

SOUTHEAST ASIA LIBRARY GROUP

NEWSLETTER

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Editorial

Welcome to the new issue of the SEALG Newsletter after another year of unusual ways of working and living during the Covid-19 pandemic! The articles show once more that we all made great efforts to use our time in the best possible way, and the outcomes are fascinating indeed, as the articles in this issue of the newsletter prove. Very sadly, we have lost our former member and chairperson Nicholas Martland who passed away in February 2021. Many of us remember him as a kind colleague and caring friend whose brilliant sense of humour brought smiles to the faces of everyone around him. We dedicate this issue of the newsletter to Nicholas' memory.
In the name of the SEALG committee I would like to thank everyone who contributed to this issue and all those who support our network continuously.

Jana Igunma (Editor)

In memory of Nicholas Martland (1957-2021)

Nicholas Martland (1957–2021)

Obituary by Pauline Khng, London





Nicholas in his garden in Candes (France), June 2018.

Retired librarian Nicholas Martland died in February 2021 in France from blood cancers (lymphatic and leukemia), a few weeks short of his 64th birthday.

Nicholas was librarian at the National Library of Singapore (1982–87), Institut Teknologi Brunei (1987–91) before it became a university, Kew's Herbarium & Library (1991–97), the School of Oriental and African Studies (1997–2009), and the British Library (2010–12).

Born near Guildford and the second of four children, his family emigrated to Australia in the 1960s when he was 9. He recalled being so reluctant to leave England that even at Southampton his parents briefly considered leaving him behind with his grandparents, then thought otherwise, so as not to break up the family. The long voyage to Australia put him off cruise ships for good. He was back in UK and Europe when he was 18 for a gap year that was three times longer than most, with stints working at Hard Rock café in London and fruit picking in France. He then returned to Australia and later graduated from the University of Melbourne and the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology for his librarian qualification.

In Singapore where I first met Nicholas in 1985 we shared a house with other colleagues from the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies. He was the easiest person to get on with and assimilated into Asian life seamlessly. He was amused by the cross-cultural contacts and did not take offence with the sometimes blunt comments of local colleagues. He often came home with amusing anecdotes. For example, he was reproached for taking his lunch at a particular noodle stall of the outdoor National Library 'canteen': 'How can you possibly eat noodles at that stall? It is like eating rubber bands!' Similarly, when he joined local colleagues for after-work taiji, the unvarnished comment of the taiji teacher was

relayed to him – that he had the grace of a water buffalo. Nicholas was in stitches when a visiting librarian from Eastbourne was puzzled that a bus driver's non-verbal response to the cost of the fare to the National Library was by silently raising his hand with his five finger tips together. 'It means 50 cents' said Nicholas to the English librarian.

Nicholas was fine-tuned to politics in Singapore and recalled someone visiting the library daily to read the newspapers. You had to sign in to access the papers and Nicholas noted the same person used a different name each day, such was the paranoia of Singaporeans about their government, and this was well before the digital age. He also absorbed from his time in Singapore the goodwill in staff relations and would from then often take his staff out to a meal annually without expecting to reclaim expenses from whichever institute he worked for.

He moved to Brunei as chief librarian at Institut Teknologi Brunei, and enjoyed the environment, with many walks in the forest. There was a memorable vast party at the sultan's palace which he attended as a civil servant and where many guests were adorned with medals on their respective jackets. Nicholas displayed one too on his attire, which he'd bought from Portobello market.



Nicholas with other SEALG members at the SEALG Annual Meeting that took place at Maison Asie Pacifique Aix-Marseille, 2008.

His period at Kew Library honed his interests in things botanical and his long stint at SOAS drew together his interests in Southeast Asia and his experience working in the region. As a member of the Southeast Asia Library Group, Nicholas enjoyed the annual

meetings with other colleagues within the UK and in Europe. He was chair of SEALG from 2002 to 2005 and organised with great passion a visit to Kew Gardens and Library, which was a much appreciated highlight for the attendees of the group's Annual Meeting that took place in connection with the EUROSEAS Conference 2001 in London. Even after he left Southeast Asian librarianship, he continued to attend the annual meetings of SEALG.

Rahadi Karni (Leiden), whom Nicholas succeeded as SEALG chairperson, and Lim Peng Han (Singapore) remember Nicholas as a friendly, cheerful colleague to have good honest exchanges in a conversation. Peng Han recollects how he met Nicholas for the first time in Cambridge in 2011. After his presentation on colonial past-times and sport, Nicholas asked him why cricket was not a popular game in Singapore, and he spoke about where he stayed in Singapore, his work at SOAS library and his interest in gardening. Fellow SEALG member and former colleague of Nicholas at SOAS, Jotika Khur-Yearn completed the challenge to cycle 300 miles in the month of September 2021 in Nicholas' memory to raise funds for Cancer Research UK.

Nicholas had an allotment when living in North Sheen. A former Kew colleague, Sue Frisby, recalled Nicholas' wedding present to her was one day's work on her allotment when she was on her honeymoon. On her return she found, to her astonishment and initial outrage, that his gift had been to plant heritage varieties of potato; however, her feelings changed at harvest time when she enjoyed the memorable quality of the potatoes that was superior to any from the supermarket. He similarly had an allotment when he moved to Hampton Wick and announced sheepishly he'd won the first prize for his pears.



Nicholas' prize-winning pears, in the apples & pears category, 2011.

Nicholas took early retirement in 2012 as he felt the need to indulge his passion for horticulture. He marketed himself as the 'Australian gardener' for his host in exchange for board and lodging in France, to widen his knowledge of the area while in search of a house, and simultaneously made very good friends. He bought a dilapidated farmhouse in the hamlet of Candes in Occitanie which did not even have a toilet let alone a shower. It had been on the market for two years and had 10 signatories under 'seller'. Over the next few years, he made improvements to the farmhouse, not extravagantly, but to be comfortable.

However, his main passion was his garden and he was chuffed when unknown visitors came to check out his *jardin anglais* that had assorted roses, irises, peonies, maples, amongst others. He grew sweetcorn which puzzled his French neighbours who thought it cattle fodder. He had walnut trees, and, among others, grew peach vine, grape, medlar, melon, yuzu, apple, kiwi berries, red, black and white currants, quince, pumpkins (Queensland blue variety), and feijoa. Besides gardening, Nicholas enjoyed DIY on his farmhouse, cooking, long hikes with friends, and the fortnightly French book club. He often referred to himself as both 'gourmand and gourmet'.

His presence in Candes was welcomed by the three ageing locals who lived there and even more appreciated by their relatives in surrounding villages because Nicholas would call in to check on their mother, uncle or aunt. When Nicholas was taken ill and spent 11 months in and out of hospital mostly at Clermont-Ferrand hospital more than three hours' drive away, with long spells of isolation because of chemotherapy, his neighbours' relatives rallied spontaneously. They mowed his lawn, watered his plants, emailed photos of his beloved garden and flowers in bloom to cheer him up. They, and his other good friends, Margriet and Hans, took turns to drive him to Clermont Ferrand when necessary.

In palliative care, and allowed only two visitors who had to be the same ones during Covid, he had the love of two good friends by his hospital bedside daily – his partner Paul who had after the third attempt managed to fly into France from New Zealand, and Margriet who with her husband Hans had supported him throughout his treatment. He is buried in Comiac, the village nearest to his hamlet. Nicholas' collection of botanical books was gladly received by Montpellier's botanical garden, the oldest botanical garden in France, established by Henri IV in 1593.

Former colleagues and friends in England were finally able to celebrate Nicholas' life when we gathered on 30 October 2021 at St Paul's in Clapham to share bittersweet memories of a wonderful, kind, humorous, modest friend whom we loved and lost but are so privileged to have known.



Nicholas' books donated to Jardin des Plantes, Montpellier's botanic garden.
Left to right: Hans Dijkmans, Paul Wilson, Margriet van Dyck, and botanist Didier Morisot. Photo by Denis Nespoulous, Jardin des Plantes, March 2021.

Publications by Nicholas Martland

Collectors, classifiers and researchers of the Malay World: How individuals and institutions in Britain in the 18th, 19th and early 20th centuries collected, arranged and organised libraries, archives and museums and how that impacts on today's researchers (2004)

Early Records of the Natural History of the Malay World (2010)

Milk and two sugars: why Australians switched from Chinese to Indian tea (2012)

https://independent.academia.edu/nicholasmartland

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The EFEO in Indochina: A History of Maps and Archives

Magali Morel, Head of the South East Asia Fund, EFEO, Paris
Sovannara Mey, Archivist, EFEO, Paris

Translated from French by Dat-Wei Lau and Sybille Ngo

Map collection of the EFEO

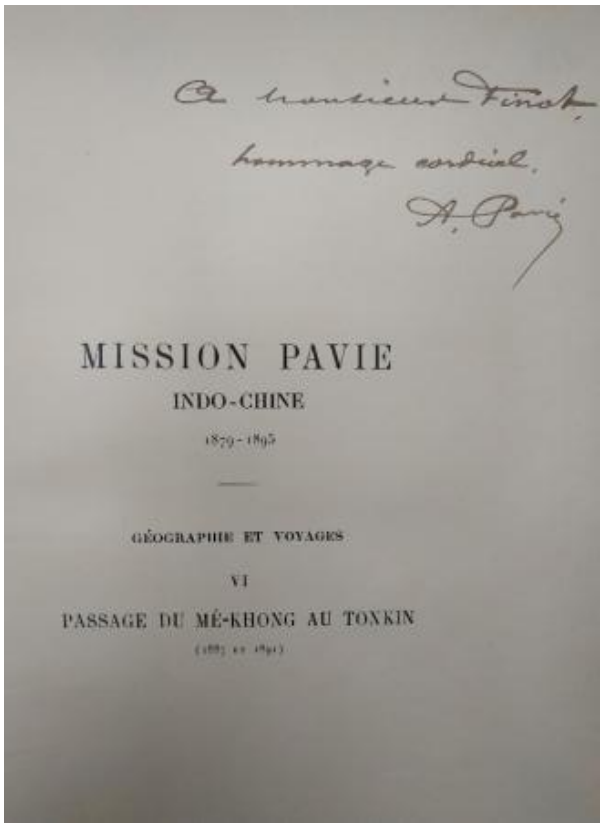
The singularity of the map collection of the *École française d'Extrême-Orient* (EFEO) is tied to its research domains, due to the geographical areas covered as well as to the various types of maps represented (topographical, geological, administrative and above all ethnographical and archaeological). Collecting or producing maps and plans are an integral part of the school's history, from the beginning of its activities in Indochina to the current numerous archaeological missions throughout Asia.

The EFEO and the history of Indochinese cartography

Firstly, let us examine this map collection through the spectrum of the history of French Indochinese cartography. At the time of the foundation of the *Mission archéologique française* (French archaeological mission) in Indochina (1898), the topographic knowledge was still vague and inconsistent. The first steps of cartography were built on data collected by missionaries and explorers, which were processed and completed by the *Bureau topographique des troupes de l'Indochine* (Topographic bureau of the troops of Indochina). When the archaeological mission was renamed *École française d'Extrême-Orient* in 1900, the topographical bureau had just been removed and replaced by the *Service géographique de l'Indochine* (SGI) on July 5th, 1899, founded because of the necessity of making accurate and scientific maps, through regular data collection.

The map collection of the EFEO reflects the scientific explorations led from the end of the 19th century to the early 20th century: from the Mekong expedition of Captain Ernest Doudard de Lagrée, Francis Garnier and Louis Delaporte, or the one led by Auguste Pavie and Commander Lunet de Lajonquière who explored all of Indochina, to Claude Eugène Maître's expedition in Moï country.

The EFEO collection also illustrates the military progression: military sketches, border maps between Tonkin and China, or between Siam and Tonkin, maps of Topographic bureau of the troops of Indochina – which was led by officers – and later maps by the SGI, all of them originally designed to respond to the specific administrative needs of the time.

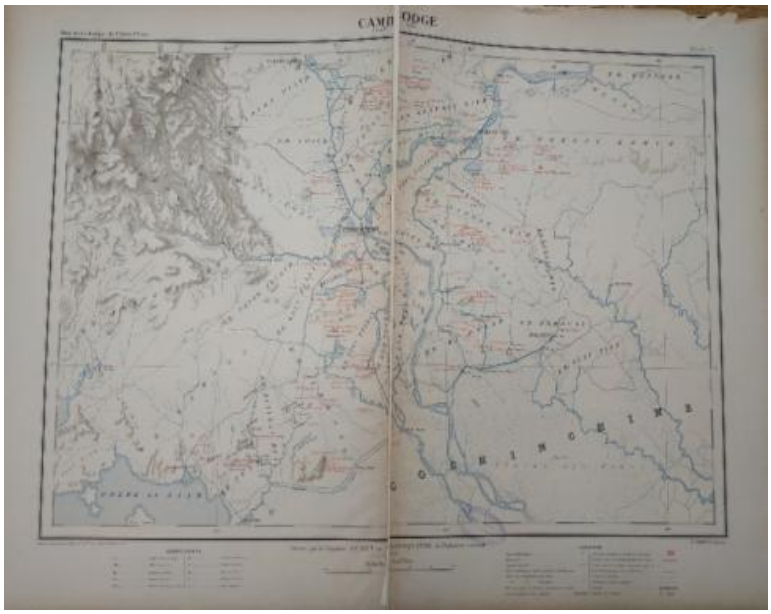




Left: Mission Pavie, Indo-Chine (1879-1895). Géographie et Voyages: VI, Passage du Mé-khong au Tonkin (1887 et 1891), par Auguste Pavie. Paris, 1911.

Right: Mission Pavie, Indo-Chine. Atlas, notices et cartes, par Auguste Pavie. Paris, 1903.





Atlas archéologique de l'Indo-Chine : monuments du Champa et du Cambodge, par le capitaine E. Lunet de la Jonquière, 1901.



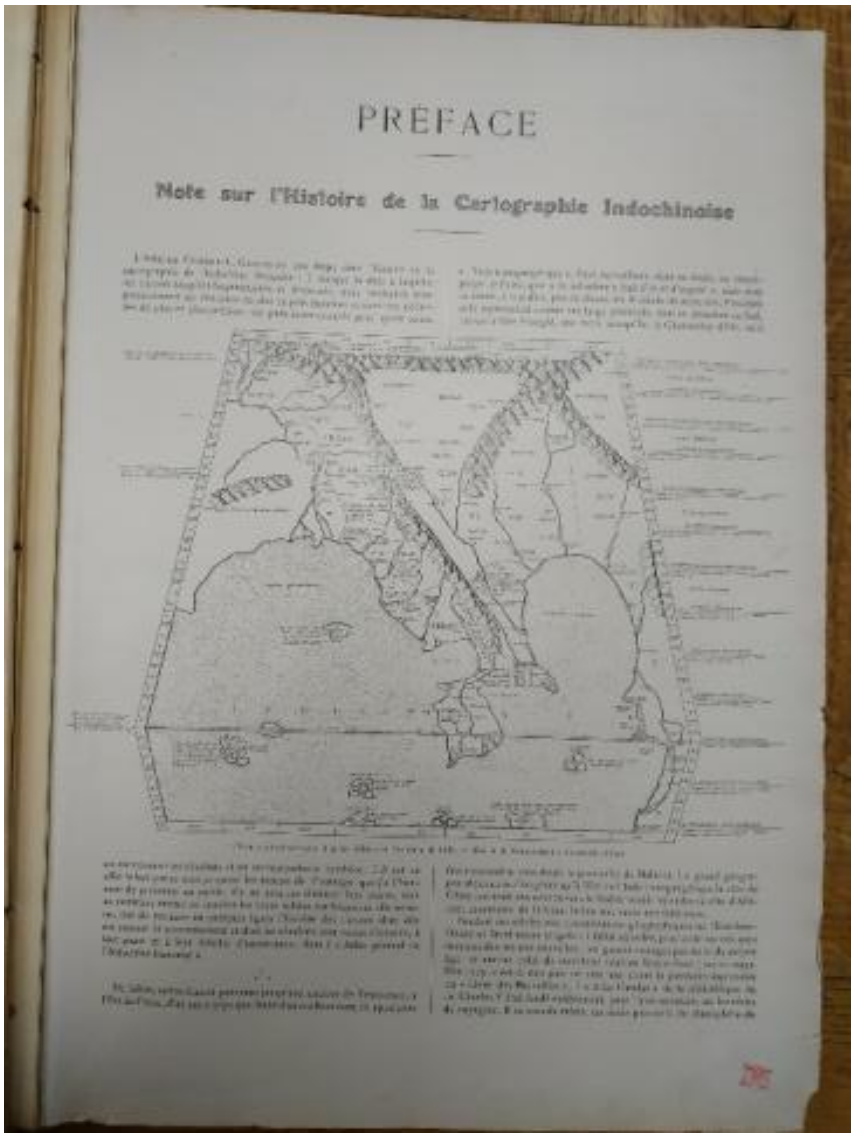
Mission Maître région moï de l'Indochine sud-centrale. Itinéraires des missions H. Maitre-Darlac, 1906-1908. Hinterlands du Cambodge, de la Cochinchine et du Sud-Annam, 1909-1913. Service géographique de l'Indochine, 1906-1913. (EFEO CAR 21)

Topographic surveys to the scale of 1:20,000 on the coastal and delta areas helped establishing maps to the scale of 1:25,000, enabling the colonial administration to collect data necessary for pipeline and irrigation projects. In the mountains and forest regions of the inland, least accessible, surveys to the scale of 1:80,000 enabled a 1:100,000 scale mapping where the local administration was planning studies for the development of roads and railroads.

Among the first directors of the EFEO, Louis Finot and Claude Eugène Maître in particular showed a peculiar interest for cartography. Cartographic works by the SGI that were tied to conquering, exploiting and valuing the local territories encountered multiple scientific interests, in particular for the fields of human geography and archaeology. For instance, in 1903, Louis Finot proposed to the Governor-general the prescription of the launching of ethnographic inquiries within the consular districts. These inquiries, meant to draw up an ethnographic map, led to the study *Ethnographie des territoires militaires* by Commander Lunet de Lajonquière. Unfortunately, as reported in Claude Eugène Maître's review, too many omissions remained, as detailed inquiries having only been led within military territories.

The EFEO directors took an active part in providing useful knowledge enabling the making of maps, composing prefaces, introductions, reviews to cartographic works, and supplying ethnographic, linguistic and historical information. Due to shortage of personnel leading the cartographic works, the EFEO was solicited by the SGI, as the colonial administration's sovereignty was limited in the neighbouring territories.

The singularity and importance of the map collection of the library can also be found in the fact that it mirrors its collection of atlases, monographs, periodicals as well as its archives which give an account of the scientific works of its directors, researchers and archaeologists. Claude Eugène Maître described the phases of cartography studies in Asia in the preface of the *Atlas général de l'Indochine française* of 1909, and Louis Finot wrote a critical review of the *Atlas de l'Indochine* of 1920.



PRÉFACE

Note sur l'Histoire de la Cartographie Indochinoise

Atlas général de l'Indochine française. Atlas de Chabert, L. Gallois, contenant 169 cartes ou plans... ; avec une préface de M. Cl.-E. Maître. Hanoï, 1909.

While the SGI - whose assembly tables show the progress of the work - was mapping the territory and giving precise data on relief, hydrography, coastlines, phytosociology, and human settlements, the EFEO did its utmost to list monuments and inscriptions and organised its primary archaeological mission in Angkor. For instance, the Chief of the *Service archéologique* and one of the founders of the *Conservation d'Angkor*, Henri Parmentier, used topographic maps of the SGI to locate Khmer monument sites.

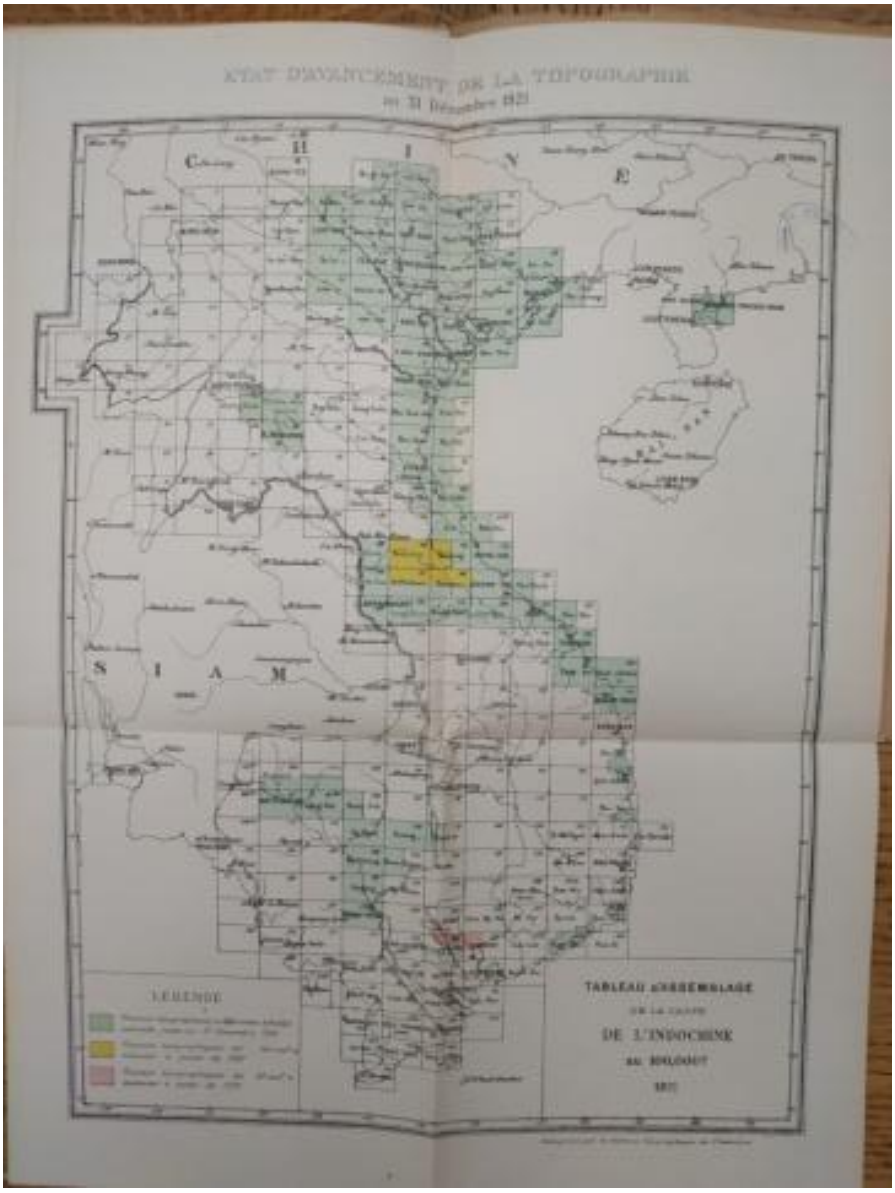


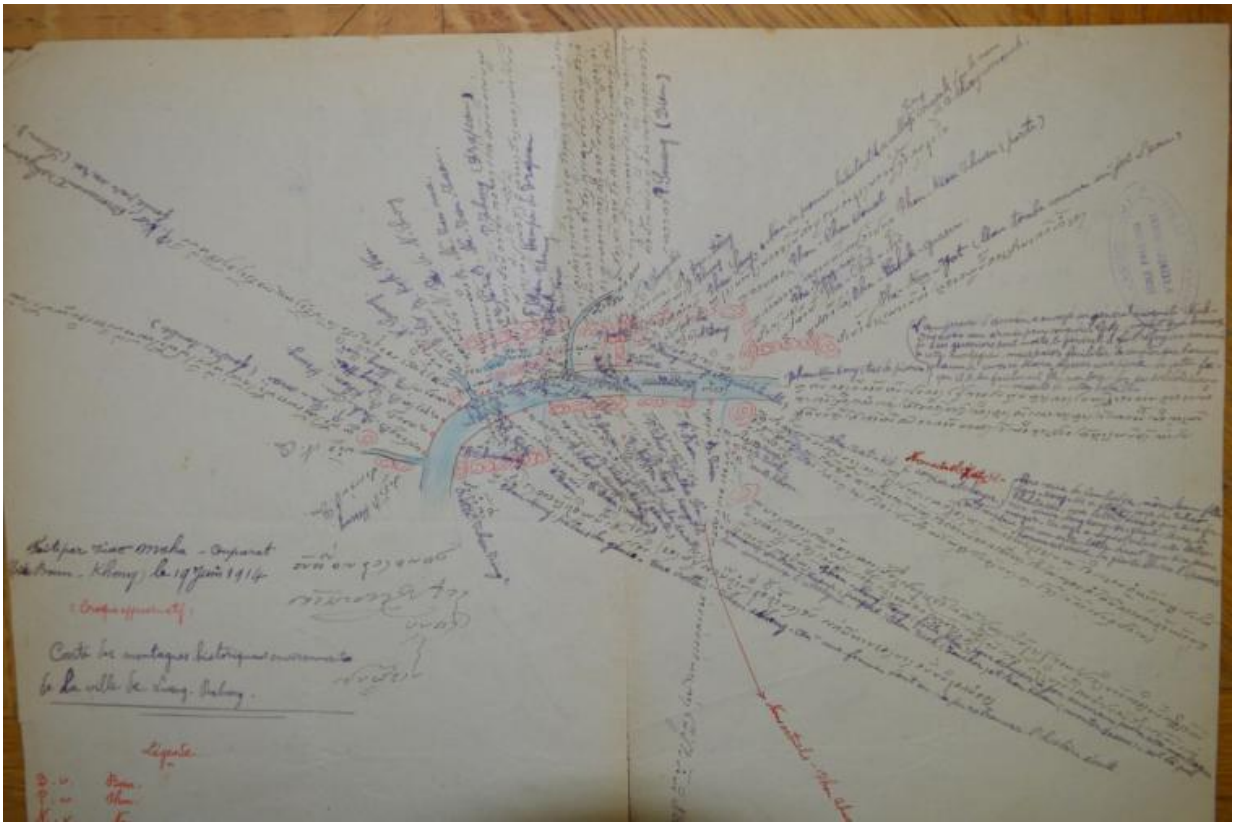
Tableau d'assemblage de la carte de l'Indochine au 100,000e, 1921. In : Compte-rendu des travaux exécutés par le Service géographique de l'Indochine : année 1921. Hanoi-Haiphong, 1922.

History of processing and describing the EFEO map collection

When the EFEO left Indochina in 1957, the maps collection was dispatched to Paris via Cambodia and India, along with the crates transporting the Hanoi library collections. The map collection has remained unprocessed for a while. A first manuscript inventory was made in 1998. Maps were geographically sorted, the Louis Finot collection was sorted by origins. Inventory cards indicated titles, shelf marks, dates and scales. From 2014 to 2016, a comprehensive and precious spreadsheet has been achieved. More than 3100 maps were inventoried and shelf marked. Besides the title, date, and scale, a detailed description provided data such as the former shelf mark, author, editor, origins, type of map, and the fabric of the map. Pending the cataloguing of the entire collection, this spreadsheet enables map researching and sorting out.

Since 2020, the cataloguing of maps has started with more than 750 maps already visible in the Sudoc Catalogue. Maps are stored in large-format drawing folders inside drawers of archival cabinets. The *Maison de l'Asie* stacks have recently been reorganised: maps and plans of the *Conservation d'Angkor* are meant to be gathered on the first floor in order to build a map library.

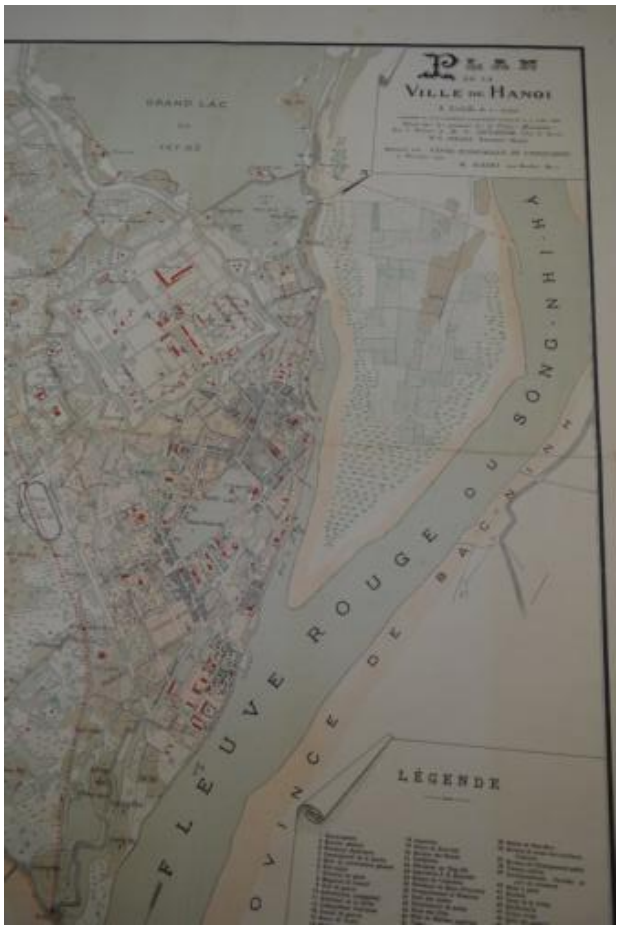
Apart from maps of Indochina mentioned earlier which represent a big part of the collection (from the SGI, as well as those from the American army map service: series to the scales 1:25,000 and 1:100,000), the singularity of the collection is due to the geographical areas and different types of maps represented. The Louis Finot collection represents the primary collection at the EFEO. In particular, it comprises the earliest maps of the SGI stored at the EFEO, for example maps of the Red River delta or maps of the communication routes of Annam, archaeological plans and maps of the Angkor area as well as ancient drawings, manuscripts on paper and tracing paper, from Luang Prabang, Vientiane and Hanoi.



Carte des montagnes historiques environnant de la ville de Luang-Prabang par Jiao Maha Ouparat, 1914 (EFEO CAR 45)



Plan de la ville de Vien-Tiane, dressé par M. Klieber Inspecteur de la Garde Civile. Service Géographique de l'Indochine, 1905 (EFEO CAR 47)



Plan de la ville de Hanoi, dressé par le personnel de la voirie municipale sous la direction de M. V. Leclanger, 1924. (EFEO CAR 56)

Among the documents from Indochina, we must also mention Vietnamese atlases on microfilm and maps in the Han Nom manuscripts collection.



