

HINDU MYTHS IN THAI LITERATURE

WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO

THE NĀRĀI SIP PĀNG

Thesis submitted for the Ph.D degree

of the University of London, by

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this thesis is to investigate the sources of those Hindu myths which have been adapted and then interpolated into Thai literature so as to become an integral part of it. All categories of Thai literary texts which contain any Hindu myth, dating from the Sukhothai period up to the time of King Rama VI of the Ratanakosin, have been taken into account, but special reference is made to the Nārāi Sip Pāng, a Thai work attempting to deal authoritatively with many divinities shared with the Hindu pantheon.

The thesis commences with an introduction. This is followed by seven chapters and the conclusion. The thesis ends with two appendices.

The Chapters:

Chapter 1 deals with Hindu myths concerning Brahmā, the first divinity of the Hindu trimūrti. Though he is sometimes misunderstood to be the same as a Buddhist Brahma, he is still regarded by the Thais as the Creator.

Chapter 2 is about Śiva who, for the Thais, is the supreme as well as the most benevolent god.

In Chapter 3 accounts of two sons of Śiva -- Gaṇeśa and Kārttikeya -- confused by the Thais to be the same, are analysed.

Chapters 4 and 5 consist of myths about Viṣṇu, appearing as the valorous preserver in Thai literature. His eight minor incarnations are discussed here.

In Chapter 6 the Kṛṣṇa incarnation of Viṣṇu and the love-story of Aniruddha, his grandson are investigated.

Chapter 7 is concerned with the most celebrated Hindu myth in Thai literature -- the myth of the Rāmacandra incarnation of Viṣṇu.

The conclusion is an attempt to suggest the most influential factors to have made Hindu myths appear in their present form in Thai literature.

The appendices:

Appendix 1 is the translation of the Royal Press Version of the Nārāi Sip Pāng.

Appendix 2 is a concise study of present-day Thai Brahmins who still hold the Nārāi Sip Pāng as one of their sacred texts.

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INTRODUCTION

The first evidence in the Thai language of any knowledge of Hindu mythology on the part of the Thais dates from the very beginning of the Sukhothai period. The occurrence of the form 'Rāma' as part of King Rām Khamhāeng's name (literally, Rāma the Strong; also found as Rāmarāja in the inscription No. II) in the very first Thai inscription ever set up (1292 A.D.) itself suggests that at least the hero of the Rāmāyana, if not the whole epic, was familiar to the Thais at that time. The name of a cave which is called after Rāma, the hero of the epic mentioned in the king's inscription, also shows that the gist of this Indian epic had been current for sometime in this territory. For the most part, however, the early Sukhothai inscriptions are predominantly Buddhist in content. Similarly, most of the surviving statuary and reliefs are devoted to Buddhist subjects, though a small minority of Hindu devas were produced and have survived to this day.*¹

In the Lilit Ōngkan Chaeng Nam (the text recited in the ceremony of Drinking the Water of Allegiance performed from the early Ayuthya period (around 1320)), besides the Hindu trimūrti, some important Hindu gods, such as Agni, Yama and Skanda, are invoked together with Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa to witness the ceremony. Moreover, it seems that some episodes of Kṛṣṇa's life, i.e. his lifting up of the Govardhana Mountain and his fighting with the serpent Kāliya, are also referred to in the text. Three characters from the Rāmāyana, i.e. Vālī, Sugrīva and Hanumān, are referred to in the Kot Monthian Bān (the Palatine Law). In this same text there is also description of an interesting performance called chak nāk du'kdamban. It can be said for certain that this performance is the representation of the Hindu myth of the churning of the ocean. In inscription No. 45 (1392 A.D.)

1. Theodore Bowie (ed.) The Arts of Thailand, Indiana University, 1960, p. 192.

the Pāndava princes of the Mahābhārata are first mentioned along with the heroes of the Rāmāyana and the Hindu gods. In the Lilit Yūan Phāi (15th century) there is an indirect reference to the primal creation of the world by Brahmā. It is related in the text that King Bṛomatrailōkanāt is an incarnation of eleven Hindu gods; he is created to put an end to calamities happening in the world at that time by turning the earth face-up and by propping up the sky (chū phaen din hai ngāi, thāi phaen fā bō hai khwam)*². It is generally known in Hindu mythology that the first stage in the world's creation by Brahmā is that the god separates the sky from the earth and thus creates order out of chaos. King Bṛomatrailōkanāt's deed mentioned in the Lilit Yūan Phāi is reminiscent of this myth. Moreover, in the Lilit Yūan Phāi characters of the Mahābhārata are referred to throughout. This shows that at that time the Thai elite, or Thai courtiers, who were the readers of this text must have known the story well so that they were able to appreciate the work. But unlike the Rāmāyana, the Mahābhārata has never been popular in Thailand to the extent that the whole story has been rewritten many times by the Thais. The Mahābhārata did not become familiar until after the introduction of the study of Indology to the Thais by King Rama VI. Only a small part from the Mahābhārata, or, what seems more likely, from the Harivamśa, its appendix, which can be classified as a Purāṇa on its own, was taken and used as source-material for composition by a Thai author, viz. in the Anirut Kham Chan (about 15th century) which is the story of Aniruddha, Kṛṣṇa's grandson.

Besides the Rāmāyana and the story of Aniruddha there is no other extant Thai text on any particular Hindu myth composed during the Ayuthya period. But this does not mean that the Thais did not know of other Hindu myths. On the contrary there must have been numerous Hindu myths current in Thailand at that time. Evidence can be found in some episodes from the Thai Rāmāyana which are different from Vālmīki's Rāmāyana (see p.215f) but similar to other versions :

2. Lilit Yūan Phāi, Bangkok, 1922, p. 2

of the Rāmāyana composed in various Indian dialects. Other evidence is found in a text called Nārāi Sip Pāng which contains a number of Hindu myths, especially those concerning Viṣṇu's incarnations. Hardly any of the Hindu myths in the Nārāi Sip Pāng are in accordance with those related in Sanskrit texts, They are more like Thai versions transformed from Indian folk myths. It is because they are so different from the Sanskrit versions that King Rama VI makes a remark that the Thais must have either misunderstood or wrongly interpreted the myths narrated to them by the Indians. Rama VI seems to have been irritated by the local versions of Hindu myths as found in Thai literature, and it was he who introduced the correct Hindu mythology (i.e. one that conforms to Sanskrit texts as studied by the West) to the Thais. From then on Hindu myths appearing in Thai literature tend to conform to the Sanskrit prototype.

The characteristics of the Nārāi Sip Pāng can be said to be somewhat similar to those of a Purāṇa. It contains at least two topics required for a Purāṇa as defined by Amara Siṅha, an ancient Sanskrit lexicographer. These topics are: (1) The creation of the universes; and (2) the genealogy of gods and sages. In the Nārāi Sip Pāng there is the story of the creation of the world by Śiva. Genealogy of gods and kings in the Nārāi Sip Pāng is limited to the gods and kings appearing in the Thai Rāmāyana only. (Genealogy in the strict sense of the word will not be discussed in this thesis.) It is a reasonable hypothesis to say that the myths in the Nārāi Sip Pāng have their prototype in the Purāṇas (both Sanskrit and local Indian ones) Prince Dhani attests this suggestion. In his review in the Journal of the Siam Society (Vol. LV, Pt. 2, 1967) of a book called Nārāi Sip Pāng Lae Phong Nai Rū'ang Rāmākīan he says, "From this presentation one may deduce that the myths of the Sanskrit Purāṇa were not unknown to our ancestors".

The characteristics of the Hindu myths in the Nārāi Sip Pāng are Vaiṣṇava in origin. This is clearly seen from the present title of

the text — Nārāi Sip Pāṅg, "The Ten Incarnations of Nārāyaṇa". It means that whoever who gave this title to the text regarded the myths about Viṣṇu incarnations as the essential part of the text. Later on some Śaiva myths were integrated into the myths about Viṣṇu. Some Śaiva myths, such as the destruction of Tripura by Śiva, maintained their original characteristics and were not altered to conform with the existing Vaiṣṇava myths in the text. But some Śaiva myths lost their original character and were adapted to be Vaiṣṇava ones. For example, a Śaiva legend about the installation of a liṅga by Viṣṇu, who had taken the form of a fish, and about the obtaining of a conch-shell by Viṣṇu (as related in connection with Kāñcipuram, a town in the Tamil region), does not maintain the theme of Viṣṇu's devotion to Śiva any more when it is related in the Nārāi Sip Pāṅg. Only the legend of Viṣṇu's incarnation in the form of a fish to destroy the demon who steals the Vedas is chosen to be related by the Thais (see p. 111). The last step must have been the interpolation into the text of a Śaiva myth of the creation of the world by Śiva extolling his grace and superiority to Viṣṇu.

There is much uncertainty about the date of the Nārāi Sip Pāṅg. Prince Dhani believes that it existed in the Ayuthya period or before the reign of King Rama I because, (as he says in his review) the myths in the Nārāi Sip Pāṅg inspired later scholars who compiled the Rāmākīan of King Rama I in the year 1797. Even though no text of the Nārāi Sip Pāṅg belonging to the Ayuthya period has been found, its existence during that time is not impossible.

The Nārāi Sip Pāṅg exists in prose in three versions; the Royal Press version, the Watcharin Press version, and the version of Khun Ying Lūan Rit. The Royal Press version was at first kept in manuscript in the National Library under the name of Tamrā Saiyasāt, translated in Prince Dhani's review as "Treatise on Hindu mythology"*³. It was first

3. A more literal translation of the word saiyasāt, however, is 'magical Art as found in Brahmanical writings'. The Rāṭṭhabanditayasathā dictionary for the entry sai(y) 'Doctrines concerned with charms and spells (wēt monkhāthā = Skt: vedamantragāthā) held to be derived from India.'

published in 1874 under the title of Thēwapāng, "Incarnations of the Gods", and republished in 1935 under the title of Nārāi Sip Pāng with the curious remark at the end that the work had been translated from a text written in Grantha characters. The Watcharin Press version was first published in 1869 and again in 1901, also with a short note appended to the effect that the tenth incarnation of Rāma can be found "in the Rāmākīan and has therefore been omitted". This would indicate that this version was compiled after a text of the Rāmākīan had been composed. The version of King Rama I, which was composed in 1797 A.D., must be the earliest Rāmākīan text for consideration. The version of Khun Ying Lū'an Rit was published in 1923. In none of these published versions are races of the gods and heroes of the Rāmākīan included. This topic is combined with the foregoing material only in the text published in the year 1968 and called Nārāi Sip Pāng Lae Phong Nai Rū'ang Rāmākīan. It contains two versions, that is the Royal Press version and the Watcharin Press version.

All these versions are written in a prose style which cannot be very old. They differ however in the order of the material. Whereas the Royal Press version begins with the Incarnation of the Boar, the Watcharin Press and the Lū'an Rit versions begin with the Incarnation of the Fish, which latter order corresponds to the order in all Sanskrit Purānas. The other incarnations conform as to content though there is some divergence in arrangement and order. The following table shows the order of the incarnations in the three versions.

	Royal Press	Watcharin Press	Lū'an Rit
1.	Warāhāwatān	Matchāwatān	Matchāwatān
2.	Katchapāwatān	Katchapāwatān	Katchapāwatān
3.	Matchāwatān	Warāhāwatān	Warāhāwatān
4.	Mahingsāwatān	Thawichāwatān	Thawichāwatān
5.	Samanāwatān	Mahingsāwatān	Mahingsāwatān
6.	Singhāwatān	Kritsanāwatān	Singhāwatān
7.	Khutchāwatān	Narasinghāwatān	Samanawatān
8.	Kritsanāwatān	Samanāwatān	Apsarawatān
9.	Apsarawatān	Apsarawatān	Mahanlaka-asurawatān
10.	Rāmāwatān	Rāmāwatān	Rāmāwatān

The Kṛṣṇa Incarnation is omitted from the version of Khun Ying Lū'an Rit. In its place is the incarnation called Mahanlaka Asura who seems to be the same as Viṣṇu in the form of a man called Rāmāwatān in the tenth story of the Royal Press version. Both Mahanlaka Asura and Rāmāwatān deceive Daśakaṇṭha (Rāvaṇa) by persuading him that he should ask the god Śiva for Monthok to be his chief queen, and not the goddess Umā.

The incarnations of Paraśurāma, of Buddha Śākyamuni, and of Kalki are absent from the Nārāi Sip Pāng. The list of the Hindu ten incarnations of Viṣṇu is shown below for the sake of comparison with the preceding Thai list.

- | | |
|---------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Matsyāvatāra | 2. Kūrmāvatāra |
| 3. Varāhāvatāra | 4. Narasiṃhāvatāra |
| 5. Vāmanāvatāra | 6. Paraśurāmāvatāra |
| 7. Rāmacandrāvatāra | 8. Kṛṣṇāvatāra |
| 9. Buddhāvatāra | 10. Kalkyavatāra |

However the Samanāwatān (Sanskrit: śramaṇāvatāra) seems to be a kind of reminiscence of the Buddhāvatāra. This incarnation is discussed in Chapter IV.

The two odd stories in the ten Thai incarnations are Mahingsāwatān (Sanskrit: Mahimsāvatāra) and Apsarawatān (Sanskrit: Apsarāvatāra). The Mahingsāwatān is discussed in Chapter V. The Apsarawatān is the incarnation of Viṣṇu in the form of a goddess. This seems to refer to Viṣṇu in Mohini form in the Sanskrit Purāṇas. The difference between the Thai version and the Sanskrit Mohini myth is in the mission given to the incarnated goddess. In the Sanskrit Purāṇas Viṣṇu turns his body into the form of a beautiful girl called Mohini. She has to deceive the demons who have taken possession of the Amṛta elixir which has been produced from the churning of the ocean by the gods and the demons.

The gods need to drink this amṛta elixir in order to be more powerful than the demons. Mohini's mission is to attract the demons' attention by her beauty and charm whilst the gods drink all the elixir. In the Nārāi Sip Pāṅg, however, the incarnated goddess has to kill a demon called Nonthuk who has a diamond finger which kills anyone he points at. This incarnation is discussed in Chapter v.

There are 26 manuscripts of the Nārāi Sip Pāṅg kept at the National Library in Bangkok. They can be divided into 4 groups as follows:

1. Nārāi Yīsip Pāṅg, "Twenty Incarnations of Viṣṇu". There are three sets of this version. They are: (a) Nos 1, 2, 3, 4; (b) Nos 5, 6, 7, 8; (c) Nos 15, 16, 17. Though the title indicates that there should be twenty incarnations of Viṣṇu, there are only ten narrated in these manuscripts. It is more likely that the scribe wrote the title down wrongly. The version of the Nārāi Yīsip Pāṅg contains no myths peculiarly its own. The basis of selection seems to be length: whichever version of a myth, be it from the Royal Press, the Watcharin or the Lu'an Rit versions, is the longest, then this version is included in the Nārāi Yīsip Pāṅg.
2. Watcharin Press Version. This group comprises Nos 9, 10; 11, 12; 13; 14; 18. Only the first set comprising Nos 9 and 10 is complete. The others are either ~~damaged~~ or incomplete.
3. Single myths. This group comprises Nos, 19 and 20. No 19 is the story about the destruction of Mūlākhanī by Śiva. No.

20 is the myth about the destruction of the demon Phangkhi by Skanda. Both myths are in accordance with those same myths in the Royal Press version.

4. Lineages. This group comprises Nos 24; 25; 26; 27; 28; 29. The content of these manuscripts is more or less the same. They are all about the genealogy of the gods and heroes, including the monkey-heroes of the Ramakian.

The Narai Sip Pang must have been regarded as one of the most important Thai literary works. In the year 1879-1882 King Rama V had the episodes from the Royal Press version of the Narai Sip Pang painted on the walls of the Emerald Buddha Temple, Bangkok. Each picture is accompanied by verses describing the story it represents. Moreover, the popularity of the Narai Sip Pang during the early Ratanakosin period can be attested. A noble called Kromakhun Phūwanai, who lived during the reign of King Rama V, composed a story called Wong Kromakhun Phūwanai which is a mockery of the Narai Sip Pang. It is the story of Kromakhun Phūwanai, his family, and his friends. It is written in manuscripts Nos 21; 22 and 23, labelled with the same title as the Narai Sip Pang. It has not been published yet.

CHAPTER I

B R A H M Ā

The physical description of Brahmā in Thai literature is nearly similar to the Hindu account. His best known characteristics are having four faces and riding on the Swan Lord. These two are always mentioned whenever Brahmā is referred to in any Thai text. However, differences occur too. In Hindu mythology Brahmā, who has four faces, has only four hands*¹. In most Thai literary works Brahmā is described as having eight hands. In only one place is Brahmā referred to as a deity with four hands. But there is still a slight difference even in this description. In Hindu mythology Brahmā has four hands holding a sceptre, a spoon, a string of beads, (or his bow Parivāta, or a water-jug), and the Vedas. In the Thai account Brahmā's four hands hold a sceptre, an alms-bowl, and the Vedas.*² The fourth object is missing in the Thai text, while an alms-bowl is wanting in the Hindu list.

The difference in the number of Brahmā's hands is considered to be late Thai literary tradition. From the twelfth century onwards until the Ratanakosin period Brahmā (though often confused with the Buddhist Brahmas) has been represented in sculpture as having four faces and four hands.*³ It is likely that the poets of the Ratanakosin period must have speculated that the god should have eight hands, a reasonable number, to agree with his four faces. The sculptures of Brahmā in Thailand do not give much help in informing what he has in his hands. This is because most of the time it is the Buddhist Brahmas, who possess the same physical characteristics as the Hindu Brahmā, i.e. four faces and four hands, who are represented. Most of these Brahmas are represented as one of the chief attendants of Buddha. They are usually coupled

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1. John Dowson, A Classical Dictionary of Hindu Mythology, 12th ed; London, 1972, p. 57.
 2. Luang Thammaphimon (Thu'k), "Chan Klom Phra Sawēt Wachiraphāha", Chumnum Chan Dutsadi Sangwoei, Bangkok, 1914, p.313
 3. Dhanit Yūphō, "Phrom Sī Nā", Sinlapakorn, IX (February, 1965), pp. 24-25 .

with Indra and are represented as holding more or less the same thing as Indra, such as an umbrella for Buddha, a caurī whip -- part of Buddha's regalia, and a lotus.*⁴ But there is one sculpture*⁵ in which a Brahma is represented as holding a water-jug which is also held by the Hindu Brahmā. This and the following passages show that the confusion between Buddhist Brahmas and the Hindu Brahmā in Thai culture in general, not just in literature in particular, is very great.

Four major characteristics of Hindu Brahmā are referred to in Thai literature. They are: (1) as the Creator of the world, (2) as the Lord of Knowledge, (3) as being responsible for the destiny of any creature, (4) as being born from a lotus rising from the navel of Viṣṇu.

4. Ibid., p.27.

5. Ibid., p. 28.

I

Brahmā the Creator, together with his creation, is mentioned in the Lilit Ōngkān Chaeng Nam (14th century) which is one of the few extant early works of the Ayuthya period. It concerns ritual oath-taking. In the invocation to the Hindu triad in the Lilit Ōngkān Chaeng Nam nearly all the prominent characteristics of Brahmā are mentioned. It is clear from these characteristics that Brahmā here is the Hindu deity rather than any Buddhist one. The passage which follows reveals this.

The Lord, who has a lotus as his seat, is four-faced. He, who rides on the Swan Lord, created the earth and the sky. He has reigned over the universe (brahmāṇḍa, see below) for a very long time. He is renowned for his justice and is the great Lord of Knowledge*⁶.

This passage, however, discusses certain other characteristics which are not so unequivocal. In this text, Brahmā, the Creator in the Hindu Pantheon is partially confused with a being or beings termed Phrom (Brahma)*⁷ by Thai Buddhists. Thus in addition to the above characteristics, he is also called 'the revealer of the Sixteen Tiers of Brahma-Heavens.'⁸

In the Buddhist literature Brahma is multiple. These multiple Brahmas are not seen as founding figures of the Buddhist cosmology but rather as mere dwellers in it with responsibilities for lordship over certain levels of heaven. Any sage or hermit who attains a certain level of virtue, accompanied by meditation and contemplation, may be born in one of these Sixteen Tiers which all together are called Rūpa Bhūmi or Rūpa Brahmāloka, 'The Brahma World of Form.' Sages who attain higher levels of meditation may be born in Arūpa Bhūmi or Arūpa Brahmāloka, 'The Formless Brahma World', which consists of four heavens. The Sixteen Tiers of the Brahma Heavens are described in the Trai Phūm Phra Ruang (14th

6. "Lilit Ōngkān Chaeng Nam", Lilit Lae Nirāt, by Watcharī Romyanan, Bangkok, 1974, p.11.

7. Brahma: Buddhist, an angel, a class of superior angels whose pleasures are simply intellectual or meditative but who are yet mundane, in that they have bodies or forms (Henry Alabaster: The Wheel of the Law, London, 1871, p. 13)

8. "Lilit Ōngkān Chaeng Nam", Lilit Lae Nirāt, by Watcharī Romyanan, p.11.

century) of Phrayā Li Thai of Sukhothai as a thousand times more splendid than the heaven of Indra. In each tier of the Brahma Heavens there is a lord who is ruler over it. Among these Brahma Lords, Lord Mahā Brahma and Lord Sahampati Brahma are better known than the others.*

The Hindu Brahmā the Creator rules only one particular heaven. It is called Brahmāloka or Satyaloka, which is the world of Infinite Wisdom and Truth. It is the highest world above the earth, and is the seventh in order counting up from the Pitṛloka, Indraloka (or Svarga), Divaloka (or heaven), Gandharvaloka (or Mahāloka which is the world of celestial spirits), Janaloka (or the sphere of saints), and Tapoloka (the region of the seven sages).*

What is certain is that Brahmā the Creator is not found in the classic Thai work on cosmology the Trai Phūm Phra Ruang. There is, however, mention of Brahmā as Creator in some other Buddhist scriptures. In these it is highly likely that Brahmā the Hindu deity is meant. For example, in the Agañña Suttanta of the Dīghanikāya, which is a part of the Suttapiṭaka, sages Vasiṣṭha and Bharadvāja tell Lord Buddha that Brahmins think that they only are perfect, and no others. This is because they were created by Brahmā (brahmanimmitā), and were born from his mouth (brahmun mukhato jātā).¹¹ It follows that Brahmā the Creator here is Hindu, not Buddhist. The concept of brahmins being born from the mouth of Brahmā is as old as the time of the Ṛgveda, and is sustained in all later Hindu works.

The fact that Brahmā in the Lilit Ōngkān Chaeng Nam is described as 'four-faced' allies the passage still more with the Hindu

9. Phrayā Li Thai, Trai Phūm Phra Ruang, 8th ed.; Bangkok, 1972, pp. 237-248.

10. Matsya Purāṇa 86.6; 178.76;
Bhāgavata Purāṇa IV 31.23; XI 23.30;
Vāyu Purāṇa 101.27.

11. Dīghanikāya III.81.

tradition. In the Buddhist scriptures the Brahmas are nowhere described as having four faces. In the Trai Phūm Phra Ruang, the Brahmas in the Rūpa Bhūmi are described as having very shining hands. One single hand of a Brahma can shine over ten thousand universes. Their hair is beautiful and bound in a chignon. Brahmas in the Arūpa Bhūmi are mere effulgences or spirits without forms.*¹²

The word 'brahmāṇḍa' appearing in the Lilit Ōṅkān Chaeng Nam puts additional emphasis on Brahmā as the Hindu deity. In the Manusmṛti, 'brahmāṇḍa' is the egg which was engendered from a seed placed in the water by Brahmā himself. Then Brahmā entered into this egg and stayed there inside for a whole year before he broke it into two parts. Out of these two halves he formed heaven and earth.*¹³ In later works this egg is given still more characteristics in addition to being the abode of Brahmā in the beginning of the world. The duration of Brahmā's stay inside it is also lengthened to a thousand years. In the end the egg has the connotation of 'the universe'. The description of this primeval egg in the Viṣṇu Purāṇa may be quoted as an example.

In that egg, O Brahmin, were the continents and seas and mountains, the planets and divisions of the universe, the gods, the demons, and mankind.*¹⁴

The appearance of the word 'brahmāṇḍa' in the Lilit Ōṅkān Chaeng Nam makes it certain that it is Brahmā the Hindu deity which is meant, and not any Buddhist Brahma.

Another point which definitely shows that Brahmā in the Lilit Ōṅkān Chaeng Nam is Brahmā the Creator, not Lord Mahā Brahma or Lord Sahampati Brahma of the Buddhist tradition, is that Brahmā is invoked together with Śiva and Viṣṇu*¹⁵, the other two of the Hindu triad, and he therefore completes this triad.

12. Phrayā li Thai, Trai Phūm ..., p. 242.

13. Manusmṛti I. 8-13.

14. Viṣṇu Purāṇa I.2.54-55.

15. "Lilit Ōṅkān Chaeng Nam", Lilit Lo Nirāt, pp. 7-11

The description of the Hindu Brahmā, then, associated with the mention of the Sixteen Tiers of the (Buddhist) Brahmaloḥka, provides evidence of a confused attitude towards the two traditions.

The confusion between the Hindu Brahmā the Creator and a Buddhist Brahma persists through time and becomes more pronounced in some Ratanakosin literary works. In the Sanphasit Kham Chan (1829), a renowned poetic Jātaka tale, Prince Paramānuchitchinōrot, the learned author, invokes Brahmā as 'Lord Thādā (Sanskrit: dhātā) or the Creator, who has four faces and lives happily in the Sixteen Tiers of the Brahma Heavens.'¹⁶ In the Chan Sangwoei Klōng Winitchai Phērī (A poem in chan meter for the religious ceremony of the installation of a drum - Winitchai Phērī, the Court Judgement Drum) the same author replaces Brahmā the Creator with the Buddhist Sahampati Brahma in the invocation to the Hindu triad.*¹⁷ Phrayā Sī Sunthōn Wōhān (Nōi), a very famous Thai language preceptor who lived during the reign of King Rama IV and Rama V, in Chan Klōm Phra Sawēt Suwaphāphan (A poem in chan meter sung as a lullaby for a royal elephant called Phra Sawēt Suwaphāphan), invokes Brahmā as a deity with four faces who rides on a Swan; he also reveals the Sixteen Tiers of Heaven.*¹⁸

The confusion of the Hindu god Brahmā with Buddhist Brahmas illustrated above provides evidence for the existence of Buddhist myths side by side, or in confusion with, Hindu myths. The myths of creation in Thai literature also show the same confusion. The earliest Thai myth of creation by a Hindu god is narrated in the Lilit Ōngkān Chaeng Nam. The Lilit Ōngkān Chaeng Nam agrees with most Hindu scriptures in making Brahmā the performer of creation.

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16. Somdet Phra Mahā Samana Chao Kromaphra Paramānuchitchinōrot, Sanphasit Kham Chan, 2nd ed.; Bangkok : Khurusaphā, 1968, p.1.
 17. Somdet Phra Paramānuchitchinōrot, "Chan Sangwoei Klōng Winitchai Phērī", Chunnum Chan ..., p. 96.
 18. Phrayā Sī Sunthōn Wōhān (Nōi), "Chan Klōm Phra Sawēt Suwaphāphan", Ibid, p. 155.

Creation, as narrated in the Lilit Ōṅkān Chaeng Nam, is pratisarga or 're-creation' which occurs at the beginning of each Kalpa, or Day of Brahmā. What attests this supposition is the description of a partial destruction of the world which takes place at the end of every previous Day of Brahmā. It affects only inferior creatures and lower worlds. Gods, Buddhist Brahmas and sages, are left unharmed. Here is the description of the destruction of the world in the Lilit Ōṅkān Chaeng Nam.

The story of the destruction of the universe by fire will be narrated. At that time seven suns blazed forth and dried up all the waters in the world. Fat from seven fishes which lived beneath the earth set fire to the world. It burned up all the Hells and the worlds of the Asuras, the Pretas and the animals. It burned up to the Tāvātimsa Heaven of Indra and turned it into ashes. A great crowd of gods fled as refugees into the Suddhāvāsa Heavens which were not burned because they were ruled by Lord Brahmas. Then the sky became clear. The fire stopped. Heavy rain then poured down on the earth extinguishing the great fire. The seven fishes floated with the rising water up as far as the sky itself and reached the moon and the stars. Strong winds blew violently. Khun Phāēn (the Creator) created cities for Indra and for Buddhist Brahmas*¹⁹ He recreated earth and heaven as they used to be. Khun Phāēn created four continents, Mount Sumeru, Mount Kailāsa, Mount Gandhamādāna and other great mountains as before*²⁰

19. The meaning of the word thādā (Sanskrit: dhātā) used here should not be taken as "Brahmā the Creator" only, but as a Buddhist Brahma too. This is because the author of the O.C.N. text, after mentioning that Brahmā had revealed the Sixteen Tiers of Buddhist Brahmas, goes on to say that Khun Phāēn (i.e. the Creator) also provided mū'ang In and mū'ang Thādā (cities for Indra and for Dhātā). It is not considered likely that the Creator here is referring to a city for himself. It is more likely, in fact, that the mū'ang Thādā here is another term for the Sixteen Tiers of the Brahma heavens mentioned earlier.

20. "Lilit Ōṅkān Chaeng Nam", Lilit Lae Nirāt, pp. 13-16.

The above description of the dissolution of the world has some similarity to the great destruction described in the Trai Phūm Phra Ruang.²¹ All the incidents and the agents of the destruction of the world too, are very similar to those in the Lilit Ōngkān Chaeng Nam. But in the Buddhist treatise, after the dissolution of heaven and earth has been described, there follows an account of how these re-evolve into their previous shapes and conditions by themselves. Brahmā the Creator is not involved in the matter at all. The following passage bears this out.

After the great fire had stopped and the whole world was swallowed up by the great flood, four kinds of strong winds blew water to and fro. In the end the waters evolved into the Heaven of Lord Mahā Phrom. All gods, sages and Phrom from the unharmed tiers of heavens higher up then moved down to this heaven and to the successively evolved levels below. After this, Mount Sumeru, its seven surrounding mountains including their encircling oceans, the four continents, the world of human beings, Pretas, animals, Asuras and the Hells, appeared in the same forms and shapes as before.*²²

Whilst the destruction of the world in the Lilit Ōngkān Chaeng Nam is reminiscent of passages in some Buddhist texts, such as, the Visuddhimagga of Buddhaghosa and the

21. Phrayā li Thai,
Trai Phūm ..., pp. 294 - 298.
 22. Ibid., pp. 300 - 303

Trai Phūm Phra Ruang of Phrayā Li Thai, the re-creation of the world by Brahmā in the Lilit Ōngkān Chaeng Nam is also slightly similar to the Hindu myth on the same subject, i.e. the creation of the world by Brahmā, which is as old as the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa. Hereunder is a passage from the Līṅga Purāna quoted to attest the statement.

At the end of the night, Brahmā wakes up and beholds a void instead of the world of mobile and immobile creation. Then he, the most excellent among the knowers of Brahman, decides to create. He assumes the form of a boar and lifts the earth which is submerged under the water. He lifts it up and places it as before, together with all the rivers, rivulets and oceans. With great effect he makes the earth even. He gathers together on the earth all the mountains burned by fire. He establishes the four worlds as before. He, the lord creator then decides to create everything afresh.*²³

In later parts of the Līṅga Purāna*²⁴ and in some other Purānas*²⁵ the boar form of Brahmā is taken over by Viṣṇu. It becomes one of his avatāras. In the Lilit Ōngkān Chaeng Nam, and in other Thai literary works, there is no mention of Brahmā's taking the form of a boar in order to lift up the earth, as described in the Hindu scriptures above.

²³. Līṅga Purāna, I.4. 60-63.

²⁴. Ibid., I. 94.

²⁵ Bhāgavata Purāna III.13. 18-45; X. 2.40;
Viṣṇu Purāna V. 5.15;
Matsya Purāna 47.43.

It is likely that the Buddhist account of the creation of the world was widely accepted by the Thais at the time of the composition of the Lilit Ōṅkān Chaeng Nam. This explains its existence in an avowedly Brahmanistic text. However it can be seen that this Buddhist account is slightly altered at the end. The agent of creation, unknown to Buddhist cosmologists, has been inserted. This is none other than Khun Phāēn. There may be an argument whether Khun Phāēn is the same as Brahmā or not. How is it that the word 'Brahmā' is not used here? A plausible answer is that by that time there was already confusion between Hindu Brahmā and Buddhist Brahma. This can be seen from the passages above. If the word Brahmā or Brahma had been used in the place of Khun Phāēn, there might have been a misunderstanding among the readers. They might have thought that it was Mahā Brahma or Sahampati Brahma who was the creator. This was certainly not intended by the Brahmins who composed the text.

Moreover, if the word Brahmā had been used here, there might have been confusion with the word dhātā, in the same stanza, which refers to Buddhist Brahma. In the invocation, the description of Brahmā in the text indicates that by that time Brahmā was known by the Thais as the creator of the world. Therefore, the same creator figure (but with a different name) who occurs in the following passage on the creation, cannot be anybody else. Finally, there is no folk-tale about, or legend of, a figure called Khun Phāēn, except for the one in the Lilit Ōṅkān Chaeng Nam, who performs any kind of creation. Therefore, it is certain that Khun Phāēn in the Lilit Ōṅkān Chaeng Nam is meant to be the same as Brahmā the creator.

Confusion of multiple Buddhist Brahmas with the Hindu god Brahmā occurring in the Lilit Ōngkān Chaeng Nam, also exists in another Thai work on cosmology called Nārāi Sip Pāng. In the Nārāi Sip Pāng, there is mention of some Brahmas who became jealous of Brahmā the Creator and were therefore born as Asuras.

In the Thai story of the Fish Incarnation of Viṣṇu, in the Nārāi Sip Pāng (Watcharin Press Version), a Brahma is described as being envious of Brahmā the Creator. He thinks, "I am also a Brahma who has four faces and eight hands. Therefore I will not let any Brahma be superior to me." For this sin he is born as Śankha Asura, 'Conch Demon', who robs Brahmā the Creator of the Vedic texts. Śankha Asura is the cause of Viṣṇu's incarnating himself as a fish in order to win the Vedic texts back by force.*²⁶

In the same version of the Nārāi Sip Pāng another group of Brahmas thinks that Śiva has done something improper. He has permitted Brahmā the Creator to have the Swan Lord as his vehicle. This Swan Lord should rightly belong to them who became Brahmas before Brahmā the Creator. As a result of their jealousy these Brahmas are born as Asura Macchā, 'Fish Demons'. They want to destroy the Sumeru Mountain. This causes Viṣṇu to take the form of a turtle in order to kill them all.*²⁷

26. Praphan Sukhonthachāt (ed.), Nārāi Sip Pāng Lae Phong Nai Rū'ang Rāmakiān, 2nd ed.; Bangkok, 1968, p.6.

27. Ibid., p. 10.

It is unlikely that Thai authors got the idea of multiple Brahmas from the Hindu Brahmarṣi, which in the Viṣṇu Purāṇa,*²⁸ are nine in number. These Brahmarṣi are Marīci, Atr̥, Angiras, Pulaha, Kratu, Pulatstya, Vasiṣṭha, Bhṛgu and Dakṣa. Of this list only Vasiṣṭha appears in Thai literature (as one of the two preceptors of Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa), but he is never referred to as Brahmā but always as ṛṣi, tāpasas, or siddha. The last two names of the Viṣṇu Purāṇa's list, viz. Bhṛgu and Dakṣa appear to be mere additions to the list of seven sages (saptarṣi) as found in the Mahābhārata.*²⁹ These Brahmarṣi are described, in the Manusmṛti,*³⁰ as the same as Prajāpatis which are ten in number. Nārada is added. Teachers of Thai classical music regard Nārada as their great preceptor. Nārada is always called ṛṣi by them. These ten Prajāpatis are created by Manu Svāyambhuva for the production of all other beings including gods and men. At a later period they are described as the mind-born sons of Brahmā. It might be thought possible that these sons of Brahmā, who are also the progenitors of all beings in the world, could easily have been confused by Thai authors with Brahmā the Creator. But this is not the case. Whenever these mind-born sons of Brahmā appear in Thai literature, they are always called ṛṣi, or siddhas, or tāpasas. In the Rāmakīan,*³¹ sages Vasiṣṭha, Bhāradvāja, Svāmitra (for Viśvāmitra?), and Vajja Aggi (for Jamadagni) are described as the chief sages belonging to the race of Rāma. Only one among these names, i.e. Vasiṣṭha, is on the list of the mind-born sons of Brahmā. Vasiṣṭha, Viśvāmitra, Bhāradvāja, and Jamadagni, however, belong to the list of the Hindu saptarṣi or the seven sages mentioned in the Bṛhadāranyaka Upaniṣad.*³² It is certain that it is the ṛṣi, not the mind-born sons of Brahmā, who are referred to in the Thai literature.

28. Viṣṇu Purāṇa, I.7.5,7,37.

29. Mahābhārata XII.208.3-4.

30. Manusmṛti I. 34-35.

31. Phrabāt Somdet Phra Phuttha Yōt Fā Chulā Lōk (King Rama I), Rāmakīan, vol I, Bangkok, 1951, p.271.

32. Bṛhadāranyaka Upaniṣad II. 2.3-4.

In Thai literature the Buddhist Brahmas persistently appear in, or side by side with, the myths of Brahmā the Creator. In the Lilit Ōngkān Chaeng Nam*³³ Brahmā the Creator is described as creating cities for Indra and the (Buddhist) Brahmas. In the Nārāi Sip Pāng*³⁴ and the Rāmākīan the Buddhist Sahampati Brahma appears in the myth of the construction of the city of Laṅkā, capital of Rāvaṇa. In the Rāmākīan*³⁵ of King Rama I, Sahampati Brahma comes down from heaven to an island called Rang Kā (meaning 'crows' nest, a Thai punning allusion to Laṅkā). He sees that it is a very suitable place to build a city. He orders Viṣṇu Brahma (a figure unknown in Hindu mythology) to build the city and names it Laṅkā. Then the Buddhist Sahampati Brahma sends Brahmadhātā or Brahmā the Creator to come down and rule that city. Brahmadhātā is renamed Chaturaphak (Sanskrit: catura vaktra, an epithet of Brahmā). Chaturaphak is the grand-father of Rāvaṇa. The persistent appearance of the Buddhist Brahmas associated with the myths of Brahmā the Creator makes it clear that the multiple Brahmas in Thai literature are Buddhist, not Hindu, and thought of as enjoying a separate (and sometimes superior) existence of their own.

It is possible, however, that in Thai tradition, the idea of multiple Brahmas may not be exclusively Buddhist. There is another category called Asuraphrom (Demon Brahmas). These are notionally Hindu. In the Nārāi Sip Pāng (Royal Press Version) an Asuraphrom named Muḷākhanī (Sanskrit: Muḷāgni) is very proud of himself and oppresses the three worlds. Śiva has to come down from the Kailāsa Mountain to kill him and bring peace back to the gods.*³⁶

33. "Lilit Ōngkān Chaeng Nam", Lilit Lao Nirat, p. 15.

34. Khun Ying Lū'an Rit (ed.), Nārāi Sip Pāng, 1923, p.24.

35. King Rama I, Rāmākīan, vol. I, pp. 15-19.

36. Praphan Sukhonthachāt, Nārāi Sip Pāng ..., p. 39.

In the Buffalo Incarnation of Viṣṇu, an Asuraphrom, out of his jealousy of Brahmā the Creator, changes his body to the form of a buffalo. He wants to destroy the Sumeru Mountain. Viṣṇu has to incarnate himself as a buffalo too and kill the Asuraphrom.*³⁷

In the same text an Asuraphrom named Nonthuk is described as having the duty of washing the feet of the gods who come to see Śiva at the Kailāsa Mountain. Later he becomes very mighty by means of a boon given to him by Śiva. He thereupon oppresses all the gods. Śiva orders Viṣṇu to destroy him. Viṣṇu incarnates himself as a beautiful goddess and kills him by a trick.*³⁸

These Asuraphrom cannot be the same as Buddhist Brahmas. The Buddhist Brahmas always do good deeds and are nowhere described as demons. Asuraphrom are reminiscent of the Hindu Daityas and Dānavas, the progeny of Brahmā the Creator. In the epics and the Purāṇas, the Daityas and the Dānavas are the children of Prajāpati Kasyapa's union with Diti and Danu, daughters of Dakṣa. Both Kasyapa and Dakṣa are mind-born sons of Brahmā the Creator. The Daityas and the Dānavas are classes of demons. They are implacable enemies of the gods. The Daityas and the Dānavas are often identified with each other. Both of them are called Asuras.

However, it is possible that the idea of Asuraphrom in Thai literature might be influenced by the Thai story of Rāma as well. According to Thai tradition, the race of

37. Ibid., p. 53.

38. Ibid., p. 64.

Rāvaṇa is called Brahma Vaṃśa or Phong Phrom (vaṃśa- brahma)*³⁹ in Thai. This is because the first ancestor of Rāvaṇa is Chaturaphak Phrom who is crowned as the first king of Laṅkā by Sahampati Brahma, the creator of that city.*⁴⁰ Rāvaṇa and his relatives are also described as being demons or Asuras. they are then understood to be both Asuras and Brahmas. The devilish and vicious nature of Rāvaṇa and his race might thus originate a new category of wicked Brahmas. These would be called Asurabrahma.

39. King Rama I, Rāmakīan, Vol. I, p. 15.

40. Ibid., p. 20.

II. BRAHMĀ

Another distinguished characteristic of Brahmā which is recognized by the Thais is his being the Lord of Knowledge. This accords well with what Max Müller says in his introduction to the Śvetāsvara Upaniṣad - "It is a well known fact that the Hindus, even as early as the Brāhmaṇa period, were fond of tracing their various branches of knowledge back to Brahmā or to Brahmā Svayambhū".*⁴¹ Brahmā is referred to in Thai literature as being well-versed in the Vedas, in Nītiśāstra and in the Rājadharmā.*⁴² In Chan Sangwoei Klōng Winitchai Phērī composed by Prince Paramānuchitchinōrot to celebrate the ceremony of the installation of the Court Judgement Drum - Winitchai Phērī -, Brahmā is invoked as the guardian of martial law and the royal family laws.

Here, however, Brahmā is confused with Sahampati Brahma. What makes it certain that it is the Hindu Brahmā is that this Sahampati Brahma is described as being the Lord of the Lotus, Kamala-īśā. This is usually a description for the Hindu Brahmā. Brahmā, who is here described as being well-versed in the Dharmasāstra, in the Nītiśāstra and in the Rājasāstra, is also invoked to look after the judges and their judgements.*⁴³

There is a Thai myth which shows how much Brahmā is dependent on his knowledge of the Vedas. In the story of the Fish Incarnation of Viṣṇu, in the Nārāi Sip Pāng (WPV), Brahmā is mentioned as being in charge of the Vedas and his prestige seems to be directly dependent on these sacred texts. The conch demon comes to know of this. The demon, out of his jealousy towards Brahmā, wants to reduce the fame of the god.

41. F. Max Müller (trans.), Śvetāsvara Upaniṣad, vol. 15 of Sacred Book of the East, ed. Max. Müller, Oxford, 1884, p. XXXIX.

42. Phra Ongchaḥ Kalayā Na Prawet, "Chan Sangwoei Phra Mahā Sawētachat", Chunnum Chan ..., p. 68.

43. Somdet Kromaphra Paramānuchitchinōrot, "Chan Sangwoei Klōng Winitchai Phērī", Chunnum Chan ..., p. 96.

He therefore robs Brahmā of the sacred texts. But Brahmā is saved by Viṣṇu in the form of a fish. Viṣṇu kills the demon and gives the Vedas back to Brahmā.*⁴⁴

In the Nārāi Sip Pāṅ (Watcharin Press Version), Brahmā is described as the great preceptor of Brahmans. He teaches them Trai Phēt or the Three Vedas. The Vedas, according to the Nārāi Sip Pāṅ, contain knowledge of sacrificial ceremonies; Brahmanical ritual and rites; astrology and astronomy; and ancient medicine for "preserving life and wreaking destruction"⁴⁵. Here again Buddhist lore is inserted. Brahmā teaches Brahmans not only the special characteristics of the Hindu triad, of emperors, and of wealthy merchants, he also teaches them the Buddhist thirty-two auspicious signs on the body and one hundred and eighty marks on the foot of the Mahā Puruṣa, or Lord Buddha, too.*⁴⁶ In this story Brahmā is also made to acknowledge the superiority of a Buddhist figure, as he has to in the myth of the construction of the city of Laṅkā for Rāvaṇa too. Brahmā is

44. Praphan Sukhonthachāt, Nārāi Sip Pāṅ, p. 6.

45. Ibid., pp. 4 - 5.

46. The Mahā Puruṣa quoted in this passage must not be confused with an epithet of Viṣṇu who has already been mentioned in previous sentences. It cannot refer to the Adī Puruṣa, 'the first man', of the Hindu mythology either because the Adī Puruṣa is nowhere described in Hindu literature as possessing auspicious signs on his body. In the Mahāpurisalakkhaṇāni in the Dīghanikāya (II. 17 F.; III. 142 FF.) and in the Majjhimanikāya (II. 136 f.) of the Sutta Pitaka, 'Mahāpurisa' (an equivalent of the Sanskrit word 'mahāpuruṣa') is a name given to a great being who is destined to become either an emperor or - a Buddha. He carried on his person thirty-two marks. In the text with which we are concerned it is definite that an emperor is not meant here because an emperor too has already been mentioned in preceding sentences. In the Nārāi Sip Pāṅ, therefore, the possibility arises that, once again the Hindu god Brahmā the Creator is being confused with the Suddhavāsa Brahmas as mentioned in the Papañca Sūdanī, Majjhima Commentary of Buddhaghosa (II.761). When the time comes for the birth of a Buddha, then Brahmas visit the earth in the guise of Brahmans and teach men about these bodily signs as forming part of the Vedic teaching so that thereby auspicious men may recognize the Buddha.

quoted, in the Nārāi Sip Pāṅ (Watcharin Press Version) as advising Brahmins to worship the Mahā Puruṣa first. When they have done that, then only can they turn to pay homage to him. If Brahmins do not follow his advice their merit will be unfruitful.*⁴⁷

47. Praphan Sukhonthachāt, Nārāi Sip Pāṅ ..., p. 5.

III.

Brahmā is responsible for the destiny of any creature he has created. There is a superstitious idea which prevails very generally throughout India that on the sixth day after birth Brahmā writes the child's future destiny on its forehead. The lines of destiny written by Brahmā are called Brahmarekhā or Brahmālikhita. Oddly enough there is no special ceremony instituted to mark this particular day, or to propitiate Brahmā on so momentous an occasion.*⁴⁸ The Thais have also adopted the idea of Brahmālikhita from the Hindus. The Thais do not have any ceremony relating to the day of Brahmā's writing the predestination lines on a child's forehead either. The idea of the Thai Brahmālikhita is mostly explained indirectly in Thai literary works. The word Brahmālikhita connotes solely predestination with regard to the moment of death. It is noteworthy that the word is most of the time used with a word thu'ng meaning 'reaching'. The phrase thu'ng Phromlikhit (thu'ng Brahmālikhita) would then translate as an expression such as 'Reaching the last stage of one's predestined life'. In the Rāmākīan, when Valī realizes that the wrong done to his brother Sugrīva is going to be penalized by Rāma, he accepts that his body and his life have reached 'Brahmālikhita' on that day.*⁴⁹ In the Khun Chāng Khun Phāēn (a romantic epic of the lives of Khun Chāng and Khun Phāēn), the hero Khun Phāēn consoles Phra Wai, his son, for the death of Wan Thōng, his wife and Phrai Wai's mother, that all living men and women have to relinquish life when they 'come to the Brahmālikhita'.*⁵⁰

48. Sir Monier Monier Williams, Brahmanism and Hinduism, 4th ed.; London, 1891, p. 370.

49. King Rama I, Rāmākīan, vol. II, p. 740.

50. Khun Chāng Khun Phāēn, 11th ed.; Bangkok: Sinlapa Bannakhan, 1966, p. 886.

However, there is one example where Brahmā is described as being responsible for the misery of a living being, and yet the word Brahmālikhita is not used here. In the Dutsadi Sangwoei Klom Chāng Khōng Kao (a poem sung as a lullaby for a newly captured white elephant) believed to have been composed during the Ayuthya period (date uncertain), the poet consoles the newly captive elephant that it should not be so depressed at being separated from its family and from the forest surroundings. All these sufferings are the result of the power of his own 'karma' which has been deliberately predestined by Brahmā. The elephant should not blame either its own family or any man or god.*⁵¹ It is quite clear that the idea of Brahmālikhita is meant in this example even though the word is absent. It is noteworthy that the word Brahmālikhita is not found in any of the literary texts composed during the early period of Ayuthya. The word 'karma' (Thai: kam) appears in its place and is also used with the verb thu'ng. In the Lilit Phra Lō, Phra Lō consoles his mother, who is greatly agitated by his departure for their enemies' kingdom, saying that he cannot keep his hold on life once he 'reaches his karma'.*⁵² When the word karma is used without the word thu'ng it always denotes bad deeds done in the past (which can be from previous births also). This meaning is clearly and widely expressed in Thai literary works of all periods. It is possible that this meaning of the word karma also plays some part when the same word is used with thu'ng. But it may have a slightly different meaning, i.e. the power of bad deeds performed in the past resulting in death.

51. "Dutsadi Sangwoei Klom Chāng", Chumnum Chan ..., p. 116.

52. Lilit Phra Lō, Bangkok: Sinlapalorn, 1953, p. 44.

The doctrine of karma, the result of the deeds of one life affecting the next, is first referred to in the Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad. The text declares that the souls of those who have lived lives of sacrifice, charity and austerity, after certain obscure peregrinations, pass to the World of the Fatherly, the paradise of Yama, while the unrighteous are reincarnated as worms, birds or insects.*⁵³ This doctrine of karma soon became fundamental to most Indian thought, whether Hindu or Buddhist. It provided a satisfactory explanation to the mystery of suffering. The Thais have adopted this doctrine from Buddhism. There is a very understandable tendency to confuse karma with simpler ideas of fate or destiny. Later on, when the idea of Brahmalkhita had been adopted, the two words were further confused and used as if they were one and the same. However, by the time of the early Ratanakosin period each of them had come to have their own idiomatic usages and thus attained some degree of independence from each other.

53. Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad VI.2.16.

IV

Thai literature contains some accounts of the creation myth which presents a rather Vaiṣṇava point of view. An account of Brahmā's birth from the navel of Viṣṇu is referred to in some works. In the Khlong Thawāthotsamāt, (Poem on Twelve Months), (15th century), Brahmā the Creator is invoked as 'The Lord whose great delight is in staying in the navel which shines brilliantly'.*⁵⁴ This undoubtedly refers to the Purāṇic myth of Brahmā being born from the umbilicus of Viṣṇu. This myth may be accepted without refutation as a Vaiṣṇava myth. It is narrated in both epics and in nearly all of the Vaiṣṇava Purāṇas. The Śaiva scriptures also have this story, but make Brahmā and his progenitor Viṣṇu inferior to Śiva.

There are some interpolations in the myth of the Lotus-Born Brahmā in some works of the Ratanakosin period. In the Nārāi Sip Pāng (Watcharin Press Version) it is not only Brahmā who rises from the navel of Viṣṇu. A character of considerable importance in the Thai story of Rāma is also described as a lotus-born child of Viṣṇu. In the Watcharin Press Version of the Nārāi Sip Pāng*⁵⁵, after Viṣṇu in the form of a boar has killed the demon Hērantayak, he returns to his own form and goes back to sleep on the Serpent Lord Ananta in the Ocean of Milk. While he is lying there a lotus springs from his navel. That lotus unfolds and from within it Brahmā, who has four faces, appears holding a princely child. Viṣṇu takes the child from Brahmā and goes to Mount Kailāsa to present him to Śiva. Śiva, by means of meditation,

54. Chanthip Krasāēsīn (ed.), Khlong Thawāthotsamāt, Bangkok, 1961, p. 55.

55. Praphan Sukhonthachāt, Nārāi Sip Pāng ..., p. 11.

realizes that the boy will extend the race of Nārāyaṇa or Viṣṇu. Śiva, therefore, orders Indra to build a city on earth for the boy. The city is named Ayuthya, and is described as being as beautiful as heaven. Śiva names the boy Lord Anōmātan and blesses him with the power to overcome all evil demons. Śiva gives Lord Anōmātan a discus and a diamond mace and sends him down to earth to rule over Ayuthya. He is the great-grand-father of Rāma. In the other two versions of the Nārāi Sip Pāng, (i.e. the Royal Press and the Lū'an Rit Versions)*⁵⁶, the original lotus-born child of Viṣṇu, i.e. Brahmā, is absent. Only the interpolated character is retained. It is Lord Anōmātan only who rises from the navel of Viṣṇu while he is lying in the Ocean of Milk. To account for these differences, it is not sufficient merely to say that the scribes copied the story wrongly. The Royal Press Version of the Nārāi Sip Pāng was acknowledged as authentic by the court scholars of King Rama V. Its acceptance as a work of authority can be judged from the following. In the year 1879 King Rama V commanded his court poets to compose poems on the Ten Incarnations of Viṣṇu recorded in the Nārāi Sip Pāng (Royal Press Version). These poems were to be inscribed on a wall in the Emerald Buddha Temple.*⁵⁷

Brahmā the Creator does not appear at this juncture in the Rānakīan of King Rama I either. Here, again, it is Lord Anōmātan only who appears from the lotus rising from the navel of Viṣṇu. But it does not mean that the author, or the compiler of the text, had no knowledge of the original myth. There is even a passing reference to Brahmā the Creator's lotus-birth in this work. Lord Anōmātan is described as,

56. Ibid., p. 49; Khun
Ying Lū'an Rit (ed.), Nārāi Sip Pāng, Bangkok, 1923, p. 22.
57. Praphan Sukhonthachāt, Nārāi Sip Pāng . . ., p. (8).

'A handsome child who appears in the lotus as if he were mighty Brahmā whose vehicle is the Swan Lord.'*⁵⁸

It can be certain that Brahmā is omitted from the text in order that Lord Anōmātan may possess more dignity and power. Thus it appears that the myth of Brahmā's being born from a lotus must, tacitly at least, have been accepted in the Thai story of Rāma. But something else is put in its stead. The figure of Brahmā is replaced by that of Anōmātan, probably with the aim of praising the race of Rāma, the hero of the Rāmāyana. To be more specific: the attempt seems to have been made to associate Rāma's ancestor directly with Viṣṇu, without Brahmā being an intermediary in any way. Thus the line is Viṣṇu-Anōmātan-(Atchabān-Daśaratha)-Rāma in contrast to the line Brahmā-Pulastya-Rāvana.

As for the prototype of Anōmātan, it is difficult to say whether it is the same as Manu Vaivasvata, who is mentioned in the Rāmāyana as the semi-divine founder and first king of Ayodhyā, or not. In the Bālakaṇḍa of the Rāmāyana, Ayodhyā is described as, 'A world-famous city built by Manu himself', (ayodhyā nāma nagarī tatraśilloka-viśrutā / manunā manavendreṇa yā purī nirmitā svayam).*⁵⁹ Manu Vaivasvata and Anōmātan are each considered, by the Sanskrit and the Thai authors respectively, to be the divine ancestor immediately prior to the human founder of the race of Rāma (viz. Ikṣvāku by Valmiki, and Atchabān by the Thai authors). But Anōmātan is not the founder of Ayuthya. Śiva has Indra build it for him. And there is no story of the birth of Manu Vaivasvata from a lotus rising from the navel of Viṣṇu in Hindu literature. Manu Vaivasvata or the seventh Manu, is described in Hindu mythology as a son of Sūrya, the sun. In the Rāmāyana and

58. King Rama I, Rāmākīan, vol. I, p. 5.

59. Rāmāyana I.5.6.

Purānas, Sūrya is said to be the son of Kaśyapa and Aditi, but elsewhere in the Rāmāyana he is otherwise referred to as a son of Brahmā. It is therefore difficult to claim Manu Vaivasvata as the prototype of Anōmātan. Nevertheless, there is a possible explanation, though this relies upon hypothesis. The myth of Manu Svāyambhuva might be considered to be nearer to the myth of Anōmātan. It is the story of Manu Svāyambhuva's springing from Brahmā. In the Brahma-vaivarta Purāna*⁶⁰ Manu Svāyambhuva, the first Manu, is said to spring from the mouth of Brahmā. In the Bhāgavata Purāna*⁶¹ Brahmā is mentioned as dividing himself into Manu Svāyambhuva and Śatarūpa, the first man and woman of the world. In the Viṣṇu Purāna*⁶² there is mention of Brahmā creating Manu Svāyambhuva from himself, and the assertion that Manu is to be identified with Brahmā. In earlier times Thai authors may have got the idea of Manu Svāyambhuva being the same as Brahmā from this myth. They could then replace Brahmā with Manu Svāyambhuva. The next stage in incorporating the Hindu myth into Thai literature would be in the confusing of Manu Svāyambhuva with Manu Vaivasvata. The common name 'Manu' of the two progenitors of the world makes it easy for confusion to arise among Thai authors. Later authors might then have failed to recognize the identity of Brahmā with Manu Svāyambhuva on account of the subsequent change into Manu Vaivasvata. This latter, therefore, could then be thought of as playing a role equivalent in importance to that of Brahmā, possessing the same birth-characteristics, but quite independent. The final stage can be represented by a further change of name -- Manu Vaivasvata into Anōmātan -- and by the identification of this divinity with the ancestor-figure appropriate to the race of Rāma.

60. Brahmavaivarta Purāna I.3.10-21.

61. Bhāgavata Purāna III.12.54.

62. Viṣṇu Purāna I.7.14-19.

The name Anōmātan itself is a problem. It has nothing in common with the name Manu. But it is much more problematic than the names of some characters in Thai version of Rāmāyana, such as, the names Samanakhā and Phiphēk which are equivalent to the Sanskrit names Śūrpanakhā and Vibhīṣaṇa respectively. In such names there are certain correspondences retained which make the identification certain in spite of the surprising differences in other portions of the names. There are no correspondences at all, however, between such a Thai form as 'manu' and the attested name Anōmātan.

There is some similarity between the name Anōmātan and the Tamil name Anuman (Sanskrit: Manumān) which is the name of the monkey hero in the Tamil version of the Rāmāyana. There are examples of Tamil names of characters in the Rāmāyana being borrowed by the Thai. These are:

Kaiyakesī	(Bharata's mother and the second queen of King Daśaratha; Tamil: Kaikēsī; Sanskrit: Kaikeyī.)
Kalaikōt	(A chief sage officiating at the sacrifice of King Daśaratha. Tamil: Kalaikoṭṭu Muni. This name form in Tamil is in fact a form of loan-translation of the Sanskrit term <u>Rṣyaśrṅga</u> .)
Kulhan	(The boatman who rows the boat carrying Rāma across the river Ganges. Tamil: Kukan; Sanskrit: Guha.)* ⁶³

63. S. Singaravelu, "A Comparative Story of the Sanskrit, Tamil, Thai and Malay Versions of the Story of Rāma with Special Reference to the Process of Acculturation in the Southeast Asian Versions", The Journal of Siam Society, LVI (July, 1968), pp. 172-173.

But this type of borrowing cannot be applied to the name Anōmātan. The character whose name is Hanumān exists in the Thai version of Rāmāyana. This character is also identical with the Tamil monkey hero Anuman. Therefore it is unlikely that the Tamil name Anuman is the source of Anōmātan.

King Rama VI suggests a plausible source for the name Anōmātan.*⁶⁴ The king says that it may derive from the word 'anumati' meaning 'consent and permit'. But the king does not offer any supporting reasons for his hypothesis. However, King Rama VI's speculation remains interesting. The word 'anumati' might have been chosen by the Thai authors of the Rāmākīan in the first place in order to establish a new category for a legitimate king different from a 'sammati', or 'chosen' king, which finds its source in Buddhist tradition. It is clearly said in the Buddhist scriptures on kingship*⁶⁵ that a khattiya, or a ksatriya or king, must be a 'sammati', or a man universally chosen by his own people. The Thai authors might have thought that since the primal ancestor of Rāma was appointed, not chosen, and by Śiva only, not by the people, i.e. his subjects, to be the first king of Ayuthya, he should be termed an 'anumati' king. In both Sanskrit and Thai the word 'anumati' preserves this connotation of approval from on high and serves to emphasize the difference between appointing and choosing. In due time the word 'anumati' might have become the Proper Name of the king. The last stage could have been the adaptation of the Sanskrit and Pali form of the word 'anumati' to the form of 'anōmātan' which shows some influence of a Tamil word form. Proper nouns having this word form, i.e. the form of a male noun usually ends in -an, are abundant

64 Phra Bāt Somedet Phra Mongkut Klāo Chāo Yū Hūa, Lilit Nārāi Sīp Pāng, Bangkok, 1960, p. 411.

65 Dhigṇīkāvya III.81.

in the Thai version of the Rāmāyana. For example, Sumantan is equivalent to the Sanskrit Sumantra; Kuperan to Kuvera; Māyan to Maya, Khukhan to Guha; and Prathūtan to Pradūtadanta.

Brahmā appears as performing the creation in the Lilit Ōngkan Chaeng Nam only. In another Thai work on cosmology, the Nārāi Sip Pāng (all versions), Brahmā is not the creator. It is Śiva who effects creation, including the creation of Brahmā.*⁶⁶ But whenever there is an invocation to the Hindu triad, in almost all Thai texts, it is Brahmā, not Śiva, who is invoked as the creator. In the Lilit Yūan Phāi, the story of a battle between King Borommatrailōkanāt and a northern prince, (about 15th century), King Borommatrailōkanāt is compared to Brahmā the Creator. Both of them are invoked as, 'The Lord who maintains the world'.*⁶⁷ In Chan Sanrasōen Phra Mahā Manīratana Patimākōn (Poetical Eulogy on the Emerald Buddha), composed in the reign of King Rama IV, Brahmā is invoked as, 'Brahmadhātā who is well versed in the Vedas; he creates the world'.*⁶⁸ In the Chan Sangwoei Phra Thīnang Bāng Pa In (Poem on the Consecration of Bāng Pa In Palace), composed in the reign of King Rama V, Brahmā is invoked as, 'The Lord who created the world, who rides on the Swan Lord; he has eight hands'.*⁶⁹ Accordingly, although there is some slight evidence for sectarian preferences as to the creator (e.g. Śaiva sectarian preference as above in the Nārāi Sip Pāng where Śiva is the creator), the impression on the whole is that there are distinct divine agencies, each with its own function to perform. In Thai literature

66. Praphan Sulhonthachāt, Nārāi Sip Pāng..., pp. 1, 3, 5.
Khun Ying Lū'an Rit, Nārāi Sip Pāng, p. 1.

67. Lilit Yūan Phāi, Bangkok: National Library, 1912, p. 15.

68. Khun Sāra Prasōet (Nūt), "Chan Sanrasōen Phra Mahā Manīratna Patimākōn", Chumnum Chan..., p. 9.

69. "Chan Sangwoei Phra Thīnang Bāng Pa In", Chumnum Chan..., p. 72.

Brahmā is mostly invoked as the Creator; Viṣṇu as the Protector; and Śiva as the Destroyer. In the Thai view, then, although texts are not unanimous in naming Brahmā as the Creator, they nevertheless agree in maintaining his independent existence.

CHAPTER II

Ś I V A

ŚIVA: ŚABDABRAHMAN AND HIS CREATION

In the Nārāi Sip Pāṅ it is Śiva, not Brahmā, who is regarded as the Creator. In deed, Brahmā is not considered to be a creator at all in this text. (There is one exception i.e. the four deities -- Śiva, Viṣṇu, Brahmā, and Agni -- are each held to be creators of separate races of celestial horses and elephants). In the Lilit Ōṅkan Chaeng Nam Brahmā is again described only as a secondary Creator, or a Re-creator, of parts of the universe which had been destroyed (e.g. certain mountains and lower levels of the heavens). Śiva, in the Nārāi Sip Pāṅ, is given the honour of being the Prime Creator. In the Nārāi Sip Pāṅ it is Śiva who is the first being to appear in the beginning of the world, and who is in charge of the creation of the world. Śiva is here given a name, Sayomphūwayān*¹, implying that he possesses knowledge of self-existence, though it must be noted (see below) that, logically, the Vedas and the Dharmas must have existed before him, though not, presumably, as living beings. This being, Sayomphūwayān, is identical with Isūan (Sanskrit: Īśvara, the Lord, an epithet of Śiva), and with Paramēsūan (Sanskrit: Parameśvara, the Supreme Lord, another epithet of Śiva), in the Royal Press Version and in the Watcharin Press Version of the Nārāi Sip Pāṅ respectively. This is expressly stated by the author of the Nārāi Sip Pāṅ. The following passage from the Nārāi Sip Pāṅ (Royal Press Version) illustrates the scene of the appearance of the world's first being at the beginning of the 'sarga' or creation.

1. Praphan Sukhonthachāt (ed.), Nārāi Sip Pāṅ Lae Phong Nai Rū'ang Rāmākian, 2nd ed.; Bangkok, 1968, p. 35.

The story of the very beginning is as follows. When the Pralaya Kalpa Fire had devastated the whole world, it became void of anything except for the ether. At that time all the Vedas and the Dharmas amalgamated and became Phra Sayomphūwayān. This was Īsvara*²

The emergence of the supreme god Śiva from the amalgamation of the Vedas, Dharmas, and the Mantras (in the Lū'an Rit Version), can be traced back to the belief of the Thai brahminsthat one of the many forms of the god Śiva is the Mantra form.*³ There are some Thai brahmins' scriptures on Brahministic rites and ritual, composed in Sanskrit and Tamil, and written in Grantha script, in which a hymn called Chā Hong is included. The names of the particular scriptures in which this Chā Hong Hymn appears are Phra-rāṭchaphithī Khu'n Hong; Phra Avisut; and Wēt Būchā Thēwarūp Tāng Tāng. This Chā Hong Hymn is written in Sanskrit. It consists of four sections which are mainly eulogies of Śiva. The first section is 'Om' , or 'the Hymn of the Word 'Om' ', which is regarded as a form of Śiva. The other three are: Śivapañcākṣara stotram ('Eulogy of Śiva by the five sacred syllables' viz. namas śivāya); Ardhanarīśvara stotram ('Eulogy of Śiva and Umā when They Share the Same Body', i.e. Śiva on the right side and Umā on the left); 'Eulogy of Śiva and Viṣṇu'. This latter can be found in a book called Subhāsitaratnabhāṇḍāra published in Bombay.*⁴

The scriptures in which the Chā Hong hymn appears are also the names of the Brahministic rites forming parts of some ceremonies. Phrarāṭchaphithī Khu'n Hong, 'The Royal Rite of Mounting the Swan', is a part of the royal ceremony called Triyampavāi Triṇawāi. King Rama V, in Phrarāṭchaphithī Sipsong Dū'an (Royal Ceremonies for the Twelve

2. Ibid.

3. P. Sāstrī, Rāṅgān Sanrūat Tamrā Phra Rāṭcha Pithī Phrām Sayān, Bangkok, 1931, p. 24.

4. Ibid., pp. 24-25.

Months), says that this ceremony is the New Year ceremony for the Thai brahmins. It is supposed that at this time of the year (in the Ayuthya period it fell in the first lunar month (December - January), and in the Ratanakosin period in the second (January - February)) the gods, Śiva with Umā, and Viḡneśvara, and Viḡṇu with Lakṣmī and Mahes̄varī, come down from heaven to visit and stay on earth for a few days. At the end of their visit they are to be put on the back of the swan for their return to heaven. This is the source of the royal rite called 'Khu'n Hong'.*⁵

Phra Avisut, which King Rama V calls 'atamasut' (Sanskrit: ātmasuddhi), identified by Quaritch Wales*⁶ with one of the purificatory rites, is performed at the beginning and at the end of any Brahministic rite in Thailand

Wēt Būchā Thēwarūp Tāng Tāng, 'The Vedas for paying Homage to Various Gods' is also recited at every Brahministic rite.

Kot Monthian Bān, the Ayuthya Palatine Law, mentions and describes four royal ceremonies in which Brahministic rites are performed. These ceremonies are: Chōng Prīang Lot Chut Lōi Khōm (Festival of Lamps); Triyamphawāi (The Swinging Festival and the Reception of the Gods); Samphatcharachin (New Year Festival in the Fourth Lunar Month); and Chawīan Phra Khō Kin Liāng (The Worship of the Sacred Bull). Only the first three of the Ayuthya ceremonies were still performed in the Ratanakosin period. The last ceremony was performed in the time of the Ayuthya period only.

5. Phra Bāt Somdet Phra Čhula Čhomklāo Čhāo Yū Hūa (King Rama V), Phra Rāčha Phithī Sipsōng Dū'an, Bangkok: Dannādhān, 1970, pp. 77, 85, 104.

6. H.C. Quaritch Wales, Siamese State Ceremonies, London, 1931, p. 249.

To the list in the Kot Montian Bān King Rama V adds six more royal ceremonies, in which Brahministic rites are performed. They are: Thānyado (Burning Rice); Khēntha Thīn Khāng (Top Spinning); Katikēya (Another Festival of Lamps); Siwarātri (Śiva's Night); Pharunnasāt (Ceremony for the Control of Rain); and Sāt (Festival of First Fruits). The first was performed in the Ayuthya period only. The second was performed in the Sukhothai period only. The rest remained in practice until his time.

It is possible that Thai authors listened to these hymns eulogizing the god Śiva, which are chanted and repeated in these ceremonies performed, each in turn, all the year round, and thus they might have come to the conclusion that Śiva and Om, or Śiva and Phra Wēt (the Vedas, i.e. here Brahministic mantras) were the same. The argument could be made that brahmins in the time of Ayuthya might just as well have regarded Viṣṇu as superior to Śiva, and so might have praised Viṣṇu in the place of Śiva. This was not the case. King Rama V says that brahmins in Thailand who performed any Brahministic rite, except for those concerning elephants, are Horadāchan (Sanskrit: Hotarācarya). He further states that these Horadāchan regard Śiva as the supreme god in the same manner as Farang (Westerners) and Khāek (Muslims) regard Jehovah and Allah as their supreme gods respectively.*⁷

The concept of Thai brahmins that the god Śiva has, among many of his forms, the form of 'Om' and of the Vedas is not so different from that of the Śaivites. The following eulogy of Śiva by the narrator of the Lingapurāna attests this.

