Chiang Rai Ph.S. 2386-2446 [The Chiang Rai Annals: Reconstruction Period BE 2386-2446], trans. and ed. Aphichit Sirichai (Chiang Rai: Lo Lanna Press, 2015): 44.

[15] Khathin Mahat Thai: Volume commemorating the donation of the khathin by the Ministry of the Interior at Wat Jet Yot in the year 2547 (Chiang Rai: Wat Jet Yot, 2004): 15.

[16] Pannyalankan, "*Jotmaihet,*" 46.

[17] Ibid., 60.

[18] Katherine Bowie, "Khruba Sriwichai: The Charismatic Saint and the Northern Sangha," in *Charismatic Monks of Lanna Buddhism*, ed. Paul T. Cohen (Copenhagen: NIAS Press, 2017) 33-37.

[19] *1886 Sangha Reformation in Chiang Rai* (Chiang Rai, 1887): 5. One copy held at the manuscript library of Wat Sri Bun Ruang, Chiang Rai. Electronic copies are held by myself and at the Lo Lanna Press office. References refer to the electronic version, which features two palm-leaf pages per page and central Thai transliteration prepared by Aphichit Sirichai.

These three monks were the monastic representatives of temples built within, or very close to the walled city (*wiang*). Monks from all over the area attended the meeting, as well. The document lists the district head from north of the wiang, Thu Chao Chumphu of Wat Ban Du, and the district head from east of the wiang, Thu Chao Sawi of Wat Pa Yang. All together, the meeting brought together forty-two abbots from temples inside and outside the city. Chao Muang Suriya (r. 1878-1891) served as head representative of the laity, and he was accompanied by twelve additional lay representatives as witnesses.[20]

The document states that these lay and monastic leaders have assembled to "record these monastic instructions (Pali: ovādāchaya) [that the three head monks had decided] and present them to the people to be applied to whomever hereafter becomes a monk, or a novice, or whomever wraps themselves in the robes of a novice of monk and takes on the form[21] of one who ordains."[22] While we are still working through this document, some of the monastic strictures it includes are: A ban against monks selling objects at the docks on the river, at their temple doors, and at the gates to the city wall; A ban against monks who haggle back and forth in public; All monks traveling to their natal villages must dress neatly with their robes well-folded; Monks traveling at night must go with lit torches and always in a group of two or three; Monks must travel only where it is necessary, and inform their superiors before they depart; A ban on monks reciting Dhamma as if it were a song; A ban on lay people selling, or supplying, or imbibing in alcohol with monks. Punishment for this last offense is equal for both monks who drink alcohol and those who supply it to them—they must carry 100 loads [หาบ] of sand from the Mae Kok river to Wat Chet Yot.[23] In addition to these modes of decorum, the document states that after the meeting, a copy of the rulings (or possible an entire *Vinaya* scripture) will be made and distributed to each temple.[24]

While more details will be revealed as we continue to decipher this document, even in this state, it serves as a window into the role and shape of the Chiang Rai sangha in the period before the Siamese asserted greater control in the region. It also highlights the relationship between the local Chao and the monkhood. In addition to presiding at this meeting of the Chiang Rai sangha, Chao Suriya, the reigning Chao Muang of the city at the time oversaw other important Buddhist ceremonies. In 1889 he served as lay sponsor of the construction of the Buddha image at Wat Tham Phra. That same year he oversaw the celebration of the completion of the city wall, which included another ceremony of 108 monks.[25]

Reorganization of the Chao:

After the completion of the city wall, a number of Chao from Chiang Rai traveled to Chiang Mai and received higher ranks. Not long after their return to Chiang Rai in 1891, Chao Muang Suriya passed

[20] Ibid.

[21] literally: gender (เพศ)

[22] 1886 Sangha Reformation in Chiang Rai, 5.

[23] I assume that this sand was used for construction purposes.

[24] 1886 Sangha Reformation in Chiang Rai, 5.

[25] Pannyalankan, *Jotmaihet*, 60-61.

away. The death of Chao Suriya began a transitionary period in the government of Chiang Rai, which eventually gave way to a reorganization of the Chiang Rai Chao and an assertion of Siamese administrative power in the city that mirrored what was happening in other areas of the north. The shift of power away from the local Chao began in Chiang Mai between the years 1884-1899. During this time, the Siamese Commissioner of Lao Chieng (later named Monthon Phayap), Kromnmoen Phichitprichakon, implemented sweeping changes in the North. A system of departments (Interior, Military, Finance, Justice, Royal Household, and Land) and their department heads (*sena*) was introduced, overshadowing the authority of old positions of the Chao. The system that began in Chiang Mai eventually spread to the rest of the north in 1893. Sarawasdi notes that the following areas were eventually incorporated into Kromnmoen Phichitprichakon's administrative system: Lamphun, Lampang, Mueang Yuam, Mueang Khun Yuam, and Mueung Mae Hong Son, Muang Phrae and Muang Nan.[26] For some reason, Sarassawadee leaves out mention of Chiang Rai, but local documents reveal that the same administrative reorganization and integration to the Siamese fold was occurring on the ground in the Kok river Valley.

After the death of Chao Muang Suriya, and before this administrative reorganization, between 1891-1893, there was no appointed Chao Muang of the city, instead the lower Chao were in charge.[27] Then, in 1893, Nai Phantri Luang Phuwanathon Rueban was appointed the first Kha Luang to Chiang Rai, with an administrative jurisdiction over the Kok river valley, including Chaeng Saen and Fang.[28] Being new to the city, the Siamese commissioner did what was expected of the powerful gentry at the time—he affiliated himself with a temple, and began sponsoring renovation and construction projects. Nai Phantri Luang Phuwanathon Rueban quickly became a patron of the only Shan temple within the city walls, Wat Chan Lok Klang Wiang, and its reformist abbot Khruba Khanthiya. Nai Phantri Luang Phuwanathon Rueban was the main lay sponsor of the large renovation that repaired and rebuilt many elements of the temple. As we will see below, the Siamese affiliation with Wat Chan Lok Klang Wiang was relatively brief, however it impacted the religious and political landscape of Chiang Rai in unexpected ways.

The 1890s and temple reconstruction:

In 1853 a powerful hail storm severely damaged the roof of the *Vihan* of Wat Chan Lok Klang Wiang, and many *kuti* on the temple grounds. This was not the storm that would eventually bring down the temple's sandalwood tree, but nevertheless, the destruction was extensive. There is no record of any renovations or repairs done to the temple in the thirty-year period between the storm and Nai

[26] Sarassawadee Ongsakul, *History of Lan Na*, Trans. Chitraporn Tanratanakul, ed. Dolina W. Millar and Sandy Barron (Chiang Mai: Silkworm Books, 2005 [T. 2001]): 185-200.

[27] This is an interesting period was dominated by the abusive local Chao Uparat Kham Doi, who exploited local farmers, harassed temple dancers, and was responsible for the mysterious death of a visiting Siamese official who "fell" off of his elephant. I explore these events more fully in the completed dissertation. See: Aphichit Sirichai, *777 Chat Kan Phraya Mangrai Luang* (Chiang Rai: Lo Lanna Press, 2015): 75-76.

[28] Pannyalankan, *Jotmaihet*, 67.

Phantri Luang Phuwanathon Rueban and Khruba Khantiya's renovations of the 1890s, which were completed on February 6, 1895. This may be because of lack of written sources, or, more likely, because most construction labor and materials in the city at the time were dedicated to the construction of the city wall.

The city wall was completed in 1889, which presumably freed up both labor and resources to dedicate to temple construction. An uncountable number of bricks had been produced within the city to construct the wall so that by the end of the process, the people of Chiang Rai must have been used to constant cycle of brickmaking. This process almost immediately pivoted to the production of bricks for temple vihan and other structures.