Tiền-Lê Nam-Việt bản-đồ mô-bản. 前黎南越版圖摹本. Copie par décalque de l'atlas du Việt-nam de l'ancienne dynastie des Lê. (EFEO VIET/A/Géo 4)

Since the repatriation of the library collections from Hanoi to Paris, the map collection has broadened due to the EFEO's deployment all over Asia. During the 1950s, the EFEO has opened new research centres in Jakarta, Pondicherry, Siem Reap and Phnom Penh, followed by Chiang Mai in the 1970s, and Beijing and Tokyo in the 1990s. Thereby, EFEO now also preserves series edited by different geographical services in Asia: the Survey of India for British India, the Royal Thai Survey Department, the Topografische Inrichting of Batavia for the Dutch East Indies, the Directorate of National Mapping of Malaysia, the National Geographic Directorate of Vietnam, the Geographic services of the state of Laos etc.

Southeast Asia is obviously the most represented region, but the map collection also comprises maps of South Asia and Eastern Asia. In regard to languages, English, French and Dutch are most present for Europe, whereas for the Asian languages we have Thai, Khmer, Malay, Vietnamese, Lao, Chinese and Japanese.

At last, we need to mention sixty manuscript maps of the late 19th century of Cambodian provinces - reproductions of locally produced maps -, as well as more than twenty maps of the 17th and 18th century - proof of the geographic knowledge of the East by the West

prior to the colonial expansion, as observable on the map *Les Indes Orientales où sont distingués les Empires et Royaumes qu'elles contiennent tirés du Neptune Oriental*, 1751.

Perspectives

The map collection of the EFEO has yet to show its full scope, because the inventory has not been fully completed. A number of drawers and boxes in the library stacks still need to be explored. The inventory of maps is now well engaged, and the cataloguing has passed its first steps. In regard to the history of the collection, where it was collected and by whom, we are still lacking information.

For the time being, it is quite difficult to evaluate how complete the series of the SGI that we possess are. Certain map sheets may well be useful in completing the series already digitised at other map libraries in France.

Finally, in the scope of the up and coming online digital library, the EFEO will undoubtedly be able to share its most precious collections, e.g. the manuscript maps of Cambodia, the military drawings or its manuscript city maps.

The following three sections highlight individual special collections in which maps and map-related materials are contained.

The Henri Parmentier Archives, Head of the Archaeology Department of the EFEO

As an archaeologist, architect and historian of art, Henri Parmentier was one of the first specialists of Indochinese archaeology. Member of the École Française d'Extrême-Orient (EFEO) since 1900, he became Head of the Archaeology Department in 1904. Alongside philologists, the young architect worked for the study and safeguarding of the monuments beneath which carved texts of the history of Annam were still buried. In 1907, he organised the Conservation of Angkor, a permanent branch of the EFEO in Siem Reap in charge of exploring, restoring, and protecting the Angkor site. In 1918, he finalised the publication of the descriptive inventory of the Cham monuments of Annam before beginning the same work on the Khmer temples. The documents related to this last work are the ones that we will mainly find in the Parmentier Archives.

History, description, and archival work

In 2002, the fonds of Henri Parmentier was processed by Brice Vincent under the supervision of Bruno Bruguier. A major work of description and inventory was carried out, but it was only in late 2020 that a complete archival treatment, including the code referencing and conditioning of the documents, has been started with the objective of writing and communicating a finding aid in XML/EAD on the website archives.efeo.fr.

Two sub-fonds constitute the Parmentier archives: The first one is concerned with the administrative and scientific activities, including all of Parmentier's correspondence, as well as the notes and preparatory drafts for his books and publications. The second one deals with all the documents related to the Inventory of the Khmer Monuments ("Khmer art, primitive and classical periods") and is composed of four principal series: the preparation of the Inventory (documentation, notes, and preparatory drafts); the notices; the assembled notices; and the maps and plans.

Among the most important documentary ensembles, we shall distinguish the notices from the maps and plans. For archival and material reasons, the notices have been classified by province and IK (standing for "Inventaire Khmer" [Khmer inventory]) number - in use since Étienne Lunet de Lajonquière (former Officer, archaeologist and ethnologist attached to the Indochinese archaeological mission of 1893) - in order to properly identify the Khmer monuments and vestige. The archival work then has consisted in highlighting the most important elements in the notices' description for the researchers, i.e., the IK number, the monuments' names, and the content of the notices (typewritten or handwritten descriptions, photos, plans, drawings, etc.).



Phnom Kulen. (EFEO ARCH008/2/4/2/10)



Phnom Kulen. (EFEO ARCH008/2/4/2/10)

The maps, probably edited in 1926 by the Service géographique de l'Indochine, were sorted out in a second phase. They form altogether eight ensembles of maps, each composed of several parts (from 2 to 78 pieces). Those maps have been used by Parmentier to geographically locate the Khmer monuments and vestige and demonstrate the precise methodology of the archaeologist. Inscribed with a handwritten mark on the back of each fragment, a circle or cross or simple line, sometimes completed by an IK number, refers to its precise location on the front side of the map. In the end, the archival treatment consisted in the double-sided digitisation of all the maps. Moreover, a whole digitised assemblage of every ensemble has been done. Those scans are available for consultation online.

The Conservation of Angkor Archives: In the Footsteps of the Archaeologists

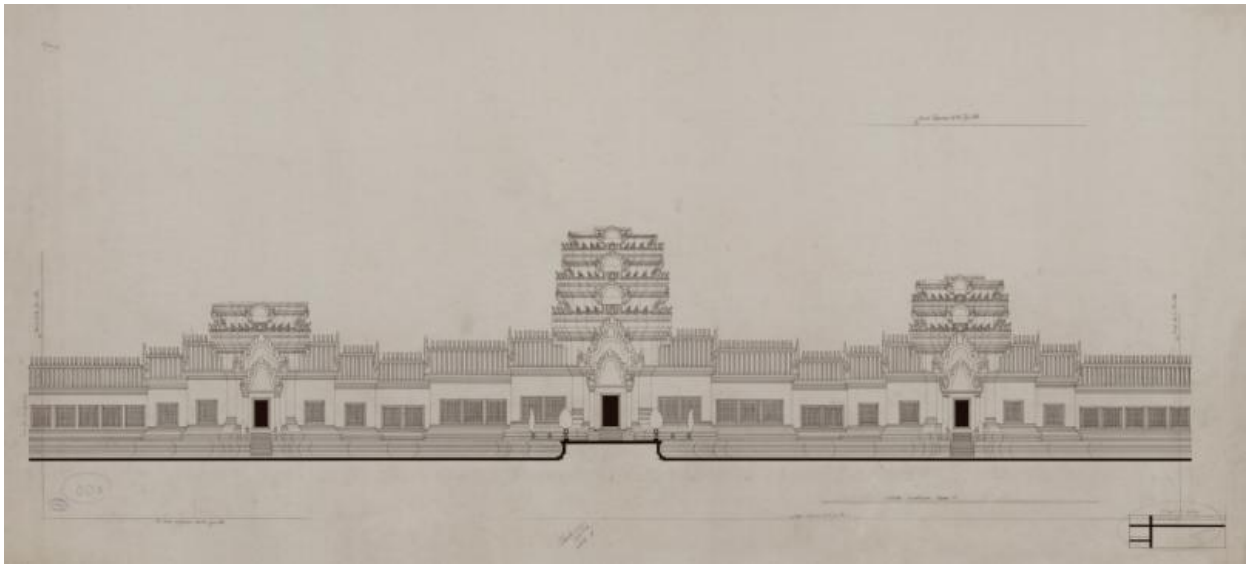
At the end of 1907, Jean Commaille, first Curator of Angkor, was entrusted with the primary work of clearing the site before his official appointment by a decree dated 14 July 1908. The ambition of the Conservation of Angkor was, and remains, to work on the archaeological exploration, restoration, and protection of the Angkor site. Furthermore, it promotes the knowledge of its history, its monuments, its languages and the scholarly study of the Angkorian region and civilisation. The Angkor site rapidly became the symbol of France's cultural action in Indochina and a privileged stopover for official visits led by the Curator. In 1973, following the intensification of the civil war, the Conservation of

Angkor was forced to cease its activities with the departure of Bernard-Philippe Groslier, the last Curator of Angkor.

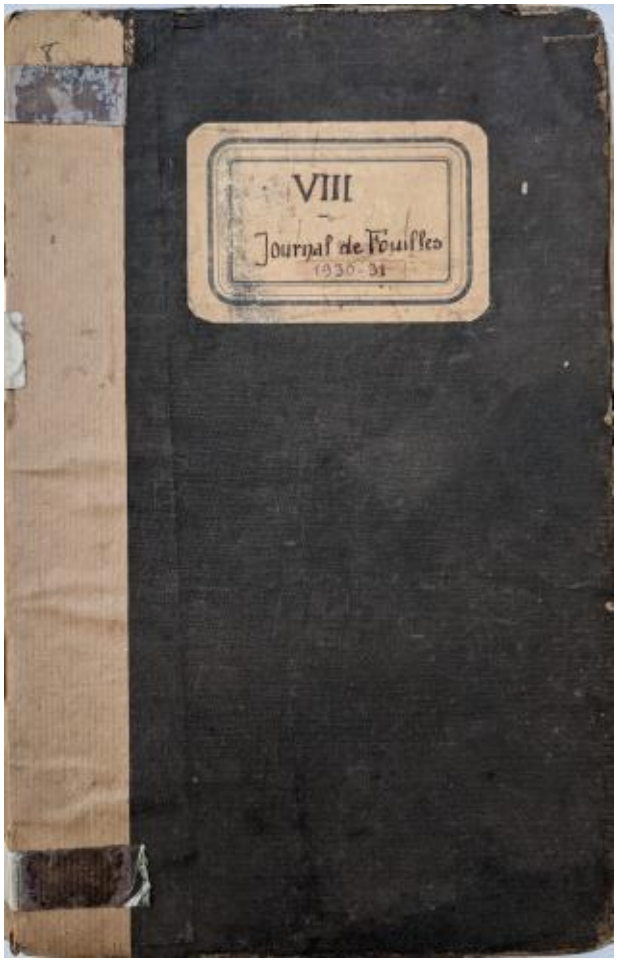
Between 1970 and 1974, the archives of the Angkor Conservation were repatriated to France under difficult conditions. The treatment of the archives then followed a long and winding development from 1990 till 2020:

- July 1990 to December 1991: a first program of indexing, classification and conservation of the archives was set up under the direction of Bruno Dagens and Bruno Bruguier, and thanks to funding from UNESCO via the Japanese government on deposit at the EFEO.
- In the 2000s: first digitisation campaign of the excavation reports and journals and reconditioning of the graphic documents.
- 2007: within the framework of the ANR (Agence Nationale de Recherche) "Espace khmer ancien", inventory of graphic documents (plans, maps, etc.)
- Between 2017 and 2019: second digitisation campaign, entrusted to the company Arkhenum and via funding obtained from PSL (Paris, Sciences & Lettres).
- November to December 2019: creation of metadata for each excavation report and journal.
- March-July 2020: resumption of all the inventories to carry out a complete archival treatment.

Plans, journals, and reports of excavations



Angkor Vat – 4th enclosure, Gopura IV/O, main part, elevation. (EFEO FCA/2/DG/473)



Excavation journal n°8, 1930-1931. (EFEO FCA/2/JFCA/8)

The fonds of the Conservation of Angkor consists of all the documents produced by the EFEO's archaeological activities on the Angkor site from 1907 to 1975. In the absence of institutional documents detailing the activities and organisation of the Conservation, the classification plan has been designed to reflect the general activities. Three subfonds are thus distinguished: General Administration; Field Activities and Research; and Conservation Depot.

Among these major documentary collections are the excavation reports and journals. The excavation reports inform the EFEO board about the work and research in progress. They are written, signed and sent by the Curator to the Director of the EFEO. Carried out monthly until 1960, they sometimes include quarterly, semi-annual, or annual summaries. The excavation journals are among the most important elements of the fonds. These are the diaries in which the curators who succeeded each other between 1908 and 1955 noted on a daily basis the activities and significant events of the Conservation: tasks, discoveries, visits, etc. In total, they represent 25 registers of approximately 300 handwritten pages each.

For the purpose of guaranteeing optimal storage conditions, various proceedings have been decided. Custom-made folders with flaps were made from paper with a neutral acidity before being stored in conservation boxes. Due to the variation in size of reports and journals, fabrication of standardised folders reducing the risk of mishandling the

documents was necessary. Furthermore, the documents are now available for online consultation - work made possible following the digitisation campaign led between 2017 and 2019. Finally, the creation of metadata for each of these documents will also facilitate their consultation. For instance, it is now possible to find for each report: its nature (handwritten or typed), the presence of attached documents (mainly correspondence or sketches), and the curator(s) who contributed to its writing.

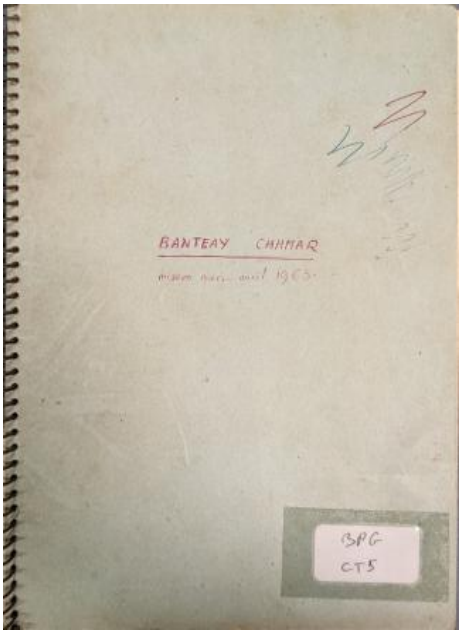
The fonds also contains nearly 3500 plans and drawings. Provided with a reference code, described, and digitised individually, the collection is now stored in four plan cabinets and thirty-seven large-format storage boxes. The documents consist mainly of plans of monumental structures, but also of cartographic and topographic surveys, excavation surveys, illustrations of technical processes or decorative motifs, and sketches of archaeological pieces. They show the progress of the work, the location of the various interventions and allows us to understand the restoration methods used for each monument.

The graphic documents can also be consulted online, and the creation of the metadata enables us to find for each document its scale, its dimensions, its draftsman if it is included, and the reference to a precise excavation report or to an item number of the Conservation Depot. Finally, the archival description for every document informs us about the name of the site, a brief title, and the nature of the document (section, elevation, axonometry, drawing, and/or plan).

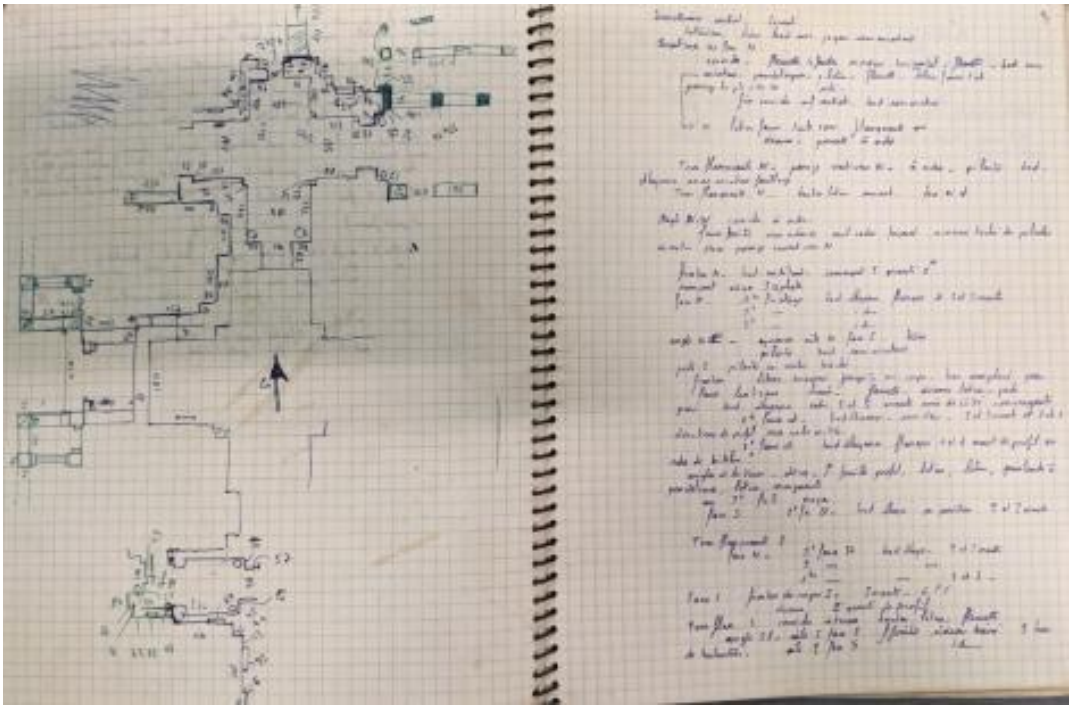
The rest of the fonds has been conditioned in the same way as the excavation reports and journals. The General Administration sub-fonds contains all the correspondence, the management of the site, and all documentation regarding the relations between the Conservation of Angkor, the EFEO and the local. Today, there is still a great amount of work to be done, such as the classification and conditioning of the records of the Conservation Depot.

The Fonds of Bernard-Philippe Groslier, Archaeologist and Last Curator of Angkor

Born in Cambodia, Bernard-Philippe Groslier is the son of George Groslier, founder of the Cambodian Arts School, and of the National Museum of Cambodia. He became a member of the EFEO in 1951 and was firstly curator of the Blanchard de la Brosse Museum in Saigon, then participated in several excavation campaigns in Angkor, in Thailand or even in the Middle-East or in Greece. At the same time, he published two popular works on Angkor (in 1956 and 1957). In 1955, he was appointed as a research fellow at the French National Center for Scientific Research (CNRS) and afterwards was seconded to the EFEO in 1958, where he became Director of Archaeological Research, and Curator of Angkor in 1959 - a position he left in 1973 following the intensification of the civil war and the departure of the EFEO from Cambodia. As such, he is considered the last Curator of Angkor. In 1976, he became director of the Center for Archaeological Research (CRA) that the CNRS had installed in Valbonne. He then examined the very object of his studies ("Costs and profits in archaeology") and the ethics of architectural restoration.



Field notebook, Banteay Chhmar, March-April 1955. (EFEO ARCH010-1-4-5



Field notebook, Banteay Chhmar, March-April 1955. (EFEO ARCH010-1-4-5)

In 2001, his widow Brigitte Lequeux donated her husband's archives to the EFEO. A pre-inventory was carried out by Michèle Vallerin and Eric Bourdonneau that same year. Particular attention was paid to the field notebooks and the photographic collection. In 2012, an inventory of the nine boxes of paper archives was realised by Alice Vierstraete. In 2014, Christophe Pottier recovered four notebooks and the thesis of Bernard-Philippe Groslier on the Preah Khan of Kompong Svay. The four notebooks were digitised in Thailand before being added to the EFEO's archives in December 2014. In 2018, Brigitte Lequeux donated a second part of the fonds and a pre-inventory was achieved by Armelle

Ninnin. The collection is currently being fully processed, classified, and catalogued, in 2021.

The collection brings together some of the documents produced or received by Bernard-Philippe Groslier during his career as an archaeologist member of the EFEO, seconded to the Conservation of Angkor and as a researcher fellow of the CNRS. It comprises a wide variety of documents (papers, photos and plans in small and large formats). For example, the archives related to Bernard-Philippe Groslier's work at the Conservation of Angkor contain all his correspondence between 1970 and 1974 during the early days of the civil war. They also consist of numerous aerial photographs taken between 1953 and 1958. The field notebooks and lists of photographs are classified in two other series because of their particularities, both material and intellectual. The field notebooks record notes taken during site visits and restoration work. They are accompanied by sketches of maps. In many cases, there is still uncertainty about the notation of toponyms and temple names. The lists of photographs should be cross-referenced with the photographic fonds of Bernard-Philippe Groslier held at the EFEO's photo library.

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Collecting Information and Artifacts about the South East Asian Peninsula (SEAP) Games (1959 – 1979) Archives, Library and Museum (ALM): Issues Regarding Collection, Conservation and Preservation

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Introduction

The study of sources of information in sport and leisure is a relatively new area that has not been fully explored as there are hardly any published reports about sport archives, libraries and museums in Southeast Asia. According to three directories of museums in Southeast Asia, there are no sport museums in the region (Kelly, 2001; Lenzi, 2004, National Museum of Singapore, 1988). In fact, the Singapore Sports Council (SSC) did set up a sports museum to preserve and showcase Singapore's sporting heritage at the demolished Kallang National Stadium in November 1983 after receiving a donation of $10,000 from the International Olympic Committee (Singapore Sports Council, 1983, p. 40).

Officially opened in December 1990, it served as a repository for sports related artifacts that "bear historical, aesthetic, educational and scientific importance (Singapore Sports Council, 1991, p. 37). Therefore, other than the SSC's Sport Museum, now known as the Sport Hub Museum, sport's role in museums received relatively very little attention in Southeast Asia, although there were 75 Olympic Museums around the world (Adair, 2012, p. 122).

The author felt that it is timely to champion and promote the need for a South East Asian Peninsula (SEAP) Games (1959 – 1975) museum, including archival and library facilities,

that are able to collect, build and showcase the region's unique cultural and sporting heritage. The inaugural bi-annual SEAP Games was held in Bangkok in 1959, and six countries - Thailand, Burma, Malaysia, Singapore, Vietnam and Laos - and a total of 480 men and 38 women athletes participated in 12 events (Organizing Committee, 1960, p. 60). The eight SEAP Games that were organised from the years 1959 to 1975 were restricted to the seven Southeast Asian nations as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Ranking of participating SEAP Games countries medal tally from 1959 to 1975

	1959	1961	1965	1967	1969	1971	1973	1975	Total
Thailand	1st (H)	2nd	1st	1st (H)	2nd	1st	1st	1st (H)	10
Burma	2nd	1st (H)	4th	4th	1st (H)	4th	4th	3rd	23
Malaysia	3rd	3rd	2nd (H)	3rd	4th	2nd (H)	3rd	4th	24
Singapore	4th	5th	3rd	2nd	3rd	3rd	2nd (H)	2nd	24
Vietnam	5th	4th	6th	5th	5th	6th	6th	Absent	
Laos	6th	7th	7th	6th	6th	7th	7th	Absent	
Cambodia/ Khmer	Absent	6th	5th	Absent	Absent	5th	5th	Absent	

Note: The ranking is based on the most gold medals each country obtained. H means host country. Sources: Organizing Committee, 1960; Organizing Committee, 1962; Organizing Committee, 1966; Organizing Committee, 1968; Organizing Committee, 1970; Organizing Committee, 1973; Professional, Technical and Facilities Committee, 1973; Organizing Committee, 1976.

Methodology

The research methodology is to look at the holdings of major libraries, research publications and monographs in Singapore, Malaysia and Thailand to try to identify the sources of information that are needed to start a conceptual model of the SEAP Games ALM. The authors also refer to case studies of existing sport museums like the International Olympic Committee's (IOC) Le Musée Olympique, Lausanne (LMO) (Adair, 2012), Olympic Hall of Fame and Museum, Calgary (Ramshaw, 2010), National Baseball of Fame and Museum Library, New York (Higgins, 2008), England Rugby Union Team, Twickenham, Tennis Museum at Wimbledon, All England Lawn Tennis and Croquet Club, Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC), Museum at Lord's Cricket Ground, London, Museum at Stamford Bridge Stadium, Chelsea Football Club (Vamplew, 2012). The LMO consists of a museum and archives of photographs, audiovisual and multimedia items, original documents, correspondence, and files and a library (Maxwell, 1998, p. 38).

The SEAP Games' archives

The LMO's Olympic Studies Centre's Historical Archives primarily houses documents relating to each of the modern Olympics, as well as IOC correspondence in the form of reports of official Olympic meetings, conference, proceedings, newsletters and so on (Adair, 2012, p. 109). The SEAP Games, now known as SEA Games Secretariat in Bangkok, would have a valuable and extensive collection of official documents for sport historians to study many aspects of the history of the SEAP Games. Habibah Zon Yahya (1981) described archival materials to be in the form of written manuscripts or printed materials such as files, publications, cartographic records, maps, plans, postage stamps and posters. They can be in the form of audio and visual materials, photographs, films, microfilms, microfiches, tape recordings and newspapers (p. 21).

Archives of photographs and newspaper cuttings

Many established newspaper corporations and agencies do have photograph and newspaper libraries of their own. It is possible to source for photographs of the SEAP Games from a list of newspaper companies in Singapore, Malaysia and Thailand listed in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Sources for newspaper clippings

Language	Country	Newspaper	Period available
English	Singapore	*Straits Times* (1845 – present) [1]	1959 - 1975
English	Singapore	*Sunday Times* (1845 – present) [1]	1959 - 1975
Malay	Singapore	*Berita Harian* (1957 – present) [1]	1959 - 1975
Malay	Malaysia	*Berita Harian* (1957 – present) [2]	1959 - 1975
Malay	Malaysia	*Mingguan Malaysia* (1964 – present) [2]	1965 - 1975
Malay	Malaysia	*Utusan Malaysia* (1967 – present) [2]	1967 - 1975
English	Malaysia	*The Star* (1971 – present) [2]	1971 - 1975
English	Thailand	*Bangkok Post* (1946 – present)	1959 - 1975

Sources: [1] Philips, 1991a, p. 143 & 165; [2] Safar, 2000, pp. 326 – 327; Grossman, 2009.

Black and white television footage of the SEAP Games

One of the most captivating sections of the LMO's Olympic Studies Centre is the Images and Sound Department, which contains some 20,000 hours film footage of the Olympic Games from 1896 to today (Adair, 2012, p. 109). It is not possible to obtain press pictures and film footages of the SEAP Games from the press and broadcasting agencies in Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam because these countries were at war, lacking basic infrastructure and experienced widespread media censorship (Morgan and Loo, 2000, pp. 300-302, Clarke, 2000, pp. 245-250, Panol and Do, 2000, pp. 467-471).

Broadcasting in Singapore began in 1935 when the first station was set up and operated by the British Malaya Broadcasting Corporation. After World War Two the broadcasting service was organised as Radio Malaya, Singapore and the Federation of Malaya, with its

headquarters in Singapore. In 1959 it was split into two organisations, Radio Singapore and Radio Malaya (Philips, 1991b, p. 48). When Singapore joined Malaysia in 1963, television was introduced in Singapore and Radio Singapore functioned as the Singapore station of Radio Malaysia. When Singapore left Malaysia to be an independent sovereign state in 1965, the broadcasting station came under the Ministry of Culture's Department of Broadcasting. With the passing of the Singapore Broadcasting Corporation (SBC) Act in December 1979, SBC took over the functions, asset and staff of the Department of Broadcasting (Philips, 1991a, p. 98). SBC is now known as Mediacorp.

The Radio and Television Malaysia (RTM) started its own film archives in 1963 when television was first introduced in Malaysia (Hassan Mohammad & Samsiah Muhammad, 1985, p. 30). The collection comprises of 16 mm films and 35 mm films, covering a wide variety of fields like politics, drama and sports. In 1982 the National Archives of Malaysia (NAM) began to assume its role as the custodian of the film archives (Rahani Jamil, 1990).

After the end of absolute monarchy in Thailand in 1932, the Propaganda Department (later known as the Public Relations Department [PRD]) was established the following year. Radio Thailand, the official government broadcasting station established in 1941, came under the operation and control of the PRD. Legislation created the Thai Television Co. Ltd, a joint public and private-sector venture, that went into operation on 24 June 1955 as Channel 4 in Bangkok. The Royal Thai Army started the second commercial station, Channel 7, in January 1958. Colour transmission began in 1967. Television in Thailand was a state monopoly and main propaganda tool for the government. Broadcasting in the early days covered the Bangkok area offering newscasts and entertainment. (Ekachai, 2000, pp. 435 – 436). Hence the likely sources of film archives of the Games would come from Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand as shown in Table 3 below.

Table 3: Sources for SEAP Games (1959 – 1975) film archives

Country	Broadcasting station	Location
Malaysia	Radio Television Malaysia (RTM)	National Archives of Malaysia
Singapore	Department of Broadcasting, Ministry of Culture	Mediacorp, Singapore
Thailand	Public Relations Department (PRD)	Information not available

Sources: Rahani Jamil, 1990; Philips, 1991a, p. 98; Ekachai, 2000, pp. 435 – 436.

The SEAP Games Library

The LMO contains an Olympic Studies Centre that boasts the world's most comprehensive collection of books, documents, and images relating to the Olympics (Adair, 2012, p. 109). It is a special library with a collection of 16,000 books and 200 periodicals. Unique to this library are reference collections of final reports published by cities that have held the Olympics (Maxwell, 1998, p. 39). The proposed SEAP Games Library should try to emulate the LMO Library as a general guideline, by having a collection development policy that tries

to assemble the most comprehensive collection of books and information relating to the Games, sporting institutions and the sports history of each member country. The information to be collected can be in the English, Malay, Thai, Vietnamese, Burmese, Cambodian and Chinese languages.

Multi-sport Museum

Sports museums are the best places to replicate performance, drama, romance, passion and emotion of sport (Vamplew, 1998, p. 279). They also represent three natural phases in the maintenance of heritage: collection, conservation and display. The value of heritage lies in its use, in display (Davis, 1984, p. 65). The author envisaged the SEAP Games Museum can conceptually be divided into three sections with the types of promotional materials and artifacts to be collected, conserved and displayed. The first section introduces the brief history of the Olympics, Asian Games and SEAP Games host countries in detail. The second is allocated for the SEAP Games Hall of Fame for individual and team events. The third section is solely devoted to the team events as shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Three sections of the museum

Overview of the Games	**Individual and team events**	**Team events**
Bangkok (1959), Rangoon (1961), Kuala Lumpur (1965), Bangkok (1967), Rangoon (1969), Kuala Lumpur (1971), Singapore (1973), Bangkok (1975)	Athletics, badminton, cycling, sailing, shooting, swimming, table-tennis, tennis, weightlifting, gymnastics and bowling	Basketball, football, sepak takraw, volleyball, water polo, hockey and rugby

An overview of each Games

To follow some of the features of the LMO (Adair, 2012, p. 109), the first section of the SEAP Games Museum should narrate the opening ceremony of each of the eight Games. This would include the torch carriers, medals, promotional materials (posters and SEAP Games stamps) and locations where the various events were held. It also should show the overall medal tally of each Games, total number of athletes and officials by gender, male and female athletes winning the most medals in each Games and the official sportswear of each contingent.

The SEAP Games Hall of Fame should feature 16 sports in detail, namely: athletics, badminton, basketball, boxing, cycling, football, judo, sailing, sepak takraw, shooting, swimming, table tennis, tennis, volleyball, water polo and weightlifting, considering they were included in most of the SEAP Games. Bowling (1975), gymnastics (1969) and rugby (1967) were included in the Games one time and hockey (1971, 1973 and 1975) three times. These sports can further be categorised into those with strictly individual events like boxing, judo and weightlifting. Sports with individual and team events are athletics, badminton, cycling, sailing, shooting, swimming, table-tennis and tennis. Strictly team sports are basketball, football, sepak takraw, volleyball and water polo. The collection of artifacts can include sportswear, sports equipment, balls, shoes and even medals donated by past winners.