7. King Rama V, Phra Rātcha Phithī ..., p. 78.

I bow down to the supreme lord whose body is Sabda-Brahman, who is the revealer of the Sabda-Brahman, whose limbs are the letters, whose characteristics are unmanifest, but who manifests himself in diverse ways, who is constituted by the letters a, u, m, who is gross as well as subtle, who is greater than the greatest, who has the form of Om, whose face is the Rgveda, tongue the Sāmaveda, throat the Yajurveda, and heart the Atharvaveda.*⁸

The amalgamation of the Vedas, Dharmas and the Mantras is reminiscent of the Śaiva concept of the Brahman as identical with the god Śiva. The Brahman, or the World Spirit, is the first and only thing present in the beginning of the world. This Brahman, which has no form, created Īśvara. This Īśvara is the manifest form of the formless Brahman. Hereunder is a passage from the Śiva Purāna describing the creation of Śiva.

At the time of the Great Dissolution, when all the mobile and immobile objects of the world are dissolved, every thing is enveloped in darkness. ... Thus when there is pitch darkness which cannot be pierced with a needle, what is mentioned in the Vedas as 'The Existent Brahman' alone is present... It is immeasurable, without the power of sustaining, changeless, formless, attributeless, perceptible to the yogins, all-pervasive and the sole cause of the universe. It is free from alteration. It has no beginning. It is free from illusion and harassment. It has no second. It has neither beginning nor end. It has no development. It is in the form of pure knowledge. People are in doubt about naming it. That Being, then, after, some time, it is said, wished for a second. It wanted to create, in the course of its own sport (līlā), an auspicious

8. Liṅga Purāna 1. 19-21

form of its own, endowed with all power, qualities and knowledge, and hence it created the form of Īśvara of pure knowledge. Then the original Being, or the Cit (Knowledge), or the supreme Brahman, vanished. The manifest form of the formless Being is Sadā Śiva. The learned of the ancient and the succeeding ages have sung of it as Īśvara.*⁹

Brahman, or the World Spirit, is often referred to as a mysterious entity in the Rgveda. It is the Upanisads which take it as their main purport or subject and discuss it fully. This World Spirit, which is sometimes described only in negative terms, such as incorporeal, unborn and uncreated, is sometimes referred to as a god and described in completely theistic terms. The Īśa Upanisad refers to it as Īśa, 'The Lord'. In the Śvetāśvatara Upanisad, the World Spirit is no longer an impersonal essence, but a creator god. In fact it is the god Śiva.*¹⁰

Brahman, in many contexts, is the magical power in sacred utterances or Mantras. Mantras can therefore be identified with the Brahman. It is more difficult for Thai authors to understand and accept the abstract qualities of Brahman than to accept the idea of its being identical with Mantras. For the Thai authors, Brahman is no more than the Mantras or the Vedic Hymns. They conceive of Śiva as being created from the union of the Vedas, Dharmas and Mantras. This seems to be derived from the idea of the Vedas' and Mantras' being identical with Brahman, which is, in turn, described as the same as Śiva.

9. Śiva Purāna I.6.4-10

10. A.L. Basham, The Wonder That Was India, London, 1971, p. 254.

The Creation that follows the creation of Śiva himself, is that of the goddess Umā. In the Nārāi Sip Pāṅg (all versions) Śiva is described as, "stroking his chest with his hands" and the goddess Umā is described as being created when Śiva stretched his hands outwards from himself. The creation of the goddess Umā from Śiva's own body suggests that the idea of Śiva's having the form of an ardhanaṛiśvara (an androgyne) may have been known to Thai authors. In many of the Hindu creation myths, Śiva appears in the form of an androgyne as the helper of Brahmā. Hereunder is the translation from the Śaura Purāna depicting the scene in which Brahmā's creatures failed to increase and Śiva had to come to help Brahmā by becoming an androgyne.

Brahmā praised Śiva and Śiva said, "I will do what you ask. I will become your son and create the universe." Brahmā then began to create creatures, but they did not increase. Śiva approached and said to Brahmā, "I know the cause of your sorrow and I know what will remove it." Then he became an androgyne, and from his female half he created Devī as a separate being. Brahmā asked her to become the daughter of his son Dakṣa, in order to increase creation, and she created a goddess like herself from between her brows. She reentered Śiva's body, Śiva became the androgyne again, and from that time forth creatures were made by intercourse.*¹¹

Śiva in the form of an androgyne is also eulogized by the Thai brahmins. The hymn Chā Hong recited in various royal ceremonies (mentioned above) consists of 'ardha--nāriśvara stotram', and images of Ardhanaṛiśvara are not lacking in Thailand. This Ardhanaṛiśvara legend about Śiva may well have furnished the Thai concept of the creation of the goddess Umā from Śiva's own body, and also have

11. Śaura Purāna 24.55-67, 25.5-29.

provided a sense of priority in the ordering of acts of creation. Śiva first creates himself, but after that, his first act as a created being is to create Umā, his wife (or Śakti).

The creation of the goddess Umā prior to that of the other two members of the Hindu triad, i.e. Viṣṇu and Brahmā, is somewhat similar to the account of Śiva's creating his own Śakti, or potency, described in the Śaiva scriptures. This Śakti is identified with the goddess Umā. The following translation describing the creation of the goddess is taken from the Śiva Purāna.

Īśvara, though alone, then created the physical form of Śakti from his body. This Śakti did not affect his body in any way. This Śakti is Ambikā, Prakṛti and the goddess of all.*¹²

The word 'Śakti' does not appear in the account of Umā's creation in the Nārāi Śip Pāṅg. But there is a hint of her being considered as Śiva's potency. In the Watcharin Press Version, after Śiva has created Umā, he consults with her on the matter of creation. It is noteworthy that Śiva must seek her help. In that text Śiva is quoted as saying, "We will create Chakāmāphachōṅ Heavens*¹³ and Sumeru Mountain together."*¹⁴ In the Lū'an Rit Version Śiva tells Umā, "We two have to create the upper, the middle and the lower worlds to be the dwelling places of the gods, human beings, animals and demons."*¹⁵

12. Śiva Purāna I.6.19-21.

13. P: Chakāmāvacara: the six heavens of the inferior, or sensual, angels. These heavens are: (1) Cātummahārājika ruled by the four guardians of the world. (2) Tāvātimsa ruled by Indra. (3) Yāma which rests entirely on air. (4) Tusita is where all Buddhas pass their existence before being born on earth. (5) Nimmānarati inhabited by gods who can create any form in any colour. (6) Paranimmita Vasavati.

14. Praphan Sukhonthachāt (ed.), Nārāi Śip Pāṅg..., p. 1.

15. Khun Ying Lū'an Rit (ed.), Nārāi Śip Pāṅg, Bangkok, 1923, pp. 1-2.

Contrary to the Śaiva story of the creation, the Nārāi
Sip Pāṅg narrates that Umā warns Śiva that the two of
 them alone cannot accomplish the task of creating the
 world. Śiva then creates Brahmā and Viṣṇu to be their
 assistants. In the Śiva Purāna it is Śiva who thinks of
 creating another being to take over the task of creation.
 Thus he and Umā would be free to enjoy life in whatever
 way they wish. "Another being shall be created by me.
 Let him create everything, protect it and, in the end,
 let him dissolve it with my blessing. Having entrusted
 everything to him, we two, remaining in Kāśī, shall roam
 as we please. We can stay happily in this blissful forest
 being free from worries."*¹⁶ Subsequent to this thought
 of Śiva's, Viṣṇu is said to be created from Śiva's left
 side: "With the consent of his Śakti (i.e. Umā) the Supreme
 Lord spread the liquor-essence of nectar on his left side, on
 the tenth limb (sampradhāryeti sa vibhus tayā śaktayā
 pureśvaraḥ / saye vyāparayāṁ cakre daśame'ṅge sudhāsavam /37)
 Thereupon a person came into being. He was the most handsome
 in the three world."*¹⁷ This person is the god Viṣṇu.

In the Śiva Purāna and in other Purānas Brahmā is not
 described as being created by Śiva at the same time as
 Viṣṇu. Brahmā has to wait until the primeval egg is created,
 and then he emerges from it. There is discrepancy in the
 account of the creation of Brahmā by Śiva within the
 Śaiva Purāna. Elsewhere, for instance, Śiva is quoted
 as telling Viṣṇu and Brahmā that they were born from his
 left and right sides. Śiva says, "O strong ones, you two
 were born of my own Prakṛti, out of my left and right sides.
 I am the lord of everything. This Brahmā, the grandfather
 of the world, was born from my right side. You, Viṣṇu,
 were born from my left side. I am the Supreme Ātman (ayan

16. Śiva Purāna, I.6.32-36.

17. Ibid., I.6.37-38.

me daksīṇāt pārśvād brahmā lokapitāmahaḥ / vānapārśvād
ca viṣṇus tvaṃ samutpannaḥ parātmanah//)"*¹⁸ The author
of the Nārāi Sip Pāṅg might not have been aware of the
discrepancy in the accounts of the creation of Brahmā
in the Śaiva Purāṇas, or he might have considered that it
is better to have Viṣṇu and Brahmā being created at the same
time. Therefore in the Nārāi Sip Pāṅg (all versions)
Brahmā is said to be created by Śiva at the same time
as Viṣṇu, but after he has created the goddess Umā.

Then Īśvara stroked his right hand
with his left hand and when he stretched
out his left hand away from the right
hand Nārāyaṇa was created. Then he stroked
his left hand with his right hand and when
he stretched out his right hand away from
the left Brahmā was created.*¹⁹

The above account of the creation of Viṣṇu and Brahmā
from the hands of Śiva is, without doubt, inspired by
the Śaiva story of the creation of these two gods from
the left and right sides of Śiva. The problem is that it
is not quite clear whether the Nārāi Sip Pāṅg has got the
directions right or not. The hand movements in the Nārāi Sip
Pāṅg do not make clear exactly from which hand the act
of creation comes, but it is assumed that the hand which
is rubbed provides the material substance for the creation.
The interpretation here, then, is that Viṣṇu is born from
Śiva's right hand, and Brahmā from Śiva's left.

In Hindu mythology, although Śiva is described and eulogized
as the source of the creative seed, he often employs other
substances to produce a being. There is a myth of Śiva's
producing a son from the blood of Viṣṇu in the Pine Forest.*²⁰

18. Ibid. I.9.15-17.

19. Prapñān' Sukhonthachāt (ed.), Nārāi Sip Pāṅg ..., p. 35;
Khun Ying Lū'an Rit (ed.), Nārāi Sip Pāṅg, p. 1.

20. Vāmana Purāṇa 2.46-9; Kūrma Purāṇa 2.31-34-7.

Sweat, which is related to heat and the creative tapas, is another substance which is used in many creation myths. Śiva wanders naked, doing tapas, and when he sheds a drop of sweat from his forehead the Earth nourishes it and raises the child born from it.*²¹ The fever demon is born when Śiva sheds a drop of sweat at Dakṣa's sacrifice.*²² Although the sweat mentioned is of anger, not of tapas, it is both as destructive and creative as the sweat of tapas. There are also a few myths of creation by tears, which are counted as being in the same category as blood and sweat i.e. liquid substitutes for a god's seed produced by 'heat', i.e. deep emotional disturbance. Soma, or the moon, is described as being created by tears flowing down from Atri's eyes in which Śiva dwelled together with Umā.*²³

It is not certain which substance Śiva, in the Nārāi Śip Pāṅg, uses in the creation of Viṣṇu and Brahmā. It is certain that neither blood nor tears can be described as the essential substance in this creation. The Nārāi Śip Pāṅg does not mention the liquor-essence of nectar (suhāsava), as does the Śiva Purāṇa, either. There is the possibility that Śiva uses his sweat in the creation of Viṣṇu and Brahmā. But this cannot be certain. The action lūp or stroking of each of Śiva's hands, one with the other, does not provide any definite information. The other thing which can possibly be considered as the substance under discussion is khilai or khī khilai, or scurf from the hands of Śiva. In the myth of the birth of Gaṇeśa in the Śiva Purāṇa, the goddess Umā is described as creating Gaṇeśa from the scurf of her body.

21. Śiva Purāṇa III.3.10-14.

22. Mahābhārata XII.274.45 .

23. Matsya Purāṇa 23.1-10; Padma Purāṇa V. 12.1-13.

Once Śiva entered into the inner apartment where Pārvatī was taking a bath. She considered it an untimely arrival. So Pārvatī thought along the line suggested by her friends, Jaya and Vijaya, that she should have an attendant of her own. At that time when the incident occurred, Pārvatī thought, "There must be a servant of my own who will be expert in his duties. He must not deviate from my orders in the very slightest." When the goddess had thought thus she created a person out of the dirt from her body. He was very handsome, and was all-valorous. Umā took this person as her son and named him Gaṇeśa.*²⁴

In the Rāmākīan, or Thai version of the Rāmāyaṇa, there is a myth of the creation of Chomphūphān, a monkey lord, from the sweat and scurf of Śiva's body. This myth bears some similarities with the myth of Gaṇeśa's birth from Umā's scurf. The creator is changed from Umā to Śiva, who is regarded as the supreme and the most benevolent god in the Rāmākīan.

When Īśvara had finished educating Hanumān to be well-versed in Mantras, he took him to the court of Vālī. Īśvara took Chomphūphān with him too. He entrusted these two monkey chiefs to Vālī. When he entrusted Chomphūphān to Vālī, he told Vālī, "Chomphūphān is very mighty and possesses much valour. I created (the word used here is chup, 'to vivify' or 'to animate'), him from my sweat and scurf. He is well-versed in all kinds of special medicine. He will help in times of trouble when Nārāyaṇa incarnates himself (to be Rāma) to destroy demons. Take him as your son.*²⁵

The resemblance between the myth of the creation of Chomphūphān and of Viṣṇu and Brahmā is clear. But it is not certain which myth may be presumed to have arisen first.

24. Śiva Purāṇa II.4.13

25. Phra Bāt Somet Phra Phuttha Yōt Fā Chulā Lōk (King Rama I), Rāmākīan, Bangkok, 1951, I, pp. 42-55.

When Śiva had completed his creation of the other two members of the Hindu triad i.e. Viṣṇu and Brahmā, he engaged in creating the world and its population. The narration in the Nārāi Sīp Pāṅg (Royal Press Version) goes:

Then Īśvara, by means of his divine power, created the world's surface, Phra Thōranī, from a piece of his flesh, which he had vomited out from the region of his chest. Then Īśvara created Phra Phlōeng, Phra Phāi, and Phra Khongkhā. They were the four elements of all creatures. Then he created Manī Mēkhala to be the guardian of the ocean. Then the demon Parōt Rāmasūn was born. Sages, siddhis, vidyādhara and gods were created: Apsaras; all creatures within the three worlds; Sumeru Mountain; Kailāsa Mountain; Himavanta Forest; the Serpent Ananta; and Suparna or Garuda. Īśvara then created the Bull Usubharāja as his mount.*²⁶

Śiva's creation of Thōranī -- the earth -- from a piece of his own flesh has some similarity with the dismemberment and distribution of Puruṣa, or the Primeval Man, as narrated in the Rgveda. The creation of the goddess Umā, the gods Viṣṇu and Brahmā from some parts of Śiva's body (see above) can be seen as this kind of creation too. In the Rgveda, Puruṣa, or the Primeval Man, is sacrificed to himself in order to bring forth the creation of the universe. Hereunder is the translation from a part of the Puruṣasūkta, Hymn of the Puruṣa, of the Rgveda.

The Man (Puruṣa) has a thousand heads, a thousand eyes, a thousand feet... The Man himself is all of this, whatever has been and whatever is to be. He is the lord of immortality and also lord of that which grows on food. Such is his greatness,

26. Praphan Sukhonthachāt (ed.), Nārāi Sīp Pāṅg, pp. 35-36.

and the Man is yet greater than this.. When they divided the Man, into how many parts did they disperse him? What became of his mouth, what of his arms, what were his two thighs and his two feet called? His mouth was the brahmin, his arms were made into the nobles (kṣatriyas), his two thighs were the populace (Vaiśya), and from his feet the servants (Sūdra) were born. The moon was born from his mind; the sun was born from his eyes. From his mouth came Indra and Agni, and from his vital breath the wind was born. From his navel the atmosphere was born; from his head the heaven appeared. From his two feet came the earth, and the regions of the sky from his ear. Thus they fashioned the world.*²⁷

The concept of the Puruṣa is retained in all later creation myths in Hindu mythology. The Puruṣa is later identified with Brahmā the Creator, who in turn, is identified with the sectarian gods Viṣṇu or Śiva. The dismemberment and distribution of the Primeval Man is also retained in the purāṇas of both Hindu sects. Whether Brahmā's identification is made with Śiva or with Viṣṇu, the same things nevertheless are created from the same parts of his body.

The concept of four elements (i.e. earth, fire, wind and water) being the constituents of all creatures is Buddhist. They are discussed in Buddhist scriptures as topics in their own right.*²⁸ Dhātu, rūpa, or mahābhūta are the Pali terms for 'element' of which the following terms make up the Pali list: pāthavi, tejo, vāyu, and āpo. In the Trai Phūm Phra Ruang these four element are described as four of the thirty-two constituents of a human being.*²⁹ They also belong among the twenty-eight constituents of beings in the hells,*³⁰ and among the eight constituents of plants, of the earth, and of rivers and mountains.*³¹ These sets of

27. Ṛgveda X.91.1-3; 11-14.

28. Itikopadesa 393-396.

29. Phrayā li Thai, Trai Phūm Phra Ruang, 3th ed.; Bangkok, 1972, p. 72.

30. Ibid., p. 9.

31. Ibid., p. 291.

constituents have no exact counterpart in Hinduism. In Hindu scriptures the basic principles (tattva) from which a being is evolved are twenty-five in number. Among these principles are the five material elements (mahābhūta). They are: ether, air, fire, water and earth. The Buddhist four elements can be identified with the last four of the Hindu list. It is likely that it is the Buddhist concept that is adopted by the Thais, even though the elements earth, fire, wind and water exist in both Hinduism and Buddhism.

There is evidence of the concept of the four elements being created by Śiva in the Khlong Thawā Thotsamāt, a famous love poem from the early Ayuthya period. In this text the poet asks the god, 'who wears a chignon, who created the four elements,' to inquire after his beloved and transfer news of her to him.*³² There are two hypotheses for the creation of the four elements by Śiva in Thai texts. One is that in some texts the creator god in Thailand is Śiva. Therefore Śiva is to be in charge of creating the four elements. The other is that it is linked with the five faces of Śiva. In Hindu mythology Śiva is described as having five faces named Isāna, Tatpuruṣa, Aghora, Vāmadeva and Sadyojāta. These faces represent the five elements: ether, air, fire, water and earth. However, in the case of Thailand, it is likely that the Buddhist concept is prior to the Hindu one.

In the Nārāi Sip Pāng, two of these elements are identified with gods. This is more than a personification, as can be seen from what follows. Phra Phlōeng, 'fire', and Phra Phāi, 'wind', are identified with the gods Agni and Vāyu. In the later part of the story of creation in the Nārāi

32. Chanthip Krasācsin (ed.), Khlong Thawā Thotsamāt, Bangkok, 1961, p. 140.

Sip Pāng, Phra Phlōeng, the Fire God, is described as one of the gods who created celestial elephants and horses. Moreover Phra Phlōeng also created two sons for Śiva. In the Rāmāṭīan, and in the story of the Rama-incarnation of Viṣṇu in the Nārāi Sip Pāng, Phra Phāi, the Wind God, is described as having the same role as the god Vāyu in the Rāmāyana of Vālmīki. In the Lū'an Rit Version of the Nārāi Sip Pāng, the earth is personified as a goddess. In the story of the battle between Śiva and Trī Buran, when Śiva found that his mighty bow was useless, he asked the goddess Earth to keep that bow for him, and to hand it to Rāma when he is waging war with the demons. But that is as far as it goes. There is no myth about a Hindu goddess Earth in Thai literature. The goddess Gangā of Hindu mythology does not exist in Thai literature either, and at all times in the Thai language, the term 'khongkhā' (Sanskrit: gangā) has the meaning of 'water, river, or an ocean'.

THAT MYTHS ABOUT THE ŚIVALĪŅGA

According to Hindu mythology the Liᅅga is the most important symbol of Śiva. It is believed that the whole essence of the god is completely contained in his Liᅅga. The Śiva Purāᅅa says, "The Liᅅga is the body of Śiva and Śivā (Śiva's śakti) because it is presided over by them. By worshipping Liᅅga alone, Śiva and Śivā are worshipped."³³ The works also glorifies the symbol of Śiva as the representative of the whole world. "The world is in the form of Liᅅga. Everything is found in Liᅅga. Hence if the Liᅅga is installed, everything is installed."³⁴

There are several myths to explain how the Liᅅga comes to be the representative of Śiva. The Śaiva Purāᅅas give a myth of antagonism and competition between gods, especially between Brahmā and Śiva, in which Śiva terrorizes the other gods into worshipping him with devotion to the Liᅅga. Hereunder is the summary of the myth from the Śiva Purāᅅa.

Once when all the universe had been destroyed and had become a single ocean, Brahmā, Viᅅᅅu, and Rudra arose from the midst of the water. Their arrival was unwitnessed. Then Brahmā and Viᅅᅅu asked Rudra to perform the creation as he wished. Rudra promised to do so. But he then plunged into the waters and remained immersed for a thousand celestial years. Brahmā and Viᅅᅅu were very restless. Viᅅᅅu in the end encouraged Brahmā to perform the creation of the world. Brahmā followed the advice of Viᅅᅅu. He created everything conducive to happiness. When that creation had been performed, Sambhu emerged from the water, desirous of creating. But when he saw the whole universe being created, he was very angry. He wanted to destroy it. He released from his mouth a flame which burnt everything. When Brahmā saw that everything was on fire he bowed to Śiva and praised him until he was pleased with Brahmā. Brahmā then asked Śiva to let Brahmā's extensive range of progeny be as it was. Śiva

33. Śiva Purāᅅa VII.2.34.12,14

34. Ibid. , VII.2.34.2

promised this, but Brahmā had to help him find a way to destroy the excessive energy gathered by him in order to destroy Brahmā's creation. Brahmā thought carefully, for the sake of the world, and then he said to Sankara, "Cause your own energy to enter the sun, since you are the lord over the sun; for you are the creator, protector and destroyer. Let us live together with all the immortals in the energy of the sun. We will receive with devotion the sacred image of the three times (i.e. past, present, and future; the Liṅga is their image) that was given by mankind. Then at the end of the aeon you will take the form of the sun and burn this universe, moving and still, at that moment." Śiva agreed to this and laughed, for he was secretly amused, and he said to Brahmā, "There is no good use for this Liṅga except for the creation of progeny." And as he said this he broke it off and threw it upon the surface of the earth. The Liṅga broke down through the earth and went up to the very sky. Viṣṇu sought the end of it below, and Brahmā flew upwards, but they did not find the ends of it, for all their vital effort. Then a voice arose out of the sky as the two of them sat there, and it said, 'If the Liṅga of the god with braided hair is worshipped, it will certainly grant all desires that are longed for in the heart.' When Brahmā and Viṣṇu heard this, they and all the divinities worshipped the Liṅga with devotion, with their hearts set upon Rudra.*³⁵

Another Śaiva myth makes the importance of the Liṅga the result of a curse pronounced by a number of sages. The Vāmana Purāna says:

When Sati died at Dakṣa's sacrifice, Śiva wandered from place to place like a mad man, mourning her absence. He travelled from hermitage to hermitage, but could find no rest. When the hermits' wives saw him they fell desperately in love with him and followed him from place to place. Their husbands, incensed at this, cursed the god, and deprived him of manhood. A great commotion followed. Brahmā and Viṣṇu interceded on his behalf with the hermits, who consented to withdraw their curse on condition that the offender should be represented by the Liṅga, and thus it became an object of worship to gods and men.*³⁶

35. Ibid., Dharmasāhita 49.23-46, 74-86.
36. Vāmana Purāna 6.60-93.

In Vaiṣṇava versions of the myth, however, Liṅga-worship is a curse pronounced upon Śiva by Bhṛgu, the leader of the Pine Forest sages. The Padma Purāna relates:

Once in the past, Manu went to a special and lengthy sacrifice on the highest mountain, Mandara, with all the sages pre-eminent for the severity of their ascetic practices. The sages could not then agree to an answer to the question:- "Who among Brahmā, Viṣṇu, and Śiva, is the best, and should be praised as the one who gives release to men?" The sage Bhṛgu was sent by them to find out the answer. Bhṛgu came to Śiva's abode. He was prevented from entering immediately by Nandin, the doorkeeper. Nandin informed Bhṛgu that Śiva was making love to the goddess. After waiting for some time, Bhṛgu's patience being exhausted, the sage was filled with anger, and pronounced a curse: "Śankara, the fool, is immersed in darkness and does not recognize me. Since he is so intoxicated by union with a woman that he dishonours me, therefore he will have the form of the Yoni and the Liṅga.*³⁷

None of these Hindu myths on the origin of the Liṅga worship has a counterpart in Thai literature. However, the Hindu myth of Śiva's conquering the demon Tripura, in the Lū'an Rit Version of the Nārāi Sip Pāng, may be regarded as the myth depicting the origin of the Liṅga cult in Thailand. It is noteworthy that elsewhere a myth of Śiva's vanquishing the demon Tripura gives more importance to the arrow which Śiva uses in destroying the demon than to Śivaliṅga. The myth of the origin of the Liṅga-worship in the Lū'an Rit Version of the Nārāi Sip Pāng is as follows.

Once the demon Trī Buram, the king of So-Lot, performed a very intense religious rite on the shore of the ocean. Śiva was very pleased with him. He came down from his abode to the ceremonial ground of Trī Buram in order to grant him a boon. Trī Buram asked, 'May the power of

37. Padma Purāna 6.282.

your Śivaliṅga be presiding over my head so that I will be entitled to do anything at my own will. May I not be killed by any weapon or by Viṣṇu." Śiva granted Trī Buram the boon he had asked for. Finally, the god admonished him not to lead an immoral life. Then the god returned to his abode. Trī Buram, on his part, left the ceremonial ground. While he was walking away he found a Śivaliṅga. He put it reverentially on his head. From then on Trī Buram became very mighty. He could do whatever he wanted. That made him very proud and he oppressed the whole world. When Śiva heard of this he asked Nārāyaṇa to destroy the demon. Nārāyaṇa refused to do so by reminding the god of the boon he had given to the demon. Śiva then decided to destroy the demon himself. He made a bow out of the energy of Sumeru Mountain, a bow-string out of the energy of the Serpent Ananta, an arrow out of the energy of Nārāyaṇa, and his armour out of the energy of Brahmā. Then Śiva came to the abode of Trī Buram. He shot at the demon three times. But he found that the arrow did not move at all because Nārāyaṇa had fallen asleep. The god was filled with anger. Nārāyaṇa reminded him of the boon yet again. Nārāyaṇa then volunteered to destroy the demon's power originating from the Śivaliṅga on the head of the demon. Nārāyaṇa turned himself into a monk and came to see Trī Buram. The demon was very impressed by the appearance of the monk and wanted to learn his doctrine. The monk promised to teach him provided that the demon would give the Śivaliṅga to him. The demon agreed to do this and did so. Then Nārāyaṇa turned back to his own form and flew to Śiva. Śiva could then kill the demon with his fire-eye. When the god had killed the demon Trī Buram, he consulted with Nārāyaṇa about what they should do with the Śivaliṅga. Śiva said, "Śivaliṅga appeared in this world through my creation. It should be kept on earth to be the companion of the world. But its name should be changed to 'Phra Sayom-phūwayān'. Let it be put on the head on one half of the body of the demon Trī Buram so that it can be clearly seen by the world."³⁸

The date of this myth is not certain. What is certain is that the cult of Śivaliṅga was practised a long time ago in the

38. Kham Ying Lū'an Rit (ed.), Nārāi Sip Pāng, pp. 43 - 47.

territory where Thailand now is. The discovery of Śivalīṅga at various Śaiva temples and at some ancient buildings built by the Cambodians in Thailand gives support to this statement.*³⁹ The cult of Śivalīṅga was taken over by the Thais and was widely practised during the Ayuthya period and its popularity extended to the reign of King Rama I of Ratarakosin. This can be seen from one of the early decrees enacted by the king. In the year 1782, which is the first year of his reign, King Rama I had decreed that all Śivalīṅgas were to be burned. He said, "Nowadays all beings are very worldly. When they have any trouble they will turn to all kinds of spirits and guardian gods instead of to the Triple Gems. But I cannot order people not to believe in those spirits, for, according to the Buddha's words, a king has, among many of his duties, to support and look after the guardian gods in his kingdom. Therefore, from now on, I want governors of all towns in my country to take care in looking after the house of the guardian gods. Normal rites and rituals can be performed there. But these gods should not be worshipped more than the Triple Gems. And no animal sacrifice should be performed there any more. The most important thing is that all Liṅgas belonging to those spirit houses must be burned. The worship of the Liṅga is neither mentioned in the Buddhist canons nor practised in any capital. The appearance of the Liṅgas could bring condemnation from foreigners in our country. If any governor or district officer does not completely destroy the Liṅgas in his area, he will be severely punished, even to the penalty of being executed."*⁴⁰

It seems from the decree of King Rama I that the myth of the origin and importance of the Śivalīṅga, either in the Thai texts or in the Hindu texts, had not reached the king.

39. Somdet Kromphrayā Naritsaranuwattiwong, *Krophrayā Damrong Rāchanuphāp*, *Sān Somdet*, Vol. II, Bangkok, 1962, p. 169.

40. Phra Bāt Somdet Phra Phuttha Yōt Fā Chulā Lōk (King Rama I), "Phra Rātcha Kamnot Mai", *Kotmāi Trā Sām Dūang*, Bangkok, 1973, pp. 754-755.

The king, in his decree, had speculated upon the origin of the worship of the Linga himself. He thought that, formerly, base men had made those Lingas in order to ridicule some wicked women. Later on this practise was blindly followed by foolish people.*⁴¹

However, it seems that the decree of King Rama I was not observed for very long in practice. His grandson, King Rama III, at the time of the restoration of Wat Phrachētuphon (1831) installed a Śivalinga in the grounds of that famous temple. (King Rama III might have wanted to keep it as one of examples of the Brahministic art in order to educate his subjects.) Prince Damrong, in Sān Somdet, made a hypothesis that King Rama III had removed that Śivalinga from a mountain called Sihanimit (Śivaninitra) in Lopburī.*⁴² Although Prince Damrong's hypothesis might be wrong, what is certain is that the cult of Śivalinga was not completely eliminated by King Rama I. Moreover this idea is also made firm by the statement of Prince Narit, in Sān Somdet, that he found a number of Śivalingas in various spirit-houses when he was on a tour in the North-East of Thailand.*⁴³

The worship of the Linga as the symbol of Śiva does not exist in Thailand any more. In its place is the cult of khik or ai khik. The ai khik can be a tattooed design or a detachable object, of metal or of wood, or of other materials, such as coral, which has a shape similar to a Śivalinga.*⁴⁴ Many ai khik objects are worn around a small boy's waist in order to gain protection from animal's teeth and fangs, to avert the evil eye, and to divert the attack of any vicious spirit intent upon striking at a

41. Ibid., p. 755.

42. Somdet Kromphrayā Naritsarānuwattiwong, Kromphrayā Damrong Rāchānuphāp, Sān Somdet, Vol. II, p. 269.

43. Ibid., p. 189.

44. Bruno Friedman, "Thai phallic amulets", Journal of the Siam Society, Vol. 65 (July, 1977), p. 173.

boy child's genitalia and damaging his future virility. Moreover many men carry a small khik as a good-luck charm. They believe that khik can provide prophylaxis against possible accidents or violent situations.

There is a legend of the origin of khik. It is related that a Brahman priest first produced khik by reducing a large Śivaliṅga to a small size, to make it easily portable. When the small phalluses were brought into Thailand as a consequence of the spread of Indian civilization, according to the legend, Buddhist spells were put on them instead of Brahman ones, and they became the present day Thai khik.^{*45}

Prince Damrong also argues along much the same line as this legend. He links the cult of khun phet, another name for khik, with Śivaliṅga. In his letter to Prince Narit, Prince Damrong says that a Śaiva cult must have existed and must have been practised in Thailand prior to the Vaiṣṇava cult seriously enough to remain on until his own time. When he was a child he had many khun phet tied around his waist. He identifies them with Śivaliṅga.^{*46}

45. Ibid. p 176.

46. Somdet Kromphayā Naritsarānuwattiwong, Kromphrayā Damrong Rāchānuphāp, Sān Somdet, Vol. III, p. 252.

DESTRUCTION OF MULĀKHANI AND TRIBURAM BY ŚIVA

In most Thai literary works composed during the Ayuthya period, Śiva is described as the destroyer. The Lilit Ōngkān Chaeng Nam describes Śiva, in the invocation stanzas, as 'the god who wields the mighty phet, and uses this phet to vanquish all vicious obstacles'.⁴⁷ It is not certain what object the phet (Sanskrit: vajra) is. It might be the thunderbolt as usually found in an epithet of Indra:- vajrapāṇi, 'he who has the thunderbolt in his hand.' In the Ratanakosin time the author of Chan Sansoen Phra Mahā Manī Ratana Patimākōn (Poems for eulogizing the Emerald Buddha) interprets phet as the diamond trident of Śiva.*⁴⁸ On the one hand, if phet means the thunderbolt, it accords well with the myths of Śiva, under the name of Rudra, in the Rgveda where it is said that Rudra is the wielder of the thunderbolt. On the other hand, if it is the trident, it agrees well with the myths of Śiva in epics and Purāṇas. In any case, it is certain that this phet must have been known during the Ayuthya period as one of Śiva's famous weapons.

In Khlong Thawā Thotsamāt, there is mention of the third eye of Śiva. It is described as being both beautiful and destructive at the same time.*⁴⁹ In Yuan Phai one of the chief characteristics of King Boromatrailōkanāt is said to be his destructive power. This quality in him is compared to that of Śiva.*⁵⁰ But the myth of Śiva's destroying the three worlds at the end of the aeon, which is the basis of this renowned characteristic of his, does not exist in Thai literature.

47. "Lilit Ōngkān Chaeng Nam" found in Lilit Lae Hirat by Watcharī Romyanan, Bangkok, 1974, p. 9.

48. Somdet Kromphrayā Dēchādisōn, "Chan Sansoen Phra Mahāmanī-ratanapatimākōn", Chumnum Chan Dutsadī Sangwoei, Bangkok, 1914, p. 8.

49. Chanthipkrasāsīn (ed.), Khlong Thawāthotsamāt, p. 60.

50. Lilit Yuan Phai, Bangkok: National Library, 1912, p. 84.

However, two myths about the vanquishing of malevolent and troublesome demoniacal beings by Śiva are recorded in some literary works of the Ratanakosin period. One is the myth of Śiva's taming a demon called Mūlākhanī. The other is his celebrated battle against the demon called Trī Buran. The myth of Trī Buran is narrated in two texts: the Rānakian of King Rama I and the Nārāi Sip Pāng. The story of the demon Mūlākhanī is related in the Nārāi Sip Pāng only.

The Nārāi Sip Pāng (Royal Press Version) tells the myth of the demon Mūlākhanī as follows:

Once there was a demon named Mūlākhanī (as if Mūlāgni), who was born at the same time as the Earth. He obtained a boon from all three of the gods. Both his eyes became blazing flames. He was very proud of himself, deeming himself greater than all gods and human beings. Therefore, he persecuted and oppressed the three worlds. All the sages consulted each other about what was to be done and then went, to see Śiva, and told him what had happened. Śiva, therefore, went down from Kailāsa in order to wage war with the demon Mūlākhanī. The demon fought against the god. He opened his eyes of fire and caused the fire to encircle the god. The god, by means of his divine power, trod on the back of the demon Mūlākhanī. Then the god opened the tubes of water and of fire from both his ear-holes which fell on the head of the demon, and deprived him of his power. His eyes of fire were lost forever. Śiva then cursed the demon to become King Phālī. (See p. 149f) He was to roam about in the world eating offering made to spirits at all times when human beings perform any of their auspicious ceremonies. This curse was to last for a period of one Badra Kalpa. Then Śiva went back to Kailāsa.*⁵¹

No counterpart of this myth is found in Hindu mythology. It is not possible to compare the demon Mūlākhanī with other vicious demons, such as Andhaka or Jalanchara, whom Śiva also vanquishes. There are no elements in the Mūlākhanī story

51. Praphan Sukhonthachāt (ed.), Nārāi Sip Pāng ..., p. 39.

coinciding with elements in the Śaiva stories with regard to other demons. However, Thai paintings of Śiva at the moment of treading on the back of the demon Mūlākhanī show influence from, and connection with, South Indian images of Śiva as Natarāja, the Lord of the Dance. The prototype of the demon Mūlākhanī is found in a Tamil legend which provides a motif for the image of Śiva Natarāja. It is the legend of the first Ānandatāṇḍavan of Śiva before the gods and sages after the submission of the Sages in the forest of Tāraka. This legend is related in a Tamil purāṇa called Koyil Purāṇam as follows:

In the forest of Tāraka dwelt multitudes of heretical rishis, followers of the Mīmāṃsā. Thither proceeded Śiva to confute them, accompanied by Viṣṇu disguised as a beautiful woman, and Ādiśeṣa. The rishis were at first led to violent dispute among themselves, but their anger was soon directed against Śiva, and they endeavoured to destroy him by means of incantations. A fierce tiger was created in sacrificial fires, and rushed upon him; but smiling gently, he seized it and, with the nail of his little finger stripped off its skin, and wrapped it about himself like a silken cloth. Undiscouraged by failure, the sages renewed their offerings, and produced a monstrous serpent, which, however, Śiva seized and wreathed about his neck like a garland. Then he began to dance; but lastly there rushed upon him a monster in the shape of a malignant dwarf, Mūyalaka. Upon him the god pressed the tip of his foot and broke the creature's back so that it writhed upon the ground; and so his last foe prostrated, Śiva resumed the dance, witnessed by the gods and rishis.

Then Ādiśeṣa worshipped Śiva, and prayed above all things for the boon, once more to behold this mystic dance; Śiva promised that he should behold the dance again in Sacred Tillai, the center of the universe.*⁵²

52. "Koyil Purāṇam", found in Elements of Hindu Iconography, by T.A. Gopinatha Rao, Vol. II, Part I, Madras, 1916, pp. 235-236.

The malignant dwarf, Mūyalaka is represented, in sculpture, as being pressed down upon by the right foot of the god Śiva. The god on his part, is represented as having four hands. One right hand holds a drum, the other is uplifted in abhaya mudra; one left hand holds fire, the other points downward to the lifted foot. The right foot is pressed down upon the demon Mūyalaka, a dwarf holding a cobra. The left foot is raised. There is a lotus pedestal, from which springs an encircling arch of glory (tiruvaśi), fringed with flames and touched within by the hands holding the drum and fire.

Most of the details of the Thai paintings, in Manuscripts No. 32, 33 and 34,*⁵³ of Śiva's treading on the demon Mūlākhanī are similar to images of Śiva's dancing the Ānandatāṇḍavam on Mūyalaka's back. The main differences are: the drum carried in Śiva's back right hand in the Indian images is replaced, in the painting in Manuscript No. 33, by a bael fruit; and, in Manuscript No. 32 and 34, by a crocodile. It is possible that the bael fruit is used in Thai painting because it is regarded by the Thais as Śiva's most important plant. The appearance of a crocodile in the right hand of Śiva in Thai paintings is difficult to explain. It is said in the Uttarakamikāgama, where a detailed description of the dancing of Śiva is given, that on Śiva's right earlobe there should be an earring of a crocodile shape (nakrakundala).*⁵⁴ This crocodile earring might have been misunderstood by the Thais as an object held in Śiva's hand. Another possibility is that a crocodile in the Thai paintings is the representative of the goddess Umā, the consort of Śiva. In Thai literature the vāhana or vehicle of the goddess Umā is a crocodile. The goddess created it when all gods were allowed, by the god Śiva, to create their own vehicles at the beginning of the world.*⁵⁵ It is possible that

53. All sculptures of Śiva Naṭarāja in museums in Thailand are undated. All of them are described as being found in Hindu temples in Thailand. They are exactly similar to their Hindu prototype. See illustrations Nos 1, 2, 3.

54. T.A. Gopinatha Rao, Elements of Hindu Iconography, p. 227.

55. Praphan Sukhonthachāt (ed.), Nārāi Sip Pāng ..., P. 3.

there is a complementary distribution here: a crocodile is present in the painting only when the image of the goddess Gaṅgā is depicted in the painting also, other wise the crocodile is replaced by the bacl fruit and there is no Gaṅgā figure. In both Manuscripts No. 32 and 34 where Śiva holds a crocodile in his right hand, there is an image of a minute person sitting cross-legged, with his hands held in an añjali*⁵⁶ pose, depicted within the jaṭāmaṇḍala*⁵⁷ on the left side of Śiva. This person might be identified with the goddess Gaṅgā. It is stated in the Uttarakāṁikāgama*⁵⁸ that, in the second form of dance of Śiva, there should be the figure of Gaṅgā with hands held in the añjali pose standing on the jaṭā (or braided hair) flowing on the right side of Śiva, and that the height of this figure should be sixteen aṅgulas (an aṅgula being a hundred and twentieth part of the total height of the figure of Śiva). Sometimes in the Indian literature, the goddess Gaṅgā is indirectly described as a consort of Śiva.*⁵⁹

56. añjali: the open hands placed side by side and slightly hollowed (as if by a beggar to receive food; hence when raised to the forehead, a mark of supplication.)

57. jaṭāmaṇḍala: the halo of braided hair.

58. T.A. Gopintha Rao, Elements of Hindu Iconography, p. 227.

59. In the Nandi, or benediction, part of the Sanskrit play named Mudrārāksasa composed by Viśākhadatta, Śiva is described as artfully avoiding telling the jealous goddess Umā that it is the goddess Gaṅgā who is on his head. The verse goes:

(Umā) "Who is it that is on your head?"

(Śiva) "It is the crescent-moon."

(Umā) "What? Is that her name?"

(Śiva) "That, indeed, is her name; as it is known to you, how could you have forgotten it?"

(Umā) "I am asking of a woman, not of the moon."

(Śiva) "Let Vijayā tell you then, if you do not believe it is the moon."

May the (artful) ingenuity of our lord, desiring to conceal from his consort the Divine River (Gaṅgā) in this manner preserve you. (Viśākhadatta, Mudrārāksasa, edited and translated by C.P. Devadhar, V.M. Bederar, Bombay, 1943, p. 1.)

Therefore it is possible that the Thais might like the idea of depicting the representative of the goddess Umā, i.e. a crocodile, together with the goddess Gaṅgā. Another possibility is that while the source of the image of Gaṅgā in the sculpture of Śiva Natarāja is Hindu, the origin of a crocodile in his right hand might have come from other sources long forgotten by the Thais.

Another difference between the paintings of Śiva treading on the demon Mūlākhanī and the image of Śiva dancing on the dwarf Mūyalaka is that the demon Mūlākhanī has no serpent in his hands as Mūyalaka has in South Indian images of the dancing god Śiva.

It is difficult to dismiss the relationship between the Mūyalaka in Hindu mythology and the demon Mūlākhanī in Thai literature as coincidence because the similarities are very great. The difference between the names of the two demons might have been caused by the story being related orally long before it was ever written down. The story has been changed also. The theme of Śiva's taming the heretical sages of the Tāraka forest narrated in the Hindu myth is changed to the god's vanquishing the malicious demon Mūlākhanī, and the fire flowing from the ear-holes of the god Śiva might have been formed and inspired by the fire in the left hand of the god, and by the circle of fire around the image of the god in both Indian images and Thai paintings. In some images of Śiva Natarāja's standing on the back of Mūyalaka, the jaṭā maṇḍala is depicted as flowing out from both sides of the crown of the god. This too might have been misunderstood by the Thais to be the fire and water flowing from the ear-holes of the god.

In the year 1923, in a Thai book called Tamrā Fōn Ram (Treatise

of Dancing), the images of Indian Śiva Naṭarāja (with Śiva dancing on the back of Nuyalaka) were identified with the images of Śiva's vanquishing the demon Mūlākhanī.*⁶⁰ The complete version of the myth of Śiva's taming the sages of the Tāraka forest, narrated in the Koyil Purāna, is also given. The story is very similar to the Tamil myth quoted above. But this cannot be treated as an evidence for the early existence of this Hindu myth in Thailand because the book Tamrā Pōn Ram does not mention definitely whether this myth in particular was transcribed from Thai manuscripts or translated from foreign books. In the introduction to the book, Prince Dusrong says that the work is compiled from some English books; from Sanskrit Manuscripts in the Thai Royal Library; and from Thai treatises of dancing.*⁶¹ The myth might possibly have been translated from a book on the postures of Śiva's dance carved on the Gopuram of a temple at Cidambaram, which was given to the Thai Royal Library in the year 1914.*⁶²

In Rū'ān, Hān, Nophasāt (The Story of Lady Nophasāt) there is mention of the popularity of the images of Śiva standing on the demon Mūlākhanī. It is said in the text that during the time of the author there were many images of Parameśvara, i.e. Śiva, treading upon the back of Hongdūt Phrom*⁶³ and Mūlākhanī. These images were cast either of gold, or of nine or seven kinds of metal. Large images were about five or six gōl (i.e. about 10 feet) high. Small statues were about the size of a monkey's kneecap (just a few inches). Moreover,

60. Tamrā Pōn Ram, Bangkok: 1923, p. (5).

61. Ibid., p. (6).

62. Ibid., p. (7).

63. Hongdūt Phrom is the same as Angdūt Phrom who is vanquished by Śiva. Angdūt Phrom is reborn as the demon-horse Kanthaka who is, in turn, destroyed by Viṣṇu in the form of the Thulākī incarnation. See p. 166.

various sizes between these two limits abounded.*⁶⁴ (But no description of what Śiva holds in his hands is given in this text.) Prince Damrong speculated that the date of Rū'ang Nāng Nophamāt could be around the reign of King Rama II.*⁶⁵ Therefore it is likely that the Hindu myth in the Tamrā Fōn Rān is later than that in the Nārāi Sip Pāng. However, it cannot be said for certain whether the Thai myth of Śiva and Kūlakhanī used formerly to be related to a myth concerning the creation of dancing, as it is described in the Tamrā Fōn Rān, or not. What is certain is that this was not the case during the early Ratanakosin period because it is not referred to, either in Rū'ang Nāng Nophamāt or in the Nārāi Sip Pāng, as having that significance.

64. Nāng Nophamāt, Rū'ang Nāng Nophamāt, Bangkok: Wachirayan Library, 1925, p. 14.

65. Ibid. p. (1).

The second myth, in the Ratanakosin period, of the destruction of vicious demons by Śiva is the story of the god's battle against the demon Trī Buram. In Hindu mythology it is the most celebrated myth of all Śiva's feats of arms. This myth as extant in Thai literature has more or less the same content as the Hindu myth in Śaiva texts. In the Śiva Purāna, three sons (namely Tārakākṣa, Vudyunmāla, and Kamalākṣa) of the demon Tāraka, who was killed by Skanda, Śiva's son, wanted to be more powerful than the gods. They therefore performed very severe austerities for a thousand years at Mount Meru in order to obtain a boon from Brahmā. When Brahmā came to see them to grant them boons, they asked that they might be 'indestructable at the hands of all living beings.' They wanted to be immortal. Brahmā said, "Except Śiva and Viṣṇu all else is mortal. Immortality is inaccessible and is impossible to be attained by the gods and the Asuras." Brahmā suggested they should choose a boon whereby they could do something equal to their own strength. The demons then chose to have three cities, one each of gold, of silver, and of iron, built for them by Māyā, the architect of the demons. The demons, who had deep faith in Śiva, chose their own destruction by his hand. They told Brahmā, "O Brahmā, when the three cities are joined together, the Lord, who embodies all the gods, sitting in a wonderful chariot, will shoot a single arrow and pierce our cities." Brahmā granted the demons what they had asked for. The demons thereafter ruled happily in their cities. Indra and other gods were very disturbed by the demons' happiness and virtuous way of living. They then sought refuge in Brahmā who refused to help them because the demons' prosperity was caused by the boon given by him. Brahmā sent the gods to Śiva who was not willing to help them because the demons were his pious devotees. Śiva sent the gods to Viṣṇu for help. At first Viṣṇu tried to destroy the demons by means of Bhūtas created by him while he was eulogizing the gods of

sacrifice. But Viṣṇu was not successful. Viṣṇu then realized that he had to make the demons forsake the worship of the Liṅga of Śiva and forsake the Vedic Dharma they were practising before they could be destroyed. Viṣṇu then created a teacher of delusion called Māyāmoha who created in turn a Māyāśāstra of sixteen thousand verses in Indian dialects (Apabhraṃśa), which preached Jaina and Buddhist Dharmas for misguiding the demons. Māyāmoha created four kinds of preachers for the propagation of the heresy. They preached non-violence, forbade Vedic rituals, and discarded the caste system. When the demons of the three cities had abandoned the worship of Śiva, the gods went to see Śiva again, and asked him to destroy the demons. Śiva agreed to do so on condition that the gods created a mighty chariot and a mighty bow for him. The creation of the chariot is described in detail. The chariot represents the cosmic powers with seven worlds as its wheels, with five gross elements (mahābhūta) and the gods as its constituents. The bow and the arrow were forged with the potency of the gods also. Mount Himavanta became the bow, Vāsukī, the Serpent Lord, the bow-string. Viṣṇu became the arrow, and Agni became the head of the arrow. Before the demons of the three cities could be slain in the battle, every deity was asked by Śiva to declare himself to be a mere Paśu or animal, and to proclaim Śiva as Paśupati, or Lord of Animals. The gods accepted the proposal, declared themselves to be animals and fought against the demons savagely, but their status as animals profoundly disturbed them. Śiva then taught them the performance of the Paśupata vow so that the gods could release themselves from their natures as animals. Then at an auspicious moment called Abhilāṣa, when the three cities were joined together, Śiva discharged his arrow and burned the three cities with that single arrow.*⁶⁶

⁶⁶. Śiva Purāṇa II.5.1-10.

It can be seen that the myth of the destruction of Tripura in the Śaiva texts is a mixture of a Vaiṣṇava myth and a Śaiva one. Aspects of Buddhism and Jainism have been incorporated into the myth for the sake of condemnation on the one hand (Viṣṇu plays the part of deceiver or false prophet) and for the sake of justification on the other (Śiva turns against his devotees only after they appear to have turned against him). An explanation of the Śaiva myth of Śiva's destruction of Tripura, which is suggested by Gonda in his Viṣṇuism and Śivaism⁶⁷ is that it is the reinterpretation of ancient religious practice. Here, i.e. in the Śiva Purāna, it is narrated in order to form the basis for the performance of the Paśupata vow which aims at the release of Paśu or the individual soul from the bondage of rebirth. In Thai literature this myth is adopted from the Śaiva mythology with more emphasis and importance being put on the bow of Śiva, and it is linked with the Thai story of Rāma. Hereunder is the story of Tripura in the Nārāi Sīn Pāng (Royal Press Version).

There was a demon called Trī Buram who was the king of So Lot city. He obtained a boon from Īśvara that no one could kill him with any kind of weapon. Later on Trī Buram grew very proud. He obtained a Śivaliṅga from the Sāraphū River and put it on his head. He roamed about waging war and oppressing sages and gods in all regions. When Īśvara, Lord of the World, got to know of this, he invited Nārāyaṇa to come over from his abode for consultation on the matter. Then, Īśvara, together with his army of gods came to confront Trī Buram. Īśvara used the power of the Serpent King Ananta as a string of the bow; and Nārāyaṇa as an arrow. Īśvara fired at Trī Buram in order to kill him. The power of the Śivaliṅga and the boon given to him by Śiva, caused Nārāyaṇa to close his eyes and become rapt in his own thoughts so that the arrow was unable to destroy Trī Buram. Īśvara was very angry and questioned Nārāyaṇa about what had happened. Nārāyaṇa answered, "You have given a boon to the demon so that no one can kill him. Besides, the power of the Śivaliṅga protects him. .

67. J. Gonda, Viṣṇuism and Śivaism, A Comparison, University of London, 1970, pp. 125-126.

That is why he was not killed. I volunteer to get the Sivalinga from the demon by a trick. Then you may burn him up with your crystal tube." Nārāyaṇa, by means of his divine power, transformed himself, into the form of a Buddhist monk. The monk addressed Trī Buran and asked for the Sivalinga as a gift of alms from the demon. Īśvara then, with his crystal tube, burned the demon Trī Buran into minute pieces. Īśvara then threw his Mahā Mōlī Bow down into Mithilā city and uttered a divine pronouncement, "He, only who is an incarnation of Nārāyaṇa shall be able to lift up this Mahā Mōlī Bow. If he is not Nārāyaṇa of the Solar race, he will not be able to lift it up, even if he possesses great power." When Nārāyaṇa had vanquished Trī Buran, he returned to sleep on the back of Nāga on the Ocean of Milk.*⁶⁸

The names of the three demons i.e. Tārakākṣa, Vidyumālā, and Kamalākṣa, in the Śaiva myth of the destruction of the three cities do not appear in the Thai text. The word 'Tripura' meaning 'the three cities' is taken by the Thais to be the name of the demon who is destroyed by Śiva. The changing of the names of three demons (together with their three cities) into the name of one single demon (and his single city) in the Thai texts can be explained by the frequency in the Sanskrit text of the word 'tripura' and the relative scarcity of mention of the names of the three demon lords. Moreover, there are variants for the names of the demon lords in different Hindu texts. For example, in the Matsya Purāna, the name Kamalākṣa is replaced by 'Māyā' who, in the Śiva and the Linga purānas, is the architect of the demons. The Thai demon Trī Buran, like the three demon lords, craved for immortality. This can be seen from a boon he asked from Śiva that no one would be able to kill him with any kind of weapon. In the Rāmakīan Trī Buran is described as being afraid of Viṣṇu. He wanted to be more powerful than Viṣṇu so as not to be vanquished even by him. In Hindu mythology the demons did not obtain permanent immortality. They could at best, live for a limited time only.

68. Pradhan Sukhonthachāt (ed.), Nārāi Sip Pāng ..., pp. 54-55.

In the Thai texts, however, Trī Buram is offered permanent immortality by virtue of performing righteous and meritorious acts. Trī Buram, like the demons of the three cities, is a devotee of Śiva. He finds a Śivaliṅga and puts it on his head. This is an allegory of Trī Buram being the worshipper of Śiva. Trī Buram is deluded by Viṣṇu in the form of a Buddhist monk to forsake Śiva. In the other two versions of the Nārāi Sip Pāṅ, Trī Buram is described as being pleased with the solemn appearance of the monk and wanting to learn the religion of the new sect. Trī Buram forsakes Śiva by giving the Śivaliṅga to the monk. The cosmic chariot of the Hindu myth of Tripura does not appear in the Thai texts. In its place is a suit of diamond armour mentioned in the other two versions of the Nārāi Sip Pāṅ and in the Rāmakīan. This armour is made of the power of Brahmā and of Śiva. At the end of the battle between Śiva and Trī Buram, Śiva gives this armour, which he wears during the battle, to a sage named Akhata so that the sage could give it to Viṣṇu when he came to adopt the form of Rāma. The arrow of Śiva, in the Thai texts, contains nearly the same constituents as the arrow described in the Hindu texts. Agni and Soma, who are regarded as being equally significant with Viṣṇu in the Hindu myth of Tripura, do not appear in the Trī Buram myth. Viṣṇu, in the Thai text, is retained as the most important constituent of the arrow. Actually he is the very arrow. The episode of Viṣṇu in the form of the arrow being asleep at the time when Śiva shoots the arrow at Trī Buram does not exist in any version of the Sanskrit Tripura myth. However, there is a similar episode in a Tamil myth which is influenced by an ancient Sanskrit myth which described the removal and subsequent restoration of the 'head of the sacrifice'. Hereunder is the translation from a Tamil text called Tiruvārūr.

Once the gods, Mukutaṅ (an epithet of Viṣṇu), Intiraṅ (Indra), and the rest, performed a sacrifice at Kurukkettiraṅ (Kuruksetra), having determined that he who would complete the sacrifice without hindrance would be foremost among them. After a thousand years, the gods grew weak. Then Tirumāl (Viṣṇu) completed the sacrifice and grew proud. By the command of Aran (Śiva), the sacrificial fire spurted up toward heaven, and a bow appeared in it. Māl (Viṣṇu) proclaimed himself first among the gods and, taking the bow in hand, showered the gods with arrows. The gods fled to Cattipuraṅ, as once before they had fled from the poison produced from the churning of the ocean. Māl followed them there, but on entering that site he lost all his strength and fell asleep, resting his neck on the end of the bow. The son of Viyālan (Bṛhaspati) said to the gods, "It is improper for a man to come here full of conceits; therefore Viṣṇu fell asleep through the power of Parācatti.*⁶⁹ He told the gods to take the form of white ants, and gnaw through the bowstring. The gods did so, and when the bowstring snapped, the bow cut off the head of Māl.*⁷⁰

The sleeping Viṣṇu in the Tamil myth does not exist in the Sanskrit prototype of this myth. In the Śatapatha Brāhmaṅa where the myth of the removal and the restoration of the 'head of the sacrifice' is found there is only the episode of Viṣṇu's resting his head on the end of the bow and having it cut off when the ants had gnawed the bowstring.*⁷¹ However, in a Nāyagrīva myth related in the Sanskrit Purāṅas, there is also an account of how Viṣṇu loses his head while he is asleep, resting his head in his own bow. The myth is given in detail in Chapter V (p.168)

In the Thai Tripura myth Śiva does not kill the demon Trī Purāṅ with his single arrow as is narrated in Hindu mythology. Śiva finds out that his arrow is powerless, owing to his own curse, and it cannot destroy the demon. In the end Śiva burns

69. Parācatti: Śiva's supreme energy which is all intelligence.

70. Tiruvārūr 6.1-112.

71. Śatapatha Brāhmaṅa XIV. 1.1.1-13.

the demon with his crystal tube. The Rāmakīan illustrates clearly how Śiva uses the crystal tube to reduce the demon to ashes. It is said in the Rāmakīan that Śiva, "lifted up his crystal tube to the level of his eye. He then directed the tube towards the demon. The fiercest fire immediately arose. It burned Tri Buran and all his soldiers to ashes."⁷² Śiva is, therefore described as producing the fire of devastation from his eye (which is presumably the third, or the 'fire eye') with a crystal tube in the same way as one ignites a fire with a magnifying glass projecting rays from the sun. The destruction of the demon Tri Buran by Śiva's eye finds a comparison in the myth of Tripura in the Līṅga Purāna, Śiva is much praised by the gods as being so great that he does not need either the chariot, or the mighty bow, or the army of the gods in destroying the demons. He burns the three cities by the fire from his third eye. Then as the compiler of the text wants to follow the traditional narration, he describes Śiva subsequently being urged by the gods to discharge his single arrow. Śiva then once again devastates with fire the demons who have just been reduced to ashes by him.⁷³

In the Rāmakīan, the Mahā Mōlī Bow, which has its origin in the myth of Tri Buran, is lifted up by Rāma in order to win the hand of Sītā. In the Rāmāyana of Vālmīki the bow which is bent by Rāma at Mithilā is described as Dhanurātna, 'the jewel of a bow', and is different from the Mahā Mōlī Bow. The Dhanurātna too was once a weapon of Śiva's as well as the Mahā Mōlī Bow. But it was used by Śiva to force the gods who were participating on Dakṣa's sacrifice to give him some share of that sacrifice. It was not the same bow which Śiva used in the battle against 'Tripura'. It is possible that the absence

72. King Rama I, Rāmakīan, p. 54.

73. Līṅga Purāna 1.72.

of the famous Śaiva myth of Śiva's destroying Dakṣa's sacrifice in Thai literature causes the absence of the Dhanu-ratha Bow in the Rāmakīan. In its place is the Mahā Kōīī Bow from the myth of Trī Buraṃ.

ŚIVA: THE SUPREME GOD OF THE EXPERTS IN ELEPHANT RITES

Another characteristic of Śiva referred to in literary works of the Ayutthya period is his being the supreme god of the experts in elephant-rites. In the Dutsadī Sangwoei Klom Chāng Khōng Kao (a poem sung as a lullaby for a newly captured white elephant, composed in the Ayutthya period) there is mention of the brahmins, who perform the rites for captive elephants, and put the image of Śiva alone in the centre of the ceremonial hall. They then sprinkle the god with pure and auspicious water, and pass the candles round him keeping their right sides towards him (viz. pradakṣinā). After that the brahmins present the offerings of food, flowers, and betel nuts to the god. Then they anoint the image of the god with fragrant ointment. When the brahmins have finished this last act they bow to the god and take leave of him. Then they begin the rites concerning the captive elephant.*

In the Samuthakhōt Khan Chan there is also reference to Śiva's being regarded as the most important god in a ceremony concerning elephants. In that text Prince Samuthakhōt is described as going to the forest to catch elephants. Proper rites are to be performed by a nō thao (an expert in rites and rituals regarding elephants), before the prince can catch elephants at his pleasure. When the nō thao has performed the rite called bōk phrai (opening the forest), he has to find a matūm tree (Aegle marmelos) in order to turn the area nearby into a sacrificial ground. When the nō thao has found a matūm tree, he then pays homage to it and makes offerings. Then he embraces the matūm tree and chants eulogies (mantras) to that tree. He identifies the tree with the goddess Ūmā, and himself with the god Śiva. Then he orders his men to prepare that place to be the sacrificial ground. Later on when the prince comes, at the invitation of the nō thao, to that sacrificial ground, he

* "Dutsadī Sangwoei Klom Chāng Khōng Kao," Chumnum Chan..., p. 111.

first has to put Śiva's ashes (Śivabhasma) on his forehead before proceeding to the worship of other deities.*⁷⁵

No text of the Ayutthya period other than these two mentioned above refers to Śiva as the supreme god of the experts in elephant-rites. The extant texts on elephant-lore, of both Ayutthya and Ratanakosin periods, do not contain such information either. Most of them say that Śiva is one of the four gods (the other three are Viṣṇu, Brahmā, and Agni) who created various families of elephants from the golden lotus which grew from the navel of Viṣṇu. Śiva is always invoked, in these texts, along with the other three gods, but does not obtain any special invocation of any kind.

In Hindu mythology Śiva does not have any role as a teacher of rites on elephants. All the known Hindu texts agree in attributing the founding of scientific elephantology to a mythical sage Pālakāpya who is the son of the sage Sāmagāyana and a princess named Guṇavatī who had been cursed to be a cow elephant.*⁷⁶ Śiva is not described in the Hindu works on elephants as being involved in the creation of elephants either. Some gods are mentioned in these works as causing various prominent characteristics of elephants. For example Agni cursed elephants to have an inverted tongue, and internal fire to an excessive degree. Brahmā in order to decrease the violence of Agni's curse, made elephants take delight in dust, water, and mud.*⁷⁷ Śiva is not among these gods. The only Śiva myth relating to elephants is his destroying a mighty elephant demon called Gāya who oppresses the world. Śiva rips up his body and strips off the elephant hide which he casts over his shoulders as a cloak.*⁷⁸

75. Samutthakhōt-Kham Chan, 8th ed., Bangkok: Khurusaphā, 1976, pp. 38-39, 44.

76. Nīlakantha, Mātangalīlā. I.11-20, translated by Franklin Edgerton, New Haven, 1931.

77. Ibid., I. 35-39.

78. P.A. Gopinath Rao, Elements of Hindu Iconography, Vol. 2, Part 1, Madras, 1913, p.150.

Thai experts in elephant rites and ritual of the Ayuthya period might have recalled Śiva's epithet 'paśupati', Lord of Animals, and hence might have regarded him as the first god of elephants and all animals. On the other hand, these experts in elephant rites, at the beginning of their careers, might have been educated by Śaiva brahmins who regard Śiva as the supreme god who presides over any rite and ceremony whatsoever. Another possibility is that Thai experts in elephant rites might have been taught some of the other Śaiva rites by Indian brahmins, in which a matūm tree, or matūm leaves, have an important role. In the Brahmakarma, for example, there is mention of daily pūja in which leaves of matūm are offered to the deities. Brahmins offered leaves of matūm to the five deities of the domestic sanctuary with the following words: "I offer to Śiva the triple leaves of the Aegle Marmelos endowed with the three qualifications (i.e. good, evil and indifference), with the three eyes and with the three weapons; and which destroy the sins of the three existences. By seeing the Aegle Marmelos or by touching it one is delivered from all sins. A single leaf of Aegle Marmelos offered to Śiva destroys the blackest sin."⁷⁹*

Aegle Marmelos, or bilva in Sanskrit, is, in Hindu mythology and folklore, mainly associated with Śiva and Śakta cults. Its trifoliate leaf symbolizes the three functions -- creation, preservation and destruction -- of Śiva as well as his three eyes. Its wood is not burned as fuel for fear of arousing the indignation of the god of destruction, i.e. Śiva. In Hindu mythology Śiva is described as intimately connected with this tree, hence he is called 'Bilvadaṇḍa' -- one who is endowed with the staff of bael-tree wood. However, Aegle Marmelos, or bilva, is nowhere in Hindu works on elephant-lore described

79. Brahmakarma IV.5, found in Chulākāntarāṅgala by G.E. Gerini, Bangkok, 1903, p.17.

as having any importance in the catching of elephants, or any relation to elephants at all. Neither do Hindu works associate Śiva himself with elephant-lore (see above). It therefore seems that the appearance of matum, or bilva, in a Thai myth in the Samuthakhōt Khan Chan, concerning Śiva and elephants, is simply a reflection of a Śaiva point of view (especially that of the guru), the closeness of the link between Śiva and the bacl tree being taken for granted.

Another reason why Śiva is regarded as the supreme god by the Thai experts in elephant rites is that Śiva is regarded as the father of Gaṇeśa, the god with an elephant-face. There might have been a belief, or confusion of beliefs during the time of the composition of the Dutsadī Sangwoei Klon Chāng Khōng Kao and the Samuthakhōt Khan Chan, that the god Gaṇeśa was to be identified with elephants. Therefore elephants would come to be regarded as the offspring of Śiva too. This may have led to the idea that when elephants were lured by the incantations of the mō thao -- the experts in elephant rites and lore -- , as described in the Samuthakhōt Khan Chan, they would regard the mō thao and the matum tree as their parents, and would be attracted and come into their presence. In the Samuthakhōt Khan Chan, when the mō thao has finished his sacrificial rite at the matum tree, he sends his men to the nearby region to see how many elephants have come by means of the incantations.*³⁰ There is evidence, in Thai literary works, of the god Gaṇeśa's being misunderstood to be an elephant. A phināi is widely and generally described as a kind of elephant in Thai literature and in Thai treatises on elephants. Phināi is the Thai form of the Sanskrit vināyaka which is, without doubt, the corrupt form of vināyaka. Vināyaka, 'a remover of obstacles', is one of many epithets of Gaṇeśa.

*. Samuthakhōt Khan Chan, p. 40.

In the Nārāi Sīp Pāṅg, as well as in the Rāmākīan of King Rama I of the Ratanakosin period, Śiva is described throughout as the supreme god. Viṣṇu is inferior to him in rank of divinity. It is narrated in the texts that a boy was born from the lotus rising from the navel of Viṣṇu while he was sleeping in the Ocean of Milk after he had destroyed the demon Hiranta (Hiranyakṣa) who wanted to devour the Earth. Since Śiva is superior to Viṣṇu, Viṣṇu has to take the boy to Śiva's abode and has to present him to Śiva. It seems that Śiva is omniscient, as the supreme god should be, because it is he who tells the gods including Viṣṇu that the boy is to become the founder of the phong nārāi or the Race of Nārāyaṇa (i.e. the Hindu Solar Race). The god then orders Indra to go down to the Earth and to build a city for the boy, who is named Anōmātan. Anōmātan is the first ancestor of Phra Rām (Rāma).⁸¹ Therefore the city of Ayuthya and the race of Phra Rām are founded by the grace of Śiva.

As the supreme lord, Śiva is always regarded by the gods and sages as the first protector of the three worlds. Therefore he is the first to whom they turn when they are in distress. The story in the Rāmākīan*⁸² goes that when the gods see that the demon Hiranta is going to swallow the Earth and kill all creatures, they go to Śiva's abode in a great hurry, and beg him for help. They call him 'The Crown of the Gods', and ask him 'to save and prolong the lives of the creatures of the world'. Śiva then invites Viṣṇu to come from the Ocean of Milk, and orders him to vanquish the demon Hiranta. Viṣṇu, therefore, has to incarnate himself as a boar in order to kill the demon and to save the Earth.

It is narrated later on in the Rāmākīan*⁸³ that Kalaikōt, the chief sage of King Daśaratha, comes to see Śiva to ask him for a boon. The sage wants Viṣṇu to be born to the king so that

81. King Rama I, Rāmākīan, I, pp. 5-6.

82. Ibid., pp. 3-4.

83. Ibid., pp. 286-293.

Viṣṇu can vanquish Daśakaṇṭha who is oppressing the world. Śiva grants the sage the desired boon. The god teaches the sage Kalāikōt an incantation called Saṅchīp (saṅjīva). This incantation is to be recited when the sage performs the ceremony of obtaining a son for King Daśaratha. An Asura will be created from the ceremonial fire by the power of the incantation. He will hold a tray of divine rice on his head. The rice is to be given to the queens of King Daśaratha. Then sons will be born of him.

Out of his pity for the world which is oppressed by the demons, Śiva lets Viṣṇu, with his weapons, and his consort, be born into the world so that he can restore peace. By the grace of Śiva, Viṣṇu is born as Rāma, the eldest son of Daśaratha. Viṣṇu's discus, his conch and the serpent throne, and the god's club are born as Bharata, Lakṣmaṇa, and Śatrughna respectively. Lakṣmī, Viṣṇu's consort, is born as Sīdā or Sītā, the daughter of Daśa-kaṇṭha.* It is noteworthy that even if the sages want Viṣṇu's help, they go to see Śiva first and ask him to communicate with Viṣṇu on their behalf.