The five-year period from 1890-1895 was a flurry of temple construction activity within the city. The following temple construction projects are documented as completed during this five year period: Vihan and Buddha image at Wat Chan Lok Klang Wiang; Vihan and Buddha images at Wat Phra Singh; Vihan at Wat Phra Kaew; Wat Chethawan reconstruction; Vihan at Wat Sri Koet; Vihan Wat Ngam Muang; Wat Chiang Man reconstruction (now abandoned).[29] Before the 1890s, very few major temple construction projects are recorded. In fact, Pannyalankan lists only two temple construction projects occurring between 1844-1890: The Buddha image and cedi at Wat Jom Thong, and the reconstruction of Wat Chang Kham (now abandoned).

This spike in temple construction in the 1890s reveals the factionalized power that occurred in the city at the time. While there is only extant documentation on the construction practices at Wat Phra Singh, we can, with caution, apply some factionalism to the patronage of key temple construction projects. This factionalism will be evident in the latter, failed reformation enacted by Khruba Khanthiya of Wat Chan Lok Klang Wiang and sponsored by the Siamese Kha Luang in 1897-1899.

The congregation of Wat Chan Lok Klang Wiang was, as we know, a Shan community—but Wat Chan Lok Klang Wiang was also the chosen temple of the Siamese Kha Luang, who was the primary lay donor for the 1890s reconstruction project. It is not exactly clear why Kha Luang Nai Phontri Phuwanathon Rueban chose Wat Chan Lok Klang Wiang as the focus of his patronage, but there are a few possible reasons. The temple is located center-point of the newly constructed walled city, the *chai klang wiang*, as reflected by the temple name. In terms of spatial significance, it may have been important to the new Siamese foreigner, now in charge of a large expanse of wild land, to establish his patronage in the very heart of the only civilized muang in the area. Another possible reason is simply the fact that the temple needed repair. Having been badly damaged many years earlier, it must have appeared as an eyesore in the new city center. A final possibility is that the Siamese commissioner's patronage to Wat Chan Lok Klang Wiang was an attempt at divide and rule. By choosing the only Shan temple in the city at the time, the Siamese commissioner may have been trying to undermine the power of the local Chao, who were themselves sponsoring the reconstruction of Wat Phra Singh at the same time.[30]

[29] Ibid., 52-68.

[30] Phra Sunthon Pariyatiwithan, "Khraw Ram Kan Sang Wihan Wat Phra Sing" In Tamnan Phra Borom Saririkathat Nai Lanna Thai Lae Khraw Ram Kan Sang Wihan Wat Phra Sing (Bangkok: Nilonara Press, 1999): 45-46.

The construction activities at Wat Phra Singh are chronicled in a literary form known as *Khrao Ra*m (คร่าวร่ำ).[31] The document, titled *Khrao Ram Kan Sang Vihan Wat Phra Singh*, recounts in detail the various stages of construction of the *vihan*, from the felling of lumber upriver, the hoisting of the *sao ek* (primary pillar), the making of bricks, the sculpting of Buddha and arahant images, to the celebration of the construction completion in 1895. These construction milestones were completed under the supervision of Thu Chao Thammapannya with the sponsorship of local Chao. The work was carried out by locals, who donated their labor in an extended act of religious devotion. The sponsorship and support of the local Chao at Wat Phra Singh is not unique—certainly many (if not most) major temple construction projects at the time would have been connected in some way to the efforts of the local Chao. What hints at factionalism between the contemporaneous construction projects of Wat Phra Singh and Wat Chan Lok Klang Wiang, though, is the Siamese administrators' absence from the "*Khrao Ram Kan Sang Wihan Wat Phra Singh*" document—he is not mentioned as a donor, nor as being present at any of the significant celebrations that mark construction milestones.

The factionalism between Wat Phra Singh and Wat Chan Lok Klang Wiang becomes more pronounced later in the 1890s, when the third Siamese Kha Luang of Chiang Rai, Khun Raknara (1897-1899) enacted a failed monastic reformation.[32] This reformation pitted the Siamese-supported abbot of Wat Chan Lok Klang Wiang, Khruba Khanthiya, against the new abbot of Wat Phra Singh, Khruba Pok. Khruba Pok was a local boy, having been born in San Khong village, just south-east of the walled city.[33] The next section of this paper focuses on the relationship between these two temples with each other, and the ruling class of Chiang Rai, focusing first on Khruba Khanthiya's failed reformation, and then on the events of the local and Shan rebellions in the early twentieth century.

Before the events of the Shan rebellions, the division between Wat Phra Singh and Wat Chan Lok Klang Wiang was recorded by Dr. William Clifton Dodd. Dodd, an American Presbyterian missionary who served in Northern Thailand and Kengtung from 1886-1919, spent many years living in Chiang Rai. He arrived in the city in 1897, spent the early part of the twentieth century in Kengtung, and then returned to Chiang Rai in 1907, which he made his home base until 1919. Dodd was close with Khruba Pok, whom he referred to as his "friend, the big fat jolly Bishop."[34] Dodd records the details of the Siamese-sponsored, failed monastic reformation in his *The Tai Race: Elder Brother of the Chinese*, much of which, presumably was written during his time in Chiang Rai:

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[31] Khrao Ram is a poetic style (คร่าว) that extrapolates on a particular, specific topic at length (ร่ำ meaning to go on and on). See: *Pajananukrom Yuanlanna-Thai Poriwat* (Chiang Rai: Samnak Wattanatham Changwat Chiang Rai, 2555): 90.

[32] This failed reform in Chiang Rai was first brought to my attention by Katherine Bowie, who has written about it in two of her recent publications referenced in this paper.

[33] Khruba Pok's local status is still celebrated by people in Chiang Rai, and it is often pointed out that he is the only Jao Khana Changwat to serve in Chiang Rai's sangha administration who was actually born in the city.

[34] William Clifton Dodd. *The Thai Race: Elder Brother of the Chinese*. (Bangkok: White Lotus Press, 1996 [1923]): 318.

> …in Chiengrai, our friend the big fat jolly Bishop is the leader of the very liberal party. He takes three square meals daily and sleeps soundly. He buys and sells and gets gain. He is the prince of diviners and the seller of charms to the laity—all this in smiling disregard of the Buddhist Pastoral Epistles called Wineya. His is the rich monastery [Wat Phra Singh], the largest and best gilded of the seven within the walls of the city of Chieng Rai. On the other hand, our friend Gruba Kan [Khruba Khanthiya], a Nan man said to be of princely birth but who got his education in the Western Shan country, and who is now at the head of the one Wester Shan monastery in Chiengrai [Wat Chan Lok Klang Wiang], is thin, is reported to eat nothing after midday, does not buy and sell (so far as I know) and seems to try to follow Wineya—in spots. His monastery is the shabbiest one in town. He represents the school of strict discipline. (Dodd, 318)
>
> And this our friend Gruba Kan is not beloved by our friend the Bishop. And it is this wise: Kun Raknara was once Siamese Commissioner there. Though a most immoral man himself, he had a zeal for pure Buddhism. Seeing the worldly mindedness of the good Bishop [Khruba Pok] and observing the austerity of life practiced by Gruba Kan, Kun Raknara took it in hand to have Gruba Kan institute a grand reform. To this end he convoked a council of the mendicant brotherhood, called the Sangha, and of the leading official laity. He laid before them the prevailing laxity. He asked them if they would be willing to follow the lead of Gruba Kan in a return to stricter life and teaching. Some of the laity assented. Then up spake he of the three meal party and said, "If the Laity will bring us food to our temples, wihara, and will sweep and fence and weed and care for monastery grounds, aram, we will give ourselves to learning, to fasting and to rosaries. We will read and expound the sacred law, and will not buy and sell. We liberals will return to primitive austerity if you of the laity will remove the occasion of our worldliness." Then answered Kan Praya Amat, the wealthiest of the laity and said, "The thing which the Bishop hath said is impossible. We are but following in the customs of our fathers and the footprints of our mothers. We would best let well enough alone." And to him they all agreed. And the council broke up, the reform failed, the Bishop still eats as aforetime, Gruba Kan's aram is still weedy, his wihara seedy.[35] (Dodd, 318-319).