From SEAP Games (1959-1975) to the South East Asian (SEA) Games (1977 – present)

In 1977 the SEAP Games evolved into the South East Asian (SEA) Games when Indonesia and the Philippines participated in the multi-sport event for the first time. Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos who withdrew from the games in 1975 due to the Second Indochina war did not participate as they were still politically unstable (*Asiaweek*, 1977, p. 31). Brunei Darussalam joined ASEAN in 1984. Vietnam became a member on 28 July 1995. Laos and Myanmar (previously known was Burma) were admitted in July 1997 (Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2007, p. 5). By 1999 all ten ASEAN countries participated in the 20th SEA Games which was hosted by Brunei Darussalam for the first time (Special Committee on Hospitality and Decoration, 1999, p. 36). The author feels that it is timely to research about the conceptual model of the SEAP Games Archives, Library and Museum (ALM), and the types of information that are needed to set up and develop the institution at the SEAP/SEA Games Secretariat in Bangkok, Thailand. The SEAP Games (ALM) (1959 – 1975) can also be extended to the SEA Games (1977 – present).

Conclusion

In the study of the proposed conceptual model of the SEAP Games ALM, the author has identified the various types of information needed and how to obtain the materials. This is not exhaustive as there are so much more information and artifacts yet to be identified. ASEAN countries can collaborate in the preservation of their sporting heritage. Every member country can contribute towards building the Games archival, library, and museum collection. Heritage is finite: once lost it cannot be reconstructed. It is a delicate treasure that needs constant attention and interpretation to make it meaningful. It is too important to be the responsibility of one body or institution; it must be everyone's concern. Yet we recognise the need for government involvement, both on a policy level and on a support level (Davis, 1984, p. 67).

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Malay Manuscripts in Johor

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Introduction

In November 2011, at the invitation of HRH the Sultanah of Johor (now the Permaisuri of Johor), Raja Zarith Sofiah, I visited Johor to survey the collections of the Royal Abu Bakar Museum. During my week-long visit, I was also taken to view a number of other heritage collections, including the Johor branch of the National Archives of Malaysia, and the Kota Tinggi Museum. In all these institutions I saw interesting collections of Malay and Arabic manuscripts, none of which appear to be described in any published catalogues. This article or rather photo essay therefore sets out simply to document briefly and illustrate the manuscripts that I saw during my visits.

Kota Tinggi Museum

Following the capture of the great Malay kingdom of Melaka in 1511 by the Portuguese, the sultan and his court fled southwards and established a successor state in Johor. Kota Tinggi, on the upper reaches of the Johor river, was in the 17th century the capital of the Johor empire, and is home to many royal tombs and historical sites. In 1997 a centre for the history of Johor was established at Kota Tinggi, which in 2004 was officially opened as the Kota Tinggi Museum (Muzium Kota Tinggi), administered by the Johor Heritage Trust (Yayasan Warisan Johor). The Museum closed for refurbishment in 2015, and was reopened to the public in 2019.

When I visited the Kota Tinggi Museum on 17 November 2011, the curators Encik Farhan and Puan Jamilah informed me that with the exception of the archaeology section – which displays finds from the ongoing archaeological exploration of the many historic sites along the Johor river – the collections derive from various sources, many being newly acquired, and were not necessarily all sourced in Johor. Nonetheless, there is a large and impressive display of Malay artefacts of all sorts, including brassware, weapons, basketware, textiles, ceramics, and manuscripts.

The 20 manuscripts I saw (numbered here A-U) consisted of six Qur'ans and one lithographed copy; three volumes of *tafsir* or Qur'anic commentaries; two *Kitab Mawlid* or poems in praise of the Prophet, both beautifully illuminated; a number of Malay texts including a volume on Sufism, a copy of *Hidayat al-Salikin* by Abdul Samad of Palembang and *Nabi Mi'raj*; and a few other unidentified works in Malay, Arabic and Bugis. Some of the manuscripts have original leather bindings, in the distinctive Minangkabau and Palembang styles (cf. Plomp 1993), suggesting their origins in Sumatra.

The finest Qur'an (A) is an illuminated manuscript from the East Coast of the Malay peninsula in the Terengganu style, but possibly from Kelantan as the calligraphy of the

surah or chapter headings is not of the exceptional standard associated with Terengganu production. The opening illuminated folio has been detached and re-attached with the *Surat al-Fatihah* as f. 1r (Fig. 1), so that there is no longer a double-page illuminated spread at the beginning of the Qur'an. A fine pair of double illuminated frames surround the final chapter or *surahs* (Fig. 2), and marginal ornamnents mark each new *juz'* or thirtieth part of the Qur'anic text and divisions thereof, such as *nisf* (half) and *thumn* (eighth). Page dimensions are 31 x 20 cm.

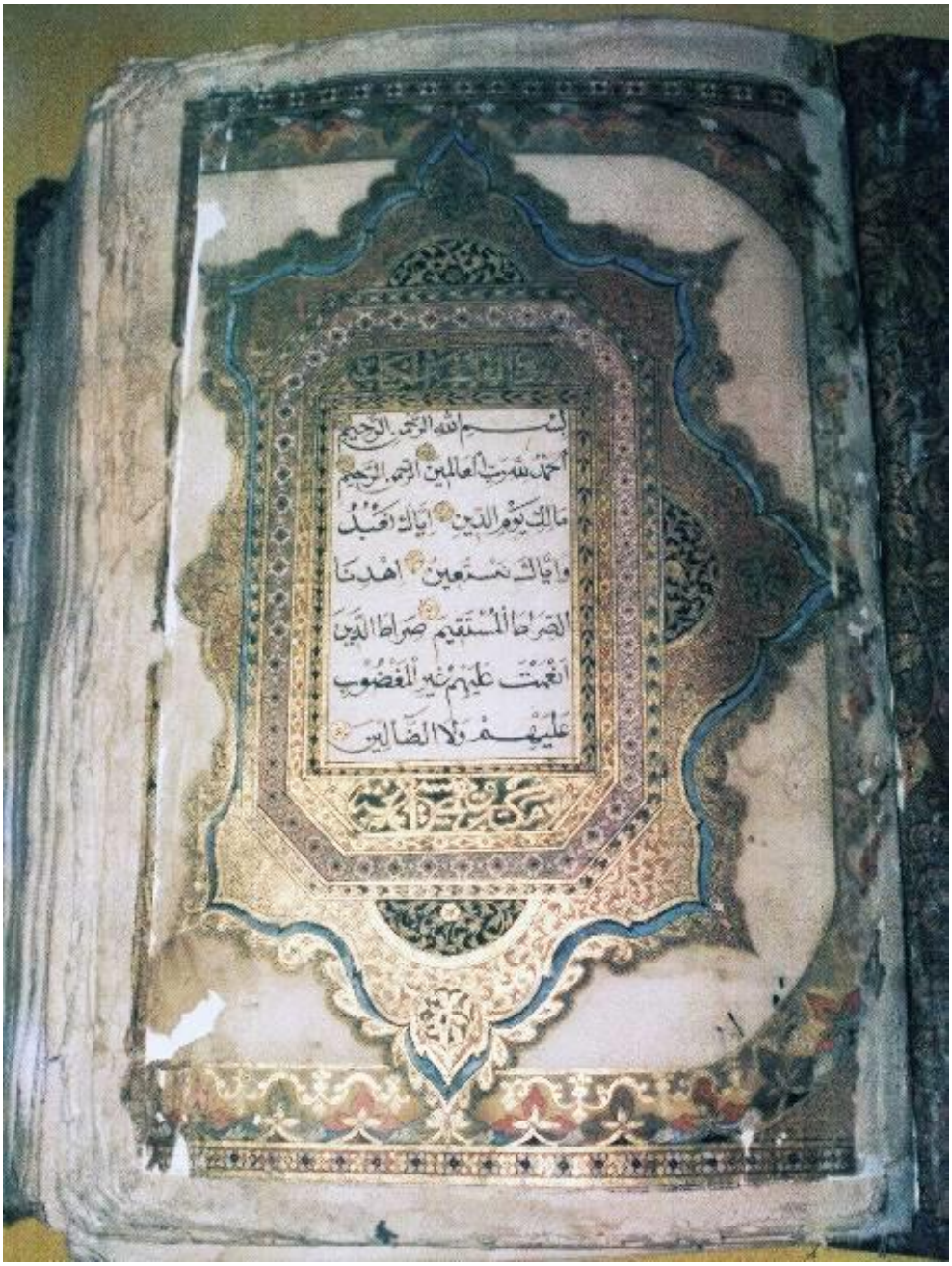


Fig. 1. Terenganu-style Qur'an A, illuminated frame at the beginning around Surat al-Fatihah (Q.1). Kota Tinggi Museum.
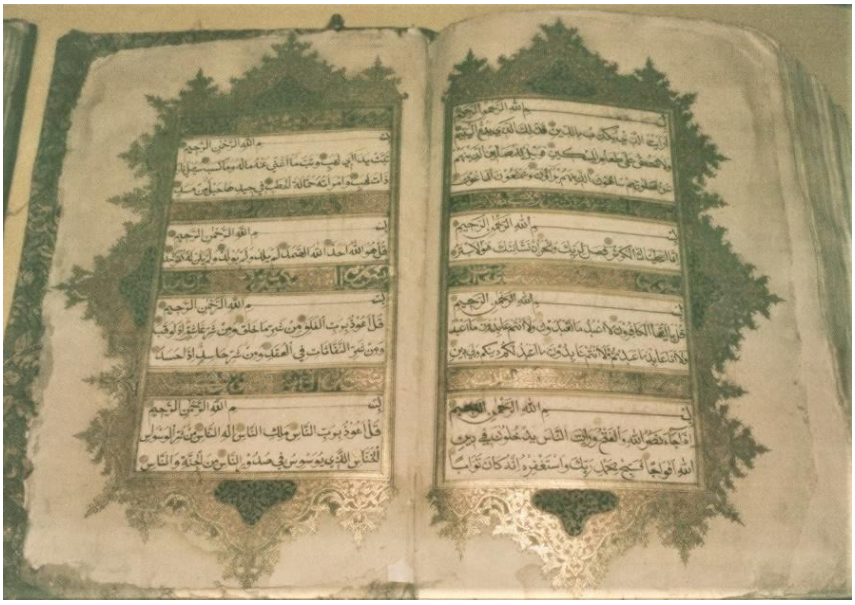


Fig. 2. Double illuminated frames around the final surahs (Q.107-114) of the Terengganu-style Qur'an A. [The poor colour of the image is due to processing problems.] Kota Tinggi Museum.

Three further Qur'an manuscripts are probably all from Sumatra. Qur'an B is copied on watermarked European paper and measures 33 x 20 cm, with the opening pages set in monochrome double decorated frames in black ink (Fig. 3). It probably originates from West Sumatra, as it has a characteristically tall and thin text block (Figs. 4-5) and a distinctive Minangkabau style binding (Fig. 6). Qur'an C is a plain manuscript which may also be from Minangkabau (Fig. 7), while Qur'an D has three sets of concentric double-ruled black ink frames on each of the opening pages (Fig. 8), and a simple binding more similar to those from Palembang.



Fig. 3. Minangkabau Qur'an B, with double decorated frames in black ink at the beginning. Kota Tinggi Museum.



Fig. 4. Minangkabau Qur'an B, Surat al-Furqan (Q.25). Kota Tinggi Museum.



Fig. 5. Minangkabau Qur'an B, final page with Surat al-Nas (Q.114). Kota Tinggi Museum.



Fig. 6. Qur'an B, with a typical Minangkabau leather binding, with the decoration outlined in yellow and black pigment. Kota Tinggi Museum.



Fig. 7. Minangkabau Qur'an C, Surat Maryam (Q.19). Kota Tinggi Museum.



Fig. 8. Minangkabau Qur'an D, opening pages set in ruled frames. Kota Tinggi Museum.

Qur'an E is written on *dluwang* or Javanese locally-made treebark paper, and is thus clearly from Java (Fig. 9). Qur'an F is a small illuminated Ottoman manuscript, perhaps brought back to the Malay world by a pilgrim to Mecca as a souvenir of the Hajj (Fig. 10).

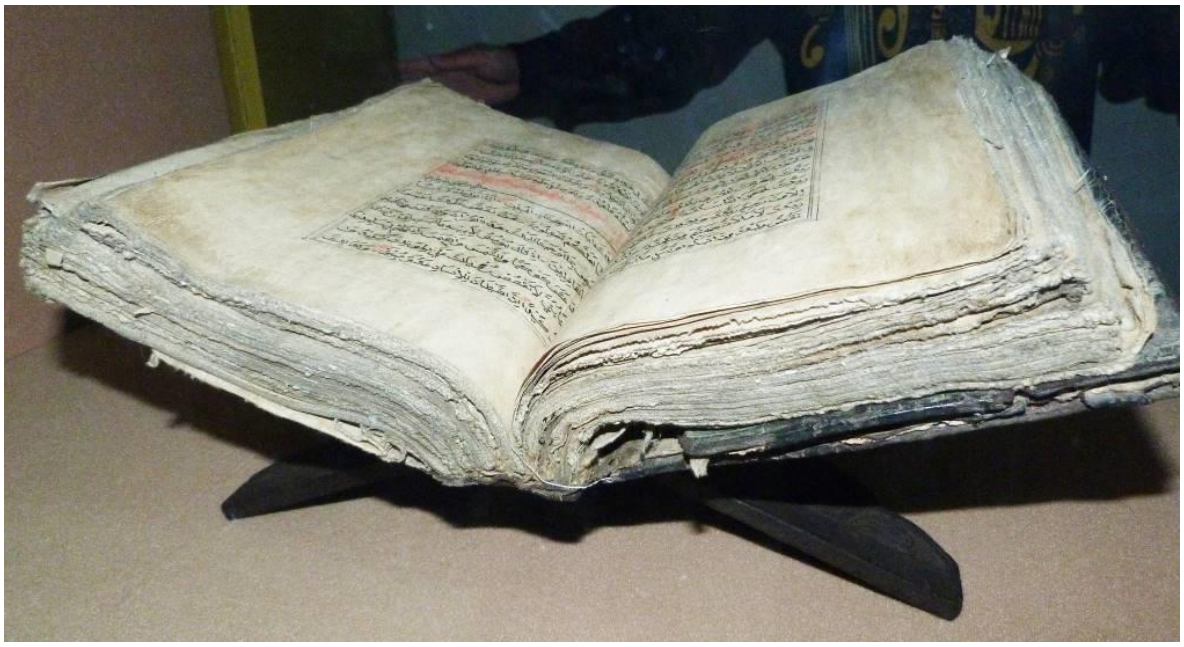


Fig. 9. Qur'an E, from Java. Kota Tinggi Museum.

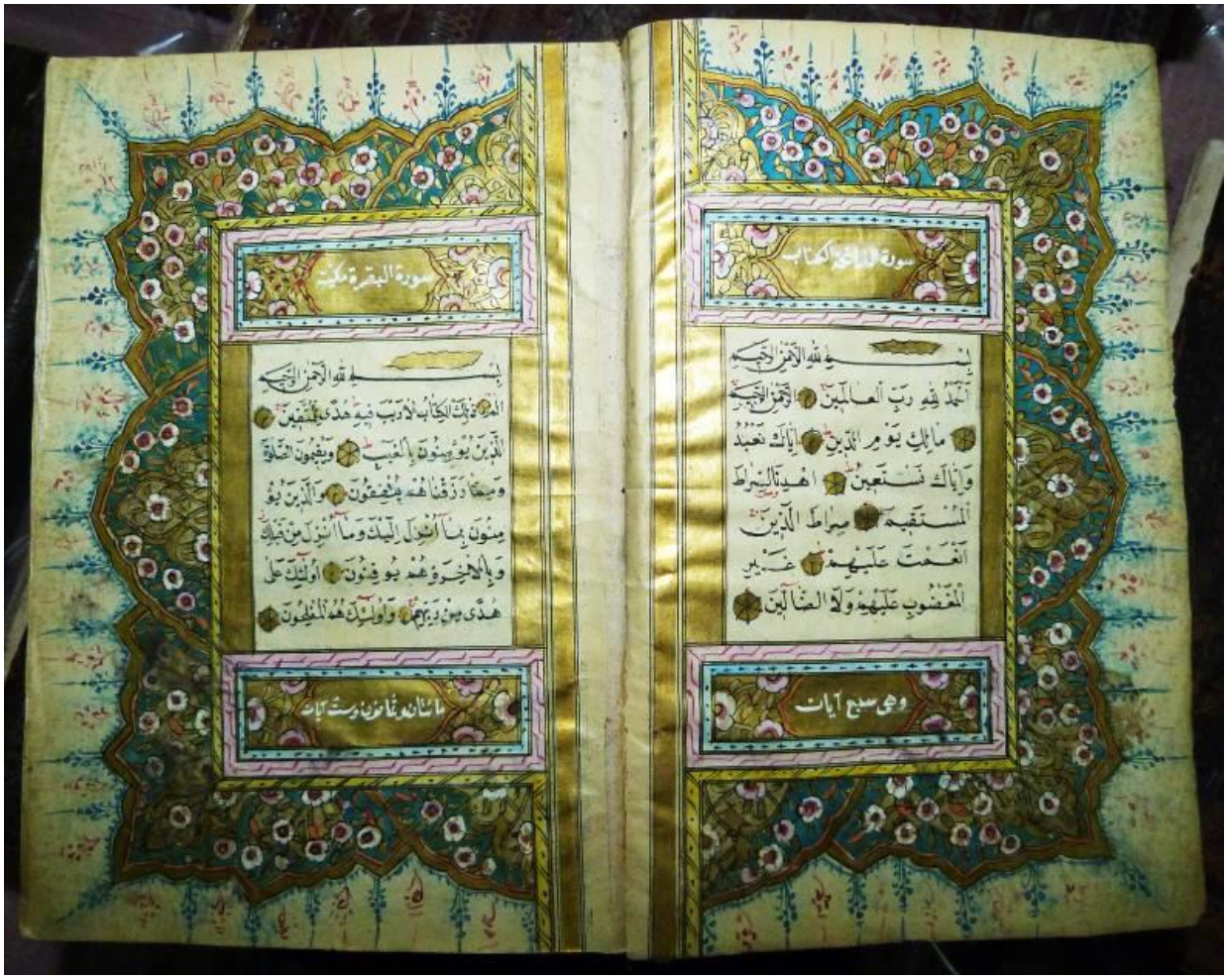


Fig. 10. Ottoman Qur'an F. Kota Tinggi Museum.

The final Qur'an, G, is not a manuscript, but a lithographed volume printed in Singapore most likely in the late 1860s or early 1870s. It has double coloured frames at the beginning (Fig. 11) and end; a contents list of *surahs* at the beginning, and at the end a *makhraj* chart to aid pronounciation of the Arabic letters, and a prayer set in a roundel (Fig. 12). The pages measure 31 x 20 cm. Ali Akbar is currently researching these lithographed Qur'ans and has traced over 30 separate editions printed in Singapore during this period.

Most of these Qur'ans emulate the page layout, decoration and even binding of fine Terengganu Qur'ans, and were often copied by Terengganu scribes. All known copies have had colour added by hand after having been printed on a lithographic press in black ink for the text and outlines of the decorated frames.

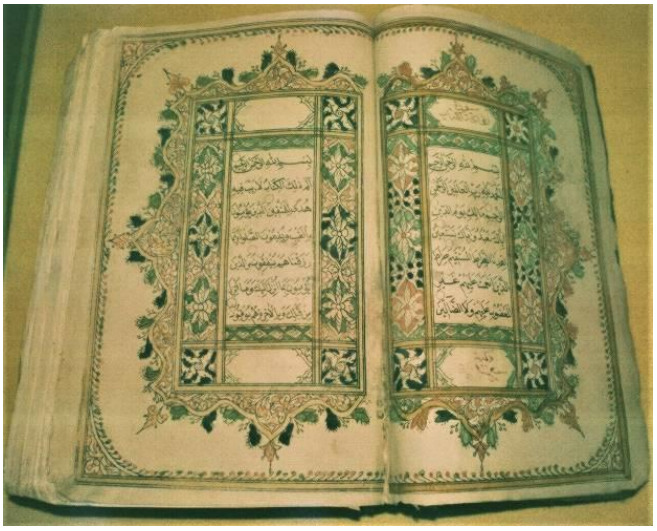


Fig. 11. Qur'an G, lithographed in Singapore, ca. 1870, with hand-coloured frames. Kota Tinggi Museum.



Fig.12. Qur'an G, lithographed, final pages. Kota Tinggi Museum.

There are three Qur'anic commentaries or *tafsir* in Arabic (H, I, J), all from West Sumatra, as is clear from the page layouts (Figs. 13, 15, 17) and distinctive Minangkabau bindings with elements of the decoration outlined in yellow and black pigment (Figs. 14, 18; see Plomp 1993: Fig. 7).

These are probably all copies of the *Tafsir al-Jalalayn*, the most widely-encountered Qur'an commentary found in Sumatra. In all three manuscripts, the Qur'anic text is written in red and the explanation and discursive remarks follow in black ink, with further annotations in the margin.

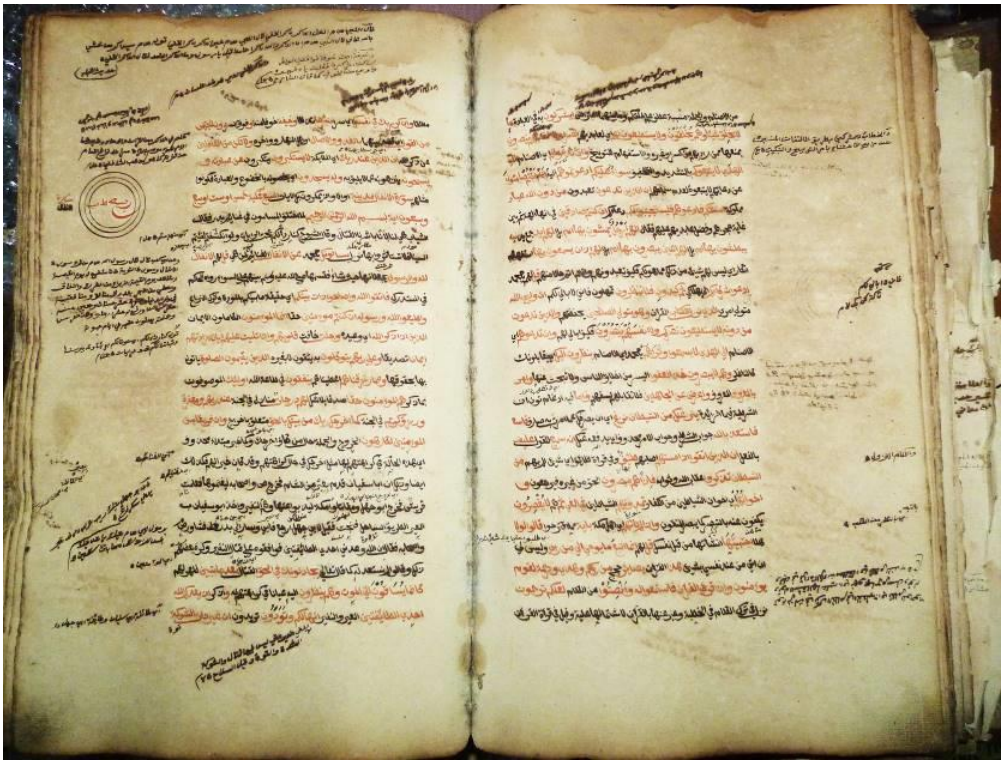


Fig. 13. Minangkabau Tafsir H, with Qur'anic text in red and commentary in black ink. Kota Tinggi Museum.

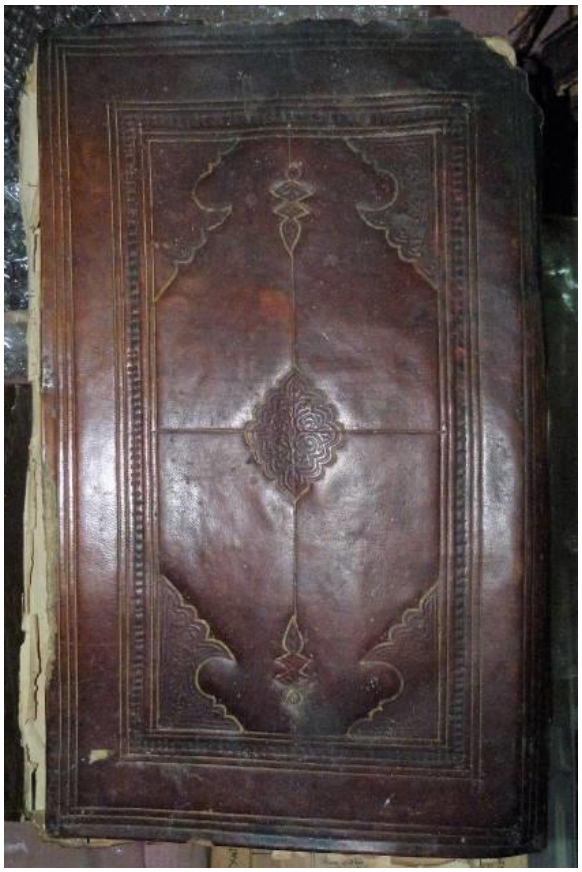


Fig. 14. Minangkabau-style leather binding of Tafsir H. Kota Tinggi Museum.

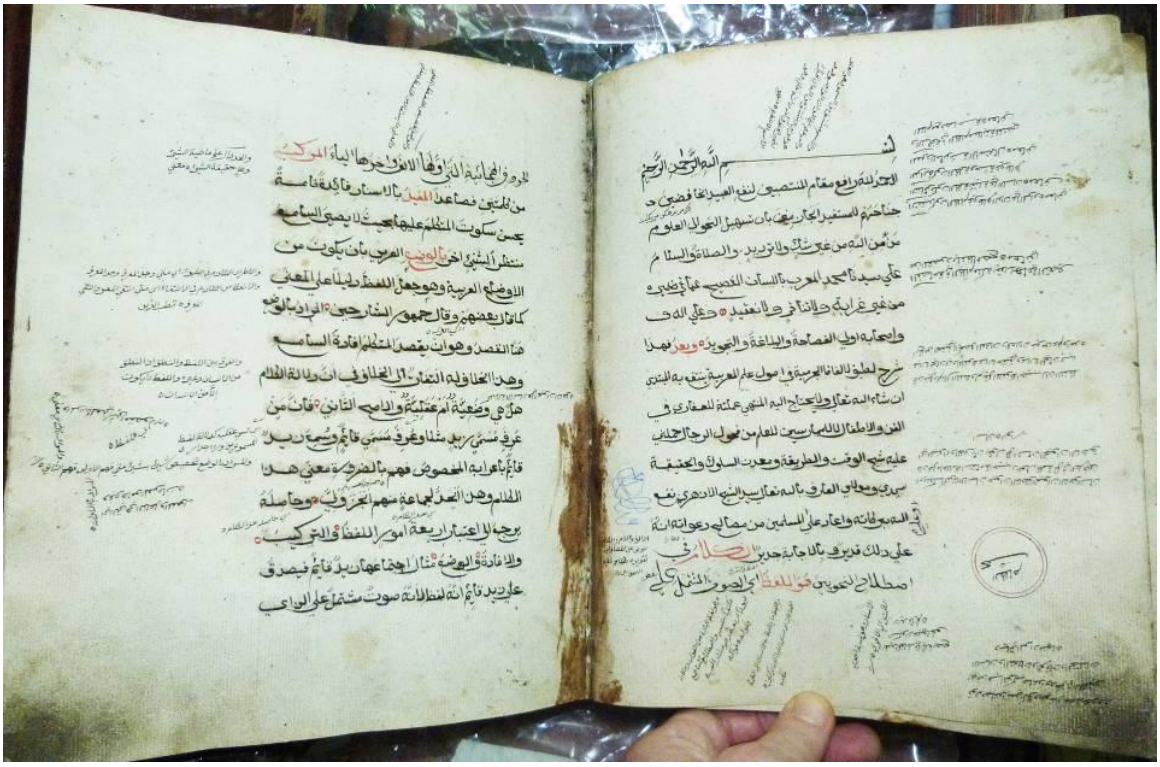


Fig. 15. Opening pages of Minangkabau Tafsiri I. Kota Tinggi Museum.

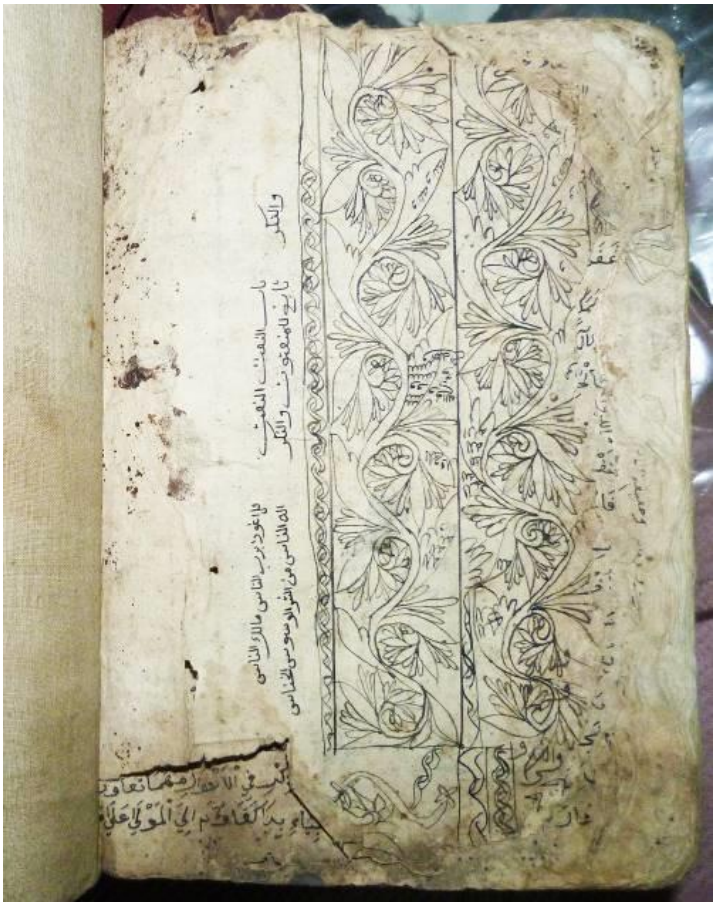


Fig. 16. Minangkabau Tafsir I, with sketches of decorative scrolls. Kota Tinggi Museum.

