

The Formation of Tai Polities Between the 13th to 16th Centuries: The Role of Technological Transfer

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Introduction

Between the 13th and 16th centuries large polities with Tai (Dai) rulers emerged in the vast area which covers Southern Yunnan, the Shan States of Myanmar (Burma), Northern Thailand and Northern Laos. This polyethnic region has been named the Tai Cultural Area by Shintani Tadahiko 新谷忠彦 because of the predominant position of Tai language and culture.¹⁾ By using the Salween river as a natural border we can divide the major Tai polities that emerged here during this period into two main groups; Lanna, Khemaraṭṭha (Ceng Tung), Sipsong Panna and Lansang to the east of the Salween, and Mäng Mao, Mäng Yang and Hsienwi (Mubang 木邦) situated to its' west.

The sudden rise to political prominence by Tai peoples in the 13th centuries has been hailed as a major turning point in the history of Mainland Southeast Asia, but so far no convincing argument has been advanced to explain this phenomenon. Since Tai rulers embraced Buddhist concepts of kingship, scholars often invoke Theravada Buddhism, but we have no concrete evidence to demonstrate that the introduction of a new religion acted as the principle motive for the foundation of these new polities, nor can we be sure that it formed the basis of political and social life in them from their inception in the 13th century. For instance, *The Chiang Mai Chronicle*, leaves the reader with a vivid impression of King Mangrai (1239-1317), the founder of Lanna, as an ambitious down-to-earth ruler who expended most of his energy scheming the conquest of the Mon Kingdom of Hariphuñjaya (Lamphun) in the upper Menam valley, constructing walled cities and laying the material foundations of his kingdom. Though the chronicle mentions the construction of Buddhist temples by King Mangrai, it certainly does not portray Buddhism as the main driving force behind his polity building activities.²⁾

The main issue then is how did Tai rulers establish their polities in the 13th century? In an earlier article written in Japanese I tried to explain the rise of Tai polities between the 13th and 16th centuries by looking at changes in their ma-

terial culture.³⁾ I argued that changes in material culture played a great role in the early polity building of the Tai. The older sort of material culture bore a striking resemblance to that of the surrounding areas. The consumption of rice, the construction of houses on poles, betel chewing, toddy or palm wine drinking readily bring to mind a connection with Southeast Asia. At the same time, we can ascertain the prevalence of a whole host of features that are considered characteristic of the broad-leaf evergreen forest belt which lies to the north in South-west China and extends from Nepal and Assam in the West through to Japan in the east. The principle features include the cultivation by swidden agriculture of cereals like the different kinds of millets and sorghums, buckwheat (*Fagopyrum esculentum*), job's tears (*Coix Lacryma-Jobi*), *Hato-mugi* (*Coix Ma-yuen*) as well as dry rice, the fermenting of soybeans and tea leaves for consumption, brewing with malt yeasts and the application of latex tapped from species of the lacquer tree and related genera to make lacquerware utensils. All ethnic groups dwelling in the Tai Cultural Area originally shared the older material culture, but in order to build new polities Tai rulers actively sought skills and technology from the outside world. The new material culture they created set the Tai apart from the other ethnic groups, and it aided them in expanding their political control over them. The erection of Buddhist temples and pagodas became an important part of the cultural programme of Tai rulers in later periods, but that was not the case in the 13th century.

Here I provide a greatly revised and expanded English version of this argument that incorporates many new sources which throw light on the 13th and 14th century period. These two centuries are crucial for understanding the nature of pre-Buddhist Tai polities, and provide a basis for making comparisons with the 15th and 16th centuries when Theravada Buddhism had been adopted as religion of state. In order to clarify the situation in the 13th and 14th centuries I first examine the ethnic composition of the Tai Cultural Area, then trace the history of Mon-Khmer power bases in South-west Yunnan before showing how pre-Buddhist Tai language and culture spread out among other ethnic groups by the late 14th century. After demonstrating the time lag in the adoption of Theravada Buddhism as religion of state between the areas east and west of the Salween river, I employ the concept of technology transfer to show how the acquisition of a new material culture played an important role in the foundation and subsequent management of Tai polities. Unfortunately, shortage of space has forced me to leave out the detailed account of the older material culture and agricultural technology contained in the original Japanese version.

Finally a word on the historical sources. Most of the source materials written in Tai languages date from the post 18th century period at the earliest. Many of the Tai polities have undergone much social and political turmoil since the Burmese conquest of the mid-16th century, and suffered encroachment on their territories by Chinese, Burmese, Siamese ever since, as well as having had to

contend with British and French colonial powers in the 19th and 20th centuries. The political situation of the age in which the chronicles were compiled has obviously influenced the nature of their contents. Apart from inscriptions, the only contemporary records, that is those actually written between the 13th and 16th centuries, appear in Chinese sources. Though Chinese sources contain ideological biases in their treatment of the relationship between non-Han polities and the Chinese emperor,⁴⁾ the wealth of detail on the ethnic, social and political conditions in the Tai Cultural Area make them invaluable for studying the 13th to 16th century period. In this article I have tried to make as much use as possible of Chinese sources that were actually written and compiled between the 13th and 16th centuries, and deliberately eschewed post 17th century sources such as the *Ming Shi* 明史 (The Official History of the Ming), the final compilation of which ended in 1735. Two sources deserve special mention. The first, called the *Baiyi Zhuan* 百夷傳 (An Account of the Baiyi [Hundred Barbarians]), was written in 1396 by two envoys, Li Sicong 李思聰 and Qian Guxun 錢古訓, who the Ming court dispatched to the powerful Tai polity of Mǎng Maw 麓川平緬宣慰使司 and the country of the Mian 緬國 (Myanmar).⁵⁾ The second is the *Xinan Yi Fengtu Ji* 西南夷風土記 (An Account of the Natural Conditions and Social Customs of the South-western Barbarians), probably written by an unknown author who accompanied the Chinese punitive expedition to Ava to subdue King Nan-da-bayin 莽應裡 (reigned 1581-1599) of the Toungoo dynasty between 1583-84.⁶⁾ Both of these are valuable because they are firsthand accounts written at an interval of approximately two hundred years which allows us to follow shifts over time.

(1) Ethnic Composition

Today the Tai Cultural Area is peopled by a great variety of ethnic groups speaking Thai/Tai, Mon-Khmer and Tibeto-Burman languages. Our information on the distribution of ethnic groups here during the 19th and 20th centuries principally derives from reports by colonial administrators and field work conducted by anthropologists, as well as from the ethnic classification of minority peoples conducted by the government of the Peoples Republic of China. Despite all of their shortcomings, and however inaccurate they may be, these classifications do give us an approximate idea of the number of ethnic groups present and the language families to which they belong.⁷⁾ But when we set out to examine their past histories we immediately run into difficulty because modern classifications do not always agree with the realities of cultural identity in the past. Ethnic groups are not fixed entities with boundaries that stand still in time; their culture is dynamic and has undergone significant change throughout history. Active response to influence and pressure from outside has frequently caused shifts in intra-and inter-ethnic boundaries. Ethnic groups have continu-

ally had to accommodate themselves to modifications to the ecological, political and social environments in which they live.

In this section, I shall try to clarify which ethnic groups dwelt in the region between the 13th and 16th centuries using contemporary Chinese historical sources. Given the nature of the source material, identification is only possible at the linguistic level, and by relating the historical data to the Chinese classification of minority peoples mentioned above. Despite the reservations expressed by Leach nearly fifty years ago concerning the validity of taking language as a criteria for "tribes" or "races" in this region,⁸⁾ the truth of the matter is that today we still do not possess a viable alternative to the linguistically-derived concepts of tribe and tribal culture for ethnic classification. Also, the recent Chinese system is a useful referent for sorting out ethnic groups in post-13th century literary sources because Chinese scholars took historical data into consideration when designating minorities. Therefore in trying to distinguish between ethnic groups I am merely aiming to arrange them into language families in order to provide the historian with a guideline with which to understand the ethnic composition of the Tai Cultural Area in the past. Proposed correspondences with present day ethnic group naming can only be approximate, and in no way imply a strict uniformity in language and culture, or an unchanged continuity of ethnic identity from the past to the present.

(i) Main Ethnic Groups in the 13th to 16th Century Period

Due to their preeminent position as the rulers of polities Chinese sources regularly mention Tai ethnic groups, so let us begin with this group.

Between the 13th and 20th centuries, the Chinese referred to the Tai ethnic groups by a variety of names, many of them containing the derogatory character *yi* 夷 meaning barbarian or more simply non-Han Chinese.⁹⁾ Those that appeared frequently in literary records included *baiyi* 百夷 (hundred barbarians), *baiyi* 白衣 (white clothes), *baiyi* 白夷 (white barbarian) and *jinchi man* 金齒蠻 (golden teeth barbarians).¹⁰⁾ But between the late 14th century and about 1573, most writers only employed *baiyi* (hundred barbarians). The singular use of this term must be related to the way contemporary Chinese comprehended the Tai. In order to ascertain exactly what *baiyi* (hundred barbarians) meant to them let us look at how the *Baiyi Zhuan* of 1396 defined this term:¹¹⁾

Baiyi (Hundred barbarians) is located several thousand *li* to the south-west of Yunnan and its area extends for 10,000 *li*. Jingdong lies to its east, the Indian Gula lies to its west, and Babai Xifu [Lanna] lies to its south, and Tufan [Tibet] lies to its north. To its south-east is Cheli [Sipsong Panna], to its south-west is the country of Mian [Myanmar], to its north-east is Ailao (the Jinchi Guard of the present day), and to its north-west lies the

Xifan and the Huihe [Uighurs]. The people include those named the Greater Baiyi [Greater hundred barbarians], the Lesser Baiyi [Lesser Hundred barbarians], the Piaoren [Pyu], the Gula [Wa], the Hala [Wa], the Mianren [Burmans], the Jiexie [Jingpo], the Hadu [Wa], the Nuren [Nu], the Puman [Plang/ De'ang], the Achang and so forth. This is the reason that it is called the Baiyi [Hundred barbarians].

百夷在雲南西南數千里，其地方萬里。景東在其東，西天古刺在其西，八百媳婦在其南，吐番在其北，東南則車里，西南則緬國，東北則哀牢（今之金齒衛也），西北則西番，回紇。俗有大百夷，小百夷，漂人，古刺，哈刺，緬人，結些，哈杜，弩人，蒲蠻，阿昌等名，故曰百夷。

Jiang Yingliang has pointed out that Baiyi [Hundred barbarians] as it appears in this passage can be construed to have three meanings; first as the name of a geographical area, second as the general appellation for all the ethnic groups residing there, and third as the designation of a single ethnic group (*minzu* 民族). While acknowledging the veracity of the first two interpretations, Jiang asserts that it is in the third sense of specifically referring to the Tai that the word Baiyi [Hundred barbarians] is used most frequently in the *Baiyi Zhuan*. Thus Jiang identifies the Greater Baiyi [Greater Hundred barbarians] and the Lesser Baiyi [Lesser Hundred barbarians] as belonging to the Tai ethnic group whose distribution extended from Yunnan to the Shan states in Burma and to the Lanna polity in northern Thailand.¹²⁾ Most scholars agree that the term Baiyi served as a general appellation for referring to all the ethnic groups bearing the autonym Tai, and we have no reason to doubt this interpretation.

To get a general idea of what other ethnic groups occupied the Tai Cultural Area between the 13th and 16th centuries I have collected data concerning them from three contemporary sources. The three sources, the *Yuan Shi* 元史 (1369), the *Baiyi Zhuan* (1396) and the *Xinan Yi Fengtu Ji* (1584), recorded the names of ethnic groups as known to the Chinese at three different points of time over a period of two hundred years. In Table 1, I have assembled their names and equated them with present day ethnic groups which have been arranged according to language family groups. This indicates the ethnic groups dwelling in the Area, and allows us to see shifts in ethnic composition.

The main conclusions that we can draw from this table may be summarized as follows;

- (1) Tai, Mon-Khmer and Tibeto-Burman language speakers resided in the Area between the 14th and 16th centuries.
- (2) Regards the Tai, apart from the Khün none of the names in the sources can be accurately identified with 20th century sub-groups.
- (3) The Mon-Khmer speakers identifiable for the entire period included the ancestors of the Wa 佤族, Plang 布朗族, De'ang 德昂族 (Palaung) and Mon.
- (4) The Tibeto-Burman speakers present for the whole two hundred years en-

Table 1 Names of Ethnic Groups in the Tai Cultural Area from Chinese Sources, 14th to 16th Centuries

Macro-Family of Languages	Present Ethnic Designation ^①	Term in Historical Sources ^②	Date of Appearance of Term		
			1369 ^③	1396 ^④	1584 ^⑤
Tai	Dai 傣族	Jinchiman 金齒蠻	Yes	No	No
	Dai 傣族	Baiyi [White Barbarians] 白衣	Yes	No	No
	Dai 傣族	Baiyi [Hundred Barbarians] 百夷	No	Yes	Yes
	Dai 傣族	Da Baiyi [Greater Hundred Barbarians] 大百夷	No	Yes	No
	Dai 傣族	Xiao Baiyi [Lesser Hundred Barbarians] 小百夷	No	Yes	No
	Dai 傣族	Ji 緦 ^⑥	Yes	No	No
	Dai 傣族 Khün	Boren 焚人 Menggenzi 孟艮子 ^⑦	No No	No No	Yes Yes
Mon-Khmer	Wa 佉族	Gula 古刺	No	Yes	Yes
	Wa 佉族	Hala 哈刺	No	Yes	Yes
	Wa 佉族	Hadu 哈杜	No	Yes	No
	Plang (Bulang) 布朗族	Puman 蒲蠻 ^⑧	No	Yes	No
	Plang (Bulang) 布朗族	Puren 蒲人	No	Yes	Yes
	De'ang 德昂族	Puman 蒲蠻	No	Yes	No
	De'ang 德昂族	Puren 蒲人	No	Yes	Yes
	Mon	Deleng 得冷	No	Yes	No
	Mon	Delingzi 得稜子	No	No	Yes
Tibeto Burman	Achang 阿昌族	Echang 峨昌	Yes	No	No
	Achang 阿昌族	Achang 阿昌	No	Yes	Yes
	Jingpo 景頗族	Jiexie 結些	No	Yes	No
	Jingpo 景頗族	Jiezi 結皆	No	Yes	No
	Jingpo 景頗族	Zhexiezi 遮些子	No	No	Yes
	Jingpo 景頗族	Andulu 安都魯	No	No	Yes
	Jingpo 景頗族	Chifayeren 赤髮野人	No	No	Yes
	Nu 怒族	Nuren 弩人	No	Yes	No
	Nu 怒族	Nuren 怒人	No	Yes	No
	Burman	Mianren 緬人 ^⑨	Yes	Yes	No
	Burman	Laomian 老緬	No	No	Yes
	Pyu	Piao 驃	Yes	No	No
	Pyu	Piaoren 漂人 ^⑩	No	Yes	No
Pyu	Piaoren 剽人	No	No	Yes	
Pisu	Bisu 比蘇 ^⑪	Yes	No	No	

Macro-Family of Languages	Present Ethnic Designation ^①	Term in Historical Sources ^②	Date of Appearance of Term		
			1369 ^③	1396 ^④	1584 ^⑤
Unclassified	Baizu 白族	Bo 樊	Yes	No	No
Unknown	Unidentified	Quluo 渠羅 ^⑫	Yes	No	No
	Unidentified	Dunu 杜怒	No	No	Yes
	Unidentified	Niudala 牛唵刺	No	No	Yes