It is clearly seen from the Nārāi Sip Pāṅ and the Rāmākāṇ that Śiva's superiority is marked by his benevolence. Throughout the Rāmākāṇ Śiva is the most benevolent god to Rāma and his race. It is Śiva who supplies assistance to Viṣṇu (in the form of Rāma) so that the hero can fulfil his aim of destroying the oppressing demons. The god Śiva knows that Viṣṇu is going to incarnate himself when the world is in some future trouble so he arranges for some gods to be born as monkeys in the cities of Choṃphū and Khūtkhin. These monkeys will become soldiers of Rāma and help him to win the battle against Rāvaṇa.*⁸⁵ The god also supplies an immortal army for Rāma. He grants a boon to gods who volunteer to be born as the monkey soldiers of Rāma. If they are killed by the demons, they will come back to life when the Wind God passes over them (i.e. when the wind blows).⁸⁶*

84. Ibid., p. 291.

85. Ibid.

86. Ibid., p. 292.

When Rāma and his brothers have learned all the arts of fighting, especially archery, and the knowledge of Trai Phēt or the Vedas from the sages Wasit and Sawāmit (Vasiṣṭha and Viśvāmitra), the sages perform the ceremony of making celestial arrows for them. The power of the sages' ceremonial fire makes Śiva uneasy. The god meditates to find out the cause of his uneasiness. When he has found out, he sets up a ceremony in a secluded place to create the arrows for Rāma and his brothers. Twelve arrows are created by the god. The god throws the arrows down from heaven into the sages' ceremonial fire. The sages divide the arrows among the princes equally according to the inscription of the names of the princes inscribed by the god on the arrows.*⁸⁷

Besides these arrows created by the god Śiva for Rāma and his brothers, the god also bestows upon Rāma the armour he used in the battle against the demon Trī Buram. When the god won this battle, he entrusted the armour to the sage Akkhata. The sage is now to present the armour to Rāma when the time comes for him to wage war against Rāvaṇa.*⁸⁸

The god Śiva also creates Hanumān, the most celebrated monkey chief in the army of Rāma. The god orders Vāyu to throw his power into the mouth of Sawāha so that a son will be born to her. Sawāha has been cursed by her mother to stand on only one foot and to open her mouth to eat the wind incessantly until she gives birth to a son. Śiva's power, thus thrown into her mouth by Vāyu, is born as Hanumān.*⁸⁹ It can be seen from the Rāmakīan that Hanumān should be called the son of Śiva, not of Vāyu, because his body is composed of the power from Śiva's body and from his various celestial weapons. The text says: Hanumān's spine is made from the diamond mace of the god, and this enables him to fly through the air. The monkey's body is made from the power of Śiva's crystal discus. When Hanumān

87. Ibid., pp. 339-340.

88. Ibid., p. 55.

89. Ibid., pp. 86-88.

is presented by Vāyu, his supposed father, to Śiva, the god teaches him incantations so that he can change his body into any form he wants. It is said in the text that Śiva has done all these things to help Rāma.*⁹⁰

The other important personage who is born, by Śiva's grace, to assist Rāma in waging war against Rāvaṇa is Phiphēk (Vibhīṣaṇa). In his former life Phiphēk was a god named Vēssayān. Śiva commands him to be born as the younger brother of Rāvaṇa. He is to be a good demon who is well-versed in knowledge of the Vedas. He will become an ally of Rāma and act as his spy. Since he knows all the secrets and trickery of Rāvaṇa, he can help Rāma very much in foiling Rāvaṇa's tricks and in successfully retaliating.*⁹¹

Another monkey chief whom Śiva creates in order to assist Rāma is Chomphūphān. The god created him from his sweat and scurf. Chomphūphān is the best physician in Rāma's army. When Lakṣmaṇa is shot by the Phrommāt Arrow of Indraajita, Rāvaṇa's son, no one, including Vibhīṣaṇa, knows how to cure him from the poison of the arrow. It is Chomphūphān who knows the secret. He tells Rāma that the secret was told to him by the god Śiva when he was serving the god at his abode. Śiva told him that when Lakṣmaṇa is shot by the Phrommāt Arrow, Rāma is to order Hanumān to fetch the medicinal herbs growing on the Āvut Mountain in the Suphawithē Continent. Rāma does as he is told by Chomphūphān and his brother is brought back to life.*⁹²

The god Śiva even goes into some minor details in supplying additional forms of assistance to Rāma. For instance, he gives a boon to an unimportant god to be born as a monkey named Chaiyamphawān, who is to volunteer to hold the victorious flag of Rāma's army. Since the name 'Chaiyamphawān' has an element

90. Ibid., p. 86.

91. Ibid., pp. 70-71.

92. Ibid., p. 94; II, p. 1351.

denoting 'victory', i.e. *chaiya-* (Sanskrit: *jaya*), it will act as a charm to bring victory to Rāma and to bring Rāvaṇa's army to destruction.*⁹³

In the Rāmāyana of Vālmīki Śiva is a great god, but not a supreme divinity. No incident expressing the grace and benevolence of the god Śiva in the Rāmakīan finds any counterpart in the Rāmāyana at all. In the Rāmāyana Śiva holds a less exalted position than does Viṣṇu.

It can be seen, then, that in the Nārāi Śiv Pāng Śiva is also thoroughly illustrated throughout as the most benevolent god of all. He has great pity for the three worlds and always commands Viṣṇu to exert his power to bring peace and happiness back to them when they are oppressed by any demon.

In the time of King Rama V of the Ratanakosin, Śiva is still regarded as the most benevolent god. King Rama V writes in Phrañāchayaphithī Sinsōng Dū'au: "Īśvara is the phra khun, (as if guru) or the most merciful god, because he is the refuge for all gods, human beings, and demons alike. He has never punished anybody without necessity. If he does so, it is merely the result of his forgetfulness. (The king gives an instance of this:- Śiva's failure to realize why Viṣṇu, as the arrow in the Trī Buran episode, falls asleep and fails to kill the demon. Śiva's anger is misplaced, but it is also shortlived.) Śiva's mercy is so great that he always gives a boon to a person he has formerly cursed. The god always limits the period of the curse, and the person being cursed will always be told he is needed to accomplish a useful task later on. (The instance here is Śiva's maidservant who forgot to light the lamps and must earn her release from Śiva's curse by waiting to tell Hanuman the way to Lañkā). Īśvara is always

93. Ibid., Vol. II, p.1920

kind to both good and bad men. He grants boons to every person who performs a ceremony for him. That is why he is famous for his benevolence."⁹³

It seems that Śiva, in the Ratanakosin period, received the rank of the supreme divinity through his kindness and benevolence. This can be seen clearly from the Ramakān, the Marāi Sīn Pān, and various poems composed by the court poets. Śiva's supremacy in Thai literature might have been inspired by the brahmins who perform all Brahminical ceremonies, except elephant rites, in Thailand. These brahmins are the Phrām Hōradāchān (Hotarācārya brāhmaṇa). According to King Rama V they worship Śiva as their first and supreme god. Therefore it is inevitable that these brahmins should eulogize and glorify Śiva's supremacy when they narrate Hindu myths and legends to the Thais. The Thais, therefore, accept without question that Śiva is the supreme Hindu god.

93. King Rama V, Phra Rāchā Phithī ..., pp. 83-84.

CHAPTER III

SIVAPUTRA

GANEŚA-SKANDA

Hindu myths of Śiva's sons, i.e. Gaṇeśa and Skanda, appear in Thai literature in a jumbled confusion. The two sons are misunderstood to be the same deity. In the Lilit Ōngkān Chaeng Nam, nearly all important Hindu gods, such as Śiva, Viṣṇu, Brahmā, Agni, Indra and Yama, are invoked to come to witness the ceremony of Drinking the Water of Allegiance. Skanda is also included, though only his main characteristic, i.e. riding on a peacock, not his name, is referred to. Oddly enough, Gaṇeśa, the god whom a brahmin has to invoke at the beginning of any rite, is not mentioned in this text. In the Anirut Kham Chan, in the battle between Kṛṣṇa and Bāṇa, both Skanda and Vighneśvara are mentioned as joining the army of Śiva, the ally of Bāṇa. But it is uncertain whether they are different deities or not. It is said in the Anirut Kham Chan, that "On the Western side of the army were the Rākṣasas. On the northern side was the victorious Khantha Kumāra (Pali form for Sanksrit Skanda), Vighneśvara, the destroyer of obstacles, holding mighty weapons, being equal to the power of a hundred thousand elephants.*¹" The Thai, no less than the English translation here, can be interpreted two ways: either Khantha Kumāra and Vighneśvara are two separate beings; or Khantha Kumāra is the being referred to, and Vighneśvara is an epithet in apposition. In the description of the actual fighting between Śiva's army and Kṛṣṇa's, only Skanda is mentioned. There is no reference to Gaṇeśa at all. In the Ratanakosin period, it is quite clear that Gaṇeśa and Skanda are regarded by the Thai authors as the same person. In the Chan Klom Somdet Phraçhao Lūk Thōe, (Lullaby for Princesses), the poet, Khun

1) Sī Prāt, Anirut Kham Chan, Bangkok: Silapakorn, 1960, p.83.

Sāraprasōet (Nut) describes Gaṇeśa as, "An awesome one, He is the same as Khantha Kumāra whose peacock mount is excellent."² In the Chan Sangwoei Phra Mahā Sawetachat, (Poem for the royal white umbrella), composed in the reign of King Rama IV, Gaṇeśa is invoked and described as the god who is the master of archery,³ while in Chan Klom Phra Sawet Udom Wāranī, (Poems for Consoling a Newly Captured Elephant called Udom Wāranī), composed in the same reign, it is Skanda who is described as Śiva's son, and as the master of archery.*⁴ In Hindu mythology it is Skanda who is the master of archery. However the literary works of the Ratanakosin period just ^{mentioned} might have been influenced by the Nārāi Sip Pāng, which existed already in a written form in the reign of King Rama V. In the Nārāi Sip Pāng Skanda is supposed to have an elephant-head as well as Gaṇeśa, while Gaṇeśa, as well as Skanda, has his origin from Agni.

The Thai myth of Gaṇeśa's birth has some similarity to the Liṅga, Matsya and the Skanda Purānas in that Gaṇeśa is born with an elephant-head. He is referred to as Śivaputra, Śiva's son. But it is Agni who created him by command of Śiva. In this myth, the younger son of Śiva, who may be identified with Skanda, is described as being created by Agni also, and at the same time as Gaṇeśa. The Thais consider that these two sons of Śiva have a special relationship with certain elephants of both Hindu and Buddhist mythology. Moreover they are regarded as the gods worshipped by all Thai teachers on elephant-lore. Hereunder is the myth of Gaṇeśa's and Skanda's birth from the Nārāi Sip Pāng.

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2. Khun Sāraprasōet (Nut), "Chan Klom Somdet Phra Chao lūk Thōe", Chumnum Chan Lae Dutsadi Sangwoei, Bangkok, 1914, p. 85.
 3. Phra Ong Chao Kalayā Na Prawat, "Chan Sangwoei Phra Mahā Sawetachat", Ibid., p. 68.
 4. "Chan Klom Phra Sawet Udom Wāranī", Ibid., p. 288.

In one of the Tretā Yuga, when the gods of the three worlds came to meet each other, Śiva issued a command and gave a boon to Phra Phlōeng (The Fire God) to create, by means of his divine power, two sons for Śiva. Phra Phlōeng obeyed the command, and he, by means of his divine power, caused flames to issue from his ear-holes. The rays of the flame were very bright. Amidst the flames, on the right, a divine boy was born. He had the face of an elephant and two arms. His right hand held a trident and his left hand held a lotus. He had a serpent as his cross-belt. He was in a cross-legged position and was floating in the air at the right side of the three gods. His name was proclaimed as Śivaputra Vighneśvara. On the left side, amidst the flames, another divine boy was born. He had three elephant faces and six arms. From one arm a white male-elephant was born. It had thirty-three heads and four feet; and was called Erāwan (Pali: erāvaṇa; Sanskrit: airāvaṇa, airāvata). From another hand another white elephant was born. It had three heads and four feet; and was called Khiri Mēkhala Traidā Yuk (as if giri mekhala tretā yuga). These two elephants had been created by the gods by means of divine power. The three gods blessed them with the privilege of being the mounts of the great king of the gods, i.e. Indra. From two other hands, three kinds of white elephant were born. They were to be born in the world as the mounts of powerful kings. They were first grade white elephants; second grade; and third. The same three families of white elephant were born from both left and right hands. But the white elephants from the left hand were female, and those from the right hand were male. From two other hands the Dakkhināvatta Conch was born from the right side and the Uttarāvatta Conch was born from the left side. They took an upright position above the temples of all the seven heads of the elephants. The three gods then named him (i.e. the second boy) Kōnchanānēsūan. The three families of white elephants were born from that time on. Because the Fire God created them by means of his divine power, the three families of white elephants were elephants of the families of Agni. This is the reason why they are considered to be one of the races called Suphalaksana, 'having good characteristics', which is made up of 51 races all told. Elephant experts therefore, worship Vighneśvara and Kōnchanānēsūan. Both sons of Śiva remained in this world until the end of one Bhadra Kalpa.*⁵

5. Praphan Sukhonthachāt (ed.), Nārāi Sip Pāng Lai Phong Nai Rū'ang Rāmakian, Bangkok, 1968, pp. 37-38

Kōṅchanānēsūan (? Sanskrit: krauñca-ānana-īśvara) is none other than Skanda in Hindu mythology. The epithet 'krauñcānanesvara' (Lord over the face of Krauñca) does not appear in Hindu texts. This epithet appearing in the Thai text is probably derived from the name of Krauñca Mountain. In the Mahābhārata when the gods waged war against the demons, the latter took shelter in Krauñca Mountain. Skanda, the leader of the gods' army, out of his desire to destroy the demons, pierced the mountain with his dart, and thus reduced it to the level of flat land.*⁶ In the Vāmana Purāna, Indra and Skanda have a dispute about their respective powers, and agree to decide it by running a race round Krauñca Mountain, who decided unfairly in favour of Indra. Skanda hurls his lance at the mountain and pierces at once both it and the demon Mahiṣa.*⁷

The elephant Airāvata is, according to Hindu and Buddhist mythology, the mount of Indra. The elephant Girimekhala does not appear in Hindu mythology. It is in Buddhist mythology the mount of Māra, not of Indra as it is in the Thai myth here. Conches are widely used in Brahmanical rites performed in Thailand. The reason why they are regarded as auspicious things, according to the myth quoted above, is that they are originally born from the centre of the palms of two of Kōṅchanānēsūan's hands. However, their importance is also to be attributed to the myth of Viṣṇu's incarnation as a golden fish which will be discussed below. (See p.123).

The myth of the origin of celestial elephants and auspicious conches from the hands of Kōṅchanānēsūan in Thai texts is influenced by the myth of the exhibition of Skanda's power in Hindu mythology. In the Mahābhārata when Skanda was born he shone like the sun rising in the midst of a mass of red clouds. Seizing the awesome bow which was used by Śiva in the battle against the Tripura demons, Skanda uttered such

6. Mahābhārata IX 45.89-91.

7. Vāmana Purāna 32.94-109.

a terrible roar that the three worlds were stricken with fear. Hearing that noise, which sounded like the rumbling of masses of big clouds, the great elephants Citra and Airāvata were shaken with fear. Seeing them unsteady, Skanda held them with both his hands. Holding a peacock and a dart in two other hands, Skanda began to sport and make a terrible noise. And holding an excellent conch shell with two of his hands, Skanda began to blow it to the great terror of even the most powerful creatures.*⁸ If this episode can be taken as iconographical for Skanda, it is not difficult to imagine that the Thais may have seen the two elephants and conches being carried in Skanda's hands as having originated in or from Skanda's hands. (See illustration No. 4.)

The creation of celestial elephants from Kōnchanānēsūan's hands can also be influenced by a Hindu myth on the creation of elephants by Brahmā. The Mātāṅgalīlā relates that the Creator took solemnly in his two hands the two gleaming half shells of the cosmic egg, exhibited to him by the sages, and chanted seven Sāmans at once. Thereupon from one shell the elephant Airāvata was born, and seven other noble elephants (i.e. the eight elephants of the quarters or regions) were severally born, through the chanting. Thus eight elephants were born from the cosmic eggshell held in his right hand. And from that in his left in turn eight cows were born, their consorts.*⁹

It is quite clear that in Hindu mythology Agni has no part in the birth of Gaṇeśa at all. It is either Śiva or Pārvatī who is responsible for the creation of Gaṇeśa. On the other hand Agni is described by Hindu texts as having produced Skanda in one way or another. There are various myths about Skanda's birth in Hindu mythology. But in all of them Agni acts the main part in the creation of this god. There are two versions of the account of Skanda's birth in the Hindu texts. One is that Skanda is the son born from the seed of Agni only.

8. Mahābhārata III.225.

9. Nīlakantha, Mātāṅgalīlā, I, 22-23, translated by Franklin Edgerton, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1931, p. 47.

The other is that Agni acts as the medium for the transference of Śiva's seed from which Skanda is created. A myth in the Mahābhārata relates how Agni desires the wives of the seven sages, and how his son Skanda is born on the white mountain.

Once when Agni saw the beautiful wives of the great sages sleeping in their hermitage, he was overcome by desire for them. But he reflected, "It is not proper for me to be full of lust for the chaste wives of the brahmins, who are not in love with me." Then he entered the household fire so that he could touch them, as it were, with his flames. but after a long time his desire became greater still, and he went into the forest, resolved to abandon his corporeal form. Then Svāha the daughter of Dakṣa, fell in love with him and watched him for a long time, seeking some weak point, but in vain. When she knew that the god Agni had gone into the forest full of desire, the amorous goddess decided to take the forms of the wives of the seven sages and to seduce Agni; thus both of them would obtain their desire. Assuming the form of each of the wives in turn, she made love with Agni, but she could not take the form of Arundhatī, Vasiṣṭha's wife, because she had such great power of chastity. Taking Agni's seed in her hand each time, Svāha thought that it was not right for her to assume the forms of the six sages' wives because anyone who saw her would falsely accuse the sages' wives of committing adultery with Agni. So Svāha, wanting to avoid this, took the form of the Garudī bird and left the forest. She threw the seed into a golden lake on the peak of the white mountain guarded by Rudra's hosts. The seed generated a son, Skanda, and some time later the six sages' wives came to Skanda and told him that their husbands, thinking that Skanda had been born of them, had abandoned them. They begged Skanda to let them dwell forever in heaven, and by his grace they became the constellation of the Kṛttikās, considered the mothers of Skanda.*¹⁰

In the Śiva Purāna Skanda is also described as the son born from Agni's seed, which was discharged when Agni had great desire for the sages' wives. But there is here a link between Skanda and Pārvatī, Śiva's wife, in the sentence — 'Kārttikeya became the son of Pārvatī.'¹¹ In the Skanda Purāna and in

10. Mahābhārata III.213-219.

11. Śiva Purāna Dharmasamhita 28-35.

the other part in the Śiva Purāna, Skanda becomes Śiva's son, and is born from his seed. Agni is only the medium for the transference of the seed to the Kṛttikās, the sages' wives.

Agni ate the seed of Śiva and returned to the gods. They all became pregnant by the seed that was in Agni's mouth, just as they all receive the oblation that is placed in Agni. Tortured by the seed, they sought help from Śiva, who told them to vomit forth the seed. They did so, and the seed formed a great mountain of burnished gold, but in Agni alone the seed remained burning like a comet. Śiva told Agni to release the seed into the womb of those who are heated every month. That dawn, the Kṛttikās came to bathe, and when they were pained by the cold they warmed themselves before the blazing fire, though Arundhatī tried to prevent them. The tiny particles of the seed entered through the pores of their skin. Agni, bereft of the seed was exhausted, and the sages' wives went home and were cursed by their husbands to become constellations. In their misery, they released the seed upon a slope of Himālaya, where the parts came together and fell into the Ganges, encased in bamboo. There it became a six-headed boy, Skanda, and at that moment Pārvatī's breast began to flow with milk, and she went where Nārada told her the boy was, and she found him and nursed him.*¹²

In the Matsya Purāna, Skanda is described as being the real son of Śiva and Pārvatī. Pārvatī actually brought forth the child herself. But even here Agni is forced to drink Śiva's seed and transfer it into a lake. Pārvatī drinks the water of that lake and gives birth to Skanda.*¹³

In the Nārāi Śip Pāng, the Kṛttikās and Pārvatī are not mentioned as having any role in the creation of Skanda, neither under the name of Kōnchanānēsuan, nor of Skanda proper. (See below.) It is quite clear from the Thai text that the second version of this myth (Skanda is born from

12. Skanda Purāna I.1.27.44-102; Śiva Purāna II.4.2.48-59.

13. Matsya Purāna 158.27-50; cf. Padma Purāna V. 41-118-142.

Śiva's seed being carried by Agni) is adopted in Thai literature. In the Nārāi Sip Pāng it is Agni who created Skanda by the command of Śiva. The other important element in the Hindu account of Skanda's birth is the seed of either Śiva or Agni. It is replaced in the Thai text, by the blazing flames which flow out from the earholes of Agni.

There are then in the Thai text, two different ways in which Gaṇeśa and Skanda-Kōṅchanānēsūan are brought together in close similarity and, eventually, in one of them, into complete identity. The first way is by the two gods' being born from Agni simultaneously, by virtue of flames issuing from his earholes. They both possess elephant heads, Gaṇeśa one and Kōṅchanānēsūan three. This common ground is lacking in all Hindu texts. The element common to all, Thai and Hindu alike, is merely that Gaṇeśa and Kōṅchanānēsūan are to be viewed as Śiva's sons (as witnessed by the common element śivaputra in the Thai names for both). This version of the myth leaves the possibility open, however, that Gaṇeśa and Kōṅchanānēsūan remain separate beings, though similar in appearance and identical in parentage.

The second way in which Gaṇeśa and Skanda are brought together is by a sequence in which Skanda, with six heads, is turned into Gaṇeśa with one head, viz. that of an elephant. In this latter case, difference in form is offset by the fact of complete identity, for the text (see below) expressly states that Skanda is Vighneśvara.

It can be said that the story of the birth of Gaṇeśa from Agni, in the Nārāi Sip Pāng, is intended to be the birth of Gaṇeśa in particular rather than of Skanda. Firstly, the two sons Vighneśvara and Kōṅchanānēsūan are regarded as the gods worshipped by all teachers of elephant-lore. This agrees with

the Hindu concept of Gaṇeśa only. In the Liṅga Purāna, Gaṇeśa is invoked as being 'bound to the pillar of the lotus-like hearts of men by Brahmā and those who act as divine mahouts.'¹⁴ Since the story in the Nārāi Sip Pāṅg focuses on elephants, a myth of Skanda's creating elephants from his hands is included. Secondly, the popular Hindu names of the younger son of Śiva, i.e. Skanda or Kārttikeya, are not used in this myth. Moreover Kōṅchanānēsūan's physical characteristics are different from the Hindu Skanda's. Kōṅchanānēsūan has three elephant faces and six arms. Skanda has six faces and twelve arms. However, yet another myth of Skanda-Gaṇeśa's birth appears in the Nārāi Sip Pāṅg. The boy who is created in this myth is definitely Skanda in the beginning of the story. He has six faces and twelve arms as Skanda does. But it is odd that in this myth Śiva only is retained as the main agent of his birth. Agni, who is an indispensable factor for his creation in all Hindu myths, is not mentioned at all. So this Thai version comes nearer to the Hindu account of Gaṇeśa's birth rather than Skanda's. The following story of the two gods Gaṇeśa and Skanda illustrates how much they are confused as being one and the same.

After the war against an Asura named Mūlākhanī¹⁵, Śiva went to observe strict religious precept at Ratchadākūt Mountain. He had a number of serpents cure him by drinking blood from his toes. Then the god by means of his divine power, created a boy from the region of his chest. The boy had six faces and twelve arms. His name was proclaimed by the god as Khantha Kumāra, son of the god. Then the god returned to Kailāsa. He created a peacock as the mount of Khantha Kumāra.

At that time there was a goddess who was the maid of the goddess Sarasvatī. She lacked any sense of morality appropriate to the conduct of gods and celestial nymphs, so that, when she came to die, she was born in the world as a male sea-elephant demon called Phangkhi. The demon Phangkhi became supreme among all the beasts. He persecuted and oppressed all the three worlds. When Śiva learned of what had happened he thought of commissioning Khantha Kumāra to vanquish the demon. But Khantha Kumāra had to have his tonsure first. Śiva had all gods, sages

14. Liṅga Purāna I.82.35.

15. See full story p. 62.

siddhas and vidyādhara assemble at Kailāsa at the auspicious moment on the day of the tonsure. Then he had the two gods, i.e. Brahmā and Viṣṇu, invited to come to cut, at the same time as the gods of all the three worlds, the hair of Khantha Kumāra as suited the auspicious sign.

When the auspicious time came, Brahmā and all gods had assembled at the abode of Śiva. But accidentally Viṣṇu was in deep sleep. His wives, Laksmī and Maheśvarī, were unable to awaken him. Śiva and all the gods had been waiting for a long time until the auspicious moment drew near. Śiva then commanded Indra to awaken Viṣṇu who was in deep sleep in the Ocean of Milk by blowing the Vijaya Yuddha Conch. Viṣṇu, who was sleeping, dimly hear the sound of the conch. He then opened his eyes and saw Indra. He asked, "What is the matter with the world?" Indra answered, "Śiva commanded me to awaken you by blowing the Vijaya Yuddha Conch. He would like to invite you to cut the hair of Khantha Kumāra now." Viṣṇu, who was still sleepy, said unintentionally, "What a headless (ghost) child! I can't get any sleep in comfort." At that moment when he uttered this exclamation, the six heads of Khantha Kumāra disappeared in accordance with the sacred power of these words. Just at that time the three gods had assembled. The auspicious moment arrived, but they could not see the heads of Khantha Kumāra, so they consulted with each other on the matter and found that the day was inauspicious so that an auspicious ceremony should not be performed. All the world, therefore, called that day Wan Lōkā Wināt (wan lokavināśa, 'The Day of the Destruction of the World). Śiva then commanded Witsanukam (Viśvakarma) to go to the earth in order to cut off the heads of dead men to replace the heads of Khantha Kumāra. Witsanukam travelled about looking for heads of men who died on that day. But none had died on that day. Witsanukam told Śiva what had happened. Śiva therefore said that if any man or animals, whoever or whatever they may be, turned their heads to the West when they lay down, they were doomed to die on that day. Their heads were to be cut off and used to replace the heads of Khantha Kumāra. Witsanukam went down to the earth again and found a male elephant lying down with its head turned to the West. He cut it head off and gave it to Śiva. After the three gods

had replaced the heads of Khantha Kumāra with the elephant head, they changed his name to Mahā Vighneśvara. That is why from then on it has been prohibited to turn one's head to the West when one lies down. Siva then commanded Mahā Vighneśvara to go to vanquish the demon Phangthi.*¹⁶

In Hindu mythology there is a version of Skanda's creation by Śiva alone. The Varāha Purāna says that, "Śiva released the female creative power from his own body and agitated it for the sake of a son. As he did this, a youth, Skanda, broke out of it, blazing like a fire or the sun!"¹⁷ But the text later on says clearly that this myth is not either the absolute or the first version of the account. It says, "His birth takes various versions in various eras. He is also known as the son of the Kṛttikās and as the son of Agni, because in his second incarnation the Kṛttikās and Pārvatī and Agni were the cause of his birth."¹⁸ The Varāha Purāna also has a story of Gaṇeśa's being created by Śiva alone. It is nearly similar to the account of Skanda's birth. This might have been the source of Skanda's birth in the Nārāi Sip Pāng. The text narrates as follows.

The gods and the sages, observing that no difficulty occurred in accomplishing either good or evil deeds which they and others had embarked upon, consulted together respecting the means by which obstacles might be opposed to the commission of bad actions. They went to see Śiva for counsel and favour. They asked Śiva to create a being capable of opposing obstacles to the commission of improper acts. Hearing their words, Śiva looked at Pārvatī, and whilst thinking how he could effect the wishes of the gods, from the splendour of his countenance sprang into existence a youth shedding radiance around, endowed with the qualities of Śiva, and captivating by his beauty the female inhabitants of heaven. Umā seeing his beauty was excited with jealousy, and in her anger pronounced this curse, "You shall not offend my sight with the

16. Prapñan Sukhonthachāt (ed.), Nārāi Sip Pāng..., pp. 39-41.

17. Varāha Purāna 25.31-34.

18. Varāha Purāna 25.45-47.

form of a beautiful youth. Therefore assume an elephant's head and a large belly, and thus your beauty shall vanish." Śiva then addressed his son saying, "Your name shall be Gaṇeśa, and the son of Śiva; success and disappointment shall spring from you. You shall be worshipped and invoked the first on all occasions, otherwise the object and prayers of him who omits to do so shall fail."¹⁹*

The similar object and prayers of him who omits to do so shall fail."¹⁹ and Skanda is that the creation is performed by the creative power within the body of the god, especially in the case of Gaṇeśa by Śiva's mind. Sometimes in Hindu mythology Śiva's six faces are described as being equal to the six minds of the god. Gaṇeśa who was born from his face is looked upon by some esoteric sects as a material manifestation of the manas (the mind when considered as a reasoning factor) of Śiva. Therefore Gaṇeśa in the Varāha Purāṇa can be regarded as the mind-born son of Śiva. This motif is also found in the Nārāi Sip Pāṅg. Śiva created Khantha Kumāra from the region of his chest. It is true that no word meaning 'creative power' is used in the Thai text. But it is possible to find a link between 'the chest' and 'creative power'. The chest may be used to symbolize or refer to the god's heart (or mind also in Thai) which has power to create anything. This is analogous to 'the splendour of Śiva's countenance' in the Varāha Purāṇa text above. In one case, the heart is the source of the will to produce a son (via the chest); in the other the mind, or brain, is the source of this will, which manifests itself via the face.

Since Gaṇeśa and Skanda are believed by the Thais to be the same god with two names, a device has to be made to explain this. In the Nārāi Sip Pāṅg, the top-knot cutting rite for the god Gaṇeśa-Skanda is inserted into the myth. The Thai

19. Varāha Purāṇa 23.2-30.

tonsure ceremony is similar to the Hindu Cūlakānta Maṅgala in that it is the most important rite of initiation for youths. The tonsure ceremony marks the end of childhood and the beginning of manhood for the candidate in this rite. The candidate is from then on fit to accept any responsible commission. That is why, in the Nārāi Sip Pāṅg, Khantha Kumāra has to wait until he has his top-knot cut before Śiva can commission him to vanquish the demon Phangkhī. The name of the candidate in this rite is also changed after the ceremony. That is why Khantha Kumāra's name is changed to Mahā Vighneśvara. Moreover the myth of the tonsure ceremony of Gaṇeśa-Skanda provides a good explanation of how Khantha Kumāra, who has six human faces, can be the same as Vighneśvara who has one elephant face.

The myth of the tonsure of Gaṇeśa in the Thai text, in which Gaṇeśa loses his human heads, may be influenced by a Hindu myth of Gaṇeśa's head being cut off by the evil look of the god Śani. The Brahma vaivarta Purāna narrates that when a son was born to Śiva and Pārvatī, the couple had the auspicious rites for the welfare of Gaṇeśa performed.

In compliment to this occasion, all the gods came to congratulate Śiva and Pārvatī, and were severally admitted to see the infant. Among them was Śani, the planet Saturn, who, although anxious to pay homage to the child, kept his eyes steadfastly fixed on the ground. Pārvatī asked him the reason for this. He told her that once he was so immersed in meditation upon Visnu that he had disregarded his wife. She, in resentment of his neglect, had pronounced upon him the curse that whomsoever he gazed upon he should destroy. To obviate the evil consequence of this imprecation, he avoided looking at anyone in the face. Pārvatī, having heard this story, paid no regard to it. but, considering that what must be, must be, gave him permission to look on her son. Śani, calling Dharma

to witness his having been given leave, took a peep at Gaṇeśa, on which the child's head was severed from his body, and flew away to the heaven of Kṛṣṇa, where it was reunited with the substance of the god. Pārvatī, taking the headless trunk in her arms, cast herself weeping on the ground, and the gods joined her, all except Viṣṇu, who mounted Garuḍa, and flew off to the river Puṣpabhadra, where finding an elephant asleep, he took off its head, and flying back with it, fixed it on to the body of Gaṇeśa; hence the body of that god is crowned with the present head.*²⁰

The disastrous look of Śani in the Hindu myth is changed to the disastrous words of Viṣṇu in the Nārāi Sip Pāṅg. But these words are not malignant. A favourite habit of playing on words is relevant here. Viṣṇu uttered these words unintentionally and therefore he did not mean to hurt Śiva and his son at all. However, the literal meaning of his exclamation cannot be disregarded, especially since Viṣṇu is a great god whose every word must come true. This is very like the situation Śani finds himself in, because he too had no wish to harm Gaṇeśa either. In this case, though, it was the inevitability of a curse which caused the damage, where as in the case of the Thai version, the whole incident occurs from what is little more than a verbal joke.

Gerini gives yet another legend, in Thai literature, of the tonsure of Śiva's first-born son. In this version the name of the child is Narēt or Narēsūan (Sanskrit: Nareśvara). This is the epithet by which, according to Gerini, Gaṇeśa is known to the Saivites of the Mahā Anantavaṃśa sect, according to whom Śiva, the self-existing and self-created Lord of the Universe, is regarded as father to Narēsūan or Gaṇeśa, and to Nārāyaṇa or Viṣṇu. In this version, it is Kāla or Yama who is responsible for the disappearance of Gaṇeśa's head, as an act of revenge for not having been invited to the ceremony.

20. Brahmavaivarta Purāṇa III.10-12.

But Śiva through his transcendental knowledge, discovers the author of the mischief as well as the motive that has prompted its perpetration. Śiva despatches a messenger in quest of another head, which is obtained from an elephant sleeping with its head to the West.*²¹

This version of the tonsure of Gaṇeśa is interesting in that it is very close to the story of a kind of performance called rabeng, which, in the Ratanakosin period, is designed to be performed only at the tonsure ceremony of a royal child. The story of rabeng is that the gods are invited to join a certain ceremony at Mount Kailāsa. They all march off joyfully. But they are stopped on their way by Kāla, who is mounted on a peacock. The gods perform tapas in order to gain strength to shoot at Kāla, but they are shot by him instead. They faint but recover immediately after. Then they return to their palaces. It is noted that they never reach Kailāsa Mountain.*²² Prince Naritsarānuwattiwong, in Sān Somdet, his correspondence with Prince Damrongrāchānuphāp, argues that it is not Kāla at all who stops the gods from going to join the festival at Kailāsa Mountain. It should be Skanda, or Khantha Kumāra, because that deity is described, in the story, as having a peacock as his mount. While Skanda's mount is a peacock, the mount of Kāla, according to the Thai tradition, is nok sāk.²³ According to the Thai tradition the ceremony referred to in the rabeng performance is believed to be the tonsure of Gaṇeśa. Neither Prince Damrong nor Prince Narit agree with this belief. Prince Narit says that the myth of Gaṇeśa's tonsure, which is supposed to have a close link with the rabeng performance, had been invented no earlier than the Ratanakosin period because in the Ayuthya period, according to the Kot Monthian Ban, this kind of performance was performed not only for the tonsure ceremony but for other royal ceremonies as well.*²⁴

21. G.E. Gerini, Chūlākhānāsanāyāgala, Bangkok, 1893, p. 29.

22. Somdet Kromphrayā Naritsarānuwattiwong, Kromphrayā Damrong Rāchānuphāp Sān Somdet, Vol. V., Bangkok, 1901, pp. 177-179.

23. Ibid., Vol. III, 1902, pp. 277-278. Nok sāk: Tyto alba of the Tytonidae 'Horn owl' (Fr. Boonsong Leebagul's, Bird Guide of Thailand, 1967).

24. Somdet Kromphrayā Naritsarānuwattiwong, Kromphrayā Damrong Rāchānuphāp, Sān Somdet, Vol. V, p. 190.

Prince Damrong adds further that this myth may be an exploit of Skanda's which is taken by the Thais from South Indian mythology. It may not be a myth of Gaṇeśa's at all.*²⁵

Prince Narit is right in saying it should be Skanda who rides a peacock, and who stops the gods going to Kailāsa, It has been known to the Thais from the time of the compilation of the Lilit Ōṅkān Chaeng Nam that the mount of Skanda is a peacock.*²⁶ The part of a peacock in the rabeng performance is sufficiently important to be recorded in a literary work of the late Ayuthya period. Phra Mahā Nāk of Thā Sai Monastery describes, in the Bunnōwāt Kham Chan, composed in the reign of King Bṛomakōt (1732-1758), that one of the performances given at the Buddha's footprint at Saraburī Province during the visit of the King was the rabeng. The performers were dressed like those who performed mōṅg khrum. They, with bows in their hands, all concentrated on shooting at a peacock.*²⁷ It is true that the other parts of the story of the rabeng which are not recorded in the Bunnōwāt Kham Chan may not be the same as the rabeng story performed in the Ratanakosin period. However, lack of evidence does not imply that the stories of the two periods are different.

If it is agreed that it is Skanda who stops the gods from going to Kailāsa, the story of the rabeng performance may originally be, as claimed by Prince Damrong, a myth of Skanda. In the Vana Parvan of the Mahābhārata, there is a myth of Skanda's being born from the seed of Agni. Skanda, when newly born, was very mighty and exhibited his power so greatly that the gods were frightened. They wanted to destroy him. The gods marched to confront Skanda only to find that he was more powerful than they. Finally they submitted to him and accompanied him to Śiva who bestowed much honour upon him. From then on Skanda was known as Śiva's son.*²⁸

25. Ibid., p. 185.

26. "Lilit Ōṅkān Chaeng Nam", found in Lilit Lae Nirāt, by Watcharī Romyanan, Bangkok, 1974, p. 25.

27. Maha Nāk, Bunnōwāt Kham Chan, Bangkok, 1923, p. 24.

28. Mahābhārata III. 225-226.

The Thais might have joined the two main incidents of this myth together. The first, viz. the tonsure, refers to the birth of Skanda, and the second is the antagonism between Skanda and the gods. This is why in the rabeng the gods are invited to the abode of Śiva only to be confronted by Skanda. It is possible that the rabeng performance is one of a number of performances in which stories have been taken from Hindu mythology. In the Kot Monthian Bān, a performance called chak nāk dukdamban is described as being performed in a royal ceremony called Phrarāṭchaphithī Inthraphisēk.²⁹ It represents the myth of the Churning of the Ocean. Moreover, the mōng khrum performance, performed in many royal ceremonies such as Phrarāṭchaphithī Sanān Yai³⁰, Kānphithī Āsayut³¹ and Phithī Lot Chāēt³², shows signs of some connection with Hindu myth. The mōng khrum is like a dance with a series of poses. The names of the poses, such as Mēkhalā Lō Kāēo (The goddess Maṇi Mekhala uses a jewel as an enticement); Rāmasūn Khwāng Khwān (Rāmasūn throws his axe); Phra In Pao Sang (Indra blows his conch shell) and Thēwadā Rang Phra Sumēn (The attempt of the gods to pull Mount Sumeru upright),³³ are certainly taken from some episodes of Hindu mythology which appear in Thailand. These performances have been widely given in royal ceremonies, and there is evidence in Čhotmāihēt Khwāmsongčham Krommalūang Narinthōn Thēwī, recorded in the reign of King Rama III, that rabeng was performed together with mōng khrum and others in the celebration of King Tak Sin's receiving the image of the Emerald Buddha in the year 1779.³⁴

29. Phra Bāt Somdet Phra Phuttha Yōt Fā Čhulā Lōk (King Rama I), "Kot Monthian Bān", Kotmāi Trā Sām Dūang, Bangkok, 1978, p. 71.

30. Ibid., p. 66.

31. Ibid., p. 67.

32. Ibid., p. 72.

33. Somdet Kromphrayā Naritsarānuwattiwong, Kromphrayā Damron Rāčhānuphāp Sān Somdet, Vol. V, p. 180.

34. Krommalūang Narinthōn Thēwī, Čhotmāi Hēt Khwāmsongčham (2310-2381), Bangkok, 1958, p.156.

It is the chronicles of the early Ratanakosin period which state that rabeng had never been performed for any reason other than in the tonsure ceremony.*³⁵ It is possible that, by the time of the establishment of the Ratanakosin (Čhakri) dynasty, the myth of Gaṇeśa's tonsure and the loss of his head caused by Kāla, as referred to by Gerini, had taken shape, and was supposed to be the essential story of rabeng.

In the Thai texts, it is not only the myths of Gaṇeśa's and Skanda's birth which are confused. The myth of Skanda's vanquishing the demon Tāraka is also mixed up with the myth of Gaṇeśa's losing his left tusk. The loss of one of Gaṇeśa's tusks is the cause of his name 'Ekadanta' or 'He of the One Tusk'. In the Nārāi Sip Pāng, when Khantha Kumāra has been initiated to manhood after his tonsure ceremony, Śiva commissions him under the name of Vighneśvara to destroy a demon called Phangkhi. It is narrated in the text as follows:

Vighneśvara manifested himself as having four hands. One hand held a noose, the others held a hook, an iron hammer and a red hot lump of iron respectively. He had a rat as his mount. He went, by means of his divine power, to the Yamunā River. When the demon Phangkhi saw the son of the lord, he was very infuriated. He took ten million million monsters up to fight mightily against Vighneśvara. But the demons were no match for the god, so they ran away and dived in the Yamunā River. They hid themselves in the middle of the ocean. Vighneśvara swallowed up all the water of the Yamunā River until the river was dry and the demons became visible. The god then removed his left tusk and threw it at the demon Phangkhi with all the other demons and killed them. Then Vighneśvara vomitted out the water he had swallowed up back into the river where it formerly was. Then he returned to see Śiva and told him all that had happened. At the same time the three gods who had assembled there blessed him saying, "This head brings victory and is auspicious. Don't change it. And if any elephant has one tusk only, it should be supposed to be similar to

35. Čhao Phrayā Thiphākṇawong, Phra Rāčha Phongsāwadān Krung Ratanakōsin, Vol. I, IV, Bangkok, 1960.

Vighneśvara. If any elephant expert manages to catch this kind of elephant he ought to count it as equal to a hundred head of elephants. Let him be considered to be a well-versed expert and let him enjoy a highly auspicious life."*³⁶

This myth in the Nārāi Sip Pāṅg does not accord with the myth of the loss of Gaṇeśa's tusk in Hindu mythology. In the Brahmavaivarta Purāna Gaṇeśa used his left tusk to receive the axe of Paraśurāma, and thus the tusk was cut off by it.

Paraśurāma, who was a favourite disciple of Śiva, went to Kailāsa to visit his master. On arriving at the inner apartment, he was opposed by Gaṇeśa, as Śiva was asleep. Paraśurāma nevertheless demanded entry, and, after a long dialogue, the two came to fight. Gaṇeśa had at first the advantage seizing Paraśurāma in his trunk, and giving him a twirl that left him sick and senseless. On recovering, Paraśurāma threw his axe at Gaṇeśa, who recognizing it as his father's weapon, which had been given to Paraśurāma, received it with all humility upon his left tusk. The tusk was immediately severed, and hence Gaṇeśa had but one tusk.*³⁷

There is yet another myth, in Hindu mythology, of the loss of Gaṇeśa's tusk. The Śiva Purāna narrates that Pārvatī created Gaṇeśa as her son and her first personal bodyguard. Gaṇeśa followed his duty of guarding the apartment of Pārvatī strictly. Since Gaṇeśa was created by Pārvatī alone without the knowledge of Śiva, Śiva did not know who Gaṇeśa was at all. Śiva, desiring to enter the chamber of Pārvatī, and Gaṇeśa, wanting to guard the goddess's apartment, engaged themselves in a very long talk and fight with each other. In the end Śiva gained the advantage and cut off the left tusk of Gaṇeśa. But this was a blessing in disguise. Gaṇeśa was subsequently blessed by the god to be celebrated under the name of Ekadanta which is one of his epithets.*³⁸ (But see below.)

In the Nārāi Sip Pāṅg, Gaṇeśa removed his left tusk, of his own

36. Praphan Sukhonthachāt (ed.), Nārāi Sip Pāṅg..., pp. 41-42.

37. Brahmavaivarta Purāna. Gaṇeśakhaṇḍa. 41.19-35; 42; 43.

38. Śiva Purāna Rudrasaṃhita Kumārakhaṇḍa. 13.15-39; 14.1-37; 16; 18.1-31.

free will, in order to use it as a weapon for the destruction of the demon Phangkhī. However this myth bears some similarity with the myth in the Rāmakīan and in the Nārāi Sip Pāng, of Śiva's using one of the tusks of his elephant-mount as a weapon. The story is as follows:

Once Daśakanṭha (Rāvaṇa) had a great desire for the puṣpaka or the floating chariot, belonging to his brother Kuvera. Daśakanṭha therefore waged war with his brother. Kuvera, unable to withstand the attack of Daśakanṭha, ran to Śiva for help. At that time Śiva was riding on his elephant-mount. He was very infuriated with Daśakanṭha, so much so that he pulled out one of the tusks of his elephant-mount and threw it at Daśakanṭha. Śiva also cursed him, saying that the tusk was to stick in his chest until he died.*³⁹

There is one more South Indian legend which gives another version of the absence of one of the tusks of Gaṇeśa. This legend is interesting in that it has some points, i.e. Gaṇeśa uses his own tusk as weapon, comparable to the Thai myth of the same story.

There was once a giant-demon with the face of an elephant who was unconquerable either by god or by man. Gaṇeśa, being only a demi-god, was thus able to fight with him with some possibility of success. At the first encounter the giant-demon, Gaḥamukha by name, broke off Gaṇeśa's right tusk; but Gaṇeśa caught his broken tusk and hurled it at the giant-demon, who instantly turned into a rat, whereupon Gaṇeśa took him into his service as his vāhana or mount.*⁴⁰

According to the Thai tradition, the demon Phangkhī is no more than the demon Tāraka. Therefore the vanquishing of the demon Phangkhī in the Nārāi Sip Pāng must be regarded as the most famous exploit of Skanda. But the name Phangkhī (as if Sanskrit: Bhaṅgi)

39. Phra Bāt Somdet Phra Phuttha Yōt Fā Čhulā Lōk (King Rama I), Rāmakīan, Vol. I, Bangkok, 1951, pp. 181-183; Praphan Sukhonthachāt (ed) Nārāi Sip Pāng..., p. 67.

40. G. Jouveau-Dubreuil, Archeologie du Sud de l'Inde, Vol. II, Paris, 1914, p. 44.

has no counterpart in Hindu mythology. It is possible that the name Phangkhi, meaning, 'a wave', or 'a torrent', is derived from the story itself. Skanda swallowed up the river first before he could kill the demon. This act might have been an allegory of Skanda's taming the river, which can be said to have taken the side of the demon. But this hypothesis seems rather far-fetched.

EKADANTA

Ekadanta, which is an epithet of Gaṇeśa in Hindu texts, is regarded by the Thais as another kind of elephant and is different from Gaṇeśa. There are various accounts of this kind of elephant in Thai texts. In the Tamrā Nārāi Prathomsin Wā Duai Laksana Chāng, a Thai treatise on elephants, Ekadanta is described as one of Indra's mounts. It seems, from the text, that this kind of elephant has only one tusk from the time of its birth. The single tusk is in its forehead. This tusk can move to either side, but always to the opposite side to that which the elephant lifts its tusk. Ekadanta is a very mighty elephant. A thousand elephants cannot defeat him in fighting. If the shadow of any man is struck by his tusk, that man will die.*⁴¹ The Nārāi Sip Pāng (Royal Press Version) narrates a myth of the taming of the elephant Ekadanta by Viṣṇu in detail. Ekadanta's story is combined with the account of Viṣṇu's revelation of the mantra-prayers for taming elephants to the first four preceptors in elephant lore.

In one of the Tretā Yuga Śiva took up his abode on Kailāsa. On the day when the three gods i.e. Śiva, Viṣṇu and Brahmā assembled there, a Brahma*⁴², who saw Brahmā the Creator on his golden Swan-Mount, grew very jealous of the god. As a result of this jealousy that Brahmā was reborn on earth as an elephant called Ekadanta. It had only one tusk which grew from the middle of its mouth. The elephant was very powerful. When it pierced the shadow or foot-print of any man or any animal with its tusk, these would all die. The elephant was very wicked. It oppressed all the three worlds. Then all the sages sought Śiva's refuge. Śiva ordered Viṣṇu to vanquish the elephant Ekadanta. Viṣṇu, by means of his divine power, manifested himself as possessing six hands. They held six divine weapons. One of them was created from the energy of the sun and the moon and was called Sēmā. another was created from the energy of the god Vāyu and the goddess Ganges, and was called Sōphā. Another was created from the energy of Suparna, and was called Chālak. Another was created from the energy of Sumeru Mountain, and was called Trī (trident).

41. "Tamrā Nārāi Prathom Sin Wā Duai Laksana Chāng", Tamrā Chāng Phāk Thi Nu'ng, Bangkok, 1948, p. 56.

42. See foot-note No. 7 p. 11.

Another was created from the energy of the Eagle Lord named Sī Philālai and was called Phra Khōe. Another was a noose and made of the great Serpent Lord Ananta. Then Viṣṇu came to Earth and roamed about the four directions searching for the elephant Ekadanta. Then the god came to meet four country people. The eldest was called Phōkhawandi. The second eldest, the first sister, was called Sirawang. The two younger ones were called Khotchasāt and Sāstrakam. They earned a living by working in the field there. Viṣṇu asked the four, "Have you seen the elephant Ekadanta coming this way?" The four were very frightened by the sight of the god with six hands holding various kinds of divine weapons. They paid homage to him and told him. "The elephant Ekadanta is on yonder bank of the river. The elephant is very wicked and has oppressed all people. Why do you ask about it?" Viṣṇu answered them. "When Tretā Yuga comes, I, who am Nārāyaṇa, will vanquish all evil animals and bring happiness to the world." When the four heard that they were very glad and asked him to take them as his disciples so that they could perform the rites for elephants with the gods. Viṣṇu allowed the four to go with him. They then took him to the great river and told the god that the river was too wide for them to cross. Viṣṇu, by means of his divine power, created a boat out of a leaf of the Thalāēng Sān or Samāe Sān tree. Viṣṇu and the four crossed the river to the far bank. Then they went into the forest and came to the foot of a mountain where there was a big reservoir of water and a lot of khūn and yō trees. The elephant Ekadanta lived there. The four were very frightened of the elephant and asked the god to protect them from it. Viṣṇu then, by means of his divine power, chanted Viṣṇu prayers three times. He walked three times in a circle in a clockwise direction. Then he struck Phra Khōe into the surface of the earth and set the rays of the Fire God on both the left and right sides of Phra Khōe. The god commanded Phra Mahā Wikkhanēt to come and take his place in the fire on the right side. Then he took off his sacrificial thread, and, by virtue of prayer, turned it into Phra Thēwakam sitting in his place in the left hand fire. Viṣṇu then had the four chant the Phritthi Bāt prayers there. Then the god, by means of his divine power, broke off seven kinds of tree and waved them to and fro in order to summon a god called Mahā Mēsawa and commanded him to drive all the elephants in the forest to that place. All the elephants except for Ekadanta were driven there. Ekadanta had been a Brahma in his previous birth so he was able to resist the power of Mahā Mēsawa. Viṣṇu grew very infuriated. He recited the Viṣṇu prayers three times over the seven kinds of trees and struck them

upon the footprint of Ekadanta three times. The power of the Viṣṇu prayers caused the elephant Ekadanta to suffer from a very bad headache as if its head was breaking into seven pieces. It could not resist the summons of the god. It ran up angrily and started fighting with the god. Viṣṇu with five divine weapons in his hands fought mightily against the elephant Ekadanta. The elephant later on was drained of his energy and, seeing that it was no match for the god, was ready to flee. Thereupon the god Viṣṇu threw his Great Serpent noose at the right foot of the elephant Ekadanta and stopped it from fleeing away. Then the god stuck his trident into the surface of the earth, and by virtue of prayer changed it into the form of a matūm tree. Then the god bound the tail of the Great Serpent to the matūm tree, and with his right hand he plucked off a maliwan plant and changed it into the form of a cord and as a phap chōe. With it he bound the head of the elephant Ekadanta to a khūn tree. Then the god came and stopped under a yō tree. He then summoned the four who were under the shade of that tree, and bestowed the Phritthi Bāt Treatises upon them and made them the prakam, who were tamers of all elephants. They were to teach the science to boys of good family in future. Then Viṣṇu ordered the god Khotchanāk to take the elephant Ekadanta away to be the mount of Indra. But it must be kept in a forest far from reach of all men. Then the god returned to sleep in the Ocean of Milk.*43

It can be seen from the myth narrated above that there is a link between Ekadanta and Śiva, though it is not that Ekadanta is a son of the god. Ekadanta is described as being able to resist Viṣṇu's magical elephant-drive because he was born in the family of Īśvara or Śiva. It is reasonable to say that the section of the Hindu myth of Gaṇeśa which concerns the name Ekadanta is the only part of the myth where the god exhibits his strength instead of his usual benevolence. The Thais kept the general association, i.e., that between the name Ekadanta and the idea of courage and heroism. The specific application of the name, however, was

43. Praphan Sukhonthachāt (ed.), Nārāi Sip Pāng..., pp. 42-45.

not to Gaṇeśa at all. The epithet Ekadanta, instead of belonging to Gaṇeśa, seems to have been used by the Thais as a Proper Name for another noble, courageous elephant only, one of the mounts of Indra.

THEWAKAM

There are many and various Thai iconographical images of Gaṇeśa. Those of Skanda on the contrary are very few in number and lacking in variety. Most of these images of Skanda are similar to the Hindu prototype. Thai illustrations of Gaṇeśa are not exactly similar to those described in Hindu texts. At the same time, however, the differences are not great. The variety found among Thai images of Gaṇeśa is less than that found among the Hindu ones. In the illustrated manuscripts Nos. 32, 33 and 34 kept in the National Library Bangkok, Gaṇeśa is depicted as having either two, or four, or eight hands only. No image of Gaṇeśa with ten or sixteen hands is illustrated in the Manuscripts. The things carried in these hands are the same as those described in the Hindu texts. For example an image of Gaṇeśa with four hands carrying the aṅkuśa, the pāśa or noose, the broken tusk and the modaka can be compared to the Unmatta Uchchiṣṭa Ganapati.*⁴⁴ Gaṇeśa represented by a form with eight hands carrying axes, tusks, the trident, the aṅkuśa and the conch-shell can be compared to the Vīra Vigheśa.*⁴⁵ No image of Gaṇeśa with five faces is found in the manuscripts. There are instead only forms with three faces. One form is called Kōṅchanānēsūan and is regarded as a different god. The other is Vigheśvara with eight hands, and is in a standing posture. There is also an image of Gaṇeśa with two hands, carrying the trident and the lotus. This is called simply Śivaputra. (See illustrations 5,6,7)

It seems that in Thai literature the iconographical images of some gods with an elephant head, such as of Thēwakam (devakarma), have been derived from Gaṇeśa's image. Thewakam is, for the Thais, a god with an elephant head and two hands. Among the things which may be carried in his hands are: the tusk and a stick in one painting (No. 32); the tusk and the modaka in the manuscripts No. 32 and 34; the conch-shell and the modaka in the manuscript No. 33. As Thēwakam is one of many gods to do with elephants, he is

44. T.A. Gopinatha Rao, Elements of Hindu Iconography, Vol. I, Part I, 1914, p. 54.

45. Ibid., p. 52.

illustrated in one painting (No. 33) as carrying a conch-shell in his right hand, and his left hand is holding a post having the same shape as that found on a kōei chāng (a platform for mounting and alighting from elephants). (See illustration 8,9,10)

There are many reasons supporting the idea that Thēwakam is derived from Gaṇeśa. Firstly his iconographical image is not very much different from Gaṇeśa's. He too has an elephant head as well as Gaṇeśa, and sometimes (in manuscripts Nos. 32 and 34) is depicted as having only one tusk, i.e. the left one. This may be seen as different from the description of Gaṇeśa in Hindu mythology. According to the purāṇas, such as the Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa, Gaṇeśa has no left tusk. But Gopinatha Rao says that there is a large number of the sculptures of Gaṇeśa having the left tusk only, which is quite contrary to the descriptions given in the Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa.^{*46} Secondly Thēwakam is also regarded as the god of elephants, as is Gaṇeśa. There is no other Hindu god with an elephant-head who is the god of elephants. Therefore it is likely that Thēwakam is the same as Gaṇeśa in origin. Later on he is described as being a different god from Gaṇeśa.

In the Narāi Sip Pāng there is a myth of Thēwakam being created by Viṣṇu. The summary of the story is given here.

Once Viṣṇu was ordered by Śiva to kill the demon elephant Ekadanta. Viṣṇu came down from heaven to the earth to search for the demon elephant. When the god came to the forest where the elephant lived he performed a sacrifice in order to summon the elephant to come to him. In preparing the sacrificial ground, the god struck Phra Khoe^{*47} into the surface of the earth and arranged the rays of the Fire God on both sides of it. The god commanded Vighneśa^{*48} to come to take his place at the fire on the right side. Then the god took

46. Ibid., p. 61.

47. ? a staff; ? an ankusa.

48. Vighneśa: no conclusive evidence has been found explaining who, or what kind of god, Vighneśa is. It is possible that he is: (A) a god causing success in the performance of any ceremonies because his name "Vighneśa"-Vighna-īśa, meaning "Lord over Obstacles", indicates this; or (B) a god of elephants having characteristics similar to Gaṇeśa because the name "Vighneśa" is also very near to the name "Vighneśvara" applied to Gaṇeśa. He is here invoked to witness a ceremony concerning elephants.

off his sacrificial thread and, by virtue of prayer, turned it by chanting into Thēwakam sitting in his place at the left hand fire.*⁴⁹

One possibility is as follows: the myth mentioned above might have come into being before any painting of the god Thēwakam. Since a description of the god is not given in the myth, painters just took it automatically that his image could not be much different from Gaṇeśa's. But this does not necessarily have to be the case. There is the possibility of a link through an intermediary figure, viz. the god Phra Kan (Karma, see below). If Thēwakam can be definitely identified with Phra Kan, and if Phra Kan is the same as Gaṇeśa, the myth mentioned above might have been invented to go with the paintings or images of Gaṇeśa understood by the Thais to be different gods.

Phra Kan is, in most of the Ayuthya literary works, described as the god of elephants. In the Samutthakhōt Kham Chan it is said that a large number of elephants came to the sacrificial ground presided over by mō thao because Phra Kan was highly eulogized.*⁵⁰

In the Dutsadi Sangwoei Klom Chāng Khrang Krung Kao (Poetical lullaby for newly captured elephants) composed before the reign of King Nārāi of Ayuthya (1656-1698), it is described that offerings such as bananas, sugarcanes, coconuts and palm fruits, are offered to Phra Kan by the party of mahouts when they are leaving the forest with newly captured elephants. They ask the god to console the elephants for their enforced parting from the forest.*⁵¹

In the Lilit Ōngkān Chaeng Nam a god called Phra Kambōdī (as if karmapati) is invited to come to the ceremonial ground of the oath-taking ceremony.*⁵² One of his emblems i.e. the elephant noose (chiakbāt) is to be placed among the offerings at the ceremonial ground too. The mention of his emblem justifies the belief that Phra Kambōdī is the god of elephants, and might be the same as

49. Praphan Sukhonthachāt (ed.), Nārāi Sip Pāng..., p. 44.

50. Samutthakhōt Kham Chan, 8th ed., Bangkok: Khurusapha, 1972, p. 40.

51. "Dutsadi Sangwoei Klom Chāng Khrang Krung Kao," Chumnum Chan..., p.113.

52. "Lilit Ōngkān Chaeng Nam", Lilit Lae Nirāt, Watchari Romyanan, p. 19.

Phra Kan. What is interesting is that Gaṇeśa, who has to be invoked by Hindus to preside over any ceremony, is not mentioned at all in the Lilit Ōṅkān Chaeng Nam. It seems that Gaṇeśa is replaced by Phra Kambōdī in this text. It is possible that Phra Kambōdī was believed to be the same as Gaṇeśa during that time. But in the Lilit Yūan Phāi composed not much later than the Lilit Ōṅkān Chaeng Nam, Phra Kambōdī is not referred to at all. In this text King Bṛomatrailōkanāt is eulogized as an expert in elephant-lore, and his skill is compared to that of Phikkhanēt.*⁵³ But it is not certain whether Phikkhanēt, or Vighneśa, as used here, is the same as the Hindu Gaṇeśa or whether he is the Thai Vighneśvara-Khanthakumāra (i.e. Gaṇeśa and Skanda, believed to be one and the same god). What might be speculated from the Lilit Yūan Phāi text is that Gaṇeśa in his role of god of elephants was known to the Thais, and that Phra Kambōdī was not accepted as having the same importance as Gaṇeśa by the author who consistently shows his thorough knowledge of Hindu mythology in this work. In the Dutsadi Sangwōei Klom Chāng Khōng Kao, ostensibly composed by Khun Thēp Krawī of Sukhothai (the date of the work, however, is not as old as the Sukhothai period, and is certainly later in composition than the Lilit Yūan Phāi), Phra Kan is eulogized together with the Hindu trimūrti, with the goddess Umā, and with the god Vighneśvara-Khanthakumāra.*⁵⁴ No characteristic of Phra Kan is given in this text. Vighneśvara-Khanthakumāra is however, on the contrary, described as a sage who is well versed in Uthenthra (Udena) mantras*⁵⁵ i.e. incantations for the capture of

53. Lilit Yūan Phāi, Bangkok, 1912, p. 92.

54. "Dutsadi Sangwōei Klom Chāng Khōng Kao", Chumnum Chan..., p.109.

55. Udena: Udena or Udaya is regarded by preceptors of elephant-lore as the Lord of elephants. Sometimes in Thai texts on elephants he is known as Udentra and Uchen. Although a Brahman king, the story of his life is found given in great detail, in the Phra Dhanmapadat-thakathā, a Buddhist work. The same story found in the Sanskrit Kathasaritsāgara is very popular among the Hindus. The story of his love for the princess Vāsuladattā (Skt. Vāsavadattā), the daughter of his chief enemy - King Candapajjota - has been dramatised in the Sanskrit play called Ratnāvalī. In Thai literature the story of Udaya is narrated in the text called Uthen (Udena) Kham Chan. According to all these texts Udaya the king of Kosambī, was the most celebrated elephant-tamer in the world.

elephants.*⁵⁶ It seems that by the time of this text, Phra Kan is regarded as a different god from Gaṇeśa, but he is still a god of elephants as Gaṇeśa is. Phra Kan is rarely mentioned in literary works composed during the Ratanakosin period. He is mentioned in only one of several poetical lullabies for newly captured elephants. In Chan Klom Chāng Phlāi (Lullaby Composed in chanda metre for the Newly Captured Male-Elephant) composed by Krommamūn Sī Surēn during the time of King Rama IV, Phra Kan is eulogized as one of the forest protector gods. He is asked to console the newly captured elephant.*⁵⁷ This invocation is very similar to the passage in the Ayuthya period Dutsadī Sangwōei Klom Chāng mentioned above. It is possible that the author was influenced by that work. However, Thēwakam is also mentioned in this Ratanakosin text. In other Ratanakosin texts of the same type Phra Kan disappears completely, and only Thēwakam remains. It seems that he is invoked as one of the gods of elephants which, during this time, are eight in number. These gods are: the Hindu trimūrti and Agni (all four of whom are believed by the Thais to be the creators of elephants); Thēwakam; Vighneśvara-Khanthakumāra; Śivaputra-Vighna-Īśvara and Kōnchanānēsūan. The last two are sometimes omitted. It is noteworthy that all these gods appear in the Nārāi Sip Pāng. Therefore it might be concluded that the later Ratanakosin texts are influenced by the Nārāi Sip Pāng. It seems, from the above passages, that Gaṇeśa as the god of elephants, was first replaced by Phra Kan, and this latter is, in turn, replaced by Thēwakam later on.

56. "Dutsadī Sangwōei Klom Chāng Khōng Kao", Chumnum Chan..., p. 109.

57. Krommamū'n Sī Surēn, "Chan Klom Chāng Phlāi", Chumnum Chan..., p. 124.

It is noteworthy that during the Ayuthya period and the early Ratanakosin period, Gaṇeśa has never been regarded by the Thais as the god who removes obstacles. Neither has he been invoked by any Thai poet of these times to help him in his composition. This might have been caused by the Thai confusion of his identity with Skanda. Gaṇeśa is firstly recognized as the god who provides success (especially in artistic achievements), during the time of King Rama VI of the later Ratanakosin period when the study of Indology by the West was introduced into Thailand by the king himself. The king set up a literary club called Wannakhadi Samoson in the year 1914. The king had a royal seal made for this club. The design cut on this seal is the picture of Gaṇeśa.*⁵⁸ This was the first time when Gaṇeśa was linked with a branch of arts, and not just with elephants. The Fine Arts Department of Thailand followed the practice of King Rama VI. In the year 1947, the Fine Arts Department also took the seal of Gaṇeśa as its official seal. More specific importance is given to the god. He is depicted in the seal with seven jewels which represent the seven branches of the arts. These are sculpture, painting, music, dancing, oratory, architecture and literature.*⁵⁹ Thus the god is regarded as the deity who provides success in these branches of the arts. From this time Gaṇeśa has been regarded by the Thais as the god of arts rather than as the god of elephants. It was in the time of King Rama VI too that Skanda was recognized as a Hindu war god, and as different from Gaṇeśa. But Skanda has not attained the same kind of latter-day prestige from the Thais as has Gaṇeśa.

58. Norwipha Chaiyaphan, Kulasap Kētmaenkit, "Dūang Trā Phra Khanēt", Silpakorn, Vol. 13, No. 5, 1970, pp. 47-48.

59. Ibid., pp. 48-49.

CHAPTER IV

VIṢṆU AND HIS INCARNATION

Viṣṇu is generally called by the name Nārāyaṇa in Thai literature. In Hindu mythology Viṣṇu is called Nārāyaṇa -- 'moving in the water' because he is regarded by his votaries as the all-pervading spirit and is associated with the watery element which spreads everywhere before the creation of the world. Viṣṇu as Nārāyaṇa is thus represented pictorially in human form reposing on the serpent Śeṣa and floating on the waters. Viṣṇu in Thai literature is always connected with the serpent couch. There is reference to this in the earliest Thai Brahmanistic text -- the Lilit Ōṅkān Chaeng Nam.^{*} For the Thais the abode of Viṣṇu is his serpent couch in the Ocean of Milk, not the Vaikunṭha Heaven. It is true that the Vaikunṭha Heaven is also recognised as Viṣṇu's celestial abode, but there is rarely any reference to it in Thai literary works. In Thai literature Viṣṇu is always described as going back to sleep on his serpent couch in the Ocean of Milk after he has destroyed any demon who causes trouble to the world. The Nārāi Sip Pāng is the text which most clearly attests this. In Hindu mythology Viṣṇu returns to his Vaikunṭha Heaven after his destruction of the demons; he assumes the position of reposing on the serpent Śeṣa only during the period of temporary annihilation of the universe.

In Thai literature Viṣṇu has only one aspect, that of being an unconquerable saviour. In the Lilit Ōṅkān Chaeng Nam he is described as the god who is 'beyond Death' (phaco maru'tayū); he is the bravest in the world (kwaen klū'n fā klū'n dīn); he destroys the demons.² It is certain that, for the Thais, Viṣṇu's aspect of the saviour is inextricably linked with his valour and might in destroying the demons. This characteristic

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1. "Lilit Ōṅkān Chaeng Nam", found in Lilit Lae Nirāt, by Watcharī Romyanan, Bangkok, 1974, p. 7.
 2. Ibid.

of the god is consistently referred to in Thai literary works. In the Lilit Yūan Phāi (15th century), King Borommatriloḅkanāt is eulogized as being well-versed in fighting, and he destroys all his enemies as if he were the god Viṣṇu.*³ In the Kamphāk Rāmakīan of the Ayuthya period Viṣṇu is invoked as Nārāyaṇa who has four hands; Garuḁa as his vehicle and great valour in destroying his enemies.*⁴ In Khlong Yō Phra Kīat Phrabāt Somdet Phra Phuttha Lōet lā Naphālai (Eulogy of King Rama II), composed by King Rama III, the poet asks Viṣṇu, who has his couch on the waters, to make King Rama II be as mighty as the god himself.*⁵ In the Chan Sansōen Phra Mahā Manī Ratana Patimākōn, composed in the reign of King Rama IV, the poet praises King Rama IV as a mighty warrior who is very well-versed in the art of fighting; his power is the same as that of Viṣṇu who vanquishes all his enemies.*⁶ In Hindu mythology Viṣṇu's preserving power is manifested to the world in a variety of forms called avatāras or incarnations, in which a portion of his divine essence is embodied in a natural (animal or human) or supernatural form each of which is possessed of supernatural power. All these incarnations become manifested whenever any great calamity has occurred in the world, or the wickedness of any of its inhabitants proves an unbearable nuisance to the gods. The Thai account of Viṣṇu's incarnations retains the same purport as the Hindu, that is, Viṣṇu incarnates himself in order to save the world from calamity. Reference to Viṣṇu's incarnations in Thai literature is as old as the early 15th century. (It is true that the name Rāma, the eighth incarnation of Viṣṇu, appears in earlier documents, such as the inscriptions of Sukhothai,⁷ but the name appears in its own right. No connection with Viṣṇu is mentioned.) The Lilit Ōngkān Chaeng Nam, however,

3. Lilit Yūan Phāi, Bangkok, 1922, p. 29.

4. Kamphāk Rāmakīan, Bangkok, 1918.

5. Phra Bāt Somdet Phra Nangklāo Chāo Yū Hūa (King Rama III), Khlong Yō Phra Kīat Phra Bāt Somdet Phra Phuttha Lōet lā Naphālai, 4th ed.; Bangkok, 1968, p. 51.

6. Somdet Phraphraya Dechadison, "Chan Sansoen Phra Maha Mani Ratana Patimakon Chusuan Chan Butsadi Sangwoci", Bangkok, 1914, p. 5.