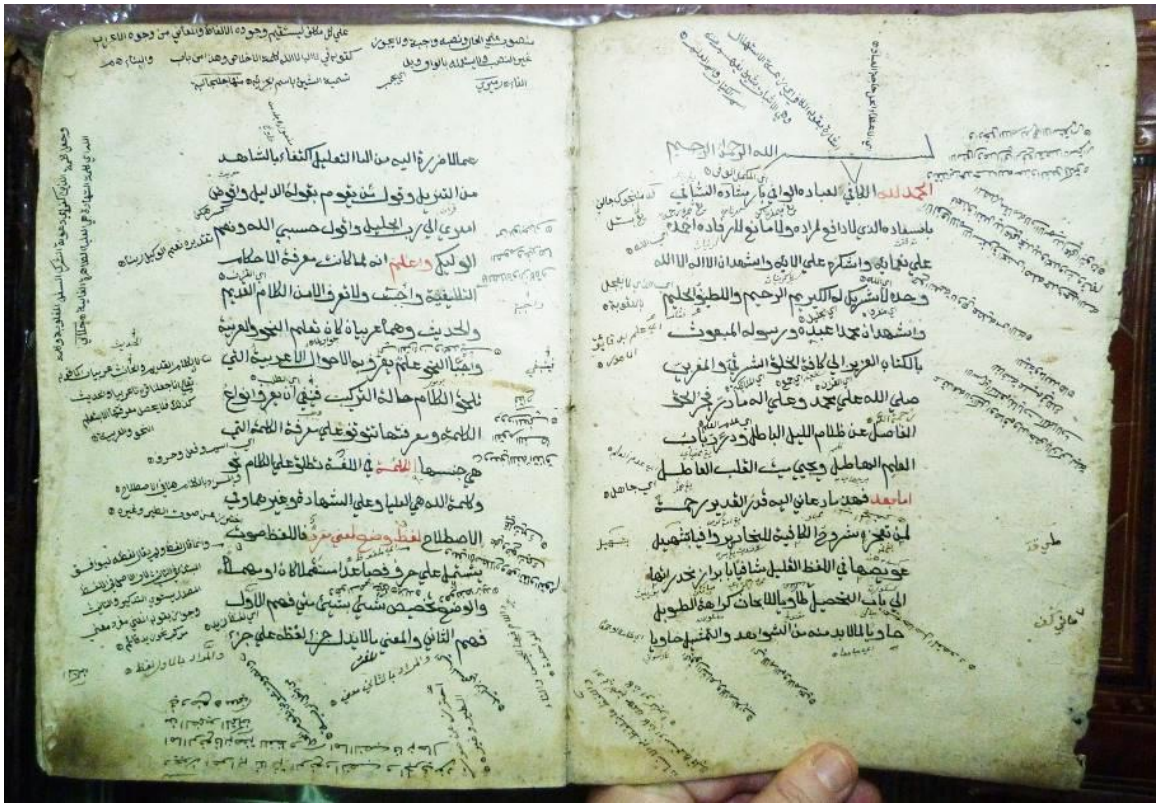


Fig. 17. Opening pages of Minangkabau Tafsir J. Kota Tinggi Museum.



Fig. 18. Leather binding of Minangkabau Tafsir J. Kota Tinggi Museum.

Also in Arabic are two illuminated *Kitab Mawlid* manuscripts containing verses in praise of the Prophet. Both manuscripts are copies of *Mawlid Sharaf al-Anam*, the most popular of such hagiographical texts in Southeast Asia, which are normally recited on occasions such as the Prophet's birthday. The first, K, is a large manuscript, measuring 36 x 23 cm,

written on English paper watermarked ‘STACEY WHITE 1818’ and thus possibly dating from the 1820s. It is elegantly but unusually illuminated in a palette of blue, brown, yellow, red and black ink, with distinctive floral motifs (Figs. 19-21). The provenance of this manuscript is difficult to judge from the illumination, but the prevalence of blue, and the relatively plain binding (Fig. 22), may hint at a Palembang origin.



Fig. 19. K, Mawlid Sharaf al-Anam, ca. 1820s. Kota Tinggi Museum.



Fig. 20. K, Mawlid Sharaf al-Anam, ca. 1820s. Kota Tinggi Museum.



Fig. 21. K, Mawlid Sharaf al-Anam, ca. 1820s. Kota Tinggi Museum.



Fig. 22. Binding of Mawlid Sharaf al-Anam K. Kota Tinggi Museum.

The second, smaller, *Mawlid Sharaf al-Anam* manuscript, L, has a large number of decorated headpieces in blue, red, yellow and black ink (Figs. 23-24). This manuscript is certainly from Palembang as it has a colophon giving the date of completion as 7 Rajab

1251 (29 October 1835), and it appears to have been written for Nyayu Irang in Kampung 22 Ilir by Ki Agus Muhammad ‘Aqip: *tarikh nabi s.a.w. seribu dua ratus lima puluh satu dan kepada tahun ba dan kepada tujuh hari ublan Rajap dan kepada hari Jumaat masa itulah sudah selesai Maulud Nabi s.a.w. Nyayu[?]Irang Kampung / Dua Puluh Dua Ilir Kiagus Muhammad ‘Aqip adanya*; there is also a later ownership note in pencil of Muhammad Kusin: *dua (?) alamat surat sampai kepada adinda Muhammad Kusin* (Fig. 25). The black leather binding (Fig. 26) is similar to the Palembang bindings illustrated in Plomp (1993: Fig. 6). A similar illuminated *Mawlid Sharaf al-Anam* is documented in the catalogue of Palembang manuscripts (Ikram 2004: 175).



Fig. 23. L, Mawlid Sharaf al-Anam, Palembang, 1835. Kota Tinggi Museum.



Fig. 24. L, Mawlid Sharaf al-Anam, Palembang, 1835. Kota Tinggi Museum.

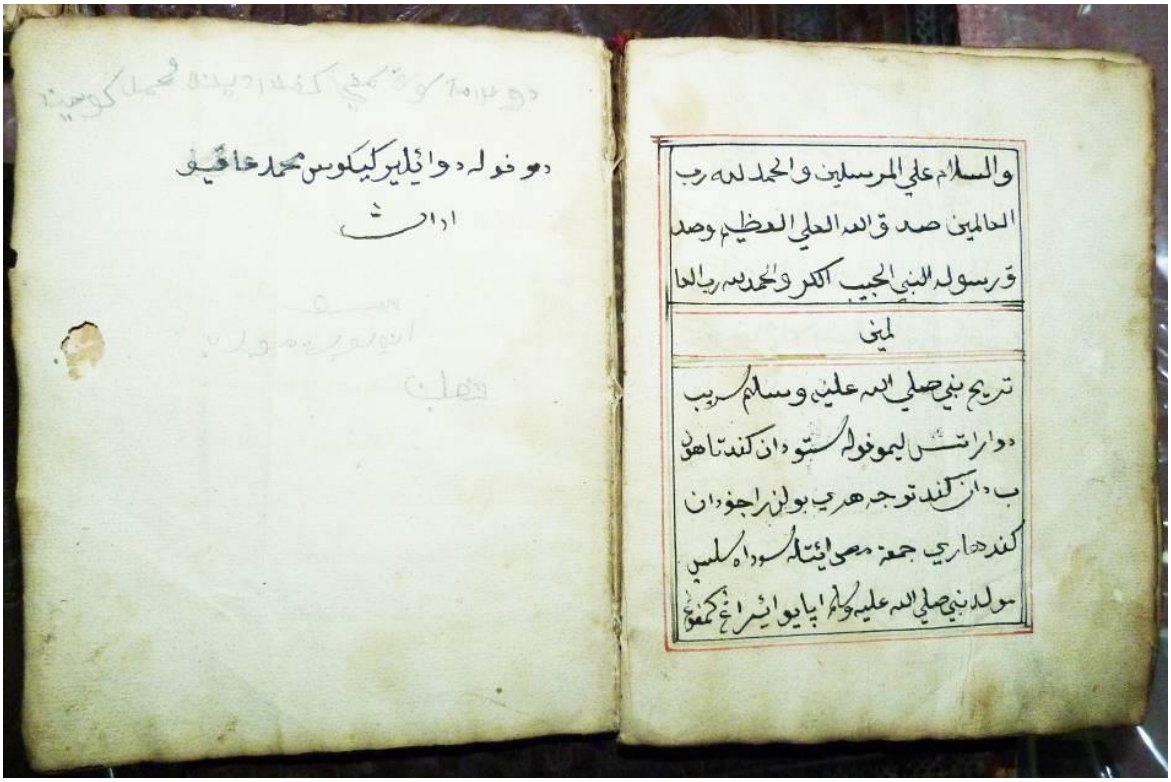


Fig. 25. L, colophon of Mawlid Sharaf al-Anam, copied in Palembang, 1835. Kota Tinggi Museum.

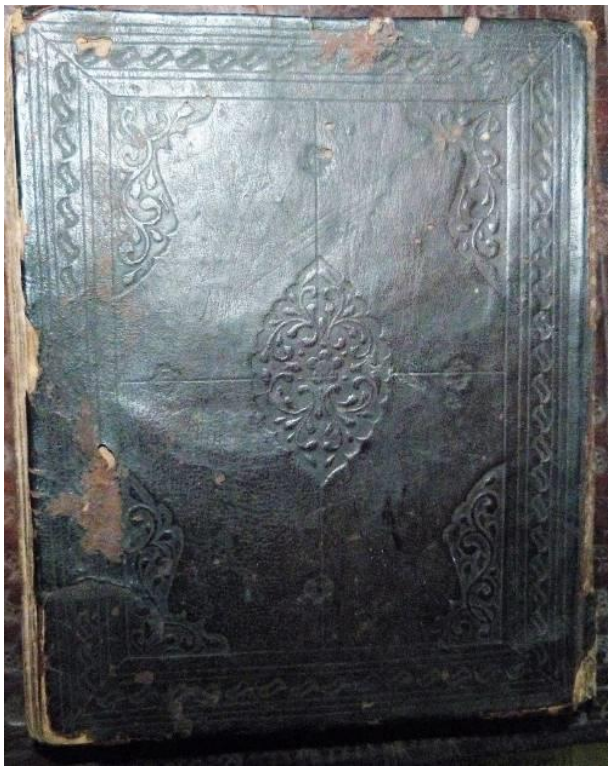


Fig. 26. L, binding of Mawlid Sharaf al-Anam, Palembang, 1835. Kota Tinggi Museum.

Of the manuscripts predominantly in Malay, probably the most interesting and historically significant is a compendium on Sufism or *tasawuf* (M), which although damaged at the edges is beautifully written in black and red ink, and contains a number of texts. The volume starts with a work on *zat Allah*, the essence of God, and *nur Muhammad*, the mystical Light of Muhammad, with a note at the top of first page confirming the names of those who have received the qualification (*ijazah*) enabling them to study/teach this complex text: *ini kitab ijazah Haji Muhammad Bustam kepada Haji Abdul Tamid dan Haji Abdul Tamid memberi ijazah pulak kepada Encik Angar[? a-ng-r]* (Fig. 27).

Next is a *syair* or narrative poem on the creation of the world and letters, by an anonymous writer, named at the end conventially as *fakir yang daif*, 'the poor mendicant' (Fig. 28). This is followed by a work addressed to Sufis (*ahl al-sufiyyah*), and then a text on *zikir*, remembrances of God, with a full colophon: *dan adalah surat ini Encik Ismail ibn Muhammad juru tulis Engku Sayid Muhammad Zain tatkala pergi ke Betawi duduk / di dalam Kampung Kerukut Jawa diambil kepada Pangiran Dipati Palembang disalin daripada kitabnya, adalah Pangiran Dipati itu duduk bersama-sama di dalam Kerukut Kampung Jawa itu, adapun Encik Ismail waktu menyuratnya itu iaitu kepada dualapan belas hari bulan Zulkaidah pada hari Selasa kepada jam pukul sembilan adanya fi al-tarikh al-sanat 1237* 'this was written by Encik Ismail, son of Muhammad, the scribe of Engku Sayid Muhammad Zain, on the occasion of his visit to Batavia when he stayed in Kampung Kerukut Jawa; it was copied from the book belonging to Pangiran Dipati of Palembang, as the Pangiran Dipati was also staying in Kerukut Kampung Jawa at the same time; it was copied by Encik Ismail on the 18th of the month of Zulkaidah on Tuesday at 9 o'clock in the year 1237' (18 Zulkaidah 1237 = 6 August 1822) (Fig. 29). The final item in the volume is a prayer in Arabic comprising the *shahada* and other formulae obtained from Tuan Haji Kemas Zamhari (Kemas is a Palembang title): *pasal ini pada menyatakan suatu doa ijazah daripada Tuan Haji Kemas Zamhari Mataram*.

This manuscript is particularly significant because the circumstances of its creation are well-documented historically. Engku Sayid Muhammad Zain al-Kudsi was one of the most senior ministers at the court of Riau (who in 1811 sent a beautifully illuminated Malay letter to T.S. Raffles which is now held in the British Library as MSS Eur.F.148, f. 106). In 1822, Engku Sayid and Raja Ahmad, the brother of the Viceroy of Riau Raja Jafar, led a large embassy of four vessels from Riau to Batavia, accompanied by many other princes and their families and retainers. As recounted in the famous chronicle of Riau, *Tuhfat al-Nafis*, written in 1865 by Raja Ali Haji (Matheson and Hooker 1982: 232-237), on arrival in Batavia the Riau delegation were met ceremoniously and taken to the accomodation that had been prepared for them in Krukut, the Arab quarter of Batavia. The embassy spent three months in Batavia, primarily to discuss with the Dutch authorities the problem of piracy and the installation of the new sultan (cf. Matheson and Hooker 1982: 388). Another interesting feature of this manuscript is the way it illustrates how Malay texts were disseminated through the archipelago: a nobleman from Riau, visiting Batavia, encountered a dignitary from Palembang staying in the same district, and was able to have a copy made of an important work on Sufism.



Fig. 27. M, first text in a compendium on Sufism, copied in Batavia in 1822. Kota Tinggi Museum.



Fig. 28. M, final lines of a syair, followed by another text on Sufism, 1822. Kota Tinggi Museum.



Fig. 29. M, colophon to a work on zikir in a Sufi compendium, copied by a scribe from Riau in Batavia in 1822 from a book belonging to the Pangiran Adipati of Palembang. Kota Tinggi Museum.

Other Malay works in the Kota Tinggi Museum include a copy of *Hidayat al-salikin* by Abdul Samad al-Jawi al-Palimbani (N), being a translation of *Bidayat al-hidayat* by al-Ghazali (Fig. 30). The original Malay translation was competed by Abdul Samad in Mecca in 1192 (1778/9), while this manuscript was copied in Mecca on 16 Ramadan 1236 (17 June 1821) by Abdullah *al-khatib al-Qedahi*, 'the writer from Kedah' (Fig. 31).

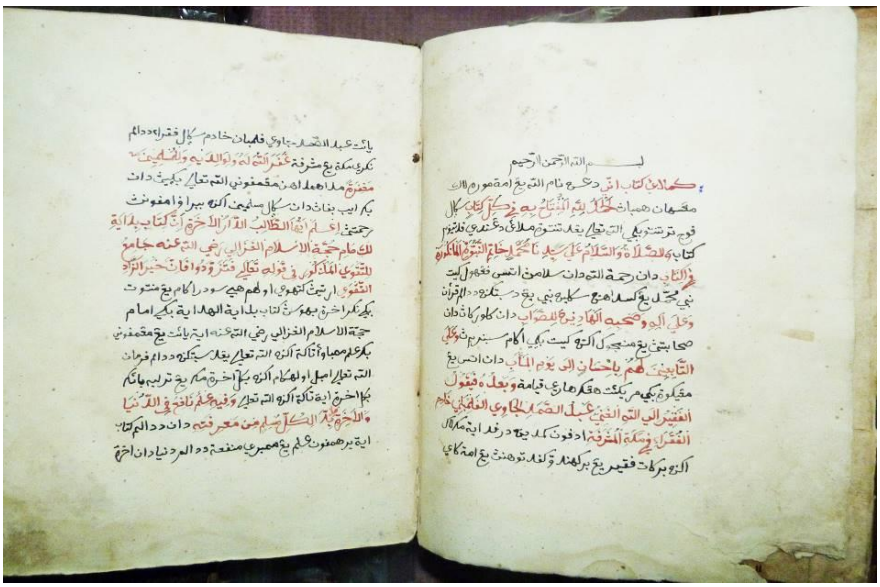


Fig. 30. N, opening pages of Hidayat al-salikin by Abdul Samad of Palembang, copied in Mecca in 1821. Kota Tinggi Museum.

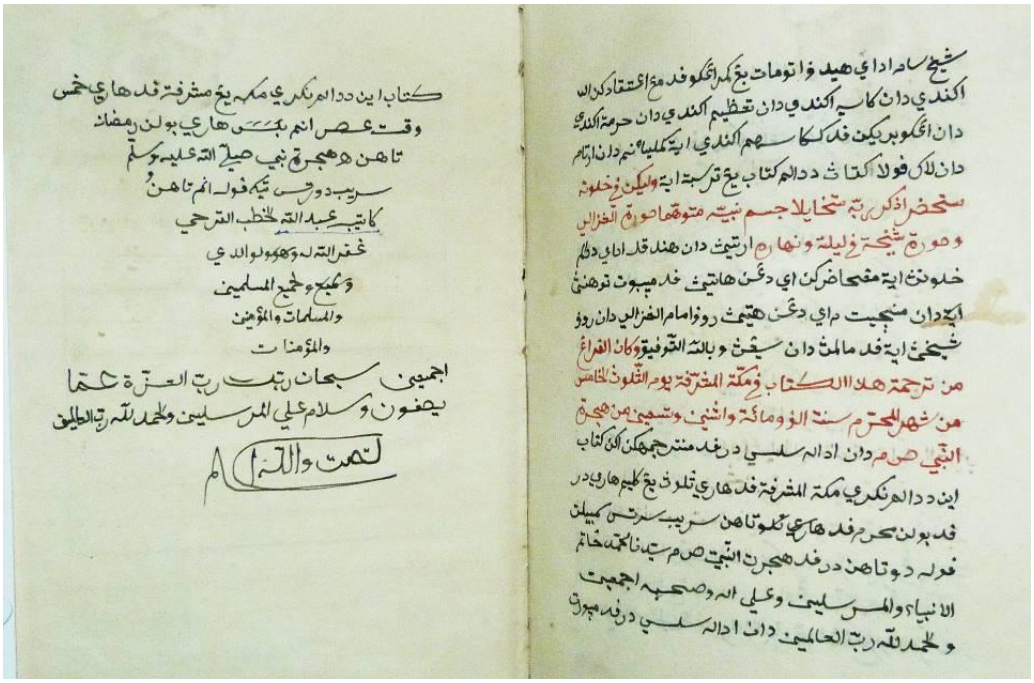


Fig. 31. N, ending and colophon of Hidayat al-salikin by Abdul Samad of Palembang, copied in Mecca in 1821 by Abdullah from Kedah. Kota Tinggi Museum.

A copy of *Nabi mi'raj* (O), on the miraculous night journey of the Prophet (Fig. 32), has an ownership note on a flyleaf dated 13 Ramadan 1278 (14 March 1862) naming the owner as Encik Aya: *tarikh sanat 1278 kepada tiga belasnya hari bulan Ramadan kepada hari Sabtu kepada jam pukul sembilan siang dewasa itulah sahaya Enci' Aya yang empunya surat Nabi Mi'raj ini intaha tamat* (Fig. 33). This manuscript also has a Minangkabau-style binding (Fig. 34).

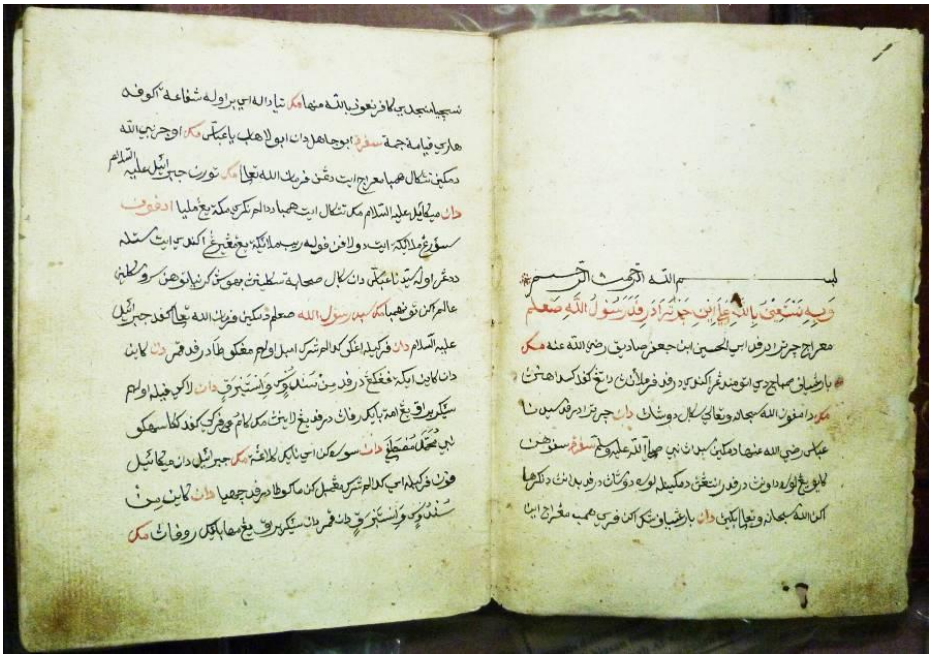


Fig. 32. O, *Nabi Mi'raj*, 1862. Kota Tinggi Museum.

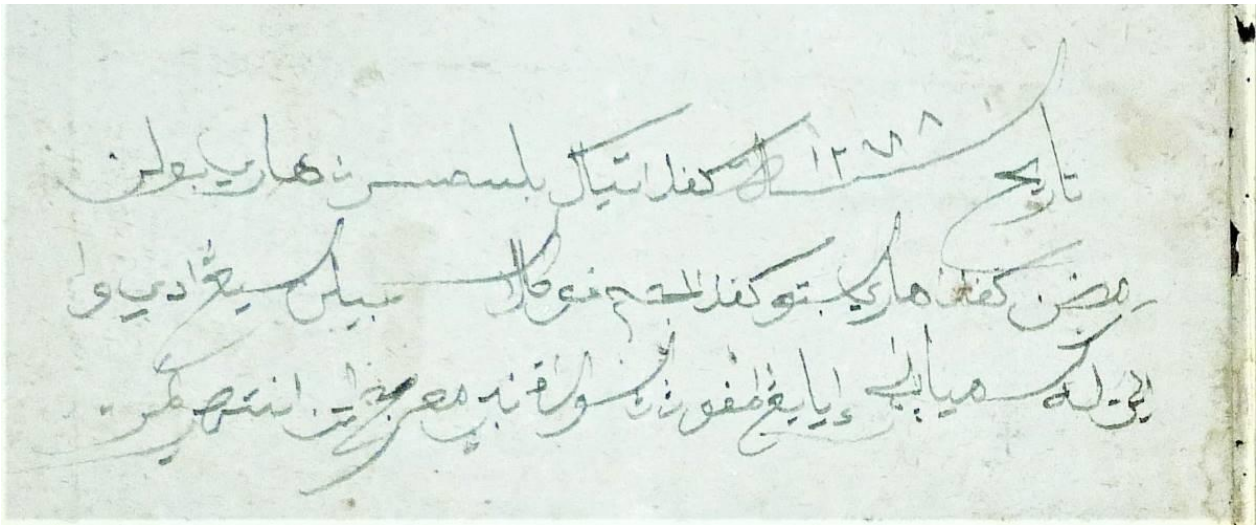


Fig. 33. O, Nabi Mi'raj, ownership note of Encik Aya, 1862. Kota Tinggi Museum.

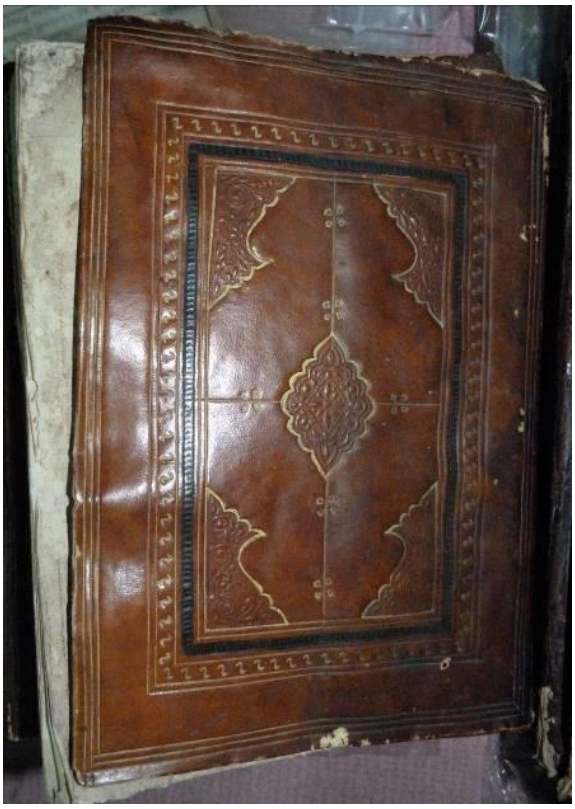


Fig. 34. O, binding of Nabi Mi'raj. Kota Tinggi Museum.

An unidentified work in Arabic with notes in Bugis (P) has a colophon stating it was copied in Mecca on Khamis 24 Safar 1324 (Thursday 19 April 1906) by Guru Hasan bin Abdullah Bugisi (Fig. 35). Another text in Arabic (Q), also of early 20th-century appearance, has an interlinear Malay translation and marginal commentary in Malay, all set in frames, well-spaced and in a very neat hand (Fig. 36). Lastly, four manuscripts (R, S, T, U) were written on *dluwang*, Javanese treebark paper, and were thus evidently from Java; one had a typically Javanese leather binding (no images available).

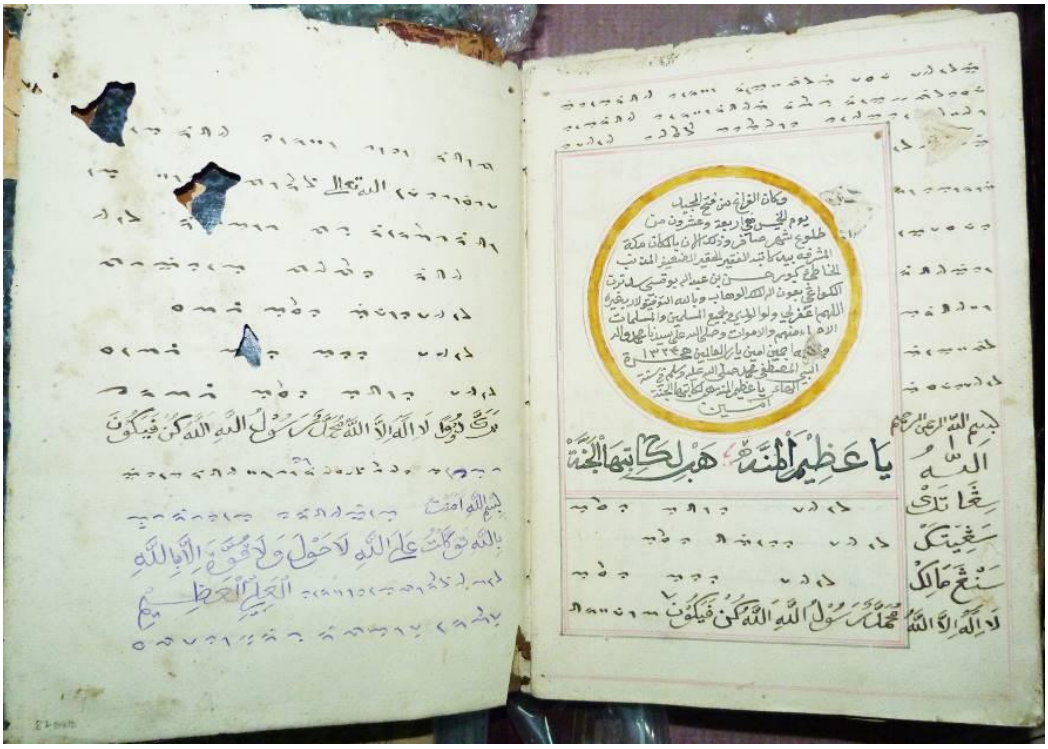


Fig. 35. P, text in Arabic with notes in Bugis, 1906 . Kota Tinggi Museum.

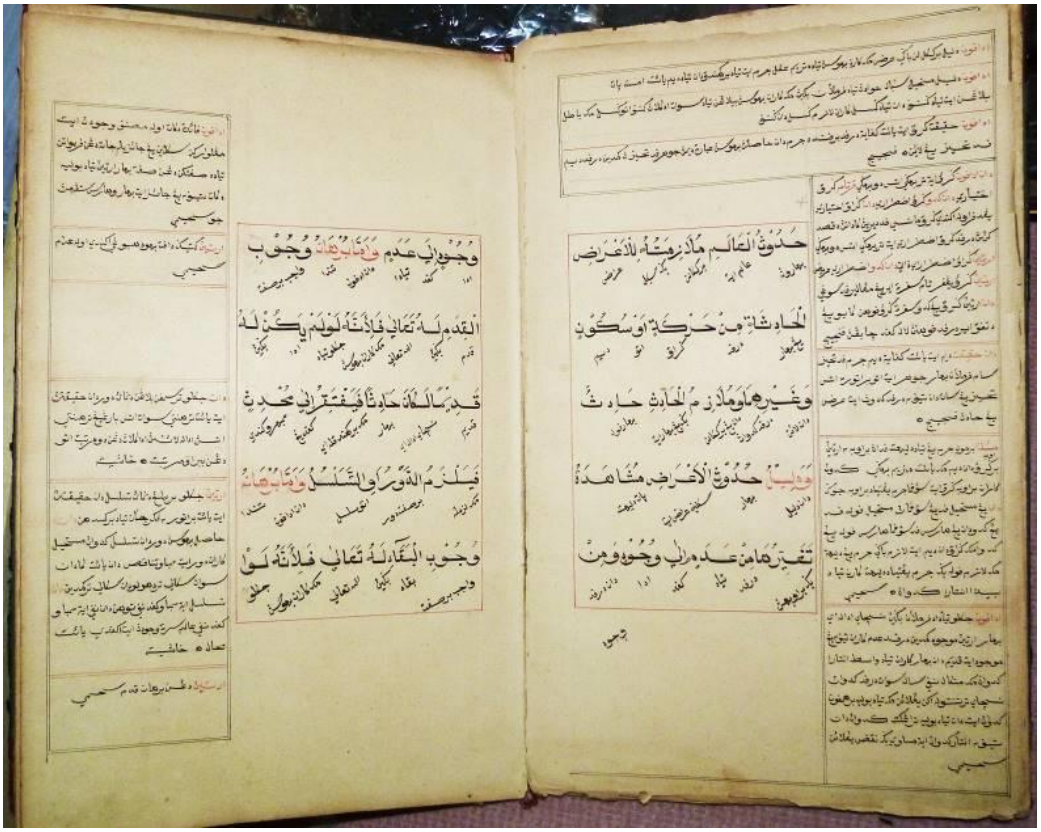


Fig. 36. Q, text in Arabic with interlinear translation and notes in Malay. Kota Tinggi Museum.