- ① Present ethnic designations generally follow the classification system of minority nationalities (*shaoshu minzu* 少數民族) in the Peoples Republic of China, but in some cases I use ethno-linguistic and ethno-historical terms.
- ② Unless otherwise noted the identification of terms in historical sources is based on the following works; Jiang Yingliang 江應樑 Ed., *Zhongguo Minzu Shi* 中國民族史 (A History of China's Minority Nationalities), Minzu Chubanshe, 1990, Vol. 2, pp. 84-92, Wazu Jianshi Bianxiezu 佤族簡史編寫組, *Wazu Jianshi* 佤族簡史 (Brief History of the Wa Nationality), Kunming, Yunnan Jiaoyu Chubanshe, 1985, pp. 23-25, and De'ang Zu Jianshi Bianxiezu 德昂族簡史編寫組, *De'ang Zu Jianshi* 德昂族簡史 (Brief History of the De'ang Nationality), Kunming, Yunnan Jiaoyu Chubanshe, 1985, pp. 17-19.
- ③ 1369: *Yuan Shi* 元史 (The Official History of the Yuan Dynasty), Beijing, Zhonghua Shuju, 1976, p. 1482.
- ④ 1396: *Baiyi Zhuan* 百夷傳 (Account of the Baiyi [Hundred Barbarians]). Textual references to the annotated edition by Jiang Yingliang, *Baiyi Zhuan Jiaozhu* 百夷傳校注 (The Edited and Annotated Version of the Account of the Baiyi [Hundred Barbarians]), Kunming, Yunnan Renmin Chubanshe, 1980, p. 42, pp. 99-105 & p. 125.
- ⑤ 1584: *Xinan Yi Fengtu Ji* 西南夷風土記 (An Account of the Natural Conditions and Social Customs of the South-western Barbarians). Textual references to the edition in Zhu Mengzhen 朱孟震, *Zhu Bingqi Wenji* 朱秉器文集 (The Collected Works of Zhu Bingqi), *juan* 14, Youhuan Yutan 遊宦餘談.
- ⑥ The De'ang Zu Jianshi, p. 17 equates *ji* with *xuan* 暹 and identifies it as Tai. The term *xuan* may suggest some affinity with Siam, or perhaps Sukhothai. But this identification is problematic because the term *ji* does not appear in Ming sources, and Jiang Yingliang Ed. *Zhongguo Minzu Shi*, Vol. 2, pp. 84-92 does not mention it as an appellation for the Tai.
- ⑦ Menggenzi was probably a transliteration of Mäng Khün, or Khemaraṭṭha in Kengtung, east of the Salween in the Shan States in Northern Burma. In Chinese it was called Menggen Prefecture 孟良府, and according to the *Ming Shi* 明史 (The Official History of the Ming), *juan* 313, (Beijing, Zhonghua Shuju, 1974), p. 8081, it was established in 1405 (Yongle 永樂3).
- ⑧ According to Jiang Yingliang Ed., *Zhongguo Minzu Shi*, Vol. 2, p. 91 the terms Puman and Puren were general appellations for an ethnic group that included both the Plang and the De'ang.
- ⑨ The term *mianren* appears in the *Yuanshi*, *juan* 210, pp. 4655-4660. *Mianren* may have referred to the Mons and even Shans as well as the Burmans for the Tianqi 天啓 period (1622-1627) *Dian Zhi* 滇志 (Gazetteer of Yunnan), *juan* 30 (Kunming, Yunnan Jiaoyu Chubanshe, 1991, p. 1001) wrote: "There are several types of *mianren*, one called *laomian* (Burman), one called *Delengzi* (Mon), one called *Awa* (Shan ? Burman ?); those like *Mengbie*, *Yonghui*, *Pugan*, *Dongwu* and *Baigu* are all of this type, generally speaking each gets its name from its territory." 緬人，有數種，曰老緬，曰得楞子，曰阿瓦，如猛別，雍會，普潑，洞吾，擺古皆其類，大抵各以其地得名。 This passage also appears in Xie Zhaozhe 謝肇淛 *Dian Lue* 滇略 (An Account of Yunnan), *juan* 9, p. 20a and in Gu Yanwu 顧炎武 *Tianxia Junguo Libingshu* 天下郡國利病書 (Strengths and Weaknesses of the Various Regions of the Realm) of 1662, 23

册 (Reprint, Kyoto: Chubun Shuppansha, 1975, p. 1515)

- ⑩ The Wazu Jianshi Bianxiezhu, *Wazu Jianshi*, p. 24, identifies the *piaoren* 漂人 as an ethnic group belonging to the De'ang, but provides no evidence for this theory.
- ⑪ At present the only known speakers of Pisu are small populations that live in Phongxaly province in Laos and in Chiang Rai and Phayao counties in northern Thailand. For the autonym Pisu see Thongpeth Kingsada and Ryuichi Kosaka, "Pisu (Lao-Phai)". The De'ang Zu Jianshi Bianxiezhu, *De'ang Zu Jianshi*, p. 18 identifies Bisu 比蘇 as members of the Lisu 僳僳族 ethnic group, but provides no corroborative evidence whatsoever. Though we have no literary references either to the Pisu or Lisu in the Tai Cultural Area between the 13th and 16th centuries, I tentatively identify Bisu as Pisu because of the proximity of the initial consonants, but this is only a hypothesis.
- ⑫ The De'ang Zu Jianshi Bianxiezhu, *De'ang Zu Jianshi*, p. 18 suggests the possibility of *Quluo* belonging to the Jinuo nationality 基諾族, but provides no other explanation.

compassed the ancestors of the Jingpo 景頗族 (Kachin) and Achang 阿昌.

(5) Among Tibeto-Burman speakers, two ethnic groups, the Nu and the Pisu vanished from the historical record between the 14th and 16th centuries. We can assume that the Nu were the ancestors of the minority of the same name who dwell in South-west Yunnan today. Their disappearance, however, was only temporary for the *Dian Zhi* (滇志 Gazetteer of Yunnan) written during the Tianqi 天啓 (1621-1627) reign period described them as residing in Lijiang 麗江.¹³⁾ But the Pisu, an ethnic group who speak a Phunoi language belonging to the Lolo-Burmese group, are only found in Phongxaly province in Laos today. A record of them for 1369 may indicate that they resided in south-west Yunnan or northern Burma during the 14th century.

(6) The absence of any term corresponding to Yao 瑤, Miao 苗, Hani 哈尼 (Akha, Goh), Lahu 拉祜 (Muser) and Lisu 僳僳 speakers corroborates the current theory that these ethnic groups migrated to the Tai Cultural Area in the post-17th century period.

(7) If the identification of the Chinese terms *piaoren* (漂人, 剽人) with the Pyu of Burma is correct, then we may conclude that the Pyu still survived as a distinguishable ethnic group until the late 16th century.¹⁴⁾

Though the general pattern of ethnic composition according to language groups resembles that of the present, (4), (5) and (6) demonstrates that the greatest shifts occurred amongst the Sino-Tibetan speakers. Yao and Miao language speakers, who were previously unknown to the Area, as well as new ethnic peoples belonging to the Sino-Tibetan group, all arrived in the post-17th century period.

(ii) The political Power of Mon-Khmer Ethnic Groups

The Tai remained the dominant ethnic group until the late 19th and 20th centuries when the Siamese, Chinese and Burmese governments disempowered and eliminated independent and subordinate polities in the Tai Cultural Area.

In their capacity as rulers of polities, the Tai exercised political control over many of the Mon-Khmer and Tibeto-Burmans speaking groups. This fact of recent history has influenced the way scholars conceive of the formation of post 13th century polities. Though linguists generally assert that Mon-Khmer speakers were settled here before the arrival of Tai and Tibeto-Burman speakers, historians have largely ignored the upland Mon-Khmer animists, regarding their ancestors as incapable of ever having played any significant part in the foundation of polities. Taking Buddhism as a mark of civilisation, they have focused on the lowland Tai as the sole ethnic group capable of promoting higher levels of political and social organisation.¹⁵⁾ But in recent years scholars in Thailand have criticized this concept. They have cited archaeological as well as ethnographic and documentary evidence from the post-17th century period to demonstrate that the Lawa (Lwa, Lua, Wa), a Mon-Khmer ethnic group speaking a Wa language, played a role in the establishment of the Lanna polity.¹⁶⁾

Evidence marshalled so far shows that four walled cities constructed by the Lawa predated the rise of Lanna. The first, Wiang Sii Tuang, was situated north of Doi Tung, near Maesai in Chiang Rai province, while the other three, Chetaburi (Wiang Chet Lin), Wiang Suan Dok, and Wiang Nopburi, were concentrated around the foot of Doi Suthep in Chiang Mai city. Aroonrut Wichienkeo has drawn attention to the fact that the Tai Yuan, the Tai ethnic group who are credited with the founding of the Lanna polity, continued to perform Lawa rituals, such as those associated with Sao Inthakhin, Indra's pillar, after the fall of these cities.¹⁷⁾ All of these findings indicate that Lawa polities existed prior to the rise of the Tai Yuan, and that they were connected in some way with the formation of Lanna. After all, the *Chiang Mai Chronicle* positions King Mangrai, the founder of Chiang Mai, as twenty-fifth in the royal lineage of King Lawacangkarat, who some have suggested may have been a Lawa monarch.¹⁸⁾

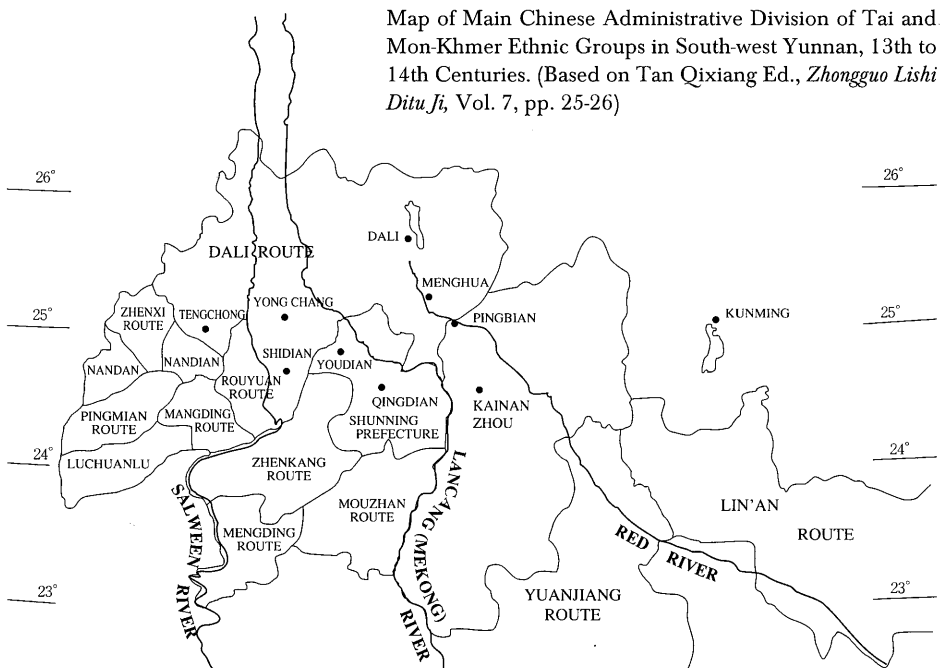
A similar, but more violent, relationship between the Lawa and the Tai can be discerned in the establishment of the Khün polity of Kemaraṭṭha in the Ceng Tung (Kengtung) basin, east of the Salween river in the Shan states. Sao Saimöng Mangrai summarizing data assembled from various historical Chronicles states that the Khün, a Tai speaking ethnic group, conquered the indigenous Lawa who fled from the Ceng Tung Basin in the direction of the present day Wa States. But he notes that some descendants of the defeated Lawa now reside in the two villages of Baan Sai and Baan Kham in the hills of the basin.¹⁹⁾ After the conquest, the Lawa continued to participate in ceremonies related with Khün royalty. The *Jengtung State Chronicle* records that the first Khün ruler of Kemaraṭṭha erected a palace on the site where the house of the former Lawa leader had stood, but before ascending the throne he invited the Lawa from the two villages to the palace, and then had them chased away while they were dining on the "gem-studded throne". This ceremony was last per-

formed at the coronation of the Chaofa in 1897.²⁰⁾ In symbolically re-enacting the conquest the Khün probably aimed to assert their legitimacy to rule former Lawa territory.

Mon-Khmer Polities in South-west Yunnan before the Ming

Chinese scholars maintain that Mon-Khmer speakers were indigenous to South and South-west Yunnan, and they have singled out the Wa, Plang and De'ang (Palaung) ethnic groups as the earliest inhabitants of the Yunnan/Burmese border region.²¹⁾ They have drawn attention to the relics of the Palace of a De'ang Queen, a De'ang walled city, and a De'ang paved road as well as pottery and bricks in Longchuan county 隴川縣, Dehong Dai-Jingpo Autonomous Prefecture 德宏傣族景頗族自治州. However, this claim is problematic because the main evidence for identifying these relics and objects as belonging to the De'ang derives from the oral tradition of local Tai and Jingpo groups who arrived later than the De'ang.²²⁾ Nevertheless we must still pose the question, can we discern a similar pattern of Mon-Khmer speakers wielding political power west of the Salween in the same way as the Lawa did? The answer is that, as yet we have no proof of links between them and with the formation of Tai polities here as has been suggested for northern Thailand, but firm and reliable evidence for the existence of Mon-Khmer polities can be marshalled.

Historical sources from the 13th to 16th centuries reveal clusters of Mon-



Khmer power bases scattered over a wide area covering the present-day Baoshan 保山縣, Shidian 施甸縣 and Fengqing 鳳慶縣 counties in South-west Yunnan. Recorded in the sources by the terms, Pu 蒲, Puren 蒲人 or Puman 蒲蠻, these ethnic groups have been identified as the ancestors of the De'ang or Plang by Chinese scholars (see Table 1). Below for convenience sake sometimes I shall refer to them simply as Mon-Khmer speakers.

The largest and most powerful Mon-Khmer polity was located in the south of Fengqing county. The Chinese transcribed the indigenous name for the territory of these Mon Khmers as Qingdian 慶甸, and after the submission of their leader to Chinese suzerainty, the Yuan and the Ming dynasties incorporated it into the imperial administrative system as Shunning Prefecture. The *Huanyu Tongzhi* 寰宇通志 (The Comprehensive Gazetteer of the Whole World) of 1456, categorically stated;²³⁾

The barbarian name is Qingdian. It is the territory where the Puman live. Since the Han and Tang [they] have not communicated with China, and relying on the dangerous and difficult terrain even the Meng clan [Nanzhao] and Duan clan [Dali Kingdom] with all their might were not able to bring [them] under sway. They acquiesced to soothing and instructions (*fuyu*) for the first time during the Taiding reign period [1324 to 1327] of the Yuan, and Shunning Prefecture was established later.

蠻名慶甸，迺蒲蠻所居之地。漢，唐以前不通中國，憑恃險固，雖蒙氏，段氏之強，亦不能制。元泰定間始從撫諭，後置順寧府。

This passage clearly shows that the Qingdian Mon-Khmer speakers boasted a long history of freedom from outside interference, whether it be from the Nanzhao and the Dali Kingdoms, or from successive Chinese dynasties. Qingdian Mon-Khmers enjoyed a reputation for being fiercely independent, and they continued to administer their own affairs until the late 16th century, as we shall see later.