7. Inscription No. 1 of "Chāru'k Krung Sukhōthai", Prachun Chāru'k Sayām Phāi Thā 1, edited and translated by G. Coedès, Bangkok: Bangkok Times Press, 1921, p. 53.

is the first Thai text which specifically refers to Viṣṇu's incarnations. The text, in one place, makes a passing reference to Viṣṇu's incarnation as a woman (bhīru-avatāra).⁸ This for certain refers to the embodiment of Viṣṇu in the form of Mohinī, the goddess who, in Hindu mythology, lures the demons away from the amrita, or elixir, obtained from the churned ocean, and thus provides the opportunity for the gods to drink that substance of immortality and power.* Moreover it seems that two other incarnations of Viṣṇu are alluded to in the Lilit Ōngkān Chaeng Nam. The first is his Varāha or Bear incarnation which the god assumes when he saves the sunken Earth. The second is Viṣṇu's Vāmana, or Dwarf incarnation, which he assumes in order to save the gods from the demon Bali. Indirect references to these two incarnations occur in the Lilit Ōngkān Chaeng Nam, in that Viṣṇu is described as having the Terūt in one of his four hands,*¹⁰ and also, as having stepping feet of fire which destroy the demons (asura 158, 159, 160 / 44th-46th chapters).¹¹ Later on in the Ayutthya period the story of Viṣṇu's incarnation as Kṛṣṇa was written in a text called Asinut Khan Chan. But it illustrates only one episode of Kṛṣṇa's life, that is, his battle against the demon king Bāna. It is the Devī Sīn Pān, which was first edited in the reign of King Rama V of the Ratanakosin period, that contains most of the myths dealing with Viṣṇu's incarnations. The incarnations of the god in the Devī Sīn Pān are also ten in number, but they are not the same as the ten Hindu stories. The Parāśurāma and the Rādhā incarnations are missing in the Thai text. They are replaced by the story of an embodiment of Viṣṇu in the form of the goddess Mohinī for the destruction of an asurabrahma, and by the myth of Viṣṇu's destruction of the buffalo demon who in Hindu mythology is destroyed by Devī. Hereunder are the myths of the Māyā, Mūlā, Varāha, Naraśiṃha, Vāmana and Buddha incarnations.

8. "Lilit Ōngkān Chaeng Nam", Lilit Lee Hirāt, p. 7.

9. Mahābhārata I.15,16,17; Harivaṃśa 3.30; Viṣṇu Purāṇa I.9; Bhāgavata VIII, 6-12.

10. "Lilit Ōngkān Chaeng Nam", Lilit Lee Hirāt, p. 7.

11. Ibid.

They are grouped together here because they occur in both Hindu and Thai mythology. The missing Hindu Parāsurāma and Kalki incarnations are discussed together with the Thai Nakimsa and Apsara incarnations in the following chapter. The Kṛṣṇa and Śiṣya incarnations are discussed separately in their own chapters.

FISH INCARNATION

In all the Hindu texts the fish incarnation of Viṣṇu is numbered as the first of the ten important incarnations of the god. In most of the Thai texts it is described as the first also. Thai myths of the fish incarnation of Viṣṇu do not center around the great world flood as most of the Hindu myths do. In the Thai texts Viṣṇu's fish incarnation myths are built around the story of Brahmā's being robbed of the Vedas by two demons. The story in the Vetcherin Press Version of the Nārāi Sīn Pāng goes:

"Once a Brahma¹² was jealous of Brahmā the Creator. He thought, "I am a Brahma also. I also have four faces and eight hands. I will not let anybody be greater than me." Śiva found out the thought of the Brahma by means of his meditation. The god knew that that Brahma would be born as a demon. The jealous Brahma, in course of time, was born as the demon Saṅgha-asura (Conch-Demon). He lived at the bottom of the ocean near the foot of Sumeru Mountain. The demon was waiting for the chance to attack Brahmā the Creator. Later on Brahmā brought the Vedas and the Dharmaśāstra to the abode of Śiva. Brahmā wanted to present them to the god so that the god could teach the world. Brahmā was desirous of taking a bath before he reached Kailāsa. He then placed the sacred texts on the shore of the ocean and went down into the water. When the Conch-Demon saw that he thought, "I will rob Brahmā of the sacred texts, and will throw them into the sea so that Brahmā will not be able to teach the world. No man will worship him any more."¹³ After the demon thought thus he ordered Phī Sū'a Nam* to steal the Vedas of Brahmā. Phī Sū'a Nam did as he was commanded to do. He gave the Vedas to the Conch-Demon who swallowed them into his stomach. When Brahmā came out of the water he could not find the Vedas where he had left them. He was very angry, and his anger made it impossible for him to find out the reason for their having vanished, even when he had meditated very hard. Brahmā therefore went to see Śiva and told him what had happened. Śiva, by means of his meditation, found out that the Vedas had been swallowed by the Conch-Demon. He, therefore, sent Viṣṇu to invite Viṣṇu to come from the Ocean of Milk. When Viṣṇu arrived at Kailāsa Śiva related to him the story and ordered him to destroy the demon and to bring the Vedas back. Viṣṇu then incarnated himself in the form

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12. Brahma: Buddhist, an angel, a class of superior angels whose pleasures are chiefly intellectual or meditative but who are yet mundane, in that they have bodies or forms. (Henry Alabaster, The wheel of the law, London, 1871, p. 13).
13. Phī Sū'a Nam: malevolent spirits, genii or fierce-looking giants who carry iron clubs; they reside in the water and are often blamed in cases of drowning.

of a huge golden plā krāi¹⁴ named Maṭchāwatān (Fish Avatāra). First he killed the Phī Sū'a Man, then he went down to the world of the Conch Demon. When the demon saw the great fish, he did not realize that it was identical with Viṣṇu. He thought that it was just a darling fish, so he came out of his hiding place and fought with the fish. The demon fought mightily against the god, but at last he was defeated. Then the great fish turned back into the form of the god. The god said to the demon, "You are wicked. You are jealous of Brahmā and have robbed him of his Vedas. I will kill you now." After the god had said this he pushed his hand into the mouth of the Conch-Demon and pulled out the Vedas and the Dharmaśāstra. Then he killed the demon. That is why there are the fingerprints of Viṣṇu on the mouth of a conch until today. Then Viṣṇu made a divine announcement. "My fingerprints marked on the mouth of the conch where I pulled out the Vedas and the Dharmaśāstra are auspicious. The stomach of the conch which once contained the sacred texts is also auspicious. Another auspicious element is Brahma who was born as a mighty conch. These three things make conches auspicious, and the regions where their sound can be heard are also very auspicious." Then Viṣṇu took the sacred texts to Kailāsa and presented them to Siva. This caused great joy in heaven.*¹⁵

The story of Brahmā's being robbed of his Vedas occurs in the Mahābhārata. There is also mention of the two demons who are responsible for the robbery. They are Madhu and Kaitabha. But in the Great Epic Viṣṇu does not assume the form of a fish in order to kill the demons and recover the Vedas. He changes himself into a form possessing a horse's head to fulfil his task. Hereunder is the story of the demons Madhu and Kaitabha from the Mahābhārata.

When the world dissolves into the Supreme Soul or Brahma, then darkness spreads over the universe. From that primal darkness arises Viṣṇu. Viṣṇu lays himself down on the waters. He then thinks of the creation of the universe. While engaged in thinking of creation, he recollects his own high attributes. From this activity springs the four-faced Brahmā. He comes to birth within the lotus that springs from the navel of Viṣṇu. Seated on that lotus, Brahmā sees the waters on all sides and then commences to create the universe. In that primal

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14. Plā Krāi: Notopterus chitala, a species of feather-backs with 7 or 9 black spots along the sides of the body.
15. Praphan Sukhonthachāt (ed.), Nārāi Sip Pāng Lae Phong Nai Rū'ang Rāmākīan, 2nd ed., Bangkok, 1968, pp. 6-8.

lotus, two drops of water have been shed by Viṣṇu. Viṣṇu casts his eyes on those two drops of water, and one of them, which looks like a drop of honey, becomes a demon named Madhu. The other drop of water within the lotus is very hard. From it springs the demon Kaitabha. The two demons, possessed of might and armed with maces, begin to rove immediately after their birth within that vast primal lotus. They see Brahmā engaged in creating the four Vedas. The demons suddenly seize them in the very sight of their creator, and quickly dive into the ocean and proceed to its bottom. Seeing the Vedas forcibly taken away from him, Brahmā becomes filled with great grief. He asks Viṣṇu to help him. Viṣṇu then shakes off his slumber and resolves to recover the Vedas for Brahmā. He assumes a form possessing a horse's head and then proceeds to the nether regions. When he has reached there, he applies himself to advanced Yoga and begins to utter Vedic mantras loudly. The sound of his voice fills the nether regions from end to end. This makes the two demons throw the Vedas down in the nether regions, and run towards the spot whence those sounds appear to come. Meanwhile Viṣṇu takes up all the Vedas and returns to where Brahmā is waiting. He gives the Vedas back to Brahmā and resumes his own nature.

When the two demons are not able to find the person from whom those sounds proceed, they quickly come back to where they left the Vedas. But they can find nothing. They therefore rise from the nether regions, and return to where the Primeval Lotus is. They see only Viṣṇu lying on the hood of a snake. They laugh at him and wake him up. Viṣṇu is thus awakened and then prepares to fight against the demons as they wish. In order to gratify Brahmā Viṣṇu slays them both. He then comes to be called by the name Madhusūdana or the slayer of Madhu. Having destroyed the two demons and restored the Vedas to Brahmā, the god disappears there and then and goes to the place he has come from.*16

In the Purāṇas there are many versions of the myth of the robbery of the Vedas. In the Bhāgavata Purāna^{*17} there is a myth of Viṣṇu's incarnating himself in the form of a fish in order to vanquish a demon who steals the Vedas, and to save Manu Vaivasvata from the great flood at the dissolution of the universe. In this myth there is but one demon who robs Brahmā of the Vedas. This is Hayagrīva, or

16. Mahābhārata XII. 348.

17. Bhāgavata Purāna VIII. 24.7-57

the demon with a horse's head. It is noteworthy that this form is the one taken by Viṣṇu in the Mahābhārata when the god vanquishes the demons who rob Brahmā of his Vedas. (See above.) In the Padma Purāna Viṣṇu is described as assuming the form of a fish to kill a demon makara¹⁸ who steals the Vedas. The text narrates that a makara came to the world of Brahmā. He took away the Vedas of Brahmā and entered the great ocean. Brahmā and all the gods went to see Viṣṇu and asked him to recover the Vedas. Viṣṇu assumed the form of a fish similar to a makara and entered the ocean. The god tore the demon into pieces and brought the Vedas back to Brahmā.*¹⁹

In none of the myths of the robbery of the Vedas mentioned above does there exist a conch demon as in the Thai texts. However myths relating to Viṣṇu and a conch are not wanting in Hindu mythology. In the Viṣṇu Purāna there is a myth of how Viṣṇu obtains a conch shell as one of his emblems. The text narrates that Kṛṣṇa and his brother Balarāma are requested by Sāndīpāni, their preceptor, to give him his dead son, who had been drowned by the sea Prabhāsa, as the preceptor's fee. Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma agree to do so. They then take up their arms and march against Prabhāsa. But Prabhāsa denies the charge. He tells them of the real criminal. It is the demon Pañcajanya who lives in the form of a conch shell. The demon is still under that Prabhāsa sea. On hearing this Kṛṣṇa plunges in, and having slain the demon Pañcajanya, takes the conch shell, which had carried the demon's bones, and carries it as his horn. The sound of the conch shell fills the demon hosts with dismay, animates the vigour of the gods, and annihilates unrighteousness. Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma thus recover the boy from the pains of death and restore him to his father. Then Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma return to their city Mathurā.*²⁰

18. makara: a kind of sea-monster sometimes confounded with the crocodile, shark, dolphin.

19. Padma Purāna VI.253.

20. Viṣṇu Purāna V.21.

It cannot be said that the robbery of the Vedas by the demons in the Mahābhārata and the Bhāgavata Purāna, and the acquisition of the conch shell by Viṣṇu in the Viṣṇu Purāna, are the prototype of the Thai myth of the fish incarnation. It is true that the element of robbery existing in the Viṣṇu Purāna, that is, the kidnapping of Śāndīpāni's son by the demon Pañcajana, might have caused the joining of these two myths in Thai literature. But this is unlikely to be the case because there is evidence that the mixing of these two myths had already occurred in Hindu literature. In a Tamil purāṇa called Kāñcīpurāṇam, the myth of Viṣṇu's fish incarnation is a combination of the myth of Viṣṇu's rescuing the Vedas and of Viṣṇu's acquisition of the conch Pañcajana. It is noteworthy that, similar to the Thai myths, the Tamil myths of the fish incarnation are also all built around the story of Viṣṇu's restoring the Vedas to Brāhma, and not around the final flood story. The Kāñcīpurāṇam narrates:

The evil Coṣṭkan stole the Vedas. Sacrifices ceased, and the gods came to Viṣṇu for help. Viṣṇu took the form of a fish and went to Kāñcīpuram, where he installed a liṅga by the side of the Oyster Tank. Having obtained the grace of Śiva, he entered the ocean, killed the demon Coṣṭkan and his companion Pañcacapaṇ, and returned the Vedas to the Brahmīns. From the body of Pañcacapaṇ, he took the valamuni conch.* 21

The similarity between the Thai myth and the Tamil myth in the Kāñcīpurāṇam is very close. Both versions contain two themes, i.e. the stealing and recovery of the Vedas and the defeat of, and appropriation of, a conch by Viṣṇu. However, there is still a slight difference between the two versions. In the Tamil myth, the conch demon Pañcacapaṇ does not instigate the demon Coṣṭkan to rob the Vedas, as does the conch demon in the Thai myth.

21. "Kāñcīpurāṇam", found in Les Legendes Śivaïtes de Kāñcīpuram, by R. Desdiguane, P.T. Pattabiramin, and Jean Fillionat, Institut Francais d'Indologie, Pondichery, 1904, p. 70.

It seems that the conch demon in the Thai version has more importance than its Tamil counterpart. It can be seen that the new role of the Thai conch demon is to fuse the two original Hindu themes more closely together.

The way in which the conch shell has come to be so auspicious is readily explained by its having been, if only for a short time, a receptacle of the Vedas. This is an appropriate reason too, for the conch shell figures in many Brahminical rituals in Thailand ²² (e.g. Phrarāṭchaṅṅithī Chat Hongkhon, and Phithī Saṅphatcharachin*) where a connection with Viṣṇu is hard to imagine.

22. Phra Jēt Soḍet Phra Chula Chonklao Chao Yū Hūa (King Rama V), Phra Saṅphatcharachin Sinsōn Dū'au, Bangkok; Bangkok, 1970, pp. 60, 167. Phrarāṭchaṅṅithī Chat Hongkhon (Skt. chatra maṅgala, literally the "blessing of the royal umbrella,") is the royal ceremony performed to celebrate the Anniversary of the Coronation of a King. Phithī Saṅphatcharachin (Skt. sambacchara-chinda) is a Brahminical rite of changing from the Old to the New Year.

TURTLE INCARNATION

In Hindu mythology, the turtle incarnation of Viṣṇu always forms part of the myth of the churning of the ocean. In this myth Viṣṇu as a turtle supports Mount Mandara, which the gods and the demons are using as a churning-stick to churn the ocean of milk. This incarnation is necessitated by the fact that the gods are in danger of losing their superiority over the demons. They are then told to churn the ocean of milk so that they might procure the amṛta or ambrosia by which they would be made strong and mighty again. In Thai literature, the two myths, i.e. the turtle incarnation myth, and the myth of the churning of the ocean, exist separately. There is no connection between these two myths at all. In the Royal Press Version of the Nārāi Sip Pāng, Viṣṇu incarnates himself as a turtle in order to bring back the Vedas, which have been stolen by the demon Phī Sū'a Naṁ. It is narrated briefly there that when the demon Phī Sū'a Naṁ knows that Brahmā has gone to see Śiva, he robs Brahmā of the Vedas and gives them to the fish demons. When Śiva finds out what has happened he orders Viṣṇu to ascend from the Ocean of Milk. Viṣṇu then changes himself, by means of his divine power, into the form of a golden turtle named Kaccharāwatān (Kaccharāwatān). He follows the demon Phī Sū'a Naṁ and the fish demons to their abode and kills them. But before he dies, the demon Phī Sū'a Naṁ gives the Vedas to the conch demon because he knows that he will be defeated.²³ It is noteworthy that Viṣṇu does not get the Vedas back in this incarnation. It takes him another incarnation after this one to fulfil his mission. It seems that in the Royal Press Version of the Nārāi Sip Pāng, the main theme of the Hindu Viṣṇu's turtle incarnation is lost and its importance is much lessened.

In the Vitharān Press and the Lū'an Rit Versions of the Nārāi Sip Pāng, the turtle incarnation of Viṣṇu has nothing to do with the recovering of the Vedas as is narrated in the Royal Press Version.

23. Prapān Sakhonthachāt (ed.), Nārāi Sip Pāng ..., p. 51.

In these two versions Viṣṇu incarnates himself as a turtle in order to kill the fish demons who want to break Sumeru Mountain down. The story goes as follows:

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The Brahmas* who live on one of the levels of heaven are jealous of Brahmā the Creator. They think, "We too have been Brahmas before. It is not right that Śiva lets this Brahmā ride on the Swan Lord." As soon as they conceive such a thought, they die and fall from heaven and are born as fish demons endowed with monstrous and very ugly bodies. They are so wretched that they want to destroy Sumeru Mountain. They swim to the mountain and press hard against its foot. The gods and sages tell Śiva what has happened. By means of his meditation, the lord finds out the action of the fish demons. He therefore orders Viṣṇu to come to see him. The lord relates the happening to Viṣṇu and orders him to kill the demons. Viṣṇu incarnates himself as a huge golden turtle and kills most of the fish demons except their leader. Before the god kills him, the god turns back into his form with four hands holding divine weapons. He tells the demon, "You are a Brahma who is jealous of Brahmā the Creator. You have been born as a very base demon. Moreover you have caused great danger to the world by trying to pull down Sumeru." Then the god kills the fish demon, who is twenty yojanas long, with his discus. Then the god goes to see Śiva and tells him what he has done, and returns to the Ocean of Milk.*25

No counterpart of Viṣṇu's vanquishing the fish demons like this is found in Hindu mythology. In the Mahābhārata there is mention of the serpent Ananta trying to uproot Mount Mandara so that the gods and demons can use it as a churning-stick. This is a beneficent act, however. It cannot, therefore, be compared to the vicious action of the fish demons in the Thai texts.

It might be said that the main theme of the turtle incarnation of Viṣṇu in Hindu mythology is weak. This can be seen from some texts, such as the Mahābhārata and the Matsya Purāna where a turtle which serves as a base for a churning-stick is mentioned, but it is described as being different from Viṣṇu. So it is not considered

24. See note No. 10.

25. Praphan Subhombhachāt (ed.), Nāwāi Sīp Pāng ..., p. 10; Khun Ying Jā'oen Pit (ed.), Nāwāi Sīp Pāng, Bangkok, 1923, pp. 15-17.

an incarnation at all.*²⁶ The churning theme of this incarnation might have been lost by the time the myth reached Thailand.

There are, however, two forms of the myth of the churning of the ocean in Thai literature. The one that occurs in an early Ayutthya text is very close to the Hindu myth; the other one, in a Ratanakosin work, is only a reminiscence of the myth. In the Kot Monthian Ṭān, the Ayutthya Palatine Law Code, there is mention of a performance called chak nāk dā'damban, the Pulling of the Serpent (as handed down from) Ancient Times. This performance is put on stage during the Inthraṅphisēk ceremony (Inthraṅphisēk: Anointment with the rites of Indra). The Kot Monthian Ṭān describes the scene:

For the royal ceremony of Inthraṅphisēk, a Meru of a height of one sen five wā is built in the middle of an open space. There Indra sits on the Meru. On Kailāsa sits a figure of Śiva and a graceful Unā. On the top of Meru is a figure of Indra. Figures of demons are in the middle of the Meru. Viṣṇu sleeps on the water at the foot of the Meru, and a seven-headed nāga encircles the Meru. Ministers are dressed as 100 demons, and pages represent 100 gods. There are also Vālī, Sugrīva, Mahājambu, and a train of 100 monkeys. They pull the nāga. The demons pull the head, the gods pull the tail, and the monkeys are at the end of the tail. On the fifth day of the ceremony they pull the nāga (according to the tradition of) ancient times. On the sixth day they make three big jars of amṛta.^{*27}

It is quite clear that this performance cannot be other than the representation of the Hindu myth of the churning of the ocean. What is noteworthy is that no turtle incarnation of Viṣṇu is mentioned. The god is depicted as lying on the Ocean of Milk instead. It is clear from the Kot Monthian Ṭān that, in the early Ayutthya period, Viṣṇu's turtle incarnation is already separated from the myth of the churning of the ocean. Another interesting point in this performance is the presence of some chief characters from the Rāmāṅkian, such as Vālī and Sugrīva. This might denote that the myth of the

26. Kaṅkōn Ṭān I. 16.

27. "Kot Monthian Ṭān", Kotānī Tā Sān Dāng, Bangkok, 1977, p. 71.

churning of the ocean is already included in the Rāmakīan extant at that time. It is possible that the scene of the pulling of the nāga in the Kot Northān Bān might have been handed down from the time of the early Ayutthya to the Ratanakosin period and recorded in the Bān edited by King Rama I. The story of the pulling of the nāga in the Rāmakīan goes as follows:

A god named Arjuna has come across a demon named Rāmasura who is engaged in chasing after the goddess Kāñāśālā. Arjuna is angry that Rāmasura has passed him without paying any homage or respect to him, so that the god challenges the demon to fight. But the god is no match for the demon. In the end the demon takes hold of the feet of the god. He strikes the god against Sumeru Mountain and kills him. The blow is so great that it topples the mountain off its balance. When Śiva sees this he is frightened. He asks gods, gandharvas, garudas, nigas, vidyas, demons and Sugrīva to come and pull the mountain back to its former position. The gods and demons wind the serpent round Sumeru and try in vain to pull it upright. In the end Sugrīva volunteers to set it right. He tells the gods and demons to pull the mountain at the same time as he is tickling the navel of the serpent. This plan is carried out and Sumeru is pulled back to its right position as before.* 28

It can be said that the scene of the gods and demons pulling Sumeru Mountain as described above, is the reminiscence of only one part in the myth of the churning of the ocean, that is, the pulling of the mountain. Neither the asṛta nor Viṣṇu's turtle incarnation is mentioned. It is certain that this scene has been influenced by the clak nāḥ chūkdān, which is described in the Kot Northān Bān, rather than by the proper Hindu myth about the same incident.

28. Pira Pāḥ Soudet Pira Phuttha Yōt fā Chulā Lōk (King Rama I), Rāmakīan, Bangkok, 1957, pp. 87-100.

BOAR INCARNATION

Viṣṇu's Boar Incarnation myth in Thai literature is composed of two Hindu myths. It combines the myth of Viṣṇu's saving the sunken earth at the beginning of the Varāha Kalpa with the myth of Brahmā's springing up from the navel of Viṣṇu at the beginning of the Padma Kalpa. In Hindu mythology the Varāha episode appears after the myth of the origin of Brahmā from the primeval lotus. In Thai literature Viṣṇu assumes the form of a bear to save the earth first and then he creates the lotus and Brahmā. Hereunder is the myth from the Hatcherin Press Version of the Nārāi Sip Pāng:

A demon named Hēranta performs a religious ceremony at the foot of Vinatāka Mountain. The demon's ceremony is so sacred that it beats up the throne of Śiva and makes the god uneasy. Śiva therefore comes down from heaven to grant a boon to the demon. From then on the demon becomes very wicked. He oppresses all the sages and gods. Then the demon think of eating up all the creatures on the earth. The demon, therefore, by means of his great power, rolls up the surfaces of the four continents and brings them down to the nether regions. The gods and goddesses are very frightened. They tell Śiva what has happened. Śiva then orders Viṣṇu to incarnate himself to subdue the wicked demon. Viṣṇu then assumes the form of a white tusked boar which has diamond tusks. He is called Sveta-varāha — White Boar. He follows the demon Hēranta to the nether regions and kills him. Then the god lifts up the surfaces of the four continents from the nether regions and makes them resume their normal shape as before. Whereupon the god returns to his Ananta couch on the Ocean of Milk.

At that time a lotus springs up from the navel of Viṣṇu. The lotus opens immediately after it has sprung from the navel of the god. In that open lotus the four-faced Brahmā is seen holding a royal boy in his hand. Viṣṇu then carries the boy to Śiva and tells the god of his vanquishing the demon Hēranta. Viṣṇu also presents the boy to the god Śiva.* 29

29. Praphan Sukhonthachāt (ed.), Nārāi Sip Pāng..., p. 11.

In Hindu mythology there are two myths relating to the boar incarnation of Viṣṇu. One is the myth of the boar's lifting up the earth from the water. The other is the legend of the vanquishing of the demon Hiraṇyākṣa by Viṣṇu in the form of a boar. These two myths appear separately in most of the Hindu texts. However, some texts, such as the Bhāgavata Purāna and the Devībhāgavata Purāna, join these two myths together. In most of the combined myths of the boar incarnation of Viṣṇu, the lifting up of the earth constitutes the main theme and to it is subjoined the slaying of the demon Hiraṇyākṣa. The following passage taken from the Bhāgavata Purāna is given as an example of the combined myth relating to Viṣṇu's boar incarnation.

When Brahmā was engaged in creation the earth had been flooded over with water and had gone down into the abysmal depths. Brahmā did not know what to do. He then decided to leave the matter to Viṣṇu the Lord. While Brahmā was thus musing, a tiny boar of the size of a thumb came out of his nostrils. As Brahmā was looking at the boar it instantly reached the height of the sky and increased in dimensions to the size of an elephant. Brahmā and his sons eulogized the boar. The very next moment after he was praised the boar dived into the deep water. With his keen sense of smell he went in search of the earth, and at last discovered it sunken in the subterraneous regions. The boar lifted up the submerged earth on his tusks from the nether regions in only a short time, and came up from the deep water with ease. Thereafter, in the water, he killed the Lord of the Daityas named Hiraṇyākṣa. That Hiraṇyākṣa had dashed towards him with upraised mace in hand. But the prowess of the god was unbearable. The Lord with his fierce wrath flamed up and, with the ease of one in sport, slew the Daitya king.* 30

It seems from the myth mentioned above that the boar is seen in the nether regions by Hiraṇyākṣa, in the act of carrying the earth off. The demon then claims the earth and challenges Viṣṇu to fight, and in the end is slain by the god. However no relationship between the sunken earth and the demon Hiraṇyākṣa is clearly described in this text. The reason for the demon's desire for the earth is not

30. Bhāgavata Purāna III 13.13-36

mentioned either. It seems that the common element in the two myths, the myth of the lifting up of the earth from the subterranean regions, and that of the slaying of the demon Hiraṇyākṣa, is that Viṣṇu in the form of a boar is the actor of these two deeds. This common element may have made the Hindu authors combine the two myths together. However, a Śaiva text blends one myth with the other on more than one level and thus makes them into one. The Linga Purāna narrates:

Hiraṇyākṣa is the brother of the demon Hiraṇyakaśipu, and the father of the demon Andhaka. The demon Hiraṇyākṣa binds the earth, which has the lustre of a blue lotus, and takes it to the nether regions. He makes the earth his prisoner. Viṣṇu in the form of a boar, with the tip of his curved tusks, kills the demon Hiraṇyākṣa. The god enters the nether regions and brings the earth out of the ocean and seats her on his lap.* 31

There is a very close similarity between the Śaiva myth just mentioned and the Thai myth of Viṣṇu's boar incarnation in that, in both myths, the danger to the earth caused by the demon Hiraṇyākṣa forces Viṣṇu to incarnate himself as a boar to save the earth from the calamity that might happen to it.

It has been already mentioned in the beginning of this chapter that the Lalit Āṅgān Chaeng Nam seems to refer to this boar incarnation of Viṣṇu in that it describes one of the objects held by the god as the Earth. The word used in the text is 'charaṇī' which cannot be translated otherwise. In fact some later poets, such as Phan Sāyprasōet (Hut) and Phrayā Sī Sunthōn Wōhān (Nōi), have imitated this description.* What makes it certain that this passage on Viṣṇu in the Lalit Āṅgān Chaeng Nam refers to Viṣṇu's boar incarnation is that in Hindu mythology the Earth is connected with Viṣṇu in this myth only. There are two plausible sources for the notion of the Earth in one of the four hands of Viṣṇu described in the Lalit Āṅgān Chaeng Nam. One is the Indian sculpture of

31. Linga Purāna I. 94.

32. Phan Sāyprasōet (Hut), "Chan Sansōen Phra Mahā Marī Ratna Patimākṣṇ," Charaṇī Chri..., p. 5; Phrayā Sī Sunthōn Wōhān (Nōi), "Chan Klṇ Phra Sāyā Pōyān," Ibid., p. 100.

Varāha form of Viṣṇu. Most examples of this iconographical form of Viṣṇu are depicted as carrying the goddess Earth (bhūdevī) in one of his arms.*³³ Another plausible source might have been the Caledonian tradition. The Sanskrit inscription from the temple of Ta Kuo in Szechuan, dating from the reign of Suryavarman I (1002-1050 A.D.), describes Viṣṇu as 'the holder of the earth, the club, the conch and the discus (bhūgadāsankhaeniradhrt)*'.³⁴ An inscription in Old Khmer, dating from the middle of the 7th century, lists the earth as one of Viṣṇu's attributes.*³⁵ The symbol of the earth takes on a variety of form in Cambodian art; a sphere, a disk, a segment of a sphere, or a discus that has been hollowed out. In the great majority of cases throughout the Pre-Angkorian period to the end of the Angkorian, the attributes of Viṣṇu are arranged according to the following scheme: the conch in the upper left hand, the wheel or the discus in the upper right hand, the earth in the lower right, and the club in the lower left.*³⁶ A form of Viṣṇu similar to the Cambodian one just described has not yet been found in Thailand. But it is still possible to say that the Thais have been influenced by the Cambodian literary tradition. It is noteworthy that some Thai poets such as Prince Praek Siamlitchinōrot seem to forget or be in doubt about the connection between the Earth and Viṣṇu so that they replace 'clavaṅgī' with 'caṅgī' (a knife, a spear, or a sword).*³⁷

As for the creation of Brahmā from the navel of Viṣṇu, the myth is discussed elsewhere. (See p.30f.). But it should be noted here that the myth of the creation of Brahmā from Viṣṇu's navel is described, in all Thai texts, after the story of Viṣṇu's vanquishing the demon Vīraṃyāsa in order to give the maximum importance to the birth of the prince; Jay Anōnātan who is the ancestor of Rama in the Thai version of Rāmāyana.

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33. T.A. Gopināth Rao, Elements of Hindu Iconography, vol. I, part I, Madras, 1914, pp. 122-143.
 34. Dupont, Les inscriptions grāngkorisme, Ascona, 1955, p. 143.
 35. Ibid.
 36. Stanley J.G. Conner, Hindu Gods of Peninsular Siam, Ascona, 1972, p.31.
 37. See the preceding Paruṅmichitichinōrot, "Chen Klong Chāng Phang," Chumnum Chuan..., 1. 209; cf. Sondet Chao Pā Kromphraya Narisaranuwattiwong, Phraya Anurāṅg Rajānan, Buddhā'k Rū'ang Khwām Rū'angtāng, Vol IV, 1963, p.77.

MAN-LION INCARNATION

The Thai myth of the Man-lion incarnation retains all the main points similar to those in the Hindu texts, especially in the Mahābhārata Purāṇa. The full story of this myth is narrated vividly in the Chitralaria Press Version of the Nārāī Śiṅh Pāṇḍ. The story is here quoted in full in order to show how close it is to the Hindu prototype.

An asura named Hiranta has a thousand heads and a thousand hands on his left and right sides. The wicked Hiranta wants to be the most mighty lord in the three worlds. He therefore performs a religious ceremony at the foot of Sumeru Mountain for a hundred years. He does not obtain a boon from the gods though. The demon then lights a fire and roasts himself on it until the fat issues out of his body. He then uses the fat to light up lamps for the three gods (Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva). The gods are pleased and come down from heaven to where the demon is. Hiranta then asks them for a boon: "May I be greater than all the kings in the whole world. May I not be killed by either arrows or spears, nor swords, nor tridents, nor paces nor by any kind of weapon. May I not die during either the day or the night time. May I not be killed by either gods; or human beings; or garuḍas; or vṛkṣas; or gandharvas; or sages; or vidyādharas; or bhikṣus; or by Indra; or Brahmās; or Yama; or by spirits; or animals with four or with two feet; or by birds, fishes or deer. May I not be killed by animals which have fangs, talons and nails such as crocodiles. May I not die either in the land or out of the town; in the water, or on the dry land. May Your Honours grant this boon to me." Śiva grants the boon he has asked for. Viṣṇu gives Hiranta a mighty race. Then the three gods preach to Hiranta, "Behave righteously when you become the greatest lord in the world. Don't oppress gods and human beings." After that the three gods go back to their abodes.

Hiranta returns to his dwelling place after he has obtained the boons and the race from the gods. From then on he is very proud of himself. He desires to make himself the greatest lord of the three worlds. Hiranta then measures, by means of his power, the depth of the ocean. When he finds that the water can reach his knees only, he realizes that the boon granted by the god has great sacred power. Hiranta then exhibits various kinds of mighty power which

wide gods and sages, vidyācharas and kinnaras, nāgas and garuḍas, and gandharvas frightened of him. They come to pay respect to him every day. Hiranta regards himself as equal to Viṣṇu who is the lord of the whole world. No one dares to antagonize Hiranta at all. Formerly when sages recited the Vedas and the Mantras they would say, "Om namo nārāya nama (sic)" first. Now Hiranta forces them to say "Om namo hiranta nama" first before they recite their prayers. The sages, who are very frightened of Hiranta, teach their disciples to recite their prayers as Hiranta forces them to do. When all the gods and sages see that Hiranta is doing such a wrong, they inform Siva of it. Siva orders Viṣṇu to incarnate himself in order to slay Hiranta. But Viṣṇu must not nullify the boon granted to Hiranta by Siva.

When Viṣṇu receives Siva's order he causes his conch-shell Thakḥhināvat (Dakṣiṇāvarta) to be born as the son of Hiranta. When the boy is grown up his name is proclaimed as Kralātham. Hiranta appoints a whole host of demon sages to teach all branches of knowledge to Kralātham. After the sages have taught the boy all knowledge of the Vedas, they teach him to recite "namo hiranta nama" as the invocation prayer. But the boy just says "namo nārāya nama". The sages forbid the boy to say this. Kralātham will not listen to them. All the sages then take Kralātham to Hiranta and tell the demon of his son's devotion to Viṣṇu. Hiranta speaks to Kralātham, "Show me how you recite your Veda invocation." Kralātham does so. When the boy says the words "Om namo nārāya nama", all the sages close their ears with their hands because they are frightened of Hiranta. They tell Hiranta that it is impossible to teach Kralātham as Hiranta wants them to. Hiranta is very angry. He threatens his son, "You pay homage to the god who is my enemy instead of to me, your father. From now on you must not do this. If you do not follow my words, I will kill you." Kralātham, however, does not listen to his father. This makes Hiranta very angry. The demon lord orders an executioner to throw the boy into the fire. But the boy is not killed. Neither will an elephant kill him. The executioner then tries to kill the boy with all kinds of weapons. But they too fail to hurt Kralātham. The executioner then binds Kralātham and throws him into the midst of the ocean. Kralātham does not drown either. He comes up to stand on the surface of the water instead. When Hiranta knows of the failure of the executioner he decides to kill Kralātham with his own hands. At that moment Kralātham cries out, "It is not right for you to kill me. You did not give me my life. I received my life from Nārāyaṇa." Hiranta speaks, "If you know of any Nārāyaṇa who has given you your life, ask him

to help you. I cannot see any Nārāyaṇa." Kralātham answers his father, "Nārāyaṇa is in every being." This makes Hiranta ask, "Does Nārāyaṇa exist inside this crystal pillar?" When Kralātham affirms to Hiranta the omnipresence of Viṣṇu, the demon is very infuriated. He kicks the pillar of the palace with his left foot and shouts, "If Nārāyaṇa is in this pillar, let him come out and fight with me." Suddenly the roaring laughter of Viṣṇu is heard all over the world. Kralātham tells his father, "It is the voice of Nārāyaṇa. Pay homage to him so that you will be saved from death." Hiranta does not listen to his son and insists on fighting with the god. Viṣṇu, in the form of a man-lion called Narasiha, comes out, by means of his power, from the pillar of the palace. He has the face of a lion and the body of a human being. His feet are like claws. He has a thousand left and right hands of which the nails are very sharp. He does not carry any weapon. When Hiranta sees the man-lion coming out of the pillar, he orders his soldiers to fight against the god. The god kills them all and waits for sunset so that he can kill Hiranta at twilight.

Kralātham, on his part, asks his father not to fight with the god. Hiranta does not follow the advice of his son. He fights against the god instead and in the end is caught in the claws of Narasiha. Narasiha reproaches him, "Formerly you asked Śiva for a boon which made you very powerful in the three worlds. It is a pity you do not follow the righteous ways. So I will kill you now." Hiranta argues with the god, "What wrong have I done? It is you who do not behave righteously. You are interfering in a quarrel between father and son. Why will you kill me?" Viṣṇu answers, "You are free to teach your son whatever you want. But why do you have to challenge me to fight? And, furthermore, you are seriously oppressing all gods and human beings. You regard yourself as greater than me. I am Nārāyaṇa the lord. I incarnate myself now in order to kill you." Then the god, at sunset, holds Hiranta tightly and flies with him to the gate of the city. The god, by means of his power, makes the ocean flood over the city gate. Then the god asks Hiranta, "Is this water or dry land? Is it day or night? Who am I? With what kind of a weapon am I going to kill you?" Hiranta cannot answer any of the questions asked by the god. The god then, at sunset, tears the demon into pieces at the city gate, which is flooded over, and kills him.

Then the god resumes to the form of Viṣṇu with four hands holding a discus, a mace, a conch-shell and a trident. The god appears to Kralātham in this form. Kralātham pays homage to him and worships him with fragrant flowers. Viṣṇu is very pleased and creates a city for him. The god names the city Kyung Thōp Phra Mahā Nakhōn, and names Kralātham Phra Chakrapānirāt. Then Viṣṇu goes to Kailāsa and tells Śiva of his vanquishing of Hiranta. Then Viṣṇu returns to the Ocean of Milk as before.* 38

Even if there are some interpolations in the Thai myth of the man-lion incarnation, the main points, all similar to those in the Hindu text, are retained. The Thai demon Hiranta asks for the boon he got from Śiva as Hiraṇyakaśipu in the Rhāgavata Purāna from Brahmā. The demon wants to be invincible to all kinds of beings in the world. That is, the demon wants to be immortal as the gods are. The conflict between Viṣṇu and Hiraṇyakaśipu in both versions is caused by the demon's son's devotion to Viṣṇu, who the demon takes as his foremost enemy. The most important characteristic of the incarnated man-lion, his sharp teeth, is mentioned in both Thai and Hindu texts. The destined place and time when the demon is to be killed are also explained in both texts. The Thai version does not only contain the main points similar to the Hindu prototype, but its detailed descriptions are also surprisingly close to the Hindu version. There are the details of the boon Hiranta asks from Śiva, the method used by the executioner to kill Kralātham, whose words of praise for the god, which are almost identical with Prahlāda's. Prahlāda's words spoken to his father Hiranta assuring him of Viṣṇu's omnipresence -- "I received my life from Viṣṇu who is in every being." -- seem to echo Prahlāda's praise of Viṣṇu -- "Viṣṇu is the source of my power and is so for all beings, including you."³⁹ The dramatic moments when Hiraṇyakaśipu challenges the god's omnipresence, (and his challenge is at once answered by Viṣṇu who comes out of the pillar) are also very

38. Prajāso Sakonbanchāt (ed.), Hārāi Sip Pāng..., pp. 18-22.

39. Śhṛīmad VII.8.7.

similar in both Thai and Hindu versions.

The points of difference appearing in the Thai myth of the man-lion incarnation are not all mere interpolations. Some incidents can be said to have been influenced by the Indian tradition. For example the story of the origin of Hiranta's son -- Kralātham -- in the conch-shell of Viṣṇu (unknown to the Hindu prototype) might have been influenced by the origin of Bāma's brother in Viṣṇu's mighty weapons, as is narrated in some Indian versions of the Rāmāyana.⁴⁰ The very severe, even appalling, austerities performed by Hiranta are reminiscent of the austerities performed by Hiranyakāśipu. The Māyavata Purāna relates that the demon has his arms uplifted and his eyes turned towards the sky. He remains standing on the tips of his toes. Then a great heat arises after the demon has performed his solemn austerities for a hundred years. The heat disturbs the gods so much that they are forced to tell Brahmā of the demon's action.⁴¹ The heat mentioned in the Hindu text may have been changed to the fire on which Hiranta roasts himself.

Another point of difference in the Thai story is that Hiranta is compared to Viṣṇu once the demon attains full power in the three worlds. In Hindu mythology it is Indra, not Viṣṇu, who is always regarded as the mighty leader of the host of the gods in heaven. If anyone can usurp Indra's throne and can seize his abode, he will be regarded as the most mighty warrior-deity. And Hiranyakāśipu regards himself so. When Hiranyakāśipu is successful in seizing the kingdom of Indra, all the gods and sages have to attend his court, and to do whatever he orders them to do. Indra, in Thai literature, is quite different from the Hindu Indra. The Thai Indra has rather the characteristics of Indra/Sakka of the Buddhist tradition. He is regarded

40. THAI RĀMĀYANA by Kumbhan; Kāśmiri RĀMĀYANA by Divakar Prakash Bhuth.
41. THAI RĀMĀYANA VII, 2, 1-5.

as a beneficent god rather than as a powerful warrior. It seems that in Thai literature the Hindu Indra tends to be replaced by Viṣṇu who is regarded by the Thais as the stronger and more militant deity. Viṣṇu's exploits in each incarnation come to be regarded by the Thais more as the adventures of a warrior than as deeds of a world-saviour (except in the Varāṇa incarnation). This is why Hiruṅka, who takes himself as being equal to Viṣṇu, in the Hirūṅka Pāṅg, can force all gods and sages to do whatever he wants as if he is, in Hindu terms, Indra, the lord of the gods.

DWARF INCARNATION

At the beginning of this chapter (p.126) it was said that the Lilit Ōṅkān Cheeng Nam might refer to the Vāmana incarnation in that it describes Viṣṇu as having 'thathakkhanicharacāi' (or thath⁴²ai-caracāya), which might be rendered as 'kicking feet of fire'. There is difficulty, however, in applying this description as a reference to any special episode in Viṣṇu myth. The agni, or fire element, in the compound links the description here with the Vāmana myth. This is because in all Hindu texts on the Vāmana myth, Viṣṇu is said to be born as Āditya, the son of Marīcī and Aditi, and thus he is connected with fire, especially fire in the sky, i.e. the sun*.⁴³ It is possible that at the time of the composition of the Lilit Ōṅkān Cheeng Nam Viṣṇu was held by the Thais, or by the author of the text, to be connected with the sun god. But since nowhere in Thailand the cult of the sun god, or Viṣṇu as the sun god, is referred to, therefore this speculation remains very uncertain. Moreover, another problem is still extant. Nowhere in Hindu mythology is Viṣṇu in the Vāmana form described as kicking, or as killing any demon with his feet. He only strides two, or three, steps, to cover the earth in order to regain it from the demon Bali. The argument can also be advanced that the description in the Lilit Ōṅkān Cheeng Nam is for Brahmā who defeats the serpent demon Kāliya by beating its hood with its feet.*⁴⁴ But this can be rejected because

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42. 'thath' is a reduplication of a Cambodian word ទាត់ or តាត់ (viz. téak or thak) meaning 'knock, brush or kick with the foot'.
43. In the early Vedic times the Ādityas were six in number and Viṣṇu was not one of them. In later times the number was increased to twelve. Viṣṇu was included. It is likely that this was caused by certain Vedic characteristics of Viṣṇu resembling those of a sun god, whose three 'steps' are his rising, noon, and setting.
44. Marīcaṅśa 47-48; Bhāgavata X.10.

nowhere in Hindu mythology is Kṛṣṇa described as possessing feet of fire.

The Thai myth of the Vāmana incarnation contains the same theme as the Hindu myth, i.e. vast distances are traversed by the three strides of Viṣṇu. Hindu texts go so far as to say that the whole universe is traversed by these three strides (or in some texts, by two only), but in Thai literature this theme is not stated explicitly as it is in the Hindu texts. The Thai myth of Viṣṇu's Vāmana incarnation tends to show the god as a saviour rather than illustrate his encompassing the whole universe. In Hindu mythology Viṣṇu saves the gods only. He helps them from being robbed of their lands by the demons, and helps to make the gods superior to the demons, whereas, in the Thai texts, Viṣṇu's three strides save the whole of mankind. Hereunder is the story of Viṣṇu's Vāmana incarnation in the Royal Press Version of the Nārāi Sip Pāng. It is noteworthy that the word 'vāmana' (a dwarf) is rarely used in the Thai texts. 'Dvija' (a brahmin) and 'khujja' (humpbacked) are used in most of the Thai texts. But in the Thai texts Viṣṇu in the form of a brahmin is more emphasized than Viṣṇu in the form of a dwarf.

A demon named Tāwan obtains a three-yojana-wide forest as a boon from Siva. The demon Tāwan lays it out as a pleasure garden. If any being loses its way into this garden, he eats it. When Siva gets to know this he orders Viṣṇu to get rid of the demon. Viṣṇu therefore incarnates himself as a very handsome brahmin. He makes himself look attractive to all creatures, men, garuḍas and demons. Then Viṣṇu comes to the land of the demon Tāwan. When the demon sees the handsome brahmin, the demon is very attracted to him. The demon asks the brahmin why he has come there. The brahmin tells the demon that he has been deprived of his abode and so asks the demon to give him some land. The brahmin says, "I do not want much land. I only want a piece of land of three strides in length." The demon Tāwan does not realize the truth. He believes that that brahmin really wants to stay there, so he agrees to give him as much land as he was asked for.

Other than King Rama VI, in Lilit Nārāi Sīr Pāng, gives another reason for the Thai deviation from the Hindu myth of the dwarf incarnation. The King seems to dislike the Thai version very much. He says, "Our version is very inferior. We have got only the main story from the Hindus, and have made up a story of our own around it, but still our inferior thought."⁴⁶ King Rama VI's reason for disliking the Thai authors so much is that the demon, in the Thai texts, seems to be eating animals only. King Rama VI seems to have believed that this is not an appropriate characteristic for a demon who aspires to be a king. King Rama VI probably preferred the noble attitude of the demon Bali, in the Purānas, who desires to rule over the whole world, and even over the regions of the gods. But it seems that King Rama VI has failed to notice one important point in Thai literature, i.e. a demon, whether he be commoner or king, is always described as being fond of eating animals.⁴⁷

Another reason given by King Rama VI in the Lilit Nārāi Sīr Pāng for showing his disapproval of the Thai version of the Vānana incarnation is that the morality embodied in the story by the Thai authors is low. This is because the authors allow the demon Tāwan to be charmed and attracted to the handsome brahmin and thus, inevitably, to be deceived by him. The Thai authors' standard of morality being so low, in the opinion of King Rama VI, can best be explained in two ways. Firstly, the Thai authors might have missed, or misunderstood, the significance of Hindu hospitality towards a guest, especially a brahmin guest. A passage from the story of the Vānana incarnation described in the Bhāgavata Purāna is here quoted in order to illustrate the concept of a good host as practised by the demon Bali.

As the Bhṛguṣ are performing a sacrifice for Bali on the banks of the Narmadā river, a dwarf visits Bali in Indra's heaven. Bali, who is acquainted with his duty,

46. Ebec ๓๓๓ So dek Phra Kṛngul Klee Choo Yū Kṛa (King Rama VI), Lilit Nārāi Sīr Pāng, Bangkok, 1966, p. 405.

47. Vānana, or Vānana, of the Rāmāyaṇa is an exception. He was intentionally created by Siva to be a good demon. See King Rama I, Rāmāyaṇa, p. 71.

placed upon his own head the auspicious water with which the bridegroom's feet have been washed. The demon says, "Welcome to you, O Brahmin! What can we do for you? Ask of me, student, whatever you desire. Son of a Brahmin, I conclude you are a suppliant; ask a cow, pure gold, an embellished house, food and drink, a bridegroom's daughter, flourishing villages, horses, elephants, and carriages." The dwarf answers with some semblance of moderation, as follows, "I ask from you a small portion of ground, three paces measured step by step. I desire no more from you. A wise man incurs no sin, when he asks only as much as he needs." The King, though astonished at the smallness of the request, takes a vessel of water in his hand, and is about to confirm the gift, when Sudra, his preceptor, seeing through Vignu's device, tries to dissuade his pupil. In a long speech Sudra seeks to show that, rather than be left homeless, it would be better for Bali to break his word. But the demon persists in fulfilling his promise, even though cursed by his preceptor for doing so. With two steps Vignu strides over the universe; there is nowhere for him to take a third. The demon Bali offers his head as a place for Vignu's foot. Later on the demon goes to stay in the Pātāla world.*⁴⁸

It must have been difficult for the Thai authors, who were not accustomed to the Hindu principle of hospitality towards a brahmin, to understand the demon's behaviour. Therefore they appear to have changed this to a merely superficial attraction as described in the Thai text.

Secondly, there is a strange concept in Thai literature that a young brahmin is always described as both an attractive yet also a pitiful figure. This may seem to contradict the above passage, but it is not so because, in Thai literature, it is the handsome appearance of a bridegroom that attracts people. A brahmin, even one who has just arrived from a distant place, is not regarded by the Thais to be just a suppliant who can beg for any kind of alms. In most Thai lakhon, which have existed from the Ayuthya period, whenever a hero or a heroine wants to escape for a while from some menacing

48. Maṅgalavata VIII. 18.20-22; 19.21-25; 20.8-13; 22.30-34; 22.1-5.

danger, he or she will disguise himself or herself as a young brahmin boy, and by so doing, he or she will obtain pity and protection from people who are afraid of him or her. This concept continued until the Ratanakosin period. For example, from the Ayutthya period:- In a khān called Manī Phichai, Indra transforms his daughter, Yō Phraklin, into the form of a brahmin boy after he had rescued her from being killed by her mother-in-law. Indra thinks that this is the best thing for her so that she will be safe. Later on Yō Phraklin's mother-in-law is bitten by a poisonous snake and loses consciousness. Yō Phraklin, as a brahmin, volunteers to cure her mother-in-law. She is called to the palace. When Phra Manī Phichai, her husband, sees her, he is attracted by her appearance as a brahmin, and the prince thinks that the disguised brahmin may be none other than his wife Yō Phraklin.* And from the Ratanakosin period:- Nitbān Khān called Phra Aphaimani, a famous poetical tale, composed by Sunthōn Phū (1706-1855), the most renowned poet of this genre, relates that Sī Swan, the brother of Phra Aphaimani, disguises himself as a brahmin when he is driven out of his kingdom with Phra Aphaimani. It happens as follows.

First Sī Swan wanders along with Phra Aphaimani and they come to meet three young brahmins together. Later on Phra Aphaimani is kidnapped by the Phī Sū'a Saai, and so Sī Swan is left alone with the three young brahmins. While searching for Phra Aphaimani, Sī Swan and the three brahmins come to a city called Romachak. Before they enter the city, the three brahmins advise Sī Swan to disguise himself as a brahmin too. Sī Swan does so, and as a young brahmin, he attracts all the people of the Romachak city and gains a lot of pity and attention. In the end the princess of that city hears of him and arranges to see him at her palace. They become lovers and in the end are married to each other.*⁵⁰

This strange concept in Thai literature might, unconsciously, have been interwoven into the Thai version of Viṣṇu's Vāmana incarnation.

49. Phra Bāt Somdet Phra Phuttha Lōet Lā Naphālai (King Rama II), "Manī Phichai", Bot Lakhōn Nōk, Bangkok, 1922, pp. 339-345.

50. Sunthōn Phū, Phra Aphai Mani, Bangkok: Sinlapa Bannakhan, 1959, pp. 23-128

This explanation is, at the very least, as good as that of King Rama VI, who attributed the deviation from the Hindu myth of the Vāmana incarnation simply to low moral standards among Thai authors.

One similarity between the Hindu and the Thai Vāmana incarnation myth is that the demon is not killed by Viṣṇu. The demon is driven out from his place and goes to stay elsewhere. In the case of the Hindu version, he goes to a subterranean realm. In the Nārāi Sip Pāng the demon goes to stay at a city called Māyan which was formerly created by Indra for the god's own son. Later on in the Thai text the demon is killed by Indra for committing adultery with the god's concubine. It can be said that this part of the story in the Nārāi Sip Pāng is influenced by an episode from the Rāmāyana. It is related in the fourth chapter or the Kīṣkīṇḍha Kaṇḍa of the Rāmāyana that, while Hanumān and Angada are searching for Sītā along the Vindhya Mountains, they come to a place called Vṛkṣavila. This is the garden of a Dānava. It is a very beautiful garden which was formerly created by a demon named Maya. Later on the Demon Maya dares to commit adultery with the goddess Hemā. Indra is very angry and therefore kills the demon.*⁵¹ In the Nārāi Sip Pāng the name of the demon Maya is changed to the name of the city Māyan. The adultery between the demon and the goddess which is the cause of the slaughter of the demon by Indra is retained in the Nārāi Sip Pāng. What is different is that the demon Maya in the Rāmāyana is confused by the Thais to be the same as Bali and thus he is identified with the demon Tāwan in the Nārāi Sip Pāng.

As for the name of the demon Tāwan instead of Bali in the Thai texts this is still a puzzle. In Thai the word tāwan can be used to give the meaning of 'the sun' (literally 'the eye of the day', cf also Malay-Indonesian 'mata-hari' with the same meaning). It might be said that the demon is the representative of a sun god, and so this

51. Rāmāyana IV 50-51.

myth might be the story of the rivalry between Viṣṇu and a sun god. But this hypothesis seems to be too far-fetched. In fact, in certain interpretations*⁵² Viṣṇu himself, also takes the role of a sun god, whose three steps represent his rising, noon, and setting. However, the name Bali is not completely absent in Thailand. It exists in Thai astrology as a guardian spirit of the land. King Rama VI identifies this Krung Phālī, or King Bali, with the demon Bali of Hindu mythology. The king explains that an astrologer invokes Bali as one of the guardian spirits of the land because Bali had ruled the world before, and had been granted a boon by Viṣṇu to come back and rule the world again in future. So Bali is the real owner of the land.*⁵³ In a book on astrology called Phrommachāt Chabap Lūang,⁵⁴ the name Bali is also connected with the land. But here it is the name of a city which is ruled by King Thotsarāt (as if Dasarāja), whose nine sons are the guardian spirits of the world.*⁵⁴ It is possible that the demon Bali as ruler of the whole world, as he is in Viṣṇu's Vāmana incarnation myth, was once known to the Thais through the Cambodians. The Cambodians too regard Bali (Kroñ Pāli) as the creator, or the proprietor, of the world. There are abundant Cambodian myths on this subject.*⁵⁵ Like Bali in Hindu mythology, the Cambodian Kroñ Pāli does not later on own the world he created. In Hindu texts Bali has to give the whole world to Viṣṇu, in the form of Vāmana, who covers it with his three strides. In Cambodian myth

52. V. P. O'Flaherty, Hindu Myths, 1975, p. 170.

53. King Rama VI, Lilit Nārāi Sip Pāng, pp. 429-430.

54. Uralin Wrigchānana (ed.), Phrommachāt Chabap Lūang, Bangkok, 1960, pp. 222-224.

There are two myths about Bali in the Phrommachāt Chabap Lūang: the one that has been mentioned above, and another one which has a great deal of similarity to a Bali myth related in the Lilit Nārāi Sip Pāng of King Rama VI. Of these two, the composition of the Lilit Nārāi Sip Pāng predates the compilation of the Phrommachāt Chabap Lūang. It is clear that King Rama VI has relied upon Hindu sources for this Lilit Nārāi Sip Pāng version.

55. H. Paréc-Maspero, "Kroñ Pāli et rites de la maison", Anthropos, Vol. LVI, 1961, pp. 596, 699.

it is Buddha who is described as taking, by the same name as Vishnu, the world from the demon Kṛōṅ Pāli. Though Buddha appears in the Cambodian myth in the place of Vishnu, the Hindu influence in the Cambodian story is still clearly seen. But the Cambodians insert an interpretation in this myth. It is related in the Cambodian myth that before Kṛōṅ Pāli agrees to give the whole world to Buddha, he asks the latter to let him have offerings given at the beginning of any ceremony. Kṛōṅ Pāli is granted what he requests. That is why Kṛōṅ Pāli is invoked by the Cambodians, not just at the beginning of the construction of any building because he is the guardian spirit of the land (as is done by the Thais), but also at the beginning of every ceremony about to be performed, such as the making of an image of Buddha, the cutting of a baby's hair, and weddings.*⁵⁶ It seems that Kṛōṅ Pāli of the Cambodians may be confused with the demon Mūlākharī of the Thais, Śiva. In the Royal Press Version of the Nārāi Sip Pāng the demon Mūlākharī is described as being born at the same time as the world. This records well with one of the Cambodian myths about Kṛōṅ Pāli. It is also narrated in the Nārāi Sip Pāng that after Śiva had killed the demon Mūlākharī, the god curses him to become a Kṛōṅ Pāli who is to roam about in the world eating offerings made at the beginning of every suspicious ceremony. (See full story p. 62). In the case of Bali's name in Thailand became related more to astrology and geomantic rites to do with land, the final stage is that Bali is linked exclusively with astrology. This might have caused the need for a new name for the demon who is driven out from his land by Vishnu.

56 J. I. J., p. 999, 904.

Viṣṇu's Buddha incarnation myth in Thai literature is a Śaiva one. This is, essentially, so because it is combined with the myth of Śiva's destruction of the demon Tripura. This myth in the Nārāi Sīg Pāng, together with its prototype in the Śaiva purāṇas, has already been discussed in the chapter on Śiva. (See p. 69f). A remark is called for here, however, about the absence of Buddha in this incarnation. In the Thai text the subject of Buddha, and of his doctrine's being a heretical one, is not touched on. Buddha is replaced by just a Buddhist monk (Siā, or Siā; Sanskrit: Śramaṇa). And his preaching, which turns Tripura into Śiva's devotee to become a Buddhist convert, does not appear in the Thai text either. In the Nārāi Sīg Pāng (Watcharin Pans Version) Tripura is described as being impressed by the solemnity of the monk and therefore gives his Śivaliṅga as alms to the monk.*⁵⁷ This myth is intended by the Thai authors as Tripura's act of renouncing his faith in Śiva, and so his destruction by the god is justified. The reason why the main point of this myth, in Thai literary works, is shifted from Viṣṇu's Buddha incarnation to Śiva's destruction of Tripura can probably be explained by the strong hold that Buddhism had over the people of this country long before the importing of this myth. On the other hand, it is still possible, of course, that the myth in the present form, i.e. Śiva's destruction of Tripura mixed with Viṣṇu's incarnation as Buddha, has been the only form known to the Thais all along.

It is noteworthy that while the myth of Viṣṇu's Buddha or Śramaṇa incarnation is very Śaiva, the Nārāi Sīg Pāng is very Vaiṣṇava. Besides this, it is very odd that this Nārāi Sīg Pāng remains similar to the Hindu prototype, while all the other myths are either altered or omitted. In the case of the Fish and the Turtle incarnation of Viṣṇu, this Nārāi Sīg Pāng has no important part to play in Thai literature. Yet its complete content is still retained, while those of the fish and the turtle myths are mostly forgotten. But there is, interestingly enough,

57. Prajñā Sādhanaśāstra (ed.), Nārāi Sīg Pāng, . . . , p. 24.

an attempt to link this myth with the origin of the present capital of Thailand. This appears at the end of the myth when Viṣṇu creates a city called Krung Thēy, *Kṛuṅg Thēy* and crowns the son of the demon Heranta as the first king of that city.* ⁵⁸ It is possible that this part of the Narasiṅha myth has been influenced by the story of the founding of Ayutthya and the race of Rāma related in Viṣṇu's Varāha incarnation myth. In the Varāha myth the first ancestor of Rāma, i.e. Kōṭīśa, is described as having close connection with Viṣṇu, in that he is born in the lotus arising from the navel of Viṣṇu.* ⁵⁹ Moreover, his capital Ayutthya is also founded through Śiva's grace ⁶⁰ so that it can claim a divine origin too. The author of the Watcharin Press Version of the Nārāi Sip Pāng might have been impressed by this myth and might have taken Rāma's capital Ayutthya to be the same as Thailand's capital of the same name. Then he might have wanted to claim a divine origin, especially to Viṣṇu and his grace, for Krung Thēy too. The connection between Viṣṇu and the demon Heranta's son, Kralāthas (i.e. Kralāthas, is created from Viṣṇu's conch shell), which is already extant in the Narasiṅha myth, might have made the author of the Watcharin Press Version of the Nārāi Sip Pāng interpolate the account of the founding of Krung Thēy by the god Viṣṇu into this myth. But this interpolation in the Narasiṅha myth is nowhere referred to or discussed in Thailand. Therefore it must be said that it is the idea of the author of the Watcharin Press Version of the Nārāi Sip Pāng alone.

58. Ibid., 1. 22.

59. Ibid., 11. 11, 43.

60. Ibid.

CHAPTER V

MORE AVATĀRAS OF VIṢṆU PARASURĀMA INCARNATION

Parasurāma is nowhere in Thai literature described as an incarnation of Viṣṇu. It is possible that the main purport of this incarnation as described in Hindu mythology, cannot be accepted by the Thais. In the Hindu texts the Parasurāma incarnation is for the purpose of exterminating the Kṣatriya caste. He is said to have cleared the earth of the Kṣatriyas twenty times, and to have given the earth to Brahmins. The Indian story of the struggle for supremacy between the Kṣatriyas and the Brahmins, which ends with the great defeat of the Kṣatriyas, would scarcely have been conceivable in Thai terms. The Brahmins in Thailand, such as they are (see p.32of), have never been powerful at all. It has always been the Kṣatriyas, i.e. the king and the nobility, who were more powerful and superior to the Thai Brahmins. However, the story of Parasurāma is not wanting in Thai literature. There are two episodes of the Hindu Parasurāma myth related in the Thai Rāmākīan: the story of his fighting with Rāma; and the story of his conflict with Arjuna Kartavīrya.

The account of Parasurāma's fighting with Rāma in the Thai Rāmākīan is quite similar to the narration in Vālmīki's Rāmāyana. In the Rāmākīan the story is shorter, and there is no mention of the rivalry between Śiva's followers and Viṣṇu's worshippers as in the Rāmāyana. The Rāmākīan relates:

When Rāma is travelling with his bride Sītā on his way from Mithilā to Ayuthya he encounters Rāmasūn (as if Rāmasūra) who is roaming for pleasure in the forest. Rāmasūn, who is normally described as an aggressive demon, challenges Rāma to fight with him. Rāma accepts his challenge, and a fight follows. In the end Rāmasūn surrenders

because he cannot defeat Rāma, and he also sees the true form of Rāma, i.e. his god figure with four arms. Rāmasūn then presents to Rāma his bow, which was given by Śiva to his grandfather a long time ago.*¹

In Valmiki's Rāmāyana Parāśurāma, who has heard of Rāma's prowess in breaking Śiva's bow at King Janaka's court, comes to meet Daśaratha and Rāma on their way back to Ayuthya. Parāśurāma does not accept Rāma's power wholeheartedly because Rāma can subdue only Śiva's bow, which is generally regarded by the gods to be inferior to Viṣṇu's bow. Parāśurāma then narrates to Rāma a long story of the rivalry between Śiva and Viṣṇu in the old days. Rāma now has to bend Viṣṇu's bow which Parāśurāma has brought with him. This bow of Viṣṇu's was given to his grandfather by the god himself. Rāma bends the bow, and fits an arrow to the string. Rāma then asks for a target for his arrow. He lets Parāśurāma choose between Parāśurāma's aerial abodes which are very splendid and Parāśurāma's superhuman capacity of movement, which he has accumulated after practising long penance. By then Parāśurāma has recognized Rāma as an incarnation of Viṣṇu and offers his abodes to Rāma to shoot. He then presents to Rāma Viṣṇu's bow, which Rāma makes over into the hand of the god Varuṇa.*²

The Rāmākīan does not mention Viṣṇu's bow as possessed by Parāśurāma at all. On the contrary, the bow belonging to Rāmasūn in the Thai text is described as having been handed down in his family by Śiva. This accords well with the whole narration of the Rāmākīan where divine weapons are described as being created by Śiva. The account of rivalry between Śiva's followers and Viṣṇu's never occurs in the Rāmākīan where Śiva is described as the supreme god throughout.

1. Phra Pāt Somdet Phra Phuttha Yōt Fa Chulā Lōk (King Rama I), Rāmākīan, Vol. I, 1951, pp. 421-429.
2. Rāmāyana II.75.

Parasurāma's conflict with Arjuna Kartavīrya in the Rāmakīan is very different from the Hindu story. In the Rāmakīan, it is confused with the myth of the conflict between the rain god Parjanya and Rāmasūn (or the demon with the axe). It is related in the Rāmakīan that once, when all the gods and the goddesses were dancing in the festival of the rainy season, the demon Rāmasūn behaved as a trouble-maker. He pursued the goddesses and caused tumultuous disorder. Then he turned to pursue a goddess called Maṇimākhala alone. While he was so doing, a god named Qrachun (Arjuna) came along that way. Rāmasūn, who was quarrelsome, challenged Qrachun to single combat. Qrachun, who boasted that he had once bound Rāvaṇa himself, accepted Rāmasūn's challenge. But he was no match for Rāmasūn. The demon succeeded in the end in taking hold of Qrachun's feet and smashing him into the Meru Mountain. The mountain was tipped off its balance and Qrachun was killed.*³

Qrachun

In Hindu mythology Arjuna Kartavīrya is not a god, but a king of the Haihaya tribe. He oppresses both men and gods so that the gods appeal to Viṣṇu for refuge. Viṣṇu then incarnates himself as Parasurāma in order to kill him. The account of Parasurāma's killing Arjuna Kartavīrya related in the Bhāgavata Purāna is as follows:

Kartavīrya visits the hermitage of Jamadagni, Parasurāma's father, when Parasurāma is absent. The sage's wife receives the king well with all respect. But Kartavīrya makes an ill return for her hospitality. He carries off with him the calf of the milch cow of the sacred oblation, and casts down the tall trees of the hermitage. When Parasurāma returns to his abode his father tells him what has happened. He is very angry. He takes up his bow and goes to fight with Kartavīrya. Parasurāma cuts off the thousand arms of Kartavīrya and kills him with sharp arrows.*⁴

3. King Rama I, Rāmakīan, Vol. I, pp. 97-101.

4. Bhāgavata Purāna IX. 15.22-41.

The link between Arjuna Kartavīrya in the Hindu myth and Qrachun in the Thai Rāmakīan is Qrachun's reference to his fight with Rāvāṇa. In the Rāmakīan when Qrachun first meets Rāmsūn he boasts that he once captured and bound Rāvāṇa. The episode of this fight in the Rāmakīan is as follows:

While Rāvāṇa is staying with the sage Goputra as the latter's pupil, Qrachun, whose abode is the peak of the Khiri Chakrawān Mountain, has quarrelled with him. Qrachun is angry with Rāvāṇa who has entered his beautiful garden without asking permission to do so. They fight and Qrachun fires the arrows of snakes at Rāvāṇa and thus binds him. He then carries the defeated off as prisoner and flies around exhibiting his victim before the world. But Qrachun releases him later on at the request of Goputra.*

This myth in the Rāmakīan accords well with the story of the same subject in the Vālmīki Rāmāyana. In the Uttara Kāṇḍa of the Rāmāyana Rāvāṇa has his quarrel with Arjuna Kartavīrya at the Nerabuda River. Rāvāṇa is bound by Arjuna and carried to Mahismati, Arjuna's capital. Pulastya, Rāvāṇa's father, hears from the gods of the misfortune of Rāvāṇa. He goes to Mahismati and requests Arjuna to release Rāvāṇa. Arjuna does so and they become friends.*⁵

The episode in the Rāmakīan, in which Qrachun flies with the captured Rāvāṇa and exhibits him before the world, seems to have been influenced by the story of the fight between Rāvāṇa and Vālī in the Uttara Kāṇḍa of the Rāmāyana. It is related there that Rāvāṇa disturbs Vālī who is performing his Sandhya rite at the Dakṣiṇa ocean. Vālī carries away Rāvāṇa under his arm by force and flies around the world exhibiting him.*⁷

5. King Rama I, Rāmakīan, Vol. I pp. 66-70.

6. Rāmāyana VII. 37.

7. Ibid., VII. 39.

In Thai literature Arjuna Kartavīrya is confused with a god called Parjanya. As a Vedic deity, Parjanya is the rain-god or rain personified. In later times he is regarded as the guardian deity of clouds and rain, and the name is applied to Indra. The Thais call this god Prachun (spelling - pra-juna which is derived from Pali Pajjuna). The second element -- juna -- of the word causes confusion to the Thais and thus Prajuna is confused with Arjuna. The reason why this Arjuna is thought to be the same as Parjanya, and not the hero from the Mahābhārata, is that Paraśurāma is in turn confused, in Thai literature, with a demon called Rāmasūn who is connected with the rainy season.

The word Paraśurāma hardly appears in Thai literature. It is mostly replaced by the word Rāmasūn, the name of the thunder god. In Thai literature Rāmasūn is always mentioned together with the goddess Maṇimekhala, the goddess of lightning. Rāmasūn always holds an axe which he throws at the jewel of the goddess. The goddess always plays with her jewel in the sky in the rainy season, and the flashing of her jewel is thought by the Thais to be the same as lightning. In the same way, the crashing of Rāmasūn's axe striking the clouds is thought to be thunder. Phrayā Anumān Rājadhon and N. Sylvain Levi have the idea that the cult of Rāmasūn as the demon of thunder, and Maṇimekhala as the goddess of lightning, is Thai, and that it was believed in Thailand long before the arrival of the Hindu Paraśurāma myth. The names of the couple may well, primarily, not have been Rāmasūn and Maṇimekhala. These names were given to them only after the Indian characters of Paraśurāma and Maṇimekhala came to be known in Thailand.*⁸

8. Phrayā Anumān Rājadhon, Thēp Niyāi Songkhro Rū'ang Mēkhala Rāmasūn Lae Phra Khanēt, Bangkok, 1969, p. 50.

There is evidence that, by the year 1392, Paraśurāma as a figure in Hindu mythology was known in Thailand. In the invocation to the gods and the heroes of old time, in the Sukhothai inscription No. 45, Rāmaparasu (sic.) is invoked along with Bhīma, Arjuna, Yudhiṣṭhira, Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa.*⁹ In this inscription the goddess Maṇimekhalā is not mentioned at all, even though some other female figures, such as Umā and the Kinnaris, are referred to. But it is the name only, Paraśurāma, which appears in the inscription, nothing of the myths relating to him being mentioned there. However, it is likely that at that time Paraśurāma had not yet been identified with Rāmasūn, the demon of thunder.