There are undoubtedly other manuscripts held in the Kota Tinggi Museum, as recently seen in photographs in the press and on social media, and hopefully a full catalogue will eventually be published of this important collection.

Johor branch of the National Archives of Malaysia

The Johor branch of the National Archives of Malaysia (Arkib Negara Malaysia, cawangan Johor, or ANMJ) in Johor Baharu holds a rich collection of 19th-century manuscript documents relating to the early history of modern Johor and its relations with the Singapore authorities, as well as on commercial business dealings between the sultan and other members of the royal family and local merchants. Among the holdings are two letterbooks in English: 'Letter book of H.H. the Maharajah of Johore, 1855-1868', including from the time of Daing Ibrahim, and 'Maharaja of Johore Letterbook 1885-1888', containing amongst others letters from Sultan Abu Bakar, Ungku Abdul Majid, and Ibrahim bin Abdullah Munsyi. Of particular interest is the 'S' series of original letters, S.1-223, many of which are in Malay. These documents are catalogued in a card index in the ANMJ.

The ANMJ also holds a fine illuminated Qur'an manuscript from the island of Sumbawa. Although in reasonable condition, all the pages have been fully laminated, which lessens the impact of the two attractive double decorated frames at the beginning and end of the text, in blue, red, yellow and black ink (Figs. 37-38). There are 15 lines per page, set within text frames of red-thick yellow-black-red ruled lines, following the Ottoman *ayat berkenar* text layout model whereby each *juz'* or thirtieth part of the Qur'an fills exactly 20 pages, and each page ends with a complete verse. Although the provenance of the manuscript is not immediately discernible from the decoration, the annotation of variant readings (*qira'at*) in the margins (Fig. 39), and the presence of supplementary texts at the end – a guide to the canonical readings, prayers on completion of the Qur'an (*du'a khatam al-Qur'an*) and a detailed colophon in Arabic – all suggest a Sulawesi diaspora connection, which is confirmed in the colophon. The colophon states that the Qur'an was copied on 19 Syawal al-akhir 1273 (12 June 1857) in the village of Labu Bua in Sumbawa by *al-Haj Ismail ibn al-Sawi al-Jawi al-Bugisi al-Menpawa[? m.n.f.w.a] b.a wa al-Buni*, namely Haji Ismail, a Bugis from Bone in south Sulawesi (Fig. 40). According to a typed note in English appended at the end of the volume, the Qur'an was found at Mesjid Telok Sengat, Pengerang, in 1949, and was presented by the official of the mosque to the Religious Library, Johor Bahru. The Qur'an was then checked and its errors corrected by Sheikh al-Mukari Tuan Haji Hassan Ismail; some of these corrections can be seen in typescript, stuck in on the margins of the pages.



Fig. 37. Qur'an from Sumbawa, 1857, opening decorated frames. National Archives of Malaysia, Johor branch.

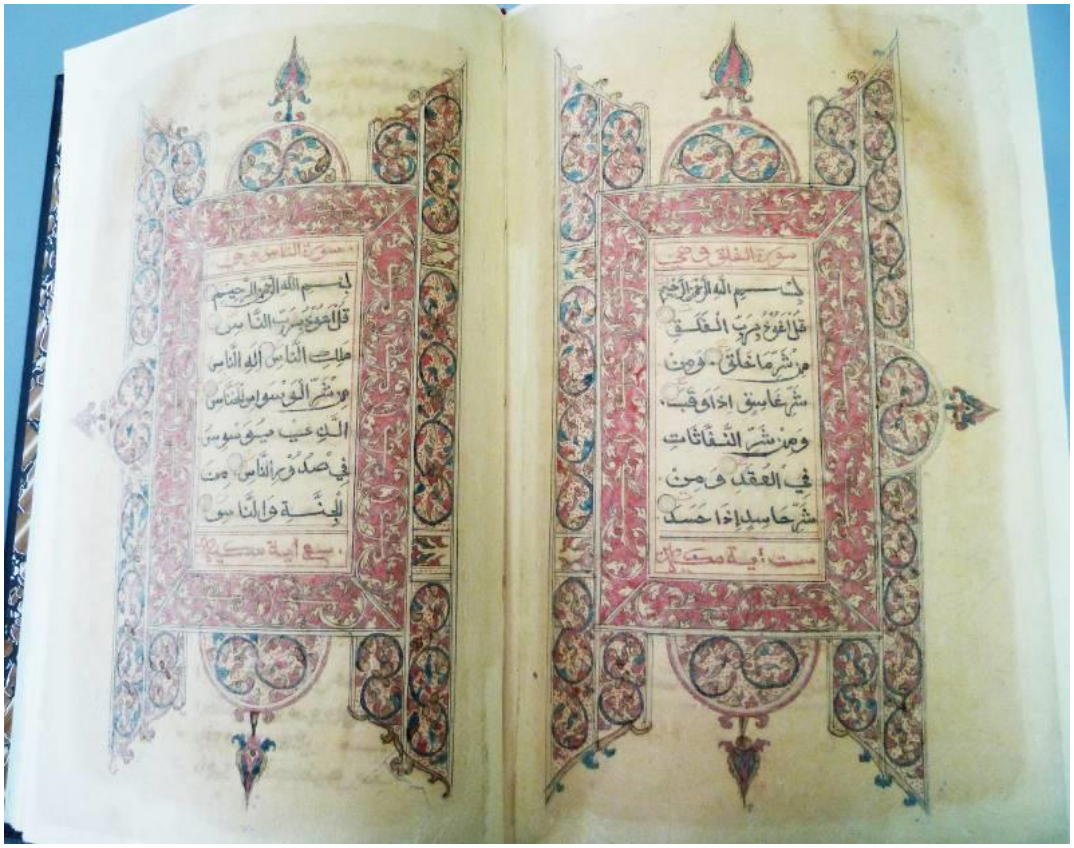


Fig. 38. Qur'an from Sumbawa, 1857, closing decorated frames. National Archives of Malaysia, Johor branch.
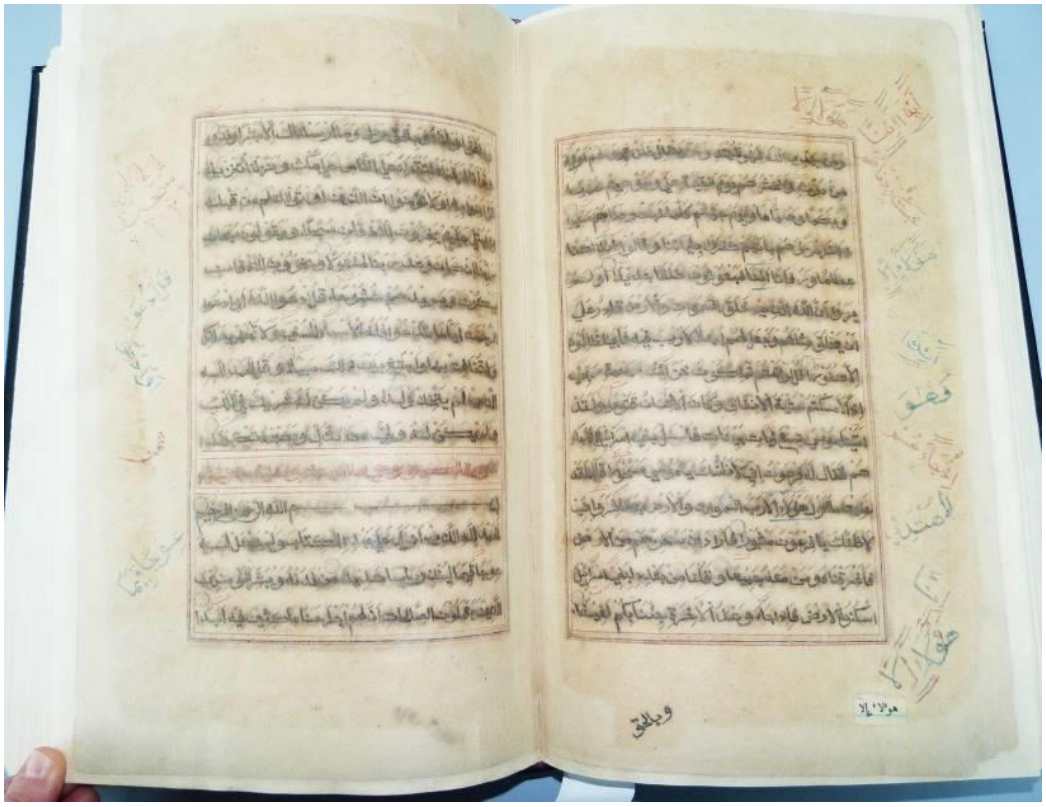


Fig. 39. Qur'an from Sumbawa, 1857, with variant readings annotated in the margins. National Archives of Malaysia, Johor branch.

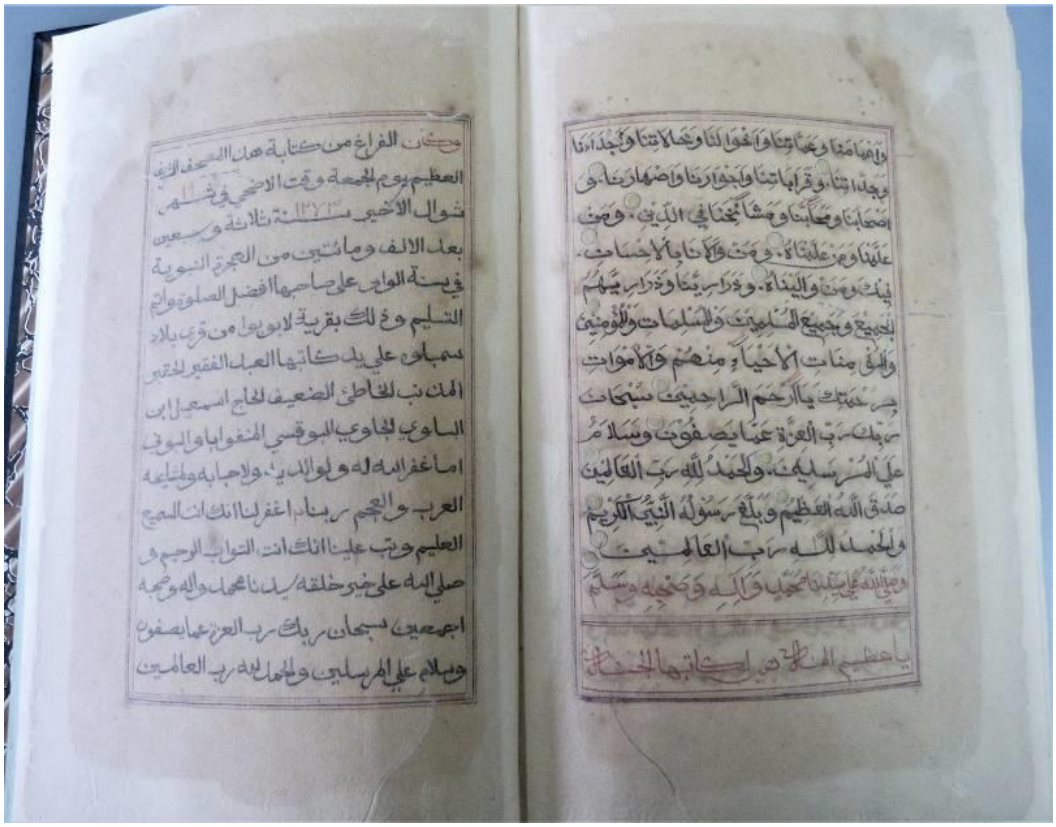


Fig. 40. Qur'an from Sumbawa, 1857, with colophon in Arabic on the left-hand page. National Archives of Malaysia, Johor branch.

Royal Abu Bakar Museum

As the Royal Abu Bakar Museum was undergoing renovation at the time of my visit, the manuscript collection was being stored in the Sultan Ibrahim Building (Bangunan Sultan Ibrahim) in Johor Baharu. There were three large boxes containing 27 volumes of manuscripts, comprising six titles of multi-volumed literary works, with many of the volumes containing around 300 pages. The manuscripts all gave the impression of dating from the late 19th-early 20th century. Some were written on lined paper, and most were bound in full or half leather bindings. There were two volumes of *Hikayat Isma Yatim*, each with illuminated double headpieces at beginning (Figs. 41-42), and a detailed colophon: *habislah surat kitab Isma Yatim di dalam negeri Singkapura kepada empat belas hari bulan Rajap kepada hari Ahad di Teluk Belanga dan ini kitab Encik punya dan sahaya Tuan Haji Ismail Hamzah bin al-marhum Encik Abu Bakar menyuratnya tiada bebera(pa) baik suratannya sekadar boleh dibaca sahaja kira2nya senang membaca adanya / sanat / sanat 00018*, 'the book of Isma Yatim was completed in Singapore on 14th Rajab on Sunday in Teluk Belanga and this book belongs to Encik, while I, Tuan Haji Ismail Hamzah, son of the late Abu Bakar, wrote it, in not very good handwriting but simply so it could be read easily by those reading it / the year 00018', with the signature of Tuan Haji Ismail Hamzah (Fig. 43). If the year '00018' is taken to mean 1318, then the date of copying would be 14 Rajab 1318 = 7 November 1900.

The other titles in the collection were: *Hikayat Sahibul Zaman* (5 volumes); *Hikayat Maha Banu* (3 volumes); *Hikayat Mengerna Indera* (1 volume); *Hikayat Efendi Hakim* (7 volumes, each with a cut-out picture of flowers stuck on the back title page) (Fig. 44); and *Hikayat Syarif al-Akhtar* (9 volumes). Although the *Hikayat Isma Yatim* is well known, with manuscripts held in many other libraries and multiple published editions, none of the other titles are familiar from the main reference works on Malay literature, and therefore deserve further investigation.



Fig. 41. First volume of Hikayat Isma Yatim, with decorated double headpieces, Singapore, 1900. Royal Abu Bakar Museum, Johor.



Fig. 42. Second volume of Hikayat Isma Yatim, with decorated double headpieces, Singapore, 1900. Royal Abu Bakar Museum, Johor.

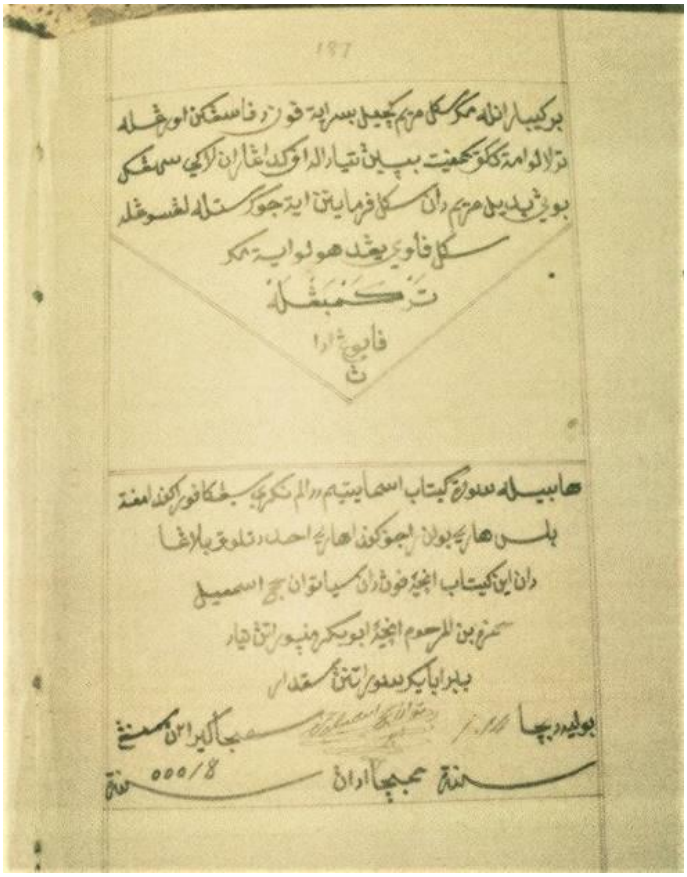


Fig. 43. Colophon of Hikayat Isma Yatim, copied by Haji Ismail Hamzah in Teluk Belanga, Singapore, 1900. Royal Abu Bakar Museum, Johor.

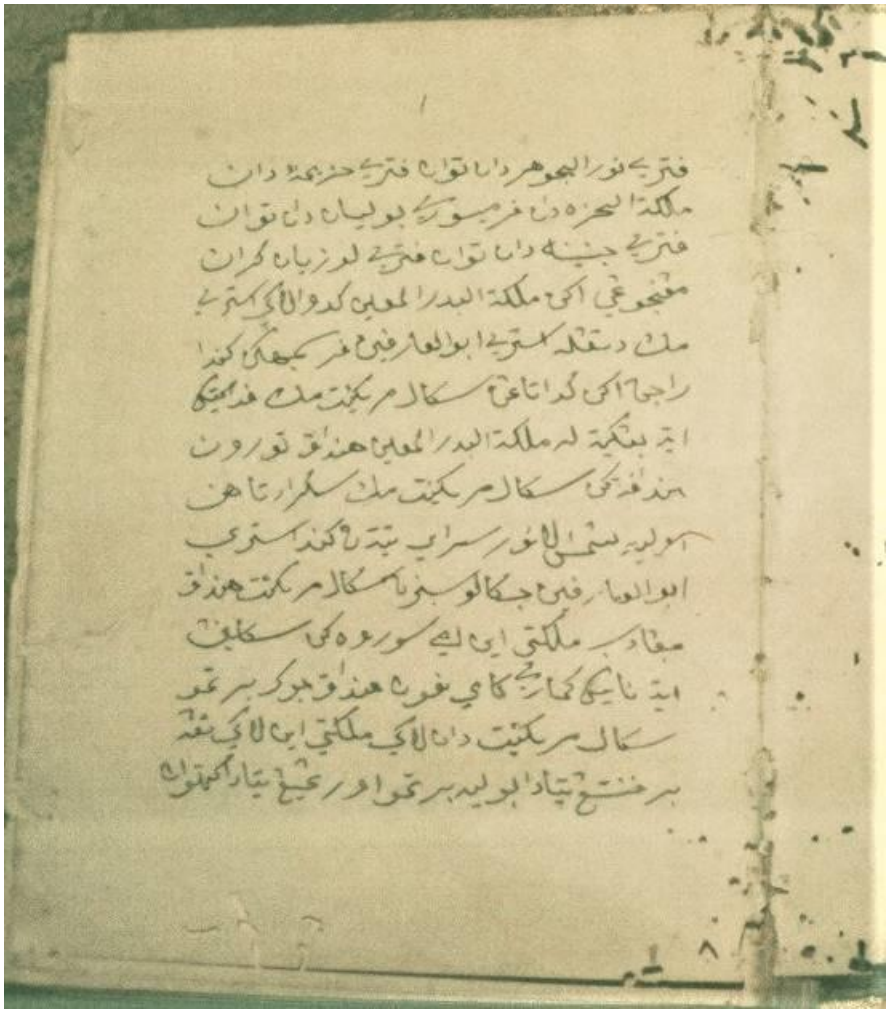


Fig. 44. Opening page of one of the seven volumes of Hikayat Efendi Hakim. Royal Abu Bakar Museum, Johor.

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Burmese dhammasattha manuscripts at the British Library

Maria Kekki, Curator for Burmese, The British Library, London

The British Library's Burmese Collection holds some of the earliest extant dhammasattha manuscripts in the world. The dhammasattha, or "treatise on the law" is a genre of Buddhist legal literature prevalent in mainland Southeast Asia, written in Pali and in a range of vernacular languages, including Burmese, Arakanese, Mon, Shan, Thai, Lao and Khmer. Although it is an integral part of the Theravada tradition, it is also historically related to Brahmanical dharmaśāstra texts written in Sanskrit.

The dhammasattha was the primary legal framework for the society, and originally applied to every Buddhist, both secular and monastic. It dealt with all aspects of the law, i.e. property and land, debt, wages, inheritance, slavery, marriage (including rape and adultery), assault, murder, theft, slander and the breaking of oaths. The most extensive tradition of dhammasattha comes from Myanmar, where some laws derived from the genre are still in force in the legal system today. Knowledge of dhammasattha was part of the education of rulers and administrators, monks, as well as any "good men", and could be put to practice by any of these (therefore being mainly a male activity). The dhammasattha texts were addressed to these judges, and were intended as guides to jurisprudence and the practice of law. They continued to be produced until the late 19th century, when new forms of legislation became more popular. The exclusive profession of a judge came to being only during the colonial period, when the British introduced a completely different legal corpus and judicial system into the country.

The story of how the dhammasattha text came into being has many versions. According to the original narrative, it already existed at the beginning of the world. The very first king, Mahāsammata, had a renowned minister of great learning named Manu, whom he appointed to adjudicate disputes. Manu, however, soon found that it was difficult to rely only on witness testimony in passing judgment, and since he was fully accomplished in super-knowledge (*abhiññā*) and magical powers (*iddhi*), he used these to fly through the sky to the boundary wall of the universe. There the dhammasattha was written on the wall in Pali with letters each as big as a cow. Manu then proceeded to transcribe the law from the wall and presented the dhammasattha text to Mahāsammata.

The dhammasattha was therefore originally conceived of as cosmically derived, neither human nor divine. It had no author, but was intimately tied to writing. Although it was a natural part of the cosmos it was only accessible to those with magical power. It was also stated that the dhammasattha was so vast it could not be mastered by the average man. This is why, the tradition reports, scholars and wise men abridged it, sometimes translating it into vernacular languages. Although the dhammasattha had many textual variations its essential cosmic justification stayed the same until the 18th century when Burmese jurists began to question this theory of the origin of law.

The dhammasattha advocated for universal justice and applied to all Buddhist beings, human and celestial. It was meant to be "impartial, like a pair of scales".

> *"The Dhammasat is like Sakka's thunderbolt-weapon and the jewel-treasure of a cakkavatti king that grants all wishes. It is like the weapon of the lords and ministers who have been tasked with carrying out the duties of the country. It is like a carpenter's ruler and a physician's diagnostic manual. It is like an oil lamp that illuminates a dark room filled with precious gems. It is like an eye that can see whether an appearance is good or bad, and like an ear that can hear whether a sound is good or bad. It is like the rays of the moon that illuminate the four continents at night, and the rays of the sun that brighten them during the day. It is like the tusk of a powerful elephant. It is like mother's milk."* (Add MS 12254, f. Ki v; trans. Lammerts 2018, 184–185)

Versions of Dhammasattha

There are many different versions of dhammasattha texts. The British Library holds 30 dhammasattha manuscripts in the Burmese Collection and includes at least 18 different versions.

Textual references to dhammasattha start in 13th-century inscriptions in Bagan (although they were likely in circulation much earlier). The earliest extant dhammasattha composition (both in Myanmar and in Southeast Asia) has traditionally been attributed to *Dhammavilāsa* (1180-1245), a famous monk active in Bagan. Lammerts has however shown that this attribution was in fact an early 19th century construction that made use of the Kalyāṇī Inscriptions (1479-1480) in order to provide historical authorship to the text. There were many Dhammavilāsas who could have written the text, and at the time of the composition of the **Dhammavilāsa dhammasat** (dhammasat: Burmese for dhammasattha) historical authorship was not important, as the primary author was still understood to have been Manu.

Out of seven existing versions of the Dhammavilāsa dhammasat three are located at the British Library (Add MS 12248, Add MS 12249, Or 11775). Of these, Add MS 12249 is particularly significant, as it provides the only secure date for the composition of the text. Although the manuscript is dated to 1825 the scribal colophon states that the text was copied from an old manuscript dated to 1637/38. The oldest physical copy of the Dhammavilāsa dhammasat is from 1758 and is located at the Universities' Central Library Yangon. One of the British Library copies (Or 11775), however, is dated only 11 years later, to 1769. The Dhammavilāsa dhammasat was widely transmitted and produced many significantly different versions, both in prose and verse, not only in Burmese, but also in Arakanese, Mon and Shan.



Fig. 1: An early 18th century copy of the Dhammavilāsa dhammasat, the oldest known dhammasattha composition. British Library, Or 11775, dated 1769.

The British Library holds a rare early **Arakanese dhammasat** manuscript (Add MS 12254) from 1749, which has been fully digitised. Although related to the Dhammavilāsa dhammasat this version represents a distinct Arakanese dhammasattha tradition, prevalent in the area of Sittwe and Chittagong in 18th-19th centuries. This is the oldest extant Arakanese version and the westernmost of dhammasatthas; it is also nine years older than the oldest extant Burmese version of the Dhammavilāsa dhammasat. The text is written with black ink on individual strips of yellow paper (instead of palm leaf or paper folding book).

The Murray Collection, of which it is a part, contains the oldest Arakanese paper manuscripts in the world (dated between 1721-1784). The text is written in “mra mā”, which before the end of the 18th century designated both Arakanese and Burmese languages (that are closely related). Its scribal colophon identifies it as the work of “the excellent teacher and monk Rāmi Shyaṅ.” In Arakan personal names were used instead of monastic titles, which is still tradition in Chittagong today.



Fig. 2: The last folio of a rare Arakanese dhammasattha manuscript with a colophon dating it to 1749. British Library, Add MS 12254, f.73r. Murray Collection.

The **Mahārājasat**, or “treatise on [legal questions posed by] the great king”, can be understood to have been the second oldest dhammasattha text. It was authored by *Tipiṭakālaṅkāra* (a monk and vinaya scholar, 1578/9-1651/2) and *Kaingza Manurāja* (a lay judge, royal minister and the lord of Kaing village). Although its exact date is in doubt, it was likely written between 1638-1648. The Mahārājasat was a legal responsa, or a

collection of questions and answers (*pucchā-vissajjanā*) on legal topics. The British Library holds two manuscript copies of the Mahārājasat, both dating to the 19th century.

Tipiṭakālaṅkāra and *Kaingza Manurāja* also authored another authoritative dhammasattha composition. The **Manusāra dhammasat**, or Manusāra rhve myañḥ, "golden line Manusāra", was written in 1651-52. Here for the first time the dhammasattha was geographically linked to Myanmar and chronologically to Burmese and Mon kings (Mahasammatā was linked to the first king of Bagan who is related to have composed a Pali abridgement, which was translated into vernacular in Rāmaññadesa, and then used to compile yet another version during the reign of king Bayinnaung, 1551-1581). In other words, the dhammasattha was finally historicised. The origin story was also expanded and revised, and instead of Manu the seer Manusāra transcribed the dhammasattha off the boundary wall of the universe, creating a unique Burmese version of events. Whereas prior to this it seems that dhammasattha were written exclusively in the vernacular, Manusāra was written in Pali poetry (in the *vatta* meter), for the benefit of clarity, durability and easier memorisation. All of the extant manuscript copies of the Manusāra dhammasat, however, also include an elaborate *nissaya* commentary in Burmese, stressing the importance of the vernacular. Some manuscript versions of the text also include a table of contents that aids with organisation and memorisation. The Manusāra dhammasat, furthermore, divided the laws into root laws (*mūla*) and branch laws (*sākhā*), so for example root law no. 14, physical assault, had ten branches or types of assault. Whereas there were only 18 root laws, branch laws were countless (only examples were given, the list was not meant to be comprehensive), and could be divided further into individual laws (*ṭarāḥ*).

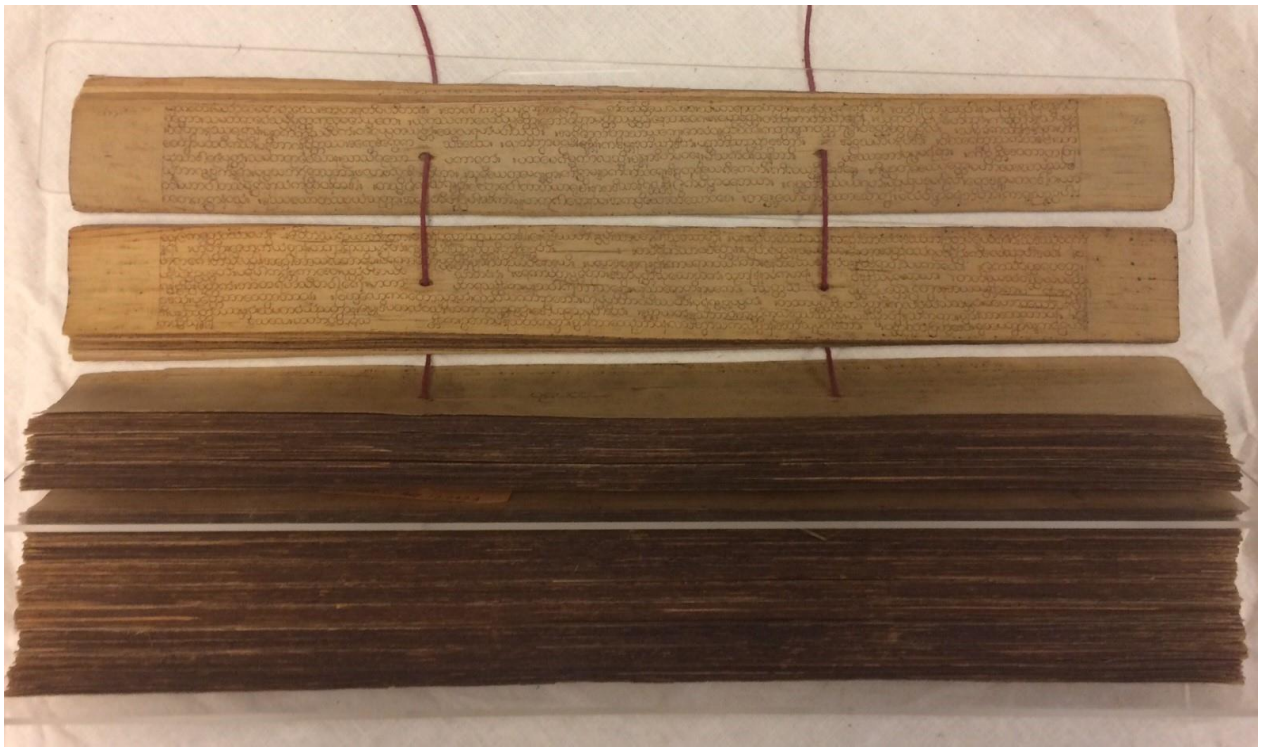


Fig. 3: The beginning of the earliest extant Manusāra dhammasat, written in Pali verse with a Burmese nissaya commentary. British Library, Add MS 12241, dated 1772.