Exactly when did the Qingdian Mon-Khmers submit to the Yuan?. The *Yuan Shi, juan* 30 gave the name of the Qingdian Mon-Khmer leader as Ani 阿你, and the entry for the shinmao 辛卯 day, eleventh lunar month of the fourth year of Taiding (1327/28) recorded, "The Puman of Yunnan came to submit, and [the Yuan] established Shunning Prefecture, Baotong Sub-Prefecture and Qingdian County 雲南蒲蠻來附，置順寧府，寶通州，慶甸縣."²⁴⁾ Then they presented tribute to the Yuan on the bing shen 丙申 day in the second lunar month of 1330 (Zhishun 1st year 至順1).²⁵⁾ This marked the first stage in the incorporation of the Qingdian Mon-Khmers into the Yuan administrative system for controlling the South-western frontier.

During the 1380s five Mon-Khmer leaders offered allegiance to the Ming dynasty (see Table 2), and before considering them I should like to review the

data we have for Mon-Khmer polities in the preceding period. Three sources from the Yuan provide information that may aid us in thinking about the nature of these Mon-Khmer polities, so I should like to examine each of them in turn.

The first source hints at the material basis of political power in their society. The *Zhaobu Zonglu* 招捕總錄 (General Record of the Pacified and Captured) of the *Jingshi Dadian* 經世大典 (The Great Compendium of Statecraft) of 1332 recorded the following event in the entry for the twenty-fourth year of the Zhiyuan 至元 reign period (1287);²⁶⁾

Also, the Puren from Linchang, Ali, Alingshu Alang and Amengzi Xionghei, were all pacified by the Branch Secretariat. Ali undertook to submit a levy of six hundred iron hoes and three hundred pieces of xionghei cloth each year.

又林場蒲人阿禮，阿怜叔阿郎及阿蒙子雄黑，皆爲行省招出。阿禮歲承差發鐵鋤六百，雄黑布三百匹。

Though I cannot identify the location of Linchang 林場, we can conclude that for Ali to be able to supply 600 hoes and 300 pieces of cloth annually to the Yuan dynasty authorities at Yongchang Prefecture 永昌府 (present day Baoshan 保山縣), he must have had control over metalwork and blacksmithing operations, as well as commanding a population large enough to produce a regular surplus of cloth. This situation sounds similar to that at Doi Tung near Maesai in Northern Thailand where a Lawa leader possessed 500 hoes and rented them out.²⁷⁾ The political authority of early Mon-Khmer leaders may have been intimately linked with power over metalwork technology.

The second source portrays Mon-Khmer speakers as perpetrators of violence and as aggressors in conflict on the frontier. The *Zhaobu Zonglu* of the *Jingshi Dadian* gives the following snippet;²⁸⁾

The Pu bandits of Nanwo in Yongchang, A Duzhong, A Gen and others revolted in the fifth year of the Yanyou reign period (1318), burning and plundering the common people, killing Garrison Commanders and seizing horses belonging to the courier service”

延祐五年，永昌，南窩蒲賊阿都衆阿良等作亂，燒却百姓，殺鎮將，奪驛馬。

These rebels undoubtedly belonged to the Puman ethnic group for the *Yuan Shi*, *juan* 26 also mentioned persistent banditry behaviour by the “Yongchang Puman Abala and others 永昌蒲蠻阿八刺等” in an entry for the second lunar month of 1319 (Yanyou 延祐 6).²⁹⁾ The *Zhaobu Zonglu* recorded that after Yuan troops quelled the uprising in the fifth lunar month of 1319, “Gukedian, Youdian, Qingdian and others all surrendered 枯柯甸，祐甸，慶甸等皆降”，indi-

cating that all of these places were Puman strongholds.

The third source demonstrates the ability of the Qingdian Mon-Khmers to engage in larger scale military action. The section entitled Yunnan in the *Zhaobu Zonglu* described the following event that occurred in the second year of the Zhizhi 至治 reign period (1322/23);³⁰⁾

In the twelfth lunar month Guoshengzong, the leader (*huotou*), of Luoluo Mocha in Lanshanchang in Menghua Sub-Prefecture, allied with Anitong, the Pu leader (*huotou*) of Qingdian, raised a Pu army of 2,500 and a Mocha army of 500 [soldiers] and plundered Dangpu, Huji, Luoheijia and other [places] in Dingyuan [Dingbian] county of Zhennan Sub-Prefecture, killing 99 people and capturing over 100 men and women. The Branch Secretariat instructed them to submit to [the Yuan].

十二月，蒙化州蘭神場落落磨察，火頭過生琮結慶甸蒲火頭阿你通，起蒲軍二千五百，磨察軍五百，劫鎮南州定遠縣當布，戶計，羅黑加等，殺九十九人，虜男女百餘人，行省招諭。

The population of Qingdian must have been substantial for Anitong to have been able to raise, arm and dispatch a force of 2,500 soldiers to distant Dingbian. His allies were situated in Menghua Sub-Prefecture 蒙化州 (in present day Weishan county 巍山縣), while the enemy was located in Dingbian County (in present day Nanjian county 南澗縣) over a hundred kilometres away. Obviously the Qingdian Mon-Khmers possessed sufficient military strength to maintain alliances with outside leaders, and had enough political clout to exert some influence on neighbouring ethnic groups as well.

The Number of Mon-Khmer Polities Incorporated by the Ming State

Next, we come to the issue of exactly how many Mon-Khmer polities and power bases existed in South-west Yunnan. Since no historical accounts written by the Mon-Khmers themselves have been discovered yet, we can only answer this question by referring to Chinese sources. Needless to say, these sources are not entirely accurate because the Chinese only concentrated on recording the ethnic groups whom they controlled, and omitted the ones who refused to acknowledge the supremacy of China. Despite this flaw, the information they contain can still give us a general idea of the situation.

In order to maintain political stability on the south-western frontier the Ming dynasty followed the Yuan policy of awarding designations to indigenous leaders, who had submitted to and recognised the Chinese emperor as their overlord. These official titles carried a rank, and recipients were called Native Officials (*tuguan* 土官); this bore great significance to the Chinese for it placed these indigenous leaders within the hierarchy of the imperial administrative system. The actual scale of power commanded by indigenous leaders varied in

size from confederations of basin polities, as was the case with the Tai ethnic groups, to headmen of a single village, a more common situation for swidden agriculturalists. The rank of titles conferred generally accorded with the strength and importance of leaders and their regimes.

From the viewpoint of indigenous leaders these titles acknowledged their positions as sovereigns. In effect, the Chinese emperor appointed them to exercise authority over their own ethnic people or polities, and issued Native Officials with letters patent, credentials and seals as proof. In return the Ming court expected Native Officials to present tribute at prescribed times and to assist the Ming army in punitive expeditions in frontier areas. Otherwise, Native Officials retained the freedom to rule their people according to their own customary law. However, the Ming court did intervene in their domestic affairs when disputes arose over succession to titles, and resorted to military action against Native Officials who rebelled. So the very act of becoming a Native Official launched indigenous leaders off on a journey towards incorporation into the Ming system of administration; failure to comply with rules, regulations and prescribed codes of behaviour could lead to disempowerment and eventually elimination.

In Table 2 I have listed the titles of five Mon-Khmer Native Officials (*Tuguan* 土官) and given the dates of their initial appointment and abolishment (when known) between the 14th and 17th centuries. The title of each Native Official indicated the existence of an indigenous unit of social and political organisation of different size. Among them the Shunning Native Prefectural Magistrate 順寧府土知府 (rank 4a) held the highest rank, the Senior Officials of Native Chief's Offices 長官司 (rank 6a) came next, while the Native Police Chiefs 土巡檢司 bore the lowest rank. This allows us to assume that the Shunning Native Prefecture and the two Native Chief's Offices of Shidian and Fengxi represented the largest Mon-Khmer polities.

If we take into account evidence not included in Table 2, the count of Mon-Khmer strongholds actually goes up. The *Dian Zhi* of the 1620s recorded the existence of fifteen *xuan* and twenty-eight stockades (*shiwu xuan ershiba zhai* 十五暄二十八寨) in Baoshan County.³¹ In his reconstruction using 19th century sources, Gong Yin 龔蔭 lists twenty of the twenty-eight stockades as headed by vice Battalion commanders (*fu Qianzhang* 副千夫長) and Company Commanders (*Baihuzhang* 百夫長) who he identified as Plang.³² The *Dian Zhi*, the sole Ming source to mention them, however, only gives their ethnic composition as Dabo 大樊 (Tai), Puren 蒲人 (De'ang/Plang) and Echang 峨昌 (Jingpo), and provides no indication whatsoever of which ethnic group lived in what stockade. This is the main reason that I have excluded the fifteen *xuan* and twenty-eight stockades from Table 2. Nevertheless, we cannot ignore the fact that Mon-Khmer groups with smaller scales of power existed in Baoshan county.

Also some ethnic groups shied away from contact with China. The Youdian

Table 2 Mon-Khmer Native Officials (*Tuguan* 土官) in south-western Yunnan, 14th to 17th centuries.

	Title of <i>Tuguan</i>	Ethnic Name	Dates		Present Location	Source
			Initial Appointment	Elimination		
1	Native Prefectural Magistrate of Shunning Prefecture 順寧府土知府	Puman 蒲蠻, Puren 蒲人	Hongwu 17 (1384)	Wanli 26 (1598)	Fengqing county 鳳慶縣	<i>Ming Shi</i> , 卷 313, p. 8073. <i>Tuguan Dibu</i> , 卷上, p. 84a.
2	Senior Official of Shidian Native Chief's Office 施甸長官司土官正長官	Pu 蒲	Hongwu 17 (1384) Z	After Tianqi (1621-1627)	Shidian county seat 施甸縣縣城	<i>Ming Shi</i> , 卷 314, p. 8103. <i>Dian Zhi</i> , 卷 30, p. 977.
3	Senior Official of Fengxi Native Chief's Office 鳳谿長官司土官正長官	Pu 蒲	Hongwu 23 (1390)	After Tianqi (1621-1627)	North-eastern part of Baoshan county 保山縣東北部	<i>Ming Shi</i> , 卷 314, p. 8103. <i>Dian Zhi</i> , 卷 30, p. 977.
4	Native Police Chief of the Diantou Police Office 甸頭巡檢司土巡檢	Puren 蒲人	Hongwu 16 (1383/84)	After Tianqi (1621-1627)	Northern part of Baoshan county 保山縣北部	<i>Tuguan Dibu</i> , 卷下, p. 13b. <i>Dian Zhi</i> , 卷 30, p. 977.
5	Native Police Chief of the Shuiyan Police Office 水眼巡檢司土巡檢	Puren 蒲人	Hongwu 18 (1385?)	After Tianqi (1621-1627)	Beishui Zhang, Shidian county 施甸縣北水長	<i>Tuguan Dibu</i> , 卷上, p. 87 a. <i>Dian Zhi</i> , 卷 30, p. 977.

Mon-Khmers avoided yielding to the Ming dynasty for over sixty years. Because they lay beyond the ken of Han culture, the Ming authorities found their customs and language difficult to understand, and accordingly labelled them as "raw Pu (*sheng Pu* 生蒲)" emphasizing their complete lack of sinicised cultural characteristics. In the entry for the *dingsi* 丁巳 day of the fifth lunar month of 1430 (Xuande 宣德 5), the *Xuanzong Shilu* 宣宗實錄 (Veritable Records of the Xiaozong emperor), related;³³⁾

Mang Han, the headman of the raw Pu in Youdian in Yunnan dispatched his uncle Alei to come to court to present tribute of horses. Prior to this, Adabu and other raw Pu from Shunning Prefecture had come to rob and then disappear, which disturbed the peace of the barbarian people (*yimin*) Mang Han and others felt delighted [when they heard that the Emperor had refrained from dispatching a punitive expedition against

them], brought the five thousand households that were subordinate to them and turning toward civilisation (*xiang hua*) [they] desired to enter court to present tribute. Adabu also dispersed his followers and did not commit robbery again.

雲南右甸生蒲頭目莽寒，遣叔阿類來朝貢馬，先是順寧府生蒲阿答卜等，出沒為盜，夷民不安。……莽寒等感悅，以所屬五千戶向化，願入朝貢。阿答卜亦散遣其黨，不復為盜。

This example indicates what large numbers of Puman lived outside the control of the Ming state until the first half of the fifteenth century. In order to incorporate these five thousand households the Ming created a new administrative unit called Guangyi Sub-Prefecture 廣邑州 within the jurisdiction of Shunning Native Prefecture, and appointed their leader Mang Han to serve as the Vice Magistrate (*tongzhou* 同州), under the new Puman magistrate (*zhizhou* 知州) named Adulu 阿都魯. In the words of the *Xuanzong Shilu*, the establishment of this new sub-Prefecture involved, “combining the tame Pu with the raw Pu that have been subdued, and subordinating [them] to it” 以熟蒲并所招生蒲屬之.³⁴ By mixing the raw Pu who remained unsinicised with the tame Pu who were subject to Ming law and culturally closer to Han culture, the Ming State hoped to make them easier to manage.

Even in the early 17th century, uncontrollable or wild Pu (*ye pu* 野蒲) still abounded in Yunnan. The *Dian Zhi*, juan 30 described their distribution³⁵;

Those in Mengzi, Jiaohua Sanbu [Wenshan county 文山縣] and the eighteen stockades are all called wild Pu, and are more obstinate and intractable than the other barbarians. Those in Jingdong are simple and engage in agriculture. Those that live alongside the Lancang [Mekong] river in Shunning are known as Puman, and are also called Puziman. By nature they are fierce and specialize in banditry; they ride without saddles, go barefooted, use short armour which does not cover their knees and neck, charge forward at great speed and excel at using spears and crossbows.

在蒙自及教化三部，十八寨，皆號野蒲，桀驁甚諸夷。在景東者，淳朴務農。在順寧沿蘭滄江居者，號普蠻，亦曰朴子蠻，性尤悍惡，專為盜賊，不鞍而騎，徒跣短甲，不蔽頸膝，馳突迅疾，善用槍弩。

This passage indicates a wide distribution of wild Pu east of the Mekong river. They spread from Wenshan county in the extreme south-east through Mengzi in the Honghe Hani-Yi Nationalities Autonomous Prefecture 紅河哈尼彝族自治州 to the Mekong river in the south-west. While many of the larger Mon-Khmer polities in South-west Yunnan had become incorporated into the Ming administrative system as Native Officials by the 1620s, smaller groups of Puman still continued to reject interference from the Chinese State.

The Decline of Mon-Khmer Political Power

The elimination of the Shunning Native Prefecture in 1598 (Wanli 萬曆 26th year) signalled the shrinking of Mon-Khmer political authority. This prefecture boasted a long lineage of twelve Native Prefectural Magistrates in the Ming who had amassed substantial wealth. In fact it was precisely this wealth that brought their downfall. Let us begin with the first magistrate.