There is much to unpack in Dodd's account, and Bowie has already commented on this failed reformation as it relates to broader Siamese attempts to unseat the authority of the Lanna sangha through the revision of monastic decorum.[36] The failure of this reformation clearly shows the division between the local laity, sided with Wat Phra Singh, and the Siamese administrators who chose the Shan temple and its Shan-educated abbot as their preferred sect.

The prominent role of the laity in deciding the outcome of the failed reformation is an important marker in Lanna Buddhist practice. During the council, Khruba Pok puts the power in the hands of the laity—not his fellow monks, the Siamese Kha Luang, or even the local Chao—to decide the specifics of monastic practice. This resembles the sensibilities of his predecessor, Thu Chao Thammapannya who, when asked to reconstruct the Vihan at Wat Phra Singh by the local Chao, tells them that the decision is

[35] Ibid., 318-319.

[36] Bowie, *Khruba*, 46-48.

not up to him. Before agreeing to rebuild the Vihan, Thu Chao Thammapannya consulted with the laity, and left the ultimate decision up to them, since it would mostly impact their lives.[37] The prominent role of the laity in is a defining characteristic of the northern sangha. Katherine Bowie argues that, unlike the integration of the sangha into the Siamese court and state-building efforts in the early twentieth century, "the northern sangha maintained a much greater degree of independence from the Lanna courts, being oriented more toward the peasantry than toward the ruling elite.[38]

Beyond what Dodd's account can tell us about the character of the Lanna sangha at the time, it also problematizes the present-day, accepted lineage of the Chiang Rai ecclesiastical hierarchy. Dodd's refers to Khruba Pok as the "Bishop" of Chiang Rai. Under the Lanna sangha hierarchy, each temple was led by an abbot (*thu chao*), and the full monastic body headed by a *sangharaja*.[39] While surviving documents from Chiang Rai do not use terminology such as "*sangharaja*," it is clear from Dodd's account that Khruba Pok was the head of the Chiang Rai sangha. This is odd, considering that contemporary histories around Chiang Rai list Khruba Khanthiya of Wat Chan Lok Klang Wiang as the first "Chao Khana Changwat" of Chiang Rai." The use of the title of "Chao Khana Changwat" during this time, however, may not be all together accurate, since the title was not adopted in the north until after Khruba Khanthiya's death. Bowie explains that the Sangha act of 1902, which established the system of monastic administration (including the title "Chao Khana Changwat") was not officially adopted in the north until 1924.[40] Referring to Khruba Khanthiya as the first "Chao Khan Changwat" of Chiang Rai is also confusing given the fact that Chiang Rai was not incorporated as a Province (Changwat) until 1906. From 1906-1909, Chiang Rai was grouped together with other muang in the area under the administrative zone known as "Changwat Phayap Nuea."[41] It wasn't until 1910 that Chiang Rai Province, as it is still called, was formally designated by the Ministry of the interior.[42] It is maybe only a coincidence that this date, 1910, aligns with the beginning of Khruba Pok's reign as the second Chao Khana Changwat. Listing Khruba Khanthiya as the first Chao Khana Changwat of Chiang Rai is most likely an anachronism, especially given the fact that his tenure in the position is listed as beginning in 1902, the same year the Sangha Act was passed. Furthermore, Khruba Khanthiya is not mentioned in any of the missionary reports or photography produced during his purported reign as Chao Khana Changwat. Instead, these documents focus on Khruba Pok, that fat and jolly Bishop.

Early Images of the Chiang Rai Sangha

[37] Khrao Ram, 46.

[38] Katherine A. Bowie, Of Beggars and Buddhas: The Politics of Humor in the Vessantara Jataka in Thailand (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2017): 229.

[39] Bowie, *Khruba*, 30.

[40] Ibid., 49;

[41] *Prawatsat Muang Chiang Rai* (Chiang Rai: Samnak Wattanatham Changwat Chiang Rai, 2012): 306.

[42] Aphichit, *777 Chat*, 95.

Dr. William Albert Briggs, a Canadian-born American Presbyterian minister, and his wife Annabelle King Briggs were important missionaries in Chiang Rai from 1900-1918. The Briggs' role in the development of the city cannot be understated. Some of the earliest photos taken of the city were done on the camera that the Briggs' brought with them. These images were taken by either by themselves, or "Nai Sao" a fellow Christian and doctor with whom they worked closely. The Briggs photo collection features only three photos taken on the grounds of Buddhist temples in Chiang Rai. One is of a group of three large Buddha images, presumably moved from Chiang Saen and kept on the grounds of Wat Ngam Muang, and the other two are both taken at Wat Phra Singh. One is a shot of the exterior of the *vihan* and *sala kaew,*[43] and the other a very handsome photo of Khruba Pok posing with seven of his disciples.

In addition to Briggs' photos, the earliest known photos taken in Chiang Rai are also of Wat Phra Singh. Two photos taken on November 9, 1899 may have been taken by someone in the retinue of Phaya Narit Rachakit, the Kha Luang Tesaphiban of Chiang Mai (1890-1899), who traveled to the in that year to assess work on the telegraph line being installed between Chiang Mai and Chiang Saen Luang (present-day Mae Chan).[44] One of the photos is of the main shrine within the temple's *vihan*, featuring the principle Buddha image, and six of the nine arahant images constructed in 1895 by Thu Chao Thammapannya. The image is marked with a sign written in central Thai script, and features a scale measuring stick typically used by archeologists. The other photo of the temple is of the façade of the *vihan* taken from the south-east. Khruba Pok can be seen standing at the bottom of the stairs, looking directly at the camera. On the decorative railing across from him is the same marking sign. The scale-marker is absent from the photo, and Khruba Pok may have been positioned in front of the building to mark its size. In the foreground of the photo, there is an illegible stone inscription, the location of which is currently unknown.

Khruba Pok was not only photographed by Christian missionaries in Chiang Rai, but also was intrigued by their teachings and welcoming of interreligious dialogue and education. Khruba Pok was first close with Dodd, who included a translation of a local Buddhist prayer the monk gave him in his *Tai Race*[45]. By the time the Briggs' arrived in 1900, Khruba Pok was most likely familiar with the general contours of Christianity. During the early part of the nineteenth century, the missionaries had no stable place to perform their services, as the Overbrook Hospital was not yet completed. Khruba Pok generously allowed Briggs to perform multi-media preaching sessions in the *vihan* of his temple.[46] An account of the Christian landscape of the city in early 1906 reports:

> At Chieng Rai city, each Sabbath afternoon two or more of the leading Christians teach and preach in the markets. From time to time the city has been crowded with men from the out-villages, who have come to pay taxes or to work on the public improvements. These men sleep in the temples; and from night to night bands of four or five Christians with elders…have visited

[43] The residence of the temples famous Phra Singh Buddha image.

[44] Pannyalankan, *Jotmaihet*, 71.

[45] See page 316.

[46] The interreligious landscape of Chiang Rai in the early part of the twentieth century is worthy of more attention than I can give it here, especially given the rather large Muslim community of Pashtun and Ho peoples that had settled in the city.