These organisational divisions echo Sanskrit dharmaśāstra texts, and were applied further on in later Burmese and Thai dhammasattha texts. The Manusāra dhammasat is noteworthy for the many reformulations of the dhammasattha tradition it introduced, including a more explicit separation of lay and monastic jurisdictional boundaries. The British Library holds the earliest extant Manusāra dhammasat manuscript (Add MS 12241), copied in 1773. It is one of only four manuscript copies that include the Pali verse in addition to the Burmese nissaya.

The **Vinicchayarāsī**, or "collection of judgements", was completed in 1768 and written in mixed Burmese prose and verse with added Pali and nissaya passages. In one manuscript copy the authorship is attributed to the monk *Khemācāra*. Instead of the traditional origin story this version started with lengthy citations from authoritative Buddhist commentaries, and then went on to reference various Jātaka stories, coming back to the Buddha as the final authority on law. It subsequently related a much changed history of the dhammasattha, where Manu and Mahāsammata were simply different names of a ruler who requested his judges to draw up a legislation that was transmitted through the royal lineage and rewritten many times over time. In other words, the dhammasattha was in this version no longer cosmically derived, but manmade, and included a historical bibliography of dhammasattha texts. The Vinicchayarāsī also saw the dhammasattha as the vinaya of the laity, thus making a clear separation between monastic and lay law. *Khemacārā* took a critical approach and encouraged the study of the extent to which the dhammasattha accorded with the teachings of the Buddha. The British Library holds one copy of the Vinicchayarāsī, dating from the late 19th century.



Fig. 4: The cover of a revised Manusāra by Vaṇṇadhamma Kyaw Htin, with painted wooden binding board. British Library, Or 16639, dated 1793.

The writings of *Vaṇṇadhamma Kyaw Htin* were highly influential and popular, and were circulated widely during the late 18th and 19th centuries. As consequence, they are also well represented in libraries. *Vaṇṇadhamma Kyaw Htin* was a royal tutor of the crown prince during the reign of Hsinbyushin (1763-76), and a disciple of the famous monks Tejosāra and Candapañña. He wrote three different dhammasattha compositions. The earliest of them was a **revised Manusāra** (also known as Manusāra rhve myañḥ, similar to the earlier Manusāra version**)**, written in 1769. Its purpose was to be a purification or revision of the Manusāra, that was by this time perceived to have become corrupted. The

Vaṇṇadhamma Manusāra circulated both in Pali and Burmese *nissaya* versions. The British Library holds two manuscript copies of the Pali version, one of them from the late 18th century (Or 16639).

The second of *Vaṇṇadhamma Kyaw Htin*'s dhammasattha versions was the **Vinicchayapakāsanī**. It was composed in 1771, and also existed as Pali and Burmese versions. It was a reworking of the Mahārājasat, although it also included considerable amount of material from elsewhere. In this version *Vaṇṇadhamma Kyaw Htin* found discrepancies with the dhammasattha and Buddhist teachings, and went on to purify or revise the dhammasattha, so that it would be in better accordance with the *piṭakat*. He furthermore provided a list of existing dhammasattha versions, admitting that most of them were produced by men (connected with particular kings). The British Library holds one Vinicchayapakāsanī manuscript, dating to the late 19th century.

The longest of *Vaṇṇadhamma Kyaw Htin*'s dhammasattha compositions was the **Manuvaṇṇanā**, authored in 1772. The Manuvaṇṇanā was a commentary on multiple earlier dhammasattha treatises, and survives today in Pali and Burmese nissaya. In the Manuvaṇṇanā *Vaṇṇadhamma Kyaw Htin* explicitly continued in more detail his "purification" of the dhammasattha. The British Library holds three copies of the Manuvaṇṇanā, all dating to the 19th century. All three, Manusāra dhammasat, Vinicchayapakāsanī and Manuvaṇṇanā, were published by Tet To under the British colonial administration in the late 1870s.

During the Konbaung era in 1770 *Hsonda Nandamāla* (c. 1718-1784) composed the **Manu raṅḥ**, or "original Manu" dhammasat (to be distinguished from Mahābuddhaṅkura's Manu raṅḥ, written between 1733-1752). Nandamāla traced tipiṭaka-derived precedents for many of the dhammasattha laws, and wrote his work in Pali, again for the purposes of clarity, durability and easier memorisation, claiming perfect literalness. He also strongly warned against any miscopying of the text in his introduction: *"May future scribes who copy the text write carefully and not mutilate a single letter or verse! Let only scribes who understand the [Pali] letters and verses copy the text! For there is no merit in compiling a text in Pali if the letters are ruined. So don't mutilate the text! If young scribes who don't understand [the meaning] copy the text, then after a time the letters will be ruined. Scribes who have the requisite skills should take care and do the copying!"* (trans. Lammerts 2018, 93) The British Library holds one a portion of a Nandamāla Manu raṅḥ, dated to the 19th century.

The **Manu kyay**, or "extended Manu", was an anonymous compendium of laws derived from the dhammasattha tradition and compiled sometime prior to 1782. It has inhabited a prominent place in Burmese legal studies, primarily due to Richardson's 1847 translation. However, Lammerts has shown that it in fact was not widely circulated at its time, and only became referred to as authoritative in scholarship since the 1880s. The British Library holds four manuscript copies of the Manu kyay, including the second oldest extant copy (Mss Man/Bur 3429), dated to 1789. Two other Manu kyay manuscripts that come from the Phayre collection and were written on black paper (instead of palm leaf)

were embellished with very beautiful embossed golden covers (Or 3447 A, Or 3447 B). These two manuscripts are also fully digitised.

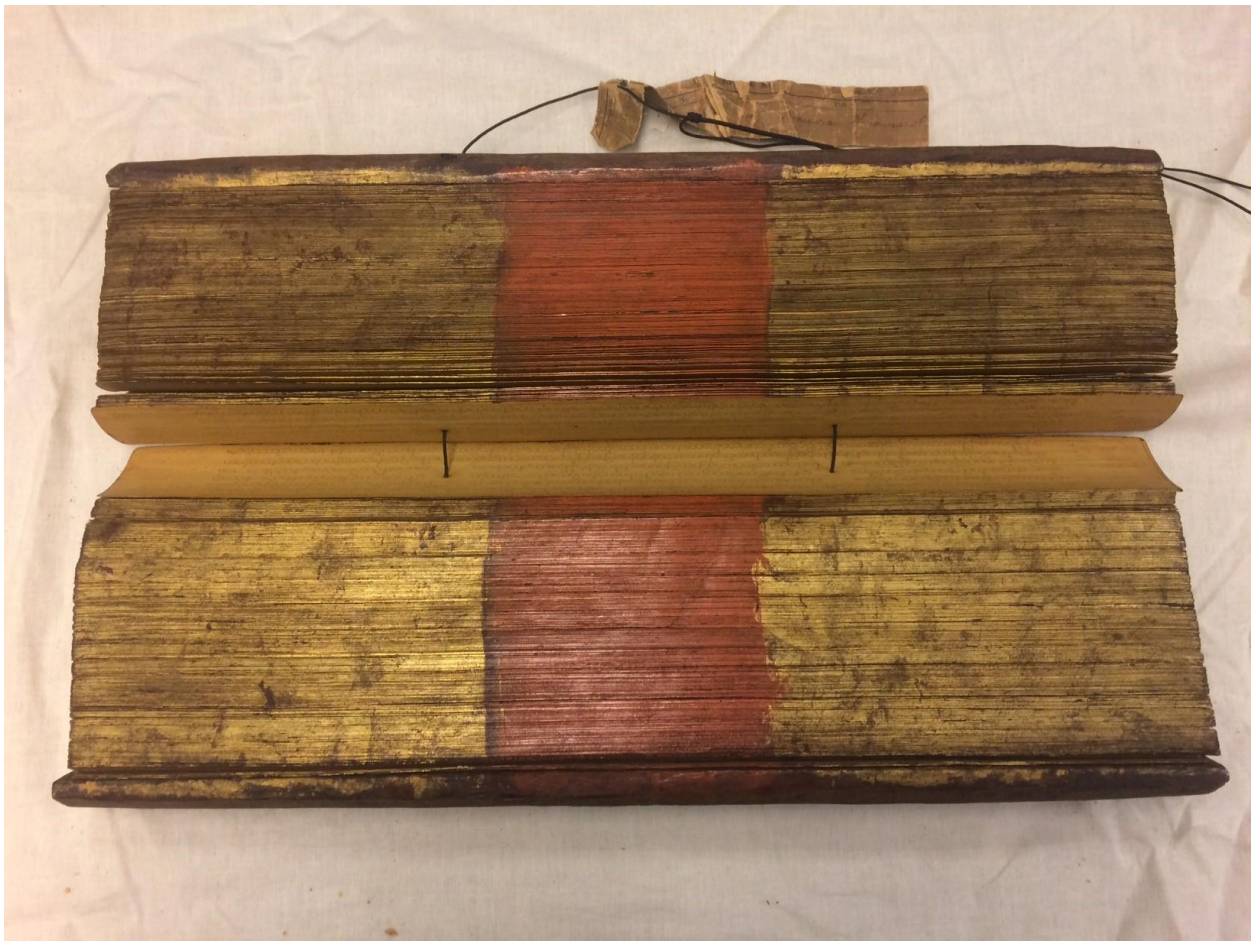


Fig. 5: The second oldest extant copy of the Many kyay dhammasat, an abridged compendium of pre-existing versions. British Library, Mss Man/Bur 3429, dated 1789.



Fig. 6: Silvered, gilded and embossed back cover of a dhammasattha manuscript, decorated with cranes in various poses. British Library, Or 3774 B. Manu kyay dhammasat, 19th century. Phayre Collection.

The **Dhammasat atui kok** or "dhammasat digest" was composed by the poet, judge and royal minister *Letwe Sundara* in ca. 1791. It was based on the Manuvaṇṇanā and Mahārājasat dhammasatthas. Instead of commencing with the origin story *Letwe Sundara* started the work with a long list of dhammasattha titles, further historicising it and placing it within the wider geographical area of Myanmar. Most of the versions on the list were connected to a particular reign, thus further intertwining the dhammasattha with kingship and royalty. The bibliography interestingly also included the number of manuscript fascicles. The British Library holds one manuscript copy of *Letwe Sundara's* Dhammasat atui kok, dating from the mid 19th century.

Many **Dhammasat digests**, or texts that were composed of extracts, comparisons and lists of various laws taken from different treatises, were written after this time. They circulated under different titles, such as phrat thuṃḥ, phrat cā, atui kok, kok khyak, etc. Some of them focused on specific laws, such as inheritance law or divorce law. Four digests whose authorship is presently unknown exist in the British Library's Burmese Collection. Three of them date to the 19th century, one (Mss Man/Bur 3472: "Dhammasat' phrat' thuṃ") to the late 18th century.



Fig. 7: Dhammasat digests became popular from the late 18th century onwards. The opening folio of "Dhammasatʿ phratʿ thuṃ", a digest on divorce law. British Library, Mss Man/Bur 3472, dated 1784.

Aṭṭasaṃkhip dhammasat laṅkā, of which the British Library holds one copy, was one of the late dhammasattha versions, written in 1868 by *Kinwun Mingyi U Kaung*. It was published in 1881 under the title "*'Aḍḍa saṃ khip' dhamma sat' / Lay' kuiṅ'" mrui' cā" se nat' vanʿ krī""* and can be found in the British Library's printed collection.

Other dhammasattha versions that require further research are: the **Manuvaṇṇanā pyui**, conventionally attributed to the monk *Ñāṇasaddhamma* who allegedly authored it in 1759, however this is seriously in doubt; **Rhve nāḥ tau svaṅḥ dhammasat laṅkā**, a common text composed according to the tradition by monk *Kavisāra* in 1766; **Rājabala dhammasat**, a major treatise with few extant copies that exists both in Pali and Burmese nissaya, compiled by *Rājabala Kyaw Htin* in 1780; **Pakiṇṇaka dhammasat laṅkā**, that has many variants, some of which attribute the work to *Jeyya Pyaṃ Khyī* in 1817. The British Library holds one copy of Manuvaṇṇanā pyui, three copies of Rhve nāḥ tau svaṅḥ dhammasat laṅkā, including one from the late 18th century (Or 4784), two copies of the Rājabala dhammasat, both from the late 19th century, and one copy of Pakiṇṇaka dhammasat laṅkā, dated to the 19th century.

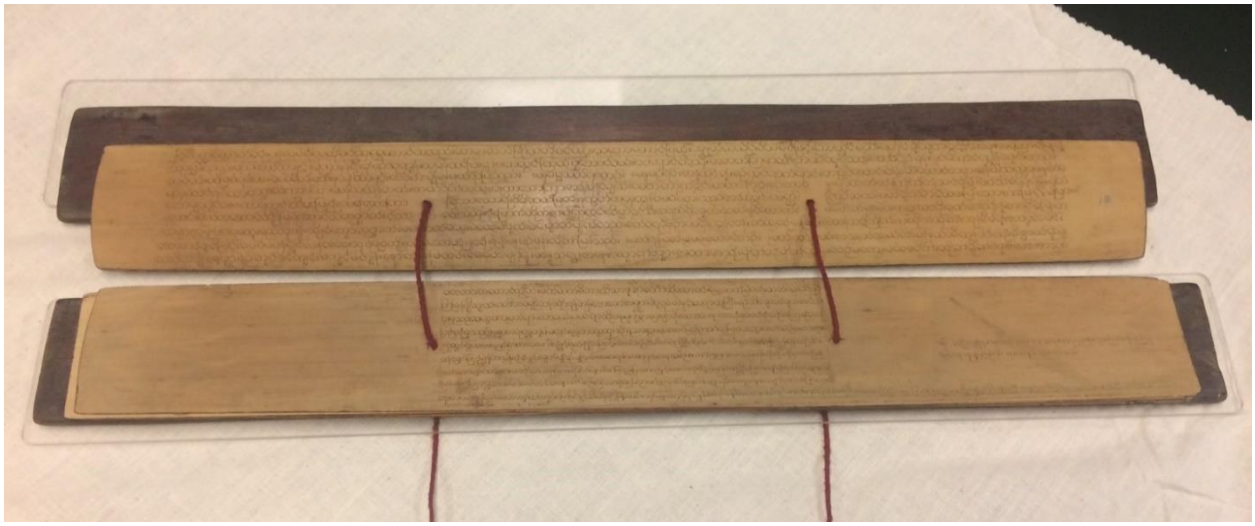


Fig. 8: The last folio of Rhve nāḥ tau svaṅḥ dhammasat laṅkā, one of the dhammassatthas that merit further research. British Library, Or 4784, dated 1782.

This has been an overview of the dhammasattha manuscripts found in the Burmese Collection of the British Library. Many more dhammasattha versions exist, not only in Burmese, but also in Mon and Shan.

Further dhammasattha manuscripts associated with the British Library can be found in the Fragile Palm Leaves Collection, also catalogued on Explore Archives & Manuscripts, and discussed in Lammerts' "Buddhist Law in Burma".

I would like to thank Christian Lammerts for his inspiring research, generous help in identifying the manuscript versions, for his comments and his overall expert advice. This article uses extensively Lammerts' "Buddhist Law in Burma: A History of Dhammasattha Texts and Jurisprudence, 1250-1850" (2018) and "The Murray Manuscripts and Buddhist Dhammasattha Literature Transmitted in Chittagong in Arakan" (2015), in which he discusses at length the dhammasattha manuscripts found at the British Library.

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Tet To [Tak tuiḥ], Maung (Moṅ): *The Manoo Thara Shwe Myeen Dhamma-that, or the Golden Rule of Manoo Thara according to Wonna Dhamma Kyaw-Deng.* Rangoon, 1879

Tet To [Tak tuiḥ], Maung (Moṅ): *The Wini-tshaya Paka-thani Dhammathat, or Judgments Explained, by Wonna Dhamma Kyaw-Deng.* Rangoon, c. 1879

Richardson, D. (trans.): *The Damathat, or the Laws of Menoo.* Maulmain, 1847

List of Burmese dhammasattha manuscripts at the British Library

Dhammavilāsa dhammasat

- Or 11775, "Dhammavilāsa", 1769, palm leaf [gift from Brig. J.A. Sinton, 1945]
- Add MS 12249, "Dhammasat' kyo'", 1825, palm leaf [purchased of Mr. Rodd, 1842]
- Add MS 12248, "Dhammasat'", 19th century, palm leaf [purchased of Mr. Rodd, 1842]

Arakanese Manu dhammasat (Dhammavilāsa)

- Add MS 12254, "Dhammasat", 1749, yellow paper [Murray collection, purchased of Mr. Rodd, 1842]

Mahārājasat

- Mss Man/Bur 3516, "Mahā rājasat'", 1823, palm leaf [Mandalay mss, 1886]
- Or 16744, "Mahā rājasat'", 19th century, palm leaf [found in department, 2010]

Manusāra dhammasat (*Tipiṭakālaṅkāra and Kaingza, 1651-2)*

- Add MS 12241, “Manusāra e* kuiṅ’” cā" rhve myañ"’ dhammasat’", 1772, palm leaf [purchased of Mr. Rodd, 1842]

Vinicchayarāsī dhammasat

- Or 6456 B, “Vinicchaya rāsī”, 1867, palm leaf [Col. Eyre Collection, presented 1902]

Manusāra dhammasat (*Vaṇṇadhamma, 1769)*

- Or 16639, “Manusāra dhammasatʿ”, 1793, palm leaf [found in department (IOL), 2009]

- Or 16318, “Manussaya rhve myañ`" pathʿ”, 1897, palm leaf [Universities’ Central Library Rangoon, donated 1982]

Vinicchayapakāsanī

- Mss Man/Bur 671, “Vinicchayya pakāsanī kyamʿ"”, 1878, palm leaf [Mandalay mss, 1886]

Manuvaṇṇanā dhammasat

- Or 14052, “Manuvaṇṇanā dhammasatʿ”, 1854, palm leaf [bought from Mr. T. Crawford, 1981]

- Or 16018, “Manu vaṇnanā”, 1864, palm leaf [Universities’ Central Library Rangoon, donated 1982]

- Mss Man/Bur 569, “Manu vaṇṇanā”, 19th century, palm leaf [Mandalay mss, 1886]

Manu raṅḥ dhammasat *(Nandamāla, 1770)*

- Or 5048, portion of “Manu raṅʿ' dhammasat”, 19th century, palm leaf [bought of Mr A.G.L. Rost, 1896]

Manu kyay

- Mss Man/Bur 3429, “Manu raṅʿ' dhammasatʿ”, 1789, palm leaf [Mandalay mss, 1886]

- Mss Man/Bur 570, “Manu ʾa kyayʿ”, 1862, palm leaf [Mandalay mss, 1886]

- Or 3447 A, “Manu mano dhamma vilasa rvhe myaññʿ"”, 19th century, paper folding book (black), [Phayre collection, acquired 1886]

- Or 3447 B, “Manu ʾa kyayʿ”, 19th century, paper folding book (black) [Phayre collection, acquired 1886]

Dhammasat atui kok *(Letwe Sundara, c. 1791)*

- Add MS 27458, “Manusāra dhammasat’”, mid-19th century, palm leaf [presented by Capt. Alexander G. Duff, 1866]

Dhammasat digests

- Mss Man/Bur 3472, “Dhammasatʿ phratʿ thuṃ"”, on divorce law, 1784, palm leaf [Mandalay mss, 1886]

- Or 15787, “Manu dhammasatʿ ʾa mve khanʿ"”, on inheritance law, 19th century, palm leaf [found in department, 2002]

- Or 16025, “[Law book]”, 19th century, paper folding book (black) [found in department, 2004]

- Or 16026, “Dhammasatʿ ʾa tui kokʿ”, 19th century, paper folding book (black) [found in department, 2004]

Aṭṭasaṃkhip dhammasat laṅkā

- Mss Man/Bur 900, “ʾAṭha saṃkhipʿ dhammasatʿ laṅkā”, 19th century, palm leaf [Mandalay mss, 1886]

Manuvaṇṇanā pyui

- Mss Man/Bur 3472, “Manuvaṇṇanā pyui”, 19th century, palm leaf [Mandalay mss, 1886]

Rhve nāḥ tau svaṅḥ dhammasat laṅkā

- Or 4784, “Manu raṅʿ' lankā”, 1782, palm leaf [presented by Sir W. Franks, 1894]

- Or 2789, “Dhammasat”, early 19th century, palm leaf [bought of A. H. Johnstone, 1884]

- Mss Man/Bur 1040, “Manu dhammasatʿ”, 1834, palm leaf [Mandalay mss, 1886]

Rājabala dhammasat

- Or 6452 A, “Rājabala dhammasatʿ”, 1878, palm leaf [Col. Eyre Collection, presented 1902]

- Mss Man/Bur 671, “Rājabala dhammasatʿ”, 1878, palm leaf [Mandalay mss, 1886]

Pakiṇṇaka dhammasat laṅkā

- Mss Man/Bur 573, "Kanˇ toˇ maṅˇ" kyoṅˇ" pakiṇṇaka dhammasatˇ", 19th century, palm leaf [Mandalay mss, 1886]

Manu raṅḥ laṅkā

- Mss Man/Bur 3472, "Manu dhammasatˇ laṅkā pyui'", 19th century, palm leaf [Mandalay mss, 1886]

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Illustrated Yogāvacara meditation manuals from Thailand and Laos

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Introduction

Yogāvacara meditation practices were an integral part of Theravāda Buddhism in Southeast Asia until monastic reforms of the 19th and early 20th centuries discouraged some of these practices. Yogāvacara manuals incorporate teachings from canonical as well as post-canonical literature: for example, the Navasivathikapabbaṃ (Nine charnel-ground observations) of the Mahāsatipaṭṭhānasutta and Buddhaghoṣa*'s* explanation in the Visuddhimagga on meditation on the foul, as well as contemplation of core Buddhist teachings like Dependent Origination, Four Attachments, Three Marks of Existence, contemplation of the decaying corpse, the fruits of entering the stream, *saṃsāra* and *nibbāna, kasiṇa* meditation, Ten Forms of Knowledge etc. Although this article focuses on a fragmented example from 18th-century Ayutthaya (central Thailand), it also introduces two 19th-century manuscripts from the southern Thai and Lao Buddhist traditions which give insight into Yogāvacara meditation practices, and how Yogāvacara manuals evolved in mainland Southeast Asia.

An extensive Yogāvacara text that was examined by the British Pali scholar Thomas W. Rhys Davids consisted of 141 palm leaves, with incised bi-text in Pali and Sinhalese languages in Sinhalese script. Rhys Davids' Romanised version was published in 1896 by the Pali Text Society. His wife Caroline Rhys Davids (née Foley) stated in the foreword to the English translation by Frank L. Woodward (1916) that this version was a poor copy of another, older manuscript from the mid-18th century which was found in 1893 at Bambara-galla Wihārē in Teldeniya in central Sri Lanka. The copy, dated 1893, was commissioned by Colombo-based barrister D. B. Jayatilaka who sent it to Rhys Davids via Anagarika H. Dharmapala. Rhys Davids coined the title "Yogāvacara manual" since neither the original manuscript nor the copy had a title, and it also could not be identified

as a canonical text, but the content focused primarily on instructions for a person called Yogāvacara. The word Yogāvacara in this context refers to an “aspirant whose sphere, whose constant resort, is yoga” and yoga is “diligence, devotion, mental concentration”. Rhys Davids described the practices laid down in this manual as “ethical self-training” that consists of 112 different states of the mind.

According to Caroline Rhys Davids, the Pali-Sinhalese version is more likely a copy of - or strongly influenced by - an older version brought to Sri Lanka from Ayutthaya at the time the Siam Nikāya was established (around 1753) in order to revive the Buddhist tradition there (in: F. L. Woodward 1916, p. vii). This version contains a mixture of text passages from the Sutta-piṭaka, Abhidhamma-piṭaka, Buddhaghosa’s Visuddhimagga, meditation exercises and graphic-descriptive explanations of the Pali text in Sinhalese language, namely texts on Five Kinds of Happiness (*pīti*), Six Pairs of Adaptabilities (*cha yugalāni*), Four Forms of Bliss (*kaya-sukha, citta-sukha, buddhānussati, upacāra-samādhi*), Self-possession associated with Five Jhāna (*ānapāna-sati*), Ten Predominant *Ideas (kasiṇa*), Ten Impurities (*asubha*), Thirty-two Parts of the Body, Ten Memories (*anussati*), Four Formless Planes of Being *(arūpāvacara*), Four Excellent Conditions (*brahma-vihāra*), Tenfold Knowledge (*ñāṇa*), Nine Transcendent Qualities (*lokuttarā dhammā*).

Caroline Rhys Davids pointed out that in Sri Lanka, the last monk who was known to have been initiated in Yogāvacara practices was Doratiyāveye Thera, who lived around 1900. However, according to the account of Mr G. Sagāris de Silva from Mahinda College, Galle, this monk did not actually practice these meditations himself but was content enough to initiate a chosen pupil of his, “who went mad and died, which would probably happen unless the *guru* himself were fully versed in the methods, and able to see clairvoyantly exactly what effect each meditation was having on his pupil” (ibid, p. xix).

The uncertainties regarding the effects on the practitioner’s mental health are probably the reason for exclusive transmission of Yogāvacara practices from teacher to disciple and the necessity of supervision and monitoring of the disciple’s wellbeing. Hence manuals used in the process of transmission of knowledge and exercises for spiritual attainment as well as Yogāvacara meditation practices were in all likelihood passed exclusively from teacher to disciple.

Some of the meditations described in the Pali-Sinhalese manuscript are still practised in Southeast Asia today, often referred to as *borān kammaṭṭhāna,* but others had been lost due to 19th and early 20th-century reforms. Research on *borān kammaṭṭhāna* practices and text associated with them has been carried out by Bernon (2002) who linked a 20th-century published transcript of an extinct 17th-century Thai (Ayutthaya) manuscript to the Pali-Sinhalese version, furthermore Crosby (2000, 2019, 2020), Crosby, Skilton and Gunasena (2012), McDaniel (2012), Skilton and Choompolpaisal (2014, 2016), Skilton (2019), Choompolpaisal (2019, 2021).

In the course of the 20th century, the title *Pritsana Tham* (Dhamma puzzles) emerged in Thai researches of Yogāvacara manuals (H. Woodward, 2021), which were also

transliterated into modern Thai and partially translated and explained in Western languages, for example by Buddhadasa Bhikkhu (1968 English, 1969 German).

A Yogāvacara manuscript fragment at the British Library

A lavishly illustrated manuscript fragment consisting of three complete and two half folios with mainly Thai text and some Pali phrases in Khom script (a Thai variant of Khmer script) is held in the Thai, Lao and Cambodian collection at the British Library (Or 14447). It has been fully digitised and is available online. Short text passages written in black ink next to the illustrations contain instructions for the person called Yogāvacara (spelled *yogābacara* in the manuscript). The back side has no illustrations, but there is text in Thai language written in Thai script. The manuscript was purchased from Hentell Ltd Hong Kong in 1989, but unfortunately nothing else is known about its provenance.

The fragment is in the format of a paper folding book (*samut khoi*) in portrait orientation, which in the Thai manuscript tradition is mostly only used for divination manuals (*phrommachāt*), or occasionally for medical treatises, *yantra* manuals or poetry books (*konlabot*). Folding books containing Buddhist texts are usually in landscape orientation which is consistent with the format of the more widespread palm leaf manuscripts.



Complete view of the illustrated (front) side of the Yogāvacara manual at the British Library, Or 14447

The illustrations relate to Yogāvacara meditation or insight methods belonging to the Ten Forms of Knowledge detailed in the chapter “Vipassanā-ñāṇa” in the Pali-Sinhalese manuscript that Rhys Davids transliterated (translated into English by F. L. Woodward 1916, pp. 129-139). These Ten Forms of Knowledge are also mentioned in the Abhidhammattha-saṅgaha, a Pali text attributed to Ācāriya Anuruddha who is thought to have lived between the 8th to 12th century (translated by Bhikkhu Bodhi, 2000, pp. 346-7), but without detailed explanations in that source. In its essence the content is based on Buddhaghoṣa's Visuddhimagga (translated into English from Pali by Ñāñamoli, 4th ed. 2010), which mentions only Eight Forms of Knowledge, but elaborates in great detail on graphic descriptions associated with them.

The Ten Forms of Knowledge, according to Rhys David's transliteration of the Pali-Sinhalese version and the subsequent translation by F. L. Woodward, and in brackets according to the translation of the Abhidhammattha-saṅgaha, are the following:

1) Knowledge of calm and insight (comprehension) – *sammathadassana-ñāṇa (sammanañāṇaṃ)*
2) Knowledge of rise and fall (rise and fall of formations) – *udayavyayādassana-ñāṇa (udayabbayañāṇaṃ)*
3) Knowledge of disruption (dissolution of formations) - *bhangānudassana-ñāṇa (bhangañāṇaṃ)*
4) Knowledge of what is to be feared (dissolving things as fearful) - *bhayatupaṭṭhāna-dassana- ñāṇa (bhayañāṇaṃ)*
5) Knowledge of evil (fearful things as dangerous) - *ādīnavanudassana- ñāṇa (ādīnavañāṇaṃ)*
6) Knowledge of disgust (disenchantment with all formations) – *nibbidānu-dassana-ñāṇa (nibbidāñāṇaṃ)*
7) Knowledge of desire for freedom (desire for deliverance) - *muccitukamyatādassana-ñāṇa (muñcitukamyatāñāṇaṃ)*
8) Knowledge of reflection (reflecting contemplation) - *paṭisaṅkhānupassanā-ñāṇa (paṭisaṅkhāñāṇaṃ)*
9) Knowledge of indifference towards all conditioned formations (equanimity towards formations) - *saṅkhārupekkhānupassanā-ñāṇa (saṅkhārupekkhā-ñāṇaṃ)*
10) Knowledge of contemplation of adaptation (conformity) – *anulomanu-passanā-ñāṇa (anulomañāṇañcāti-dasa-vipassanāñāṇāni)*

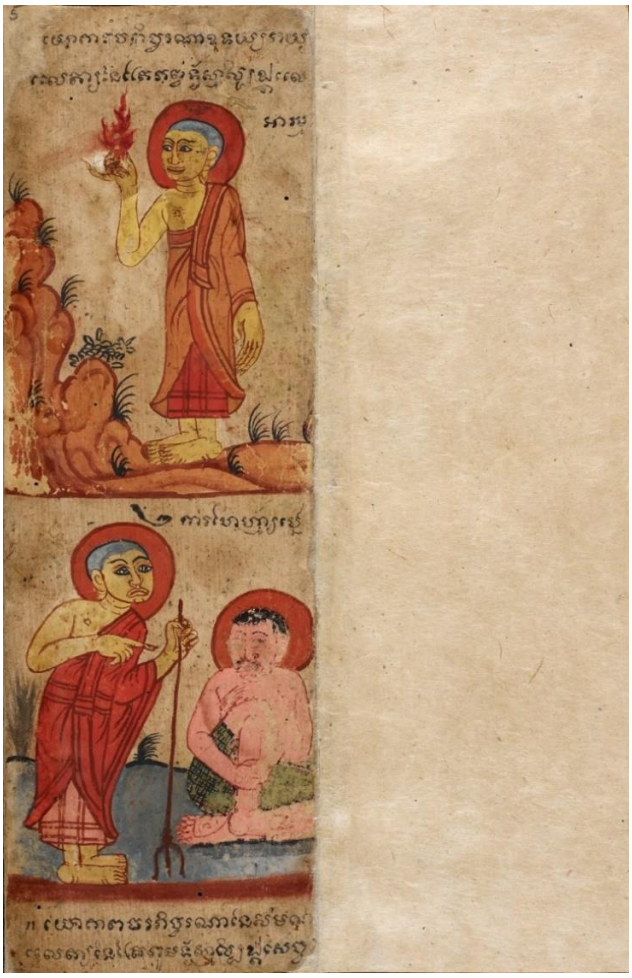
The water-colour illustrations accompanying the Ten Forms of Knowledge in this manuscript are in the Ayutthaya painting style with a strong Mon influence of the late 17th or early 18th century. Irving Chan Johnson (National University of Singapore) pointed out that the colour scheme with minimal use of gold and liberal use of orange, the execution of mountains and rocky outcrops in the "Chinese" style with a light watery wash, the use of the *Krajang Pattiyan* (*krajang hu*) pattern, and the depiction of a round halo around the monk's head distinguish the painting style as Ayutthayan of the late 17th to early 18th century. However, he also emphasised that the style is not 100% Thai/Siamese of the Ayutthaya period due to features that are often found in Mon/Shan/Burmese inspired paintings like the rough, voluminous tail of the *haṃsa* bird, depiction of the monk side view, the flow of the monk's outer robe, and the monk's *krot*, an umbrella used by forest monks (personal communication, 11.6.2021). It is possible that the artist was Mon, or the manuscript was produced in a local Mon community in the Ayutthaya Kingdom.