The Ming court formally appointed the Qingdian leader, "Ayuegong, a Puren of Shunning Prefecture in Yunnan 阿曰貢雲南順寧府蒲人",³⁶⁾ as the Native Prefectural Magistrate in 1384 (Hongwu 洪武 17), two years after their submission to the new Chinese dynasty.³⁷⁾ By doing so the Ming court merely acknowledged the power of the established leader, so the act of pledging allegiance at this time did not cause any re-structuring of leadership among the Qingdian Mon-Khmers. According to the *Tuguan Dibu* 土官底簿 (The Draft Register of Native Chiefs), the other eleven Magistrates who succeeded Ayuegong all adopted the surname Meng 猛.³⁸⁾

The *Ming Shi* related that the abolishment of Shunning Native Prefecture resulted from the animosity felt by the Assistant Regional Commander (*canjiang* 參將) Wu Xianzhong 吳顯忠 towards Meng Tingrui 猛廷瑞, the last in the line of Native Prefectural Magistrates, who refused his demands for money. Wu then turned vindictive, and he concocted charges against Meng Tingrui, claiming that Meng intended to rebel against the Ming. The Wanli emperor responded by ordering punitive military action. Wu Xianzhong, who led the Ming forces in the attack against Meng Tingrui, "seized all the several millions of wealth that the Meng family had accumulated over eighteen generations 盡取猛氏十八代蓄貲數百萬"³⁹⁾, which indicates the affluence of the ruling family at the time of its demise. For the leadership lineage to have lasted for 18 generations, six generations must have preceded the Ming, which suggests a total history of about 300 years. Although we do not know anything about the internal organisation of this polity, the disempowerment of it at the end of the sixteenth century probably had repercussions on other Mon-Khmer powerholders as well.

The Mon-Khmers had definitely lost their former lustre by the early 17th century. The *Dian Zhi* remarked on the contemporary Puman,⁴⁰⁾

Yongchang, Fengqi, Shidian and the Fifteen *Xuan* and twenty-eight stockades are all of their type [i.e. Puman]. They diligently labour cultivating with hoes. They ascend mountains barefooted faster than flying birds. In former times when problems arose [the dynasty] often relied on their strength, but now they have gradually become weak and poor. Those that have moved into Xinxing [in Yuxi county 玉溪縣], Lufeng [present day Lufeng county near Kunming], Ami [Kaiyuan county 開遠縣] and Zhennan [Nanhua county 南華] are jet black in complexion, tie their hair in mallet shaped knots and go barefooted. They dress in short clothes that they put

on by pulling over the head, wear bronze bracelets on their wrists and insert bronze rings through their ears, and carry swords, crossbows and long shields which are decorated with silk and lacquer, and attach peacock tail feathers to the top.

永昌，鳳溪，施甸及十五喧，二十八寨，皆其種。勤力耕鋤。徒跣登山，疾逾飛鳥。舊時有事，多資其力，今漸弱而貧矣。其流入新興，祿豐，阿迷，鎮南者，形質純黑，椎結跣足，套頭短衣，手銅鐲，耳銅圈，帶刀弩長牌，飾以絲漆，上插孔雀尾。

The Shidian and the Fengqi Native Chief's offices as well as the Diantou 甸頭 and Shuiyan Police Offices 水眼巡檢司土巡檢 and the other village level Mon-Khmer power bases clearly had fallen into decline by the 1620s. Failure to maintain their former economic and political vigour had reduced the capability of Mon-Khmer Native Officials to handle problems and render aid in emergency situations on the frontier. This turn of events made them less useful to the Ming state, and undermined their prestige. The reason for the sudden wane of Mon-Khmer political power remains unclear. Perhaps it had something to do with the abolishment of the Shunning Native Prefecture in 1598. Or perhaps it was connected with economic changes; swidden agriculture and metal-work may no longer have been sufficient to viably support polities as before.

Whatever the real reason, there can be no doubt that the decline caused a dispersal of Mon-Khmers. The *Dian Zhi* clearly stated that it was political weakness and impoverishment that forced the Mon-Khmers to emigrate. Moreover, the geographical extent of the diaspora was amazingly broad. They migrated as far as Kaiyuan [Ami Zhou] and Yuxi/[Xinxing] counties in South-eastern Yunnan, Lufeng county near Kunming, and to Nanhua county [Zhennan] which lay closer to home. Severe disruptions to their livelihood must have driven them to move so far away. For the Mon-Khmers of South-west Yunnan the early 17th century marked a major turning point in their history. It spelt the end of their larger independent polities, and the onset of a new era which was characterised by migration, assimilation and life in smaller settlements scattered over a wide area of Yunnan. For the Mon-Khmers in the South-west who chose not to emigrate the possibility of assimilation with other ethnic groups, especially the Han loomed larger than ever before.

(iii) The Spread of Tai Language and Culture

As I mentioned in the Introduction, one of the main characteristics of the Tai Cultural Area is the dominance of Tai language and culture. Tai languages served as the *lingua franca* of the market-place and of the political elites, and other ethnic groups adopted Tai material culture and practised Tai style Theravada Buddhism, often using Tai language and script. When did this phe-

nonomen arise? Was it related to the introduction of Theravada Buddhism?. These questions come readily to mind, and the purpose of this section is to try to answer them by examining the historical background. As I shall demonstrate below, Tai language and culture spread as a result of the political ascendancy of the Tai ethnic sub-group called the Baiyi in the 13th and 14th centuries before the introduction of Theravada Buddhism west of the Salween river.

To understand the situation first let us consider how the Chinese sources classified the Tai ethnic groups in the 13th century. The authors of the *Yuan Shi* (The Official History of the Yuan Dynasty) of 1369 recognised two large sub-groups of the Tai; they called one the Jinchiman (Golden Teeth Barbarians), and the other the Baiyi (recorded as either White Barbarians, or Hundred Barbarians in various sources). The *Yuan Shi*, *juan* 61 gives the following account of the background to the emergence of these two sub-groups before they surrendered to the Yuan dynasty during the mid-13th century.⁴¹⁾

The domains of the Pacification Commissions of Jinchin and other places lie to the South-east of Dali, the Lancang [Mekong] river borders on its east and it adjoins the territory of Mian [Myanmar] on its West. Altogether there are eight types of local barbarians (*tuman*) called; the Jinchin (Golden Teeth), Baiyi (White Barbarians), Echang [Jingpo], Piao [Pyu?], Ji [Tai or Siam?], Quluo [unidentified], and Bisu [Pisu?].

According to the [*New History of the Tang*] [*Nanzhao Zhuan*], the Mangshi Barbarians were originally of the type from Guannan [error for Kainan 開南], and to the south of Yongchang they live in raised buildings and possess no walled cities. Some paint their teeth with lacquer, while some gild their teeth with gold, and it is for this reason that they are commonly called the Jinchiman. They have never communicated with China since the Han [dynasty] opened the South-western Barbarians. During the Tang the Meng Clan of Nanzhao arose. [The sixth King of the Nanzhao Kingdom] Yimouxun [779-808] defeated the hordes of barbarians (*gunman*), captured all of their people and [moved them] to populate the south, east, and north of his territory. He obtained their lands, and [the area to] the Qingshi mountain on the border with Mian [Myanmar] all belonged to Dali.

By the time of the Duan Clan, the Baiyi [White Barbarians] and the various barbarians had gradually regained their former lands, and thereafter the Jinchin and various barbarians came to flourish more and more.

金齒等處宣撫司。其地在大理西南，蘭滄江界其東，與緬地接其西。土蠻凡八種：曰金齒，曰白夷，曰爨，曰峨昌，曰驃，曰緦，曰渠羅，曰比蘇。按唐史，茫施蠻本關南種，在永昌之南，樓居，無城郭。或漆齒，或金齒，故俗呼金齒蠻。自漢開西南夷後，未嘗與中國通。唐南詔蒙氏興，異牟尋破羣蠻，盡虜其人以實其南東北，取其地，南至青石山緬界，悉屬大理。及段氏時，白夷諸蠻漸復故地，是後金齒諸蠻浸盛。

This text distinguishes the Jinchi and Baiyi as separate political entities. It traces the Jinchi back to the Mangshi Barbarians, who were called Mangman 茫蠻 during the Nanzhao period. Jiang Yingliang identifies them as ancestors of the Tai and has shown that they commanded a wide geographical distribution. He says that apart from Kainan (area south of present day Jingdong county) given in the *Yuan Shi*, they also occupied the area south of Yongchang (present day Dehong Dai and Jingpo Nationalities Autonomous Prefecture) as well as the region west of the Salween river to both banks of the Irrawaddy river.⁴²⁾ The name Golden teeth barbarian was an exonymic appellation deriving from their customs of bodily adornment. During the Nanzhao period terms such as Heichi 黑齒 (Black Teeth), Yinchi 銀齒 (Silver Teeth), Qichi 漆齒 (Lacquer Teeth), Xiumian 繡面 (Embroidered Face), Xiujiào 繡脚 (Embroidered Legs) and so forth were used to refer to them.

The reason that the Yuan court paid close attention to the Jinchi seems to have been due to their ready submission, and because of their political ascent in the Dali Kingdom period after experiencing forced migration under the Nanzhao regime; the *Yuan Shi* clearly noted their recent rise to power with the phrase, “the Jinchi and various barbarians came to flourish more and more”.

Though the *Yuan Shi* failed to furnish a clear statement on the origins of the Baiyi, there can be no doubt that by the 13th century the Baiyi and Jinchi represented different power groups, and in order to bring south-west Yunnan and northern Burma under sway the Yuan court had to subdue both groups. The *Yuan Shi*, *juan* 61 continued;⁴³⁾

Dali was pacified in the fourth year of Xianzong [1254], and the Yuan persisted with its campaigns against the Baiyi [White barbarians] and other barbarians. In the first year of the Zhongtong reign period [1260], the various chiefs of the Jinchi and the Baiyi [White barbarians] each dispatched [their] sons and younger brothers to present tribute. In the second year [1261], an Anfusi [Pacification Commission] was established in order to administer them. In the 8th year of the Zhiyuan reign period [1271], the Jinchi and the Baiyi [White barbarians] were separated into the two East and West Route Anfushi [Pacification Commissioners]. In the twelfth year [1275], the West Route was converted into the Jianning Route, and the East Route was converted into the Zhenkang Route. In the fifteenth year [1278], the Anfu [Pacification Commissioners] were changed to Xuanfu [Pacification Commissioners], and the Six Route Commands were set up. In the Twenty-third year [1285], the Xuanfusi [Pacification Commissions] of the two routes were abolished and incorporated into the Xuanfusi [Pacification Commissions] of Dali, Jinchi and other places.

元憲宗四年，平定大理，繼征白夷等蠻。中統初，金齒，白夷諸酋各遣子弟朝貢。二年，立安撫司以統之。至元八年，分金齒，白夷爲東西兩路安撫使。十

二年，改西路爲建寧路，東路爲鎮康路，十五年，改安撫爲宣撫，立六路總管府。二十三年，罷兩路宣撫司，併入大理金齒等處宣撫司。

Since the Yuan court acknowledged the Jinchi and the Baiyi [White Barbarians] as distinct political groups, they tried to administer them separately by dividing them into two administrative units; first into East and West Route Anfushi, and then into the Zhenkang and Jianning routes. Administrative titles such as Xuanfusi [Pacification Commission] and so forth were designations awarded by the Yuan Emperor to chieftains of non-Han peoples in south-west China in order to exert some form of authority over them, but they do not accurately reflect the extent of indigenous polities. This makes it difficult to determine whether the repeated changing of these titles indicated real shifts in the political power of Tai speaking groups, or merely mirrored the whims of Yuan administrators.

But by 1278 when the Yuan court established the Pacification Commissioners and Six Route Commands the Baiyi had clearly emerged as the dominant group. The *Yuan Shi* recorded that the Baiyi [White Barbarians] occupied three of the six routes (the Zhenxi Route 鎮西路, Pingmian Route 平緬路, Luchuan Route 麓川路,) and shared an auxiliary territory called Nandan 南談 with the Echang (Jingpo). Of the other three routes only the Mangshi Route 茫施路 seems to have been Jinchi.⁴⁴ From this time onwards, Chinese sources used Baiyi as the main term for the Tai, and the name Jinchi gradually disappeared.

At the turn of the 14th century, the *Yunnan Zhilüe* 雲南志略 (A Brief Account of Yunnan), written by Li Jing 李京 who took up office in Yunnan in 1301, referred to the political supremacy and wide distribution of the Baiyi in the following words:⁴⁵

The *Baiyi* [White Barbarians] flourish the most amongst the barbarians of the south-west. To the north they adjoin the Tufan [Tibetans], and in the south they extend to Jiaozhi [Vietnam], and [their] customs are generally the same.

西南之蠻，白夷最盛，北接吐蕃，南抵交趾，風俗大概相同。

At this point we have to ask the question who were the Baiyi? How were they related to the Jinchi?

The term Baiyi [Hundred barbarians] superseded Baiyi [White Clothes] during the Ming dynasty, but it first appeared during the Yuan period in an explanation submitted by envoys from the Jinchi Barbarians who had travelled to Shangdu 上都 (Dolon-nor, present day Duolun 多倫) in Inner Mongolia for an audience with Khubilai Khan in 1261 (Zhongtong 中統 2) after their surrender:⁴⁶

Their language is unintelligible, and must undergo repeated translations

before it can be understood. The country is called *Baiyi* (Hundred barbarians), which is a general appellation meaning hordes of barbarians (*qunman*). Its territory is located several thousand *li* south-west of Dali, and it is subordinate to the six *zhao*.

言語侏離，重譯而後通，國名百夷，蓋群蠻之總稱也。其地在大理西南數千里外，而隸六詔焉。

The term six *zhao* 六詔 refers to the Duan family regime (*Duan Shi Zongguan* 段氏總管 or Duan Clan Route Commander) which continued to maintain some vestige of power in Western Yunnan until the 14th century.⁴⁷⁾ The *Baiyi Zhuan* supplied the names of the ethnic groups dwelling in Mäng Maw at the close of the 14th century (see Table 1), and in his preface to this work Li Sicong 李思聰 attributed the origin of the term Baiyi to the fact that “the various barbarians live intermixed 以其諸夷雜處，故曰百夷”⁴⁸⁾. From this we can conclude that the word Baiyi [Hundred Barbarians] originally had two meanings; first as a general appellation for polities with a polyethnic composition, and second as a name for the Tai ethnic groups who controlled the polities. The term seems to have lost its first meaning by the 15th century, after which it came to exclusively refer to the Tai ethnic group. According to Chinese sources, it was the language and culture of the Baiyi [Hundred Barbarians] that came to dominant other ethnic groups.

After the 14th century, the Chinese stopped using the terms Jinchi and Baiyi to distinguish between political power within the Tai. Instead they divided them into two groups which they named the Greater Baiyi (大百夷 Greater Hundred Barbarians, or Greater Tai) and the Lesser Baiyi (小百夷 Lesser Hundred Barbarians, or Lesser Tai). Judging from the *Baiyi Zhuan*, the Greater Baiyi occupied the area lying between the west bank of the Salween and the Irrawaddy rivers, while the Lesser Baiyi spread from the east bank of the Salween to the Mekong river. The precise origin of the term Great Baiyi remains unclear, but one cannot help noticing the striking resemblance it bears to the Siamese appellation for the Shan, the Tai Yai, which also means Great Tai. Apart from geographical location, historical sources for the 14th century mention no other criteria for distinguishing between the Greater Baiyi and the Lesser Baiyi.

Regards the Lesser Baiyi, the *Baiyi Zhuan* of 1396 provided the following explanation:⁴⁹⁾

The Lesser Baiyi live in the north-east border of the territory. Some imitate the Achang, some copy the Puman, while others follow the Greater Baiyi. Their customs are not uniform. Cheli [Sipsong Panna] is also called Lesser Baiyi, and its customs include tattooing the forehead, blackening the teeth, and cutting the hair in the style of an itinerant monk.