Whether the myth of Paraśurāma existed during the Ayuthya period or not is uncertain because he is not mentioned in any text of that period. Similarly, Rāmasūn does not appear in any literary works composed during that time either. But it is possible that stories of either Paraśurāma or Rāmasūn may have been related in some parts of the Rāmakīan of the Ayuthya period which are now missing.

It is noteworthy that while the Ayuthya texts are silent on the subject of Rāmasūn, some of them contain the story of Maṇimekhalā, his rival. But it seems that Maṇimekhalā of the Ayuthya texts, is yet again different from the goddess of lightning of the Rāmakīan of the Ratanakosin period. In a non-canonical Jātaka tale, the Porānakabilarāja Jātaka compiled in the Paññāsa Jātaka, composed during the Ayuthya period (1457-1657), Maṇimekhalā is described as a goddess who rows her 84,000 golden boats on the ocean in the kingdom of the Bodhisattva, who at that time had been born as the ruler of a city called Purānakabila.*¹⁰ The description of this kingdom reminds one very much of the abode of Indra.

9. Inscription No. 45, Prachun: Silā Chāruk Phak Thī 3, Bangkok: Office of the Prime Minister, 1965, p. 65.

10. Paññāsa Jātaka, Vol. VII, Bangkok, 1925, pp. 48-49.

The characteristic of Maṇimekhalā in this Jātaka, i.e. being a retinue of an Indra-like king, has an element similar to the Maṇimekhalā of the Trai Phūm Phra Ruang. In that text Maṇimekhalā is also described as one of the multitude of Indra's goddesses. But here she does not row any boats, but blows a big conch shell called Phichai (Vijaya).^{*11} It is possible that Maṇimekhalā in these two texts comes from the same source.

In two other Jātaka tales of the Paṇṇāsa Jātaka, i.e. Samuddagghosa and Candarāja Jātaka, Maṇimekhalā is the guardian of the ocean. She is appointed by the Catulo-kapāla, or the four guardians of the world, to protect and save the lives of various beings who are in distress in the ocean.^{*12} This account of Maṇimekhalā in the Thai non-canonical Jātakas is very similar to that in the Nipāta Jātaka. In the Mahajanaka Jātaka (No. 539) and Sankha Jātaka (No. 442) the Bodhisattva is described as being saved from the sea by Maṇimekhalā, the guardian of the ocean.^{*13}

In both Nipāta Jātakas mentioned above the Bodhisattva meets with misfortune when he is travelling to Suvannabhūmi, or the land of Gold, which is said to be the area of Burma and Thailand. This seems to imply that Maṇimekhalā is the guardian of the sea between India and the Malay Peninsula. This accords well with the extant evidence. There is no mention of Maṇimekhalā, the goddess of the ocean, in any Sanskrit text, not even in the Mahāvastu where the story of the Bodhisattva's being saved from the sea by a samudradevatā -- the ocean god --

11. Phrayā Li Thai, Trai Phūm Phra Ruang, 8th ed., Bangkok, 1972, p.21

12. Paṇṇāsa Jātaka, Vol. I, III, Bangkok, 1924, pp. 21; 68-70.

13. E.B.Cowell and W.H.D.Rouse (trans.), The Jātaka, ed. E.B.Cowell, Vol. VI, Cambridge, 1907, p.22; W.H.D.Rouse (trans.), Ibid., Vol. IV, 1901, p. 11.

is mentioned.*¹⁴ In addition to the Pali text, reference to this goddess appears in Tamil and Sinhalese texts only. In the famous Tamil literary work called Maṇimekhalai, the goddess Maṇimekhalā is referred to under the Tamil name Maṇimekhalai. She is the guardian of the ocean as well as the guardian angel of the heroine. She helps the heroine, also named Maṇimekhalā (Maṇimekhalai), by carrying her to a sacred island called Manipallavam, and thus saves her from abduction by Prince Udaya, who has fallen in love with her.*¹⁵ In a Sinhalese text called Rājāvaliya, a historical work of the 17th century, there is the narration of how Vihāradevī, the mother of the Sinhalese national hero Dutthagāminī, is offered by her father as a sacrifice to appease the wrath of the sea-gods, and of how she is safely brought by the goddess Maṇimekhalā across the sea to Māgama, where she finds a husband.*¹⁶

However, neither the Thai texts nor the Indian texts mentioned above refer to Maṇimekhalā as the goddess of lightning. There are two possible hypotheses to account for this form of the goddess. One, suggested by Phraya Anuman Rājadhon and H. Sylvain Levi, is that in Thailand the cult of the goddess of lightning had existed already for a very long time, and later on the Indian name was transferred to the Thai goddess. The other hypothesis is that, at the time of the Ayuthya texts mentioned above (1657) Maṇimekhalā was still the guardian of the ocean and had not yet been linked with Rāmasūn.

14. Sylvain Levi, "More on Maṇimekhalā", The Indian Historical Quarterly, Vol. VII, 1931, p. 376.

15. Sylvain Levi, "Maṇimekhalā, a Divinity of the Sea", Ibid., Vol. VI, No. 4, 1930, p. 601.

16. Sylvain Levi, "More on Maṇimekhalā", Ibid., Vol. VII, 1931, p.374.

Maṇimekhalā as the guardian of the sea is also retained in the literary works of the Ratanakosin period where the name Maṇimekhalā is already applied to the goddess of lightning. The story of Maṇimekhalā, lightning personified, has already been mentioned above in the reference to Rāmasūn in the Rāmakīan (p. 157). The account of the sea-guardian Maṇimekhalā also appears in the Rāmakīan (of King Rama I). It is narrated there that Maṇimekhalā, together with other deities, came to protect the baby Sītā when she had been put in a crystal box and thrown into the sea on the orders of Rāvaṇa, her father.*¹⁷

The reason behind the Thai identification of the Indian Paraśurāma and Maṇimekhalā with the Thai Rāmasūn and Maṇimekhalā can be explained as follows. In the case of Maṇimekhalā it is the word 'maṇi' which attracts the imagination of the Thais. The Thais must have assumed that, because of the presence of the word for 'jewel' in her name, the Indian goddess of the sea also possesses a jewel, as does the Thai goddess. The resemblance between Paraśurāma and Rāmasūn is that both of them carry an axe as their weapon. As for the reason why Paraśurāma, who is a Brahmin was misunderstood by the Thais to be a demon, this is explained by King Rama VI in the Bō Kōet Rāmakīan. The king's explanation is that the Thais call Paraśurāma an 'asura' by confusing the word 'nyakṣa' (meaning 'low', an epithet given to Paraśurāma because, although a Brahmin, he was irate and fierce) with the word 'yakṣa'.*¹⁸ This misunderstanding might have been another reason for the Thais identifying Paraśurāma with a Thai axe-bearing demon of thunder.

17. King Rama I, Rāmakīan, Vol. I, pp. 328-329.

18. Phra Bāt Somdet Phra Mongkut Klao Chao Yū Iṭṭha (King Rama VI), Bō Kōet Rāmakīan", Bot Lakhōn Rū'ang Rāmakīan Lae Bō Kōet Rāmakīan, Bangkok: Bannakhan, 1969, p. 904.
See also Lilit Nārāi Sip Pāng of King Rama VI, Bangkok, 1960, p. 454.

In the Narai Sip Pang (Royal Press Version) a being called Prarōtrāmasūn is described as being created by Śiva at the beginning of the world. His name is listed immediately after the name of the sea-guardian Manimekhalā. This shows that the first step in identifying Parasurāma with Rāmasūn is that the pronunciation of the word Parasurāma is changed according to the Thai system to Prarōtrāmasūn. Firstly, the word 'asura' (the two final syllables --asūn) is added to indicate the nature of this being. Secondly, by dropping the pronunciation of the final short 'u' vowel in the name,*¹⁹ the Thai form parot will be derived, with the syllable 'rot' being short. For some reason which is not yet clear,*²⁰ this 'rot' syllable was lengthened into 'rōt'. Thirdly, a very common prefix in both Thai and Khmer, 'pra' is substituted for the simple 'pa' initial.*²¹ The final form which emerges is thus 'pra-rōt-'. The next step must have been the splitting of the word Prarōtrāmasūn into Prarōt and Rāmasūn. Rāmasūn was then identified with the Thai demon of thunder. A myth had to be invented for Prarōt. However, it can be seen from the Rāmakīan that Prarōt is none other than Rāmasūn. The Rāmakīan describes Prarōt as a demonish god (asura-devaputra). His main characteristic is somewhat similar to that of Rāmasūn. Both of them chase after the goddess Manimekhalā whenever they see her playing with her bright jewel in the sky in the rainy season. Sometimes both Prarōt and Rāmasūn appear in the same episode doing the same thing. It is narrated in the Rāmakīan that it was the rainy season when Bharata was travelling back to Ayuthya, after he had finished his battle with the king of Maliwan. Then the goddess Manimekhalā came out from her celestial palace to sing and dance with her bright

19. a, i, u is often dropped: ratha - rot; dasa - thot;
vuthi - wut; sadhi - sut;
ketu - kēt; hetu - hēt.

20. Perhaps in Khmer, where the inherent vowel is long, e.g. possible analogy with Nārada - nārōt in Thai rather than nārōt, and parada - Thai parōt.

21. e.g. pairs such as phasom - prasom;
phāsā - prasā etc.

jewel in the sky. The god Parōt, who could see her from his palace, had great desire for her jewel. He took up his bow, came out from his palace, and pursued the goddess. In the meantime Rāmasūn, who was roaming in the clouds, saw Maṇimekhalā being chased by Parōt. He too wanted that jewel so he joined Parōt in pursuing Maṇimekhalā. But neither of them was able to win that jewel from the goddess.*²² It must be concluded that this story was inserted in the Rāmākīan after the splitting of the word Prarōtrāmasūn had occurred.

22. King Rama I, Rāmākīan, Vol. IV, 1951, pp. 2568-2571.

KALKI INCARNATION

The absence of the Kalki incarnation in Thai literature is highly likely to be due to the Buddhist concept of Maitreya Buddha who is the Buddha yet to come. The earliest Thai literary work where Maitreya Buddha is referred to is the Trai Phūm Phra Ruang (1343 A.D.). In the preface of that text Phra Srī Ariya Maitrī (he is mostly known as Phra Sī Ān in Thailand) is mentioned in order to attribute religious value to the text. The preface says: if any one has a desire for heaven and nirvāna he should listen carefully to the Trai Phūm Phra Ruang. He must not be careless in his life. Then he will meet Phra Sī Ān when he comes to his enlightenment in this world.*²³ Mention of Maitreya Buddha as propaganda for this text shows that the concept of this Buddha had been widely spread in Thailand, long before the time of the text itself. However, the text does not describe what the world will be like after the ministry of Phra Sī Ān. Four hundred years later, the Buddhist Utopia of Phra Sī Ān is described fully in a Thai Buddhist literary text called Phra Mālai Kham Lūang composed by Prince Thammāthibēt, a son of King Eḡromakōt. The condition of Phra Sī Ān's world as described in this text is similar to the world in the Kṛta Age of the Hindu texts. That is the time when religion which has deteriorated is made pure again. The ethics of the righteous are restored. Men do not lack any need and they live happily because of their own good merits. In this same text the arrival of Phra Sī Ān at the end of the dark age is also described.

The time will come when the religion of Gautama Buddha is 5000 years old. There will be the cessation

23. Phrayā Li Thai, Trai Phūm Phra Ruang, p. 11.

of all religious rites. Men will have no morality in their sexual life. They will cohabit with members of the same family as if they were animals. They will fight with each other until the earth is flooded by blood. But some wise men will hide themselves in the forest and follow the meritorious path. They will survive. The rest will be killed. Then there will be a partial dissolution of the world. Phra Sī Ān will then come to the world which is to be full of happiness and righteousness.*²⁴

The change from evil to good with the coming of Maitreya Buddha finds its counterpart in the Hindu texts. An example from the Visnu Purāna can be quoted.

Unable to support their avaricious kings, the people of the Kali Age will take refuge in the chasms between mountains, and they will eat honey, vegetables, roots, fruits, leaves, and flowers.*²⁵

But unlike the Buddhist texts, the Hindu texts do not mention the partial dissolution of the world before the time of Kalki. Actually Kalki will come when the Kali Age is not completely over. He will come then to mark the beginning of the Kṛta Age or the Golden Age. The Visnu Purāna relates:

When Vedic religion and the dharma of the lawbooks have undergone total confusion and reversal and the Kali Age is almost exhausted, then a part of the Creator of the entire universe will become incarnate here in the universe in the form of Kalki, endowed with the eight supernatural powers, in the house of Viṣṇuśaśa, the chief brahmin of the village Sambala. Kalki will punish the wicked, reward the good, and restore the ethics of the Golden Age.*²⁶

It is certain that the Buddhist picture of the world at the junction of the Dark Age and the Golden Age, as described in

24. Čhao Fā Thammāthibēt, Phra Mālai Kham Lūang, Bangkok: Fine Arts Department, 1931, pp. 48-50.

25. Visnu Purāna IV.24.

26. Ibid.

the Phra Kālai Kham Lūang, has long been established in Thai literature, and has been so popular that it gave no opportunity for the emergency of the Hindu story on the same subject.

It cannot be said for certain, however, that the Thais totally omitted the Kalki incarnation myth. In the Nārāi Sīp Pāng (Royal Press Version) an incarnation of Viṣṇu has characteristics somewhat similar to Kalki. This incarnation is called Thulakī (as if Dulakī). It is related in the text that in this incarnation Viṣṇu takes the form of a human being with two hands. He also rides on a horse when he comes to vanquish the demon who is troubling the world. But in the Thai text Viṣṇu takes upon himself this man incarnation only in order to kill a demon horse, not to save the world from its total annihilation. The story in the Nārāi Sīp Pāng goes.

In one of the Tretā Yuga a Brahma*²⁷ called Angkhut is described as being jealous of Brahmā the Creator. He thus oppresses all the other Brahmas in their world. Siva, who is very angry at Angkhut's deed fights with him and with his earing cuts off Angkhut's head and kills him. Angkhut is reborn as a horse called Kanthaka which is very powerful and wicked-minded. It oppresses all the three worlds until they are sorely distressed. Siva then asks Viṣṇu to get rid of the demon horse. Viṣṇu incarnates himself in the form of a man with two hands named Thulakī Avatān. He holds an umbrella in his left hand and a whip in his right hand. He rides on the back of Thēva Kanthat, a horse which possesses wings. Thulakī, on horseback, flies down to the foot of Kailāsa where he can find the demon horse Kanthaka. He fights with the horse, which after a mighty battle with the god, flees and hides itself on the bank of the Sindhu. There it accidentally meets a sage named Satchanālai who is wandering about looking for fruits as food. The demon Kanthaka, through its vicious character, bites the sage's

27. See Note No. 7 on p. 11.

head off and eats it as its food. At that moment Thulakī Awatān arrives there on his horse. He strikes the demon horse with his whip and cuts its head off. Thulakī then restores the sage to life by fixing to his body the head of the horse demon in the place of his own eaten head. That is why the sage has the face of a horse. Then the god gives to the sage the magic umbrella and the whip and also the Vedic prayers for taming all ill-natured and unyielding horses. Thereupon the sage is named Isī Kanlāiyaka*²⁸ and becomes a horse expert from then on.

It is true that the difference between the Thai Thulakī and the Hindu Kalki are greater than the similarities between them. But it can still be said that the Thulakī myth has some common basis in the myths relating to Viṣṇu in Hindu mythology. The demon horse Kanthaka might have been a reminiscence of the horse demon Keṣi who is destroyed by Kṛṣṇa. It is related in the Harivamśa that Keṣi is an ally of Kāṁsa, Kṛṣṇa's chief foe. Kṛṣṇa breaks Keṣi's mouth by his enlarged arms.*²⁹ The sage who obtains a horse-head might be influenced by an iconographical form of Kalki described in the Hindu texts. The image of Kalki should, according to the Vaikhānasāgama, have the face of a horse and the body of a man with four hands.*³⁰ The Agni Purāna agrees with this text and adds that Kalki should ride on a horse.*³¹ The Thais might have taken this image to be a different figure in Hindu mythology and might have borrowed the theme of the changed head from the Gaṇeśa myth and integrated it with the destruction of the horse demon by Kṛṣṇa.

On the other hand the Thulakī myth in the Nārāi Sip Pāng might have been reminiscent of a Hayagrīva myth in Hindu

28. Praphan Sukhonthachāt (ed.), Nārāi Sip Pāng Lae Phong Nai Rū'ang Rāmakīan, 2nd ed., Bangkok 1968, pp. 46-47.

29. Harivamśa II.80.

30. T.A. Gopintha Rao, Elements of Hindu Iconography, Vol. I, Part I, Madras, 1914, p. 223.

31. Ibid.

mythology. The demon horse Kanthaka might have had its prototype in a demon with a horse neck -- Hayagrīva. The change of the sage Satchanālai's head for a horse's head might have been influenced by the account of Viṣṇu's head being replaced by a horse's head in the same myth. The story in the Devībhāgavata Purāna goes:

A demon named Hayagrīva practised tapas on the bank of river Sarasvatī for a thousand years. Then Devī appeared to him and granted him a boon, which he had asked for, that he would not be killed by anyone but a Hayagrīva -- he who has a horse neck. The demon Hayagrīva, on receiving such a boon, became very haughty and over-confident, and went about oppressing the three worlds. At first Viṣṇu and the gods failed to defeat him. Viṣṇu then decided to rest for some time to regain his strength. During his rest his head was hit by the end of his own bow and the head was severed from the trunk. Viṣṇu replaced the head thus lost with that of a horse and killed the demon Hayagrīva.*³²

The Thais might have taken the Hayagrīva form of Viṣṇu to be a character different from Viṣṇu and might have linked it with a horse expert. However, it is submitted that the element of the saviour on horse-back in the Thulakī myth has been influenced by the Kalki cult.

32. Devībhāgavata Purāna, I.5 . 5-30; 74-100.

MAHIṢĀ INCARNATION

In Hindu mythology no account of any incarnation of Viṣṇu as a buffalo is extant. Nor is there a story of the same god's slaying of a demon buffalo thereby. The only renowned myth relating to a demon buffalo in Hindu texts is the story of the destruction of a demon called Mahiṣa (Buffalo) by the goddess Durgā. The myth of the goddess's fighting against Mahiṣa is fully described in the Devībhāgavata Purāna.

The text says:

A demon named Mahiṣa is the son of the demon Rambha who obtained a boon from the Fire god that Rambha will have a son, who is more powerful than his father. This son will be born from any female of whichever species Rambha cohabits with. Rambha cohabits with a she-buffalo and a son emerges from her womb from the midst of the funeral pyre of Rambha, which the she-buffalo has entered as an act of sati. This son of Rambha is an expert in Māyā. He can change his body to any form he likes. The demon Mahiṣa always appears in a human form. He will assume the form of a buffalo whenever he wants to show his prowess.

Then the demon desires to be immortal. He goes to perform a very severe and excellent penance at Sumeru Mountain. Brahmā is pleased with him. The god comes down from heaven to where the demon is. But the god cannot grant him immortality. So the demon Mahiṣa asks Brahmā to grant him a boon that only women can cause his death. When the demon has obtained the boon from Brahmā he becomes very proud of himself. He wants to rule heaven, and so he wages war against the gods. The gods fight fiercely against the demon, but they are driven away from heaven by Mahiṣa in the form of a lion.

Mahiṣa then takes possession of Indra's abode. The gods therefore seek Viṣṇu's refuge. Viṣṇu recommends them to create a goddess out of the collective energy of all the gods. This goddess will be able to destroy the demon Mahiṣa. So a goddess is created out of the energy of all the gods. She too, like the demon Mahiṣa, can assume

different forms at will. The goddess has eighteen hands and rides on a lion. From their own weapons all the gods create weapons for her. When the demon Mahiṣa hears of her he wants her to be his queen. The goddess refuses his proposal. She tells him that her husband is the great god Śiva. The goddess challenges the demon Mahiṣa to fight instead. The demon assumes many forms to fight against the goddess. He is killed, in the end, by the goddess when he assumes the form of a human being.*³³

The Thai myth of the demon buffalo has only one element in common with the Hindu one, viz. the presence of a demon buffalo who has enough power to oppress even the gods. He is referred to by the Thai word for 'mahīṣa' (mahingsā). What is really odd is that in the Thai texts Viṣṇu too assumes the form of a buffalo when he kills the demon. Hereunder is the story of the demon buffalo in the Watcharin Press Version of the Nārāi Sip Pāng.

A Demon Brahma*³⁴ is jealous of Brahma the Creator. He finishes his life as a Brahma and is reborn in the human world as a fierce buffalo. He comes every day to try his strength against the foot of Sumeru Mountain until the mountain's foot tumbles down. When Śiva knows of the happening he orders Viṣṇu to kill the demon buffalo. Viṣṇu incarnates himself as a wild buffalo named Mahingsāwatān (Mahisāvātāra). He kills the demon buffalo and after that goes back to the Ocean of Milk.*³⁵

Admittedly, there is mention of Viṣṇu's fighting against the demon buffalo in the Hindu myth of the goddess's vanquishing Mahiṣa. But there Viṣṇu fights in his own form. He does not assume the form of a buffalo to fight against the demon. There is also mention of the demon being defeated by the god, but it is momentary only. The story in the Devībhāgavata Purāna

33. Devībhāgavata V . 2-10; 16; 18.

34. See Note No. 7 on p. 44.

35. Praphan Sukhonthachāt (ed.) Nārāi Sip Pāng ..., pp. 15-16.

goes:

When the demon Mahiṣa sees two gods, i.e. Siva and Viṣṇu, being called to the battle field he is very infuriated. The demon assumes a buffalo form and attacks the two gods. He hurls, with his horns, the huge mountain peaks at the gods. Seeing that the demon begins to hurl mountains at them, Viṣṇu cuts up those mountains into a hundred pieces with his arrows and immediately strikes at the demon with his discus. The demon Mahiṣa faints, but he instantly rises up with a human body and resumes his fighting.*³⁶

In addition to the fight between the demon Mahiṣa and Viṣṇu in the Devībhāgavata Purāna quoted above, there is another plausible source for the Thai Viṣṇu's buffalo incarnation. That is the myth of Kṛṣṇa's destruction of the demon bull Arṣṭa who attacks his herd of cattle at his village. This myth is narrated in the Harivamśa.

Once while Kṛṣṇa was engaged in sport, the demon Arṣṭa in the form of a bull arrived in Braja, Kṛṣṇa's hometown. The sight of this bull terrified the cattle. It was of ash colour, its horns were pointed, its eye balls as bright as the Sun, its front hoofs sharp as a razor, and its shoulder high and solid. The demon bull attacked every cow and bull he met, and killed many of them. The remaining cows and bulls then sought Kṛṣṇa's protection. Kṛṣṇa came forward to chastise this demon bull. The demon Arṣṭa, aiming at Kṛṣṇa's abdomen, rushed to him. But Kṛṣṇa held it by the horns, then he twisted its neck, snatched out its horns, and struck it severely on the face. The demon bull fell down, vomitted blood and died.*³⁷

As Kṛṣṇa is regarded by the Thais, as well as by the Hindus, to be none other than the god Viṣṇu himself, the Thai authors

36. Devībhāgavata V. C. 50-55.

37. Harivamśa II.77.

might have assumed that it was the god Viṣṇu who had vanquished the demon bull. The appearance of the god, in the Thai texts, in the form of a buffalo may be analogous to the god's taking the form of aquatic animals in order to be an equal match with his enemies, e.g. a fish against the conch demon, and a turtle against the fish demon. The vicious act of the demon buffalo Mahiṣa in the Thai texts, i.e. he crushes himself against Sumeru Mountain until the mountain's foot tumbles down, might have been reminiscent of the demon buffalo Dundubhi's act from the Rāmāyana. In the Rāmāyana Dundubhi is described as a very mighty buffalo. He is so proud of his own power that he challenges Himavanta Mountain to fight with him. But the Mountain does not accept the buffalo's challenge. Dundubhi is advised by the Mountain to fight with Valī instead.*³⁸

There is yet another plausible influence for this Thai Mahiṣa incarnation of Viṣṇu. That is, in some Tamil purāṇas, Viṣṇu is identified with Umā or Devī, Śiva's consort. One of these purāṇas is the Kaṇṇiyākumari which identifies the goddess Bhagavatī at Kaṇṇiyākumari as a form of Viṣṇu, who has many female forms, such as the Maiden, Durgā and Matangī the slayer of Mahiṣa.*³⁹ The identification between Viṣṇu and Devī in the Polani Purāna is more articulated than that in the Kaṇṇiyākumari.

38. Rāmāyana IV . 11.13.

39. "Kaṇṇiyākumari Purāṇam", found in "The Mythology of the Tamil Saiva Talapurāṇam" (unpublished Ph.D. Thesis by David Dean Shulman, S.O.A.S., University of London, 1976, p. 314.

Siva related to Devi the story of the Dāruvana: the sages there had left the path of the Vedas; each of them believed himself to be Brahmā. Siva went there in the form of a kṛpāli (the form of a mendicant carrying human skulls both as ornaments and as an alms-bowl) followed by Viṣṇu as Mohini. Seeing the beautiful woman following him, Siva felt desire for her, but Mohini said, "You will embrace me after destroying the chastity of the wives of the sages and the sages' conceit." Siva went from street to street begging alms with his skull-bowl, and the women seeing him, lost all shame. They offered him sexual delight as alms. Meanwhile Mohini went deeper into the forest. The sages devoured her with their eyes and thus lost their tapas. Perceiving what had happened, they cursed Siva; when their curses had no effect, they made a sacrifice against him, but Siva took the weapons sent against him by the sages and made these weapons ornaments instead. Afterwards, Mohini said to Siva, "Be my husband, and I shall be your Devi." Since this was already true, Siva granted the request, promising soon to marry Mohini. "And so it happens", said Siva to Devi, "that Viṣṇu is you, Devi, residing in half of my body. The part of you is Viṣṇu, who gives birth to Brahmā and supports the world." Siva sent Devi to the konku forest to perform tapas before their wedding there.*40

There is abundant evidence of the existence of many myths from the Tamil purāṇas in Thai literature. Most of them are interpolated or integrated into the myth that came from Sanskrit texts. For example the myth of the demon Comukan who robs Brahmā of the Vedas (p.126), and the myth of Mūyalaka who is known as Mūlāṅkanī in Thai literature (p.63), and the myth of the demon Bhasmāsura who is bewitched and defeated by Viṣṇu in the form of Mohini (p.175). Therefore it is possible that the myth which identifies Viṣṇu with Devi, Siva's consort, might have been yet one more among those Tamil myths imported to Thailand. Its subject-matter might have caused confusion to the Thais. They might then have assumed automatically that it was Viṣṇu, their heroic god, who performed the valorous act of the goddess Devi. That is why it is Viṣṇu, not Devi, who, in the Thai texts, is the destroyer of the demon Mahiṣa.

40. "Polani Purāṇas", *Ibid.*, p. 318.

APSARA INCARNATION

The Apsara-avatān (Apsarāvātāra) or the goddess incarnation of Viṣṇu in Thai literature has its prototype in the Hindu myth of the Mohini, or the enchantress, form of Viṣṇu. Mohini appears in most Sanskrit Purāṇas in connection with the myth of the churning of the ocean. She uses her charm and beauty to enchant the demons and to rob them of the amṛta or ambrosia obtained from the churned sea. In Thai literature the episode of the demons' being enchanted by Mohini at the time of the churning of the ocean does not exist. In fact, a full and formal myth of the churning of the ocean is absent from Thai literature until modern times. However, the Mohini story cannot be said to be absent in the true sense of that word, for it is replaced by a quite separate story of the vanquishing of a single demon by Viṣṇu in the form of a goddess. The name of the demon is either Nonthuk (spelling nan-du-ka) Or Nonthok (spelling: nan-da-ka) which is probably derived from the Sanskrit Nandi. Nandi is best known as the name of the bull of Śiva. But what attests this hypothesis is that the demon Nonthuk is described as a kind of doorkeeper of Śiva. This accords well with another of the main characteristics of Nandi who is the chamberlain of Śiva. The story of Nonthuk, in the Rāmākīan and in the Nārāi Sip Pāng goes as follows:

A demon called Nonthuk is a foot-washer for the gods at the foot of the stairs of Kailāsa Mountain. Every time the gods come to see Śiva, each one of them gives him a knock on the head until Nonthuk loses all his hair and becomes bald. This makes Nonthuk very angry so that he goes to see Śiva and asks him for a 'diamond' finger.*⁴¹

41. In the Lü'an Rit Version of the Nārāi Sip Pāng, Nonthuk asks Śiva for a diamond discus (chak-phet, Skt. cakravajra).

This diamond finger is to be used as a weapon by Nonthuk. From then on Nonthuk points his diamond finger at any god who teases him and who knocks his head as before, and kills that god. When Siva comes to know of this incident he orders Visnu to get rid of the demon. Visnu then incarnates himself as a very beautiful goddess. The demon Nonthuk falls in love with her at first sight. The goddess then tells him to imitate her dancing or else she will not accept his love. Nonthuk, enchanted by the goddess's beauty, agrees to do so. In the end the incarnated goddess, in the course of her dancing, points at her own lap. Nonthuk, unconscious of what he is doing, points at his own lap too. Crippled, he falls to the ground and is killed by Visnu who has replaced his goddess form by that of his divine majesty.*⁴²

Two motifs (i.e. the use of a finger as a weapon by the demon; and the use of dancing as a device to vanquish the demon by the god in goddess form) from the myth mentioned above find their counterpart in the Hindu myth of a demon named Bhasmāsura. There is no mention of this myth in any of the Sanskrit purāṇas at all.*⁴³ His story is narrated in the Tamil Keralatecavaralāru Purāna. The story of Bhasmāsura is here quoted in order to attest the hypothesis made above.

Bhasmāsura is born of the ashes on the body of Siva. He is so devoted to the god that the god grants him a boon of having the power to turn to ashes anybody on whose head he places his hand. Bhasmāsura becomes arrogant because of the boon and he becomes a threat to the whole world. Visnu changes himself to the form of Mohinī and bewitches the demon into imitating the hand-movement of her dance. Mohini puts her hand on her head, and the demon follows her and turns himself to ashes.*⁴⁴

42. King Rama I, Rāmākīan, Vol. I, pp. 56-63; Praphan Sukhonthachāt (ed.), Nārāi Sip Pāng..., pp. 26-27; 64-65.

43. But cf. Bhāgavata Purāna X.88.

44. "Keralatecavaralāru Purāna", found in "The Mythology of the Tamil Talapurana", by David Dean Shulman, p. 314.

The story of Bhasmāsura in the Tamil purāna goes on. It is narrated in the text: "Śiva makes love to Mohinī and their son Aiyanār is born."⁴⁵ It seems that the Thais have taken over this part of the myth and have mixed it with a Śaiva myth of Śiva's incarnating himself in the form of Hanumān. The Śiva Purāna narrates:

Śiva sees Viṣṇu in the Mohinī form. He falls in love with her at first sight so he lets fall his semen. The seven celestial sages keep that semen in a leaf. Later on they pour that semen through the ears of Anjanī, the daughter of Gautama. In due course Śiva is born of it in the form of a monkey named Hanumān who has great strength and is very adventurous.*⁴⁶

The creation of Hanumān in the Śiva Purāna seems to have influenced the myth of the birth of Hanumān in Thai literature. It is related in the Nārāi Sip Pāng (Watcharin Press Version):

After Viṣṇu has destroyed Nonthuk he goes up to see Śiva in his abode. When Śiva sees Viṣṇu in the form of a beautiful goddess he tries to make love to her. The goddess incarnation tries in vain to tell Śiva that she is one and the same as Viṣṇu, not a beautiful goddess as Śiva thinks. Śiva does not listen to her. Śiva makes love to the goddess until his semen is shed. Śiva, who knows that it will be useful later on, keeps it in a jar and puts the jar near him. Later on Śiva orders Phra Phāi or Vāyu to throw that semen together with Śiva's divine weapons into the mouth of Sawāha (Anjanī in the Rāmāyana). In due time Hanumān is created from those substances.*⁴⁷

45. Ibid.

46. Śiva Purāna. Śatarudrasaṃhitā. 20 . 1-7.

47. Praphan Sukhonthachāt (ed.), Nārāi Sip Pāng..., pp. 27-33.

In Thai literature Nonthuk is linked with Rāvaṇa. He is, in fact, reborn as Rāvaṇa. A possible reason for this, according to the Thai point of view, is that it is not fair for Nonthuk, who does not recognize the real form of Viṣṇu, to be killed by the god. Nonthuk should have another birth in which he will have an advantage over the god. On the other hand, the Thais also need an explanation of why Rāvaṇa possesses twenty hands. In the Rāmākīan and the Royal Press Version of the Nārāi Sip Pāng, a conversation between Viṣṇu and Nonthuk foretelling his following birth is inserted. Nonthuk asks Viṣṇu, "You have four hands so you can kill me easily. Why do you have to change yourself into a woman's form? Are you afraid of my finger?" Viṣṇu answers him, "Not at all. I have to disguise myself as a woman in order to kill you, because you are destined to be destroyed by your own lust. However, if you are complaining of having only two hands in this birth, I will grant a boon to you so that you will have ten heads and twenty hands in your next birth. And I will be reborn as a human being with only two hands and still kill you."⁴⁸

In the Nārāi Sip Pāng (all versions) another explanation of how Nonthuk comes to be reborn as Rāvaṇa with twenty hands is given in the form of another myth. The text narrates:

After his death Nonthuk in the form of an uncremated ghost wanders along the foot of Sumeru Mountain. He performs a penance by making his skull into a fiddle, his back bone into a bow, and his sinews into strings of the fiddle. He plays the fiddle for Śiva. Śiva gives him the boon he wants, "You will be born of the race of Brahmā. You will have ten heads and twenty hands. You will be able to separate your heart from your body. You will live for one thousand years." Nonthuk therefore is born into the race of Brahmā. He is born as a son of Lord Latsatīan (Pulastya) and of Ratchadā. He is named Thotsakan (Daśakantha).^{*49}

48. King Rama I, Rāmākīan, p. 63; Praphan Sukhonthachāt (ed.) Nārāi Sip Pāng ..., p. 27.

49. Praphan Sukhonthachāt (ed.), Nārāi Sip Pāng..., pp. 28, 65; Khun Ying Lū'an Rit (ed.), Nārāi Sip Pāng, Bangkok, 1923, pp. 76-77

It appears that the prototype of Nonthuk's severe penance in this myth can be traced in a myth relating to Rāvaṇa from South India. It is related in a Tamil purāṇa called Tiruvaraṇcaram as follows:

Rāvaṇa tries to uproot Kailāsa. Śiva presses him into Pātāla with his toe-nail. Rāvaṇa then tears off one of his heads and makes a vīṇā with it. He uses the tendons of his forearms for strings and plays music for Śiva. Śiva is very pleased and gives him a līṅga, as asked for by Rāvaṇa.*⁵⁰

Another possible reason behind the link between Nonthuk and Rāvaṇa, in the Thai texts, can also be found in the Vaiṣṇava purāṇas. In the Bhāgavata Purāṇa there is a story of the successive births of Jaya and Vijaya who are the door-keepers of Viṣṇu. It is narrated in the text that once the two door-keepers had barred Sanaka and other sages, who were very powerful through their tapas, from seeing Viṣṇu. The sages were very infuriated and they cursed the door-keepers to be born three times in the human world so that they too were barred from seeing and worshipping the god. Accordingly Viṣṇu's door-keepers were born in the earth in their first birth as Hiranyākṣa and Hiranyakaśipu. In their second birth they were born as Rāvaṇa and Kumbhakarna. In their last birth they were born as Śisupāla and Dantavakra.*⁵¹ The Thais might have taken the element of Rāvaṇa's having been born before as a door-keeper from this Vaiṣṇava myth, and might have integrated it into the story of the Bhaṣmāsura taken from the Tamil purāṇa. And that is why Nonthuk who is the door-keeper of Śiva is reborn as Rāvaṇa.

It is possible that the myth of Bhaṣmāsura's imitating the hand movements of Mohini was adopted into Thai literature at the time when Indian dancing was introduced to the Thais

50. "Tiruvaraṇcaram Purāṇam", found in "The Mythology of the Tamil Saiva Talepurāṇam", by D.D. Shulman, p. 439.

51. Bhāgavata Purāṇa VII.1.

in ancient times. First of all it is the only Hindu myth, in Thai literature, which is relating to dancing. Its existence in Thailand must have preceded the myth of the performance of the Ānandatāṇḍavam dance before the assembly hall of Cidambaran or Pillai by Śiva as narrated in the Koyil Purānam. This is because the latter myth, in the Thai texts, loses its main motif, i.e. the god's supremacy being exhibited through his cosmic dance,*⁵² and is preserved in Thai literature as no more than the myth of the destruction of the demon Mūyalaka (Mūlākhanī in Thai) by Śiva only. The extant Thai myth of Śiva-Mūyalaka does not contain any episodes of dancing at all. The myth of Śiva and Mūyalaka, which is exactly similar to the Hindu prototype is narrated only in the Tamrā Fōn Ram, which is a comparatively later text of the Ratanakosin period.*⁵³ Moreover the Rū'ang Nāng Nophamāt, compiled during the early Ratanakosin period, refers to the images of Śiva-Natarāja, who is dancing on the demon Mūyalaka, as no more than images of the god's vanquishing the demon Mūlākhanī.*⁵⁴

Moreover the presentation of the story of Viṣṇu in the form of the goddess vanquishing Nonthuk had been used as the Bot bōek rōng — preliminary dance at the opening of the theatre — from the Ayuthya period. This tradition has been referred to by King Rama IV in his poetical script for this dance, called Bot Bōek Rōng Nārāi Prāp Nonthuk. The king explains further on that this story began to be performed as the preliminary dance because in dancing this episode, the teachers of the lakhōn nai (dance drama of the Inner Court) were able to show their pupils how to dance various movements, as the goddess Viṣṇu did in the ancient times.*⁵⁵

52. See Thai myth p.

53. Tamrā Fōn Ram, Bangkok, 1923, p. (4-5).

54. Nāng Nophamāt, Rū'ang Nāng Nophamāt, Bangkok, 1925, p. 14.

55. Phra Bāt Somdet Chom Klao Chao Yū Hūa (King Rama IV), "Bot Bōek Rōng Rū'ang Nārāi Prāp Nonthuk", Bot Bōek Rōng Lakhōn Luang, Bangkok, 1920, p. 13.

In addition to the explanation of King Rama IV, the reason why this story was presented as a preliminary dance in the first place can be found in Indian tradition of dramatic art as prescribed in the Nāṭyaśāstra. In the elaborate series of preliminaries (purvaraṅga) performed before the actual drama begins, there is the appearance of the dancers practising their steps.*⁵⁶ The Indian teachers of dancing must have brought this tradition with them and must have taught it to the Thais too. Then the main content of the Dhasmāsura myth, i.e. the demon imitates the dance of the god, would have been chosen as the most appropriate piece for this practice. There is, however, no certain date for the introduction of Indian dancing to Thailand. But there is reference to the goddess incarnation of Viṣṇu in an early Ayuthya text. In the invocation to Viṣṇu in the Lilit Ōṅkan Chaeng Nam, Viṣṇu is described as the god who assumes the woman incarnation in order to destroy the demons (phīru awatān asura lān lāṅg thak*⁵⁷). But it is only a passing reference. None of the demons' names is given. Neither is the story of the dancing episode mentioned in this text. However, what is certain is that this phīru awatān (Sanskrit: bhīru-avatāra), or the woman incarnation of Viṣṇu referred to in the Lilit Ōṅkan Chaeng Nam, cannot be said to be a reference to the myth of the churning of the ocean. In that myth Viṣṇu, in the Mohinī form, does not destroy any demon directly. He only deceives them in order to gain amṛta for the benefit of the gods.

56. A.B. Keith, The Sanskrit Drama, Oxford, 1924, p. 339.

57. "Lilit Ōṅkan Chaeng Nam", found in Lilit Lee Nirāt, by Watchari Romyanan, 1974, p. 7.

CHAPTER VI

KṚṢṆA

Nowhere in Thai literature, except in the Lilit Nārāi Sip Pāng composed by King Rama VI in the year 1923, does the whole story of Kṛṣṇa's incarnation exist. Only fragments of the Kṛṣṇa myth from Hindu mythology are elsewhere referred to by the Thais. These are: some episodes in the early life of Kṛṣṇa; reference to Kṛṣṇa as an ally of the Pāṇḍava princes (a characteristic stressed by the Mahābhārata); and the account of the battle between Kṛṣṇa and the demon king Bāṇa. In Thailand, the last of these three is by far the best known. It is related and enlarged upon in three works, i.e. the Anirut Khun Chan of the Ayuthya period, the Nārāi Sip Pāng and the Bot Lakhon Pū'ang Unarut of the Ratanakosin period. There is a discussion on this subject below.

The Lilit Ōngkān Chaeng Nam refers to some episodes in Kṛṣṇa's early life. In this text a god, who is described as holding up a mountain, and as wrestling with a serpent, is invoked to come to be a witness at the Oath-taking ceremony.*¹ This god can well be thought to be Kṛṣṇa. It is related in the Chāgavata Purāna that Kṛṣṇa persuades Nanda, his step-father, and the cowherds to give up the worship of Indra, and to worship the mountain Govardhana, which shelters them and their cattle. Incensed at the loss of his offerings, Indra pours down a heavy rain which would have deluged them, but Kṛṣṇa lifts up the mountain Govardhana, and holds it upon his finger as a shelter for seven days and nights, till Indra feels that he has been foiled.*² It is also related in the Bhāgavata Purāna that Kṛṣṇa has a terrible conflict with the great serpent Kāliya, who lives in the Yamunā river. The serpent Kāliya makes the water of the Yamunā poisonous and thus useless for the cowherds. Kṛṣṇa fights with the serpent and finally

1. "Lilit Ōngkān Chaeng Nam", found in Lilit Lae Nirāt, by Wachari Songman, Bangkok, 1974, p. 25.
2. Bhāgavata Purāna X . 25

compels him and his family to go away.*³ Regarding this myth of Kṛṣṇa's fight against the demon serpent Kāliya, in the Nārāi Sip Pāng, Phayān is called by the name Nārāi Krasāē Phayān, and this might be a reference to a certain iconographical form of Kṛṣṇa fighting with Kāliya. The Nārāi Sip Pāng (Royal Press Version) narrates that after Viṣṇu has been ordered by Siva to be born as Nara, by means of his divine power, Viṣṇu dances in the centre of the ocean.*⁴ This form of the dancing Viṣṇu is called Nārāi Krasāē Phayān. In Hindu mythology, the only incarnation of Viṣṇu which performs any dance is Kṛṣṇa. The god performs this when he is suppressing the serpent Kāliya.*⁵ Though examples of dancing Viṣṇu images exist, such as the one at the Varadarājaperumal in Kāncipuram,*⁶ the form of dancing Kṛṣṇa has been more popular both in India and in Cambodia. It is likely that the form of Viṣṇu called Nārāi Krasāē Phayān may be reminiscent of such an Indian iconographical form. However, no actual name of Kṛṣṇa is mentioned in the Lilit Ōngkān Chaeng Nam, and the name Nārāi Krasāē Phayān (? (a) the restraint (viyāma) of the current (krasāē) by Nārāyaṇa; ? (b) Nārāyaṇa with a plumb-line (krasāē) measuring the fathoms (vyāma) of the ocean) does not give any evidence either. Therefore a definite conclusion cannot be made here. But if these references in the Lilit Ōngkān Chaeng Nam are taken as being stories about Kṛṣṇa, it is possible to say they are the only myths of Kṛṣṇa's boyhood in Thai literature. Unlike Hindu literature, Thai literature is totally silent on the subject of Bālakṛṣṇa or the child Kṛṣṇa. The boyish pranks of Kṛṣṇa, (such as, the incidents in which Kṛṣṇa unties the calves when it is not the proper time, and laughs at everyone's angry shouts; or in which, when the wives of the cowherds are busy with house-

3. Ibid., X.16.

4. Praphan Sukhonthachāt (ed.), Nārāi Sip Pāng Lae Phong Nai Rūang Rāmākian, 2nd ed., Bangkok, 1968, p. 68.

5. Bhāgavata Purāṇa X.16.

6. Mireille Benisti, "Note D'Iconographie Khmère", Bulletin de l'Ecole Française d'Extreme-Orient (BEFEO), Vol. 60, 1973, p. 81.

hold duty, Kṛṣṇa will steal things in a dark room), regarded by Indian women as charming and endearing are nowhere referred to in any Thai literary work. It seems that the Thai poets cannot accept the idea of a god who performs such naughty deeds with ease or without repentance. Moreover the absence of the myths about the child Kṛṣṇa can also be explained in this way. For the Thais the gods do not have a childhood. This is because the Thais, who accept the Buddhist concept, believe that the gods are born without parents (upapātika) and they have the form of a grown-up as soon as they are born. That is why the Thais cannot conform to the idea of the child Kṛṣṇa.

Kṛṣṇa as a warrior in the Mahābhārata is mentioned in the Lilit Yūan Phāi, the historical poem composed during the early Ayuthya period (between 1489 and 1592). The poet of the Lilit Yūan Phāi shows his familiarity with, and his predilection for, the Mahābhārata by referring, in many places in the text, to certain heroes of that epic. He compares King Bṛomatrailōkanāt to Arjuna, Bhīma, Bhīṣma, and Kṛṣṇa. These heroes are very prominent characters in the Mahābhārata. King Bṛomatrailōkanāt is praised as being very efficient in fighting as though he were better than Arjuna.*⁷ When King Bṛomatrailōkanāt holds a club, he is regarded as being the same as the famous club-fighter Bhīma.*⁸ The king's excellence is compared to that of Bhīṣma*⁹, who is the guardian of Pāṇḍu and Dhṛtarāṣṭra and their children, the Pāṇḍavas and the Kauravas.

In the Lilit Yūan Phāi, the poet, in one of his verses glorifying King Bṛomatrailōkanāt, compares the king to Kṛṣṇa by saying that King Bṛomatrailōkanāt is very well-versed in the strategies of war. He knows all the tricks of retaliation against his enemies. His trickery is so well-devised that no-one can understand it. He knows all the methods of forming an army, of setting up war-camps, and of fighting.*¹⁰ It is certain that when the poet makes this reference, he has Kṛṣṇa the warrior, as he is described in the Mahābhārata, in mind and not Kṛṣṇa

7. Lilit Yūan Phāi, Bangkok, 1922, p.17.

8. Ibid.

9. Ibid., p.16.

10. Ibid., p. 17.

the god, as he is described in the Harivamśa and the Purānas. It is here that in many parts of the Mahābhārata, the same Kṛṣṇa, the friend and counsellor of the Pāṇḍavas, is praised and glorified as an incarnation of Viṣṇu, but no other text other than the Mahābhārata depicts Kṛṣṇa as a deceitful warrior. The Purānas always describe Kṛṣṇa as an incarnation of the god Viṣṇu. He is always depicted as a youthful hero and demon-slayer, but the god incarnate rarely uses any trick in destroying these harmful demons. Hereunder are three passages from the Mahābhārata. They are here quoted in order to show the well-known trickery and deception of Kṛṣṇa, which may have impressed the poet of the Lalit Yān Phāi so much that he refers to it in his work.

The first passage is from the seventh book or the Dronaparvan:

On the fifteenth day of the battle, an astonishing hand-to-hand fight between Drona and Arjuna, teacher and pupil, which even the gods watch with admiration, leads to no result, as the pupil is not inferior to his teacher in any of his feats of arms. It is now again Kṛṣṇa who conceives a devilish trick. At his instigation, Bhīma kills an elephant which happens to answer to the name of Aśvatthāman, and then calls out loudly, approaching Drona, that Aśvatthāman, which is also the name of Drona's son, has been killed. Drona is frightened but does not yet believe the report. It is only when Yudhiṣṭhira, who is famous for his love of truth, repeats the lie, at the persuasion of Kṛṣṇa, that Drona is compelled to believe it. Overcome with sorrow, he casts his weapons aside and stands, lost in deep meditation. This is the moment utilised by Drupada's son Dhr̥ṣṭadyuṣṇa to cut off the head of the eighty-five years old Drona.*11

The second passage is from the eighth book or the Karnaparvan:

Arjuna and Karṇa fight a terrible duel in which even the gods take sides with them: Indra

11. Mahābhārata VII. 191 .1-23; 46-60; 193 . 36-61.

for Arjuna, and Śūrya for Karna. Like two wild elephants goading each other with their tusks, the two heroes shower each other with arrows. In vain does Arjuna endeavour to bring Karna to earth. Then one wheel of Karna's chariot begins to sink into the ground. Karna now tries to pull the chariot out, and asks Arjuna to break off the combat, in accordance with the rules of warfare. Kṛṣṇa, however, persuades Arjuna to have no regard to this; and Arjuna, generally a model of chivalry, kills Karna treacherously, while the latter is still busy with his chariot.*¹²

The third passage is from the ninth book or the Śalyaparvan:

After Śalya is killed by Yudhiṣṭhira, the Kauravas flee and they are later on entirely annihilated. Duryodhana flees alone to a pond. He hides himself there. The Pāṇḍavas find him and challenge him to single combat. The duel is to be fought between Duryodhana and Bhīma. The fight with clubs is prefaced by the usual duel of words. Baladeva, Kṛṣṇa's brother, who has not taken part in the battle, comes from a long distance, in order to be a spectator of the club fight. As two bulls butt each other with their horns, so the two heroes rain blows on each other with their clubs. They both accomplish marvels of valour, and the issue remains indecisive. Then Kṛṣṇa tells Arjuna that Bhīma will never be able to defeat Duryodhana in fair fight, for though Bhīma is the stronger fighter, Duryodhana is more skillful. But he reminds him of the words of Bhīma, when on the occasion of the insult to Draupadī, during the game of dice between Yudhiṣṭhira and Duryodhana, Bhīma had sworn to smash Duryodhana's thigh. Then Arjuna slaps his own left thigh before Bhīma's eyes. Bhīma understands this hint, and whilst his opponent is taking a leap preparatory to striking, Bhīma smashes his thigh, so that he falls down like a tree uprooted by a storm. But Baladeva, who has been watching the fight, hurls angry words at Bhīma, accusing him of fighting dishonestly, for in an honest club fight it is forbidden to strike one's opponent below the navel. His brother Kṛṣṇa has some difficulty in restraining him from chastising Bhīma; but in vain does Kṛṣṇa seek to

12. Ibid., VIII . 90; 91 . 1-50.

persuade his brother by his sophistry that Bhīma has acted rightly. Honest Baladeva mounts his chariot in anger and drives away, promising that Bhīma shall always be known in the world as a dishonest fighter and Duryodhana as an honest one.*¹³

While Kṛṣṇa as a treacherous warrior is fully described in the Mahābhārata, Kṛṣṇa as an incarnation of Viṣṇu is described in detail as a mighty demon-slayer in the Harivamśa and the Purāṇas. The emphasis is upon his being an incarnation of Viṣṇu, and, as such, he is a valiant and righteous figure. Kṛṣṇa's account, in the Purāṇas, of his slaying of all kinds of demons, such as the demon Arṣṭa in the form of a bullock,*¹⁴ and the demon king Dāṇa who has ten heads and twenty hands,*¹⁵ has nothing to do with trickery at all. In his fights with all these demons Kṛṣṇa uses only his own might and valour, which may, however, also include the use of the power of his godhead, as in the battle between him and the demon king Dāṇa. It is this fight of Kṛṣṇa with Dāṇa only that is fully related in Thai literature.

13. FAI, IX . 30 . 1-14; 33 . 16-31; 34; 56-59; 60 . 1-20.

14. Harivamśa . Viṣṇu-parva , 64.

15. U&L, 112.

There are three versions of the story of the fight between Kṛṣṇa and Śāyā in Thai literature. The story related in the Anirut Khan Chan retains more or less the same story as the Hindu Lokha. The other two versions, i.e. the Narai Sip Pang, and the Bot Lakṣṇ Rū'ang Unarut, are quite different from the original Hindu myth and show some influence from the Ramāyana and the Jātaka tales.

Anirut Khan Chan, according to Thai tradition, has its prototype in the Viṣṇu Purāna. Dhanit Yāphō, the former director of the Fine Arts Department of Thailand, who has done extensive research on Thai literature, wholeheartedly accepts this hypothesis in his introduction to the play Bot Lakṣṇ Rū'ang Unarut. He says: "The story of Anirut has been widely known from the Ayutthya period. The most important version is the Anirut Khan Chan composed by Sī Prāt who lived in the reign of King Nārāi the Great. The story, names of the characters and places in the Anirut Khan Chan correspond to those in the Viṣṇu Purāna."¹⁶ But the internal evidence does not agree with this suggestion. The story of the Anirut Khan Chan agrees more closely with the myth of Kṛṣṇa's battle with Śāyā in the Harivamśa than it does with the Viṣṇu Purāna. The relationship between Aniruddha and Uṣā, before her confidante brings him back to her palace, is the same in both the Anirut Khan Chan and the Harivamśa. They have a sexual relationship on the night that they first meet each other. In the Viṣṇu Purāna Uṣā sees Aniruddha only in her dream, as the goddess Umā has foretold it to her.¹⁷ The closest similarities between the Harivamśa and the Anirut

16. Dhanit Yāphō, "Rū'ang Thī Mā Khōng Anirut Khan Chan, Lae Bot Lakṣṇ Rū'ang Unarut", Bot Lakṣṇ Rū'ang Unarut, by Phra Sat Somdet Phra Phuttha Vot Pā Chulā Lōk (King Rama I), Bangkok, 1965, p. (1).

17. Viṣṇu Purāna . V . 32 . 15 .

Kham Chan can clearly be seen in the fighting episode which forms the second main part of the story (see below).

The first part of the story of Aniruddha in the Harivamśa is as follows:

"Uṣā, the daughter of the Demon King Bāṇa, is one of the attendants of the goddess Umā. One day, seeing Umā enjoying the act of love together with her consort Siva, Uṣā wants very much to have the same experience. Umā discovers Uṣā's wish. She foretells that Uṣā is to enjoy sexual intercourse with a man in her dream on the twelfth night in the month of Vaiśākha. That man is to be her husband. On the predicted night a young man does violate Uṣā's virginity in her dream (sā svapne dharsitā tena strībhavam cāpi labhīṣā / śoṇitāktā prarudati sahasaivotthitā nisi).^{*18} When Uṣā wakes up she finds that her dress is soaked with blood. She is very upset over what has happened. Citralokhā her close friend, helps her to find out who the man is. She paints the portraits of all the gods and heroes, including Aniruddha, for Uṣā. And she also uses her magic power to bring him from his own city to reunite with Uṣā."^{*19}

It is clearly seen from the above passage that the couple, in the Harivamśa, do meet each other in reality, not just in a dream. This is the same as in the Anirut Kham Chan. But the meeting of the couple in the Harivamśa is not treated as the most important part of the story. The battle episodes are more emphasized and depicted at great length. This is because the episode is meant to be a glorification of the valour and divine power of Kṛṣṇa. In the Anirut Kham Chan, however, the meeting of the couple is so emphasized, expanded and enlarged that it has become the main part of the work. This is because, on the Thai side, the story is also meant to be the love story of Aniruddha, Kṛṣṇa's grandson, rather than

18. Harivamśa Viṣṇuparva . 107.21.

19. Ibid., 107-108.

to demonstrate the prowess of Kṛṣṇa alone. Moreover, an important character has been interpolated into the story. He plays a very remarkable role in the story, the role of a match-maker, and thus exists as an important element in the love story.

The meeting of Aniruddha and Uṣā in the Anirut Kham Chan goes:

"Anirut, while on his tour in the forest, sleeps in his chariot under a great banyan tree. Before he goes to sleep he prays to the spirit of the sacred tree. Phra Sai, or the Banyan Tree Spirit, is very pleased and wants to give Anirut something in return for his reverent behaviour. The spirit also feels pity for Anirut who is sleeping out in the lonely forest. He concludes that it is fit and proper to take him to sleep with Uṣā. He carries Anirut to Uṣā's palace. (The meeting of the couple is depicted in erotic verse at great length.) At dawn Anirut is carried by the Tree Spirit back to his royal chariot."*²⁰ (After this episode the story is similar to that in the Harivamśa.)

It is not certain where the prototype of this beneficial tree spirit can be found. In Jātaka No. 493 (Mahā Vanija Jātaka), a beneficial tree is mentioned. The spirit of a Serpent King in a banyan tree gives all kinds of desirable possessions including wealth and voluptuous girls to some merchants.*²¹ But there is no episode of a hero being carried away to meet any one of the girls. The Siddhisāra Jātaka (no. 36), in the Thai non-canonical Paññāsa Jātaka, composed by a Thai monk of Chiangmai, mentions the spirits of four banyan trees. The first and the fourth tell Bodhisattva a secret of magical food. The second tells him the way to the cities he wants to go. The third saves the life of Bodhisattva's

20. Sī Prāt, Anirut Kham Chan, Bangkok, Silapakorn, 1960, pp. 31-46.

21. The Jātaka, Vol. IV, translated by W.H.D. Rouse, Cambridge, 1901, p. 202.

companions.*²² It can be seen that none of them plays the role of a match-maker. In the Thai version of the Rāmāyana, the Sāmakāra, the spirit of a banyan tree is referred to in two places. In one place what he does is to create, by means of his divine power, a boat for Rāma, Sītā, and Lakṣmaṇa so that they can cross the river Amarik.*²³ In the other passage the spirit of a banyan tree is asked to watch over Sītā who is buried enclosed within a casket enfolded in a magic lotus, beneath that banyan tree.*²⁴ Neither of these two banyan tree spirits are described as playing the role of a match-maker.

There is a strikingly similar story in the Daśakumāracarita, a Sanskrit romantic tale written by the famous poet Daṇḍin (5th or 6th century A.D.). In chapter X a man comes to sleep under a very tall tree on the side of a mountain in the Vindhya. He too prays to the spirit of the tree for protection before he goes to sleep. A moment later, he finds that he is sleeping by the side of a beautiful girl on the terrace of her palace. He falls in love with her at first sight. He just touches her gently and wakes her up. She also falls in love with him. But the couple do not make love to each other. They just lie together and sleep. When the man wakes up again he finds himself back on his bed of leaves under the sacred tree. Then the spirit appears to him and explains what has happened. It is his mother who has been cursed to forget all her past life and to stay in that sacred tree. At first, without recognizing her son, she had carried him to sleep in the palace of a princess in order to protect him from wild beasts when she had to leave the tree for a while.*²⁵ Here the spirit has a reasonable motive to carry the man to the girl's palace. Later, the spirit and her son are able to recognize each other. She, however, is unable to help him further. When the man knows

22. Pañcāṅga Jātala, Vol. X, Bangkok, 1926, pp. 4-15.

23. Phra Rāma Rōmān Phra Phuttha Yōt Phā Chulā Lōk (King Rama I), Rāmājan, Vol. III, Bangkok, 1951, p. 507.

24. Ibid., pp. 331-333.

25. Daṇḍin, Daśakumāracarita, edited by H.R. Kale, Bombay, 1917, pp. 148-149.

the truth he take leave of his mother, the spirit, and wanders about searching for the girl. He comes to her city and is discovered by her maid. The girl has painted his portrait and let her maid see it and then go in search of him.*²⁶

The recognition of a man by means of a painting is similar to the story of Aniruddha in the Purānas. But the role of a tree spirit is new. Whether the spirit in the Dasakumāracarita has any influence on that in the Anirut Kham Chan or not cannot be proved, but the similarity is still striking.

This carrying of a man to the bedroom of a girl whose lover he is to become is widely referred to in Thai as Um Son, literally 'to carry in the arms and to match'. It can hardly be said, however, that it is a Thai local convention. There are about a dozen Thai works extant which are traditional non-classical plays called lakhōn nōk, most of which have more or less the same plot and even identical episodes or incidents. But none of these plays has any beneficial tree spirit at all. In only one play called Yo Phra Klin is a beneficial bamboo tree mentioned. Indra leaves his daughter inside the bamboo tree. She remains there until the hero finds her.*²⁷ But no spirit of this bamboo tree is ever mentioned.

In the Anirut Kham Chan the name of the tree spirit is not given. But in a Buddhist work called Samutthakhōt Kham Chan (a poetic version of yet another of the non-canonical Paññāsa Jātaka) it is referred to as Sī Phromarak (Sanskrit: Śrī Brahmārakṣa). It is at one point mentioned in the Samutthakhōt Kham Chan that, desiring to match Samutthakhōt with Winthumadi, the Bo Tree Spirit carries him to her "in the same manner as Sī Phromarak carried Anirut to Usa."*²⁸

26. Ibid., pp. 149-152.

27. "Nithān Rū'ang Manī Phichai", Bot Lakhōn Nōk, by Phra Bāt Somdet Phra Phuttha Lōet Lā Naphālai (King Rama II), Bangkok, 1922, p. 336.

28. Samutthakhōt Kham Chan, 8th ed., Bangkok, 1976, p. 68.

The word Sī Phromarak appears in two literary works which are supposed to be earlier than the Anirut Khan Chan, i.e. Lilit Ōngkān Chaeng Nam²⁹, and Lilit Phra Lō³⁰. In these works Sī Phromarak seems to be a kind of a tree spirit because it is preceded by a word phanatbodī (Sanskrit: vanaspati), meaning Lord of the Woods. In neither work does Sī Phromarak act as a match-maker. But in Lilit Phra Lō this kind of spirit is in the entourage of a rishi-like sorcerer who, by means of his sorcery, brings the hero away from his family and his kingdom to the twin princesses who crave madly for him. The tree-spirit, who does the same thing for Anirut, might get his name from Sī Phromarak in Lilit Phra Lō. But it is more likely that Sī Phromarak in both works comes from a common source which has not been discovered yet.

The word Sī Phromarak also appears in the Inscription No. 45 of Sukhothai³¹. There the word which precedes it is missing. Therefore it is not certain whether by the year 1392, which is the date of this inscription, Sī Phromarak was regarded as a vanaspati or not.

With its meaning 'Lord of the Woods', the word vanaspati mostly refers to a forest tree itself, especially a large tree bearing fruit apparently without blossom, such as several species of the fig. But the use of this word for the meaning of the spirit of a large tree is not wanting in Sanskrit literature. In the fourth act of the play Abhijñānasākuntalā of Kālidāsa, many vanaspati are described as giving some precious ornaments to Śakuntalā while her two friends are decking her before she is sent to the court of Duśyanta, her husband. It is related that one tree gives an auspicious moon-like silken garment. Lac-dye, which is to be used on her feet, is exuded by another tree. Some sylvan deities even provide

29. "Lilit Ōngkān Chaeng Nam", Lilit Lae Nirat, Watchari Romyanan, p.26.

30. Lilit Phra Lō, Bangkok, 1951, p. 38.

31. Inscription No. 45, Prachum Silā Chāruk Phāk Thī Sām, Bangkok: Office of the Prime Minister, 1965, p. 66.

ornaments for her with their own hands. Their hands are described as emerging as far as the wrist and thus the hands are vying with the shoots sprouting from those trees.*³² The Thais might have adopted the cult of beneficial vanaspati from Indian sources. This certainly seems to have been the case in the non-canonical Thai Jātakas and the Rāmakīan mentioned above.

It is certain that by the time of both the Lilit Ōngkān Chaeng Nam and the Lilit Phra Lō, Sī Phromarak is thought of as a kind of a tree spirit, but he is not regarded as a beneficial spirit yet. On the contrary it seems that this kind of a tree spirit is responsible for malignant actions because, in the Lilit Ōngkān Chaeng Nam, Sī Phromarak is asked to punish any oath-breaker,*³³ and in the Lilit Phra Lō, Sī Phromarak is in the entourage of a sorcerer.*³⁴ The malignant characteristic of this being is specifically referred to in the Thai texts. In all three works, i.e. the Suktethai inscription, the Lilit Ōngkān Chaeng Nam, and the Lilit Phra Lō, where the word appears, it is always followed by the word yakkhān (Sanskrit: yakṣakunāra) a demon youth. The appearance of the word yakkhān with Brahmanic overtones suggests its possible relation with the word Brahma-sūrya which is a malignant spirit. It is either a kind of evil demon, or the ghost of a Brahmin who led an unholy life in the past, or a wicked Brahmin who commits suicide or meets with a violent death. Concerning this there is a religious practice of the Cambodians which would be thought by Hindus to be very odd, namely, the worship of Brahmarākṣasa. In an inscription of a Cambodian king named Yasovarman (889 A.D.) - 910 A.D.), there is mention of shrines being consecrated not only to various gods, such as Gaṇeśa, Kārttikeya, Nārāyaṇa, but also to Brahmarākṣasa from the Cambodians. In the beginning the characteristic of being a demon must have been retained by

32. Māhātmya, Abhijñānaśūktānā, Act IV, verse No. 5, Madras, 1940.

33. "Lilit Ōngkān Chaeng Nam", Lilit Lao Kirāt, Wachari Romyanan, p. 26.

34. Lilit Phra Lō, p. 30.

35. Dr. P. P. Hattarji, Indian Cultural Influence in Cambodia, Calcutta, University of Calcutta, 1964, p. 223.

the Thais as this can be attested by the word *yaksakumāra* which follows *Śī Promarak*. Later on, trees may in any text have been thought to be its dwelling place,*³⁶ and this must have been the cause of its acquiring the characteristic of a tree spirit. For the Thais, a tree spirit is usually beneficial. This might have caused the slight change in the spelling of the word from *Brahmarākṣasa* (a demon) to *Brahmarākṣa* (= protector). On the other hand, it is possible that there was a change of spelling first, then the concept relating to it was accordingly changed in order to build up an appropriate meaning for the word. However, it is noteworthy that, by the time of the Anirut Kham Chan (about 15th century) the cult of the tree spirit *Brahmarākṣa* was not popular or else it would have been inserted in the story. It only became linked to the story later on, by the time of the Samutthānāt Kham Chan (? 16th or 17th century).

Another difference between the first part of the Anirut Kham Chan and the Harivaṅśa is that the goddess *Umā*, and her foretelling of *Ugā*'s future husband, does not appear in the Anirut Kham Chan at all. In the Anirut Kham Chan it is the call of the forest that rouses the interest of *Aniruddha*. He hears of the forest, wants to go there, and finally gets permission to go there from *Kṛṣṇa*, his grandfather.*³⁷

It can be said that the parts of the story in the Anirut Kham Chan which are different from the Harivaṅśa are due to the influence of Thai tradition. In most Thai lakhōn nōt (non-classical plays), a hero must have, in one way or another, certain kinds of adventures in the forest, and in nearly every case he gains a bride from his adventures there. The episode of a chief character's wandering in the forest will also provide a poet with an opportunity to show his skill in de-

36. This hypothesis cannot be attested yet. But it might have been influenced by Bengali folk tales in which a *Brahmadāitya* (the same as *Brahmarākṣasa*), who usually dwells in a big tree, plays an important role. This information is given by a Bengali informant, but no books on this subject have yet been found.

37. Anirut Kham Chan, p. 10.

scribing, the forest scene. This is a very popular Thai convention. However, this difference does not rule out the hypothesis that the Harivamśa is the prototype of the Anirut Kham Chan. Hereunder is a table of the close comparisons of incidents in the fighting episodes from the Harivamśa and the Anirut Kham Chan. The incidents from the Viṣṇu Purāna are here illustrated too in order to nullify the traditional Thai suggestion that the Viṣṇu Purāna was the prototype of the Anirut Kham Chan.

VIṢṆU PURĀNA* ³⁸	HARIVAMŚA* ³⁹	ANIRUT KHAM CHAN* ⁴⁰
<p>1. When Aniruddha is discovered in Uśā's palace, Bāna sends his soldiers to arrest him. Finding that Aniruddha is not easily seized, Bāna arrests him by using his snake arrow.</p>	<p>This episode is similar to VP1.</p>	<p>This episode is similar to VP1. But here, and as in the <u>Harivamśa</u>, the fighting between Anirut and Bāna's soldiers is described at great length. In the A.K.C. it is even longer than the fight between Kṛṣṇa and Bāna.</p>
<p>2. Sage Nārada tells Kṛṣṇa of Aniruddha's fate.</p>	<p>The episode is similar to VP2.</p>	<p>The episode is the same as VP2. and H2.</p>

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3. Kṛṣṇa, Baladeva and Pradyumna fight with Jvara or Fever, created by Śiva. Fever seizes Baladeva with burning heat but the latter is relieved by clinging to Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa expels Fever from his own body by a fever which he himself has created. Brahmā asks him to spare Fever's life.
- Kṛṣṇa fights with the five Fire Gods. He kills Aṅgira who is the leader. The other Fire Gods run away. The episode is similar to VP4.
- The episode is almost identical with H3 and follows H's order of episodes. Aṅgira is mentioned by name here too.
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4. Kṛṣṇa fights with the five fire gods and kills them. No names of the gods are mentioned.
- The episode is similar to VP3. But here Fever is spared due to an injunction from heaven.
- The episode is similar to H4. The injunction from above also occurs.
-
5. Kṛṣṇa fights with Śiva and Kārttikeya. Śiva succumbs to a magic arrow which causes incessant yawning. He is unable to fight. Kārttikeya runs away.
- Kṛṣṇa fights with Śiva, Kārttikeya and Nandi. Brahmā intervenes. He reminds Śiva that Śiva and Kṛṣṇa are the same. Śiva then retires from the battle. Koṭavi, the eighth part of Pārvatī, asks Kṛṣṇa to spare Kārttikeya's life.
- Kṛtsana fights with Isūan accompanied by Khanthakuman. Isūan asks Kṛtsana to spare Khanthakuman's life. Sages beg Isūan not to open his third eye. Whether Isūan retires from the battle or not is not mentioned.
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 VIṢṆU PURĀṆA

HARIVAMSA

ANIRUT KHAM CHAN

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6. Kṛṣṇa fights with Bāṇa riding on Nandi and cuts off all his arms even though the mystical goddess Kōṭ-avī appears naked and asks him not to do so. Śiva asks him to spare Bāṇa's life.
- Kṛṣṇa fights with Bāṇa. Śiva sends Nandi to help Bāṇa. Umā appears naked and begs Kṛṣṇa not to kill Bāṇa. Kṛṣṇa therefore cuts off all his arms except two.
- Kṛtsana fights with Phān (Bāṇa). He cuts off all Phān's arms except two. Phān becomes the doorkeeper of Isūan.
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7. The snakes that bind Aniruddha are destroyed by Garuḍa. Kṛṣṇa, Bala-ḍeva, Pradyumna, Aniruddha and Usā go back to Svāra-watī.
- The snakes flee away at the sight of Garuḍa. Kṛṣṇa installs Kum-bhāṇḍa, Bāṇa's minister, upon the throne of Sonitapura. Kṛṣṇa marries Aniruddha to Usā in Sonitapura.
- (The snakes flee away at the first moment they see Garuḍa) Kṛtsana brings Phollathēp (Bala deva), Pratyum (Pradyumna) Anirut and Usā back to Thawārawatī.
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 30. Viṣṇu Purāṇa . V . 33 . 11-50 .