If we assume that the order of the paintings illustrating the Ten Forms of Knowledge is consistent with the order in the Pali text sources, this manuscript must be viewed from right to left, meaning the folio on the right side is the first, then moving on towards the left. The manuscript had previously been foliated with pencil starting with "1" on the left side

(top left corner), as one would usually read a Thai folding book in portrait orientation. However, the foliation is incorrect. This happened as a result of the contents of this manuscript fragment not having been identified safely as a Yogāvacara manual until recently. The fact that this is just a small fragment of a potentially much larger manuscript, with some of the illustrations in poor condition and some text passages illegible made it difficult to indentify the content.

Below we will take a closer look at each surviving illustrated folio, or half-folio, of this manuscript fragment, beginning on the right side.

Folio 1 (right side, incomplete)



Yogāvacara manual, British Library, Or 14447 f.1 [wrongly foliated "5"]

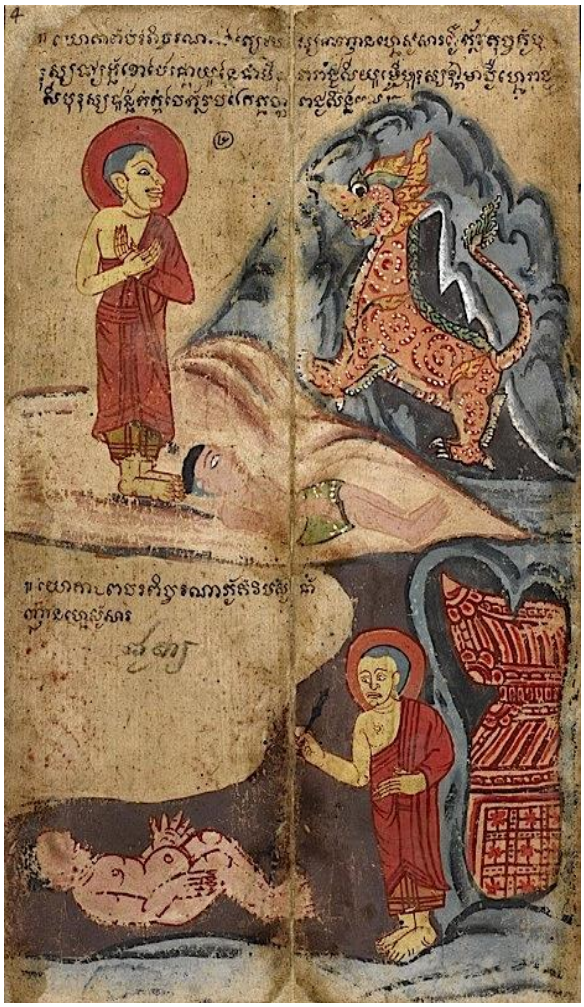
The illustrations on the first folio, of which only one half survives, appear to relate to the first two Forms of Knowledge: Knowledge of calm and insight (*sammathadassana-ñāṇa)* and Knowledge of rise and fall (*udayavyayādassana-ñāṇa*).

Knowledge of calm and insight is represented in the lower half, with incomplete text. Depicted is a monk with red halo, holding a staff in his left hand and pointing with his right hand towards a man, also with red halo, who is sitting on the floor leisurely. While the Thai-Pali text on this folio seems incomplete, the translation of the Pali-Sinhalese text gives this information: "Thus meditating, keen and alert in mind, with Nibbāna for his goal,

the element of extension appears to him. Well observing its three thought-forms, let him place them first in the heart and then in the navel." (F. L. Woodward, 1916, p. 129).

At the top is the illustration related to Knowledge of rise and fall, also with incomplete Thai-Pali text. A monk, with red halo, is seen holding a flame with his right hand. The translated Pali-Sinhalese source reads as follows: "Thus meditating, with Nibbāna for his goal, the element of heat appears before him. Well observing its three thought-forms, let him place them in the navel". (F. L. Woodward, 1916, p. 130)

Folio 2 (second right)



Yogāvacara manual, British Library, Or 14447 f.2 [wrongly foliated "4"]

The illustrations on this folio represent Knowledge of disruption (*bhangānudassana-ñāṇa*) and Knowledge of what is to be feared (*bhayatupaṭṭhāna-dassana-ñāṇa*).

Below one can see a monk, with red halo, facing a corpse by the riverside. In his right hand the monk has a staff with which he is touching the corpse, which in practice is done to extend merit to the dead. This illustration represents the Knowledge of disruption. The translated Pali-Sinhalese text source provides the following explanation: "Just as a clear-sighted man, standing on a river's bank or beside a tank and seeing the heavy rain pouring down, thus concludes: The bubbles rise and burst immediately, so also the Yogi

concludes that all complexes in like manner are broken up." (F. L. Woodward, 1916, p. 130). A similar scene is described in Ñāñamoli's translation of the Visuddhimagga, but there it is the second Form of Knowledge (Ñāñamoli, 2010, p. 673).

The illustration at the top represents Knowledge of what is to be feared (*bhayatupaṭṭhāna-dassana-ñāṇa*). A monk, with red halo, holds his hands crossed in front of his chest, which in Thai iconography is also the gesture of the Contemplation Buddha. He is facing a corpse and a lion that is emerging from a cave. Trent Walker kindly provided a translation of the Thai-Pali text caption of the illustration at the top: "The meditator [yogābacara] contemplating the *bhaiyavipasanāñāṇa* sees *saṃsāra* as scary, just like a man who goes to rest in a cave where a *rājasīha* [mythical lion] resides. When the man leaves, he sees the *rājasīha* and is very scared and seeks to escape the *rājasīha*." The translation of the Pali text source says: "…to him who gives himself to meditation, seeing the fearfulness of all conditioned things, all aggregates in every world, every sort of existence, every seat of consciousness and every abode of beings seems a source of fear, just like lions, tigers and devils to a coward who desires a happy life." (F. L. Woodward, 1916, p. 131)

Folio 3 (centre)



Yogāvacara manual, British Library, Or 14447 fol. 3

At the centre of the fragment of this manuscript (foliated "3") two illustrations relate to the Knowledge of evil (*ādīnavanudassana-ñāṇa*) and the Knowledge of disgust (*nibbidānudassana-ñāṇa*).

The image in the lower half, related to Knowledge of evil, depicts a monk with red halo, pointing with his right hand towards a burning house. The structure of the house, seen in the Thai cultural context, appears like a “pulpit” (elevated pedestal from which monks deliver sermons) that is on fire, but one needs to remember that the painter may not have been Thai and the structure is symbolic for a house. The Thai-Pali text, translated by Trent Walker, reads: “The meditator [yogābacara] contemplating the *ādinaviñāṇa* sees *saṃsāra* and flees, just like [someone in] a burning house seeks to escape the house." The translated Pali text source states that “…a Yogi realises the evil nature of all conditions; to him all aggregates appear like a forest haunted by dangerous wild beasts; like lions, tigers and so forth… or like a blazing house.” (F. L. Woodward, 1916, p. 131)

At the top another illustration shows the monk with red halo pointing towards a bird, behind him the monk’s alms bowl, umbrella and water vessel. It represents the Knowledge of disgust, and the Thai-Pali caption above the illustration, translated by Trent Walker, says "The meditator [yogābacara] contemplating the *nibhidāyañāṇa* sees *saṃsāra* and is very disgusted by it, just like a royal swan that was formerly in a clean forest but one day flies and ends up in a village of [evil-doers?]… the royal swan is disgusted and seeks to escape from there." The Pali text source reveals the following: “Just as a golden swan, living in a fair pool neigh Splendid Spur [peak of the Himalaya], is loath to dwell in the filthy, muddy pit of the outcast, so also the Yogi is altogether disgusted with the world and all conditioned things.” (F. L. Woodward, 1916, p. 132)

Folio 4 (second left)



Yogāvacara manual, British Library, Or 14447 f.4 [wrongly foliated “2”]

The illustrations on this folio represent Knowledge of desire for freedom (*muccitukamyatādassana-ñāṇa*) and Knowledge of reflection (*paṭisaṅkhānupassanā-ñāṇa*).

Shown in the lower half is a monk with red halo pointing towards Rāhu, the demon swallowing the moon. This illustration relates to the Knowledge of desire for freedom. The Thai-Pali text accompanying the illustration, translated by Trent Walker, reads: "The meditator [yogābacara] contemplating the *muñcitukāmāyañāṇa* seeks to be freed from *saṃsāra*, just like the moon seeks to be freed from Rāhu."

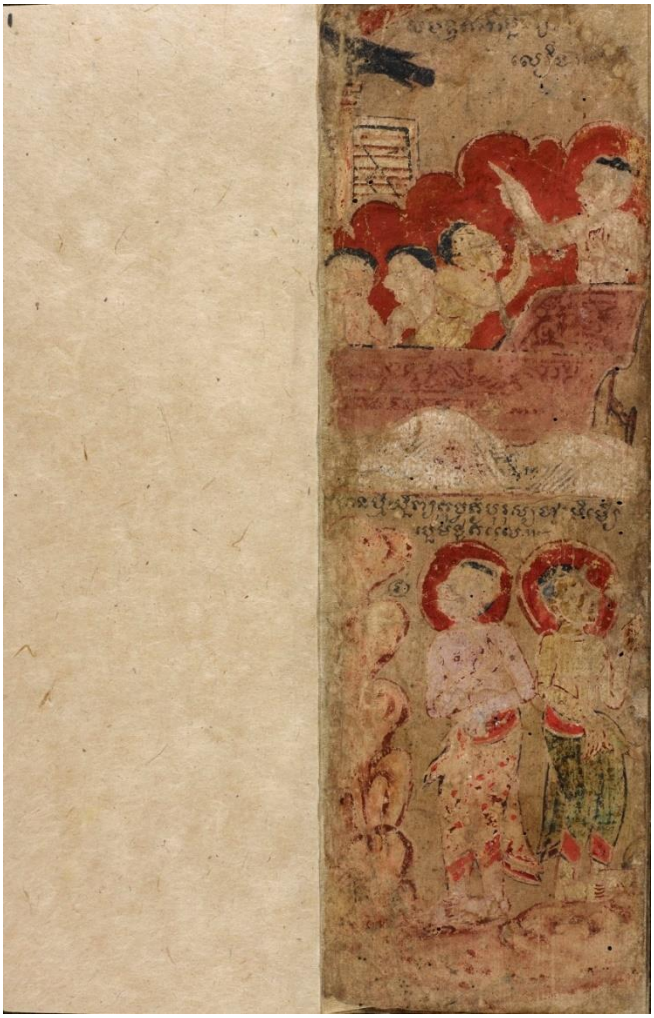
Interestingly, the English translation of the Pali-Sinhalese text omits the portion of text referring to Rahu swallowing the moon (F. L. Woodward, 1916, p. 132), although the original text passage refers to this scene: "… *men da Rāhu mukha gata candrayā*…" (freely transl. "Rāhu swallowing the moon") (Rhys Davids, 1896, p. 96). The Visuddhimagga also mentions the simile of Rāhu swallowing the moon, however, as the sixth Form of Knowledge (Ñāñamoli, 2010, p. 679).

Above one can see a monk with red halo, seated on a rug or cushion under his umbrella, pointing towards a man, also with red halo, who has caught a snake and is putting it into a fishing basket. This illustration relates to the Knowledge of reflection. The Thai-Pali caption of this illustration in the manuscript, translated by Trent Walker, describes the following: "The meditator [yogābacara] contemplating the *paṭi[saṅ]khārañāṇa* has the means of seeking to be freed from *saṃsāra*, just like a man... [illegible] …. a cobra and grasps its neck and seeks to be freed from that snake."

Neither the English translation of the Pali-Sinhalese text nor the original source seem to mention this scene under the Knowledge of reflection; however, in a summary at the end of the section on the Ten Forms of Knowledge the following is stated: "Just as a fisherman, who has waded into the water and with his hand has caught a large snake by the head, thinking it to be a fish, is overjoyed at his good luck; but, on pulling it out of the water and seeing the true marks of the snake thereon, is frightened and realises the danger he incurred by seizing it, and is utterly repelled thereby…" (F. L. Woodward, 1916, p. 134). In the Visuddhimagga, this scene is mentioned as the seventh Form of Knowledge (Ñāñamoli, 2010, p. 680).

Only half of the last folio on the left side of the manuscript fragment survives (shown in the image below), and therefore the illustrations and captions are only partially visible and in very poor condition due to tear and wear. One would assume that the illustrations are related to the Knowledge of indifference towards all conditioned formations and the Knowledge of contemplation of adaptation. The Pali-Sinhalese text source does not provide an explanation for these two Forms of Knowledge that could be related to these illustrations.

Folio 5 (left side, incomplete)



Yogāvacara manual, British Library, Or 14447 f.5 [wrongly foliated "1"]

However, the Visuddhimagga mentions under the eighth Form of Knowledge – Knowledge of equanimity about formations – two scenes that are depicted in the illustrations on this folio: below showing a divorced wife finding a new lover while the former husband remains unaffected or equanimous; and above one can see traders on a ship using a land-finding crow when the ship has gone off course, comparing this scene with the meditator's finding of *nibbāna* through rejecting the occurrence of all formations (Ñāñamoli, 2010, p. 684-5).

To read the Thai text on the back side of this folding book fragment, one must turn the manuscript into landscape orientation. The text is then read in the usual way from top to bottom. The text was written following standards of 19th-century orthography, in a different hand and with different (lighter) ink than the text in Khom script on the front side. The text on the back side appears to have been added later. It provides a list of the five *pīti* (kinds of joy or bliss), the eight cardinal and intermediate directions, as well as meditation instructions on the blue *kasiṇa*.

Regarding the paleography of the text in Khom script accompanying the illustrations, Trent Walker kindly explained that there is a general progression from a more rounded

Khom script in the 18th century to a more upright style in the 19th century called *Khom banchong* (ขอมบรรจง); and the easiest letter to look at is ว, which in the early 18th century and before usually looks very much like modern Khmer វ. However, in the British Library manuscript the ว is in the late 18th century/19th century style, though relatively rounded, but not as rounded or as 'vertically squished' as Ayutthaya-era script (personal communication, 1.7.2021).

From what we have found out about this manuscript so far, two main questions arise:

1) Why is the manuscript to be viewed or read from the right side to the left?
2) What may be the reason(s) for the discrepancy between the dating of this manuscript according to the painting style (late 17th to early 18th century) and the dating according to the paleography (late 18th century)?

In search for answers, it may be useful to have a look at similar manuscripts found in other collections, namely the Luang Prabang Provincial Museum and the Crow Museum of Asian Art in Dallas.

A Lao Yogāvacara manuscript at Luang Prabang Provincial Museum

A Yogāvacara manual from the Lao tradition is held at the Luang Prabang Provincial Museum, and it can be viewed online on the Digital Library of Lao Manuscripts (DLLM). This manuscript is in the format of a paper folding book to be read in landscape orientation. It consists of 59 folios, of which 26 contain illustrations in the Lao painting style of the 19th century, with some Thai influence being visible. The Lao-Pali text is written in black ink in Lao Dhamma script. In the DLLM catalogue it is described as "*Nyokhavacala phicalana, sanghom that, phuttha khun, basi pha cao nyam songkan* (ໂຍຄາວະຈະຣະພິຈາຣະນາ, ສັງຮອມທາຕຸ, ພຸທທະຄຸນ, ບາສີພະເຈົ້າຍາມສົງການ)", which means that various texts are included, the first of which is 'Yogāvacara contemplations', followed by a Buddhist chronicle, perfections of the Buddha and a *basi* ritual text for the New Year.

Shown below are three folios, which on the DLLM website are folios 10-12 if read from top to bottom. They represent six of the Ten Forms of Knowledge, two on each folio. The illustrations are similar to those found on the surviving complete folios in the British Library Yogāvacara manual, relating to the following *ñāṇa* if read from bottom to top:

3) Knowledge of disruption (dissolution of formations) - *bhangānudassana-ñāṇa (bhangañāṇaṃ)* – illustration of monk facing a corpse (f.12 left)
4) Knowledge of what is to be feared (dissolving things as fearful) - *bhayatupaṭṭhāna-dassana- ñāṇa (bhayañāṇaṃ)* – illustration of monk with a mythical lion (f. 12 right)
5) Knowledge of evil (fearful things as dangerous) - *ādīnavanudassana-ñāṇa (ādīnavañāṇaṃ)* – illustration of monk facing a burning house (f. 11 left)
6) Knowledge of disgust (disenchantment with all formations) – *nibbidānudassana-ñāṇa (nibbidāñāṇaṃ)* - illustration of a monk facing a bird (f. 11 right)
7) Knowledge of desire for freedom (desire for deliverance) - *muccitukamyatādassana-ñāṇa (muñcitukamyatāñāṇaṃ)* – illustration of monk facing fisherman who caught a snake (f. 10 left)

8) Knowledge of reflection (reflecting contemplation) - *paṭisaṅkhānupassanā-ñāṇa (paṭisaṅkhāñāṇaṃ)* – monk facing Rāhu swallowing the moon (f. 10 right)



Yogāvacara manual, Luang Prabang Provincial Museum, ff. 10 (top) to 12 (bottom)

One important difference is that the monk does not have a red halo like in the British Library manuscript. Towards the end of the 18th century there was a move away from depicting monks with a halo, and in the 19th century this feature takes the shape of a bodhi-leaf-shaped aura and is reserved for the Buddha, a Bodhisatta, gods like Indra (Sakka) and Brahma, deities and occasionally the monk-saint Phra Malai.

The first two Forms of Knowledge are illustrated on the 13th folio (shown below): Knowledge of calm and insight represented by two monks pointing towards a man sitting on the floor; and Knowledge of rise and fall represented by a man sitting on a stool and two monks, one holding a flame and the other holding a fan.



Yogāvacara manual at the Luang Prabang Provincial Museum, f. 13

On the 9th folio (shown below), there are illustrations of the divorced husband unaffected by his former wife with a new lover, and of a trading ship that employs a land-finding crow (although the crow is not depicted), both of which are mentioned in the Visuddhimagga under the eighth Form of Knowledge. In both illustrations the monk is not depicted which makes them different from the other eight illustrations.



Yogāvacara manual, Luang Prabang Provincial Museum, f. 9

The order of the illustrations related to the Ten Forms of Knowledge in this manuscript suggests that it should be read from bottom to top, or what would feel like “backwards” or reverse to the usual way of reading Lao and Thai folding books in landscape orientation, which is from top to bottom. This thought is supported by other illustrations in this manuscript: contemplation of the decaying corpse (Pali: *asubha-kammaṭṭhāna,* also translated as meditation on the foul or charnel-ground observations) from f. 18 to f. 14 (viewed “backwards”), and object-oriented meditation (Pali: *kasiṇa-kammaṭṭhāna*) from f. 24 to f. 22 (also viewed “backwards”).

A striking difference between the British Library manuscript and the Luang Prabang manuscript is that in the latter generous space was allocated for the text captions: at least one third, but often half of the folio. In addition, the colour scheme is different with more green, yellow and blue present in the Luang Prabang manuscript.

A Thai Yogāvacara manuscript at the Crow Museum of Asian Art, Dallas

The Crow Museum of Asian Art of The University of Texas at Dallas holds a Yogāvacara manual from 19th-century Thailand (ref. no. 2016.1). The paper folding book is in landscape orientation and consists of 65 folios with illustrations in southern Thai painting style, similar to the illustrations from three Yogāvacara manuscripts included in Buddhadasa Bhikkhu’s publications (1968/1969). Captions in Thai language with some Pali were written in black ink in Khom script. The manuscript was received by the museum as a gift from Richard Freling.

The contents of this Yogāvacara manual are varied and do not follow the order of the chapters found in the Pali-Sinhalese text version. While the chapter on contemplation of the decaying corpse (*asubha-kammaṭṭhāna*) is present from f. 9 to f. 18 (from top to bottom, in the usual way of Thai folding books), the chapter on object-oriented meditation (*kasiṇa-kammaṭṭhāna*) is missing. However, there are three medical drawings without text which cannot be associated with any of the themes of any known Yogāvacara manuals.

The illustrations on f. 52 to f. 43 (viewed “backwards”) depict scenes related to the Ten Forms of Knowledge. However, unlike in the British Library and Luang Prabang manuscripts, the illustrations are not strictly in pairs on each folio, but sometimes there is only one scene per folio (as shown below), and sometimes there are intermittent additional illustrations referencing text passages associated with the Eight Forms of Knowledge in the Visuddhimagga.



Yogāvacara manual, Crow Museum of Asian Art, ref. no. 2016.1, f. 51 (if counted from the top); Gift from Richard Freling

This illustration represents the Knowledge of disruption *bhangānudassana-ñāṇa (bhangañāṇaṃ*). However, the meditator – yogāvacara - is not depicted as a monk, but a nobleman with a crown who is pointing with his right hand towards a corpse by the river. This is the most significant difference between the manuscript at the Crow Museum and the British Library and Luang Prabang manuscripts: in the illustrations, instead of the monk one can see the nobleman.



Yogāvacara manual, Crow Museum of Asian Art, ref. no. 2016.1, f. 49 (if counted from the top); Gift from Richard Freling

Shown on the folio shown above are illustrations related to the Knowledge of what is to be feared (top) and Knowledge of evil (below). This is one example of only two folios in this manuscript that contain paired illustrations related to the Ten Forms of Knowledge.

The image below shows four folios with illustrations related to the Knowledge of disgust (below), Knowledge of desire for freedom (second below), and the two illustrations at the top show the scene of a divorced wife finding a new lover while the former husband remains equanimous; as well as the scene of traders on a ship using a land-finding crow, which in the Visuddhimagga are mentioned under the eighth (last) Form of Knowledge (Knowledge of equanimity about formations). Here, the former husband is also depicted as a nobleman with a gilded crown and jewellery. The last scene at the top in vibrant colours shows a Chinese trading junk held up by a mermaid. At the top of the main mast is the land-finding crow. The junk is moving away from burning land representing *saṃsāra*, towards land in light blue colour which stands for *nibbāna*. On top of a rock is a golden bowl with three golden spheres which symbolise the Triple Gateway to Liberation mentioned in the Visuddhimagga in a text passage following immediately after the eighth Form of Knowledge (Ñāñamoli, 2010, p. 685).

While the illustrations associated with the Ten Forms of Knowledge are to be viewed from bottom to top (or what would appear like “backwards”) in this manuscript, illustrations from other chapters – for example scenes of the contemplation of the decaying corpse – are to be viewed from top to bottom what would be the usual way of reading Thai folding books. In addition, in this manuscript the order of chapters does not follow the order of chapters in the known text sources, which makes this manuscript appear like a “puzzle” indeed.



Yogāvacara manual, Crow Museum of Asian Art, ref. no. 2016.1, ff. 43-46 (if counted from the top); Gift from Richard Freling

Discussion

One of the questions regarding the British Library Yogāvacara manuscript fragment was why the illustrated side is to be viewed or read from the right side to the left, which appears to be an unusual, "reverse" way to read a Thai folding book. Through comparison with two other Yogāvacara manuals from Luang Prabang and southern Thailand, we have seen that the British Library manuscript is not the only folding book to be read in a way that appears like reading the book from back to front. The illustrated side of the Lao folding book from Luang Prabang is to be read from bottom to top, or what would seem like back to front, if one follows the order of the illustrations in relation to known text sources. However, the text-only side of that same manuscript is to be read in the usual way from top to bottom. The southern Thai manuscript at the Crow Museum is more inconsistent as some sections are to be read in the usual way from top to bottom, whereas the part on the Ten Forms of Knowledge is to be viewed from bottom to top.

A further search on the Digital Library of Lao Manuscripts (DLLM) revealed another 19th-century Lao paper folding book in portrait orientation with illustrations which are to be viewed from the right side to the left: Nang Taeng On, a Lao story about an exiled queen and her son, which is based on a Pañ̃ñāsa Jātaka. The manuscript is held at the Luang Prabang Provincial Museum. However, Lao text in Dhamma script on the back side is in landscape orientation and to be read from top to bottom, with French translation at the end (see https://www.laomanuscripts.net/en/texts/9271#1).

In 18th-century Thai folding books, in landscape orientation, which contain Buddhist texts to be read from top to bottom, one can sometimes find that the order of the illustrations found in pairs on one folio is from right to left if one takes the storyline into consideration. Two examples of such 18th-century manuscripts in which the order of the paired Jātaka illustrations on one folio is from right to left are kept in the British Library collections: IO Pali 207 and Or 14068.

If one looks further north, in the East and Central Asian manuscript traditions, folding books which are read from the right side to the left are the norm. It is thought that those folding books are a further development or improvement of the East Asian scroll format which is usually read from the right to the left. While it is difficult and very time-consuming to find a particular text passage or illustration in a scroll, the folded format makes it much easier to locate a reference. There are thousands such folding books, fully digitised, for example through the International Dunhuang Project (IDP) or the Endangered Archives Project (EAP), like the Laṅkāvatāra Sūtra, a 9th-century folding book with text in Chinese and Tibetan translation. Another example is a Tangut folding book dating back to between the 10th to 13th century containing the Mahāprajñāpāramitā Sūtra.

Folding books in portrait orientation which are read from right to left are perhaps the last remnants of a long-forgotten manuscript tradition in mainland Southeast Asia that was adopted from East and/or Central Asia via the Silk Roads and Tea-horse trails and other trading and religious networks. The unique manuscript format may be the missing link between Tantric meditation practices and *borān kammaṭṭhāna* in Southeast Asia.

Several Yogāvacara manuals survive in manuscript collections in Thailand, but in catalogues and publications they are often called *Pritsana Tham*, meaning “Dhamma puzzle” (H. Woodward, 2021). To cataloguers and scholars who began to examine these manuscripts in the early to mid-20th century, without being aware of the apparent connection with the East and/or Central Asian tradition of reading folding books from right to left - or if transferred to landscape orientation from bottom to top - which in the Thai tradition would appear as if “out of order” or like “puzzles” indeed.

The second question concerned the possible reason(s) for the discrepancy between the dating of the British Library manuscript according to the painting style (late 17th to early 18th century) and the dating according to the paleography (late 18th century) – a difference of fifty up to a hundred years. One needs to bear in mind that the painting style of the British Library manuscript shows some features associated with Mon/Shan/Burmese painting styles which suggests that the creator of the manuscript may have been Mon, or it was made in a Mon community in Ayutthaya. The handwriting appears somewhat unsteady and the scribe may not have been very familiar with the script and certain features may appear unconventional for a certain period of time. Indeed, the manuscript is a rare example of hybrid Mon-Khmer-Thai cultural heritage in one object.

From comparison with the Luang Prabang manuscript and the manuscript at the Crow Museum, both of which are in 19th-century painting styles, one can see that not only the painting styles and colour schemes are different from the British Library manuscript, but also the composition of the illustrated folios. In the Thai manuscript tradition, sufficient space is usually allocated for the text which is almost always executed with great care and meticulousness. This is not the case in the British Library manuscript, in which the text seems to have been squeezed into and around the illustrations wherever there was some space left. The ink used for the text appears slightly lighter or of a different composition than the black ink used in the illustrations, which leaves the possibility open that the text may have been added later and the manuscript originally was not meant to contain any text, but to serve as an instructional aid kept between teacher and disciple.

Another possibility is that an artist in the late 18th century copied perfectly the painting style of an earlier period. This would be a unique example of “style-copying”, which is not normally found in Thai manuscripts where text copied from manuscripts of an earlier period is usually accompanied by illustrations in the style of the period when the copy was made. However, only scientific methods like spectroscopy can reveal in which period of time the manuscript was really made – something to look forward to!

I would like to express my gratitude to Trent Walker (Stanford University) and Irving Chan Johnson (National University of Singapore) for their precious time and their invaluable advice without which this article would not have been possible. I also would like to thank Jacqueline Chao (Crow Museum of Asian Art, Dallas) and David Wharton (National Library of Laos) for their support and for providing images of the manuscripts discussed in this article.

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Fully Digitised Manuscripts

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Report

Celebrating Peter David Koret's Intellectual Legacy at the University of California, Berkeley: A Preliminary Report

Virginia Shih, Curator for Southeast Asia and Buddhist Studies Collections, South/Southeast Asia Library, University of California, Berkeley
With contributions from Trent Walker and Karen Sprinkel[1]

Background Information

The South/Southeast Asia Library of the University of California, Berkeley is honored to receive the entire Peter David Koret Collection on Southeast Asia in August and November of 2021. Peter David Koret was a former visiting assistant professor at the Department of South and Southeast Asian Studies, University of California, Berkeley (2003-2004). This preliminary report aims at providing an outline overview of the entire collection at this early stage before it is fully cataloged for public access in the future. A biographical sketch of Peter David Koret along with an appendix is included to highlight Peter's scholarly achievements in Southeast Asian studies before his untimely passing.