> and taught them of Christ….The abbot of the head temple of the district was a regular attendant at the services held in his temple and said that he would like to have the services held every night. In accordance with his suggestion the magic lantern[47] curtain was stretched right across the front of the altar, in the very face of the colossal gilded idol. On this curtain the story of the life of Christ was pictured from night to night."[48]

While this report does not mention Wat Phra Singh by name, it is most plausible that these meetings were held at Wat Phra Singh. Khruba Pok was close with the Presbyterian missionaries in the city, and had engaged in interreligious dialogue with them in the past. Furthermore, as mentioned above, the *vihan* at Wat Chan Lok Klang Wiang was severely damaged when the temple's eponymous palladium fell on it in 1903. Between the years 1903-1906 the structure was completely torn down and rebuilt.[49] It would be very unlikely that these meetings would have taken place in an active construction site. Here again, it is suggested that Wat Phra Singh, not Wat Chan Lok Klang Wiang was the "head temple of the district." After Khun Raknara's failed reformation, it is not clear if the Siamese continued their patronage of the Wat Chan Lok Klang Wiang, but the materials explored above suggest that it was not considered to be the "head temple of the district" and that this designation was reserved for Wat Phra Singh exclusively.

The forth Kha Luang of Chiang Rai, Phra Phon Asai replaced Khun Raknara in late 1899.[50] Kha Luang Phra Phon Asai served in Chiang Rai from 1899-1902. His reign was short-lived, and did little to assure the locals. In 1902, one of the commissioner's top assistants, "Nai Mun" was caught digging up the treasures buried beneath the cedi at Wat Phra That Chom Thong. Wat Phra That Chom Thong was the first major temple renovation project carried out by the Chue Chet Thon upon their resettlement of Chiang Rai. It is the very spot where King Phaya Mangrai is said to have founded his kingdom, and still one of the most important religious and historical sites in the city. When Nai Mun was caught, he and Kha Luang Phon Asai returned to Chiang Mai. Nai Mun was thrown in jail, and Phon Asai did not return to Chiang Rai.[51]

To quickly recap the activities of the Siamese commissioners in Chiang Rai during the first decade of their rule: The first Kha Luang, Nai Phontri Phuwanathon Rueban, chose Wat Chan Lok Klang Wiang as the principle temple of his patronage. While not a controversial move on the surface, because Wat Chan Lok Klang Wiang was the only Shan temple in town, this may have created animosity between himself and the local rulers, who were simultaneously renovating Wat Phra Singh. The third Kha Luang,

[47] This "magic lantern" was most likely the stereopticon that Briggs used in conjunction with his phonograph when he would preach the Gospel (See: *The Laos News* 1 (April 1904): 47). Briggs sold the phonograph during WWI to send funds to support the Canadian war effort, however, the location of the stereopticon is unknown.

[48] *The Laos News* 3 (January 1906): 131-32.

[49] Wat Klang Wiang, 8.

[50] Pannyalankan, *Jotmaihet*, 71.

[51] Ibid., 72.

Khun Raknara, sponsored a failed reformation that pitted Khruba Khanthiya, the Shan-educated reformist abbot of Wat Chan Lok Klang Wiang, against the head of the Chiang Rai sangha—Khruba Pok, the locally born-and-raised abbot of Wat Phra Singh. The next Kha Luang left the city in shame when one of his assistants was caught looting sacred Buddhist objects from the most important *cedi* in the city. Needless to say, things between the Siamese and the locals were becoming tense, and the Shan were equally tied up in the power struggles that eventually snapped during the early years of the twentieth century.

After Kha Luang Phon Asai returned to Chiang Mai with his fiendish assistant, the fifth Kha Luang, Asa Phuthon, was sent to Chiang Rai. Asa Phuton's reign was equally short. Unlike his predecessor, Phon Asai, who merely left the city in shame, Asa Phuton was forced to flee the city under cover of darkness in fear of his life.

The Not-So-Shan Rebellion in Chiang Rai

The Shan uprising in Northern Thailand has been connected to the disenfranchisement of the Shan peoples by both the British and the Siamese.[52] Not much has been written on the events of the Shan rebellion in Chiang Rai, in either Thai or English. There are good sources that cover this unrestful period in Chiang Mai, Phrae, Lampang, and Phayao, but Chiang Rai's unique experience in these few years in the early 1900s remains untold. As we look forward to the events of 1902-1904 in Chiang Rai, and the specific details of the Shan (and not-so Shan) rebellion in Chiang Rai, the split between the Siamese and the locals is at points sharply pronounced, and other times blurred by the necessities of a city under siege.

While the Shan did attack many communities throughout the Kok river valley, the early twentieth-century uprisings in Chiang Rai first fomented among the locals, not the Shan. Dr. Briggs wrote extensive reports and letters concerning the events the uprising in Chiang Rai, and the delicate balance of power between the locals, Siamese, and Shan that eventually deteriorated into bloodshed. The problems in Chiang Rai began in early August 1902, when Briggs received news from Dr. McGilvary that the Shan had attacked the Siamese in Phrae. In Phrae, Shan murdered the Kha Luang and his retinue and forced the local Chao Luang to swear allegiance.[53] In light of this news, Briggs met with Kha Luang Asa Phuthon, who hadn't been in the area for even a year. Briggs reports:

> Being a new man, and perfectly ignorant of the geography of the northern provinces, he was utterly at sea as to how to distribute a few swift scouts. He asked me what I knew of the different roads. I immediately brought out a sketch map I had made of the territory under Chiang Rai Station…and indicated a few important points, and my reasons for thinking that a few

[52] Sarassawadee, *History*, 206.

[53] Steven D. King, ed., The Missionary Story Part 1: Dr. William Albert Briggs and Annabelle King Briggs, Missionaries to Siam, 1890-1919 Their Story from Writings, Letters, and Photographs, Part 1, 1890-1906 (Oregon: 2005): 196.

> reliable men on horses at these points, would do more to protect Chiang Rai, than any other possible scheme.[54]

The Kha Luang told Briggs that he would dispatch men, and inform the surrounding villagers accordingly. These plans were abandoned, however, when orders came from Chiang Mai. Instead of following Briggs' advice, The Kha Luang conscripted all able-bodied men from the surrounding villagers. The men were kept in the city as garrison to protect it from an oncoming attack. Briggs saw this as a grave misstep:

> I soon saw that a mistake was being made, that might result in something more serious than an attack by Western Shans. The rains this year have been late, so that rice planting has been delayed a full month or more. The rain that all have been longing for so eagerly had at last come, the clouds were pouring down their gift of life (a few weeks longer and without rain, it meant no harvest this year). The people had been sullen for some time for a multitude of reasons, but all circling round the Siamese as the cause of their troubles. The late Commissioner [Phra Phon Asai] had been very heartily disliked. Well, like a thunderbolt out of a clear sky came the summons to come into the city to guard Siamese Government Treasure. The people came, but with intensely black looks.[55]

Noticing the intensity of the people's "black looks," Briggs warned the local governor, Chao Luang Phaya Ratanakhet, of the rising dissatisfaction among the conscripted men. But the governor, while sympathetic, was on strict orders from the Siamese commissioner in Chiang Mai to fortify the city, and to not allow the men to abandon their posts. Then, on August 9, a Chiang Mai official, Chao Noi Kaew, brought reports from Chiang Mai that the people there were beginning to rebel, and that the Siamese had been defeated many times by the Shans. Briggs again warns the Kha Luang, who still can do nothing. Briggs says that the Kha Luang was, at that time, "caught between the devil (the Shans) and the sea (the locals)."[56] On August 11, a false report arrives that Lampang had been sacked. Briggs, the governor, and the commissioner had to do a considerable amount of work around the city to cool people down due to this and other rumors. By August 15, things were very tense in the city. The conscripted men wanted to return to their homes to tend their fields. Briggs reports:

> Friday the 15th morning I was told that all the people from the country had fled back to their villages before daylight that morning, and that they intended resisting any further efforts to get them to come to the City and watch. They said they were made to lie out in the open like cattle, and not allowed to go into the temples close by, during the rain. Their rice (which they had brought with them) was all gone. The officials refused to give them more. They were not going around begging for food. They took the bit in their teeth and fled. There seems to be a sort of quietness over the city since then.[57]

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[54] Ibid., 196-197. A copy of this map is held at the Payap University archives. Drawn on a single piece of paper, with "Laos" script.