39. The Vyāsa Vīṅṇaparva . 110-112 .

40. Anirut Kham Chan, pp. 11-31 .

The story of Kṛṣṇa and his grandson Aniruddha in the Nārāi
Sip Pāng is based on the Anirut Khao Chan. Three episodes in
the text attest this statement. The first concerning the
demon Bāṇa who is the chief cause of Viṣṇu's incarnation as
Kṛṣṇa. The text narrates that Bāṇa -- the demon lord with
ten heads and twenty hands -- obtains certain boons from
his patron Śiva. These boons make him proud of himself.
He then greatly oppresses the three worlds. Śiva has to do
something when he hears of the wicked deeds of the demon. As
in the other Thai stories of Viṣṇu's incarnation, in the Nārāi
Sip Pāng, Śiva entrusts the mission of getting rid of the
demon to Viṣṇu who has to incarnate himself to fulfil his
task. In this text Viṣṇu is described as taking a divine
ring with him from heaven and riding the gauda to the
human world. He creates a city called Barangkā, and he
becomes the first king of that city. He calls himself Kṛṣṇa.*⁴¹
It is true that the Anirut Khao Chan does not directly mention
the cause of the Kṛṣṇa incarnation of Viṣṇu, but since
Viṣṇu's only foe in the text is Bāṇa, it is therefore likely
that the enemy, whom Kṛṣṇa is going to conquer, and who is
referred to in the first stanza of the Anirut Khao Chan,*⁴²
is one and the same as Bāṇa. In Hindu mythology it is the
tyrant Kaṁsa -- the analogue of Rāvaṇa in the Rāma incarnation --
who causes this incarnation of Viṣṇu. Kaṁsa, a tyrannical
king of Mathurā, son of Ugrasena, is the cousin of Kṛṣṇa.
Having deflowered his father he then forbids his subjects to
worship Bāṇa, and commands them to reverence Śiva. Kaṁsa's
tyranny becomes so unbearable that the Earth makes complaints
to Indra. Viṣṇu comes to know of what has happened. He
promises the gods that he will help them by incarnating
himself as Kṛṣṇa.*⁴³

41. Prajāleo Sukhonthachāt (ed.), Nārāi Sip Pāng Lee Phong Hai
Thāi Sī Pāng Pān, 2nd ed., Bangkok, 1968, p. 66.

42. Anirut Khao Chan, p. 1.

43. Viṣṇu Purāṇa, V. 1.1-65.

The second episode, that of Usā Son, the story of Aniruddha's being carried away by the tree spirit to be matched with Usā, is also narrated in the Nārāi Sīp Pāṅ. This Usā Son episode does not occur in any Hindu text. It is the Thai's own interpolation in the story of Kṛṣṇa in the Anirut Kham Chan. In the Nārāi Sīp Pāṅ, the name of the tree spirit -- Sī Phromarak -- is mentioned. Though this name does not appear in the Anirut Kham Chan, the reference to it in the Sasutthakhōt Kham Chan, at the tree god who carries Aniruddha to Usā's palace, helps in confirming the influence of the Anirut Kham Chan upon the Nārāi Sīp Pāṅ.

In the Hindu legend, Bāṇa, who is absolutely defeated by Kṛṣṇa, becomes a doorkeeper of Śiva. This is narrated in the Nārāi Sīp Pāṅ as well as in the Anirut Kham Chan, and it is said that at first Kṛṣṇa wants to kill Bāṇa. Then Śiva asks Kṛṣṇa to spare Bāṇa's life. So Kṛṣṇa just cuts off all but two of Bāṇa's arms. Then by Śiva's grace, Bāṇa becomes the doorkeeper of the god.*⁴⁴ The Harivamśa has a different story. When Bāṇa is defeated by Kṛṣṇa, he dances for Śiva, even with wounds all over his body. Śiva is pleased with him and promises to grant him boons. Bāṇa asks Śiva to heal up his wounds caused by the weapons of Kṛṣṇa. Furthermore Bāṇa asks Śiva that the hideousness of his form as a result of the loss of his arms be removed. Finally Bāṇa asks for eternal superiority over all the demons.*⁴⁵

However, the Nārāi Sīp Pāṅ does differ in many places from the Anirut Kham Chan. In the first main part of the story, it is not only Bāṇa's ill treatment of Aniruddha that causes the conflict between Kṛṣṇa and Bāṇa. Another element, i.e. Bāṇa's committing adultery with Indra's consort without her knowledge,

44. Anirut Kham Chan, p. 90; Praphan Sukhonthachāt (ed.), Nārāi Sīp Pāṅ..., p. 63.

45. Harivamśa Vignaparva . 112 . 117-129.

which is to cause his destruction, is inserted into the Nārāi
Sig Pāng. It is related in the Royal Press Version of the
Nārāi Sig Pāng that Bāṇa, whose lust after women has increased
tremendously, changes himself into the form of a god, and
goes up to the Tāvātimsa Heaven. There he commits adultery
with many goddesses. Even that does not satisfy him. He
also transforms himself into the form of Indra and commits
adultery with the goddess Sucitrā, the chief queen of Indra,
without her knowing his true identity. When the goddess
Sucitrā realizes the truth, her grief is so great that she
takes leave of Indra to be born in the human world. She
wants to be the cause which brings about Viṣṇu's destruction
of the demon Bāṇa. Sucitrā is born without parents *⁴⁶ in a
lotus growing in a pond near the hermitage of a sage. The
sage finds her when he takes his bath there. He adopts her
as his daughter and calls her Uṣā. When the demon Bāṇa, who
has no child, hears of her, he too wants to adopt her as
his child. He asks for her from the sage. It is then that
Indra sets in motion all that remains to cause the fall of
Bāṇa. Indra makes Aniruddha feel like going to the forest.
When Aniruddha stays overnight under the banyan tree in the
forest, Indra orders a tree spirit called Sī Phromarak to
carry Aniruddha to Uṣā's palace. (The remainder of the story
is the same as in the Anirut Khan Chan. There is only one
slight difference, that is, Uṣā's confidante has to fly up
to the sixteen tiers of heaven and down to the whole world
below to order to paint the portraits of the gods and the
heroes for Uṣā. In the Anirut Khan Chan she paints these
portraits from her memory.) When Aniruddha is found and
brought to Uṣā, Indra orders Sī Phromarak to deliver the
news to Uṣā. That news brings Uṣā to Bāṇa's kingdom
and leads to the battle between them.*⁴⁷

46. Uṣā (Sinhalese Pali: uṣpātika, uṣpātika, "birth without
parents" as a deva. Piṭhanikāya III.107.

47. Phyllis B. Nordhøvelst (ed.), Nārāi Sig Pāng..., pp. 61-62.

This interpolated episode in the Nārāi Śi. Pāṇḍ is influenced by a myth or myths, from a Rāvaṇa cycle widely related in Thailand and Cambodia. In the Rāmakīan there is a story of the arrogant Rāvaṇa, who forces goddesses to appease his passion. He also commits adultery with Indra's concubines. But the name of Sucitrā is not mentioned.*⁴⁸ There is a Cambodian tale of the oppression of the gods by Rāvaṇa. The gods are very frightened of Rāvaṇa's power. Indra, in order to protect his wives, hides them in a cavern, and comes to visit them on every seventh day. The door to this cavern can be opened only by means of a magic spell. Rāvaṇa plans to change himself into a lizard: he crouches above the door and listens to the chants pronounced unsuspectingly by Indra. The next day, under the form of Indra, it is easy for him to get inside the harem and to play his role with the chief wife, Sucitrā. It is clearly seen that the mischievous deed of Rāvaṇa narrated in the preceding myths is transferred to Rāma in the Nārāi Śi. Pāṇḍ. The confusion between Rāvaṇa and Bāṇa is not difficult to explain. In Thai literature Rāvaṇa and Bāṇa, as well as Rāma and Rāma, are often confused as the same person. For example in the Andut Khan Chan Bāṇa is sometimes called Rāvaṇa. It cannot be said for certain that the Rāmakīan and the Nārāi Śi. Pāṇḍ have been influenced by the Cambodian myth. This is because there is no solid evidence for an early date for the Cambodian myth. It is true that there is a scene somewhat similar to this myth engraved on a bas-relief of the Interior Gallery of the Bayon at Angkor Thom and at Angkor Wat. It is the picture of a woman standing inside a door. Above the door there is a gigantic lizard. A prince is standing on one side of the door. On the other side is an ascetic.*⁴⁹ George Coedès observes that the real source of this scene has not yet been found.*⁵⁰ He gives instead a modern Cambodian tale

48. Phra Rāi Sotvat Phra Phuttā Yōt Fā Chulā Lōk (King Rama I), Rāmakīan, Vol. 7, Bangkok, 1953, pp. 167-169.

49. G. Coedès "Notice archéologique", Le Bayon d'Angkor Thom, les bas-reliefs, Paris, 1913, p. 20.

50. Ibid.

(quoted above) which is, according to him, very near to that scene. But he also accepts that the ascetic in this tale-related does not fit in with the tale he has given.*⁵¹ It is possible that both the Thais and the Cambodians had obtained the myth of mischievous Rāvaṇa from the same source and had formed their own versions. The Thais on their side had mixed the myth of Rāvaṇa's transgressing with a woman named Vedavati who is reborn as Sītā in order to take revenge on him, together with the myth of Indra and Rāvaṇa. The myth of Vedavati and Rāvaṇa is narrated in the Rāmāyana. Once Rāvaṇa tried to force a woman named Vedavati to be his wife. Vedavati, the daughter of the sage Kuśadvaja, did not accept his proposal. She told him that gods and gandharvas had sought to woo her, but her father would give her to no one but Viṣṇu. Śaṃbhu, king of the demons, who was angry at this resolution, slew her father; but she remained firm to her father's wish, and practised austerities to gain Viṣṇu for her husband. Nothing daunted, Rāvaṇa urgently pressed his suit, and boasted that he was superior to Viṣṇu. He then touched her hair with the tip of his finger. This greatly enraged her, and Vedavati forthwith cut off her hair, and said she would enter into the fire before his eyes. She said, "Since I have been insulted in the forest by you who are wicked-hearted, I shall be born again for your destruction." Then Vedavati entered the blazing fire. It was she who was born again as Sītā, and was the cause of Rāvaṇa's death.*⁵² The Thai version of the Rāmāyana, the Rāmākīan omits this myth of Rāvaṇa's mischievous deed. The myth is preserved in Thai literature in the cycle of Indra and is combined in the Bāṇa story related in the Nārāi Sip Pāng instead. The Cambodians also have the myth of the previous birth of Sītā which, similar to the Thai story, can be said to have its source in the Vedavati myth. But the Cambodians only combine this myth with another tale of Rāvaṇa's changing himself

51. Ibid.

52. Rāmāyana VII . 17

into the form of a lizard. On this occasion he once again assumes the form of the lady's husband, a hermit, in order to commit adultery with her. However, the Cambodians do not mix the myth of the reincarnation of Sītā with a myth of Indra and Rāvaṇa as the Thais do. Nevertheless the Cambodian myth of Rāvaṇa as a lizard, and the rebirth of Sītā, may have had some influence on the story of Uṣā in the Bot Lakhōn Rū'ang Unarut. This will be discussed in due course. (see p. 106). Another influence in the interpolated part of Uṣā's previous birth in the Nārāi Sip Pāng is from the Thai version of the Rāmāyana, the Rāmākīan. It is clear that the story of the sage's finding Uṣā, who was the goddess Sucitrā in her previous birth, in a lotus at the bathing pond is reminiscent of the sage-king Janaka's finding Sītā in a box in the river where he is taking a bath.*⁵³

53. King Rama I, Rāmākīan, Vol. I, pp. 329-330.

Differences in the second main part, or the fighting episodes, between the Anirut Khan Chan and the Nārāi Sip Pāng are that the Nārāi Sip Pāng deviates in many points from the Indian traditional story, while the Anirut Khan Chan follows the Indian prototype. In the Nārāi Sip Pāng Nārada, who in the Harivansā and the Anirut Khan Chan, informs Kṛṣṇa of the binding of Anirudha by Bāṇa, is omitted. He is replaced by a lesser spirit named Śi Phromarak, who does the same thing as Nārada, according to Indra's order. The god Kārttikeya, Śiva's son and his chief assistant in the army, does not appear either. Saladeva is no longer known in the Nārāi Sip Pāng as Kṛṣṇa's brother. He is there described as being a god only. However, the fire gods, which play an important role in the Anirut Khan Chan, do not make any appearance at all. Moreover, there is a new interpolated part in the episode, i.e. Bāṇa's arms, which have been cut off by Kṛṣṇa, are once restored by Śiva before they are cut off by Kṛṣṇa again.*⁵⁴ This might have been influenced by the Mahābhārata. It is also narrated there that Bāṇa's new hands will grow after the old ones have been cut off by Śiva.*⁵⁵ On the other hand it can also be said that this interpolation is caused by the increasing importance of Śiva which is illustrated throughout in the Nārāi Sip Pāng. However, the Nārāi Sip Pāng still retains some parts similar to the Anirut Khan Chan. These are: that Bāṇa is not killed by Kṛṣṇa; that ^{he} only has his arms cut off by Kṛṣṇa; and that he becomes the doorkeeper of Śiva.

It can be said that the Nārāi Sip Pāng does not deviate as much from the Anirut Khan Chan as does the Śol Lakhōn Rū'ang (part 1). The Mahābhārata seems to be the transition from the Anirut Khan Chan to the Śol Lakhōn Rū'ang, Ugarit.

54. Pradhan, Sāhityachāt (ed.), Nārāi Sip Pāng, ..., p. 62.
55. Mahābhārata VI.109.

Dot Lakṣṇa Rū'ang Ugarut differs the most from the Hindu prototype. If it were not for two main incidents which are similar to the Hindu story it would be thought to be a different myth. These two incidents are: (a) the union of Anurādha and Uṣā brought about by a go-between, i.e. Uṣā's confidante; and (b) the destruction of the demon Nāga by the hero (and even by Kṛṣṇa). These two incidents act like the supporting posts on which a new growth of deviations and interpolations may climb, and indeed they seem to be almost overgrown by these deviations. Most of the different episodes in the Dot Lakṣṇa Rū'ang Ugarut can be said to have been influenced by the Rāmāyaṇa, or more probably by the Thai Rāmāyaṇa.

The first noteworthy deviation is the change of the name of Ugarut's grandson from Anurūt to Ugarut. This is without doubt influenced by oral literary tradition. It seems that the word Ugarut is officially used for the first time in the version compiled by King Rama I and his court poets in the year 1800. No explanation for the change of the hero's name is given. It is said in the text merely that the king is following the ancient story, ⁱⁿ composing the story of Ugarut.*⁵⁶ It is possible that the change of the word had happened already, and the new word had been used for some time before the reign of King Rama I so that he did not see any point in giving further explanation.

To start with it can be said that the first main part of the Dot Lakṣṇa Rū'ang Ugarut is based on the Hārāi Siy Pāng. This is because the important incidents in the Hārāi Siy Pāng, which do not appear in the Anurūt Khana Chan, are found in the Dot Lakṣṇa Rū'ang Ugarut. The first is that Sāga commits adultery with the goddess Suci-trā without her knowledge, and this

* Cf. King Rama I, Dot Lakṣṇa Rū'ang Ugarut, p. (3).

leads to her taking revenge on him. The second is that Indra plays an important role in bringing Unarut to Usā. But even in these two episodes, interpolations are inserted in the Śat-tadānāt-kā'ag Unarut. They are: (a) Bāna transforms himself into a tut-tū (an imaginary ogre whose name is invoked to frighten children into obedience); and (b) Indra uses a golden deer in order to lure Unarut away from his wife.

It is related in the text that Bāna changes himself into the form of a tut-tū and hides himself at the door to Indra's inner apartment. This helps him to learn about Indra's secret prayers for opening and closing the door. He is then able to enter the apartment and commit adultery with the goddess Sucitrā. The incident of Bāna in the form of a tut-tū hiding at the door in order to obtain entrance to the apartment of Indra is similar to the Cambodian myth of Rāvaṇa and Indra which has already been quoted and discussed in the preceding passages (p.201). But in this Cambodian myth there is no mention of the rebirth of Sucitrā as Sītā. There is another Cambodian myth which contains the hiding of Rāvaṇa in the form of a lizard and the episode of Sītā's previous birth. Hereunder is the story.

In the forest lived an ascetic and his wife whose beauty was heard of by Āloviyoks (Lord of the Yakṣas, i.e. Rāvaṇa) in Lokkā. He came to spy on the woman and was inflamed with desire for her. But the hermit, who regularly left his home to practise meditation for seven days at a time, had a habit of closing the door then with a magic spell, and of opening it with another spell. Āloviyoks transformed himself into a lizard and stationed himself on the portico to learn of these spells. Under the guise of being the hermit, one night when he was absent, Āloviyoks went in to the

woman's room to have intercourse with her, leaving her when dawn came.

The wife, however, astonished by her husband's unusual return, pressed him with questions when he came back again to her. They both understood what had happened, the husband knowing that only Alovijola could be the author of such deception. The woman died of shame, but not without asking a vow to get revenge. She was reincarnated in the womb of Āstōkīni (Māndodari), the wife of Alovijola. Thus was Sītā born, through whom the ruin of Laikā would be accomplished.*

It can be seen that this Cambodian myth is the combination of two Hindu myths, i.e. the adultery of Indra with Abalyā, Sage Gandhārī's wife,⁵⁰ and the myth of Rāvaṇa's transgression with Vedavatī (see p. 202). Moreover, this Cambodian myth, as well as the Indra and Rāvaṇa myth quoted above (see p. 201), both seem to be relying upon the scene on the bas-relief at the Bayon and at Angkor Vat representing a lizard crouching under the feet of a woman who is flouted on each side by a prince and an ascetic. The source of the hiding lizard has not yet been found in Hindu mythology. It is highly probable that it is an exclusively Cambodian motif.

It is probable that the Thais had taken the hiding episode from this Cambodian myth and added it, in the Rat Lakhōn Sāng Kān, with the Indra and Rāvaṇa or Rāva myth, which had already been combined with the Vedavatī myth in the Harai Sih Rāng.

There is also a Buddhist tale in Thai literature which contains the hiding episode. In a literary poem called Rū'ang Kānī, composed by Chao Phraja Phra Kālang (Mon) during the reign of King Rama I, the confidante named Māhāwōn (Sanskrit: espion) of a king, called Brahmadatta transforms himself

47. Éveline Porcé-Maspero, Étude sur les Rites Agraires des Cambodgiens, Vol. II, Paris, 1964, p. 530.

50. Rā'ajya . I . 40. 14-33; 49. 1-10.

into a chicken-louse, and hides himself at the door of the Garuda's inner apartment in the Simphālī (Pali: Siabali; Sanskrit: Śābhālī) heaven. After the Garuda has left his apartment, Kāthuwēn changes himself back to his normal form and enters the room. He then commits adultery with the Garuda's mistress. She is called Kākī and is King Brahma-śakī's wife. She has been abducted by the Garuda.*⁵⁹ The story of Kākī finds its source in a Nipāta Jātaka named Kākātiya Jātaka or Kākāti Jātaka (No. 327). In this Jātaka there is no mention of Kāthuwēn's changing himself into the form of a chicken-louse. Only his hiding at the Garuda's door is narrated in the Jātaka.*⁶⁰ It appears that the date of Plū'ang Kākī and that of Tot La'dōn Rū'ang Unerut are contemporaneous. This applies not only to the extant texts, which are chronologically contemporaneous -- they are both from the reign of King Rama I -- but also to the contents. The details in both these stories cannot be traced further than the end of the Ayutthya period. Earlier versions of the story all lack the episode of a hidden character watching and listening. A text believed by the Thais to be by Prince Thammāthitōt, King Siamrakōt's (1733-1757) son, is in the form of a lyrical song called Tot Kē Plū'ang Kākī. But the episode of Kāthuwēn's hiding himself in the palace of Garuda does not appear in the extant Ayutthya text. Similarly, the episode of Bāna's hiding himself in Indra's palace is not mentioned in a literary work called Bunnōwāt Khan Chan, composed by Mahā Kān of the Sūi Monastery in the reign of King Eḡrommakōt, where reference to Aniruddha appears. In the Bunnōwāt Khan Chan, Mahā Kān refers to a dance-play performance of the story of Aniruddha and Kinari.*⁶¹ The mention of the Kinaris together

59. Chao Phrayā Phra Khlang (Hon), "Rū'ang Kākī," found in Draśat Munakhadī Thai Samraḡ Naksu'ksā, by Plū'ang Na Kādōn, Bangkok, 1935, p. 318.

60. The Jātaka, Vol. III, translated by H.T. Francis, R.A. Neil, Cambridge, 1897, p. 61; cf. No. 360 -- Sussondi Jātaka -- in the same volume, pp. 124-125.

61. Mahā Kān, Bunnōwāt Khan Chan, Bangkok, 1923, p. 23.

with Aniruddha in the Bunnōwāt Kham Chan implies the existence of an Unarut legend (though, of course, not necessarily having contents identical with the Bot Lakhōn Rū'ang Unarut) at that time. A whole scene is devoted to this in the Bot Lakhōn Rū'ang Unarut. No Kinnarīs appear in either the Anirut Kham Chan or the Nārāi Sip Pāng. However, it is not certain whether the hiding episode must definitely be excluded from the story-line as known in the Ayuthya period, because the telling of the story is incomplete in these texts; the Bunnōwāt Kham Chan merely makes a passing reference, and the Bot Hē Rū'ang Kākī concerns itself with only one episode. Whether the Bot Lakhōn Rū'ang Unarut is influenced by the story of Kākī of the Ayuthya period, or the other way round, cannot therefore be shown from any foregoing evidence. But it is definite that in the case of Rū'ang Kākī, the hiding episode was influenced by the Jātaka, while it is more likely that this episode in the Bot Lakhōn Rū'ang Unarut was influenced by the Cambodian myth of Āloviyoks and Sītā. What makes it certain that the Cambodian myth is the source of the hiding episode in the Bot Lakhōn Rū'ang Unarut is that the main character, i.e. Rāvaṇa, in the Cambodian myth is nearer to Bāṇa in the Bot Lakhōn Rū'ang Unarut than is the Nātkuwēn of the Jātaka. In addition to this there is also the Cambodian myth of Rāvaṇa's transgression with Indra's wife which finds its counterpart in the Bāṇa and Indra myth in the Nārāi Sip Pāng and the Bot Lakhōn Rū'ang Unarut.

The interpolation of a golden deer in the Bot Lakhōn Rū'ang Unarut is for certain an influence from the Rāmākīan. It is related in the text that when Indra knows, by means of his divine power, that Unarut is touring with his wife, the god orders Mātālī, who is usually known as Indra's charioteer, to change himself into the form of a golden deer.*⁶² The

62. King Rama I, Bot Lakhōn Rū'ang Unarut, p. 183.

deer is to lure Unarut away from his wife and his retinue. It is to bring Unarut to a banyan tree. After that the spirit of the banyan tree will carry Unarut to Usā's palace to have sexual intercourse with her. It is said in the text that, when his wife asks Unarut to catch the golden deer for her, Unarut does not do so at once. He warns his wife to think well before she urges him to do so. He says, "This deer is so strange and does not fit in with its forest surroundings. It might be the same trick that trapped Rāma, Lakṣmaṇa and Sītā. At that time Rāvaṇa ordered Parīca to transform into a deer too. The deer charmed Sītā, and she too asked Rāma to catch it for her. Rāma did so. That is why his wife was able to be abducted by Śaṅgī."⁶⁰ As for the reason why a golden deer has been interpolated in the story at all, one possibility is that it was inserted after the interpolation of a character, i.e. Unarut's wife. The golden deer is a device to separate Unarut from his wife so that it is he alone who comes to the banyan tree.

This is the second part of the Bot Lokhōn Rū'ang. Unarut that is very different from the other texts on Kṛṣṇa and his grandson. In this part the fighting between Kṛṣṇa and Śaṅga is no longer the only main theme. In fact it forms only one half of it. Moreover, there is an important alteration in the story; it is Unarut himself, who as soon as he has been released by Kṛṣṇa from Śaṅga's capture, fights with Śaṅga fiercely and kills him in the end.⁶¹ There is no doubt that this alteration is intended to glorify Unarut, and therefore to make him the real and only hero of the story. This can also be illustrated by the later episodes in this same second part of the text, U'itōn Mōn Kairut K'ao Chao and the Mōrui Siō Pāng, which deal with the defeat of Śaṅga by Kṛṣṇa, the Bot Lokhōn Rū'ang Unarut continues on from when. The episodes which follow are all on Unarut. The text tells of Unarut's being crowned as the king of his grandfather's kingdom. After that he goes

60. Ibid., p. 193.

61. Ibid., p. 316.

off to explore some wild elephants. Then finds his third wife to be a Pinnarī. (The first is called Sī Sudā and the second is Uṣā, Uṣā's daughter.) Later on Unarut continues his hunt for the elephants. The story ends with his return to Narangkā, his city, for his last adventure.

It can be seen that the alteration and the interpolation in the second part of the Śai Lakṣṇa Pāṇi, Unarut are intended to heighten the importance of Unarut. They make clear that the book is supposed to be the story of the renowned Unarut, and not that of Kṛṣṇa, his grandfather, any more. Likewise, the Thai interpolation of the tree spirit who carries Aniruddha to be married with Uṣā in the Anirut Khan Chan can be said to lower the rank of Aniruddha, i.e. Aniruddha is the most important character in this myth. It is most unlikely that the reason for the interpolation is that the tree spirit can please Kṛṣṇa by sending his grandson Aniruddha with Uṣā. After all the tree spirit has not even seen the Aniruddha yet. It is only out of curiosity that the tree spirit carries Aniruddha to Uṣā's place. The tree spirit thinks that Aniruddha, who might be either a best powerful god or a very handsome king, should not stay alone without a girl to entertain him. This interpolation in the Anirut Khan Chan concords well with a later episode. When Aniruddha is fighting with the soldiers of Pāpa he is praised as if he is Kṛṣṇa himself. His valiant fighting is described at great length, and with even more colour than the battle between Kṛṣṇa and Pāpa. It is true that the Anirut Khan Chan retains the fight of Kṛṣṇa against Pāpa. But this episode is not related at great length, nor is it composed with the great care and neatness as the episode on Aniruddha. Some passages are repeated to fill up the story. It is more like a note to show that the Thai story of Aniruddha has its origin in one of the well-known stories of Kṛṣṇa related in the Sanskrit Purāṇas. It can be seen that by the time this myth (in the Anirut Khan

Chai) has been passed down from the Ayutthya period to the Ratanakosin period (in the Soi Lakhon Rū'ang Unarut) the importance of Kṛṣṇa's grandson had been increased until it replaces and completely obliterates that of Kṛṣṇa.

The trend of these Thai literary texts on Kṛṣṇa's myths reflects the Thai preference in literature dealing with a romance. It can be seen that the story of Aniruddha in Kṛṣṇa's myth is chosen in the first place because it contains a romantic element, not because it is the only Kṛṣṇa myth known by the Thais. There is evidence showing that various episodes in Kṛṣṇa's life had indeed been related in Thailand. The reference to Kṛṣṇa found in the text of early Ayutthya period, discussed in the beginning of this chapter, confirms this statement. If these preferences for romance are admitted, however, comment is called for ^{by} the absence of any love-stories of Kṛṣṇa from Thai literature. In the Purāṇas, especially in the Bhāgavata Purāṇa, Kṛṣṇa is depicted as an amorous lover. He constantly sports with the wives and daughters of the cowherds of Vṛndāvan.*⁶⁶ The reason why these episodes do not appear in Thai literature can be that they are the stories of Kṛṣṇa in the form of a cowherd, a commoner. Since most of Thai poets during the early Ayutthya period were court poets, it is therefore unlikely that the love-stories of commoners would have interested them or their patrons. The convention of the 'pastoral' (nymphs and shepherds, gods and shepherdesses etc.) is absent from Thai classical literature. Country life -- except for the austerities of rishis and sages -- was not admired. It was definitely not thought to be a sort of paradise of desirable simplicity. On the other hand it is possible that Kṛṣṇa's love-stories might have been considered by the Thais to be examples of too mundane an activity to be carried out by the incarnation of a god, or by a god himself. For by

66. Bhāgavata Purāṇa X . 22; 29-33; 53.

the Thais, as well as the Hindus, Kṛṣṇa is thought of as the same as Viṣṇu. This can clearly be seen in Thai literature. In the three texts on Kṛṣṇa and his grandson Aniruddha, i.e. the Anirut Khan Chan, the Nārāi Sip Pāng and the Bot Lakhōn Rū'ang Unarut, Kṛṣṇa is frequently called Calrī -- a discus holder -- which is certainly an epithet of Viṣṇu. Likewise Viṣṇu is also often confused with Kṛṣṇa, and it is clear from the texts in which this phenomenon happens that Thai poets do not see any difference between Viṣṇu and Kṛṣṇa. In Chan Sangwoei Phra Mahā Savētachat composed by Prince Dechādīsōn in the reign of King Rama IV, Kṛṣṇa is invoked as the same as Vāsudeva; he rides on the Garuḍa.*⁵⁷ In Chan Sangwoei Phra Thīnang Bāng Pa In composed in the reign of King Rama V, Viṣṇu is replaced by Kṛṣṇa in the invocation to the Hindu trimūrti. Here too Kṛṣṇa is confused with Viṣṇu. Kṛṣṇa is described as wearing blue garments (the typical colour for Kṛṣṇa in Hindu mythology); he sleeps on the Serpent Lord and rides the Garuḍa.*⁵⁸ In Chan Klong Phra Savēt Suwaphāphan by Phrayā Sī Samthōn Wōhān (Nōi), the famous Thai language preceptor in the reign of King Rama V, Nāg, who is described as having four hands holding a conch, a lotus, a wheel and the Earth, is invoked together with Śiva and Brahmā.*⁵⁹ It is therefore possible that Kṛṣṇa's identification with Brahmā is the reason why the mischievous deeds of Nāg were not chosen in the first place by Thai poets of the 19th century. If these deeds are referred to at all, they are being related as vulgarous deeds of the god. This happens in Chan Klong Phra Savēt Suwaphāphan (position 1 in the beginning of this chapter, pp. 133). Nāg's role as the god who righteously

57. Prince Dechādīsōn, "Chan Sangwoei Phra Mahā Savētachat", Chan Sangwoei Phra Mahā Savētachat, Bangkok, 1914, p. 59.

58. Prince Dechādīsōn, "Chan Sangwoei Phra Thīnang Bāng Pa In", Ibid., p. 79.

59. Phrayā Sī Samthōn (Nōi), "Chan Klong Phra Savēt Suwaphāphan", Ibid., p. 133.

Indeed, the story of Bāṇa is considered by Thai poets to be a suitable subject to write about. Moreover, the cause of the conflict between Kṛpā and Bāṇa, i.e. the love-affair between Udayān, Kṛpā's grandson, and of Uṣā, Bāṇa's daughter, at the same time provides a good and attractive theme for Thai poets to display their literary skill and imagination fully. The preference for romantic, even erotic, stories may well be indulged in without any disrespect to Viṣṇu or Kṛṣṇa himself, for it is the grandson here who is the hero and chief protagonist. Another preference, viz. a love of cold-blooded and fantastic feats of heroism, can also be satisfied, this time in the person of the grandfather once the grandson is no longer able to carry the story-line with him. That is why, with but few exceptions, only the episode of Kṛpā's fight against Bāṇa is chosen, expanded and related in Thai literature.

CHAPTER VII

THAI RAMA INCARNATION AND THAI VERSION OF THE RĀMĀYANA

RĀMĀWATĀN

There are two so-called Rāma incarnations in the Nārāi Sip Pāng (R.P.V.) One has been constructed by the Thais from myths relating to Rāvāṇa widely narrated in local South Indian Purāṇas; the other is the traditional account of Rāmacandra, the great hero of the Rāmāyana.

The first Thai story of the Rāma incarnation is the myth of Viṣṇu's rescue of Umā from the hands of Rāvāṇa. Viṣṇu deceives Rāvāṇa into believing that his chosen bride, Umā, is unsuitable for him. Rāvāṇa is recommended by Viṣṇu to choose Monthuk (Mandodari) instead. The Nārāi Sip Pāng (R.P.V.) relates:

The demon Wirunhok mistakes the cry of a lizard to be the voice of Siva so he bows down to pay homage to it. When Wirunhok finds out the truth he is so angry that he throws his serpent-noose cross-belt at it. The lizard is killed but Kailāsa is tipped to one side. The gods cannot push the mountain back up again. Daśakaṇṭha volunteers to do so. Siva promises him any goddess, even his own concubine, as a reward. Daśakaṇṭha is successful in pushing the mountain back up to its previous position. He then asks for the goddess Umā from Siva as a reward. Siva has to give her to him. All the gods become very disturbed and ask Viṣṇu for help. Viṣṇu, therefore, changes his body into the form of a man called Rāmāwatān. He then comes to plant trees at the roadside where Daśakaṇṭha is passing by. Rāmāwatān catches his attention by putting the trees down into the ground topmost first. When Daśakaṇṭha comes by he is very surprised and does not realize that it is a trick. He censures the man saying, "You are a fool. How can these trees yield fruit when you plant them by putting the top part down first?" Rāmāwatān answers: "It is you who are a fool. Why did you ask for Umā? Why did you not ask for Monthok who is Siva's concubine? She is suitable to be a queen. You have asked for Umā who is the Mother Goddess in the

abode of gods. If you make her your queen your head will be broken into seven pieces." When Daśakanṭha hears that he realizes the truth. He returns Umā to Śiva and asks him for Monthok. Siva gives her to him. Daśakanṭha returns to his city. Viṣṇu then goes back to sleep in the Ocean of Milk.*¹

In Hindu mythology from South India, there are many versions of Viṣṇu's playing a trick on Rāvaṇa in order to make him renounce Umā. All versions say that Rāvaṇa wins Umā from Śiva by his great tapas and devotion to the god. The differences among these versions are the means by which Viṣṇu succeeds in rescuing the goddess. The version in which Viṣṇu uses the inverted tree for his trick as in the Thai story is a myth in the Tiruvaraṅcaram.

As Rāvaṇa was taking Umā south to Laṅkā, Viṣṇu went and stood in their path. As soon as he caught sight of Umā's wedding chain he created a site for the performance of tapas on the north bank of Mayuranadī, and there he stood in the form of a sage by the side of a grove of mulli-shrubs which were growing upside down, their roots in the air, bearing ripe fruit. Rāvaṇa observed this strange phenomenon and brought his flying chariot down to ask the sage what it meant. "Who are you, and who is this lady?" asked the sage. "The fact is that she is the wife of Siva, and I have won her by tapas," said Rāvaṇa. The sage replied "To those who die after a life of following dharma, Antaka appears as a just king; but to the wicked, he has a hideous appearance. Similarly, Siva gave you Māyā and told you she was his wife. This mulli grove is the first sign you have had of how you are deceived."

Rāvaṇa was disheartened by these words. He asked Viṣṇu to watch Umā and went to perform tapas at the river. Viṣṇu took the form of a two-footed horse and took Umā to Varaṅcai. When Rāvaṇa came back he could not find either of them. He followed them until he came to Varaṅcai too. Then he performed tapas and asked for all his boons from Śiva. Śiva gave him the sword, the spear and the Māyāsakti.*²

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1. Prapṭhan Sukhonthachāt (ed.), Nārāi Sip Pāng Lae Phong Nai Rū'ang Rānakian, 2nd ed., Bangkok, 1953, pp. 66-67.
 2. "Tiruvaraṅcaram", found in The Mythology of the Tamil Saiva Talapurana unpublished Ph.D. Thesis by D.D.Shulman, School of Oriental and African Studies, London University, 1976, p. 438.

In the Nārāi Sip Pāṅg and the Rāmakīan Viṣṇu does not take the form of a sage as in the Tamil text, but either of a man (in the Nārāi Sip Pāṅg) or of an old demon (in the Rāmakīan). But in both texts Viṣṇu uses the same trick in deceiving Rāvaṇa as in the Tamil myth mentioned above, i.e. by planting trees upside down. The theme of the Tamil myth, i.e. the sacredness of the pilgrimage site Varāṅcai which can bring forth all the supreme boons for a devotee, is lacking in the Nārāi Sip Pāṅg. Only the intriguing trick of Viṣṇu is retained. In the Tamil myth cited above Rāvaṇa's acquisition of his wife Mandodarī which is described in the Nārāi Sip Pāṅg, is not mentioned. The mention of Mandodarī as a suitable wife for Rāvaṇa is nevertheless found in another version of this myth. In the Śivalīlāmṛta Viṣṇu is described as creating a charming girl after he has been successful in making Rāvaṇa believe that Umā is very ugly, and in making Rāvaṇa return the goddess to Śiva. Viṣṇu assures Rāvaṇa that the charming girl will be born as Mandodarī, the daughter of Māyāsura. She will marry him and be a faithful wife.*³

The counterpart of Rāvaṇa's pushing Kailāsa Mountain back up again is not found in Hindu mythology except for an episode of Rāvaṇa's trying to uproot Kailāsa. The story in the Uttarakāṇḍa of the Rāmāyana goes:

Rāvaṇa is returning to Laṅkā after he has defeated Kuvera. On his way back he comes to the region near Kailāsa. Nandi, Śiva's chief attendant, stops him telling him that Śiva is sporting on the mountain, and he is not to be approached by anyone. Rāvaṇa is very angry to hear that. Then he sees the monkey face of Nandi and laughs at it. Nandi curses him to be destroyed by monkeys. Rāvaṇa is very infuriated at that curse and at his failure to proceed with his journey. So he tries to uproot Kailāsa. He lifts the mountain up at once; and then the mountain trembles greatly. The gods and Pārvatī are very frightened. Śiva, who knows the real cause of this event, presses the mountain with his great toe, as in sport. Rāvaṇa is very

3. D.D. Shulman, The Mythology of the Tamil Saiva Talapurānam, p. 441.

amazed. His arms are being crushed. From anger and pain in his arms he shouts a very loud shout. The gods and his councillors advise him to propitiate Śiva so that the god will release Rāvaṇa's arms. Rāvaṇa does so. He chants various Soma hymns for a thousand years. In the end Śiva is pleased and sets free the hands of Rāvaṇa. Śiva tells him that since he has uttered a terrific yell, which strikes horror into the three worlds, his name will be Rāvaṇa. Śiva also gives him an exceedingly effulgent sword, and grants him peace for the rest of his life.*⁴

This episode is also depicted in an iconographical form.*⁵ There are, however, no sculptured images of this episode in Thailand. It is not impossible that the Thais had misinterpreted this episode (particularly if it was familiar to them in paintings only) to be a representation of the beneficial action of Rāvaṇa described in the Thai texts. (See illustration No.11)

However, it can be said that a connection with the Sanskrit Rāmāyana is also found in the Thai Rāmāvatān myth. In the Uttarakanda of the Vālmiki Rāmāyana, Rāvaṇa is cursed by Nalakuvara, son of Kuvera, that his head will be broken into seven pieces whenever he forces any woman to appease his passion. This curse is reflected in the threat Viṣṇu utters to Rāvaṇa in the Nārāi Sip Pāng mentioned above. But in the Rāmākīan there is a reference to the element of Umā's being made out to be a disastrous choice for a bride, which is described in most of the Tamil myths on this subject. In the Rāmākīan Viṣṇu, in the form of an old demon, tells Rāvaṇa that Umā is the god Kāla, or Death. She will be the cause of the destruction of the whole race of Lankā.*⁶

The reason why Viṣṇu, referred to in the South Indian myths cited above, has been taken by the Thais to be the Rāma incarnation in

4. Rāmāyana VII . 16.

5. T.A. Gopintha Rao, Elements of Hindu Iconography, Vol. II, Part I Madras, 1916, pp. 218-220.

6. Phra Bāt Somdet Phra Phuttha Yōt Fā Chulā Lōk (King Rama I), Rāmākīan, Vol. I, Bangkok, 1951, p. 142 .

the Nārāi Sip Pāng is that the god changes his form in order to act against Rāvaṇa. Rāvaṇa is the main opponent of Rāmacandra, therefore Viṣṇu even in a form other than Rāmacandra, is nevertheless believed to be one and the same person. However, the Rāmakīan does not call this form of Viṣṇu Rāmāwatān. Here he is described as an old demon, not just a man as in the Nārāi Sip Pāng. This accords well with the story as found in the Khlong Nārāi Sip Pāng (Nārāi Sip Pāng related in a poetical form), (1879), composed jointly by many court poets of King Rama V. In the Khlong Nārāi Sip Pāng the name Rāmāwatān of Viṣṇu is also changed to Mahanlaka Asurawatān (mahallaka-asura-avatara: old-demon-incarnation). In theory this should not be so because the content of Khlong Nārāi Sip Pāng was supposed to be, according to the command of King Rama V, in strict accordance with the Royal Press Version of the Nārāi Sip Pāng. It is clearly seen that the authors of the Khlong Nārāi Sip Pāng were following the Rāmakīan of King Rama I. It is possible that by the year 1879 the disguised form of Viṣṇu who beguiles Rāvaṇa into renouncing Umā was already considered to be different from Rāmacandra. It is noteworthy that while there are a large number of references to the Rāmacandra incarnation in Thai literature, there is nowhere in Thai literary works, except for the Rāmakīan and the Nārāi Sip Pāng, any reference to this Rāmāwatān or the Mahallaka Asura incarnation at all. It is possible that it is the authors of the Nārāi Sip Pāng alone who regard this form of Viṣṇu as being a separate incarnation of Viṣṇu.

RĀMACANDRA INCARNATION

The Thai account of the Rāmacandra incarnation has the main theme similar to that of the Indian story, that is: Rāma is a son of King Daśaratha of Ayodhya; he is banished to the forest by his father; his wife Sītā is carried off by Rāvaṇa, the demon king of Lankā; Rāma recovers Sītā after he has defeated Rāvaṇa in the battle. But the Thai story of the Rāmacandra incarnation is not a translation or an adaptation of the Vālmiki Rāmāyana. While it does contain some parts identical with Vālmiki's version these are mixed with episodes and stories from various Indian stories of Rāma besides that of Vālmiki's, such as the Bengali Rāmāyana, the Tamil Kamban Rāmāyana, and those from the Purāṇas. The proportions of the contributions from these sources vary so much that no one particular work can claim influence over the Thai Rāmākīan as a whole.

The following passages, comparing the contents of the Rāma story in both the Nārāi Sip Pāṅg and King Rama I's Rāmākīan with plausible Indian sources, will attest the hypothesis cited above. Corresponding stories from the Vālmiki version are also given in order to strengthen the argument.

1. Birth of Rāma and his brother.

Thai Rāma Story: Phra Nārāi (Nārāyaṇa) promises to incarnate himself as Rāma provided that his regalia shall also be born as the other sons of King Daśaratha: his serpent and conch as Lakṣmaṇa; his discus as Bharata; and his mace as Satrugna.*⁷

Padma Purāṇa: It has a nearly similar story. It says that Rāma is treated as the incarnation of Viṣṇu; and Lakṣmaṇa, Bharata, and Satrugna of Śeṣanāga, Sudarsana discus, and the conch respectively.*⁸

Vālmiki Rāmāyana: There is reference only to Rāma being the incarnation of Viṣṇu. There is no mention of the regalia of Viṣṇu also being born as the other sons of Daśaratha.*⁹

7. Ibid., p. 291.

8. Padma Purāṇa. Uttarakhaṇḍha. 269.1-15.

9. Rāmāyana I. 15.21.

2. Hanumān as a son of Śiva

Thai Rāma story: In the Rāmākīan Śīvara is described as giving part of his power to Vāyu to put into the mouth of Sawāha in order to create Hanumān. In the Nārāi Sip Pāng (all versions) Śīvara asks Vāyu to pour his semen, shed when he has made love with the goddess form (Apsarawatān) of Nārāyaṇa, into the mouth of Sawāha. In due course Sawāha gives birth to Hanumān.*¹⁰

Śiva Purāna: Śiva falls in love with Viṣṇu in the Mohinī form. He sheds his semen. The seven celestial sages keep that semen and later pour that substance into the ear of Añjana, Gautama's daughter. In due time Śiva is born of it in the form of Hanumān.*¹¹

Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇa: When Brahmā knows that Viṣṇu is going to incarnate himself as Rāma he orders other gods to create monkeys out of their own bodies to be Rāma's soldiers. Vāyu creates Hanumān in consequence of this.*¹²

3. Pre-Matrimonial love of Rāma and Sītā.

Thai Rāma story: Rāma's eyes meet with Sītā's while he passes by under the window of the royal palace of Mithilā. They fall in love with each other at first sight.*¹³

Kamban Rāmāyaṇa: The episode is the same as in the Thai story.*¹⁴

Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇa: There is no mention of Rāma and Sītā seeing each other before the archery contest.

4. The Exile of Rāma.

Thai Rāma story: When Kuccī (Mantharā), the hunch-backed maid of queen Kaikeśī (Kaikeyī) hears that King Daśaratha is going to install Rāma as king, she recalls Rāma's maltreatment of her when

10. King Rama I, Rāmākīan, Vol. I, p. 86-88; Praphan Sukhonthachāt (ed.), Nārāi Sip Pāng..., p. 32; Khun Ying Lū'an Rit, Nārāi Sip Pāng, Bangkok, 1933, pp. 81-83.

11. Śiva Purāna, Satarudrasaṃhita. 20 . 1-7.

12. Rāmāyaṇa I. 17.16.

13. King Rama I, Rāmākīan, Vol. I, p. 362; Khun Ying Lū'an Rit (ed.), Nārāi Sip Pāng, pp. 134-135.

14. Kamban Rāmāyaṇa 1.10.35.

he was young. He was practising archery at that time. Rāma shot his arrow at her hunched back. The arrow pushed Kuccī's hump forward, and the hump moved backward when Rāma's arrow returned to him. Kuccī hurries to provoke Kaikeśī to ask for her own son's succession to the throne and for the exile of Rāma for 14 years.*¹⁵

Kamban Rāmāyana: Daśaratha desires to abdicate in favour of Rāma. When the hunch-backed Mantharā recalls Rāma as a boy shooting mud balls at her hunched back, she wants to take revenge on him. Mantharā goes to Kaikeyī and corrupts her mind. Thus Rāma is to be exiled from his kingdom for 14 years.*¹⁶

Vālmīki Rāmāyana: There is no narration of Rāma's childhood prank in maltreating Mantharā, the hunch-backed maid of Kaikeyī. And Rāma is to be appointed by Daśaratha merely as an heir-apparent to the throne.*¹⁷

5. Rāma's departure to the forest.

Thai Rāma Story: Rāma, Lakṣmaṇa and Sītā do not meet king Daśaratha before they go off to the forest in a chariot driven by Sumantra.*¹⁸

Kamban Rāmāyana: When Rāma, Lakṣmaṇa and Sītā get ready to go to the forest, they go to Daśaratha's palace, and ask the queens to take care of the king. The three do not meet Daśaratha at all. They leave Ayodhya by a chariot driven by Sumantra.*¹⁹

Vālmīki Rāmāyana: Rāma and Daśaratha engage in an elaborate discussion in which Daśaratha tries his best to persuade Rāma to stay. Rāma rejects his father's persuasion, and he, with Lakṣmaṇa and Sītā, is driven to the forest in a chariot by Sumantra.*²⁰

15. King Rama I, Rāmākīan, Vol. I, p. 137. Khun Ying Lū'an Rit, Nārāi Sīn Pān, p. 456.

16. Kamban Rāmāyana 2.2.41.

17. Rāmāyana II . 3; 7-9.

18. King Rama I, Rāmākīan, Vol. I, pp. 496-497.

19. Kamban Rāmāyana 2.4.240.

20. Rāmāyana II . 34.20-37.

6. Cremation of Daśaratha.

Thai Rāma story: At the cremation of Daśaratha, Kaikesī and her son Bharata are forbidden, according to the dead king's wishes, to join in the ceremony.*²¹

Kamban Rāmāyana: Sage Vasiṣṭha tells Bharata the wish of Daśaratha that the son of Kaikesī should not perform the ceremonies. Therefore Satrugna performs the ceremonies.*²²

Vālmiki Rāmāyana: On the advice of Vasiṣṭha, Bharata performs the cremation of Daśaratha.*²³

7. Lakṣmaṇa's unknowing murder of Kumhakāt.

Thai Rāma story: Kumhakāt (kumbha-kāśa) is a son of Samanakhā (Śurpanakhā) and Sahasachiuḥā (Vidyujjihva). He performs a sacrifice in a bamboo tree in order to obtain a divine weapon from the gods. Finally Brahmā throws a divine weapon down from heaven and it falls in front of Kumhakāt. The demon is indignant. He wants the god to hand the weapon to him by hand so he does not take the fallen weapon. On the same day Lakṣmaṇa goes there in order to collect fruits. He sees the divine weapon and takes it. He cuts the bamboo tree inside which Kumhakāt is sitting and thus unknowingly kills him.*²⁴

Paumacaria, a Jaina Rāmāyana by Vimalasuri.

Śambhuka is the son of Candranakhā, wife of Khara and sister of Rāvaṇa. Lakṣmaṇa, in his wanderings through the forest, sees a grove of bamboos and a sword near by worshipped with flowers. To test its sharpness he grips the sword and cuts down the grove at one stroke. In the midst of the falling bamboos, Lakṣmaṇa, to his surprise, beholds the severed head of a lad. This lad is Śambhuka. Lakṣmaṇa is full of remorse for his act, though committed unknowingly.*²⁵

21. King Rama I, Rāmekān, Vol. I, p. 531.

22. Kamban Rāmāyana 2.9.132.

23. Rāmāyana II.76.

24. Khun Ying Lū'an Rit (ed.), Nārāj Sip Pāng, pp. 144-145. See also p. 241.

25. Vimalasuri, "Paumacaria", found in "The Jaina Ramayanas", by D.L. Narasimhacar, Indian Historical Quarterly, Vol. 15, 1939, p. 589.

Vālmiki Rāmāyana: There is no such episode in Vālmiki's text.

8. Quarrel between Vālī and Sugrīva

Thai Rāma story: Before Vālī goes to fight with a bull called Thographī (Darabī) in a cave where the bull has been brought up by some deities, Vali tells Sugrīva that if Sugrīva sees thin blood i.e. Vālī's blood, coming out of the cave he should close the cave with stones. At the end of the fight Sugrīva sees thin blood, which is in fact Thographī's thickblood diluted by rain-water, flowing from the cave. Sugrīva mistakes it for Vālī's and closes the cave. This makes Vālī take Sugrīva to be a traitor and he banishes him from the realm.*²⁶

Adhyātma Rāmāyana in Malayalam (16th century A.D.): Vālī asks Sugrīva to close the entrance of the cave through which he must pass to kill the demon Māyāvī should any blood come out of it, and not to close it if it should be milk. Sugrīva closes it, seeing blood coming out of it. This change in colour is due to the magic of Māyāvī, not known either to Vālī or Sugrīva. Vālī regards Sugrīva as a traitor.*²⁷

Vālmiki Rāmāyana: Vālī follows the demon Māyāvī to fight with him in a cave. Sugrīva waits for Vālī to come out for a year. In the end he sees blood coming out of the cave and can hear only the demon's voice. Sugrīva thinks that Vālī is dead so he closes the cave. Sugrīva is thought to be a traitor by Vālī.*²⁸

9. Rāma's secret is revealed to Hanumān.

Thai Rāma story: Before Hanumān leaves for Laṅkā, Rāma gives him his ring to give to Sītā, and reveals to Hanumān a secret known only to himself and Sītā, that is, his eyes and her's met while he was on his way to the palace of the king of Mithilā and they fell in love at first sight.*²⁹

Kamban Rāmāyana: Before Hanumān leaves for Laṅkā, Rāma asks him to tell Sītā of their first pre-matrimonial sight of each other. Then Rāma gives his diamond ring to Hanumān to give to Sītā.*³⁰

26. King Rama I, Rāmākīan, Vol. I, pp. 438-446.

27. "Adhyātma Rāmāyana" (in Malayalam), found in A Comparative Study of Kamba Rāmāyana and Tulasi Rāmāyana, by S.S. Raju Naidu, Madras, 1971, p. 42.

28. Rāmāyana IV.9.12-20.

29. King Rama I, Rāmākīan, Vol. II, pp. 806-807.

30. Kamban Rāmāyana 4.13.67-73.

Vālmīki Rāmāyana: Rāma just gives Hanumān his ring with his name on it as a token that Hanumān has come from Rāma and tells Hanumān to work with all his might.*³¹

10. Sītā's attempted suicide.

Thai Rāma story: When Daśakanṭha leaves after he has cruelly threatened Sītā, she is so distressed that she decides to hang herself. Sītā ties her sabai (a sash worn across the body) round her neck and ties the other end to a branch of an Aśoka tree. At that moment Hanumān comes to her and saves her life.*³²

Kamban Rāmāyana: Sītā is so distressed at Rāvaṇa's threats that she resolves to commit suicide. She goes towards a jasmine creeper, and ties it round her neck. At that moment Hanumān comes down from the tree where he is hiding himself, and gives Rāma's ring to her, and thus saves her from death.*³³

Vālmīki Rāmāyana: Sītā thinks of committing suicide by tying her hair round her neck and hanging from a tree. But she does not do so, and there is no mention of her being rescued by Hanumān at all.*³⁴

11. Quarrel between Hanumān and Nala.

Thai Rāma story: While Hanumān and Nilaphat (Nala) are constructing a bridge over the ocean to Lankā, Hanumān, in order to take revenge on Nilaphat, who has thrown a whole lot of stones to him to catch, also does the same thing to Nilaphat. Nilaphat who cannot catch all the stones in his hands, uses his feet too. Hanumān takes it as an insult, so he fights fiercely with Nilaphat.*³⁵

Bengali Rāmāyana: Hanumān is angry with Nala because Nala catches the wood Hanumān gives him in his left hand. Hanumān takes it as an insult. Therefore they fight with each other.*³⁶

31. Rāmāyana IV.44.

32. King Rama I, Rāmākīan, Vol. II, p. 360.

33. Kamban Rāmāyana 4.5.21-27.

34. Rāmāyana IV.26.

35. King Rama I, Rāmākīan, Vol. II, pp. 984-993.

36. "Bengali Rāmāyana", found in Upakōṇ Rāmākīan, by Phrayā Anumān Rājadhon, Bangkok, 1972, p. 129.

Vālmīki Rāmāyana: Only Nala is responsible for constructing a bridge to Laṅkā. He takes up the work and a bridge is built in five days with mountains and trees brought by the monkeys.*³⁷

12. Rāvaṇa's special sacrifice for victory.

Thai Rāma story: When Daśakaṇṭha realizes that he cannot easily defeat Rāma, he thinks of performing phithī umong (a sacrifice in a cave) to make his body invincible. He performs this sacrifice in a cave in a mountain called Nilakākhīrī. He orders his men to close the entrance of the cave by a magic prayer and no one is able to come and disturb him for seven whole days. Hanumān, Sugrīva, and Nilaphat succeed in opening the cave. They nullify Daśakaṇṭha's sacrifice by making him angry. They bring Mandodarī there and illtreat her in front of Daśakaṇṭha. Furious, Daśakaṇṭha is not able to concentrate on the sacrifice, and leaves it in the end.*³⁸

Adhyātma Rāmāyana (in the Brahmānda Purāna): When Rāvaṇa returns to Laṅkā after being wounded in the chest by an arrow from Rāma, Śukra, the preceptor of the demon, advises Rāvaṇa to perform a sacrifice for victory. Rāvaṇa does it in a lonely cave underground. Vibhīṣaṇa gets a sign through the smoke coming up and informs Rāma. Rāma sends Hanumān, Aṅgada and other great warriors to destroy the sacrifice. Aṅgada drags Mandodarī by her hair to the sacrificial place. Rāvaṇa gets extremely infuriated. He comes up with his sword from the cave, and meanwhile the monkeys destroy the sacrifice and return to Rāma.*³⁹

Vālmīki Rāmāyana: There is no mention of Rāvaṇa's special sacrifice at all.

13. Bharata's and Satruḅhna's desire to enter the fire.

Thai Rāma story: After fourteen years have passed by without

37. Rāmāyana VI.22.41-58.

38. King Rama I, Rāmākīan, Vol. III, p. 1646.

39. Adhyātma Rāmāyana 6.10 . 4-43.

the return to Ayuthya of Rama, Bharata and Satrughna resolve to enter fire in order to prove their loyalty to Rāma. Hanumān and Kukhan (Guha), who bring the news of Rāma's arrival, reach there in time to stop Bharata and Satrughna who are on the point of entering the fire.*⁴⁰

Kamban Rāmāyana: Bharata is determined to fall into the fire and die because Rāma has not returned to Ayodhya at the end of fourteen years as he has promised. Bharata also wants to prove his innocence. At the moment when Bharata gets ready to burn himself Hanumān arrives there and delivers Rāma's news.*⁴¹

Vālmiki Rāmāyana: There is no such episode.

40. King Rama I, Rāmākīan, Vol. III, pp. 2084-2092.

41. Kamban Rāmāyana 6.57.233-240.

Unlike the episodes of the Thai Rama story discussed in the early pages, prototypes of which can be found in certain versions of the Indian Rāmāyana, some episodes in the Thai story cannot easily be identified with any one Indian origin. Most of these episodes appear in a form which seems to have been fused together by the Thais from various versions of the Indian Rāma story. Three such episodes are here quoted. They are: the birth of Mandodari; the birth of Sita; and the birth of Vali and Sugriva.

1. Birth of Mandodari. The story in the Rāmakīan goes as follows:

Four sages, i.e. Atanta, Wachira, Wisut, and Mahā Romasing, have practised austerities for thirty thousand years. Their lives are sustained by milk given to them by five hundred cows. The cows daily drop their milk in a crystal basin for them. When they have drunk their fill of milk, they give the rest to a female frog. One day a female Nāga, full of lust, comes up from the Pātāla world, and cohabits with a common snake. When the sages see this, they disapprove of the Nāga's behaviour, and strike her with their sticks in order to remind her of her superior birth. The indignant Nāga is very infuriated so that she takes revenge on the sages by vomiting her venom into the milk which is the sages' food. The frog sees what the Nāga has done. The frog, grateful to the sages for supplying her with food, jumps into the basin of milk, and is killed by the Nāga's venom. When the sages see the dead frog in the milk basin, they are very puzzled, and assume that she died through her greediness. However, they resuscitate the frog for the sake of obtaining merit for a good deed, and they question her on her action. When the sages find out the truth, they are so grateful to the frog that they change it into the form of a beautiful damsel and name her Monthō (based on mandūka, 'a frog'). The sages then present her to Śiva, who in turn, gives her to Uma.*⁴²

The counterpart of the episode cited above is not found in any of the Indian Rāma stories. Yet the Uttara Rāmāyana has a story of Mandodari's being a frog before the gaining of her human form.

42. King Rama I, Rāmakīan, Vol. I, pp. 110-117.

The text says that Mandodarī was in her previous birth a goddess names Madhurā. Once Umā found out that Madhurā had had a sexual union with Śiva while Umā was absent. Umā then cursed Madhurā to live in a well for twelve years as a frog. Śiva, having compassion for Madhurā, gave her a boon. Madhurā was to become, at the end of twelve years, a beautiful maiden and to be married to a man of great fame and valour. At the end of twelve years, Madhurā became a girl, and was adopted as a daughter by the demon Maya and his wife Menā. They named her Mandodarī. Later on she is married to Rāvaṇa.*⁴³

The element of poisonous milk in the Thai Mandodarī myth might have been influenced by an episode concerning Sītā's birth in a Kashmir version of Rāmāyaṇa called Adbhuta Rāmāyaṇa. In that text a sage named Cetasameda is described as being engaged in penance in order to get a daughter who would be equal to Lakṣmī. The sage takes milk with the head of darbha-grass, and stores it daily in a pot. Rāvaṇa takes that pot and puts into it blood of the sages, whom he has shot. Rāvaṇa gives the pot of milk and blood to Mandodarī. Mandodarī, who has become very depressed by Rāvaṇa's notorious conduct, takes the mixture as a poison and drinks it in order to commit suicide. But Mandodarī becomes pregnant instead. Mandodarī buries the foetus in Kuruksetra. After a while a girl is born from it.*⁴⁴

43. Vetter Jani, Puranic Encyclopaedia, Delhi, 1975, p. 76.

44. "Adbhuta Rāmāyaṇa", found in "Buddhist and Jain Versions of the Story of Rama", by A. Chakravarti, The Jaina Gazette, Vol. 22, 1926, p. 123.

2. Birth of Sītā. In the Thai Rāma story Sītā is regarded as the incarnation of Lakṣmī. She is described as being created from the same substance as Rāma. The Rāmākīan relates:

Monthō smells the aroma of the sacred meal, i.e. cooked rice-balls, prepared by the gods for King Daśaratha. She has a very strong desire for this and asks Daśakantha to get it for her. Daśakantha orders Kākanāsūn, one of his relatives to get it for him. Kākanāsūn disguises herself as a crow and flies to Ayuthya. Kākanāsūn steals half of a rice-ball and gives it to Daśakantha. Daśakantha gives it to Monthō. She eats it and becomes pregnant. In due course Monthō gives birth to Sītā.*⁴⁵

2.1 The robbing of Daśaratha's sacrificial meal, in the Thai story, may be based on the Ānanda Rāmāyaṇa. The story goes:

Daśaratha is dividing among his wives the divine pāyasa *⁴⁶ obtained from the sacrifice for gaining children which he performed so that he might be blessed with children. Somehow or other a kite snatches some pāyasa and flies off with it. On its way the Pāyasa falls down from the beak of the kite on to the fingers of Āñjana doing tapas in the forest. She eats that pāyasa and Hanumān is born as the son of Āñjana due to the power of the pāyasa.*⁴⁷

In the Malay Rāma story, there is a story of Gāgak Swāra, relative of Rāvaṇa's, who attends the sacrifice of Daśaratha in a form of a crow. Gāgak Swāra steals one of the rice-balls and flies away to give it to Rāvaṇa. Unlike the Thai story, in the Malay version it is Rāvaṇa who eats the rice-ball.*⁴⁸ There is no mention of Sītā's being created from this rice-ball at all. However, this Gāgak Swāra

45. King Rama I, Rāmākīan, Vol. I, pp. 296-298; 322-323.

46. pāyasa: food prepared with milk, rice boiled in milk.

47. Ānanda Rāmāyaṇa I.1.101-105.

48. S. Singaravelu, "A Comparative Study of the Sanskrit, Tamil, Thai and Malay Versions of the Story of Rāma with Special reference to Process of Acculturation in the Southeast Asian Version", The Journal of the Siam Society Vol. LVI, Part 2, July 1968, p. 157.

seems to be the same character as the Thai Kākanāsūn. It is possible that both Thai Kākanāsūn and Malay Gagak Swāra have their prototypes in the Indian Tāraka who, in the Vālmiki Rāmāyaṇa, is cursed to become a crow by the sage Agastya because she is very fond of eating human flesh.

Some Indian Rāma stories, such as, the Version in the Devībhāgavata Purāna, and the Adbhuta Rāmāyaṇa, describe Sītā as the daughter of Rāvaṇa and Mandodarī, but none of them mentions the creation of Sītā from Daśaratha's sacred meal.

2.2 In the Nārāi Sip Pāṅg*⁴⁹ and the Rāmākīan*⁵⁰ Sītā when first born is described as crying three times phlān rāp, meaning "destroy Rāvaṇa" and her cries are also taken as a bad omen. Both Thai versions say that according to Phiphēk (Vibhīṣaṇa, Rāvaṇa's brother and court astrologer) Sītā is a 'woman who will cause destruction', and is to be disposed of.*⁵¹

In the Uttara Purāna by a Digambar Jain called Guṇabhadra, Rāvaṇa is said to have outraged one Maṇimati, the daughter of Amitrega. Maṇimati vows to be born again and kill Rāvaṇa for his improper action. She is born as Sītā, the daughter of Rāvaṇa and Mandodarī.*⁵² This story might have been the source of the Thai version. However, the Vālmiki Rāmāyaṇa, Brahmavaivarta Purāna, and the Tamil Kamban Rāmāyaṇa also have a story of Rāvaṇa's outraging of a woman, here called Vedavatī, who is also reborn in order to take revenge on him. But in these texts Vedavatī is not born as the daughter of Rāvaṇa and Mandodarī.

49. Praphan Sukhonthachāt (ed.), Nārāi Sip Pāṅg..., p. 69.

50. King Rama I, Rāmākīan, Vol. I, p. 324.

51. Praphan Sukhonthachāt (ed.), Nārāi Sip Pāṅg..., p. 69.
King Rama I, Rāmākīan, Vol. I, p. 325.

52. "Uttara Purāna", found in A Comparative Study of Kamba Ramayanam and Tulasi Ramayan, by S.S. Raju Naidu, p. 22.

2.3 The Thai story continues:

Rāvaṇa, who is frightened by Phiphēk's prediction concerning Sītā, has her put in a golden box and has the box thrown into the sea. The box floats along until it reaches the river bank where King Chanok (Janaka), living as a sage at that time, is bathing. King Chanok takes the box from the river and adopts Sītā as his daughter.*⁵³

This episode might have been influenced by the Tamil Kamban Rāmāyana. The text narrates:

When Vedavati burns herself in order to protest at Rāvaṇa's ill-treatment of her, Rāvaṇa is very disturbed. He then collects her ashes in a box, and takes the box with him to Laṅkā. Later on, Rāvaṇa is advised by the sage Nārada to get rid of that box for the safety of Laṅkā and has it dropped into the sea. The box comes with the waves to India. Later on it comes to be deposited in the basin of a river in Mithilā and is found by Janaka.*⁵⁴

2.4 The Rāmākīan continues:

When King Chanok first finds the baby Sītā in a golden box, he feeds her by means of milk flowing from his finger.*⁵⁵

This is for certain influenced by a Buddhist myth. In the Trai Phūm Phra Ruang, in the chapter on the human world, people of the Uttarakuru continent are described as having no responsibility for bringing up their own children. The general practice is that they put a first-born baby by the side of the road. Any one passing by will put his finger in the baby's mouth. The baby will be fed with milk flowing from the tip of his finger.*⁵⁶

2.5 The Thai story goes on. King Chanok does not take Sītā back to his kingdom at once. In the Rāmākīan he buries her under a banyan tree.

53. King Rama I, Rāmākīan, Vol. I, p. 330.

54. Vettasani, Puranic Encyclopaedia, p.721.

55. King Rama I, Rāmākīan, Vol. I, p. 330.

56. Phrayā Li Thai, Trai Phūm Phra Ruang, 8th ed., Bangkok, 1972, p. 89.

In the Nārāi Sip Pāṅg he buries her under a tree called lamut sīdā (Mimusops Kauki (Sapotaceae)). That is why she is called Sīdā.⁵⁷ The name Sītā, under various pronunciations: 'sāedā, sēdā', is also found attached to the word 'lmūt' in Khmer. The glosses also agree on Mimusops Kauki. But there is no myth of the burying of Sītā under such kind of a tree in the Cambodian Rāmāyana or in Cambodian folklore. No reason for the derivation of that tree's name has been found either. In Tamil land a custard apple is called 'cīttā' (i.e. as from Sītā, which in Tamil is 'cītai' or its variant 'cīta'). Here too no myth of the connection between Sītā and the custard apple is found. Thai myth of lamut sīdā does not indicate any similar characteristic between Sīdā and the Mimusops Kauki either. There are two possibilities for the naming of this kind of a fruit tree. One is that the fruit tree with its present name was imported to Thailand first, then, the myth was created in order to explain the similarity between the name of Sīdā and that of the tree. The other possibility is that the fruit tree was imported first, or that it was native to Southeast Asia, then the name was attached to it afterwards, and the last stage being the creation of a myth to go with the name of the tree. Moreover, it can be said that this practice, i.e. inventing a myth explaining how the name of anything is made up, is popular in Thailand. Two more examples can be quoted from the Nārāi Sip Pāṅg. A special kind of bamboo tree comes to be called rū'si suk because, according to the Nārāi Sip Pāṅg, it first grew in front of a ru'si (r̥si, 'a sage') called Sukhawathana.⁵⁸ In this case the Common Noun ru'si for 'a sage' is compounded with suk which is the first syllable of the Proper Name of the sage. Another example is the name of Rāvaṇa's capital. It is called Langkā because of the existence of a rang kā, 'a crow's nest', there. It can be seen that the author of the text tries to make sense out of the word langkā by taking the meaning of the second syllable of the word, i.e. kā, as a crow. Then he identifies the first syllable lang with rang, 'a nest'.

57. King Rama I, Rāmākīan, Vol. I, p. 330, Khun Ying Lū'an Rit, Nārāi Sip Pāṅg, p. 129.

58. Praphan Sukhonthachāt (ed.), Nārāi Sip Pāṅg..., pp. 9; 53.

2.6 After sixteen years, King Chanok comes back to that tree and ploughs the land in order to get Sītā back. He finds her and takes her to his kingdom.*⁵⁹ The story of Janaka's discovering Sītā while he is ploughing the land is described in the Vālmiki Rāmāyana*⁶⁰, and is followed by many Indian versions. It cannot be said for certain which version is the prototype of the Thai version, but it might have been influenced directly by the Vālmiki Rāmāyana.