小百夷居其境之東北邊，或學阿昌，或學蒲蠻，或做大百夷，其習俗不一。車

里亦謂小百夷，其俗刺額，黑齒，剪髮，狀如頭陀。

Two important points should be observed here. First, the category Lesser Baiyi included the area east of the Salween river and Sipsong Panna. Second, other ethnic groups exerted strong influence on the Lesser Baiyi. The text specifically stated that some of the Lesser Baiyi positively adopted cultural elements from Mon-Khmers speakers (the Puman) who as we have already seen maintained large political bases. Considering the previous discussion on Chiang Mai and Ceng Tung, one cannot help wondering whether the culture of Mon-Khmer speakers here too played some sort of role in the formation of the Sipsong Panna polity. In this respect it is worth noting that the *Ming Shi* of 1735 singled out Sino-Tibetan speakers as one of the original inhabitants of Sipsong Panna.⁵⁰⁾

Cheli is the Chanli of ancient times, and is territory where the Woni [Aini], the Diaodang [unidentified] and other barbarians dwell intermixed. [They] have not communicated with China since ancient times.
車里，即古產里，為倭泥，貂黨諸蠻雜居之地，古不通中國。

If we recognise the Woni as a sub-group of the Hani, then some type of contact with Sino-Tibetan speakers must be considered as well. At any rate, all we can say is that early contact with a large number of ethnic groups may have contributed to the dissimilarities so manifest among the various Tai groups living in Sipsong Panna and other places east of the Salween today.

By the early 17th century a different interpretation for the terms Greater Baiyi and Lesser Baiyi had appeared. In his *Dian Lue* 滇略 (An Account of Yunnan), *juan* 9, the celebrated scholar Xie Zhaozhe 謝肇淛 (1567 to 1624) provided the following explanation. Xie wrote this book while he held office as Administration Vice Commissioner (of the right) in Yunnan 雲南右參政, and probably published it at Dali sometime after 1625.⁵¹⁾

The Lesser Boyi are tame barbarians (*shuyi*). The area south-west of Yongchang is full of them. The dress of the men and women are a bit close to that of China, and they also understand the Chinese language. They dwell in villages, and by nature are tractable and prudent. They cultivate for a livelihood, but the types of clothes that they weave are not very numerous

The Greater Boyi live to the West of Longchuan. The men cut their hair and tattoo their bodies. The women go barefoot, darken their teeth and wrap their heads in coloured cloth. Their food and drink is simple, but quite excellent. They are fond of living near water, and the men and the women both strip down to the waist and bathe together in the rivers

.....

小伯夷熟夷也。永昌西南環境皆是。男婦服飾稍近中華，亦通漢語。居村寨。性馴謹耕食，織衣種類不甚繁.....

大伯夷在隴川以西，男子翦髮紋身，婦人跣足染齒，以色布裹其首。飲食簡而頗精。居喜近水，男女皆袒浴于河。

According to this source, both the Greater and Lesser Baiyi [written as Boyi in this text] dwelt in south-west Yunnan, but there is no specific mention of either group living to the east of the Salween river. One wonders whether these terms are not just a rewording of the 13th century divisions between Baiyi (= Greater Baiyi) and Jinchi (= Lesser Baiyi).

Whatever the historical origins of the Baiyi, there can be no doubt that it was the language and culture of the Greater Baiyi that exerted the greatest influence over other ethnic groups. The *Baiyi Zhuan* clearly stated:⁵²⁾

Though the languages and customs of the various barbarians (*yi*) differ, since the Greater Baiyi are the chiefs, therefore each of them imitates their behaviour.

諸夷言語習俗雖異，然由大百夷爲君長，故各或效其所爲。

This observation demonstrates that the language and culture of the Tai west of the Salween river to some extent had diffused out amongst Mon-Khmer and Tibeto-Burman speakers through the medium of political power by the late 14th century. At that time, the Shan language probably already functioned as a *lingua franca*, and some cultural borrowing had probably already taken place as well. If this was the case, it is easy to hypothesize that the partial assimilation of some non-Tai peoples helped to increase the Tai population, or at least swell the numbers of people with close affinity to the Tai.⁵³⁾

What spread out over the area west of the Salween during the 12th, 13th and 14th centuries was the language and culture of the Tai before they converted to Theravada Buddhism. As we shall see below, Buddhism did not gain a foothold west of the Salween until the 15th century at the earliest, so the Tai culture that dominated at this time must have differed from the culture that emerged after Theravada Buddhism took root in society. Though we possess no contemporary historical sources that throw light on the nature of this older Tai culture, it is possible that some of the elements of Tai language and culture that the indigenous Mon-Khmer speakers retain today may be relics of this older tradition.

(2) Tai Polities and the Arrival of Theravada Buddhism

A great number of small and large Tai polities emerged both east and west

of the Salween river between the 13th and 16th centuries. Exactly when did the inhabitants of these polities embrace Buddhism, and from what period did their rulers adopt it as the religion of state in order to reinforce their authority? As we shall see below, historical sources indicate that Buddhism spread throughout the areas east and west of the Salween at different periods, and arrived through separate routes.

Theravada Buddhism spread out amongst the polities east of the Salween first. According to Hans Pentz, the royal family and commoners in the Lan Na polity felt a deep attraction to Buddhism from the 1330s onwards, and a movement to purify local Buddhism arose there during the 15th century, by which time it had turned into a major centre for Theravada studies; the Eighth Buddhist Council was convened there in 1477.⁵⁴⁾ The following passage from the *Dian Lüe* (An Account of Yunnan) by Xie Zhaozhe indicates the extent to which Buddhism had penetrated the everyday lives of people in Lan Na, which the Chinese called Babai Dadian 八百大甸, by the early 17th century:⁵⁵⁾

Tradition holds that Babai Dadian is named Babai Xifu (八百媳婦 or Eight Hundred Wives) because its chief (*giuzhang*) had eight hundred wives, each one of whom headed a stockade. Its territory adjoins Mubang [Senwi]. The clothing and food of the men and women are all similar, but they tattoo patterns of flowers between their eyebrows and eyes. When meeting with guests they put their palms together as a greeting. They like to serve the Buddha. Temples and pagodas are extremely numerous; each village has a temple, and each temple has a pagoda, and they probably number over 10,000. It is called the Benevolent Country (慈國 *ciguo*). Its chief (*giu*) loathes killing, and is not fond of disputes. When an enemy invades he only meets the attack if it is necessary, and stops [military action] once he captures the enemy. It produces benzoin (*anxixiang*). At present it is tributary to *Mian* (Myanmar).

八百大甸者，世傳其酋長有妻八百，各領一寨，因名八百媳婦。與木邦接壤。男女服食皆同，但刺花樣於眉目間，與客相見，則把手爲禮。喜事佛，寺塔極多，一村一寺，每寺一塔，殆以萬計，號慈國。其酋惡殺，不喜爭，敵侵不得已而應，得所讎而罷。產安息香。今入於緬。

We can assume that Buddhism had become well established at the village level much earlier than this source, at least by the 16th century.

Theravada Buddhism diffused out from Lan Na to the polities lying to its north. It may have reached Ceng Tung as early as the mid-14th century when monks are said to have begun building temples there.⁵⁶⁾ According to *The Padaeng Chronicle*, sometime in the mid-15th many hill people, the Lü and the Lēm from the direction of Sipsong Panna, as well as people from Mäng Ka, Mäng Pan, Mäng Po, Mäng Mën, Mäng Ting, and Küng Ma came down to

Ceng Tung to study Buddhism and take it back home with them.⁵⁷⁾ Though temples had been built and the Theravada tradition had spread to some extent in Sipsong Panna between the late 15th and first half of the 16th centuries,⁵⁸⁾ the Caw Phën Din (Lord of the Earth), or King, did not construct his first temple until 1570, the year after Sipsong Panna commenced submitting tribute to the newly founded Toungoo dynasty.⁵⁹⁾

In contrast, Theravada Buddhism did not reach Tai polities west of the Salween until a much later date. As with polities to the east, the dearth of source materials makes it difficult to pinpoint exactly when it turned into the religion of state here, but we do know for sure that it had not arrived by the late 14th century for the *Baiyi Zhuan* of 1396 bluntly stated that the Tai of Mäng Maw, “do not worship the ancestors, do not believe in the Buddha, and have no Buddhist monks or Daoist priests 不祀先，不奉佛，亦無僧道”.⁶⁰⁾ However, this situation had completely changed by the second half of the 16th century. The *Xinan Yi Fengtu Ji* of 1584 reported, “as a custom they revere Buddhism, temples and pagodas are everywhere in the villages, and are extremely magnificent” 俗尚佛教，寺塔徧村落，且極壯麗⁶¹⁾. If Buddhism had already taken root at the village level by this time, then one is tempted to argue that the conversion of the Tai west of the Salween to Theravada Buddhism commenced during the 15th century,⁶²⁾ but before drawing a conclusion let us consider other evidence.

First, what do Shan historical sources have to say? The *Bün Mäng Senwi* (The Senwi Chronicle) records an event which suggests that Buddhism was not prevalent in Senwi during the 15th century. Though the background is long and involved I should like to quote it at length due to its significance.

The story runs that the Burmese King ordered Kham Hip Pha, the Caw Pha of Senwi, to escort home the Caw Pha of Keng May (Chiang Mai), Keng Hai (Chiang Rai) and Keng Sën (Chiang Saen), all of whom had travelled to Awa to pay homage to him. One day at the end of his stay in Chiang Mai, Kham Hip Pha spied a large temple with a great pagoda in its compound on a walk around the city with a cowherd named Aay. He announced:⁶³⁾

“I will enter this big temple to see the five Buddha images that are lined up together”. The Caw [Pha] and followers [khaa] both exclaimed, “In this country there are images of Phi. Let us take them home to show our people. If they really are good, then we can believe in them like the people of this country. If they are not good, then we can give them to the girls and the boys to play with. Cowherd, you pick this up and see whether it is made of wood or something else?”. When the cowherd lifted it up it felt very heavy, and he proclaimed that this is not wood, but iron or copper!

Then Caw Long Kham Hip went to pick up four of the Buddha im-

ages, but he found them very heavy and was unable to raise them. Only one of the Buddha images was built lightly, and Caw Long Kham Hip was able to lift it up. The cowherd, fearing that other people would see it, covered it with cloth and hid it at his place. Two days later early in the morning, Caw Long Kham Hip Phaa gathered his soldiers and left Weng Keng May (Chiang Mai). He returned [to Senwi] in the year [Chula] sakarat 833 [= 1471AD]

At that time the people [in Senwi] all said, "Let us soak this Phi image in a hot spring in order to see if it is good or bad, and has great glory (*mun*) or not". They went and soaked it in a hot spring, and the [water] immediately turned cold. They said, "this Phi image from Mäng Yon [Yuan] possesses great glory". At that time, the Caw Pha Long addressed all of the bureaucrats (*mu maat phöng mäng*), slaves (*khaa phaay*) and commoners (*tay mäng*) saying, "This Phi image has great glory, and if angered will become frighteningly strong (*hay*). Let us cut down the sacred trees of the villages and country (*sä maan sä mäng*) to construct a house, slaughter pigs, roast fowls and offer it cattle and water buffaloes to eat."

A house was built for the Phi to dwell in. In the middle of the night the image of the Buddha ran away and could not be found.

Here I do not wish to touch upon the historical veracity of this story⁶⁴, but should like to draw attention to the unashamed admission by the compilers of this chronicle that rulers and commoners in Senwi alike knew nothing of Buddhism in the second half of the fifteenth century. Their inability to distinguish between the Buddha and Phi (local genii or guardian spirits) highlight this point; they consistently referred to Buddha statues as Phi images, and consecrated the one they eventually housed in Senwi with animal flesh, certainly not correct behaviour for devout Buddhists. While this story testifies that Buddhism did flourish in Chiang Mai at the time, it also shows that the contemporary rulers of Senwi felt no impelling urge to adopt the Buddhist religion from Lanna. This may be a reflection of the fact that Buddhism ultimately reached the Tai polities west of the Salween from Burma, a point I should like to consider next.

Second, after pacifying the Tai (Shan), the third monarch of the Toungoo dynasty King Bayin-naung (reigned 1551 to 1581) introduced a series of measures designed to incorporate them into the Buddhist world of the Mon and Burmans. Bayin-naung erected monasteries and pagodas west of the Salween, and distributed Buddhist scriptures among the Tai (Shan). In some Tai polities, he even compelled both the rulers and the clergy to conform to Burmese Buddhism.⁶⁵ This implies that Buddhism had already spread out amongst the Shan before the mid-16th century. What the above passage from the *Xinan Yi Fengtu Ji* reported then was the changed situation after Bayin-naung implement-

ed his cultural unification policy. At any rate, it is clear that some form of Buddhism had reached the Shan before they had Burmese Buddhism thrust upon them.

The Tai Cultural Area marks the northern limit to the spread of Theravada Buddhism in Mainland South-east Asia, and religious and political organisations there differed considerably from those of the adjoining Chinese world. Theravada Buddhism travelled from south to north; starting from Sri Lanka it went to the Mon states in Lower Burma during the early 11th century, next to the Burmans in the mid-11th century, and then to Ayutthaya and Cambodia during the second half of the 13th century before spreading over most of the Tai Cultural Area between the 14th and 16th centuries. Scholars have pointed out the close relationship between conversion to Theravada Buddhism and polity building in mainland South-east Asia. This seems an obvious conclusion to draw when one considers that many of the pre-16th century South-east Asian polities were undoubtedly Buddhist States founded on the concept of the Buddhist King.⁶⁶⁾ Theravada Buddhism holds that government should promote the welfare of the people, and that rulers encourage morality and uphold the Sangha. This sublime ideal found embodiment in the concept of the Buddhist King or *Dharmaraja*, "the Guardian of the Law",⁶⁷⁾ and its presence or absence may be taken as a barometer of the degree to which Buddhism had infiltrated polities. Lacking proof for the presence of a *Dharmaraja* in the Tai Cultural Area from the outset, we may conclude that the foundation of polities, the introduction of Theravada Buddhism and the subsequent conversion of Tai rulers to this faith did not necessarily occur simultaneously, but constituted separate phases in the process of polity formation. Whatever the historical order of appearance, sources strongly suggest that Tai rulers did fully adopt Buddhist concepts of Kingship, and utilised them as a means of consolidating and strengthening their power bases.

If this was the case, then what were the principal characteristics of the Tai polities from their inception in the 13th and 14th centuries? From the evidence available from Chinese sources we can ascertain the following features for polities east of the Salween river.

- (1) As I have demonstrated above, Mon-Khmer polities existed alongside Tai polities during the 13th and 14th centuries. By this time Tai political strength had become powerful, but not preeminent everywhere.
- (2) The Tai structured their polities with the caw, or lord, as the paramount leader, which the Chinese transliterated as *zhao* 昭. According to the *Baiyi Zhuan* of 1396 the paramount leader of Mäng Maw (Luchuan 麓川) resided in the capital of their territory, ce laan, which the Chinese transliterated as *zhelan* 者蘭. The caw administered his polity through officials who had clearly defined responsibilities, and who been allocated territory from which they levied corvée labour and taxes. The Thaw Mäng (Ch. Tao (or Dao) Meng 叻孟) served as the

general head of administration with control over the military and the civilian population. Under the Thaw Mäng came a series of ranked officials whose names were prefixed with the word *caw* (zhao 昭); *zhaolu* 昭錄, *zhaogang* 昭綱, *zhaobo* 昭伯, *zhao hasi* 昭哈斯, *zhaozhun* 昭准, each of which had charge of over 10,000, 1,000, 100, 50 and 10 persons respectively. The *Baiyi Zhuan* also mentions another official called the *zhao luling* 昭錄令, who cooperated with the Thaw Mäng in commanding and raising troops from among the populace⁶⁸.