[55] Ibid., 197.

[56] Ibid., 198.

[57] Ibid., 201.

On Saturday August 16, the locals had organized and were planning an attack of their own on the Siamese. That evening, Briggs was told by a shadowy figure waiting on his porch to not be in the city between 8 am and 4 pm the next day (Sunday, August 17). Briggs reports:

> This word was sent to me because neither we nor any of the Christians had anything to fear. The trouble was not with the Western Shans, but the people of the country. A general massacre of all the Siamese was evidently intended. It appeared that Chao Luang [Phaya Ratanakhet] was to be spared if he refused to help the Siamese. But in case he helped the Siamese in any way he would meet the same fate as they. The people were determined that if there were any real decoits to fight, they were willing to fight them; but if the decoits failed to appear, the Siamese and the Chinese were to take the consequences…It was evidently a popular rising, and had nothing to do with the Governor. In fact he had been severely blamed for siding with the Siamese so much. The plot had evidently been carefully planned, and the women and children might expect the worst that the man or friends could think of. Already a large number of people had entered the city, and I noticed when walking home in the evening that the people had a very determined and disrespectful attitude…I consulted with Mrs. Briggs as to what my duty was. Could I in any way give the Siamese a word of warning, without endangering the lives of my loved ones? I confess, I hesitated for some few minutes. But I felt that should a massacre occur, and I not give any word of warning, I would always hold myself responsible for the death of those women and children."[58]

As those who had fled conscription the previous day began streaming back into the city, Briggs became concerned for the lives of the Siamese women and children in the city (he does not mention concern for the male Siamese). Briggs decided to inform the commissioner's assistant, Nai Duang Di of the popular uprising planned for the next day in order to prevent a massacre:

> I reprimanded Nai Taung Di for the Siamese men leaving their wives and children at the mercy of the mob. The mob was the making of the Ka Luang and if he issued a decree permitting a large part of the people to return to their fields, the mob would disperse. I assured him it would mean great trouble if they did not act now.[59]

All of the Siamese, including the Kha Luang, fled the city that night. The next day Chao Luang Phaya Ratanakhet issued an official decree allowing all men who had been conscripted to return home. While many men returned to their villages, the locals organized their own defensive force that remained to guard the city in the event of any possible attack by the Shan.[60]

Briggs wrote to McGilvary that day, once the situation had been diffused:

[58] Ibid., 203-205.

[59] Ibid., 205.

[60] Ibid.

> I very much fear that if the Siamese had not left there would have been an uprising of the people to-day—notwithstanding every effort made by the Chao Luang, the people seemed to have gotten to the point where they were about uncontrollable. In fact the Chao Luang was almost in as much danger as were the Siamese. The people blame him for not taking their side.[61]

The events of August 1902 in Chiang Rai show the fragile balance of power that existed between the Siamese, local rulers, and residents. Briggs presents himself as having the most appropriate answers to the complex problems at hand, but also shows sympathy and understanding for the unique position of the local governor, Chao Luang Phaya Ratanakhet. It appears that Chao Luang Phraya Ratanakhet did the best he could, given the bunglings of Kha Luang Asa Phuthon, who himself was only following orders from Chiang Mai. It is clear that Briggs blamed the Kha Luang for the entire affair, and generally had a low opinion of the Siamese commissioners in the early part of the twentieth century.

The Actual Shan Rebellions in Chiang Rai

Kha Luang Asa Phuthon did not return to Chiang Rai after absconding with his life. Instead, Kha Luang Phraya Utarakit Phichan, the Khal Luang of Chaing Mai Nuea, took control. Utarakit Phichan, along with Chao Luang Phaya Ratanakhet, and the Nai Khwaeng of Chiang Saen Laung, Phraya Rachadet Damrong, led most of the defensive against the Shan attacks that occurred over the next two years, with Siamese troops arriving from Phayao and Chiang Mai at different points in the fighting. These attacks on the city bring the division between the locals, Siamese and the Shan into sharp focus.

The division is most obvious in the collusion between some of the Shan living within the city wall and the first group of bandits who laid siege to the city in October of 1902. The first wave of attacks on the city was carried out by a group of Shan led by "Phaya Sri Song Muang." This group first attacked Chiang Saen Luang on October 13, which they defeated before turning their attentions towards the walled city of Chiang Rai.[62] Briggs must have known that the Shan were planning an attack on the city, as he wrote in a letter to Dr. McGilvary in Oct. 14, a day after the Shan had plundered Chiang Saen Luang, "there is one thing certain; there is no Siamese here that ought to be entrusted with the affairs of Siam at the present moment."[63]

The Shan plan to overtake the city depended on the cooperation of those Shans who had been living in Chiang Rai for some time. Led by a man named Pha Ka Mung, members of Chiang Rai's Shan community conspired with the group led by Phaya Sri Song Muang to sabotage the local efforts to defend the city. The plan was that when the advancing Shan gave the signal, Pha Ka Mung and his lot would set fire to key locations within the city walls, therefore causing chaos and distracting the forces defending the city. Somehow, the leaders of the city got word of the plan, and arrested Pha Ka Mung and his gang, and held them prisoner on the grounds of Wat Phra Singh during the siege.

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[61] Ibid., 204.

[62] "Banthuek Chotmai Het 'Khadi Pha Ka Mung,'" In Charin, Banthuek Muang Chaing Rai, 112.

[63] King, Missionary Story, 208.

Singkaew Suriyakam, one of Dr. Brigg's disciples, gives an account of the Shan advance on the city on October 17, 1902. The account is published in his booklet "Briggs of Chiang Rai" from 1962.[64] Singkaew was a child at the time, and waited out the failed invasion at the Brigg's home. Singkaew remembers lying flat under the bed of Dr. and Mrs. Briggs to shield himself from bullets. Here is Singkaew's recollection of the invasion:

> "The bamboo bridge…was just opposite to the present-day police station. The ruling princes of that time placed an old mortar with its muzzle pointed to the bridgehead on the other bank ready to fire at any moment. The bamboo mat floor in the middle of the bamboo bridge, where the current was very strong, had been removed and a camouflaged floor had been put in its place in order to lure the enemy to be drowned there. Later it was found to be effective as planned.
>
> All was quiet on both banks of the river for a long while. Then the sound of gongs and long drums burst forth, "Mong, Sae mong" The chief of the Shan forces shouted, "Pakamoong!" Hey! Jee Hey! Pao Hey![“] He was calling the gang in the city under the leader Pakamoong to set fire to the city of Chiangrai [sic]. Unfortunately for him this gang was being held in custody in the temple of Wat Phra Singh. So nothing happened as planned by the Shans. Simultaneously gun-fire began at the bridgehead mixed with the sound of drums and gongs and Shans shouting "Wat Lae! Wat Lae" which was similar in meaning to the cry of dacoits farther south who shout, "Ai sua aow wah!" when making an attack. Apart from firing their rifles the Shans shot off fire crackers to frighten people in the city.
>
> Then the robbers who though themselves invulnerable because they were tattooed all over, marched with swords in both hands to the bridgehead and came within the firing of the big gun hidden on the city side. When the robbers came near the middle of the bridge, the ruling prince himself pulled the trigger of the big gun and the vanguard of the enemy disappeared into the river. The followers, very angry, rushed over the bridge to invade the city despite the rain of bullets from the city side. Many of them fell and disappeared into the current because the false floor in the middle of the bridge did not bear their weight. The rear guard, seeing the failure to cross the river, retreated and encamped about six kilometers from the city.
>
> Suddenly the Thai soldiers from Chiang Mai arrived and at once crossed the bridge in pursuit of the enemy. The robbers put up a severe resistance at Santakook village because they were entrenched in a well-fortified position. At last the Shan force was driven out of the kingdom. By mistake the Thai soldiers thought that all the houses on the other bank of the Mae Kok river belonged to Shans so they burned all of them down. They beheaded two Shan rebels and put the heads up for public view in front of the present government office just opposite to the official's club.[65]

[64] Singkaew dates the invasion to 1905, but it is clear from primary source documents that the invasion occurred on October 17, 1902.