59. King Rama I, Ramakian, Vol. I, p. 372.

60. Rāmāyana I. 66. 13-14.

3. Birth of Vālī and Sugrīva. The Rāmākīan narrates

After the sage Gotama practised penances for two thousand years he is reminded by a rice-bird that it is a sin to remain childless. So the sage creates a wife for himself from a sacrificial fire. He calls her Kān Atčhanā. She gives birth to a daughter called Sawāha. Later on Indra commits adultery with Kān Atčhanā in his own form. His motive is that he wants to hand on his own power to Rāma who is going to fight with Rāvana. Kān Atčhanā in due time gives birth to Indra's child, Vālī. Later on Kān Atčhanā falls in love with the sun god Sūrya, who thinks along the same lines as Indra, and commits adultery with her and creates a son, Sugrīva. At first both Vālī and Sugrīva are human beings. Later on they are cursed by Gotama to be monkeys. Gotama throws them together with his daughter into a river saying that if any one of them is his child, may he swim back to him, or else let him become a monkey. Only Sawāha swims back to him.*⁶¹

3.1 In Hindu mythology Indra does not produce any child with Ahalyā, Gautama's wife with whom he commits adultery. On the contrary he is severely punished. His linga drops off, but through the help of the Prajāpatis, it is replaced with that of a male goat.*⁶² However, in Hindu mythology there is also the story of Vālī's and Sugrīva's being the sons of Indra and Sūrya respectively. In the Mahābhārata Vālī and Sugrīva are described as being the sons of Aruṇi, or the female form of Aruṇa, begotten by Indra and Sūrya. On the advice of Indra and Sūrya who are ashamed of themselves, Aruṇi gives Vālī and Sugrīva to Ahalyā to bring them up.*⁶³

3.2 The importance in the Thai version of water as a medium for magical transformation might be due to the influence of a Hindu myth of Rkṣarāja. In the Vālmīki Rāmāyana Rkṣarāja saw his own image reflected in a lake. He thought it was some enemy and jumped into the lake to attack it. But he soon realized his mistake and returned to the shore. As soon as he came out of the water, he found that he had become a woman.*⁶⁴

61. King Rama I, Rāmākīan, Vol. I, p. 72.

62. Rāmāyana I.49. 1-8.

63. Vetterani, Burjic Encyclopaedia, p.105.

64. Rāmāyana VII.41.

However, the curse of Gotama upon Vālī and Sugrīva in the Thai version must also have been influenced by the Māhābhārata. The text says that when Vālī and Sugrīva are entrusted by Aruṇi to Ahalyā, the latter brings them up with tender love. But her husband Gautama does not like this, and curses Vālī and Sugrīva and turns them into monkeys.*⁶⁵

In none of the Indian Rāmastories does Ahalyā have a daughter.

3.3 In the Rāmākīan Gotama, infuriated by what he has just found out, curses Kān Atchanā to become stone. She will be released from the curse only by her meeting with Rāma. Kān Atchanā, angry at her daughter Sawāha who has disclosed her secret to Gotama, curses her daughter. Sawāha is to stand on one foot and to have only wind as her food until she gives birth to a monkey-child like Vālī and Sugrīva.*⁶⁶

In the Vālsāki Rāmāyana Ahalyā is cursed by Gautama to have only wind as her food. But some other Indian versions, such as the Adbhuta Rāmāyana, Raghuvamśa, the Janaki Harana, Rāmlinga, and the Kamban Rāmāyana, do have Ahalya's being turned to a stone because of her husband's curse.

65. Vettan Iani, Mythic Encyclopedia, p. 105.

66. King Rama I, Ramakian, Vol. I, pp. 82-83

67. Rāmāyana I. 48.29-30.

There are several Thai versions of the Rāma story. These are:

- (1) Botphāk or Khamphāk Rāmakīan of the Ayuthya period.
- (2) Botlakhōn Rāmakīan of the Ayuthya period.
- (3) Rāmakīan of King Tāksin of Thonburi.
- (4) King Rama I's Rāmakīan.
- (5) King Rama II's Rāmakīan.
- (6) King Rama IV's Rāmakīan.
- (7) King Rama VI's Rāmakīan.
- (8) Rāmawatān in the Nārāi Sip Pāng.

The complete version is that of King Rama I's. The story in the Khamphāk Rāmakīan begins at the abduction of Sītā by Rāvāna. It continues until the death of Kumbhakarna, Rāvāna's brother. The text Khamphāk Rāmakīan also contains some detached episodes, some of which are incomplete. Botlakhōn Rāmakīan of Ayuthya period is very short. It contains only the episodes of the preparation of Rāma's army and Rāma's dispatch of Angada as an envoy to Laṅkā. King Tāksin of Thonburi composed five episodes. These are: Hanumān meets Wānarīn, who tells him where the demon Wirunchambang, Rāvāna's ally is hiding himself; Lord Mālīwarāt, Rāvāna's grandfather acts as a judge in the quarrel between Rāvāna and Rāma; Rāvāna's performance of a ceremony of burning the idols of the gods; Lakṣmaṇa's being pierced by the Spear Kabinlaphat of Rāvāna; and Rāma's performance of a horse sacrifice in which the sacrificial horse leads him to meet his son. The story of Rāma in the Rāmakīan of King Rama II is divided into two parts. Part One starts from Hanumān's presenting Rāma's ring to Sītā in Laṅkā, and ends at the coronation of Rāma. Part Two begins at the banishment of Sītā and ends at the reconciliation between Rāma and Sītā. King Rama IV composed only one episode of the Rāma story,

that is, the journey and adventures of Rāma in the forest during his exile. The story in King Tāksin's version, which is presumably based on the Ayuthya version (or versions), is more or less the same as that of King Rama I's version. The versions of King Rama II and of King Rama IV are not different in content from that of King Rama I either. King Rama II and King Rama IV change only the composition of the verses. The versions which are different from King Rama I's Rāmakīan are: the Rāma story in the Nārāi Sip Pāng; the Khamphāk Rāmakīan of the Ayuthya period; and King Rama VI's version. King Rama VI composed discontinuous episodes of the Rāmakīan. These episodes are: The Ordeal of Sage Gotama's children; Lakṣmaṇa's being pierced by the Phrommāt Arrow of Intharachit; the disguise of Benyakāi, Rāvaṇa's niece, as the dead Sītā, and her floating against the stream to the pavilion of Rāma; the fight between Arjuna and Rāvaṇa; the construction of the bridge by Rāma's army to Lan̄kā; the first battle between Rāma's and Rāvaṇa's armies; the abduction of Sītā; Hanumān's burning Lan̄kā; the banishment of Vibhīṣaṇa; and the Nāgapāśa of Intharachit. Most of the episodes, (except the episodes of the Phrommāt Arrow, and of the floating Benyakāi, which are similar to the version of King Rama I), are based on Vālmīki's Rāmāyana, and thus differ most from all the other Thai versions of the Rāma story. The differences between King Rama I's Rāmakīan and the Nārāi Sip Pāng, and between the Khamphāk Rāmakīan of the Ayuthya period and King Rama I's version are discussed below.

None of the versions of the Nārāi Sip Pāng has the full story of the Rāmacandra incarnation of Viṣṇu. Most of them refer to the Rāmakīan (probably of King Rama I) as being a complete version. However some episodes of the Rāma story in the Nārāi Sip Pāng are not the same as those in the Rāmakīan of King Rama I. These differences are discussed in the following passages.

1. Śiva's destruction of the demon Trī Buram. *68

This episode is inserted into the Rāma story in both the Nārāi Sip Pāng and the Rāmakīan in order to act as the creation myth for Śiva's bow, bestowed upon the king of Mithilā. This bow is the one Rāma lifts up (or breaks in the Indian version) in the archery contest in that city in order to obtain the hand of Sītā in marriage. ^{In the} Nārāi Sip Pāng the story of Trī Buram also serves as a basis for the myth of the Indian Buddhāvātāra, or the Thai Samanāwatān. The Rāmakīan of King Rama I completely omits this latter part of the story. It is not impossible that the absence of this Samanāwatān myth in the Rāmakīan is because the Thai king (who is supposed to be the first patron of Buddhism) could not accept a myth in which a Buddhist monk commits a deceitful action.

2. The penance of Nonthuk's ghost. The Nārāi Sip Pāng narrates that after his death the demon Nonthuk, in the form of the ghost of an uncremated corpse (phī dip), desirous of a boon from Śiva, performs a penance by making his skull into a fiddle, his backbone into a bow, and his sinews into strings of the

68. Praphan Sukhonthachāt (ed.), Nārāi Sip Pāng..., p. 24. King Rama I, Rāmakīan, Vol. 1, pp. 42-55.

fiddle. He is finally given a boon by Śiva to be born as Daśakantha.*69 The Rāmakīan omits this episode. The compilers of the Rāmakīan might have considered this episode as somewhat redundant. In both the Nārāi Sip Pāṅg and the Rāmakīan*70 it has already been stated by Viṣṇu in the form of the goddess Apsarāwatān, while he is killing Nonthuk, that Nonthuk will be granted by him a future birth as the mighty Daśakantha.

3. Hanumān's mistaking the sun for a fruit.

This episode appears in the Nārāi Sip Pāṅg (Royal Press version) only. The text narrates that after Sawāha, his mother, has left him, Hanumān wanders along in the forest. Then he sees the red rising sun, and mistakes it for a fruit. Hanumān flies up to the sun and pulls the rear part of the sun's chariot in order to eat the sun. The sun is frightened at first and then is very angry at Hanumān. He curses Hanumān that his strength will be reduced by half.*71 There is a nearly similar episode in the Vālmīki Rāmāyana. The Sanskrit text relates that Hanumān asks Añjana, his mother, how he is to earn his living. His mother answers him that fruits as ripe as the rising sun will be his food. Hanumān then thinks that the glittering sun is his food. He jumps up at it. But in the

69. Praphan Sukhonthachāt (ed.), Nārāi Sip Pāṅg..., pp. 28; 65.

70. Ibid; King Rama I, Rāmakīan, Vol. I, p.63.

71. Khun Ying Lūan Rit, Nārāi Sip Pāṅg, pp. 83-84.

Vālmiki Rāmāyana, Hanumān is not cursed by the sun because Hanumān changes his mind. He does not want to eat the sun when he sees Rāhū and Airāvata (Indra's vehicle). Hanumān is punished by Indra instead. He is struck on his chin by Indra's thunderbolt.*72

4. Early relationship between Rāma and Kukhan (Guha). The Nārāi Sip Pāng (Lūan Rit Version) says that Kukhan's wife used to be Rāma's wetnurse. This makes Kukhan more loyal to Rāma.*73 There is no mention of Kukhan's wife in the Rāmākīan at all. In the Vālmiki Rāmāyana Guha is described as a minor king, which corresponds to both the Thai texts. The Vālmiki Rāmāyana also says that Guha is an old friend of Rāma's.*74 This might have been the starting point for the Nārāi Sip Pāng version.

5. Lakṣmaṇa's unknowing murder of Kumhakāt. In both the Nārāi Sip Pāng (Lū'an Rit Version) and the Rāmākīan, Kumhakāt, Samanakhā's (Śurpanakhā's) son is described as performing a penance in a bamboo tree in order to obtain divine weapons. Later on in the Nārāi Sip Pāng*75 Kumhakāt, who is still in the bamboo tree, is killed unknowingly by Lakṣmaṇa with the divine weapon rejected just before by Kumhakāt himself. In the Rāmākīan*76 Kumhakāt comes out of the bamboo tree when he sees Lakṣmaṇa trying the divine weapon that he

72. Rāmāyana VII. p. 40.

73. Khun Ying Lū'an Rit, Nārāi Sip Pāng, p. 139

74. Rāmāyana II, 50.33.

75. Khun Ying Lū'an Rit, Nārāi Sip Pāng, pp. 144-145.

76. King Rama I, Rāmākīan, Vol. 1, p.

has previously rejected. Kumhakāt then fights with Lakṣmaṇa and is killed by him.

6. Daśakanṭha's abjuction of Sītā. In the Rāmakīan Daśakanṭha, in the form of a hermit, comes to beg alms from Sītā. Then he asks her about her family. When Sītā tells Daśakanṭha of Rāma, Daśakanṭha begins to praise himself to make Sītā believe that he is a better suitor for her than Rāma is.^{*77} This is very near to the Valmīki Rāmāyana and the Tamil Kamban Rāmāyana. The Nārāi Sip Pāṅg does not mention Daśakanṭha's boast at all. But the Nārāi Sip Pāṅg mentions that Sītā does not follow Lakṣmaṇa's advice that she should be in the hermitage all the time until he comes back. The text narrates that when Daśakanṭha in the form of a sage calls her to come out from the hermitage, she does so. She then loses protection for herself, and is abducted by Daśakanṭha.^{*78} The story in the Nārāi Sip Pāṅg might have been influenced by the Mahāvīracarita and the Hanumānnāṭaka in which Lakṣmaṇa is described as drawing a protective circle for Sītā. But Sītā is not careful enough so she comes out of the circle and is abducted by Rāvana.^{*79}

7. Sadāyu (Jatāyu) and Sītā's ring. In the Rāmakīan when Sadāyu comes to rescue Sītā, he tells Daśakanṭha that he cannot be destroyed by any weapon except those

77. Ibid., Vol. II, p. 692

78. Khun Ying Lū'an Rit, Nārāi Sip Pāṅg, pp. 150-151.

79. Phrayā Anumān Rājadhon, Upahōn Rāmakīan, p. 103.

of Śiva, of Viṣṇu, and by Sītā's ring given to her by Śiva. Sadāyu's own statement causes his death because Daśakanṭha then uses Sītā's ring in attacking him.*80 In the Nārāi Sip Pāṅg (Lū'an Rit Version) Sadāyu does not disclose to Daśakanṭha the secrets about the exception to his invulnerability. Sadāyu accidentally sees Sītā's ring and is frightened of being hit by it. Daśakanṭha, who has magical ears which enable him to hear anybody's words or thoughts within a distance of an elephant's cry, comes to know of Sadāyu's fright. Daśakanṭha then uses Sītā's ring in attacking him in their fight.*81 Sadāyu's being vulnerable to Sītā's ring is not found in any Indian version of the Rāma story.

8. Sugrīva's grief. In the Rāmākīan when Hanumān goes to persuade Sugrīva to join Rāma in fighting against Daśakanṭha, Hanumān does not have any difficulty in finding Sugrīva at all. He just goes straight to the Amatang Mountain where Sugrīva is hiding himself from Vālī.*82 In the Nārāi Sip Pāṅg (Lū'an Rit Version) at first Hanumān cannot find Sugrīva. After searching for him, he feels thirsty, and goes to drink at a brook. Hanumān, with great surprise, finds that the water is salty and has a fishy odour. Hanumān traces the brook's source. He finds it in an anthill which has grown up over the weeping Sugrīva. It is Sugrīva's tears which are the brook's water.*83

80. King Rama I, Rāmākīan, Vol. II, p. 700.

81. Khun Ying Lū'an Rit, Nārāi Sip Pāṅg, pp. 152-153.

82. King Rama I, Rāmākīan, Vol. II, p. 727.

83. Khun Ying Lū'an Rit, Nārāi Sip Pāṅg, pp. 158-159.

This episode is not found in any Indian version either.

A speculation about the original prototype of either the Rāmakīan of King Rama I or the Nārāi Sip Pāng Rama story cannot be made with any certainty from the comparison of different episodes in both texts. The differences only confirm the fact that there must have been many versions of the Rāma story in Thailand extant at the same time. The stories in the Khamphāk Rāmakīan of the Ayuthya period, different in turn from those in the Rāmakīan of King Rama I and the relevant episodes in the Nārāi Sip Pāng, also attest this hypothesis. The episodes in the Khamphāk Rāmakīan which are different from King Rama I's version and the Nārāi Sip Pāng are:

1. Daśakanṭha's passion for Sītā. In the Khamphāk Rāmakīan, there is the description of the great passion of Daśakanṭha for Sītā when he hears of her from Samanakhā. Daśakanṭha has flowers strewn over his bed to make it cool and thus release him from the heat of his passion. But this is useless. Then Daśakanṭha orders three gods to help him. Vāyu is ordered to blow; Sūrya, or the sun, is ordered to hide in the clouds to reduce the heat of the world; and Candra, or the moon, is ordered to shine her cool rays during the day. But all these, too, are unable to help Daśakanṭha.*⁸⁴ The Rāmakīan does not have this description at all. The prototype of the description of the boundless passion of Daśakanṭha in the Khamphāk Rāmakīan is found in the Tamil Kamban Rāmāyana in which Rāvāna, who has been smitten with passion for Sītā, finds no comfort in a bed of newly-plucked flowers. Rāvāna comes to hate all seasons. His body is not soothed by either the sun or the moon. In the end Rāvāna asks for complete darkness in

84. "Khamphāk Rāmakīan", found in Wachirayān, Part 112, p.6.

Lankā. *85

2. Mārīca and Rāma. In the Khamphāk Rāmākīan when Mārīca, in the form of a golden deer, finds that he is closely followed by Rāma, he flies up to hide himself in the clouds. But Rāma, by means of the power of his prayers, blows those clouds apart, and thus Mārīca is seen by Rāma again. Mārīca's attempt to flee also makes Rāma realise that he is a demon in the disguise of a deer. *86 In the Rāmākīan Mārīca does not hide himself in the clouds, and Rāma finds that he is a demon only when Mārīca's face, because of his fright, turns into a demon face. *87 Neither of the stories in the Khamphāk Rāmākīan and the Rāmākīan appears in any Indian version.

3. Rāvana's abduction of Sītā. In the Rāmākīan Rāvana carries Sītā in his arms and flies in his chariot to Lankā, *88 while in the Khamphāk Rāmākīan, Rāvana does not touch Sītā's body. He carries the part of the earth's surface on which Sītā is standing and puts it on his chariot, and then flies back to Lankā. *89 The episode in the Khamphāk Rāmākīan seems to be similar to the Jaina version. King Rama I's is similar to the Vālmīki Rāmāyana.

85. Kamban Rāmāyana 3.7.88-149.

86. "Khamphāk Rāmākīan", found in Wachirayān, Vol. 112, p. 23.

87. King Rama I, Rāmākīan, Vol. II, p. 685.

88. Ibid, p. 696.

89. "Khampāk Rāmākīan", found in Wachirayān, Vol. 112, p. 31.

4. In the Khamphāk Rāmakīan, after Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa have lamented pathetically at Sītā's disappearance from the hermitage, they do not faint. They go straight away to search for her in the forest.^{*90} This seems to accord with the Vālmīki version. In the Rāmakīan the brothers faint after they have made their lament. Then they are revived by Indra who is greatly disturbed by their misery. Indra then tells them what has happened to Sītā and directs the way for them to find her.^{*91} It can be seen that the Rāmakīan of King Rama I is influenced by Buddhist tradition in which Indra is some times used as a kind of deus ex machina.

5. The reconstruction of Lankā after it is burnt down by Hanumān. In the Khamphāk Rāmakīan Rāvaṇa asks Varuṇa to extinguish the fire with rain. Then Rāvaṇa asks Vāyu with his wind to make even the ground where Lankā used to stand. Finally Rāvaṇa asks Wetsukam (Viśvakarma) to reconstruct Lankā.^{*92} In the Rāmakīan of King Rama I these gods are also mentioned, but they are ordered by Indra to help Rāvaṇa. The text says that after the fire is extinguished, Rāvaṇa asks Indra, his old enemy, to reconstruct Lankā.^{*93} It can be seen that this episode in King Rama I's version is also influenced by Buddhist tradition in which Indra is always a beneficent god.

90. Ibid, p. 40.

91. King Rama I, Rāmakīan, p. 708.

92. "Khamphāk Rāmakīan", found in Wachirayān, Vol. 117, p. 1-2.

93. King Rama I, Rāmakīan, Vol. II, pp. 899-901.

6. Hanumān's tying Rāvaṇa's hair to Mandodarī's when he goes to see Sītā in Lāṅkā. This appears in the Khamphāk Rāmākīan only.*94 In the Rāmākīan Hanumān does not do so. But in the Rāmākīan on a different occasion Hanumān does tie Rāvaṇa's hair to Mandodarī's when he goes into Rāvaṇa's chamber in order to find a special grinding stone for medicine.*95

It is noteworthy that the sixth episode in the Khampāk Rāmākīan is also mentioned in a book on astrology called Phromachāt (Brahmajāti). Episodes from the Rāma story are much cited in this kind of book in order to describe the nature of the moments of the day. For example, "Day 7, Yām (Sanskrit yāma, 'a watch') 7 is the time when valourous Hanumān volunteers to help Rāma, the God of the Three Worlds. Yām 4 is the time when Hanumān flies to the neighbourhood of Lāṅkā. The demon lord is deceived by Hanumān's trick. Yām 1 is the time when Hanumān, reciting his mantras, ties Mandodarī's hair to Rāvaṇa's. Yām 5 is the time when Hanumān enters the city, gives the ring to Sītā and informs Sītā of Rāma's news in the garden. Yām 2 is the time when brave Hanumān playfully destroys Rāvaṇa's garden.*96

94. "Khamphāk Rāmākīan", found in Wachirayān, Vol. 116, p. 51.

95. King Rama I, Rāmākīan, Vol. III, p. 1792.

96. "Phromachāt", found in Upakōṇ Rāmākīan, by Phrayā Anumān Rājadhon, p. 194.

Rāma and Sītā in the Thai Rāma story are consistently regarded as the incarnations of Viṣṇu and Lakṣmī respectively. Internal evidence is abundant, and here incidents from the Rāmakīan of King Rama I are given to attest the statement.

Rāma's own recognition of his being the incarnation of Viṣṇu. When Kaikeśī (Kaikeyī) tells Rāma of his exile, Rāma discloses to her his true feeling. He says: "My exile as a hermit in the forest for 14 years agrees with the purpose of my incarnation. I prefer it to reigning over the kingdom. I will have an opportunity to destroy the demons and save the world."^{*97}

When Rāma finds that he is deceived by Mārīca, and Sītā has disappeared from the hermitage, he laments: "It is a pity that I, who have incarnated myself in order to destroy the vicious demons, am trapped by the demons' trickery. I will be ridiculed by the three worlds."^{*98}

Rāma tells the demon Kumphon (Kabandha), whom he meets on his way while searching for Sītā, that his name is Rāma; he is the same as Nārāyaṇa; he has been invited to incarnate himself as Rāma by the sages and gods.^{*99}

Sītā's recognition of Rāma as an incarnation of Viṣṇu. When Sītā hears Mārīca's imitating Rāma's voice calling for help, she laments: "It is a pity that Rāma, an incarnation of a god, is defeated by the demons".^{*100}

97. King Rama I, Rāmakīan, Vol. 1, pp. 470-471.

98. Ibid., Vol. II, p. 707.

99. Ibid., p. 713.

100. Ibid., p. 687.

Lakṣmana's recognition of Rāma as an incarnation of Viṣṇu.

When Lakṣmana sees Rāma lose consciousness after his pathetic lament for Sītā's disappearance, he too laments: "How can you leave me without any compassion by going back to sleep on the Ocean of Milk."^{*101}

The device used in the Rāmakīan of King Rama I in order to show that Rāma is Viṣṇu incarnate is Rāma's exhibition of his Viṣṇu form. It is an absolute proof of his divine nature. Rāma exhibits this god-form, having four hands holding a conch, a discus, a mace, and a trident, and having a shiny complexion, either green or black in colour, to his foes when he has vanquished them, and to his devotees. Rāma shows this Viṣṇu form to Rāmasūn (Parasūrāma),^{*102} Vālī,^{*103} and Kumbhakarna^{*104} when he has defeated them in the battle. This makes them wholeheartedly accept his superiority over them. Rāma also reveals his god-form to Sugrīva^{*105} and Mahāchomphū^{*106} in order to impress them with his divine nature, so that they will become his allies. Rāma's exhibition of his god-form is not found in any of the Indian versions, not even in the versions in which the divine nature of Rāma is strongly emphasised, such as the Adhyātma Rāmāyana, the Hindi Tulsidas Ramacaritamānasa and the Tamil Kamban Rāmāyana.

101. Ibid., p. 707.

102. Ibid., Vol. I, p. 428.

103. Ibid., Vol. II, p. 740.

104. Ibid., p. 1243.

105. Ibid., p. 731.

106. Ibid., p. 783.

Sītā as an incarnation of the goddess Lakṣmī is referred to in the Rāmakīan of King Rama I when Sītā is about to be abducted by Rāvāna. It is narrated in the text that when the gods, to whom Lakṣmaṇa has entrusted the care of Sītā while he is absent, see the approaching Rāvāna, they do nothing to protect her because they think: "Nothing will happen to Lakṣmī even if she is abducted by Rāvāna. Nārāyaṇa will search for her, and kill the demon Rāvāna."*107

Jaṭāyu, seeing Rāvāna carrying Sītā off by force to Laṅkā, reminds Rāvāna that Rāma is an incarnation of Viṣṇu from the Ocean of Milk, and Sītā is the goddess Lakṣmī, his consort. Then Jaṭāyu advises Rāvāna to return Sītā to Rāma.*108

Once when Rāma is greatly depressed by Sītā's abduction, he is reminded by Lakṣmaṇa of Sītā's true nature. Lakṣmaṇa tells him: "Sister Sītā is the goddess Lakṣmī. She is the mother of the gods. Even if she has been abducted by the demon, she will be returned spotless."*109

Moreover the names used in the Thai texts of the Rāma story to represent Rāma and Sītā also indicate that they are taken by the Thais to be incarnations of Viṣṇu and Lakṣmī. The word Lakṣmī is alternatively used to refer to Sītā while Nārāyaṇa and groups of words describing Viṣṇu are given to Rāma. For example:

107. Ibid., p. 690.

108. Ibid., p. 698.

109. Ibid., p. 758.

Phra Awatān, 'the incarnate';
Phra Čhakri, 'the discus holder';
Phra Si Kōn, 'the four-handed';
Phra Song Nāk, 'riding on the Nāga';
Phra Song Khrut, 'riding on the Garuda'.

However Rāma in the Thai story is not treated as the Supreme God as in some Indian versions of the Rāma story. There is no mention, as there is in the Tulsidas's Ramacaritamānasa, of Rāma's superiority to Śiva and Brahmā. In the Ramacaritamānasa Rāma is eulogized as the Supreme One throughout. For example, Angada, acting as an envoy of Rāma to Lānkā, speaks to Rāvaṇa: "Have I disgraced my family by being the envoy of one whose feet Śiva and Brahmā and all the gods and sages long to serve?"^{*110} In some passages Rāma is even described as praising himself. He at one time tells Sugrīva: "I will slay Vālī with a single shaft. Though he flees for refuge to Brahmā and Rudra, he shall not escape alive."^{*111} Moreover there is no episode in the Thai Rāma story of the hero's being asked to take any character in the story as his religious devotee. In the Thai version of Rāmāyana it is Śiva who is the Supreme One and Rāma all the time acknowledges his supremacy of him. Rāma always refers to the 'Om̄kāra' or command of Śiva which causes him to be born as Rāma to demolish all the troubles in the world.

Rāma, for the Thais, is the image of heroism and a very mighty sovereign. There are successive references

110. "Tulasi Das's Ramacaritmānasa", translated as The Holy Lake of the Acts of Rāma by W. Douglas P. Hill, Oxford, 1952, p. 376.

111. Ibid., p. 327.

to this characteristic of him in Thai literature. In the inscription of King Rāma Khamhāēng of Sukhothai, the king describes his valorous fight against Khun Sam Chon, his father's enemy, and his victory over him. The king says that due to his valour his father has given him a new name of Rāma the Valorous, Rām Khamhāēng. *112 In inscription No. 41 of the Ayuthya period a noble called Khun Sī Ratanakōn makes a vow to be, in his next existence, as valorous as Rāma (khō hai hān thīam Rāma). *113 In the Lilit Yūan Phāi of the Ayutha period (15th century), King Bōromatrailōkanāt's valour is compared to that of Rāma who vanquishes Rāvaṇa. (chaya chaya amnāt thāo khū' Rām/rōn Rāp luang Longkā phaen phaeo). *114 In Chan Klom Phra Sawēt Woralak (Lullaby for a new captive white elephant called Sawēt Woralak), the poet..Phrayā Sī Sunthōn Wōhān (Nōi), eulogizes King Rama V as follows: "The power of the king is equal to that of Rāma who vanquishes all enemies and thus he gets rid of wars (phra rit khū' rit Krung Rām/khāt sīan songkhrām Ra-Ngap Sa-Ngap Phairin). *115 In the reign of King Rama VI, Prince Ratchani Čhaem Čharat, in the Chan Sangwoei Phra Mahā Sawētachat (Eulogy of the white umbrella), eulogizes the king as "Having the same power as Rāma who vanquishes Rāvaṇa and the countries around his

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112. Inscription No 1., Prachum Čharu'k Sayām Phāk Thī 1, edited and translated by G. Coedis, Bangkok Time Press, Bangkok, 1924, p. 53.
113. Inscription No. 41, Prachum Silā Čharu'k Phāk Thī 3, Office of the Prime Minister, Bangkok, 1965, p. 48.
114. Lilit Yūan Phāi, p. 80.
115. Phrayā Sī Sunthōn Wōhān (Nōi), "Chan Klom Phra Sawēt Woralak", Chumnum Čhan Dutsadi Lae Sangwoei, Bangkok, 1914, p. 239.

kingdom". (rit rāt khū' Rām rōmrān/rōn Rāp rāp lān/riap rōp prathēt monthon).^{*116} The praise for Rāma as the most celebrated king for the Thais can be clearly seen in the appearance of the name 'Rāma' in many names of the Thai kings. In the Sukhothai period there is King Rām Khamhāēng, or Rāma the Valorous. In the Ayuthya period there are Rāmēsūan (Rāma-Īsvara), or Rāma the Supreme; Rāmrat (Rāma-Rāja), or Rāma the King; and Rāmāthibodī (Rāma-adhipati), or Rāma the Leader. Last but not least, the first six kings of the Čakrī dynasty, the present dynasty of the Ratanakosin, are also called Rāma.

116. Phra Ongchao Ratchanī Čhaem Charat, "Chan Sangwoei Phra Mahā Sawetachat", Ibid., p. 74.

CONCLUSION

1.1 Of all the myths about Viṣṇu's incarnations, the Rāma incarnation myth is the most popular in Thai literature. This can be clearly seen from the number of different versions of this myth composed during the Ayuthya and the Ratana-kosin period. (See chapter VII) In various parts of Thailand places are named after the characters and the incidents in the Rāma myth and this also attests its popularity. A lake in Lop Buri, a province in the Centre of Thailand, is called Thalē Chup Sōn, "The sea for dipping the arrows in", because it is supposed to be the lake where Rāma dipped his arrows before he shot them. In Chaināt, another province in the Centre of Thailand, there is a mountain called Saphayā, "all kinds of medicine". This mountain is believed to be the place where Hanumān came to collect a medicinal herb called Sang Korani Tri Chawā. In Sara Buri, another province in the Centre, a mountain is called Khao Khāt, "Torn Mountain", because, according to the legend, it was broken by the wheel-hub of Rāvaṇa's chariot when he was abducting Sītā to Laṅkā in such a great haste. In Chon Buri, a province in the South East of Thailand, there is a brook called Huai Sukhrīp, "Sugrīva's Brook". In Phthalung, a province in the South, there is a cave called Tham Phālī, "Valī's Cave".

1.2 The Rāma ^{story} has had, and still has, a great influence upon the life of the Thai people. Some Thai sayings and phrases have been coined after the incidents of the Rāma story. For example, yung yang ka Rāmakīan, "complicated like the story of Rāma"; yang ka yak Paklan, "(big) as the demon Paklan"; lūk Thōraphī, "an ungrateful son like Thōraphī" (who kills his own father).

1.3 The story of Rāma is continually quoted and is greatly

used in simile in Thai literature*1 In the Khlong Thawathosamat (17th century), the poet tells his beloved that he will return to her like Daśaratha's son, who, though he has departed from Sītā, returns to her. In a poetical work composed by Phra Sī Mahōsot, a court poet of King Nārāi (17th century), the poet tells his beloved that he loves her as Vālī loves the damsel who is destined to be his younger brother's wife. In a poem of Phra Mahā Nāk of Thā Sāi Monastery -- he was a poet in the reign of King Bōromakōt (18th century) -- the poet says that his beloved's attractiveness is similar in power to Rāma's three arrows used in killing the demons. She is also said to kill men with her arrow-like charm.

1.4 The popularity of the Rāma myth in Thailand is so great that parts of it are interpolated, or integrated, into some Hindu myths, as related in Thailand, which are not originally connected with this epic at all. Three of Viṣṇu's incarnation myths have been reshaped under this process. They are the Boar incarnation; the Dwarf incarnation; and the Buddha incarnation myths. In the Rāmakīan and the Nārāi Sip Pāng, the Boar incarnation myth is linked with Brahmā's Padmayoni myth, or the myth of Brahmā's birth from the lotus rising from the navel of Viṣṇu. Then the combined myth is cited by the Thais as a myth of the creation of the first ancestor of Rāma, i.e. Lord Anōmātan. (See p.132). In Hindu mythology the Boar incarnation myth is clearly separated from Brahmā's Padmayoni myth. In Vaiṣṇava texts the Boar returns to the form of Viṣṇu after he has brought the Earth back to its normal position. In Śaiva texts the Boar becomes more arrogant and troublesome after he has fulfilled his mission, and he has to be subdued by Śiva in the form of Śarapha. But in neither of the Hindu

1. Phrayā Anumān Rājadhon, Upakōn Rāmakīan, Bangkok, 1972, pp. 247-248.

sectarian texts, does a lotus spring from Viṣṇu's navel after the god has brought the Earth back to its previous position. Moreover, in none of the Hindu texts is Rāma's first ancestor created from the lotus rising from Viṣṇu's navel. It is clear that the Thais give such great importance to the Race of Rāma that they try to link the date of its founding with the date of the world's creation.

In the Thai texts the Dwarf incarnation myth is mixed up with a myth from the Rāmāyana. It is related in the Thai texts that the demon Tāwan (Bali in the Sanskrit texts), who has been driven out from his region by Viṣṇu in the form of a dwarf, comes to live in a city called Māyan. There he transgresses against Indra by living with one of the god's concubines whom he has abducted from heaven. Indra finds out what has happened and kills him. The god also curses the go-between, who is involved in Tāwan's adultery with the goddess, to stay on in that city in order to help Rāma's soldiers in searching for Sītā. The Dwarf incarnation myth is also related in the Rāmāyana. But it does not play any part in the main story. There is also, in the Rāmāyana, the myth of a demon called Maya (not Tāwan, or Bali) who commits adultery with Indra's concubine, and is punished by the god with death. The go-between, named Syamprabhā (Butsamālī in the Thai texts), is also cursed to stay on in Maya's city, and she also helps Aṅgada and his soldiers searching for Sītā just as Butsamālī shows the way to Lankā to Hanumān. But in the Rāmāyana these two myths are not connected. Bali retires to the Pātala world, and he is not killed by Indra. Maya is in no way identified with Bali. The Thais seem to think that the Dwarf incarnation myth will fit into the Rāma story better if it is combined with the myth of Maya, who commits adultery with Indra's concubine.

The third of Viṣṇu's incarnation myths which becomes a part of Rāma story in the Thai texts is the Buddha incarnation myth. In this myth Viṣṇu incarnates himself in the form of a Buddhist monk in order to make the demon Trī Buram renounce his faith in Śiva. Then only it is right and proper that the god Śiva shall

kill him. ^{It is} the myth of the origin of the bow of Mithilā which Rāma bends in order to win the hand of Sītā. It is related in the texts that a special bow has to be made for Śiva to kill the demon Tri Buram. In the Hindu scriptures there is no link at all between the Tripura myth and the Ratnadhanu myth of the Rāmāyana.

1.5 In addition to some of Viṣṇu's incarnation myths, two more Hindu myths can be described as being influenced by the Rāma myth. These are: the demon Nonthuk myth; and the myth of Sugrīva's lifting up Sumeru Mountain.

Nonthuk is the foot-washer for the gods at Kailāsa. He has a magic finger that can kill anybody by pointing it at him. This myth does not appear in the Rāmāyana. The Thais adapted it from a Tamil myth of the demon Bhasmāsura, (see p. 175). It is certain that this Tamil myth was taken over by the Thais in order to provide a plausible motive for Viṣṇu's Rāma incarnation. In the Rāmākīan Viṣṇu, in his Mohini form as the incarnation prior to the Rāma incarnation, has overcome Nonthuk. Nonthuk makes a complaint that the battle between him and Viṣṇu in disguise has been ill-matched. So Viṣṇu promises to give Nonthuk advantages in his next birth as Daśakantha, or Rāvaṇa. Even then, he prophesies, Viṣṇu will vanquish the demon notwithstanding. In Vālmiki's Rāmāyana Viṣṇu is invited by the gods to incarnate himself in the form of Rāma in order to destroy Rāvaṇa who has asked Brahmā to give him the boon of being invincible to all kinds of beings. But Rāvaṇa excludes human beings from his list because he looks down upon them. That is why Viṣṇu has to incarnate himself as a man.

The myth of Sugrīva's lifting Sumeru Mountain back up again after it has been tipped to one side is reminiscent of the myth of the churning of the ocean which in Hindu mythology has nothing to do with the Rāma story. One aspect only

of the churning, i.e. the effort made by the gods in pulling (churning) Mandara Mountain, is retained in the Rāmakīan in order to supply material for a Thai interpolation into the Rāma legend. The interpolation is inserted into the story with the purpose of giving justification for Rāma's killing Vālī. It will be recalled that, after the Arjuna-Parasūramā fight, and after the failure of the gods to pull the mountain back up again, Sugrīva is successful in lifting back the Sumeru Mountain to its former position. He then goes back to Kīṣkindha straightaway so Śiva has no chance to reward him for his deed. The god then asks Vālī to carry a lady called Tārā, whom the god has put in a box, to give to Sugrīva. Śiva is warned that it is not a sensible thing to entrust a man's wife-to-be to another man. So the god makes Vālī promise that he will accept death by Viṣṇu's arrow if he does not accomplish his mission honestly and righteously. Vālī, however, breaks his promise and that is why Rāma has to kill him. It is possible that the Thais may have thought that a mere quarrel between brothers, as described in the Rāmāyana, is not a weighty enough reason for Rāma to kill one of the brothers. So the interpolation finds its way into the Thai story.

2. The other element, besides influence from the Rāma story, which is introduced into Hindu myth as related in Thai literature is the folklore element. The interpolation of folklore into a Hindu myth sometimes adds humour to the story, or sometimes provides an alternative version of the Hindu original myth long forgotten by the Thais. The Hindu myths which contain interpolations from Thai folklore are: Nāk Sadung myth; the demons and their armour; Baladeva, the god of grains and vegetables; buffaloes and chū'ak taphāi and mai tā thot; matūm tree myth, and the sī suk bamboo myth.

2.1 The Nāk Sadung myth is related in the Lū'an Rit version of the Nārāi Sip Pāng. It is reminiscent of the myth of the churning of the ocean related in Hindu mythology. The story goes as follows:

Rāmāsura, in a fight against a god named Arjuna, strikes him against Sumeru Mountain and kills him. The mountain is pushed off its balance. Siva commands all the gods, and gandharvas to tie the Serpent Ananta round the mountain. Then the gods try to pull the mountain up to its previous position. The gods are not successful in doing so because they are poisoned by the poisonous vapour emitted by the Serpent Ananta. The gods find difficulty in breathing and they feel weak in their hands and feet. Sugrīva finds out the cause of the gods' trouble. He suggests that the tail of the serpent should be tied in the Patala world. Then he orders the demons, who live in that mountain too, to carry a large number of stones there. The demons are commanded to fill in the gap left after the mountain is pulled back to its normal position. When everything is ready, Sugrīva tickles the navel of the serpent. The serpent gives a start and bends its body up. By that action of the serpent, the mountain is pulled back to its right position, as it was before. When Sugrīva sees that his mission is accomplished, he returns to Kiśkindha. Phra Witsanukam (Viśva-Karma) records the event and calls it Nāk Sadung (i.e. nāga gives a start) from then on.*²

2. Khun Ying Lū'an Rit (ed.), Nārāi Sip Pāng, Bangkok, 1923, p.95.

Nāk Sadung is the name of a Thai architectural design. It is a part of the roof work. It has the shape of the body of nāga slightly curling. It is decorated with pieces of glass. No other meaning of nāk sadung is found in either old or modern Thai texts, therefore it is likely that the author of the Lu'an Rit version of the Nārāi Sip Pāng refers to this architectural design. The curly part of the nāga design might have made the author of the text identify it with the Serpent Ananta which curls up when it is tickled by Sugrīva.

2.2 The myth of the demons and the armour is related in the Royal Press version of the Nārāi Sip Pāng. It is the myth of the quarrel between Rāvaṇa and his brother Kuvera narrated in the Rāmāyana. the story goes:

Daśakanṭha is crowned the king of Lankā after the death of his father. He does not follow the righteous way of a king. Daśakanṭha is very greedy and jealous. He craves for the celestial puspaka (the flying chariot) bestowed upon his brother Kuperanta by their father. Daśakanṭha tries to possess his brother's puspaka by force. He wages war with his brother. Kuperanta, who is Siva's devotee, seeks refuge with the god. He withdraws to the summit of the Rat-chadākūt Mountain where Siva is practising his religious austerities. When he arrives there Kuperanta cries loudly to Siva for help. Siva opens his eyes and sees what is happening. The god is very angry. He pulls out the left tusk of his elephant mount and throws it at Daśakanṭha. The tusk hits Daśakanṭha's chest and sticks in it. Siva then curses Daśakanṭha that the tusk will remain in Daśakanṭha's chest until he is shot by Nārāyana's arrow, i.e. when he is destined to die. Daśakanṭha has great pain, so he flies back in the puspaka he has just robbed from his brother to Lankā. He then orders Witsanukam to saw off the part of the tusk that showed. From then on Daśakanṭha wears armour all the time to conceal the tusk from the eyes of his people. And all demons likewise wear armour to conceal their chests.*³

3. Praphan Sukhonthachāt (ed.), Nārāi Sip Pāng Lae Phong Nai Ru'ang Rāmākīan, 2nd ed., Bangkok, 1968, p. 67.

2.3 There is reference to Baladeva, the god of grains and vegetables, in the Royal Press version of the Nārāi Sip Pāng. Baladeva, who is sometimes in Hindu mythology regarded as the eighth incarnation of Viṣṇu, is never recognized as such by the Thais. He was known to be Kṛṣṇa's brother by the author of the Anirut Kham Chan of the early Ayuthya period. By the time of the Nārāi Sip Pāng of the Ratanakosin period Baladeva is merely described as a god, and there is no mention of his kinship with Kṛṣṇa at all. In the Royal Press version of the Nārāi Sip Pāng, Baladeva is described as joining the army of Kṛṣṇa who fights against the demon Bāṇa in order to rescue his grandson -- Aniruddha. Baladeva fights a duel with Phichaikālā, one of Bāṇa's ministers, and kills him with his weapon -- a plough. The demon Bāṇa is very infuriated at the death of his minister so he fights fiercely with Baladeva. Kṛṣṇa seeing that Baladeva is no match for Bāṇa, comes to help him. Thereupon Baladeva is freed from the necessity to carry on fighting. Baladeva is mentioned no more until the end of the story. It is said in the text that after the war between Kṛṣṇa and Bāṇa, Kṛṣṇa and Śiva give a boon to Baladeva. He is to become the god of grains and vegetables by virtue of the royal ceremony of the First Ploughing of the Land from then on.*⁴

The cause that makes the Thais link Baladeva with grains and vegetables, or agriculture, must be his plough which is meant to be his special weapon in Hindu mythology. In Hindu scriptures, especially in the Purāṇas, there is no story of Baladeva's tilling the land with his plough. On the contrary, he is described as using it in order to exhibit his heroic prowess. For example, it is related in the Viṣṇu Purāna that Baladeva, who is intoxicated, orders the waters of the Yamunā river to come to him so that he can bathe. But the river does not heed his command. So with his ploughshare he

4. Ibid., pp. 62-63.

drags the waters wherever he goes, until they beseech his forgiveness.*⁵ None of these myths appears in Thai literature.

The name 'Baladeva' was already linked with agriculture in Thailand from the early Ayuthya period. In the Kot Monthian Bān (Palatine Law), an officer whose rank was Phra Pholathēp (Baladeva) is described as being responsible to a certain extent for the royal ceremony of the First Ploughing of the Land. He had to inform other officers concerned of the program of the ceremony. In the Khamhaikān Khun Lūang Hā Wat (The Statement of Khun Lūang Hā Wat) of the Ayuthya period, Phrayā Pholathēp (Baladeva) is described as leading the cow in that same royal ceremony. It was in the early Ratanakosin period (from King Rama I's reign to King Rama III's) that Phrayā Pholathēp is described as performing the first ploughing of the land in this royal ceremony. After the reign of King Rama III, it is not fixed that it must be Phrayā Pholathēp only who performs this act.*⁶ It is likely that Baladeva was first regarded as the god of grain and vegetables during the later period of Ayuthya and the early Ratanakosin period when officers, whose rank was named after him, were assigned to perform the most important act in the most important ceremony concerning agriculture in Thailand.

The myth of why buffaloes are frightened of chū'ak taphāi (or sāi taphāi, a rope passed through the septum of the nose of a bullock or buffalo) and mai tathot (or mai taphot, a bamboo spiked stick about a meter long, having a cord attached to the end, used as a goad by farmers) is related in the Lū'an Rit version of the Narāi Sip Pāng. It is interpolated into the myth of the buffalo incarnation of Viṣṇu. The story in the Lū'an Rit Version is different from the other two versions, i.e. the Royal Press and the Watcharin Versions, in that in this version Viṣṇu incarnates himself in the form of a she-buffalo

5. VIṢṆU PURĀṆA V. 25.1-14.

6. Phra Bāt Somdet Phra Chula Chom Klao Chao Yū Hūa (King Rama V), Phrarāṭchaphithī Sipsōng Dū'an, Bangkok: Bannakhan, 1970, pp. 399-400, 409-410.

in order to attract the demon buffalo first and then she can defeat him. In the other two versions Viṣṇu incarnates himself in the form of a he-buffalo, and uses his strength straight-way in vanquishing the demon buffalo. The story in the Lū'an Rit Version of the Nārāi Sip Pāng goes:

A brahma is jealous of Brahmā the Creator. He then dies and is reborn on earth as a demon buffalo. He wants to pull down and destroy Sumeru Mountain. The frightened gods seek refuge with Siva who then orders Nārāyaṇa to vanquish the demon. Nārāyaṇa incarnates himself in the form of a she-buffalo. She gambols around within the sight of the demon buffalo. The demon buffalo is excited by her smell and falls in love with her. The she-buffalo then plays a trick on him. She runs here and there so that he cannot reach her. In the end he is very fatigued and has to lie down on his knees. The she-buffalo then turns back to the form of Nārāyaṇa. He pierces the nose of the animal and passes a creeper through its nose. The god then ties the end of the creeper above the ears of the demon buffalo. This piece of creeper is called taphāi. The god tortures the buffalo in this way until he is tamed. Then the god ties the end of a bamboo rod of ten joints' length with a rope of the same length. He calls it mai tāthot (a rod of ten joints). The god punishes the demon buffalo until he realizes his guilt and beseeches the god for forgiveness. Nārāyaṇa then curses the buffalo to be a draft-animal and a labour-animal of men forever. Then the god sets free the demon buffalo. That is why buffaloes have been frightened of chū'ak taphāi and mai tāthot until now.*⁷

2.5 The myth of the matūm tree is related in the Royal Press Version of the Nārāi Sip Pāng. Though in Hindu mythology and folklore, matūm, or Aegle Marmelos is mainly associated with Śiva, in Thai literature it is linked with Viṣṇu. The myth in the Nārāi Sip Pāng is about how the matūm tree has become an auspicious thing. "Viṣṇu, when on an expedition to conquer a monstrous elephant demon named Ekadanta who was ravaging the three worlds, struck his trident on the ground and transformed it into a matūm tree to which he tied the tail of the monster. Hence it is forbidden for mahout to break branches of the matūm

7. Khun Ying Lū'an Rit (ed.), Nārāi Sip Pāng, pp. 36-37.

trees, or to strip them of their bark and leaves." This myth of the origin of the matūm tree, in fact, has no similar counterpart in Hindu mythology. Oddly enough, however, even in Hindu mythology where the bael tree's origin is connected with Śiva, it is Lakṣmī, Viṣṇu's wife, who is described as the creator of this kind of tree. "Lakṣmī used to worship Śiva everyday with a thousand lotus flowers. Accidentally, one day two flowers were missing. Pondering over an alternative, she remembered that her husband had casually remarked that her breasts were as beautiful as blooming lotus flowers. Then she decided to offer these parts of her body. When she was cutting them off with a sharp weapon the god appeared, declaring himself satisfied and restraining her from completing what she had begun. One breast however was already cut off; it was, the god said, to be planted and would become one of the most sacred fruits in the world."⁸ Thus one reason why matūm, or Aegle Marmelos, may be regarded as an auspicious tree is because its triple leaves resemble the shape of a trident. Though this is one of the chief characteristic weapons of Śiva, in Thai texts, however, it is sometimes a weapon of Viṣṇu too. This may explain the importance of the matūm tree's employment in almost all Brahminical rites in Thailand, and why it figures in the episode concerning its origin in the Nārāi Sip Pāng mentioned above.

2.6 The si suk bamboo (*Bambusa arundinacea*) is a species of tough bamboo. It is fit for splitting up into strips and weaving, or for making into baskets and therefore it is much employed by the Thais. It grows to a height of 100 feet. A possible reason why the myth about this kind of bamboo appears in Thai literature is that it was once used as the material for making small stools used in the coronation ceremony. They were set around the throne at the eight points of the compass. Čhao Phrayā Thiphākōrawong in Phra Rāčha Phongsāwadān Krung Ratanakōsin (Chronicle of Ratanakosin), enumerates eight small stools made of mai rū'si suk in the list of objects used in the coronation of King Rama I and King Rama II. There is

8. J.Gonda, Visnuism and Sivaism, A Comparison, University of London, 1970, p. 112.

no evidence of the use of this kind of bamboo for the same purpose in the reign of King Rama III. But it is certain that in the reign of King Rama IV other kinds of wood — mai ma dū'a (*Ficus glomerata* (Urticaceae)) and mai chaiyaphru'k (*Cassia renigera*) — were used in its place. Mai r̄u'sī suk or mai phai sī suk was in use again from the reign of King Rama VI onwards.

The myth of the sī suk bamboo is related in all versions of the Nārāi Sip Pāng. The content in these texts is more or less the same. The following story is taken from the Royal Press Version of the Nārāi Sip Pāng.

A sage named Sukhawattana was living on Sumeru Mountain. A bamboo clump had grown over the roof of his hermitage. The sage brought that bamboo to Siva. Siva broke it into two pieces and flung them on the ground. From the bottom part of it sprang a monkey named Chāmphūwarāt (*Jambuvarāja*). From the top part of it sprang a demon called Wēram who was a relative of Rāvaṇa. This kind of bamboo is henceforward known as mai phai r̄u'si suk, (or mai phai sī suk).*⁹

The Watcharin Press and the Lū'an Rit Versions of the Nārāi Sip Pāng contain a different point concerning the broken bamboo. In these two versions, it is the monkey who was born from the top part of the broken bamboo, and it is the demon who sprang from the bottom part of it. That is why, the texts continue, the demons are defeated by the monkeys in the battle between Rāma and Rāvaṇa.

It cannot be said for certain where a prototype for this myth can be found. It might have come from the Rāma cycle as narrated in one of the Indian dialects, because it contains a creation myth of two characters of the Rāma story. But such a myth has not been found yet. On the other hand, it might have been adapted by the Thais from a myth of a celebrated sage of the Hindus called

9. Praphan Sukhonthachāt (ed.), Nārāi Sip Pāng..., p. 53.

Suka. (The Lu'an Rit Version gives the name 'Suka' to the same sage.) In Hindu mythology Suka was born from the seed of Vyāsa fallen upon an arañi*¹⁰ stick at the sight of the heavenly nymph Chrtāchī while roaming over the earth in the form of a female parrot. Hence his name of Suka, meaning a parrot. On account of a fire stick being connected with his birth, he was also named Aranisuta. He became afterwards proverbial as the most rigid observer of continence.*¹¹ It is possible that the name Suka of the Hindu sage, and the story of his birth with the concourse of an arañi have played some influential role on the Thai myth of the si suk bamboo. But the actual story of the bamboo tree growing in front of him as related in the Thai texts does not appear in any Hindu scriptures.

10. arañi: the wood of the ficus Religiosa used for kindling fire by attrition.

11. G.E. Gerini, Jhulākāntamaṅgala, Bangkok, 1893, p. 170

3. Another influence upon Hindu myths as related in Thailand is Buddhist mythology. The confusion between Brahmā, who is regarded in Hindu mythology as the World Creator, and the Buddhist Brahma has already been discussed in Chapter I. The other Buddhist element mixed in with the Hindu myths related in Thai literature is Buddhist cosmology. In the Lū'an Rit Version of the Nārāi Sip Pāng Śiva is described as the Lord of the Chakāvacara which is the collective name of the Six Tiers of Heavens described in Buddhist scriptures only. Of these six heavens the second one called Tāvātimsa is the most celebrated. It is ruled by Indra. According to Buddhist tradition, however, none of these Six Tiers of Heaven is ruled by Śiva. Neither is Śiva described as the overlord of them. Another kind of Buddhist heaven, or rather, again, the collective name, which is frequently mixed in with the Hindu myths in Thai texts is the Solasa Heaven. In Buddhist texts these Sixteen Tiers of Heaven are higher than the Chakāvacara Heaven. It is more difficult to be born in these heavens. But since the beings born in these heavens are named Brahma, the Thai authors of the Nārāi Sip Pāng described in their texts how Śiva has appointed Brahmā the Creator to be the Lord of these Sixteen Tiers of Heaven.*¹² The confusion between the Hindu Brahmā and the Buddhist Brahma leads, unintentionally, to the conclusion that, if the Sixteen Tiers of Heaven are superior, as they certainly are in Buddhist texts, then Brahmā is superior to Śiva; but if the Six Tiers are superior, as seems to be the case in as much as Śiva is the authority who appoints Brahmā, then the opposite is true. Though the Nārāi Sip Pāng texts do not make this point clear, it is safe to assume the authors held Śiva to be supreme to Brahmā at all times.

The Buddhist figure who appears most frequently in Thai Hindu myths is Indra. In the Rāmākīan of King Rama I he acts as deus ex machina throughout. Four remarkable incidents in the Rāmākīan, in which Indra plays a vital role, are worth mentioning here. The first is the episode in which Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa faint after their

12. Praphan Sukhonthachāt (ed.), Nārāi Sip Pāng..., p. 5.

pitiful lament for the abducted Sita; Indra makes the two heroes recover by spraying down his divine rain on them; the god also tells them the direction which they should follow in order to discover Sītā. The second incident is the rescue of Rāma's army by Indra. The whole army of Rāma is devoured by Thapphanāsūn, Rāvaṇa's ally. Phiphēk (Vibhīṣaṇa) advises Rāma to seek refuge in Indra. Rāma informs Indra of his misfortune by shooting his arrow at Indra's abode. Indra then orders the god Witsanukam (Viśvakarma) to vivify Rāma's army by means of divine water. The third episode is the rescue of Mongkut (Kuśa), Rāma's son. Indra orders a goddess named Ramphā to rescue Mongkut who is a captive in Rāma's capital. By doing so, the goddess helps Mongkut and Rāma recognize each other as father and son. The fourth incident is the reconciliation between Rāma and Sītā. Sītā does not want to be reconciled with Rāma. This disturbs Indra very much. Indra therefore asks Śiva to force Sītā to be reconciled with Rāma. Śiva does so, and thus comes the happy ending of the story. However, Indra is not regarded as the Supreme God in these Hindu myths. He is subordinated to Śiva. This is clearly expressed in the Nārāi Sip Pāng and the Rāmākīan of King Rama I.

The importance of Śiva as the Supreme God in the Nārāi Sip Pāng, and most specially in the Ramakīan, shows that Śaiva influence in Thailand at the time of the composition (or compilation) of the texts was very high. It cannot be concluded for certain, however, that Śaivism has had, or still has, more influence in Thai literature than Viṣṇuism. In fact there is internal evidence in the Nārāi Sip Pāng showing that the stories were originally Vaiṣṇava in character. Unlike the stories of Viṣṇu incarnations in the Śaiva scriptures, none of the Viṣṇu incarnations in the Nārāi Sip Pāng has to be subdued by Śiva later on. It is related all the time in the text that Viṣṇu returns to his own abode after he has fulfilled his task. He does not report his deed to Śiva even. In the Śaiva Purāṇas Śiva not only orders Viṣṇu to incarnate himself in order to destroy some demons, but he has also to tame Viṣṇu's incarnate forms which become too proud of themselves after they have accomplished their missions. None of these myths appear in the Nārāi Sip Pāng. It seems that the Thais first received the myths about Viṣṇu from Vaiṣṇava sources, and later on a Śaiva element was added to them.

For the time being it is impossible to say whether Viṣṇuism used to have a greater influence in Thai literature. It is true that two ancient Thai texts, i.e. Lilit Ōngkān Chaeng Nam and Lilit Yūan Phāi, show more preference for Viṣṇuism. In the Lilit Ōngkān Chaeng Nam, Viṣṇu is invoked before Śiva. Moreover his characteristics, such as his power over death (phaeo maru'tayū), chosen by the author to describe him, are more impressive than Śiva's qualifications. In the Lilit Yūan Phāi it is Kṛṣṇa, an incarnation of Viṣṇu, who is eulogized throughout. But all this evidence from the Lilit Ōngkān Chaeng Nam and the Lilit Yūan Phāi cannot seriously be taken in favour of a preference for Viṣṇuism as against Śaivism in Thai literature at that time. This is because the characteristics of these two Thai texts are militant and warlike. The only Hindu

god who fits in with this characteristic, in Thai opinion, is Viṣṇu. Therefore it is inevitable that Viṣṇu plays a greater part in these texts. However, it is certain that by the time of the early Ratanakosin period Śivaism became more important in Thailand. This can clearly be seen from the Ramakīan of King Rama I. In that text Śiva is referred to as the Supreme Hindu God throughout.

APPENDIX I

TRANSLATION OF THE ROYAL PRESS VERSION OF THE
NĀRĀI SIP PĀNG

The story of the very beginning is as follows. When the Banlai Kan Fire had devastated the whole world, it became void of everything except for the ether. At that time all the Phra Wēt and Phra Tham amalgamated and became Phra Sayomphūwayān. This was Phra Isūan, the god. Phra Isūan then stroked his chest with his hands and Phra Umā Phakha-wadī was created when he stretched his hands outwards from him. Then Phra Isūan stroked his right hand with his left hand and when he stretched out his left hand away from the right Phra Nārāi was created. Then he stroked his left hand with his right hand and when he stretched out his right hand away from the left Phra Phrom was created. Then Phra Isūan, by means of his divine power, created the (world's) surface, Phra Thōranī, from a piece of his flesh he had vomited out from the region of his chest. Then Phra Isūan (also) created Phra Phlōeng, Phra Phāi, and Phra Khongkhā (from that piece of flesh). They (i.e. Phra Thōranī, Phra Phlōeng, Phra Phāi, and Phra Khongkhā) were the four elements of all creatures. Then he created Hāng Manī Mēkhalā to be the protector of the ocean. Then the demon Phra Rōt Kāmmasūn was born. Sages, sidhis, vidyācharas and gods were born. When all the following things: Apsaras; all creatures within the three worlds; Phra Sumēn Mountain; Krailāt Mountain; Phra Himachān Forest; The Serpent Ananta; and Suban, had all been created, Phra Isūan then created the Bull Usuppharāt as his mount. This is why the 'Treatise of Gulls' has been called 'Trai Tru'ngsā Sakdirāt' from then on till now. Because he (Phra Isūan) had a bull as his mount he was called 'Phra Thru'sopphayān Trī Sulī'. Then Phra Nārāi

created a garuḍa as his mount. Because he had a garuḍa as his mount he was named Phra Khrut Phāhana Kritsanurak. Then Phra Phrom created a swan as his mount. Because he had a swan as his mount he was called 'Phra Kamalāt Khanlai Mong'. Then Phra Phlōeng created Khankha Āt, that is a rhinoceros, as his mount. Phra Phāi created the Horse Phalāhok as his mount. And all gods created (various kinds of) animals as their mounts.

The queens of Phra Isūan were Queen Umā Phakhawadī and Queen Suratsawadī. The queens of Phra Nārāi were Phra Lakṣmī and Queen Mahāsawarī. When the Lord Phra Isūan had finished creating the Kāṇāplachōn Heaven, each god, as Lord, took up his abode there in his appropriate place. Phra Nārāi then went back to sleep in the Ocean of Milk.

In the Tūcā Yek, Phra Nārāi, by means of his divine power, caused a lotus to rise up from his navel. It had eight petals, one hundred and seventy-three stamens. Phra Nārāi then went to the abode of the Lord Phra Isūan, and presented the lotus to him at Krailāt Mountain. At that time the gods of the three worlds were assembling there, Phra Isūan divided that lotus into four parts. One part with eight stamens belonged to Phra Isūan, the Lord. One part with eight petals and twenty-four stamens was given to Lord Nārāi Phrom. One part with eight stamens was given to Phra Nārāi. And one part with one hundred and thirty-five stamens was given to Phra Phlōeng. The gods then created four families of elephants. They were the families of Isūan; of Phrom; of Mitsanu; and of Almi respectively. They had different characteristics. Then the four gods created the four Phra Lēt in order to help men in taming the four families of elephants in the world.

Phra Isān the Lord then laid a curse on Lady Mahā Uppakāsī: she was to go down (from heaven) to live in a cave named Thāī Siāṅgō Banghot. She ate khot creeper. Phra Phrom then created the sons of Lady Mahā Uppakāsī to be ten families of elephants in the Himawān Forest. They were the ten families (called) Chat Than; Mōsot; Hōma Matthī; Longdon Matthī; Khamtha Matthī; Pingkhala Matthī; Tāmpa Matthī; Saṅgān Matthī; Khaṅghai Matthī; and Kālavaka Matthī. They were all together the ten kinds of elephants in the world. Then Phrom, from the eight petals of the lotus created the Attha Thit elephants (of the eight directions). Then Phra Nāvī with his stemms from the lotus created a further eight kinds of Attha Khot elephants. Then Phra Isān created a further kind of Attha Kuechā Thān elephants. Then Phra Phōng created forty-nine kinds of elephants having all and had characteristics in the world.

In one of the Traidā Yuk, when the gods of the three worlds came to meet each other, Phra Isūan the Lord issued a command and gave a boon to Phra Phlōeng to create, by means of his divine power, two sons for Siwa. Phra Phlōeng obeyed the command, and he, by means of his divine power, caused flames to issue from his earholes. The rays (of the flames) were very bright. Amidst the flames, on the right, a divine boy was born. He had a face of an elephant and two arms. His right arm held a trident and his left hand held a lotus. He had serpents as his cross-belts. He was in a three-legged position and was floating in the air at the right side of the three gods. His name was proclaimed as Siva Sat Phlīhanēt. On the left side (amidst the flames) another divine boy was born. He had three faces of elephants and six arms. From one arm a white male-elephant was born. It had thirty-three heads and four feet; and was called Erawan. From another hand another white elephant was born. It had three heads and four feet; and was called Khiri Hēkhala Traidā Yuk. These two elephants were created by gods by means of divine power. The three gods blessed them with the privilege of being the mounts of the great king of the gods (Indra). From two other hands, three kinds of white elephant were born. They were to be born in the world as mounts of powerful kings. They were first grade white elephants; second grade; and third. The same three families of (white) elephants were born from both left and right hands. But the white elephant from the left hand were female, and those from the right hand were male. From two other hands the Mahābhūrat Conch was born from the right side, and the Utkūrat Conch was born from the left side. They took an upright position above the temples of all the seven heads (of the elephants). The three gods then named him Kōncharā-nāṭva Siva Sat. The three families of white elephants

were born from that time on. Because Phra Phlōeng created them by means of his divine power, the three families of white elephants were elephants of the families of Akni (i.e. the race of Fire). This is the reason why they are considered to be one of the Sughalaksana races which is made up of 31 races all told. (Elephant) experts therefore worship Phra Siva But Phiddhanēsūan and Phra Kōnchanānē-sūan Siva But. Both sons of Phra Siva remained in this world until the end of One Phatthara Kan (Shadra Kalpa). The three families of white elephants and the two families of coaches are regarded as auspicious things because they were originally born from the center of the palace of Phra Phiddhanēsūan Siva But, at the time when the three gods assembled together. This is why their descendants have continued the succession (until now).

At that time Lady Akāt Chārī, who was in charge of serving the divine food (for the gods), and used regularly to serve the three gods whenever they met in assembly, on this occasion, through heedlessness, neglected her duty. She forgot to serve them the divine food. Phra Isūan the Lord was very angry. With his sword he cut off her hair which she wore in a chignon and laid a curse on her: she was to float in the air so that she might spit out a noxious bolus (of fire) seven times a day. She was to stay on Earth for a period of one Phatthara Kan. Then Phra Isūan divided the hair of Lady Akāt Chārī into four parts. One part belonged to Phra Isūan, the others belonged to Phra Phrom, Phra Kārāi, and Phra Phlōeng respectively. From their one part (each) the three gods created the three families of horses. These were the families of Kasat, of Phrām, and of Phāēt respectively. They were able to fly in the air. They race about on the Earth. Then Phra Phlōeng created

another family of horses. The last kind lived in the ocean. They were named Sintkop. And so there were four families altogether. Then Phra Kārāi went back to sleep in the Ocean of Milk.

Once there was an Asura named Mūlākhanī Yak. He was born at the same time as the Earth. He obtained a boon from all three of the gods. Both his eyes became blazing flames. He was very proud of himself that he was greater than all gods and human beings. He persecuted and oppressed the three worlds. All the sages consulted each other (what to do) and then went to see (Phra Isūan the Lord). They told him all that had happened. Phra Isūan the Lord therefore, went down from Krailāt in order to wage war with the demon Mūlākhanī. Mūlākhanī fought against the god. The demon opened his eyes of fire and caused the fire to encircle the god. Phra Isūan, the god, therefore, by means of his divine power, trod on the back of the demon Mūlākhanī. Then the god opened tubes of water and of fire in both his ear-holes. Water and fire came out and fell on the head of the demon Mūlākhanī and deprived him of his power. His eyes of fire were lost forever. Phra Isūan the Lord then cursed the demon Mūlākhanī that he was to become King Phālī. He was to roam about eating offerings made to spirits in the world at the time when all (beings in) the human world perform any of their auspicious ceremonies. And this curse was to last for a period of one Phatthara Kan. Then Phra Isūan the Lord went back to Krailāt.

Later on he went to observe strict religious precept at the summit of Ratchadākūt Mountain. He had a number of serpents cure him by drinking the blood from his toe. Then, the god, by means of his divine power, created a boy from

the region of his chest. The boy had six faces and twelve hands. His name was proclaimed by the god as Phra Khantha Kumān, Son of the God. Then the god returned to Krailāt. He created a peacock as the mount of Phra Khantha Kumān.

At that time there was a goddess who was the maid of Lady Suratsawadī. She lacked any of the sense of morality appropriate to the conduct of gods and celestial nymphs so that, when she came to die, she was born (in the world) as a hippopotamus demon called Asura Phangkhī. Asura Phangkhī became supreme among all the beasts. The demon Phangkhī was wicked-minded. He persecuted and oppressed all the three world. When Phra Isūan learned of what had happened he thought of commissioning Phra Khantha Kumān to vanquish the demon. But he (i.e. Phra Khantha Kumān) had to have his tonsure first. Then he (Phra Isūan) had all gods, sages, siddhis and vidyādhara assemble at Krailāt Mountain at the auspicious moment on the day of the tonsure (of Phra Khantha Kumān). Then he (Phra Isūan) had the two gods i.e. Phra Phrom and Phra Nārāi, invited to come to cut, at the same time as the gods of all the three worlds, the hair of Phra Khantha Kumān as an auspicious sign.

When the auspicious moment came, Phra Phrom and all gods had assembled at the abode of Phra Isūan the Lord who was to have the tonsure of his son performed. But accidentally Phra Nārāi the Lord was in deep sleep. Lady Laksamī and Lady Mahesawarī were unable to awaken the god. Phra Isūan the Lord, Phra Phrom and all gods had been waiting for a long time until the auspicious moment drew near. Phra Isūan, then commanded the Great King of Gods (Indra) to awaken Phra Nārāi who was in (deep) sleep in the Ocean of Milk by blowing the Great Phichai Yut Conch. Phra

Nārāi the Lord who was sleeping, dimly heard the sound of the Great Phichai Yut Conch. He then opened his eyes and saw the Great King of Gods (Indra). He asked, "What is the matter with the world?" The Great King of the Gods answered, "Phra Isūan the Lord commanded me to awaken you by blowing the Great Phichai Yut Conch. He would like to invite you to cut the hair of Phra Khantha Kumān now." Phra Nārāi, the Lord, who was still sleepy, said unintentionally, "What a headless (ghost) child! I can't get any sleep in comfort." At that moment when the god uttered (this exclamation), the six heads of Phra Khantha Kumān disappeared in accordance with the sacred power of these words. Just at that time the three gods had assembled. The auspicious moment had arrived, but they could not see the heads of Phra Khantha Kumān, so they consulted with each other on the matter (and found that) that day was inauspicious so that an auspicious ceremony should not be performed. All the world, therefore, called that day Wan Lōkā Phināt (the day of the destruction of the world). That was why Phra Isūan the Lord commanded Phra Witsanukan to go (down from heaven) to Earth in order to cut off the heads of dead men. These heads were to replace the (vanished) heads of Phra Khantha Kumān. Phra Witsanukan obeyed the command. He travelled about looking for heads of men who had died on that day. But no one had died (on that day). Phra Witsanukan then told Phra Isūan the Lord what had happened. Phra Isūan therefore commanded that if any men or animals, whoever or wherever they may be, turned their heads to the West when they lay down, they were doomed to die (on that day). Their heads were to be cut off and used to replace the heads of Phra Khantha Kumān. Phra Witsanukan obeyed the command (of Phra Isūan) and went down to the Earth and travelled about looking for any one who turned

his head to the West when he lay down. He found a male elephant lying down with its head turned to the West. He cut its head off and gave it to Phra Isūan the Lord. When the three gods had replaced the elephant head for the heads of Phra Khantha Kumān they changed his name to Phra Mahā Wickhanēt. That is why from then on it has been prohibited to turn one's head to the West when one lies down. Phra Isūan the Lord therefore commanded Phra Mahā Wickhanēt to go to vanquish the demon Phangkhī.