(3) Society in Mäng Maw was hierarchical in structure with a major division between nobles (*gui* 貴) and commoners (*jian* 賤). The *Baiyi Zhuan* recorded that commoners had to bow and kneel to nobles, wore different clothing and accessories, and bathed their new born babies in different locations (nobles at home and commoners in rivers). Among nobles, appointment to official positions served as another source of division. The *Baiyi Zhuan* wrote; "If a young man has an official rank, his father and elder brothers kneel and show obeisance [to him]." 子弟有職名, 則受父兄跪拜⁶⁹.

(4) West of the Salween river Tai polities like Mäng Maw used a writing system before their conversion to Theravada Buddhism. The *Baiyi Zhuan* stated;⁷⁰

[They] do not employ Chinese script. [They] engrave small matters on bamboo and wood, and use *mian* [Myanmar] script for major matters. In both cases [they] make the record in horizontal lines.

無中國文字, 小事刻竹木, 大事作緬書, 皆旁行爲記。

Though we do not know whether the expression *mian* script specially refers to Burmese, Shan or some other Indic-derived script, this passage shows that at the close of the 14th century people in Mäng Maw drew up official documents in a script of some kind. Furthermore, to ensure speedy communication Mäng Maw possessed an efficient postal service. The *Baiyi Zhuan* commented;⁷¹

For postal transmission, a small tower is set up every *li*, and several persons watch over it. Matters of official business are reported swiftly even to [places] as distant as one thousand *li* away.

郵傳一里設一小樓, 數人守之, 公事雖千里遠, 報在頃刻。

Official documents could have been easily sent all over the territory. Written script seems to have been used mainly for administrative purposes because the Tai possessed no religious texts, and as we shall from (5) below they had no literature on practical subjects either.

(5) The sciences and technologies that are usually associated with Theravada Buddhism had not been introduced by the late 14th century. The *Baiyi Zhuan* reported;⁷²

[They] possess no books on medicine, divination and other [such subjects]. [They] do not know how to keep time, and simply mark it by gazing at the waxing and waning of the moon. In deciding matters they merely use chicken-bone divination. [They] have no knowledge of administering medicine, and just pour ginger juice into the nose.

無醫卜等書。不知時節，惟望月之盈虧爲候。有事惟鷄卜是決。疾病不知服藥，以姜汁注鼻中。

The absence of any calendrical system, either of South-east Asian or Chinese origin, stands out as a prominent feature of Mäng Maw at the time. The use of chicken-bone divination by rulers suggests that court astrologers had not yet been called to service, and that *hora* (astronomers/astrologers) using horoscopes for fortune-telling had not yet arrived on the scene. Clearly here we are looking at a description of the situation before the introduction of Theravada Buddhism.

(6) The rulers of Mäng Maw did not build walled cities. The *Baiyi Zhuan* noted;⁷³⁾

The sites where they reside have no walls and moats. They merely build stockades from wood [around settlements].

所居無城池濠隍，惟編木立寨。

The lack of walled cities west of the Salween river stands in contrast to the situation to its' east where both the Tai and the Mon-Khmers are said to have constructed walled cities.

This evidence demonstrates that Mäng Maw, and probably other polities west of the Salween river as well, remained pre-Buddhist states during the 13th and 14th centuries. Though we cannot discern any Chinese, Mon-Khmer or Indic influence in these polities, similarities with the area east of the Salween are striking. Polities to the east and west share two salient features; first the division of society into nobles and commoners, and second the basic power structure of rule by a caw or lord with assistance from a bureaucratic elite. Viewed as a whole, Tai polities displayed a continuation of the traditions of earlier regimes rather than new ones founded on a discontinuity with the past. Chronicles written after the 16th century tend to trace the origins of their polities back to the pre-13th century period. According to chroniclers, the Sipsong Panna polity was established in 1180⁷⁴⁾, as we have already noted, *The Chiang Mai Chronicle* positioned Mangrai, the founder of Lanna, as twenty-fifth in the long line of rulers of the Lavacankarat which some believe to have been a Mon-Khmer polity founded in the 7th century⁷⁵⁾. In other words, Tai polities did not make a sudden entrance on to the historical stage of the 13th century, they had been in the making for a long time.

(3) The Patterns of Technology Transfer to the Tai Cultural Area

In Southeast Asia, the increased volume of trade during the 15th and 16th centuries promoted the specialisation of handicraft production of metals, porcelain and other commodities. Craftsman practising similar occupations either congregated in villages close to the source of raw materials, or resided in specialist quarters of cities located on trade routes. They worked for royal courts and merchants, and in general their scale of operations remained small, often comprising only family members and a few apprentices. Anthony Reid has noticed that craftsmen rarely developed into large-scale producers with independent capital, and that their lack of self-funds created a tendency to manufacture only when clients placed orders; such commissions in effect constituted an advance of funds for the purchase of raw materials for production. In stressing the strong connection between craftsmen and royal and powerful patrons, Reid points out that the latter generally regarded goods and services from the former as tribute or *corvée* labour.⁷⁶⁾ Protection from the rulers of polities characterized the position of indigenous craftsmen in Southeast Asia, and this point distinguished them from migrant Chinese artisans.

With the increase in the volume of Asian trade between the 16th and 19th centuries, Chinese merchants established bases for the manufacture of Chinese products like sugar and silk in Southeast Asia. This type of local production contributed to the overall economic growth of the region, and it was achieved by the transfer of advanced Chinese manufacturing technology by Chinese merchants and immigrant craftsman. I have labelled this phenomenon trade-induced transfer of technology, and prior to the commencement of colonial rule by the European powers during the 19th century, Chinese technology and craftsman played an extremely crucial role in manufacturing in archipelago Southeast Asia. Chinese craftsman did not only bring new technology for making hitherto unknown commodities, they also competed with indigenous Southeast Asian craftsman in producing similar goods. Common theory holds that everywhere Chinese immigrants cooperated with colonial governments and native potentates, and gained a monopoly over commerce and distribution of systems. I should also point out that they did not only play the roles of merchants and coolies, but as skilled workers who brought hitherto unknown skills and technology to archipelago Southeast Asia.⁷⁷⁾

As I have already pointed out the most salient feature of the history of the Tai Cultural Area between the 13th and 16th centuries was the establishment of polities by Tai peoples. Unlike archipelago Southeast Asia, two factors inhibited the transfer of Chinese technology to this area. First, the reliance on overland caravans for transportation greatly restricted the ability to expand the volume of trade, and second, lack of access to large consumer markets did not

make local production of Chinese commodities an attractive proposition for Chinese merchants. In this type of society, the demand for new technologies and skills lay not with the common people but with the rulers. Rulers badly needed the skills and technology of various types of artisans in order to construct new walled cities, majestic palaces and noble temples with which to overawe the populace. To achieve prolonged and stable regimes they sought the ability to manufacture weapons, and undertake gold and silverwork. Therefore, how rulers acquired artisans and how they utilised them in their polity building activities become issues of central importance. In this section I shall first examine what indigenous technologies were transferred from Mainland South-east Asia between the 13th and 15th centuries, and then consider whether technology was shifted from China to this area during the 16th century.

(i) Technology Transfer and Polity Building By Tai Rulers

In pre-industrial societies, the movement of people carried skills and technology from one place to another. Due to its reliance on positive action by human beings, such transplanted can be best described under the rubric of technology transfer, rather than by the simple term diffusion, which obscures the vital role people played as mediums. The success of this whole process relied on special situations operating on the donor and recipient sides. Conditions that encouraged craftsmen to emigrate included: (1) the ravages of war, (2) religious persecution, (3) political oppression (4) economic dislocation, and (5) lucrative offers from merchants and political rulers. For the adoption and diffusion of their technology and skills to succeed on the recipient side, the following factors proved essential: (1) a viable economic base, (2) the existence of workmen capable of learning the technology and skills, and (3) special treatment for these technicians in regard to tax and status from the state, or at least a non-interference policy.⁷⁸⁾

In the Tai Cultural Area, craftsmen with the skills and technology essential for the construction and management of polities tended to concentrate at royal courts and Buddhist temples (the Sangha). Apart from these two, there were no other patrons in society between the 13th and 16th centuries competent enough to retain and foster large numbers of craftsmen. The pattern of the organisation of artisans by political and religious authority appeared quite early in mainland Southeast Asia. For instance, the Burmese state of Pagan (1044-1299) achieved a high degree of craft specialisation, and the status of carpenters, masons, wood-carvers, metal workers and other artisans who worked on temples exceeded that of other non-agricultural groups.⁷⁹⁾ Pagan originally acquired skills and technology through military conquest, the most famous example being that of the skilled craftsmen and scholars brought back from the Mon

capital of Thaton in Lower Burma when King Aniruddha conquered it in 1057.⁸⁰⁾ Before continuing on to see how potentates procured artisans, let us first consider an example of voluntary technological transfer by common people.

(ii) The Transfer of Skills by Human Movement

People emigrate for a whole host of reasons, warfare, disease, famine and political instability come readily to mind, and when they settle elsewhere they usually rely on their old skills for their livelihood. In many cases, their activities may contribute to local society by providing it with goods and services hitherto not available. In Mainland Southeast Asia, we can find evidence for this kind of transfer from an early period.

Tai people have a long history of drawing fibres from cocoons to obtain silk, but the Khmers (Cambodians) during the Angkor period did not possess any knowledge of sericulture. The Chinese official Zhou Dagan 周達觀, who visited Cambodia in 1296-97, recorded in his *Zhenla Fengtu Ji* 真臘風土記 (A Record of the Mores and Customs of Cambodia) how immigrant Siamese (probably from Sukhothai) produced silk for the local population:⁸¹⁾

None of the local people engage in sericulture. The women also do not know the work of needles, threads, tailoring or mending, and are only able to weave cotton cloth. They are also unable to spin [it], and merely use their hands to knead it into yarn. There are no looms, and for weaving they simply tie one end of the yarn to their waist and hang the other end above a window. For shuttles they merely use bamboo tubes.

In recent years, Siamese have come to reside [here], and make their living by sericulture. The mulberry seeds and silkworm eggs all come from Siam (*xianzhong*). [Cambodia] has no hemp and ramie, it only has *luoma*. The Siamese weave patterned silk fabrics with silk thread by themselves, and wear them as clothes. Siamese women, unlike [Cambodian women], are able to tailor and mend, so when the cloth that the local people wear becomes tattered and torn, they all hire Siamese women to mend it.

主 [土] 人皆不事蠶桑。婦人亦不曉針線縫補之事，僅能織木綿布而已。亦不能紡，但以手理 [捏] 成條，無機杼以織，但以一頭縛腰，一頭搭 [窗] 上，梭亦止用一竹管。近年暹人來居，却以蠶桑爲業。桑種蠶種皆自暹中來。亦無麻苧，惟有絡麻。暹人却以絲自織阜綾衣着。暹婦却能縫補，土人打布損破皆倩其補之。

Here I should like to draw attention to the fact that the Siamese transferred all aspects of sericulture technology. In order to begin production the Siamese had to bring silkworms as well as mulberry trees, the leaves of which were used

for feeding them. Just the arrival of people with skills would have been insufficient since Cambodia had no silkworms and mulberry trees; the means of production (technology) itself had to be transferred too. From the above description we can assume that the Khmers used some form of backstrap loom to weave cotton cloth, but for the weaving of "dark patterned silk fabrics", we can speculate that the Siamese may have introduced treadle-operated looms. Also, Siamese women took advantage of Khmer incapacity for needlework, to earn income by tailoring and mending clothes for the local population. Here, as with silk production, the immigrant Siamese provided the host society with goods and services that previously did not exist.

This example demonstrates that the pattern of undertaking the local production of commodities with transferred technology, already confirmed for Chinese immigrants in Southeast Asia after the 16th century, appeared among the Siamese as early as the late 13th century. Though the principle pattern of these transfers remained unchanged, we can assume that some differences existed between the scale of them before and after the 16th century when the volume of trade began to expand. Whereas the Chinese often transferred advanced techniques to produce high value goods for sale on long distance markets, mainland Southeast Asian immigrants between the 13th and 16th centuries mostly provided goods and services which suited the demands of local markets. Before the growth of trade which brought Chinese in larger numbers, Southeast Asians dislocated by warfare sought to make a living by practising skills not held by the local people.

(iii) Procurement of Craftsmen

The construction of stately walled cities and the creation of a new culture became major policy issues in Tai polity building from the 13th century. After conversion to Theravada Buddhism, the ruler himself began to raise noble temples in his role as protector of the faith. Temples required the erection of permanent structures in brick and mortar with roof tiles, a style considerably divergent from that of domestic architecture which used impermanent materials such as bamboo, wood and thatch. Since most of this new material culture originated from outside the Tai Cultural Area, the rulers here did not originally possess large numbers of artisans capable of undertaking this kind work. Therefore for them the procurement of craftsmen became vitally important, and below I present concrete examples to show the two main methods by which they achieved this.

First rulers acquired craftsmen through warfare, or by employing military force. Let us consider the case of Lanna, which originally did not boast a high level of technology anyway. According to *The Chiang Mai Chronicle*, in 1290-91 King Mangrai (1239-1317), the founder of Lanna, pledged to build a *cetiya* at

Wat Kan Thom before leaving on a military expedition to Phukam-Ava, in Burma, to seek artisans. Mangrai succeeded in procuring 500 families of craftsmen from the King of Ava, and he immediately assigned them to strategic positions within his polity; the goldsmiths went to Ceng Tung, the bronzesmiths to Chiang Saen, and the jewellers and ironsmiths to Kum Kam where Mangrai resided. Later Mangrai did erect the *cetiya* he promised, but the exact identity of the regime from whom he obtained the artisans remains unclear. The Pagan dynasty fell in 1287, and the Ava dynasty did not begin until 1365, so we can only surmise that Phukam-Ava lay somewhere in central or northern Burma.⁸²⁾

Anyhow, we can be certain that this dispatch of an expeditionary force involved more ulterior motives than the erection of a single *cetiya*. Undoubtedly, King Mangrai hoped to strengthen the power base of Lanna by procuring metalworkers who could create weapons, agricultural implements and Buddhist images. His subsequent handling of these artisans strongly suggests such motives. First, he did not try to monopolize all of the artisans himself, but took pains to distribute them among his subordinates in Ceng Tung and Chiang Saen in order to achieve some sort of equilibrium in the diffusion of technological resources throughout the polity. Such adjustment ensured effective defense against outside enemies. Second, Mangrai most probably had the craftsmen he assigned to Kum Kam participate in the construction of his new capital city, Chiang Mai, in 1296. He needed large numbers of skilled artisans in order to embark on such a colossal enterprise. Third, Mangrai may have wanted to secure bronzesmiths to forge statues of the Buddha different to those from the Mon Kingdom of Hariphuñjaya. Mon culture enjoyed high status, and after Mangrai conquered Lamphun, the centre of Hariphuñjaya, in 1281, he undoubtedly began to search for new cultural and religious symbols with which to publicize the grandeur of his new regime. The Mons of Hariphuñjaya mostly sculptured Buddhist statues in stone, and we can hypothesize that by forging statues in bronze Mangrai was attempting to make a political statement; he was announcing that the centre of culture had shifted from vanquished Hariphuñjaya to victorious Lanna. Even if we disregard this as unfounded speculation, there can be no denying that the acquisition of skilled metalworkers served as a means of consolidating Mangrai's regime, for why else would *The Chiang Mai Chronicle* record the requisitioning of craftsmen from Phukam-Ava in such detail.