[65] Singkaew Suriyakam, Briggs of Chianrai: William A. Briggs M. D. The Founder of Overbrook Hospital (Chiang Rai: Overbroook Hospital, 1962): 6-7.

Singkaew's account supports the story that Pha Ka Mung and his gang were in cahoots with the invading Shan. Primary source documents indicate that after being defeated at the bridge, as Singkaew describes, the Shan fled to Nang Lae. There, at Wat Nang Lae, the Shan regrouped, and then dug trenches at Ban Khua Khrae in Ban Du to prepare for the coming retaliation. On October 22, A force of Siamese soldiers equipped with a canon from Phayao crossed the bridge at Ban Khua Khua Khrae and pushed the Shan back to their stronghold at Wat Nang Lae. The Siamese soldiers fired on the temple, sending the Shan in all directions. Some took shelter in another temple, Wat Huay Rai, and others fled to Chaing Saen Noi, back within the 25 kilometer no-man's land.[66]

The documents do not mention, as Singkaew does, whether or not the Siamese soldiers burnt all of the homes north of the Kok river, but they do report that after their victory, they took two prisoners, Sang Oo, and Nan Sang. Sang Oo was quickly beheaded, but not before corroborating the fact that the group led by Pha Ka Mung had plotted with the rebels.[67] Nan Sang was more cooperative, and gave a full confession in writing. Nan Sang states clearly in his confession that the Shan living within the city were in on the plot:

> Phaya Sri Song Muang was the head of the Shans. He plotted together with the Shans who had made their homes in Chiang Rai city. They planned together how to lay siege to muang Chiang Rai, to slaughter all of the Southern officials, and to set fire to the city. They planned to take the money in the city and split it among themselves, both in large and small shares. These are the names of the Shans living within the city who were in on the plot: Uchai, Chongmon, Saen Muang Noi, and many others whose names I don't know. There are documents and letters that they all saw and swore to telling the exact time and date that Phaya Sri Song Muang was to attack the city. They were to arrange two boats on the river at the north and the south each, and when Phaya Sri Song Muang arrived on the other side of the bridge and was at the city gate, [these leaders of the Shan in the city] were to set fire to the city and the Kha Rachakan office. They were also to seize the southern and northern officials and kill each and every one of them.[68]

Nan Sang confesses that the invading Shan planned on killing both the southern (Siamese) and northern (local) officials. This may suggest that any animosity between the local and Siamese officials for the failed monastic reformation of 1897-99 had been forgotten. Or, at least, that the Shan, like the locals who conspired to kill Chao Luang Ratanakhet along with the Siamese just a few months earlier, considered the local Chao to be in the back pocket of the Siamese Kha Luang.

While Nan Sang does not mention Pha Ka Mung by name, he was the main individual fingered by the locals and Siamese alike as the head of the Shan living within the city. Directly after the siege, Pha Ka Mung must have escaped detention at Wat Phra Singh, as he fled the city with his valuable belongings, family, and five other Shan. The group was quickly apprehended by the Siamese soldiers, who beheaded Pha Ka Mung and his five male companions. This led to a minor conflict between The British Consul "Mister Becket" and Phraya Narit Rachakit, the Kha Luang Yai of Monthon Phayap. The

[66] Nan Sang, "*Kham Hai,*" 113-114.

[67] "Banthuek Chotmai Het 'Khadi Pha Ka Mung,'" 112.

[68] Nan Sang, "*Kham Hai,*" 113.

British sought payment for retribution for the extrajudicial execution of six Shan, who were their colonial subjects. The Siamese produced the written confession of Nan Sang that identified Pha Ka Mung and his lot as co-conspirators in the attack. The British, however, did not accept it as admissible proof of their guilt. In the end, the Siamese paid damages to the British in the amount of 4,377.50 Rupees for the deaths of Pha Ka Mung and his gang.[69]

Pha Ka Mung and his beheaded group of Shan rebels were most likely members of the Shan congregation of Wat Chan Lok Klang Wiang. Given the friction between Wat Chan Lok Klang Wiang and Wat Phra Singh that transpired just a few years earlier, their arrest and detention at Wat Phra Singh seems symbolic. [70] Indeed, throughout the following years, as local and Siamese forces fought off another wave of Shan advances, Wat Phra Singh and another temple, Wat Saen Thong, served as temporary prisons, army barracks, and infirmaries.[71] Wat Chan Lok Klang Wiang, however, is absent from any documents describing the defense of the city during this period. So too is any mention of Khruba Khantiya who had spent time studying and practicing meditation in Shan country. This, of course, does not suggest that Khruba Khanthiya was in any way involved in the Shan scheme to burn the city. It is curious, however, that the Shan community in Chiang Rai would conspire to slaughter the Siamese administrators, who had been major donors to their community temple just ten years earlier. Maybe the Shans felt used by the Siamese after Khruba Khanthiya's failed reformation, or maybe they were angry at the locals for rejecting the reformation. These possible reactions to localize events no

[69] "Banthuek Chotmai Het 'Khadi Pha Ka Mung,'" 112.

[70] There is another photo of Wat Phra Singh in the Briggs collection held in the Phayap Univeristy Archives, which, like many of Brigg's photos, features his annotation transferred to the front of the photos. Instead of listing the temple's name, the photo is simply marked: "Government Building—Chiang Rai." While this may be a happy accident, during the early part of the twentieth century, before military barracks, prisons, or government strongholds had been built, Wat Phra Singh certainly served as an important "government building" in Chiang Rai. Readers may wonder about the role of the Sala Klang Changwat Chiang Rai, which secondary literature, and latter signage on the building itself, purports to have been completed in 1900. It is commonly held that Dr. Briggs himself designed and led the construction of the building, however, Briggs makes no mention of being involved in this project, nor does he ever write at all about the building. In fact, after the construction of Overbrook Hospital (1909-1911), Briggs wrote in a report that "Previous to the building of Overbrook Hospital, no government building of any size or value had been built in Chieng Rai. The work on market shops and native houses is done by cheap untrained labor, and is typically disgraceful. Most of the houses would be called huts, if called by their right name" (The Missionary Story Part 3, section 1, 2006, 94-95).