Scope of the Collection

The entire Peter David Koret Collection consists of 33 cartons of monographs in the following languages:

- Burmese (31 volumes), Chinese (4 volumes), English (227 volumes), Khmer (35 volumes), Lao (359 volumes), Sanskrit (2 volumes), and Thai (924 volumes)

The collection also includes 6 Lao maps, 1 atlas of Laos, 1 road map of India, and 10 village wall paintings by artists at the Janakpur Women's Development Center in Janakpur, Nepal. In addition, the collection covers retrospective journal issues in Thai, fieldwork research notebooks, unpublished manuscripts, illustrations of *The Ten Lives of the Buddha*, drawings, postcards, and correspondence. The collection covers Southeast Asian studies in history, culture, literature, politics, philology, and language learning of Thai, Lao and Shan. The Tai narrative manuscript collection includes about 150 bundles/pieces of various sizes and formats in different Thai and Lao language scripts.

[1] This report would not have been possible without the remarkable generosity, collaboration, assistance, support, and advice from the Peter David Koret Family and his family friend, Karen Sprinkel, the UC Berkeley Library Preservation Department, UC Berkeley alumnus, Dr. Trent Walker, UC Berkeley graduate students (Parkorn Wangpaiboonkit and Thiti Jamkajornkeiat), Thomas Kilbane, and a team of undergraduate students led by Angelina Karnsouvong.
Special thanks are due to Dr. Ryan Wolfson-Ford, Southeast Asia reference librarian at the Asian Division of the Library of Congress for sharing additional bibliographic entries of Peter Koret's published articles.

Peter Koret's Thai book collection covers the following topics under three major themes:

- **Thai political commentaries in Bangkok of mid-20th century:** Pro-democracy, anti-monarchy, Bangkok political history, political reform, Thai views on Japan and America, national chronologies, slavery, biographies of politicians and activists of the 20th century, and political prisoners' correspondence.
- **Isan studies**: ancient Isan language learning manuals, Isan/Northeastern history, Chinese Isan studies, central Thai-Isan dictionaries, prayer books, poetry, phrasebooks, culture and tradition, literature, children's primers, and folklore.
- **Lanna/Chiang Mai studies:** Lanna language learning manuals, Thai-Lanna dictionaries, Lanna lullabies, legal history, phrasebooks, commentaries on religious manuscripts and rituals, literature commentaries, folklore, law, prayer books, philology, poetry, literature, Buddhist texts, comparative religion of the 20th century, and chronicles.

In addition, the monograph collection includes the following topics:

- Japanese language instruction in Thailand
- Khmer, Lao, and Thai linguistics
- Lao and Thai history
- Thai national literature, contemporary fiction, Thai drama scripts
- Travelogue on Myanmar



Thirty-three boxes of Peter Koret's Collection of books and papers

Assessment of the Peter David Koret Manuscript Collection[2]

The Peter David Koret Collection on Southeast Asia includes one of the largest collections of Tai narrative manuscripts (about 150 bundles/pieces of various sizes and formats) in North America. In keeping with the late Professor Koret's expertise in Lao and other Tai narrative literature, both within and beyond the Buddhist tradition, this group of palm-leaf and folded-paper manuscripts provides extraordinary coverage of vernacular narratives in several Southeast Asian scripts (Lao Buhan, Tham Lao, Tham Khün, Tham Lanna, and modern Thai) and languages (Lao/Isan, Pali, Tai Khün, Lanna/northern Thai, and [central/standard] Thai). Most of the manuscripts appear to have been produced in what is now Thailand and Myanmar between the early 1800s and the 1990s. The majority were likely to have been purchased in Thailand over the past thirty years, including at markets in North and Northeast Thailand, as well as from new and used booksellers.



Concertina or folding books from Peter Koret's collection

[2] Assessed and written by Trent Walker, Lecturer, Department of Religious Studies and Postdoctoral Fellow, The Ho Center for Buddhist Studies, Stanford University.



Ten paper folding books and one bound paper book with textile cover from Peter Koret's collection

The majority of the manuscripts in the collection are complete, meaning that the texts they contain can be read from beginning to end, with no missing pages. This is true of all of the Thai and Tham Khün-script manuscripts, as well as most but not all of the Lao Buhan script manuscripts.

The folded-paper Tham Lanna-script manuscripts as well as some of the short-format palm-leaf manuscripts in Lao Buhan script comprise unique collections of texts, usually for ritual, magical, predictive, or astrological purposes. Since these are largely unique compilations, organised by the individual scribe or scribes who created them, these manuscripts do not usually bear distinctive titles. Many of the Lanna examples feature a range of diagrams and illustrations, mostly with astrological connections.



An illustrated paper folding book in Tham script from Peter Koret's collection

The other manuscripts in the collection (long-format palm-leaf manuscripts in Lao Buhan script, folding paper manuscripts in Tham Khün script, and printed palm-leaf books in Thai script) are all long narratives that can be identified by titles given in the cover, margins, or colophons.

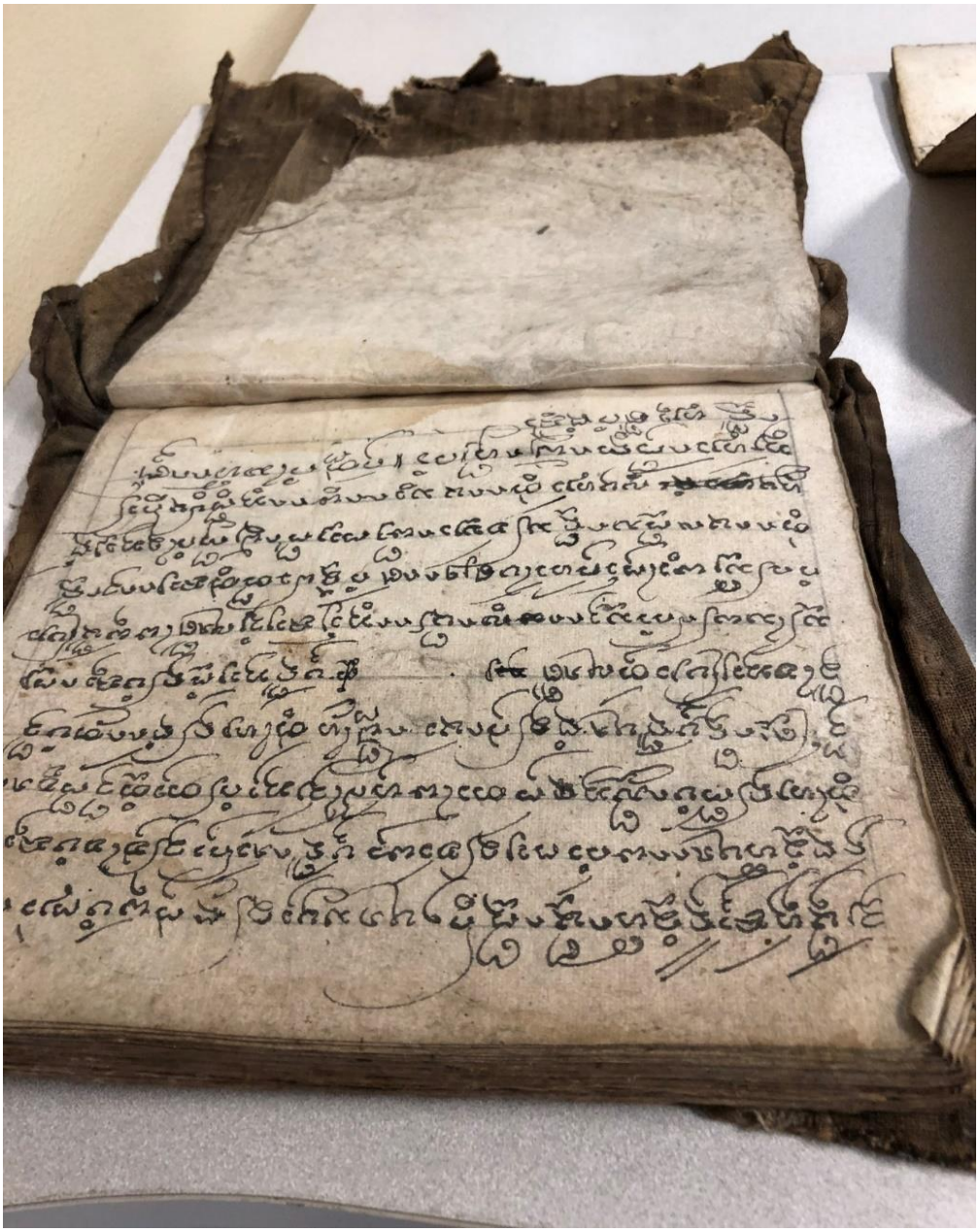
Titles in the Lao/Isan language include *Thao kam kada, Thao pa daek*, *Thao ma nyui*, *Thao kampha kai kaew*, *Khun theung*, *Thao tem don*, *Nang ong tay*, *Sang sin xai*, *Thao kalattha*, *Pannyaphala*, *Champa si ton*, *Phothilat*, *Thao kalaket*, *Thao kampha phi noi, Thao kap lang*, *Thao khang kham*, *Thao sangkhathat*, *Pha daeng*, and *Thao tao*. Some of these titles are well-known to students of Lao literature; others are quite rare. Most are transmitted in Lao verse and tell elaborate narratives drawing from folktales and local versions of the Buddha's past lives (*jātaka*).



Palm-leaf manuscripts from Peter Koret's collection

Titles in the Tai Khün language (used in and around Kengtung in Shan State, Myanmar) include *Nāṅ phôm° băn°*, *Maṇī căn°*, *Alaṅ yiṅ° ḍāv°*, *Cittakummāṙ*, *Alaṅ hmā khāv°*, *Bryā cakkavatti*, *Alaṅ bracô$_2$ ḍin° hníeẏ*, *Pvâ hạm băn° kāp°*, *Síeẏ$_1$ phī síeẏ$_1$ gân°*, *Alaṅ môḍ° sôm°$_2$*, *Pèḍ$_1$ lèṅ$_2$ âạk yâḍ°*, *Kā hyạm$_1$*, and *Suvaṇṇamegh hmā khân° gāṃ*.

All are narratives drawn from Tai/Shan folklore, most inspired by Buddhist narratives in the *jātaka* genre. Most are written in a mix of limited Pali and ample Tai Khün prose. Some are known to students of Tai Khün literature and appear in reference works; others appear to be not yet documented.



Tai Khün bound paper book from Peter Koret's colletion

There are also a range of printed palm-leaf books and printed paper books in the Lao/Isan language, printed in Thai script for use in modern northeastern Thailand. These encompass a similar range of narrative texts that are extremely hard to find in most US libraries.

The collection includes many photographs and photocopies of manuscripts, largely in Tai Khün (from Anatole Peltier's personal collection) or in Lao/Isan in Lao Buhan script (from unknown collections). These are likewise focused on narrative texts.



Printed palm-leaf manuscripts in Thai language from Peter Koret's collection

Biographical Sketch of Peter David Koret[3]

Peter David Koret was born on November 2, 1959 at Rochester, New York, and raised in Brighton, New York. He was educated at the Harley School, Hampshire College, the Naropa Institute, and Bard College, where he received his B.A. in English literature in 1982. He was awarded a doctorate in 1994 from the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, concentrating in Southeast Asian Languages and Literature.

Peter moved to Asia in 1984 as a volunteer teacher in northern Thailand for the U.S. Peace Corps. A fluent speaker and reader of Thai, Lao and Shan, he taught courses in Buddhism, Southeast Asian culture, and Thai language at the University of California, Berkeley, and Arizona State University as well as in Thailand, Laos, and the Shan State of Myanmar. He also taught Thai and English at Dulwich International College (now the British International School) in Phuket, Thailand. He was international baccalaureate translator and grader for students of Lao worldwide. He received grants from the U. S. National Endowment for the Humanities, U.S. Social Science Research Council, Fulbright Foundation, Toyota Foundation, and many others. Peter's eclectic writings covered religion, culture, and the politics of free expression in Southeast Asia, with an emphasis on traditional Lao literature and Buddhist prophecy. His discovery and interpretation of Lao traditional palm-leaf manuscripts is world renowned. He was the author of *The History*

[3] This biographical sketch was written by Karen Sprinkel and edited by Virginia Shih. Please see also the attached appendix of published and unpublished scholarly works by Peter Koret.

of Kham Thong Luang: A Translation and Study of an Early Twentieth Century Lao Poem, *The Man Who Accused the King of Killing a Fish: The Biography of Narin Phasit of Siam, 1874-1950*, and *Stone Cat*.[4]

Peter succumbed to brain cancer on April 9, 2020 at 12:25 pm in Bangkok, Thailand.



Peter David Koret

Next Steps

The Peter David Koret Collection on Southeast Asia is truly a treasure trove of a special collection that highlights the intellectual legacy of Peter Koret's lifelong interest in Southeast Asia and collecting its diverse materials for his research, teaching, and learning needs. The collection, after it is cataloged, is expected to have an everlasting impact on the Southeast Asia scholarly community, especially for those interested in Thai and Lao manuscript studies in exploring the complex linguistic intricacies in the materials Peter collected from all over Southeast Asia and beyond. An itemised inventory of the Tai narrative manuscripts will be created in the future for facilitating access to the onsite collection. Funding is being explored for digitising the manuscript collection to help promote digital access to the scholarly community. The breadth and depth of the Koret Collection will provide an extraordinary addition of primary and secondary sources to the Southeast Asia holdings at Berkeley.

[4] All these three works are available for purchase from Amazon.

Appendix

Publications by Peter David Koret

Book entitled *Buddhist Prophetic Texts of Laos and Northeast Thailand* (Currently seeking a publisher)

Book entitled *Even The Worm Turns: The Biography of the Thai Author, Bantit Aniya* (Currently seeking a publisher)

Article entitled 'The History of Kham Thong Luang: Its Importance to Tai Studies,' in *The Journal of Tai Studies,* Taunggyi, Myanmar: The Center for Tai Studies, Vol II: July, 2018, pp. 41-56.

Book entitled *The History of Kham Thong Luang: A Translation and Study of an Early Twentieth Century Lao Poem*, two volumes (1134 pages), Rochester, NY: Broken Handle Press, February, 2018.

Book entitled *The Man who Accused the King of Killing a Fish: The Biography of Narin Phasit of Siam (1874-1970)* Chiang Mai: Silkworm Press, 2012.

Book entitled *Stone Cat* Paperback. 205 pages. Independently published. 2019.

Introduction: Thai volume, *Khwam Fan Tai Duang Athit* (Dream Under the Sun) by Thai author, Bantit Aniya, Bangkok: Parbpim Press, 2014.

Translations of several modern Lao short stories in *Freeing Birds* (*poi nok*) by Bounthanong Somxaiphon, Vientiane: State Printing Press, 2014.

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Article: 'Convention and Creativity in Traditional Lao Literature' in *The Canon In Southeast Asian Literatures,* edited by David Smyth, London, I.B. Tauris & Co Ltd. 2000 pp. 210-233.

Introduction to contemporary Lao literature in *Mother's Beloved: The Short Stories of Outhine Bounyavong* edited by Dan Duffy, Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1999, pp. 2-35.

Article: 'Books of Search: The Invention of Lao Literature as An Academic Subject of Study' in *Laos: Culture and Society* edited by Grant Evans. Chiang Mai: Silkworm Press, 1999 pp. 226-257.

Article: 'Contemporary Lao Literature' in *Texts and Contexts: Interactions Between Literature and Culture in Southeast Asia* edited by Luisa J. Mallari-Hall, Quezon City: University of the Philippines, 1999 pp. 77-103.

Translation of Lao short story 'American Bones' by Bounthanong Somxaiphon in *Muang Lao* Magazine, Vientiane: Lao National Tourism Authority, 1999, pp. 56-59.

Article: 'Past and Present Lao Perceptions of Traditional Literature' in *New Laos, New Challenges* edited by Jacqueline Butler-Diaz. Tempe, Ariz.: Program for Southeast Asian Studies, Arizona State University, 1998.

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Article: 'Southeast Asian Literature' in *Larousse Encyclopedia,* Aylesbury, England: Market House Books Ltd, 1995

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Academic Presentations

Paper: ‘Ideas for Research Topics in the Comparative Study of Tai Literatures,**’** to be presented at the Sixth Lik Loung Shan Manuscript Conference, Pyin Oo Lwin, Myanmar, December 27-30, 2018.
Paper: ‘*The History of Kham Thong Luang*: Making Sense of a Thousand Page Historical, Millenarian Buddhist, and Autobiographical Poem from Early Twentieth Century Laos,’ June 4, 2018, Icat Gallery, Vientiane, June 4, 2018.

Paper: ‘Buddhist Prophetic Literature in Tai Societies,’ presented at the Fifth Lik Loung Shan Manuscript Conference, Panglong, Myanmar, December 27-30, 2017.

Paper: *The History of Kham Thong Luang* and Other Works of Historical Literature in Laos’ presented at the Fourth Lik Loung Shan Manuscript Conference, Mandalay, Myanmar, December 27-30, 2016.

Paper: ‘’Fermented Fish Consumption as Depicted in Pre-Modern Lao Literature,’ presented at the workshop, ‘Medical, Social, and Anthropological Aspects of Cholangiocarcinoma,’ Khon Kaen University, April 25-27, 2016.

Talk: ‘Thai Political Literature and the Student Movement of the 1970s,’ presented at British International College, Phuket, October 5, 2015.

Paper: ‘Prophetic Literature of Northeast Thailand and Laos,’ presented at symposium ‘Buddhism, Power, and Political Order in South and Southeast Asia,’ Oxford University, April 2004.

Paper: ‘Writing as Magic in Lao/Northeastern Thai Literature,’ presented at conference ‘Written Cultures of Mainland Southeast Asia,’ National Museum of Ethnology, Osaka, February 3-4, 2006.

Paper: The Reinvention of Literature Through Literary Interpretation in Laos and Northeast Thailand,’ Center for Southeast Asian Studies, University of California, Berkeley, November 2013.

Paper: ‘Religious, Romantic, and Political Interpretations of the traditional Lao Poem, Leup Phasun,’ presented (in the Thai language) at International Conference on Tai Studies, Nakhon Phanom, Thailand, January, 2002.

Paper: ‘The Religious Identity of Traditional Literature in Laos and Northeast Thailand,’ presented at conference ‘Revisiting History, Nation and Culture in Modern Laos,’ National University of Singapore, January 2004.

Paper: ‘Do Not Listen to Those Who Have too much to Say, Revealing That Which is Not There: Observations on the Meaning of Leup Phasun,’ presented at conference ‘Lao Heritage of Palm Leaf Manuscripts,’ Vientiane, December 2003.

Paper: ‘Religious Motivation in the Composition, Preservation, and Performance of Jataka Tales in Thailand and Laos,’ presented at conference, ‘The Role of History in World Religion,’ Summer Teacher’s Institute, University of California, Berkeley, July 2003.

Paper: ‘Leup Phasun: Opposing Thai and Lao Interpretations of a 19th Century Poem,’ presented at the International Conference on Tai Studies, Nakhon Phanom, Thailand, January, 2002.

Thai Language Paper: ‘Khwam Khit Ruam Samai Thai Lao Nai Kan Ti Khwam Wannakhadi Lao Reuang Leup Phasun (Contemporary Thai and Lao Interpretations of

the Traditional Lao Poem, *Leup Phasun*),' presented at conference 'Studies of History and Literature of Tai Ethnic Groups,' Chiang Mai University, March 2001.

Paper: 'Convention and Creativity in Traditional Lao Literature,' presented at conference 'The Canon In Southeast Asian Literatures,' School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, April 1995.

Paper: 'Books of Search: The Origins of Lao Literature as an Academic Subject of Study,' presented at conference 'Buddhism, Modernity and Politics in Southeast Asia,' Arizona State University, 1996.

Paper: 'The State of Contemporary Lao Literature,' presented at conference 'Southeast Asian Literature,' University of the Philippines, Quezon City, 1996.

Paper: 'Lao Perceptions of Traditional Literature,' presented at conference 'New Laos, New Challenges,' Arizona State University in 1996.

Paper: 'The Role of Jataka Tales in Lao Literature,' presented at University of Copenhagen and University of Lund, Sweden, March 1999.

Paper: 'Understanding the History and Social Use of Lao Traditional Literature in Relationship to the Literary Tradition of the Tai Yuan,' presented at 6th International Conference on Thai Studies, Chiang Mai, October 1996.

Paper: 'The Train That Went Off The Track or The Track That The Train Went Off: Thai Society in the Early Twentieth Century from the Perspective of the Social Critic Narin Phasit,' presented at University of Wisconsin, Madison, January 1995.

Paper: 'The Art of Parallelism in Traditional Lao Literature,' presented at Conference on Tai Studies, London, July 1993.

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Book Review

Mahāsaṅgīti Tipiṭaka Buddhavasse 2500. Bangkok: The World Tipiṭaka Foundation, 2019 (40 volumes revised edition)

Sajjhāya tēpiṭaka: Pāḷi phonetic edition. Bangkok: The World Tipiṭaka Foundation, 2018/19 (40 volumes)

Sajjhāya tēpiṭaka: Pāḷi notation. Bangkok: The World Tipiṭaka Foundation, 2018/19 (40 volumes)

Reviewed by Jana Igunma, The British Library, London

Normally, only very recent and completed publications are considered for a book review. Not in this case: the foundations for this remarkable publication were laid about 130 years ago, when King Chulalongkorn (Rama V) commissioned the world's first printed set of the Pali Buddhist canon, Tipiṭaka. It is regarded as the corpus of Buddhist scriptures closest to the original words of the Buddha, consisting of three "baskets" (Pali: *piṭaka*) of

teachings: the Sutta-piṭaka (discourses of the Buddha), the Vinaya-piṭaka (monastic discipline) and the Abhidhamma-piṭaka (miscellaneous or further teachings). The first printed publication appeared in Bangkok in 1893 as the 39-volume Chulachomklao of Siam Pāḷi Tipiṭaka Edition after six years of transcribing the texts from manuscripts, arranging them in a particular order and editing them under the leadership of the Thai Buddhist monk and scholar Vajirañāna Varorasa. King Chulalongkorn presented 1000 sets of this historic edition, done in commemoration of the 25th anniversary of his reign, to Buddhist monasteries across Thailand, and an additional 260 sets as royal gifts to leading libraries and HE institutions all over the world.

Traditionally, Pali texts were transmitted orally and Buddhist education in Southeast Asia did not follow an organised, systematic curriculum. The training of monks focused on the ability to recite/chant, memorise, comprehend, explain and, at a higher level, read and copy Pali texts from manuscripts, in addition to meditation and acquiring certain practical skills. First attempts to improve Pali studies in the Thai kingdom Ayutthaya were made under King Narai (r.1656-1688), but it took until the 19th century for Pali scholarship to take off when a system of written examinations was introduced and systematic Dhamma studies were added to the monastic curriculum. Although over time Pali Buddhist scriptures had been transcribed into Sinhalese, Burmese, Khmer, Thai, Lao and other scripts, there was no agreed set of scriptures constituting a complete corpus of the Tipiṭaka. A set of Pali scriptures found in a monastery library in central Thailand could differ significantly from a set found in Laos or Burma, and sometimes these included extra-canonical texts, like Paññāsa Jātaka for example. A Burmese version of the Tipiṭaka was chiselled onto 729 large marble slabs at Kuthodaw Pagoda in Mandalay, completed in 1869, which may have inspired King Chulalongkorn to find an option that allowed to disseminate the Pali canon as widely as possible – and the printed format was ideal for this ambition.

In 1956 – the 2500th year of the Buddhist Era - an international Buddhist Council held in Burma brought 2500 erudite monks of the Theravada tradition together and resulted in the publication of the Chaṭṭhasaṅgīti Council Edition of Tipiṭaka in Burmese script which from that time on had been regarded as the authoritative edition of the Pali canon. Based on this edition, a Romanised version was edited on the initiative of the Supreme Patriarch of the Saṅgha of Thailand, Venerable Vajirañānasaṁvara, who himself had attended the Buddhist Council in Burma. He nominated more than 500 patron, advisor and steering committee members to proof-read, edit and Romanise the Chaṭṭhasaṅgīti Council Edition. The work was finally published in 2005 by the M. L. Manīratana Bunnag Dhamma Society Fund in Thailand, now World Tipiṭaka Foundation, comprising of forty volumes with the title Mahāsaṅgīti Tipiṭaka Buddhavasse 2500 (The Great International Tipiṭaka Council Buddhist Era 2500).

Subsequent improved editions appeared in 2009/10 and 2019 (in addition to several reprints), following a meticulous proof-reading process that focused on the verification of Pali sounds and corrections of printing errors of the first edition. Tipiṭaka experts recited the entire text four times to verify every Pali sound. The proof-reading totalled to

2,708,706 words in Pāḷi or 20,606,104 letters in Roman script. Quality control was also achieved through a multi-disciplinary approach by specialists, including Buddhist monks and nuns, as well as lay scholars in various academic and professional areas from universities and institutions worldwide. An additional outcome of this process was an electronic database created by volunteers from Chulalongkorn University and members of the Dhamma Society who developed and completed the "Tipiṭaka Markup" as an important contribution to the Pāḷi Tipiṭaka Database and the Tipiṭaka Studies Reference Database.

The 2019 edition is regarded as the most accurate version of the Romanised Tipiṭaka, constituting a valuable authoritative reference work for the fields of Pali and Buddhist studies as well as interdisciplinary research. Printed in high quality with sturdy hardcover bindings this set of 40 volumes was made to last for a long time under modern library storage conditions. Colour-coded spines allow the quick and easy retrieval of volumes from the three parts, or "baskets" (*piṭaka*): 5 volumes containing the Vinaya-piṭaka, 23 volumes covering the Sutta-piṭaka, and 12 volumes for the Abhidhamma-piṭaka.

Most importantly, from a librarian's point of view, is that the transliteration follows strictly the Library of Congress Romanization standard for Pali which enables transliteration back into Southeast Asian vernacular scripts. It is also approved by the American Library Association and it is used in most anglophone academic libraries across the world. Consistency in the use of the transliteration standard is crucial not only for the retrieval of existing transliterations of the Pali text from many different scripts, but also for comparative and analytical research. Indeed, the standardised Romanisation following the Library of Congress system made it possible to publish further editions in Thai, Northern Thai, Lao, Tai Khuen, Tai Lue, Tai Khamti, Ahom and Tai Phake scripts. Additional benefits of the Romanised edition are that the texts are very well indexed and cross-referenced, so that text passages can easily be compared with older editions and other editions in Southeast Asian vernacular scripts.

Following the publication of the revised Romanised Tipiṭaka edition, the World Tipiṭaka Foundation continued to work on two further 40-volume sets of the Tipiṭaka specifically with the aim to support the correct pronunciation and recitation of the Pali texts. The importance of recitation – the original method of preserving the Pali canon for hundreds of years – was highlighted in the process of proof-reading for the most recent revised and improved edition.

The King Bhumibol Adulyadej's Sajjhāya Pāḷi Phonetic and the Queen Sirikit's Sajjhāya Pāḷi Notation editions, both published in 2018/19 alongside the digital recitation, are the culmination of half a century of international efforts to preserve the original Pali canon. The Sajjhāya Pali phonetic edition was compiled on the foundation of the Chulachomklao of Siam Pāḷi Tipiṭaka Edition from 1893, and it is particularly useful for readers of Thai who are not familiar with the Library of Congress Romanisation system. Rules of the Kaccāyana Pāḷi Grammar were referenced to each of the over nine million syllables of the entire Tipiṭaka. Utilising the 1893 edition in Thai characters, the project has developed innovative methods to preserve the Pali sound as it is believed to have been originally

recited. In the Sajjhāya Pali notation edition, the use of international musical symbols was employed in order to assist with correct Pali pronunciation rules, articulation and rhythmic emphasis, especially to clarify the duration of *Lahu* (quick syllable) and *Garu* (prolonged syllable).

The use of innovative AI and sound technology made it possible to record the recitation of the Pali texts, amounting to 3,052 hours altogether. A special feature of the digital recitation is the sound technology reference, which electronically refers to any one of over nine million Pali syllables in the Tipiṭaka to the Kaccāyana Pāḷi grammar, the oldest grammar used in ancient Pali literature. For this purpose, a patented program (no. 46390) was created in 2016 to automatically compile the digital sound recording, based on the new Sajjhāya Pali notation using AI technology. This digital Pali recitation has been named Sajjhāya Recitation and it is available on a mobile device application so that it can easily be accessed for reference, research, and learning. Digital recitation samples are available online and regular updates regarding the dedicated ongoing work of the World Tipiṭaka Foundation can be found on the worldtipitaka channel.



A complete set of forty volumes of the "Mahāsaṅgīti Tipiṭaka Buddhavasse 2500" in the Asian and African Studies Reading Room at the British Library. Photograph by Jana Igunma, December 2021

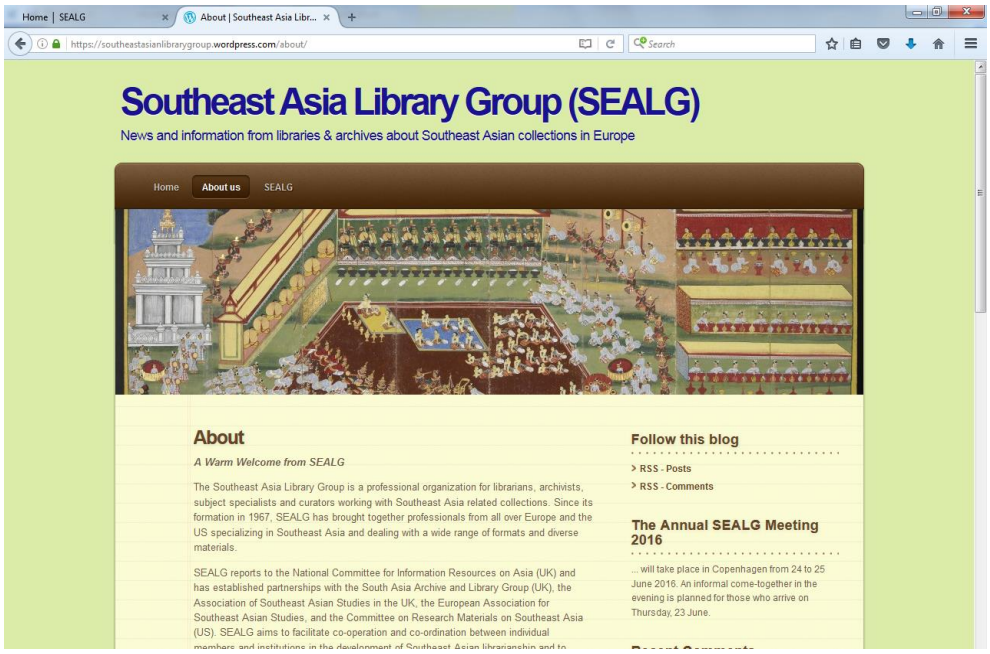
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Image on front cover: *Wormia*, painting by Marianne North, c.1876.

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