Second, on occasion rulers did invite artisans from outside their polities. According to *The Jengtung State Chronicle*, in 1411 a crown prince erected Wat Chenglae "with artisans imported from the west [cis-Salween]".⁸³⁾ This occurred approximately 120 years after King Mangrai had sent goldsmiths to Ceng Tung, and suggests a shortage of craftsmen there even in the 15th century. However, this source does not mention any artisans being invited from outside in 1430 when this same prince had bricks fired for the battlements on the city walls. Judging from this information, we can conclude that Ceng Tung possessed suf-

ficient craftsmen for its normal needs at this time, but relied on artisans from outside when undertaking large-scale construction works. Though the conditions under which rulers "invited" craftsmen remain unclear, we can still confirm the use of methods other than warfare for their acquisition.

These two cases testify that skill and technology figured as extremely important factors in the building and management of Tai polities. The renown episode of King Mangrai and the ruler of the South underline this point. *The Chiang Mai Chronicle* related that when the ruler of the South visited Lanna as a state guest, the wizard-like skills of the master craftsman, Kan Thom, astonished him so much that he exclaimed in public, "This domain's craftsmen are very clever; better than ours". This praise greatly delighted King Mangrai, and he promoted Kan Thom, originally a mere carpenter, to the position of ruler of Chiang Saen in recognition of his meritorious service.⁸⁴⁾ Skill and technology functioned as a means of enhancing the prestige of polities abroad, and this gave rulers added incentive to retain talented workmen.

(iv) The Organisation of Craftsmen under the Corvée System

Having obtained craftsmen, rulers faced the problem of how to settle them within their polities, and their solution was to incorporate them into the regular system of social control. Tai rulers laid claim to all the land and manpower residing within their territories, and in return for the right to cultivate land, they demanded that freemen render corvée labour on public works and in military service. The *Baiyi Zhuan* written by two Chinese envoys who visited Māng Mao in 1396, wrote, "major and minor [officers] are all allocated territory from which they are allowed to levy corvée labour and taxes 大小各有分地, 任其徭賦."⁸⁵⁾ so we can be certain that Tai rulers regulated manpower by this system during the 14th century.

Needless to say, rulers controlled craftsmen as well as peasants. In the Lanna polity, labour service by craftsmen appeared quite early. *The Chiang Mai Chronicle* recorded that when Saen Phu, the third King of the Chiang Mai dynasty, built Chiang Saen between 1327 to 1329, all the goldsmiths, silversmiths, drumsmiths, iron forges, distilleries, confectioners, charcoal-burners and so forth within his territory bore the obligation to put their produce and services at the disposal of the ruler.⁸⁶⁾ Here I use the term craftsmen in the broad sense to designate people who supplied rulers with specific services (elephant mahouts, blacksmiths and so forth) and presented them with special products as tribute (fruit, pottery, lacquerware and so on). From 19th century reports we know that rulers in northern Burma often levied entire villages with this type of obligation,⁸⁷⁾ a fact which leads us to conclude that many craftsmen also engaged in agriculture. Even though we cannot be sure that all artisans in the Lanna polity were specialist, we do know that from the 14th century onwards they were all

subject to *corvée* service. Rulers managed their polities and at times, augmented their wealth by organising craftsmen in this way.

(v) The Influence of Chinese Immigrants

Judging from extant source materials, if Chinese immigrants did transfer technology to the Tai Cultural Area it must have occurred from the late 15th century for they had not begun to migrate there in large numbers before that date.

Reports by officials of the Ming dynasty indicate that Chinese resided in the trading centres of the Shan States, in northern Burma, during the late 15th century. In a memorial submitted to the Hongzhi 弘治 emperor by Xie Chaoxuan 謝朝宣, the Investigating Censor dispatched to Yunnan as a Regional Inspector 巡按雲南監察御史, in the eight lunar month of 1499 (Hongzhi 弘治 12) we find the following short passage:⁸⁸⁾

I have heard that Bhamo and other places lie where waterways and roadways meet, and that the utensils and things of the barbarian lands are all produced there. The prosperity of commerce exceeds that of other places Also, many criminals on-the-run from Jiangxi, Yunnan and Dali go there.

臣聞蠻莫等處乃水陸會通之地，夷方器用咸自此出，貨利之盛非他方比，.... 又有江西，雲南，大理通逃之民多赴之。

The success of Bhamo as one of the distribution centres for commodities in Upper Burma attracted the criminal elements from China, but unlike the 16th century, we have no information as to how these immigrants made a living.

During the second half of the 16th century Chinese gathered at Katha, a big trading centre known to the Chinese as Jiangtou Cheng 江頭城 or the city at the top of the river. Trade flourished there due to its' location at a strategic point for transportation on the Irrawaddy river. The *Xinan Yi Fengtu Ji* of 1584 described the Chinese residing there in the following fashion:⁸⁹⁾

Outside the city of Katha lies the Great Ming Market (Da Ming Jie) where there several ten thousand people from Fujian, Guangdong, Jiangxi, and Sichuan who engage in trade and crafts. In addition, several ten thousand have also been captured by the Three and Six Pacification Commissioners (*sanxuan liuwei*).

江頭城外有大明街，閩，廣，江，蜀居貨，遊藝者數萬，而三宣六慰被擄者復數萬。

This text contains two important pieces of information. First, the Chinese

all lived outside the Walls of Katha, at a place called the Great Ming Market (Da Ming Jie 大明街). The location of a Chinese quarter in the suburbs indicates a spatial division of residence along ethnic lines, and strongly suggests the existence of an ethnic division of skills and technology resembling that of Siam in the 19th century, where Chinese artisans only transmitted their techniques amongst themselves, and did not transfer them to local people. Second, the merchants and craftsmen in the Great Ming market all came from places in China where handicraft industries flourished during the 16th century. It seems reasonable to assume that immigrant craftsmen would practise the same trades abroad as they did at home.

This source shows that a surprisingly large Chinese population resided in Upper Burma during the early 1580s. Apart from the "several ten thousand" in the Great Ming Market, another "several ten thousand" were held captive by what the text termed the *sanxuan liuwei*. As mentioned earlier, the Ming dynasty followed the traditional policy of appointing tribal chiefs (and their tribal organisations), who acknowledged the supremacy of China, as rulers of their own peoples; the Ming court conferred ranked titles, and issued letters patent and seals as proof of the appointment. The *sanxuan liuwei* specifically refers to the three *xuanfusi* 宣撫司 of Nandian 南甸, Ganyai 干崖 and Longchuan 隴川, and the six *xuanweisi* 宣慰司 of Mengyang 孟養, Mubang 木邦 (Hsienwi), Miandian 緬甸 (Toungoo dynasty Burma), Cheli 車里 (Sipsong Panna), Babai 八百 (Lan Na), and Laowo 老撾 (Lan Sang). The titles *xuanfusi* and *xuanweisi* are usually both rendered into English as Pacification Commissions, and in this instance they refer to polities in the Tai Cultural Area. The passage from the *Xinan Yi Fengtu Ji* cited above indicates that these Tai polities allowed Chinese to stay in their domains, and suggests that the rulers had probably incorporated Chinese craftsmen into their corvée labour systems. We can hypothesize the existence of two types of Chinese immigrant craftsmen at this time; those concentrated near cities actively selling their products through marketing systems, and those residing in Tai polities who principally provided their goods and services to the rulers as tribute.

The *Xinan Yi Fengtu Ji* wrote of the skills of artisans working in this area:⁹⁰⁾

[They] use pottery, bronze and iron as utensils. [They] are extremely adept at collecting lacquer and decorating with gold. Their craftsmen are all [from] Guang[dong], and [the articles produced] are the same as those in China. Raw meat can be stored in lacquer utensils for several days without spoiling, and water kept in bronze containers will remain cool throughout the day.⁹¹⁾

River and sea vessels are the same as those of China. On the Pegu river, Nan-da-bayin uses fifty sumptuous gilded dragon galleys with golden floral decorated thrones erected in the middle. The bayins (*muba*) all ride

in wooden boats carved with the heads of elephants, fish, horses, ducks, and cocks, that are also decorated with gold and have their sides covered with extremely exquisite paintings. The boats of subordinates (*buyi*) also resemble these, but are not decorated with gold.

器用陶瓦銅鐵。尤善采漆畫金。其工匠皆廣，與中國侔。漆器貯鮮肉數日不作息，銅器貯水竟日不冷。江海舳舻與中國同。擺古江中莽應理僭用金葉龍舟五十艘，中設金花寶座，目把所乘皆木刻成象頭，魚頭，馬頭，鴨頭，鷄頭等船，亦飾以金，周圍罨畫甚華麗。部夷船亦如之，但不以金飾也。

Though the author claims that utensils and boats were the same as those of China, and singles out people from Guangdong as excelling at lacquerwork, gilding and other crafts, we cannot interpret this to mean that all the craftsmen in Burma and the Tai Cultural Area came from China. As we have seen above, Burma boasted a wide range of craftsmen from the pre-13th century period. Here Chinese craftsmen probably did not aim to transfer advanced technology in order to produce new commodities for sale on consumer markets as in post 16th century maritime Southeast Asia, rather they concentrated on providing the same services and goods to existing markets as indigenous artisans. Their reliance on the rulers of polities and the difficulty of transportation to distant markets dictated that migrant craftsmen adjust their production to suit local needs and tastes. In the long run, the arrival of artisans from China in great numbers provided the local people with more services and goods than before.

The transfer of Chinese technology to Southeast Asia arose in conjunction with trading activities, but the merchants residing in the Great Ming Market did not enjoy the advantages of sea transportation, or access to large consumer markets as in other parts of Southeast Asia. This left them little opportunity to develop large scale production activities like export-orientated sugar manufacture undertaken by their compatriots in Java, Sumatra and Siam. Furthermore, since the Tai Cultural Area could not depend on an uninterrupted supply of fresh artisans from China as in many parts of maritime Southeast Asia, the assimilation of immigrant Chinese craftsmen and their descendants into local society there proved inevitable in the long term. This must have forced the localisation of skills and technology, and may even have generated new types of craftsmen. The slaughtering of the Chinese residents of the Great Ming Market by King Nan-da-bayin around 1582-83, as recorded in the *Xinan Yi Fengtu Ji*, certainly must have encouraged this trend.⁹²⁾

In short, Chinese technology seems to have only played a very minor role in Tai Polity building between the 13th and 16th centuries. The architecture and metalwork derived from Mainland South-east Asia as did the written scripts, astronomy and other sciences. The only possible transfer from China of great significance could have been the Chinese plough and rice transplantation techniques. During the 13th and 14th centuries the hoe served as the common

tool of cultivation in the Tai Cultural Area, and the Chinese plough was introduced and used north of Mäng Mit 孟密 probably from the 15th century at the earliest. But here again, viewed as a whole, Chinese influence did not attain predominance because cultivators south of Mäng Mit mainly used harrows and seed broadcasting, both of which are Indian techniques.⁹³⁾

Concluding Remarks

In this article I have tried to draw attention to a number of factors that contributed to the rise and expansion of Tai polities apart from Buddhism. Both east and west of the Salween river Tai ethnic groups had already formed large polities by the 13th and 14th centuries, and their political ascendancy had begun to influence the polities of other ethnic groups. One strategy that they employed to strengthen their polities involved the acquisition of new material cultures to set them apart from the pre-13th and 14th century polities whether they be Tai, Mon-Khmer or Jingpo (Kachin). To create a new material culture Tai rulers had to actively seek skills and technology from the outside world. Some of this material culture was intimately connected with Buddhism. By erecting Buddhist temples and pagodas Tai rulers gave expression to their new found roles as *Dharmaraja* or “Guardians of the Law”. Some of it served more mundane purposes; building city walls with bricks provided more permanent easily defensible structures, and control over metalworkers ensured constant supplies of weapons and agricultural tools. In their polity building scenarios, did Tai rulers first create a new material culture and then become *Dharmaraja*? Or did it occur in reverse order? It is impossible to answer this question at present, but whatever the case, there can be no doubt that the acquirement and organisation of technology played an important role in polity building between the 13th and 16th centuries.

In this regard I should like to emphasize the following three points. First, Tai rulers clearly regarded the acquisition of artisans as a method of creating a new culture base. Kings like Mangrai displayed great determination in procuring and organizing craftsmen. Second, they extracted goods and services through the corvée system. In many cases this policy led to concentrations of craftsmen with special skills, and promoted the formation of villages entirely devoted to metalwork, pottery, bamboo ware and so forth. This pattern of residence ensured the continuity of artisan service over a long period of time; skills could be transmitted from one generation of villagers to the next. Sources from the 19th century indicate that craftsmen from places with high elevations in Yunnan visited the Tai Cultural Area every year during the dry season when the chances of contracting malaria and other diseases lessened. They travelled around the villages peddling their goods and services, but they do not seem to have been subject to corvée labour. We do not know whether such seasonal

craftsmen existed during the period from the 13th to 16th centuries. Third, craftsmen mainly derived from the ethnic groups dwelling in mainland Southeast Asia, and the Chinese immigrants who were assimilated after the 15th century. In the 19th century, we find many cases of craft specialisation along ethnic lines, for instance Shan, Wa and Kachin were renown as blacksmiths, and Shan famous for their pottery. Most craftsmen practised agriculture as well as their own trades,⁹⁴⁾ a situation which probably had remained unchanged since the 13th century at least.

The late 16th century emerges as a major turning point in the history of the Tai Cultural Area. First, the Burmese conquest of the whole Area greatly restricted the autonomy of the Tai polities, though it did not eliminate them. Second, the Ming court disbanded the large Mon-Khmer polities west of the Salween river, an act which subsequently caused a contraction in the political influence of Mon-Khmers speakers. Third, the advantages of new rice cultivation techniques came to be felt in the 16th century. The use of animal-drawn ploughs and harrows had gradually begun to spread and replace hoe cultivation in montane basins from the 15th century⁹⁵⁾. The diffusion of this kind of agriculture expanded the area of land under wet rice cultivation and increased the surplus of rice; this enabled montane basins to support greater populations than ever before. Enlarged numbers of subjects probably contributed to the strengthening of Tai polities from the 15th century onwards. This constituted a later addition to the new material culture complex, but was no less important than elements which appeared earlier because it increased the supply of manpower available to polities. The decline in the political power of Mon-Khmer speakers may have derived in part from their failure to switch from swidden agriculture using the hoe to wet rice cultivation with the plough. At any rate, the diffusion of these new agricultural techniques among the Tai formed the economic bases of their polities after the 17th century, and widened the gap in the production levels of wet rice cultivators and swidden agriculturalists, a phenomenon recorded by colonial administrators and travellers from the 19th century.