[71] Pannyalankan, 73. Wat Saen Thong, also called Wat Lan Thong, is an abandoned temple located near the current municipal market in Chiang Rai, where Anuban Chiang Rai School presently resides. The Principle Buddha image of this temple was brought to Wat Ngam Muang, and then, in 1960, invited to the Vihan at Wat Phra Kaew, where it currently resides as the Phra Prathan.

doubt would have intensified growing Shan dissatisfaction with the new tax systems established with the *tesaphiban* government in 1899 that is commonly cited as sparking the 1902 rebellion in Phrae.[72]

Primary source and latter documents do not give any indication of the Shan motives behind this first attack, however, oral histories maintain that after the resident Shan community plotted to burn the city, the entire Shan congregation of Wat Chan Lok Klang Wiang was forcibly moved to Ban San Pa Ko, far south of the city walled.[73] Furthermore, Rebecca Weldon recalls that her husbands' mother, Mae Nu, and other members of her generation, absolutely refused to be associated with Wat Klang Wiang in any way, presumably because of lasting animosity towards the Shan rebels who conspired against the city.[74]

From Sandalwood Tree to City Navel Pillar

The animosity between the locals and the Shan led directly to next wave of attacks, which came in March of 1904. It was in the interim, however, between the 1902 and 1904 attacks, when the sandalwood tree, the symbol of the Shan temple Wat Chan Lok Klang Wiang, came crashing down. During a powerful hailstorm on May 5, 1903 the great sandalwood tree, which the temple history describes as the "*khu wat ban khu ban khu muang*" [palladium of the temple, village, and city], destroyed the *vihan*, as well as many *kuti.* The *vihan* was so badly damaged that the entire structure had to be torn down and rebuilt. [75] From 1903-1906, Wat Chan Lok Klang Wiang was again under construction. Even in death, however, the sacred sandalwood tree remained an important object in the religio-spatial scheme of the city.

After being hauled off from the caved-in *vihan*, the trunk of the sandalwood tree was sent by the Chao of Chiang Rai down to Chiang Mai, where it was carved into an *inthakhin* pillar. This pillar was then sent back to Chiang Rai before the reconstruction of the temple was completed. After the *vihan* of Wat Chan Lok was completely rebuilt, the pillar was installed as the city navel pillar of Chiang Rai in a ceremony that occurred around 1906.[76] During this ceremony reference to the sandalwood tree was

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[72] For more on the connection between the Shan rebellion in Phrae and the *tesaphiban* system, see: Taylor Easum, "Urban Transformation in the Colonial Margins: Chiang Mai from Lanna to Siam" PhD Dissertation (University of Wisconsin-Madison: 2012): 185-187.

[73] There is still a large Shan community at Ban San Pa Ko, and a Shan-style temple.

[74] During the period Rebecca Weldon was referring, the name of the temple had already been shortened to Wat Klang Wiang. Personal Communication, June 22, 2017.

[75] Wat Klang Wiang, 8-9.

[76] Ibid., 9. This city navel pillar was later destroyed during World War II. During this time, many temples in the city were abandoned as people sought refuge in the forests and villages far from the Allied bombing campaigns against the Japanese. The temple history states many soldiers from "the central region came to fight with the Japanese. These soldiers from the central region were quartered at the many temples and schools around the city. Some of these soldiers were good people, and others were not. The city navel pillar, which resembled a small stupa and had many valuables buried beneath it was destroyed when these thieves dug up the valuables beneath it (in truth it must be said that those who dug these things up feared neither man nor spirits). Old people in the area report that the thieves dug up a Phra Singh-style Buddha image with a *natak* of nine centimeters" ("Wat Klan Wiang," 10). A new

removed from the temple name, which was officially changed from Wat Chan Lok Klang Wiang to Wat Klang Wiang. The temple history states that the elements of the temple were rebuilt through the combined donorship of the people of Chiang Rai and Chiang Mai, and that the installation of the new city navel pillar was a testament to their unity. It makes no mention of any Shan being involved.[77]

Transporting the trunk of the tree to Chiang Mai seems like an unnecessary step. Why couldn't the pillar have been carved in Chiang Rai? Certainly, there were craftspeople capable in the city. Furthermore, there is no water link between Chiang Rai and Chiang Mai, which means that the large, sacred object had to be humped over the jungled mountain ranges separating the Ping and Mekong watersheds. The city navel pillar was an object crafted in Chiang Mai, and installed on the grounds of what had been, until then, an identifiable Shan temple. In addition to being a sacred object wrought in Chiang Mai, the pillar also carried with it ritual significance anchored in Chiang Mai Buddhist practice. The yearly navel pillar worship festivals that occurred at the Wat Klang Wiang from 1906 until the second World War, were modeled directly after the Inthakhin worship festival at Wat Chedi Luang in Chiang Mai.[78]

The refashioning of the fallen sandalwood tree into an *inthakhin* pillar suggests an effort by local powers to rebrand the temple as one associated with Chiang Mai, as opposed to Shan, Buddhist practices. It is tempting to think that local rulers, as well as the Siamese, may have viewed the destruction of Wat Chan Lok Klang Wiang as retribution for the Shan uprising. Regardless of what symbolism they may have derived from the temples destruction, it remains that the former temple of the Shan living within the city walls—the same community that conspired with Phraya Sri Song Muang to burn the city—was badly damaged not long after the Shan were repelled back to Chiang Saen Noi. The temple's own palladium, the towering sandalwood tree for which it was named, served as the weapon of its own destruction. This objects was then refashioned in Chiang Mai and re-installed on the temple grounds in Chiang Rai in an act of cultural erasure. Just as the reference to the sandalwood tree was removed from the temple's name, so too was any active Shan connection to the temple.

The Second Shan Attacks

Primary source reports do not mention the destruction of the temple, or the appropriation of the toppled sandalwood tree as motivations behind the 1904 wave of Shan attacks. Instead, they finger a social slight concerning an invitation to a party as the cause of the unrest. The Shan who had settled in Chiang Saen Noi, some of whom had fled there after their failed attack on the Chiang Rai, were purposefully excluded from the invitation list to a high-society monastic ordination. While this may be only the straw that broke the camel's back, it is, nonetheless revealing. A report written in April 4, 1904 by Nai Noi Maha Thep for Phraya Utaragit Pichan, recounts the beginnings of the Shan attack on Chiang

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city navel pillar was installed on the site of the old one on the occasion of Queen Sirikit's 60th birthday, August 12th, 1992.

[77] Ibid., 8-9.

[78] Ibid., 11.

Saen Luang.[79] According to Nai Noi Maha Thep, before the Shan attacked Chiang Saen Luang, the Chao Uparat of Chiang Rai had sent an open invitation to all of the people in the area to come to make merit and celebrate the occasion of the ordination of his son, Nai Duang Thip. Nai Noi Ku, one of the minor gentry, was preparing to extend this invitation to the Shan living in Chiang Saen Noi, but Nai Noi Maha Thep warned that many Shan would show up to the event if they were all invited. He consulted with the Chao Uparat who was sponsoring the ceremony, as well as the local governor, Chao Luang Ratanakhet. Chao Luang Ratanakhet was angry that the Shan would arrive in such large numbers, and instructed all lower gentry that not a single Shan was permitted to attend the event. Chao Luang Ratanakhet's rejection of any Shan attendees to the party may reveal the lasting resentment the locals held for the Shan that had attacked their city in 1902. This social slight on the part of Chao Luang Ratanakhet enraged the Shan living throughout the Kok river valley, who then again moved on the settlements in the Kok River valley.[80]

Thu Sala Luang Muang Oot: The Militant Craftsman Monk

The rebels who attacked present-day Mae Chan, Ban Du, were led by two monks: Thu Sala Luang Muang Oot, and Thu Mangsa. Apparently, these two monks were not Shan, but Mon, and had entered the abandoned city of Chiang Saen in 1902 and taken up residence at Wat Phra Chao Thong Thip on the banks of the Mekong river, near the market.[81] Thu Sala Muang Oot, whose title, "Thu Sala," implies that he was a craftsperson-monk, had been amongst the ranks that fought with Phaya Sri Song Muang during the October, 1902 attacks on Chiang Saen Luang and Wiang Chiang Rai.[82] After the attacks surviving the first attack on Chiang Rai, he became the acting abbot of Wat Phra Chao Thong Thip. Thu

[79] Nai Noi Maha Thep, "Report," 4 April 1904, in *Bantoek Muang Chiang Rai*, trans. and ed. Charin Chaemchit (Chiang Rai: n.d.): 105-106.