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Notes

- 1) For the concept of the Tai Cultural Area see Shintani Tadahiko, "Shan Bunkaken no Gainen ga Teisho suru mono", pp. 2-18.
- 2) For instance, see Wyatt and Aroonrut, *The Chiang Mai Chronicle*, pp. 16-49.
- 3) Daniels "Tai kei minzoku no ohkoku keisei to busshitsu bunka", pp. 152-217.
- 4) For some of the rhetoric and the images found in Ming historiography see Geoff Wade, "Some Topoi in Southern Border Historiography During the Ming (And Their Modern Relevance)", pp. 135-158.
- 5) The standard version is the collated and annotated version by Jiang Yingliang entitled, *Baiyi Zhuan Jiaozhu*, Yunnan Renmin Chubanshe, Kunming, 1980. All references throughout this article are to this version and the translations are mine. For a complete translation of and introduction to this text, see Geoff Wade, "The Bai-Yi Zhuan: A Chinese Account of a Tai Society in the 14th Century".
- 6) Textual references refer to the edition in Zhu Mengzhen, *Zhu Bingqi Wenji* (The Collected Works of Zhu Bingqi), *juan* 14, *Youhuan Yutan* which is dated 1592.
- 7) Frank M. Lebar, Gerald C. Hickey, John K. Musgrave, *Ethnic Groups of Mainland Southeast Asia*, systematically digests literary data on ethnic groups and sub-groups published prior to 1963.

- 8) E. R. Leach, *Political Systems of Highland Burma*, especially pp. 41-61.
- 9) Terms included baiyi 百夷 (the hundred barbarians), baiyi 白夷 (the white barbarians), boyi 伯夷 (elder uncle barbarians), and other homonyms such as baiyi 擺夷, and boyi 樊夷. The word baiyi first appeared during the Tang period when it was written with homophonic characters meaning "white clothes 白衣", As Geoff Wade has pointed out, the great diversity in ways of writing *baiyi* strongly suggests that it was a phonetic representation of a non-Chinese word, but its origin remains unclear. For a discussion of the historical evidence for the first appearance of the term baiyi, and a brief summary of some of the theories that have been advanced about its origin see, Geoffrey Wade, "The Bai-Yi Zhuan: A Chinese Account of a Tai Society in the 14th Century", pp. 3-5.
- 10) Jiang Yingliang, *Daizu Shi*, pp. 112-113.
- 11) Jiang Yingliang, *Baiyi Zhuan Jiaozhu*, pp. 33-42.
- 12) Jiang Yingliang, *Daizu Shi*, pp. 113-114.
- 13) *Dian Zhi*, *juan* 30, p.1000.
- 14) *Dian Zhi*, *juan* 30, p.1001 also recorded piaoren.
- 15) In her recent monograph Nicola Tannenbaum argues from ethnographical field work that the conflict between Buddhism and animism is a perceived concept generated in the minds of scholars, and that in practice, as opposed to doctrine, power-protection functions as the underlying principle which combines Buddhism and animism together in Shan religion, see Tannenbaum, *Who Can Compete Against the World ?*, particularly pp. 9-12 & pp. 193-211. The theoretical implications of this have great relevance to understanding the early history of Tai polities.
- 16) For example see Cholthira Satyawadhna, "Ethnic Inter-Relationships in the History of Lanna: Reconsidering the Lwa Role in the Lanna Scenario" and Aroonrut Wicheienkeeo, "Lawa (Lua): A Study from Palm-Leaf manuscripts and Stone Inscriptions", pp. 138-140. Also see Ishii Yoneo, "Shan Bunkaken kara mita Tai Shizo", pp. 96-99.
- 17) Aroonrut Wicheienkeeo, *op. cit.*, pp. 138-140.
- 18) Wyatt and Aroonrut, *The Chiang Mai Chronicle*, pp. 9, 16. Also see Ishii Yoneo, *op. cit.*, pp. 98-99.
- 19) Mangrai, *The Padaeng Chronicle and the Jengtung State Chronicle Translated*, pp. 201-204 & p. 230. Also refer to story in *Khun Reader*, pp. 89-90.
- 20) Mangrai, *op. cit.*, p. 230 & p.289.
- 21) Wazu Jianshi Bianxie Zu Comp. & Ed., *Wazu Jianshi*, pp. 5-6.
- 22) De'ang Zu Jianshi Bianxie Zu Comp. & Ed., *De'ang Zu Jianshi*, Yunnan Jiaoyu Chubanshe, Kunming, 1986, pp. 35-41.
- 23) *Huanyu Tongzhi*, *juan* 113, 8a.
- 24) *Yuan Shi*, *juan* 30, p. 678 & p. 683.
- 25) *Yuan Shi*, *juan* 34, p. 752.
- 26) Fang Guoyu Ed., *Yunnan Shiliao Congkan*, Vol. 2, p. 626.
- 27) Aroonrut Wicheienkeeo, *op. cit.*, pp. 138-139.
- 28) Fang Guoyu Ed., *Yunnan Shiliao Congkan*, Vol. 2, pp. 626-627.
- 29) *Yuan Shi*, *juan* 26, p. 588. Also see Fang Guoyu, *Zhongguo Xinan Lishi Dili Kaoshi*, Vol. 2, p. 876.
- 30) The text in Fang Guoyu Ed., *Yunnan Shiliao Congkan*, Vol. 2, p. 626 gives "the twentieth year", but since the Zhizhi reign period only lasted for three years it must be an error for the second year.
- 31) *Dian Zhi*, *juan* 30, p. 977.
- 32) Gong Yin, *Zhongguo Tusi Zhidu*, pp. 670-673.
- 33) *Xuanzong Shilu*, Xuande 5th year (1430), 5th month, *dingsi*, pp. 1562-1563.
- 34) *Xuanzong Shilu*, Xuande 5th year (1430), 5th month, *yichou*, pp. 1566-1567.
- 35) *Dian Zhi*, *juan* 30, pp. 1000-1001.
- 36) The entry for the Prefectural Magistrate of Shunning Prefecture in the *Tuguan Dibu* (The Draft Register of Native Chiefs), *juan shang*, p. 84a stated "Ayuegong, a Puren of Shunning Prefecture in Yunnan and the Native Prefectural Magistrate of this Prefecture, died in the

- 19th year of Hongwu [1386]. His son Meng Ai inherited [the designation] in the same year, and died in the twenty-first year [of Hongwu = 1388]. The second son Meng Wu, came into the inheritance and died." 阿日貢，雲南順寧府蒲人。本府土知府，洪武十九年故。本年男猛哀承襲，二十一年故。次男猛吾襲故。
- 37) *Ming Shi*, *juan* 313, p. 8079 wrote, "In the fifteenth year of Hongwu [1382] Shunning submitted, and the native chief Ayuegong was made acting Prefect. In the seventeenth year [1384] Ari [yue] gong was ordered to become Magistrate of Shunning." 洪武十五年，順寧歸附，以土酋阿悅貢署府事。十七年命阿日 [日] 貢為順寧知府。
- 38) *Tuguan Dibu*, *juan shang* pp. 84a-85b.
- 39) *Ming Shi*, *juan* 313, p. 8080.
- 40) *Dian Zhi*, *juan* 30, p. 1000.
- 41) *Yuan Shi*, *juan* 61, p. 1482.
- 42) Jiang Yingliang, *Daizu Shi*, pp. 98-115. De'angzu Jianshi Bianxiezu Comp. & Ed., *De'ang Zu Jianshi*, p. 18 interprets jinchi as a general term for a mixture of Mon-Khmer speakers which includes the ancestors of the present day Wa, Plang and De'ang (Palaung) as well as the Tai, but provides no evidence to support their claim.
- 43) *Yuan Shi*, *juan* 61, p. 1482.
- 44) *Yuan Shi*, *juan* 61, p. 1482.
- 45) Jiang Yingliang, *Baiyi Zhuan Jiaozhu*, p. 173.
- 46) Wang Yun, *Qiuqian xiansheng Daquan Wenji*, *juan* 81, 3a.
- 47) For a study of the Duan family regime see Hayashi Ken'ichiro "Gendai Unnan no Danshi Sokan".
- 48) Jiang Yingliang, *Baiyi Zhuan Jiaozhu*, p. 146.
- 49) Jiang Yingliang, *Baiyi Zhuan Jiaozhu*, p. 99.
- 50) *Ming Shi*, *juan* 315, p. 8156.
- 51) Xie Zhaozhe, *Dian Lue*, *juan* 9, 18b-19a. A similar passage also appeared in the *Wanli Yehuo Bian*, *Buyi*, *juan* 4, p. 925 which recorded;
The Lesser Baiyi are tame barbarians (*shuyi*) and live in the South-west of Yongchang Prefecture. The Greater Baiyi dwell in the West of Longchuan. [They] both fall within the territory of Yunnan.
小百夷為熟夷。在永昌府西南。大百夷在隴川之西，俱為滇中內地。
- 52) Jiang Yingliang, *Baiyi Zhuan Jiaozhu*, p. 105.
- 53) George Coedès proposed that the Tai attained dominance in polities by rising to power as rulers within a society in which they had lived for a long period of time, and Georges Condominas has suggested that the conquest of indigenous ethnic groups also played a role (see George Condominas, *From Lawa to Mon, from Saa' to Thai*, pp. 29-91). The data presented here suggests that both of these scenarios may be relevant.
- 54) Hans Penth, *A Brief History of Lan Na*, pp.13-14. For an account of the latest ideas on the introduction of Buddhism to the polities in the Tai Cultural Area, see Geoff Wade, "The Spread of Theravada Tradition in the Tai Polities of Yun-nan 14th-18th Centuries", pp. 6-7.
- 55) *Dian Lue*, *juan* 9, 30b. A similar passage appears in the *Dian Zhi*, *juan* 30, p. 987.
- 56) Mangrai, *op. cit.*, p. 7.
- 57) Mangrai, *op. cit.*, p. 122.
- 58) The evidence for this statement comes from the following passage in the *Le Shi* (History of the Lü), which is the Chinese translation by Li Fuyi of the *Nangsi Bün Mäng Sipsing Panna*. In 1457 when the accession to the throne of Sam Boledaei (Chinese Transcription Sanbao lidai 三寶歷代), the 12th Caw Phën Din was agreed upon, "Sam Boledaei and the various chiefs together visited a Buddhist temple where they swore an oath upon the Three Gems [i.e. Buddha, *dhamma*, and *sangha*], and the oath was left in the temple as an inscription and plated part in gold and part in silver.", 三寶歷代並衆頭目，羣詣佛寺，面對三寶（佛像，佛經及僧王）宣誓，並將誓詞銘鑄寺中，一部分貼金，一部分貼銀。see Li Fuyi, *Le Shi (Chongding Ben)*, Taibei, Furen Shuju, 1983, p. 16. The *Le Shi (Chongding Ben)*, p. 12 related that the rulers in Mäng Cë 猛遮 constructed temples and pagodas between 1417 and 1431.

- 59) Li Fuyi, *Le Shi (Chongding Ben)*, p. 27.
- 60) Jiang Yingliang, *Baiyi Zhuan Jiaozhu*, p. 98.
- 61) *Xinan Yi Fengtu Ji*, 60a.
- 62) Zou Qiyu Ed., *Yunnan Fojiao Yishu*, pp. 35-36 states that Theravada Buddhism spread to northern Burma and south-western Yunnan through the medium of the Burmese and the Shan of the Ava dynasty, but does not provide any evidence to support this claim.
- 63) *Bün Mäng Senwi*, pp. 73-74.
- 64) The *Bün Mäng Senwi* related a different version of the history of this period to that recorded in the *Chiang Mai Chronicle*. The latter source stated that King Tilokarat acquired over eleven Shan domains between 1462 and 1471, and that he visited Mäng Pan and Mäng Nay in Chulasakarat 832 (1470/71) where the Caw Pha, "named Ngoen Pong Fa, presented his son to the King and offered tribute.", see Wyatt & Aroonrut, *op. cit.*, pp. 97-98. But the *Bün Mäng Senwi* wrote (pp. 71-72) that after the failure of the rebellion against the Awa King by the three Caw Pha of Keng May, Keng Sën (Chiang Saen) and Keng Hay (Chiang Rai), these three rulers asked the Caw Pha of Senwi to accompany them to pay homage to the Awa King in Chulasakarat 832. According to the *Bün Mäng Senwi*, the Awa King ordered the Caw Pha of Senwi to escort the three Caw Phaa back to their countries, so the purpose of his visit to Chiang Mai was official business.
- 65) Victor Lieberman, "Was the Seventeenth Century a Watershed in Burmese History?", p. 242.
- 66) Okudaira Ryuji, *op. cit.*, pp. 90-108.
- 67) Takanaka Katsumi, p. 180 & Hasegawa Kiyoshi.
- 68) Jiang Yingliang, *Baiyi Zhuan Jiaozhu*, p. 68.
- 69) Jiang Yingliang, *Baiyi Zhuan Jiaozhu*, pp. 70-71, 96.
- 70) Jiang Yingliang, *Baiyi Zhuan Jiaozhu*, p. 80.
- 71) Jiang Yingliang, *Baiyi Zhuan Jiaozhu*, p. 83.
- 72) Jiang Yingliang, *Baiyi Zhuan Jiaozhu*, pp. 108-110.
- 73) Jiang Yingliang, *Baiyi Zhuan Jiaozhu*, p. 82.
- 74) Li Fuyi Ed. & Tr., *Le Shi*, p. 1.
- 75) Wyatt & Aroonrut, *op. cit.*, p. 16.
- 76) Anthony Reid, *Southeast Asia in the Age of Commerce 1450-1680*, Vol. 1, pp. 100-103.
- 77) For an account of the transfer of sugarmaking technology to Japan and Southeast Asia between the 16th and 19th centuries, see Daniels, *Joseph Needham Science and Civilisation in China*, Vol. 6, Part III, pp. 411-470.
- 78) Cipolla, Carlo M., "The Diffusion of Innovations in Early Modern Europe", pp. 46-52.
- 79) Kenneth R. Hall, "Economic History of Early Southeast Asia", p. 241.
- 80) Michael Aung-Thwin, *Pagan: The Origins of Modern Burma*, pp. 22-23, 80-81.
- 81) Translated from the Shuofu Baijuan version appended to the annotated Japanese translation by Wada Hisanori, *Shinro Fudoki: Ankoruki no Kanboja*, pp. 240-241.
- 82) Wyatt and Aroonrut, *op. cit.*, pp. 37-38.
- 83) Mangrai, *op. cit.*, p. 239.
- 84) Wyatt and Aroonrut, *op. cit.*, pp. 36-37.
- 85) Jiang Yingliang, *Baiyi Zhuan Jiaozhu*, p. 69.
- 86) Wyatt and Aroonrut, *op. cit.*, pp. 58-59.
- 87) Scott & Hardiman, *Gazetteer of Upper Burma and the Shan States*, Part 1, Vol. 1, p. 327.
- 88) *Xiaozong Shilu* (Veritable Records of the Xiaozong emperor), *Hongzhi 12/8 xinhai*, p. 2723.
- 89) Zhu Mengzhen, *Zhu Bingqi Wenji*, juan 14, 60a.
- 90) Zhu Mengzhen, *Zhu Bingqi Wenji*, juan 14, 62b.
- 91) The original text reads not cool (*buleng* 不冷), but this must be an error for cool (*leng* 冷).
- 92) Zhu Mengzhen, *Zhu Bingqi Wenji*, juan 14, 60a-60b.
- 93) See Daniels, "Tai kei minzoku no ohkoku keisei to busshitsu bunka", pp. 183-197.
- 94) Scott & Hardiman, *Gazetteer of Upper Burma*, Part1, Vol. 2, pp. 299-302, 399-400.
- 95) Daniels, *op. cit.*, pp. 183-197.