[80] Ibid.

[81] Nai Noi Kaew, "Report" 17 March 1904, in *Bantoek Muang Chiang Rai*, ed. Charin Chaemchit(Chiang Rai: n.d.): 103-104. Wat Phra Chao Thong Thip, also known as Wat Khwang, is now an abandoned temple. The name "Phra Chao Thong Thip" comes from the name of a famous Buddha image that now resides at nearby Wat Phra Chao Lan Thong (Silapa Muang Chiang Saen, 269). A sing erected by the Ministry of Fine Arts at the temple site states that the temple was originally built in the 16-17th centuries, CE, but was abandoned until the 20-21st centuries CE, when the temple was reoccupied and new structures were built over the old ones. While the temple site is presently no more than a collection of brick foundations with a truncated and collapsed *cedi*, I assume that this reconstruction was carried out by the Shan inhabitants of Chiang Saen Noi in the early 20th century.

[82] It is also possible that Thu Sala Muang Oot was another name for Phaya Sri Song Muang, as Phraya Rachadet Damrong refers to the leader of the March attacks as "Phaya Sri Song Muang Oot." However, He also mentions the name of another monk "Thu Muang Kat" who does not show up in any other documents. There is, therefore, not enough evidence to firmly claim the connection ("Rai Ngan Sathanakan Chak Chiang Rai Thueng Chiang Mai," 24 June 1904, in *Bantoek Muang Chiang Rai*, ed. Charin Chaemchit (Chiang Rai: n.d): 108.

Sala Muang Oot fought every battle while still in robes, until he was finally killed in a field near Ban Du. Thu Mangsa, however, disrobed and led the subsequent attacks on horseback.[83]

Thu Sala Muang Oot and the former monk Mangsa led an attack on Chaing Saen Luang on March 2, 1904. Phraya Rachadet Damrong, the Nai Khwaeng of Chiang Saen Luang raised a force to defend the town and held off the Shan, who fled into the night. Phraya Rachadet Damrong, anticipating another attack, then sent a request to Phraya Utarakit Pichan, the Head Kha Luang of Chiang Mai Nuea, for backup forces. The Shan had regrouped at Chiang Saen Noi, and had planned a large-scale attack on Chiang Saen Luang, Chiang Rai, and eventually Chiang Mai, hoping for British support. The women and families of the men under Phraya Rachadet Damrong fled Chiang Saen Luang for Nang Lae and Rim Kok to the south. The locals gathered reinforcements, and the Shan, led by their monastic warrior, Thu Sala Muang Oot, attacked Chiang Saen Luang on March 12, at 3:15 pm. The local force scattered the Shan rebels in all directions. Some entered the *vihan* at Wat Kassa, just outside of Chiang Saen Luang, to regroup for another attack.[84] Others, led by the former monk Mangsa, returned to Chaing Saen Noi. Thu Sala Muang Oot fled south, where he was confronted in a one-on-one battle in a field in Ban Du. The militant monk was defeated, his corpse beheaded, and his head placed on a stake in front of the Governor's office along with that of another Shan craftsperson-rebel, Sala Pok.[85] Even with their monastic leader beheaded, the Shan continued to attack settlements in the Kok river valley for the next ten days. During this time, many villages were burned and there was general chaos, which was only suppressed when Siamese and local forces occupied a number of local villages.[86]

Conclusion:

Siamese and local soldiers wounded in the fighting were treated in a make-shift infirmary fashioned in the *vihan* of Wat Phra Singh.[87] Dr. Briggs attended to these men, and then continued in the role of military doctor for the Siamese in Chiang Rai for the remainder of his time in the city. Directly after the Shan attacks, permanent barracks were established at the base of Doi Chom Thong, which relocated the military outside of temple space. All throughout this period, it is clear that Buddhist spaces were used for overt and subtle political purposes. During the temple construction boom of the 1890s, the first Siamese Kha Luang in Chiang Rai made a conscious decision to patronize the Shan temple Wat Chan Lok Klang Wiang, as opposed to Wat Phra Singh, the chosen temple of the local Chao. This political slight was amplified a few years later, when Khun Raknara, the Siamese commissioner supported the failed monastic reformation out of Wat Chan Lok Klang Wiang—directly challenged the authority of Khruba Pok, the "bishop" of the Chiang Rai sangha.

These subtle acts of political manipulation of Buddhist spaces are made more salient by the concrete examples of the early twentieth century: Wat Phra Singh served as temporary barracks and infirmary; The Shan under Phaya Sri Song Muang took refuge at Wat Nang Lae after their failed 1902 siege of the city, and Siamese soldiers made the surprising decision to fire on the temple with a canon

[83] Nai Noi Kaew, "Report," 106.

[84] "Rai Ngan Sathanakan," 107-109.

[85] Charin, Bantoek Muang Chiang Rai, 102.

[86] Nai Noi Kaew, "Report," 104; "*Rai Ngan Sathanakan*," 107-110.

[87] Pannyalankan, *Jotmaihet*, 73.

with the rebels inside; The Shan rebels under Thu Sala Muang Oot plotted their 1904 attacks at Wat Phra Chao Thong Thip, and some of them took refuge at Wat Kassa after being repelled at Chiang Saen Luang.

The different animosities and collaborations between locals, monks, Siamese officials, Christian Missionaries, and Shan peoples that played out in Buddhist spaces during this time confuses some of the hard lines we draw between and around historical actors. Khruba Pok is a perfect example of an individual who found himself on different sides of the Siamese state-building project at different times. In his early career as abbot, he was attacked by Khruba Khanthiya and the Siamese Kha Luang as improper monastic comportment, however, through the events of the Shan rebellion, his temple served as an important "government building," that served both local and Siamese efforts to pacify the region. Furthermore, his relationship with Christian Missionaries in the city reveal him as an open-minded, charismatic figure, who embraced new ideas and technologies. Then, into the beginning of the mid-twentieth century, he served as the Jao Khana Jangwat of Chiang Rai, where he no doubt collaborated with the leaders of the Monthon Phayap sangha, again involved in Siamese efforts to incorporate the north in the slowly-gelling nation-state.

In sharp contrast to Khruba Pok stands Thu Sala Muang Oot, the epitome of monastic rejection of Siamese authority in the region. He led bands of Shan against the settlements in the Kok river valley for what could be a number of reasons—from the diminished status and protection of the Shan under the *thesiphiban* system, to being excluded from the guest-list of an important ordination ceremony. Regardless of the events of the early twentieth century, the Shan played an important role in the reestablishment of Chiang Rai. Many of the city's first inhabitants were forcible resettled from Shan territories, and their almost sixty-year association with the city's central temple—Wat Chan Lok Klang Wiang—is a testament to their importance.

Just as the great sandalwood tree at Wat Chan Lok Klang Wiang, the Shan-affiliated palladium and protector of the muang, fell in the early years of the 1900s, so too did the place of the Shan in the city. While the tree smashed against the roof of the temple's *vihan*, Shan rebels broke against the city walls, and laid waste to homes throughout the region. With the sandalwood tree sent to Chiang Mai to be transformed into an identifiably local Buddhist symbol, another image of Shan Buddhism briefly stood within the city walls in its stead—the severed head of the militant monastic craftsperson, Thu Sala Muang Oot.

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