Phra Mahā Wickhanēt obeyed the command and, by means of his divine power, manifested himself as having four hands. One hand held a noose, the others held a hook; an iron mallet; and a red hot lump of iron respectively. He had a rat on his mount. He went, by means of his divine power, to the Yamānā River. When the demon Phangkhī saw the son of the God coming down (from heaven) by means of his divine power, he was very infuriated. He took one-hundred-thousand crores monsters up to fight nightly against Phra Mahā Wickhanēt. The demon Phangkhī and the monsters were no match for the divine power (of the god) so that they ran away and dived in the Yamānā River. They hid themselves in the middle of the ocean. Phra Mahā Wickhanēt therefore opened his mouth wide and swallowed up all the water of the Yamānā River until the river was dry and the demon Phangkhī and the one-hundred-thousand crores monsters became visible. The god then removed his left tusk and threw it at the demon Phangkhī and all the one-hundred-thousand crores monsters and killed them all. Then Phra Mahā Wickhanēt vomited out the water (he had swallowed up) back into the river where it formerly was. Then he returned to see Phra Isūan the Lord. He told the god all that had happened during his slaughter of the demon Phangkhī and the one-hundred-thousand crores monsters. At that time the three gods who had assembled there, blessed him, saying, "This head

bring victory and is auspicious. Don't change it. When you perform the ceremony, let them make an image of Phra Kṛpā Kṛmānāṅṅ and put it (in the ceremonial hall) so that that ceremony will be efficacious. And if any elephant has one right leg only, it is supposed to be similar to Phra Kṛpā Kṛmānāṅṅ. If any (elephant) expert manages to catch this kind of elephant he ought to count it as equivalent to a hundred head of elephants. Let him be considered to be a well-versed expert and let him enjoy a highly auspicious life." Then Phra Nārāṇ returned to sleep in the Ocean of Milk.

In one of the Traidā Yuk Phra Isūan the Lord took up his abode on Kralāt Mountain. On the day when the three gods assembled there, a kind of phron, seeing Phra Phrom-thādā riding his golden Swan-Mount, grew very jealous of Phra Phrom-thādā. As a result of this jealousy his life (in heaven) came to an end and he was reborn (on earth) as an elephant called Ēkkathan. It had only one tusk which grew from the middle of its mouth. The elephant was very powerful. When it pierced the shadow or footprint of any man or any animal (with its tusk), these would all die. The elephant was very wicked. It persecuted and oppressed all the three worlds. Then all sages and siddhis, such as the sage Chulā Mahā Phron and so forth, consulted one another with each other. They went to see Phra Isūan the Lord and told him all that had happened. The god then commanded the two gods named Chattabot and Chattabat to go and invite Phra Nārāi the Lord (to come) from the Ocean of Milk to Kralāt Mountain. Then Phra Isūan the Lord commanded Phra Nārāi to vanquish the demon Ēkkathan. Phra Nārāi the Lord obeyed the command. He, by means of his divine power, manifested himself as possessing six hands. They held six divine weapons. One of the divine weapons was created from the energy of the sun and the moon and was called Sōmā. Another of the divine weapons was created from the energy of Phra Phlōng and Phra Khongkhā, and was called Rōphā. Another was created from the energy of the auspicious Lord Sūren, and was called Chālak. Another was created from the energy of Phra Suman Mountain, and was called Trī. Another was created from the energy of the Eagle Lord named Lord Sī Phīlālai and was called Phra Khōc. Another was a noose and side of the great Serpent Lord Ananta. Then Phra Nārāi the Lord came down (from heaven) to Earth and roamed about the four directions. He wanted to find the Ēkkathan

elephant which was oppressing the three worlds. Then he came to a field where he met four country people (who lived) in that district. The eldest was called Phōkkavandī. The second oldest, the first sister, was called Sirawang. The two younger ones were called Khotchasāt and Sātrakan. They earned a living by working in the field there. Phra Nārāi the Lord then asked the four, "Have you seen the Ēkkathan elephant coming this way?" The four, seeing the god with his six hands holding various kinds of divine weapons, were very frightened. They paid homage to him by means of a benchān khiramat and told him, "The Ēkkathan elephant is on yonder bank of the river. The elephant is very wicked and has oppressed all people. Why do you ask about it?" The god then answered the four, "When Traidē Yuk comes, I, who am Phra Nārāi, will vanquish all evil animals and bring happiness to the world." When the four heard that, they were very glad. They bowed down to the god and said, "We four would like to come with you. We would like to be your disciples and perform the rites for elephants with you." The god allowed the four (to go with him). The four then took the god to the great river and told the god, "This river is very wide. We cannot find anything which we can use to cross it." Phra Nārāi the Lord, by means of his divine power, stretched his left hand out in order to pick the leaf of a Thalāēng Sān tree. This leaf is what people call a Samāē Sān leaf. He threw it into the great river. Suddenly it became a big boat. The god and the four went aboard and crossed over the great river to the far bank. Then the god alighted from the boat and went into the forest. The four also went with the god. When they came to the foot of the mountain where there was a big reservoir of water and a lot of khūn and yō trees. The Ēkkathan elephant lived there. The four then said, "The wicked Ēkkathan elephant has been living here. We are very frightened. May you, the

Lord, protect us from the danger (caused by it)". Phra Nārāi the Lord, by means of his divine power, chanted Witsanu prayers three times. He walked three times in a circle in a clockwise direction. Then he stuck Phra Khōē into the surface of Phra Thōraē (the Earth) and set the rays of Phra Phlōeng on both the left and right sides (of Phra Khōē). The god commanded Phra Mahā Wikkhanēt to come to take his place in the fire on the right side. Then he (Phra Nārāi) took off his sacrificial thread and, by virtue of prayer, turned it into Phra Thēwa Kam sitting in his place in the left hand (fire). Then he (Phra Nārāi) had the four (country folk) chanted the Phritthi Bāt prayers there. Then the god, by means of his divine power, broke off seven kinds of tree and waved them to and fro in order to summon a god called Mahā Mōsawa (and commanded him) to drive all the elephants (in that forest) to that place. When Mahā Mōsawa had received the command of Witsanu, he drove all the wild elephants to that place. But the Ekkathan elephant had been a phron in his previous birth. It had been born in the race of Isūan*. That was why it did not come as Witsanu commanded. The god grew very angry. He recited the Witsanu prayers three times over the seven kinds of trees and struck them upon the neck of that Ekkathan elephant three times. The power of the Witsanu prayers caused the Ekkathan Elephant to suffer from a very bad headache as if its head was breaking into seven pieces. It could not resist (the summons of the god). It ran up angrily and started fighting with the god. Phra Nārāi the Lord with five divine weapons in his hand, fought mightily against the Ekkathan Elephant. The Ekkathan Elephant (later on) was drained of his energy and, seeing

*In other manuscripts (Nos. 5 and 15) on this same subject, the word 'Ivara' (meaning Siva) appears in place of 'isara' (independent) of this version. The meaning of 'Ivara' fits in with the content here better than the meaning of 'isara'. Therefore, the former meaning, i.e. Ivara or Siva is chosen.

that it was no match for the god, was ready to flee. Thereupon the god threw his Great Serpent noose at the right foot of the Ocean Ekathān (and stopped it from fleeing away). Then the god stuck his trident into the surface of the Earth, and by virtue of prayer changed it into the form of a phāi tree. Then he bound the tail of the Great Serpent to the phāi tree. Then, with his right hand, he plucked off a salīnā (plant) and changed it into the form of a phāi (wood) as a phān sōe. With it he bound the head of the Wikkhān Elephant to a khūn tree. Then the god came and stopped under a phāi tree. He then summoned the four who were under the shade of that tree. The god bestowed the Phāi Phāi Treatise upon the four and made them the prakan who were teachers of all elephants. They were to teach the science to boys of good family in future. Then Phra Nārāi the Lord gave his divine command to the god Khotchanāk to take the Ekathān Elephant away to be the mount of the Supreme Lord of the gods (i.e. Indra). But it must be kept in a forest far from the reach of all men. Then the god returned to sleep in the Ocean of Milk.

The four prakan, for their part, returned to their abode and taught boys of good family who were to be mahouts how to perform the rites for elephants from then on. The first was known to every one as Phra Phōkshavandī who taught her disciples to use the lek sōng (an iron for use in the training stall). The second was Lady Sirawang who taught her disciples to use the noose. The third was Phra Khotchasāt who taught his disciples to use the hook. And the fourth was Phra Wikkhān who taught his disciples to use the balung, chanak (foot-peg for the elephant) and phāi (collar). All the aged elephants of the four prakan preceptors. They forbade

all roads: to break a branch, or cut away the bark, or to pick a leaf of any malūn, yō, or plūn tree because the god originally created the praken preceptors in a place where there were those kinds of trees.

In one of the Traidā Yū, there was a phron named Angkhut Phron. On seeing Phra Phromthācā riding his golden Swan Vand he grew very jealous. He (the phron) therefore went up to the Sattāwāt Mahā Phron (heaven) and oppressed all the phron there so greatly that they could not practice their meditation contentedly. The phron therefore all went to tell Lord Mahā Phron everything that had happened. Lord Mahā Phra commanded four phron named Satthā Sit, Satthā Sip, Satthā Thip, and Satthā Thōp respectively to vanquish Angkhut Phron. Angkhut Phron was not a bit frightened of their power. He fought with the four phron. They were no match for the power of Angkhut Phron. They fled to Lord Mahā Phron and told him what had happened. Lord Mahā Phron told Phra Isūan the Lord there-
 for and to the Sattāwāt Mahā Phron level (of heaven) in order to wage war with Angkhut Phron. Angkhut Phron started fighting with the god. Phra Isūan the Lord, by means of his divine power, tread upon the shoulder of Angkhut Phron. Then he (the god) took off his earring and threw it at Angkhut Phron and broke his head and killed him. Phra Isūan the Lord returned to Kraillāt. The soul of Angkhut Phron, for its part, ended its existence (in heaven) and went down to the lower world. It was reborn as a demon-horse called Kanthaka. The horse was very powerful and wicked-minded. It oppressed all the Uro spirits until they were sorely distressed. The Uro was filled with revenge upon Phra Isūan the Lord (for the deed he had done against him). Thereupon, it flew up to the foot of the Kraillāt Mountain. At that time the sage Thāmlit, who took care of preparing the water for the bath of Phra Isūan the Lord, came down to draw water from the Angkhūt Lake. The demon Kanthaka pursued him and bit the sage. The sage fled to Phra Isūan the Lord. He told the god all that had happened. Phra Isūan the Lord therefore commanded

Chhatubāh and Chhatubāh to invite Phra Nārāi the Lord (to come down from his abode) in the Ocean of Milk to Krailāt Mountain. Phra Isān the Lord commanded Phra Nārāi (to vanquish to demon horse). Phra Nārāi the Lord obeyed the command and, by means of his divine power, changed himself into the form of a man with two hands named Thulakī Awatān. He held an umbrella in his left hand and a whip in his right hand. He rode on the back of Thēp Kanthat, a horse which possessed wings. This horse flew down to the foot of Krailāt Mountain. The god saw the demon Kanthaka exhibiting his power there. The god drove his Thēp Kanthat Horse towards it, and fought mightily against it. The demon Kanthaka, being no match for the god, fled and hid itself on the bank of the Sinthu River. Phra Nārāi the Lord had been following searching for the demon Kanthaka until he (the god) came to the Sinthu River. At that time there was a hermit named Phra Vatsānāh observing strict religious precepts in a cave at the Sabān Praphān Mountain on the bank of that great river. As is the custom of sages, after he had finished (his meditating on the) Abhinyān, he wandered about looking for fruits as food for the barest sustenance. He accidentally met the demon Kanthaka fleeing from the god. It had come to stay on the bank of the great ocean (i.e. the Sinthu River). When the demon Kanthaka saw the sage it was very angry. Through its vicious character, it bit the sage. The sage tried to run away but failed. He fell down and the demon Kanthaka bit his head off and ate it as his food. The sage was killed there and then. At that time Thulakī Awatān riding on his Thēp Kanthat Horse, arrived there too. He struck the demon Kanthaka with his whip and it fell down. The god cut the head of the demon Kanthaka off. He chanted the Vitsanu prayers and, by means of his divine power, he restored the sage to life (by fixing to his body

the head of the horse demon in the place of his own eaten head). That was why the sage had the face of a horse. Then the god gave to the sage the magic umbrella and the whip and also the Phra Wēt for taming all ill-natured and unyielding horses. If this sage wanted to do anything, he was to open up the magic umbrella. Then he would accomplish it. He was to teach boys of good family how to perform the rites for horses in future. Thereupon the sage was named Isikanlaiyaka and became a horse-expert from then on. Then the god threw the body of the demon Kanthaka away and cursed it to become a herd of she-asses there. Whenever Phalāhok horses mate with such she-asses and they beget offspring in the form of a horse, their offspring will destroy the wombs of the she-asses at the time when they are born. The she-asses will be killed. Then Phra Nārāi returned to his sleep in the Ocean of Milk. The sage Isikanlaiyaka, for his part, observed strict religious precepts there after the god had returned (to his abode). Once, when he had stopped meditating, he came to sit on a slab of stone near the Sinthu River. He saw all three families of Phalāhok horses flying along and eating grass there. (He also saw) Sinthop horses flying (in the air) and eating the (green) scum on the water's (surface) there. After the sage, sitting there, had duly considered the four families of horses, he wanted to obtain them and keep them in the human world. He opened his magic umbrella and chanted his Phra Wēt prayers in order to call hither some cows and she-asses to assemble there. Then the sage cast a spell with the itthiling mantra upon the cows and she-asses. Then he let them loose. When the Phalāhok and the Sinthop horses saw the cows and the she-asses they were overcome the sexual desire. Each of them mated with the cows and she-asses enchanted by the spell of the sage until the cows and she-asses were pregnant. The offspring

begotten by the Phalāhok horses destroyed the wombs of their mothers at the time when they were born and the mothers were killed. But the offspring begotten by the Sinthop horses had normal births and their mothers were not killed because (for this kind of mating) they had not been cursed by the god. When the sage saw this he wanted a succession of these colts to be bred in future. He therefore opened up his magic umbrella and chanted a prayer in order to summon a demon called Kālayak. The sage commissioned Kālayak to cut off the sinews used by the colts for flying so that they could not fly away. Then the sage made bits and bridles and put them on the colts, and put the bark of the kradōn tree on their backs as saddles and rode them at will (whenever he wanted to). He taught boys of good family to perform the rites for horses from then on.

Karlai Kan	pralaya kalpa
Phra	vara; preceeding Proper Names; meaning Lord; Lady; King etc.; implying respect.
Vĕt	Veda
Tha	Dharma
Sayonbhūyān	Svayaṃ bhūva jñāna (P. : sayan bhū-v jñāna)
Toua	Īśvara
Ma Phakchowadi	Umā Bhagavati
Nārāi	Nārāyaṇa
Phra	Brahmā
Thōranī	dharanī; the earth personified
Phlōng	Thai 'fire' (Khmer: plong)
Phāi	Vāyu
Khongkhā	Gaṅgā
Manī Mekhala	Mani Mekhala
Fra Rōt Sāsasūn	Parasurēma Asura
Sūmōn	Sumeru
Kailāsā	Kailāsa
Sinaphān	Himavān
Ussapharāt	usubha rāja (P.: Skt. vṛṣabha rāja)
Thaitru'ngre Sakdirāt	Tritriṃśa śakti rāja
Phra'sopphayān	Vṛṣabha yāna
Tai Sūlī	Tri Sūlī
Khrot Phāhana	Garuḍa vāhana
Krisanurak	Kṛṣṇa anurakṣa
Kavala	Kavala āsana
Khanlai	Thai: 'to go, travel (upon)'
Hong	haṅsa
Khadga At	Khadga āsana
Phalābek	balāhaka, but also Valāhaka (P.: Proper name for a family of horses)
Saratsawadi	Sarasvati

Laksanī	Lakṣmī
Mahēśvarī	Mahēśvarī
Kāśyap'ābhya	Kāśya avacara
Tretā Yūg	Tretā yuga
Agni	Agni
Thēvī Sindhōn Parvoh	Devī sindhara parvata
Tret	goja (also in plant-name gajalabāvalaya: 'elephant vine'?)
Chat Than	chad-danta - Proper Name Chaddanta (P.: Skt. ṣad-danta)
Uḥōset	upavasatha (P.: uposatha)
Konjlon	saṅgala
Khandha	gandha
Pingkhala	piṅgala
Tāmpa	tamba (P.: Skt tāmra)
Banthōn	pāṇḍara
Khangkhai	Gāṅgeya
Kālāwa'sa	? Kāla vikra (Power of time, death)
Attha Thit	aṣṭa diśa
Khachāthān	gaja dhāra
Suppha Laksana	subha lakṣaṇa
Siva	Śiva
Siva Put Pūhāhanōt	Śiva putra viṅheśvara
Erāvaṇ	Erāvaṇa (P.: Skt. Airāvaṇa)
Khārī	giri
Thakkināvat	dakṣiṇāvat ('able, competent, strong')
Uttarāvat	uttarāvat ('victorious, overpowering')
Kōṅca ānanā'svara	Kōṅca ānanā'svara (P + Skt ; Skt Krauñca ...)
Phatthare Kan	śhadra Kalpa (Buddhist; 'the good or beautiful Kalpa'; name of the present age).
Ākāt Chārī	ākāśa cārī
Ksat	kṣatriya

Phrāṃ	brāhmaṇa
Phāc̣t	vaiśya
sindhop	sindhava (P., Skt. saindhava)
Mūlābhāṇī	Mūla agni
Yak	yakṣa
Phālī	Bali
Rajata kūtā	Rajata kūtā
Khanda kunāra	Khanda kunāra (P.: Skt. Skanda ...)
Phangkhī	Dhaṅgī
Phichai Yut	Vijaya yuddha
Wan	Thai: 'a day'
Lōka Phināt	loka vināśa
Vitranakam	Viśvakarma
Yasunā	Yasunā
Ēkathān	Eka danta
Chālā	cūla (P.: Skt. cūḍā)
Chattakot	catus pada
Chattakal	catus pada
Sōphā	śobhā
Supan	Suparna
Chālak	jālaka
Sī Philālai	śrī + ? virya ālaya; ? bila ālaya (P.: 'salt' + P.,Skt: an abode.)
Phokhavandī	Bhogavati
Khotchusāt	gaja śāstra
Sāttrelan	śāstra karma
Benchāngkha pranot	pañcāṅga pranata/pranāsa
Thalān sār	Thai: 'to inform + sara
Sarān sār	(Thai) Cassia garrettina (Leguminosae)
Khān	(Thai) Cassia fistula (leguminosae), 'India laburnum'.
Yō	(Thai) Moranda citrifolia (Rubiaceae)
Witsanu	Viṣṇu

Thēwakam	deva karma
Phritthibāt	vr̥ddhi pāśa
Phra Mēsawa	? Paramesvara
Pathawa lan	pr̥thivī lāñchana
Matūm	(Thai) Aegle marmelos (Rutaceae)
Maliwan	mali valaya; ? Jasminum Sambac (Oleaceae)
Thām	dāman
Phap chō	Thai: 'to fold' + Khmer: 'tree/wood' = hitching-rope?
Prakam	prakarma
Khotchanāk	gaja nāga
Talung	Thai: 'hitching post for elephants' (as in sao -)
Chanak	Thai: 'foot rope for the mahout' (It is attached to the elephant's collar. Also Khmer : chnak <u>idem.</u>)
Plōk	Thai: 'a ring, a loop'
Angkhut	aṅguṣṭha
Sutthāwāt	suddha āvāsa
Satthā Sit	śrāddha siddhi
Satthā Thip	śrāddha diva
Satthā Thōp	śrāddha deva
Anōdāt	Anotatta (P.)
Thēwabit	deva ? piṭha
Thēwa Kanthat	deva ? kaṅṭha
Satchanālai	sajjana (P.: Skt sad-jana) ālaya
Ratana Praphān	ratna pavāla (P.: Skt pravāda)
Aphiyān	abhi nāna (P.: Skt. abhijñāna)
Sinthu	Sindhu
Isikanlaiyaka	Isi + ? kalai, 'a stag' (P. + Tamil) The formation of this word might be derived from Kalaiḥkotttu, 'with the horns of deer', (Tamil) which is a loan-translation of the Sanskrit term R̥ṣyasṅga.

Ithiling	itthī līṅga (P.: Skt. strī ...)
Kālayak	kāla yakṣa
Kradōn	(Thai) Careya arborea (Lecythidaceae), Patana oak

1. Warāhawātān

The first incarnation is as follows. There was a phrom who was jealous of Phromthādā. The result of his karma (i.e. his jealousy) caused him to be reborn as a demon called Hirantayak. This was the first cause which led to Phra Nārāi incarnating himself ten times from this time forth. The demon Hirantayak received a boon given by Phra Isuan which made him very proud of his power. He, desiring to eat the animals (on Earth), by means of his power enlarged his body so that he was able to roll up the Earth's surface (and eat the animals). When Phra Isuan knew what had happened he invited Phra Nārāi (to come from his abode) for consultation on the matter. Phra Nārāi therefore incarnated himself as a white boar called Warāhawātān. The God slew Hirantayak with his divine power and lifted the Earth up upon his tusks and put it back in its place. Then he returned to sleep in the Ocean of Milk.

There through his divine power Phra Nārāi created a lotus rising out of his navel. Then he created Phra Anōmātan from that lotus. He then presented Phra Anōmātan to Phra Isuan. Phra Isuan ordered Phra In and four sages named Yut, Akkara, Thahara and Yākha to come down (from heaven) and build a city in the Prachum Sī Thong Thawān Forest where there are chumhet trees as a land mark. That city was named Phra Nakhōn Sī Ayutthayā. When they had finished creating all its population Phra Isuan let Phra Anōmātan come down and rule there as the first king of Phra Nakhōn Sī Ayutthayā.

Warāhawātān	varāha avatāra	Yakha	yāga
phrom	Brahma	Chumhet	Cassia spp.
Phromthādā	Brahmadhātā		(Leguminosae)
Hirantayak	Hiraṇyakṣa	Phra Nakhōn	Sri Ayodhya Nagara
Yut	yuddha	Sī Ayutthayā	
Akkhara	akṣara		
Thahara	dahara		

2. Katchapāwatān

The second incarnation is as follows. When a demon Phī Sū'a Nam realized that Phra Phrom had gone to see Phra Isuan, he went up to the abode (of the former) and stole the three Vedic texts and gave them to a thousand million fish demons. When Phra Isuan found out about this happening he had Phra Nārāi incarnate himself and leave the Ocean of Milk in order to vanquish those thousand million fish demons and get the three Vedic texts back. Phra Nārāi, in accordance with the god's (Śiva's) command, by means of his divine power, changed his body into the form of a golden turtle named Katchapāwatān. He pursued and slew the demon Phī Sū'a Nam and then pursued the fish demons to destroy them. When those fish demons realized that they would be no match (for Phra Nārāi) they entrusted the three Vedic texts to the demon Sangkha. Katchapāwatān then destroyed all the thousand million fish demons.

Katchapāwatān	P. kacchapaavatāra S. kūrma
Phī Sū'a Nam	Thai: malevolent spirit residing in the water

3. Matchāwatān

The third incarnation is as follows. When Phra Nārāi realized what had happened (i.e. the fish demons had entrusted the three Vedic texts to the demon Sangkha), he changed his body into the form of a golden plā krāi named Matchāwatān and chased after the demon Sangkha. The demon fought mightily with the god. When the demon realized that he had no real defence against the god, he swallowed the three Vedic texts into his stomach. Matchāwatān then slew the demon Sangkha. The god, by means of his divine power, forced open the mouth of the demon with his hands and fished out the Vedic texts from the stomach of the demon. Then Phra Nārāi prophesied about the plā krāi as follows. "In future even though men will eat you, they will have difficulty in doing so." And he prophesied about the conch thus, "In future whenever men will perform any auspicious ceremony, they will use a conch in that ceremony. If any man uses the water filling the inside of a conch (in the ceremonial act of water-pouring), it will be an auspicious influence to protect himself from evil and wickedness. Because a conch had swallowed the three Vedic texts into *its* stomach, it has been an auspicious (thing) up to the present day. Then Phra Nārāi went back to sleep in the Ocean of Milk.

Matchāwatān	matsya avatāra
plā krāi	Notopterus chitala; Thai: 'the krāi fish'.

4. Mahīṅṣāvataṅ

The fourth incarnation is as follows. A demon phrom was jealous of Phromthādā. He therefore changed his body into the form of a buffalo and butted Phra Sumēn Mountain in order to destroy it. Phra Isuan thereupon had Phra Nārāi incarnate himself. Phra Nārāi, by means of his divine power, transformed his body into the form of (a buffalo called) Kāsōn Awatān and killed the buffalo demon. Then Phra Nārāi went back to sleep in the Ocean of Milk.

There was a sage named Sukha Wat practising ascetic austerities on Phra Sumen Mountain. A very tall bamboo tree grew up and covered the roof of his hermitage. The sage took the bamboo (up to Krailāt) to give it to Phra Isuan. Phra Isuan broke it into two pieces and threw them down. The bottom part (of that bamboo tree) became a monkey called Chāmphūwarāt. The top part became a Yakṣa called Asura Wēram who was an ancestor of Thotsakan, but of a different mother (from Thotsakan's direct antecedent). The sage waited upon Phra Isuan until the evening.

Wānarin, a goddess who took care of lighting the lamps (of Phra Isuan, forgot her duty because she was engrossed (in pleasure-seeking) with her friends. Phra Isuan was very angry. He cursed her with exile (from heaven) to live in a cave on Angkāp Mountain. She had to serve and wait upon the soldiers of Nārāi. That is why a kind of bamboo called Rū'sī Suk has existed from then on till now.

Mahīṅṣāvataṅ Sukha Wat	mahīṅṣa avatāra sukha vardhana	Kāsōn awatān Chāmphūwarāt	kāsara avatāra as if Jāmbhūvarāja cf. monkey lord mahāchomphū in Thai <u>Rāmākīan</u> .
Wēram	Lit. as if (asura) veram?	Wānarin	vānara+in

5. Samanawatān

The fifth incarnation is as follows. There was a demon called Trī Buram who was the king of Sōlot city. He obtained a boon from Phra Isuan that no one could kill him with any kind of weapons. Later on Trī Buram grew very proud. He obtained a Śivaliṅga from the Saraphū River and put it on his head. He roamed about waging war and oppressing sages and gods in all regions. When Phra Isuan, Lord of the world, got to know of this, he invited Phra Nārāi (to come from his abode) for consultation on the matter. Then, Phra Isuan, together with his army of gods, came to confront Trī Buram. Phra Isuan used the power of the Serpent King Anantanākharāt as the string of the bow; and Phra Nārāi as the arrow. Phra Isuan fired at Trī Buram in order to kill him. The power of the Śivaliṅga and the boon of Lord Sulī (Śiva) given to him caused Phra Nārāi to close his eyes and become rapt in his own thoughts so that the arrow was unable to destroy Trī Buram. Phra Isuan was very angry and questioned Phra Nārāi (about what had happened). Phra Nārāi answered, "You have given a boon to the demon so that no one can kill him. Besides, the power of the Śivaliṅga protected him so that he was not killed. I volunteer to get the Śivaliṅga from the demon by a trick. Then you may burn him up with your crystal tube." Phra Nārāi, by means of his divine power, transformed himself into the form of a (Buddhist) monk. The monk addressed (Trī Buram) and asked for the Śivaliṅga as a gift of alms from the demon. Phra Isuan then, with his crystal tube, burned the demon Trī Buram into very minute pieces. Phra Isuan then threw his Mahā Mōlī Bow down into Mithilā city and uttered a divine pronouncement, "He only who is an incarnation of Phra Nārāi shall be able to lift up this Mahā Mōlī Bow. If he is not Nārāi of the Solar race, he will not be able to lift it up, even if he possesses great power." When Phra Nārāi had vanquished Trī Buram, he returned to sleep on the back of Nāga on the Ocean of Milk.

Trī Buram	Tripura
Samanawatān	samaṇa avatāra (P.: Skt śramaṇa ...)
Sōlot	sōlasa / soḍaśa

6. Singhawatan

The story of the sixth incarnation is as follows. There was an Asura called Hirantapakāsūn who was the king of Mahā Kāla Čhak city. One day he, together with his troops, came to the foot of Phra Sumēn Mountain. Hirantapakāsūn, desirous of a boon from Phra Isuan, set about performing ritual practices (of extreme endurance). He roasted himself and used oil (dripping from his own body) for lighting lamps for Phra Isuan. Phra Isuan gave him a boon that he would not be killed by any weapon, nor by any human being, nor by any animal, nor in the water, nor on earth, nor during the night, nor in the day time. When the demon had obtained the boon from Phra Isuan he returned to his city. Thereafter he persecuted and oppressed all manner of sages and gods. When Phra Isuan was informed of what had happened, he invited Phra Nārāi to come (from his abode) for consultation on the matter. Phra Nārāi then threw down his (conch called) Mahā Sangkha Thakkhināwat (from heaven to earth). This conch was to become the son of Hirantapakāsūn and would become the prime cause of the slaughter of the demon. Later on Hirantapakāsūn did indeed have a son by one of his queens. He had the form of a human being and was very charming. The demon called him Kalā Tham Kumān. Hirantapakāsūn grew more and more proud (of his prowess), and wanted to be supreme, unequalled by any other. When he saw that his son was grown up he wanted to have him educated in good conduct. He then had all the hermits assemble at his throne hall. Hirantapakāsūn asked the hermits, "Formerly what did people who were going to study sinlapa and wētha say as a salutation before they chanted the mon (verses)?" All the sittha-āčhān answered, "Formerly, people who wanted to chant mon would say, 'Om Paramēsawara Nārāi' first." Hirantapakāsūn then asked, "Does it not mean that Phra Isuan and Phra Nārāi were worshipped by all people more than I was?" None of the sages dared to answer him. Hirantapakāsūn therefore said, "From now on, if any man wants to recite any mon, he has to say 'Om Hirantapakāsūn' first. He must pay homage to me. This is only fit and proper, since I am

greater than Phra Isuan and Phra Nārāi." All the sages had to agree with him even if they did not want to. Hirantapakāsūn then let Kalā Tham Kumān study sinlapa sāt with the sages. Then the sages and Kalā Tham Kumān left and arrived at the abode of the sages. They taught him to say 'Om Hirantapakāsūn'. But Kalā Tham Kumān did not say as they taught. Instead he said 'Om Paramēsawara Nārāi'. The sages advised him and pleaded with him many times to do as they taught him, but Kalā Tham Kumān was not convinced. All the sages therefore took him back to Hirantapakāsūn and told him what had happened. When Hirantapakāsūn heard this, he was very angry. He said, "If you still think that Phra Isuan and Phra Nārāi are better than I, I shall kill you. You should summon Phra Isuan and Phra Nārāi to come to your aid if you want to save your life." Then he made as if to kill Kalā Tham Kumān.

At that moment Phra Nārāi became aware of the matter through his thipwinyān (omniscience). From the Ocean of Milk he then incarnated himself as a lion which had the body of a man and had very sharp claws. He situated himself inside a pillar of the palace of Hirantapakāsūn. When Kalā Tham Kumān saw that he was going to be killed he folded his hands in salutation and prayed to Phra Isuan and Phra Nārāi and smacked his hand three times on the (pillar of the) palace. Thereupon Singha-Watan came out from the (pillar of the) palace and fought, by means of his divine power, with Hirantapakāsūn. They fought together until twilight came and it began to rain. At that moment Hirantapakāsūn fell down on the threshold of his palace. Half of his body was outside the city (sic = palace?) and the other half was inside. His feet were in the rain water, but his head was on the dry ground. Singhawatān trod upon the chest of Hirantapakāsūn and asked him, "Do you know me or not? What kind of a being am I? With what weapons am I going to kill you? Are you now inside or outside the city, in the water or on dry ground? Is it the night or the day time?" Hirantapakāsūn could not answer since he did not know what kind

of a being Singhawatān was, and he could not see that he had any weapons. Hirantapakāsūn, therefore, was silent. Singhawatān then slew Hirantapakāsūn by tearing at his chest with his claws. Phra Nārāi then returned to his sleep in the Ocean of Milk. The boy (Kalā Tham) disappeared and became (the conch) Mahā Sangkha Thakkhināwat as before.

Singhawatan̄	(Nara)siṃha avatāra
Hirantapakāsūn	Hiranyakaśipu
Kāla Chak	Kāla cakra
Thakkhināwat	Dakṣiṇa varta
Kāla Tham, Kalā Tham	as if kāla dharma = Prahlāda
sinlapa	śilpa
wētha	veda
sittha-āchān	siddha ācārya
mon	mantra
sāt	śāstra
thipwinyān	divya viññāna (P. Skt : vijñāna)

7. Khutchāwatān

The seventh incarnation is as follows. A demon named Tāwan obtained a boon from Phra Isuan. He had obtained a forest three yōt wide. He laid it out as a pleasure garden to give him delight. But if any animal lost its way and entered this park of Tāwan's, he would eat it. When Phra Isuan got to know of this he invited Phra Nārāi (to come from his abode) for consultation on the matter. From the Ocean of Milk Phra Nārāi therefore incarnated himself as a very handsome brahmin. He made himself look attractive to all creatures, men, garuḍas, and demons. Then he came to the land of the demon Tāwan. When the demon Tāwan saw the brahmin whose appearance had been so (wonderfully) created, he was attracted to him. He asked, "Where have you been? Why do you come here?". The incarnated brahmin answered, "I have come from a great brahmin family. But I can not find a place to live. I do not want much (land). I only want a piece of land of three strides length. The demon Tāwan did not realize the truth. He believed that that brahmin really wanted to stay there, so he gave him a piece of land (as he was asked). Then that incarnated brahmin, by means of his divine power, magnified his body as big as Lord Brahma. He made his strides one yōt at a time. By the time that he had made three strides, he had covered the land of three yōt width belonging to the demon Tāwan. Then he changed himself back into the form of Phra Nārāi and drove the demon Tāwan out of that land. Phra Nārāi then went back to sleep on the Ocean of Milk.

The demon Tāwan could not find a place to live. He wandered along until he came to a city named Mayan. He knew that formerly Indra had built this city for his son called Phantā. Now Lord Phantā was dead. That city was deserted. Inhabitants, who once were gods in heaven, disappeared when their Lord passed away. "Now the city has no inhabitants, therefore I shall live here for the time being." The demon Tāwan asked Indra for permission to live

there. When Tāwan went to see him, Indra gave the city to him then. Later on the demon Tāwan grew very proud of his power so that he committed adultery with Thēp Ramphā who was a concubine of Indra's. Tāwan had the goddess Butsamālī as his matchmaker. When Indra found out about this he was very angry and slew the demon Tāwan. Indra then cursed Thēp Ramphā. She was to go down from heaven to earth and wait for a descendant of Phra Nārāi. She would be free from that curse only when she had helped him. Indra cursed Butsamālī who shared the guilt. She was to go down from heaven and stay in Māyan city. When Phra Nārāi, the descendant of Vāyu (sic!), fought with Thotsakan, he would command one of his soldiers named Hanumān to go to Langkā. That white Monkey Lord had jewel fangs, earrings and diamond hair. She (Butsamālī) was to tell the monkey the way (to Langkā). Hanumān would make love to her. Then only would she be freed from her curse and have no more guilt.

Khutchāwatān	Ø. Khujja avatāra.
yōt	yojana
Tāwan	Thai: 'eye of the day' = the sun!
Māyan	? Maya, N. of an Asura (the artificer or architect of the Daityas, also versed in magic, astronomy and military science)
Phantā	Thai: 'thousand eyes'; usually used as an epithet of Indra.
Thēp Ramphā	Deva rambhā
Butsamālī	Puṣpa malī
* Vāyukūla	Although the actual word used here means the descendant of Vāyu, it is more likely that this word 'vāyukūla' (pronounced 'vaiyakūn') is the wrong spelling of 'vaikūntha' which in Thai can mean either (1) Viṣṇu's heaven; (2) an incarnation of Viṣṇu. 'Vaikūntha' is frequently spelled by the Thai as 'vaiyakūntha', and is frequently pronounced as 'vaiyakūn'. It can be seen that the pronunciation of the word 'vāyukūla' as 'vāyukūn' is not much different from 'vaiyakūn'. Therefore it is likely that the real meaning of the phrase 'phra nārāi vāyukūn' is simply 'an incarnation of Nārāyaṇa.'

8. Kritsanāwatān

The eighth incarnation is as follows. There was a demon, who had ten heads and twenty hands. He obtained a boon from the god Phra Isuan. He was called King Phānāsūn. King Phānāsūn was king of Rattanā city. King Phānāsūn was very ferocious and very wicked. He went about oppressing all three worlds until they were sorely distressed. When Phra Isuan found out what had been happening, he had Phra Nārāi incarnate himself from the Ocean of Milk and go down in order to vanquish King Phānāsūn. Phra Nārāi, in accordance to the god's command, by means of his divine power, put on his divine ring, and rode upon Khрут, his mount, and went down to the human world. He then created a city and named it as Narangkā city. When he had finished creating its inhabitants, he ruled as the first king of that city. He was called Kritsanāwatān who was (in reality) Borommačhak Krit (i.e. Kṛṣṇa with the Mighty Discus). Borommačhak Krit had a son named Krai Sut. Thereupon, Borommačhak Krit entrusted his kingdom to his son and went to keep strict observance of religious precepts at Yōt Fā Mountain. Lord Krai Sut had a son named Phra Sī Anirut.

Later on King Phānāsūn became outrageous in (his demand for) sensual pleasures. He transformed his body into the form of a god and went up to the Dāwadu'ng World and deceitfully made love with all the celestial nymphs. Worse than that, he transformed his body into the form of Indra and went to deceive Queen Sučhittrā, committing the sexual act with her too. Sučhittrā was the chief queen of the Supreme Lord, Indra. When Sučhittrā knew that she had been deceived (by Phānāsūn's trick) she was tormented by grief. She then bade farewell to Lord Kōsī and went down to be reborn in the human world. That was the first cause which led to Phra Nārāi's vanquishing Phānāsūn in the end. Indra permitted Sučhittrā to go down and be reborn as

an Uppātika in a lotus in the pond near the hermitage of a sage. The sage went to bathe there, (found her) and adopted her as his own daughter and named her Usā. The good news reached King Phānāsūn who had neither a son nor a daughter. He then begged the sage for the girl. The sage gave the girl to him. King Phānāsūn then brought Usā (to his city) and adopted her as his own daughter.

At that time the Supreme Lord, Indra, (by means of his magic power), inspired Phra Sī Anirut to take leave of his father and to go on a tour of the forest with his troops. On this tour he slept during the night in his royal chariot under the shade of a great banyan tree. Indra commanded a tree god named Sī Phrommarak to carry Phra Sī Anirut to where Usā was so that they could be the (perfect) match for each other. The god, by means of his divine power, made them both able to talk to each other. The royal couple made love to each other. When the dawn was near Sī Phrommarak carried Sī Anirut back to his assembled troops under the banyan tree. When Phra Sī Anirut woke up and did not see the girl (i.e. Usā) he ordered his army to return home to the city. When Usā, on her part, woke up and did not see Phra Sī Anirut, she cried and lamented for him. She therefore ordered her nurse named Phichit Lēkhā to fly, by means of her magic power, (to various places) in order to paint the pictures of the gods in the sixteen levels of heaven, and of all the beings in all continents. Phichit Lēkhā reached Narangkā city and painted the picture of Anirut for Usā. Usā then ordered her nurse, (by means of her magic power), to carry Phra Sī Anirut to her in the palace in order to be her lover. The royal couple enjoyed their love-making and were together for several days and nights. However, a maid found out what had happened and reported it to King Phānāsūn. When Phānāsūn heard the news he grew very angry. He prepared his demon soldiers (to fight) and marched his army to his daughter's palace and besieged it. When Phra Sī Anirut saw that the palace was besieged he was not

even the least bit frightened. With his diamond sword in his hand, he attacked the demon soldiers and drove them away in confusion. When King Phānāsūn saw that, he grew even more angry and drove his demon soldiers back into battle. Then King Phānāsūn fired his serpent-noose at Phra Sī Anirut. When it struck him, Phra Sī Anirut fell. The demon minister, Phichai Kālā, seized him and bound the prince and brought him to King Phānāsūn. King Phānāsūn ordered Lord Wāsukrī to bind him and take him to the Phrom Phak Palace for his public vilification. At that moment Indra felt greatly restless. He, by means of his magic eyes, surveyed (what had happened in) the human world. When he discovered that Phānāsūn was ill treating Nārāi in such a manner he gave his divine command to the god named Sī Phrommarak to relate the happening to Bṛommaçhak Krit. When Bṛommaçhak Krit heard the news he was very angry. He rode off upon his mount Garuḍa through the air. On this occasion one of the gods who was named Phra Pholathēp accompanied him. When the god arrived at Rattanā city and saw his grandson bound by Wāsukrī at the Phrom Phak Palace he was very angry. He flew down on Garuḍa, trying to wrest his grandson (to safety). Lord Wāsukrī, hearing the sound of Garuḍa's wings, was so frightened that he escaped by means of cleaving his way down into the Earth. Phra Bṛommaçhak Krit therefore took his grandson away. When Phānāsūn saw that, he drove his army up (into the air) to fight with Bṛommaçhak Krit. Bṛommaçhak Krit ordered Phra Pholathēp to fight (first). Phra Pholathēp, wielding a plough in his hand, vanquished and slew a great number of the demon army. When the demon minister Phichai Kālā saw that, he grew very angry. Wielding a diamond mace in his hands, he flew, by means of his magic power, up into the air and fought with Phra Pholathēp. Phra Pholathēp hit Phichai Kālā with his plough and killed him. When Phānāsūn saw that happening he grew very angry. Wielding weapons in his twenty hands, he flew up and pursued Phra Pholathēp. Bṛommaçhak Krit then rode his Mount Garuḍa (into the battle and fought with

Phānāsūn. With his sword he cut off all the twenty arms of Phānāsūn, scattering them in different directions. The body of Phānāsūn fell down to Earth. Phānāsūn thought of Phra Sayom Phūwayān and chanted Siwa prayers and blew upon his own body. His severed arms were then rejoined (to his body) as before. When Phānāsūn realized that he could never be a match (for the god) he chanted prayers in order to summon the god Phra Isuan to come (to the battle field) and help him (in fighting). The power of the Siwa prayers, which the god Phra Isuan (himself) had bestowed (upon Phānāsūn), made him feel restless so that he came down to Rattana city. Phānāsūn told Phra Isuan every thing that had happened from the beginning until his fight with Lord Bōrommačhak Krit. He invited Phra Isuan to help him in fighting. The god Phra Isuan then entered upon the contest for (supreme) power with Bōrommačhak Krit. Bōrommačhak Krit thereupon forbade Phra Isuan to open his fire-eye. Phra Isuan therefore forbade Bōrommačhak Krit to throw his discus weapon. The two gods then fought, with their rival divine powers, against each other. However, both of them stopped and blew their Thakkhināwat conches. When Phānāsūn saw that his anger grew all the greater. Feeling very proud of his own royal dignity, he flew up to fight with Bōrommačhak Krit. Bōrommačhak Krit threw his divine ring at Phānāsūn which cut eighteen of his arms off. Phānāsūn had only two arms left. Bōrommačhak Krit drew out his sword in order to kill (Phānāsūn). He was stopped however by the god, Phra Isuan, who begged for Phānāsūn's life. Phra Isuan wanted him to be a nonsī guarding the gate of Krailāt. Bōrommačhak Krit gave Phra Isuan what he had asked for. Then the two gods blessed Phra Pholathēp to be lord over all cereal food-bearing plants by virtue of the royal ceremony čharot phra nangkhan from then onwards. Then Phra Isuan took Phānāsūn to Krailāt and made him nonsī guarding the gate there. Bōrommačhak Krit, on his part, took Phra Sī Anirut and Usā to Narangkā city. Then Bōrommačhak Krit changed his body back into the form of Phra Nārāi and

went back to sleep in the Ocean of Milk.

Kritsanāwatān	Kṛṣṇa avatāra
Phānāsūn	Bāṇa asura
Rattana	Ratna
Khрут	Garuḍa
Narangkā	Thai: na rang ka, 'at the crow's nest.'
Borommačhak Krit	Parāma cakṛa kṛṣṇa
Sī Anirut	Srī Aniruddha
Dāwadu'ng	Tāvatiṃsa (P.: Skt trayas triṃsat)
Suchittrā	Sucitrā
Kosī	Kosiya (P.: Skt kauśika) = Indra
Uppātika	opapātika (P.: of B. Skt aupapāduka) 'spontaneously born
Usā	Uṣā
Phrommarak	Brahma rakṣa
Phichit Lēkhā	Vicitra lekḥā
Phichai Kālā	Vijaya kāla
Wāsukrī	Vāsuki
Phrom Phak	Brahma vaktra
Pholathēp	Baladeva i.e. Balarāma
nonsī	as if nandri; ? nandi
charot phra nangkhan	Thai + P. ... naṅgala (Skt lāṅgala): 'the ceremony of first ploughing'.

9. Apsarawatān

The ninth incarnation is as follows. There was a demon called Nonthuk Phrom. He was foot-washer for the gods at the foot of the stairs at Krailāt Mountain. (Every time) the gods came to see Phra Isuan, each one of them gave him a knock on the head until Nonthuk Phrom lost all his hair and became bald. Nonthuk Phrom was very angry. He went to see Phra Isuan and asked him for a diamond finger. Phra Isuan gave him one. Then Nonthuk Phrom returned to his duty of washing the feet of gods. The gods, who were used to teasing him, knocked his head as before. Nonthuk Phrom then pointed his diamond finger at them and killed them all. Later on Phra Isuan discovered that Nonthuk had killed a lot of the gods with his diamond finger, so he then invited Phra Nārāi (to come from his abode) for consultation on the matter. Phra Nārāi then incarnated himself as a goddess Apsōn Kanyā who possessed the five characteristics of beauty and was irresistibly attractive to everybody. When the demon Nonthuk Phrom saw the incarnated goddess, he fell in love with her (at first sight). He came near her. The incarnated goddess said, "If you really love me you have to imitate my dancing. Then I can believe that you are sincere and love me." Nonthuk, who was very much in love, being quite unaware (of any danger), consented to whatever she said. The incarnated goddess then began dancing. Nonthuk imitated many of the movements in her dancing. (In the end) the incarnated goddess, in the course of her dancing, pointed at her own lap. Nonthuk, unconscious of what he was doing, pointed at his own lap too. He fell to the ground. The goddess disappeared. In her place was Phra Nārāi who trod on the chest of Nonthuk. When Nonthuk saw that, he was very angry. He shouted, "You are able to tyrannize me thus because you are Phra Nārāi with your four arms." Phra Nārāi thereupon laid a curse upon him. "Even, you ^{though} shall be very powerful and shall be born of the race of Brahma; and shall possess ten heads and

twenty hands; and can separate your heart from your body, nevertheless you will be killed by me. I shall destroy you in any rebirth you may be born in. When he finished saying this, Phra Nārāi slew the demon Nonthuk Phrom. Phra Nārāi then returned to sleep in the Ocean of Milk.

After his death Nonthuk in the form of an uncremated ghost wandered along the foot of Phra Sumēn Mountain. He performed a penance by making his skull into a fiddle, his back bone into a bow, and his sinews into the strings of the fiddle. He played the fiddle for Phra Isuan because he was desirous of a boon from him. Phra Isuan gave him a boon, "You will be born of the race of Brahma. You will have ten heads and twenty hands. You will be able to separate your heart from your body. According to destiny, the limit of your age is one thousand years." Nonthuk was therefore born into the race of Brahma. He was born as the son of Lord Latsatīan. His mother whose name was Ratchadā, was the fourth queen (of Latsatīan). He was named Thotsakan.

Apsarawatān
Nonthuk
apsōn kanyā
Latsatīan
Ratchadā
Thotsakan

Apsaras avatāra
as if Nanduka
apsaras kanyā
Pulastya
as if Rajata = Nikaṣā/Kesinī/Kaikasī
Dasakanṭha

10. Rāmāwatān

The tenth incarnation is as follows. The demon Wirunhok became the king of Bādān city and was equipped with a cross-belt, made of a serpent noose, as his weapon. One day he went to see Phra Isuan at the Krailāt Mountain. When he came to the bottom of the stairs he heard the cry of Sōraphū. He mistook it as the voice of Phra Isuan and bowed down to pay homage to it. Sōraphū cried three times which cause Wirunhok to bow down three times too. When Wirunhok looked up and saw Sōraphū in the place of Phra Isuan, he was very angry. He took off his cross-belt and threw it at Sōraphū. Sōraphū was killed and the Krailāt Mountain was tipped to one side. Wirunhok was frightened and fled back to Bādān. Phra Sayom Phūwayān (Śiva) was frightened too but then he realized that Wirunhok had thrown the great serpent noose cross-belt. He made the gods assemble to push the Mountain back up again. But the Mountain did not move at all. Phra Isuan then ordered Chattubāt to call Thotsakan up to see him. Thotsakan volunteered to push the Mountain back up again. Phra Isuan said, "If you can push the Krailāt Mountain back up to its previous position, whichever goddess in the Krailāt Mountain you desire, even though she is my own concubine, you shall have according to your wish." Thotsakan succeeded in pushing the Krailāt Mountain back to its previous position. He returned to Phra Isuan and asked him for Phra Umā. Phra Isuan, unable to think of a way to go back on his word, had to give Phra Umā to Thotsakan. When Thotsakan obtained Phra Umā he was at a loss what to do because she used supernatural means to make herself burning hot to the touch. He, therefore, put Phra Umā on his head and left. At that time the gods in all regions became very distressed. They went together to invite Phra Nārāi (to come from his abode). Phra Nārāi, therefore, changed his body into the form of a man named Rāmāwatān, who had come to plant a tree. This was on the way where Thotsakan was passing by. The man played a trick by putting the top part of the tree down (into the ground). When Thotsakan

came by (and saw that) he was very surprised and did not realize that it was a trick. He censured the man saying, "You are a fool. How can this tree yield fruit when you plant it by putting the top part down?" The Rāmāwatān answered, "It is you who are a fool. Why did you ask for Phra Umā (from Phra Isuan)? Why did you not ask for Monthok who is a concubine of Phra Isuan and sits by his throne? She is very beautiful and possesses the five characteristics of beauty. She is suitable to be a queen. Why didn't you ask for her? You have asked for Phra Umā who is the Mother Goddess in the abode of gods. If you make her your queen your head will be broken into seven pieces." When Thotsakan heard that he realized the truth. He returned Phra Umā to Phra Isuan and asked him for Monthok. Phra Isuan gave her to him. Phra Nārāi then went back to sleep in his Ocean of Milk. Thotsakan returned to his city.

At that time Phra Isuan mounted on his elephant named Mātangkha Karī Thēp and went to keep strict observance of the religious precepts at the summit of Ratchadākūt. At that time Latsatīan Phrom, who was the king of Langkā, was seriously ill. He divided his inheritance between his ten sons. He allocated his kingdoms to them to rule each according to his rank and he passed away. Thotsakan, who was the fifth son, was crowned as the king of Langkā. But he did not observe the ten religious principles for a king. He was very greedy and from his older brother named Kupērantayak, took by force the magic (aerial car) Butsabok to be his own. Kupērantayak was one of Phra Isuan's attendants. He was no match for Thotsakan, so he fled away to the summit of Ratchadākūt where the god (Śiva) was observing his religious precepts. Thotsakan pursued him there. When Kupērantayak saw that he could not escape him, he cried for help from Phra Isuan. Phra Isuan opened his eyes and saw Thotsakan pursuing Kupērantayak; he was very angry. He took out the left tusk of his elephant mount and threw it at the chest of Thotsakan. Then he cursed him, "This tusk will drop out from your chest only when you are shot by Phra Nārāi's arrow and are destined to die." Thotsakan suffered

great pain. He then mounted Butsabok and went back to Langkā. He ordered Lord Witsanukam to saw the tusk off level with his chest. Then he covered it with armour. From then on all demons wore armour upon their chest all the time.

In one of the Traidā Yuk ages, after Phra Isuan had kept strict observance of the religious precepts, he, together with Phra Umā, mounted a golden plā krāi fish and made a tour around the universe. Then Phra Isuan ordered the Wind god to put the Trī Phet (his diamond trident), the Čakkrāwut (his discus), and the Mahā Sattalōha (his spear) into the womb of Lady Sawāha. Those weapons became her son which was a white monkey called Sī Hanumān. He was to become the chief of Phra Nārāi's warriors during his tenth incarnation when he was to put an end to the calamities (of the world). Then Phra Isuan went back to Krailāt.

At that time Thotsakan grew even more arrogant and brutal. He went about persecuting and oppressing all the three worlds. None of the sages could practice his meditation in peace. Led by the sage Kanlaikōt, they went to see Phra Isuan and asked (him to invite) Phra Nārāi to incarnate himself in order to stop the calamities. Phra Isuan, therefore, bestowed upon the sages (the knowledge of) a mantra to be chanted during the ceremony of preparing celestial rice, and ordered them to perform the rite in Ayutthayā. Only then would he invite Phra Nārāi to incarnate himself. The sages acquiesced to Phra Isuan's command. So they came and informed Lord Thotsarot, who was the king of Ayutthayā city, (of what they were to do). Lord Thotsarot was the grandson of Phra Anōmātan, who was born of the race of Phra Nārāi. Lord Thotsarot granted the sages leave to perform the ceremony.

At that time Phra Isuan ordered the mighty and powerful among the gods to be born as monkeys in Chumphū city and in Khītkhin city. They would be warriors for the Rānāwatān. Then Phra Nārāi, by means of his divine power, danced in the midst of the Ocean. This is the reason why that dance is called Nārāi Krasāē Phayām. Phra Nārāi

ordered Phra Laksamī to divide herself and be born in the womb of the queen of Thotsakan. She was named Sīdā and was the first cause (leading to the killing of Thotsakan). Then Phra Nārāi caused his discus, trident and diamond mace to be born as the second prince. He caused Lord Anantanākkharāt to be born as the third prince and his conch Thakkhināwat as the fourth prince. As for his own self, he divided himself to be born as the first prince. All of them were born at the same time in the wombs of three queens of Lord Thotsarot. When those queens ate that celestial rice, they became pregnant. At the end of the ninth month (or with the arrival of the tenth month) they gave birth to four princes. They were named Phra Rāmāwatān, Phra Phlaorot, Phra Saphalakkhana and Phra Sattarut respectively.

At the time when those sages performed the royal ceremony of preparing celestial rice, the fragrant smell of the rice spread afar and reached Langkā Island. Monthok, who was the chief queen of Thotsakan, wanted very much (to eat some). She then begged Thotsakan (for some). Thotsakan ordered Kākanāsūn who was his aunt to change her body into the form of a crow and fly over the Continent of Chomphū until she came to Ayutthayā city where the sages were performing the rite. Kākanāsūn swooped down into the midst of the ceremony hall, and stole half a lump of rice. She gave it to Thotsakan who gave it to Monthok. Monthok, in accordance with her desire, ate that half lump of rice and became pregnant at the same time that Phra Nārāi incarnated himself. With the arrival of the tenth month she gave birth to a princess, and it was at the very same time that Phra Rāmāwatān was born. Just at the time when that princess was born, she cried out, "Destruction to Rāp!" three times. It seemed most miraculous. Thotsakan thought that it was a very strange omen. He ordered Phiphēk, who was his younger brother, to interpret it. Phiphēk foretold, "This girl is a misfortune for you and your race". Thotsakan, therefore, ordered his soldiers to put his daughter in a casket and throw it into the midst of the ocean. Phra Laksamī, through her own divine power,

was not destined to be killed by the tides of the ocean. It so happened that a lotus then, at her bidding, came up from the tide (and supported the casket). It floated against the tide until it came to a place where there was a landing (built by the sea-shore). The king of Mithilā had come there to practise asceticism in the forest nearby. His name was Chanok Čhakkawat. The ascetic went to bathe at the landing (on that day). He (thus) obtained the casket and adopted the girl as his own daughter. He called her Sīdā. Then King Chanok Čhakkawat gave up his asceticism and returned to Mithilā city. Then he had an idea of getting Sīdā married off. He had the kings of all continents assemble (at his city). If there was any king able to lift up Mōlī, the Great Bow of Phra Isuan, he would have his daughter married to him according to the custom of the great warrior race. Phra Rāmāwatān was able to lift up Mōlī, the Great Bow. The king of Mithilā then married Sīdā to Phra Rāmāwatān. She was his chief queen. He then took her back to Ayutthayā city. After a long time had passed, Phra Rāmāwatān together with his queen and his third brother named Phra Sapphalakkhana, went out to practise asceticism on the bank of the Khōthā river. Thotsakan, who did not realize that Sīdā was his own daughter, kidnapped her and took her back to Langkā city. He wooed her, but found he could not come near her because (she had used supernatural means to make herself) burning hot to the touch whenever he did so. He did not know what to do. Phra Rāmāwatān, together with Phra Sapphalakkhana, marched his monkey soldiers from the two cities (i.e. Chumphū and Khītkhin) in an advancing army. They made a road across the ocean by filling the ocean with rocks and thus crossed over to Langkā Island. They waged war with Thotsakan. After Phra Rāmāwatān had killed Thotsakan with the Phrommāt Arrow and destroyed all wicked demons, he returned to Ayutthayā and was crowned as the king there. When he died he became Phra Nārāi and returned back to sleep in the Ocean of Milk.

Rāmāwatan, the 10th incarnation, which is neither more nor less than what histories of kings call 'Rāma's Renown', has been translated from Grantha script in accordance with the (authoritative) Treatise on Magic. It ends here.

Rāmāwatān	Rāma avatāra
Bādān	Pātāla
Wirunhok	? Virūlhaka (P. Lord of the Kumbhaṇḍas, Regent of the South)
Sōraphū	sarabhū (P.; Skt. sarāṭa) 'a lizard, gekko'
Monthok	maṇḍūka ; ? Mandodarī
Matangkha karī thēp	mātanga karī deva
Ratchadākūt	Rajatakūṭa
Kupērantayak	Kubera yakṣa
butsabok	puṣpaka
plā krāi	Notopterus chitala, Thai : 'the krāi fish'
Sattalōha	sapta loha
Sawāha	Svāha
Kanlaikōt	? Kalayakoṭi
Thotsakan	daśakanṭha
Thotsarot	Daśaratha
Chumphū	Jambū
Khītkhin	Kīṣkindha
Krasāē	Thai : 'current'
phayām	vyāma
Phlaorot	Bharata (but the spelling appears as if Thai : 'axle of chariot')
Sapphalakkhana	Lakṣmaṇa
Sattarut	Śatrughna
Kākanāsūn	Tārakā
Phiphēk	Vibhīṣaṇa
Chanok Chakkawat	Janaka cakravartī
Khōthā	Godā

APPENDIX II

THAI BRAHMINS OF THE PRESENT DAY

There must be a great number of descendants of the so-called 'Brahmins'¹ in Thailand, but of them all, about fifteen families can claim to be of Brahmin origin. However, these origins in fact mean no more than the families' ability to trace their lineage back to Brahmins of the Ayuthya period. It certainly does not mean that there is any evidence of descent from Brahmins in India, though some Thai Brahmins claimed that their ancestors came either from Ramesvaram (the sacred island between Ceylon and India) or from Benares. These fifteen families are: Thōng In; Marinkun; Singhasēnī; Chantharōtchawong; Chatchakun; Phūmirat; Būranasiri; Sučharit-kun; ^{Siriwathanakun; Rangsi-phrām-nakun;} Sētaphrām; Kōmonwethin; Ratnaphrām; Nākhawēthin; and Sawatdiwēthin. These descendants are not called 'phrām' (brāhmaṇa) until they have been initiated into the Brahmin priesthood. At present there are only twenty one Brahmins in Thailand. Seventeen of them are in Bangkok and the rest, i.e. four, are in Vābhān Sī Thammarāt.² Initiation into the Brahmin priesthood is called buat phrot and it is still performed. The community of Brahmins of the Thēwasathān (Devasthāna), or Hindu Shrine, in Bangkok will perform this ceremony only for one who can prove that he is the descendant of a Brahmin family. Since no Brahmin female ever immigrated into Thailand, and since inter-marriage observances for Thai Brahmin families

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1. The English term 'Brahmin' is used here, both as noun and as adjective, to refer to the Sanskrit brāhmaṇa and to its Thai equivalent, phrām. The spelling 'Brahman', though a possible option in English, has been avoided for fear of confusion with Sanskrit brahman (neuter noun).
 2. "Brawat Sangthōp Kīao Kap Phrām Nai Mathayom Prathēt (India)", found in Aanusōn Nai Kānphrarāthathān Phlōeng Sop Phra Rātcha Khru Sangthōp Hani (Somchit Rangsi-phrām-nakun), Bangkok, 1970, p. 21.

has never been strict, the line of inheritance for Thai Brahmins is therefore paternal only.

The ceremony of buat phrot, or initiation into the Brahmin priesthood, is performed on the sixth day of the waxing moon of the second lunar month, which is one day before the beginning of the ceremony of Triyampawai-Tripawai. The candidate has to prepare certain offerings and presents for the Brahmin who is going to initiate him into the Brahmin priesthood. These offerings are: a phā nung (a sarong-type lower garment); a cushion; a wash-bowl; a handkerchief; a nut; a betel nut; a coconut; flowers; incense; candles; alms-money to the value of six Baht; and three sets of food-offerings. The candidate gives these offerings, grouped in sub-sets, to the officiant who, upon receiving each sub-set, recites some mantras which are to be imitated immediately by the candidate. The candidate is then initiated and becomes a Brahmin. Then the community of Brahmins take a vow, or phūk phrot.³ For fifteen days they declare themselves vegetarians and observe vow of celibacy i.e. from the sixth day of the waxing moon of the second month to the sixth day of the waning moon of the same month. When the incense stuck in the food-offering is wholly burned the ceremony is over.

Most of the initiated Brahmins become government officials. They are under the Department of the Royal Palace. Their duties are to perform certain royal ceremonies, such as the coronation and the first ploughing of the land. When they are not on duty they are free to perform any other Brahministic rites and ceremonies, such as setting up a shrine for the guardian spirit of a house or compound, or a wedding ceremony, should any one request them. It is noteworthy

3. The Thai phrot corresponds to Sanskrit noun vrata. The two verbs collocated here are buat -- ultimately from Sanskrit vr̥j -- 'to become ordained, to take vows' and phūk 'to tie'.

that it is not necessary that it must be a real Brahmin only who can perform these Brahministic rites for the common people. Any man who educates himself in the knowledge of Brahminism and Brahministic rites and ceremonies is also called phras, or Brahmin, even though he is not one by blood, and by this very fact he has never been initiated in the Hindu Shrine as a Brahmin. This kind of person is called phras phithi phras too.

After their initiation Thai Brahmins must wear their hair long and arrange it in the form of a chignon. They always wear white clothes. They put on the Brahmanical cord on ceremonial occasions only. On these occasions too they put on ^awhite jacket with ^awhite pha nung which is worn ^vChong-Phras -- thot -- fashion in nearly ^{the}same style as Indian Brahmins. Any Thai initiated Brahmin can take any kind of profession at the same time as attending to the Shrine and ceremonial occasions. This is different from Indian Brahmins. An Indian Brahmin who is a performer of ceremonies, or who is a teacher in Hinduism, does not take any other profession.

Thai Brahmins are partly Buddhist. They follow most of the Buddhist Dharma, precepts and teachings, (except for the Nirvana concept which is replaced by a belief in universal Phras), as well as their Hindu Vedas. At one and the same time they believe in Hindu gods side by side with the Lord Buddha. It is claimed on behalf of the Thai Brahmins that they still perform Deva-pūjā or the daily worship of the gods in the domestic shrine, though their ritual acts may be different in detail from those of Indian Brahmins. At present no daily Deva-pūjā is performed at the Phawasathan. As for the other five daily religious duties (i.e. 1. Religious bathing; 2. Worship of the Supreme Being by meditation and reciting mantras at the three Sandhyas, viz. at the morning, midday, and evening services; 3. Brahma-yajña, or worship of the Supreme Being by a formal repetition of the first words of every sacred book; 4. Tarpana, or the

threefold daily oblation of water to the secondary gods, to the sages, and to the Pitrs; 5. Homa, or sacrifice to fire (as fuel, rice, clarified butter), none of them can be said to be performed daily by Thai Brahmins. It is likely that these religious acts are performed by them on special occasions, i.e. when they are performing any ceremony.

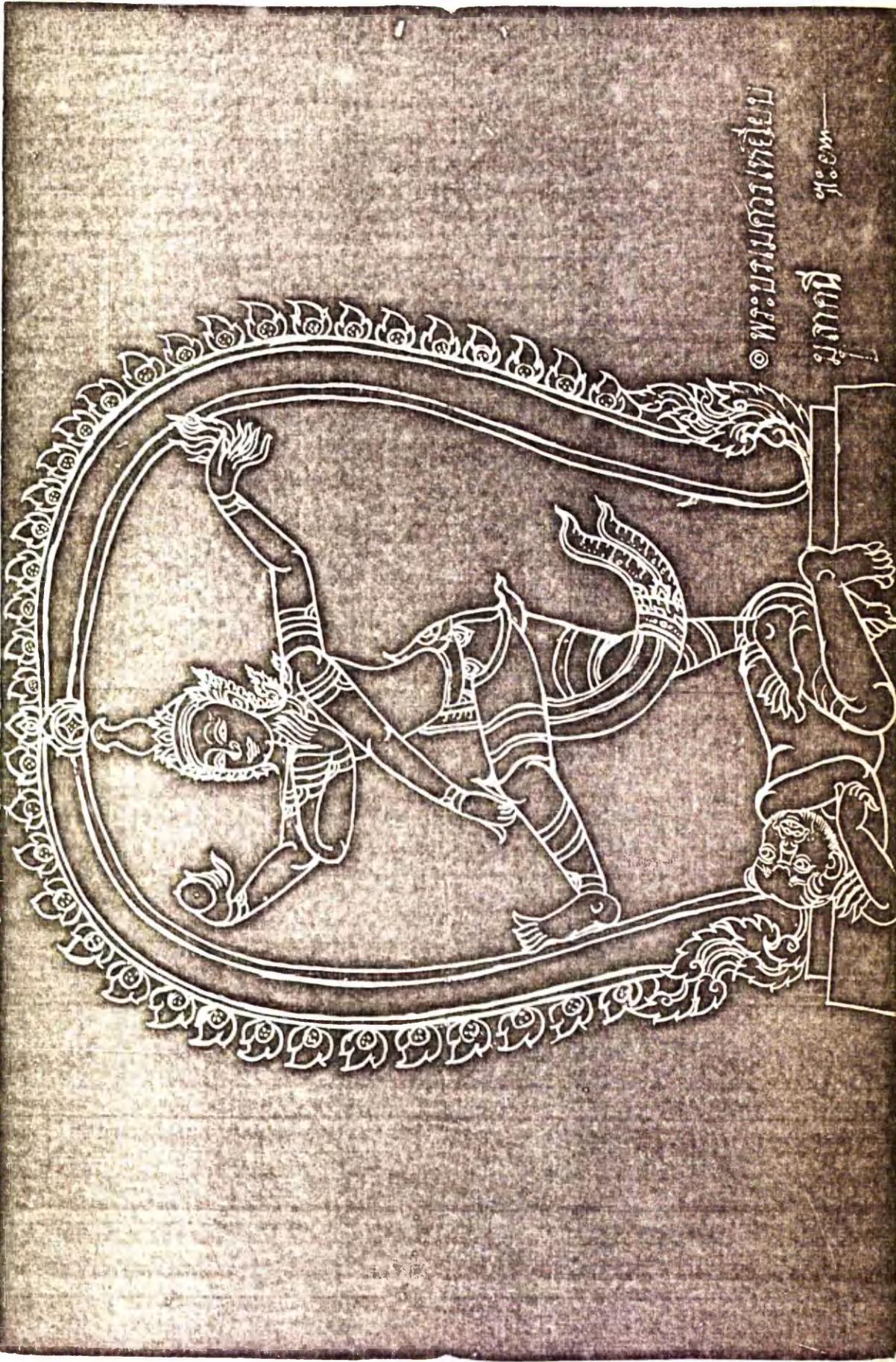
Thai Brahmins do not have to take a predetermined course of study in order to become a Brahmin or to be able to perform any ceremony. The general practice is to hand down the knowledge of Brahmanism from father to son, or from teacher to pupil. The pupil is so strictly obedient to his preceptor that he hardly deviates the slightest bit from his teaching. That is why knowledge of Hindu gods and goddesses still accords with, and is still limited to, Thai Hindu mythology as recorded in the text called Nārāi Sip Pāng. Thai Brahmins worship seven gods and goddesses. These are: Ivāra or Śiva; Nārāyaṇa or Viṣṇu; Brāhmā; Caṇḍeśvarī; Lakṣmī; and Maheśvarī. The last goddess -- Maheśvarī -- is regarded as one of the two consorts of Viṣṇu (the other is Lakṣmī). This concept does not exist in Thai mythology, but it is recorded in the Nārāi Sip Pāng.⁴ Śiva represented in the form of Naṭarāja is not regarded by the Thai Brahmins as the Lord of the Dance, but as the Lord who is Vanquishing the Demon Mūlākhānī. The myth of the destruction of the demon Mūlākhānī by Śiva does not appear in Hindu mythology either, yet it is narrated in the Nārāi Sip Pāng. However, some modern Brahmins and Phrū Phitthī Phraṇ also study genuine Hindu mythology, i.e. unadulterated and pure, from the Sanskrit Purāṇas, as found in the Lalit Nārāi Sip Pāng composed by King Rama VI. This they study side by side with the Nārāi Sip Pāng. But

4. In Hindu mythology Maheśvarī is one of the Saptamātṛkas, or the 'Seven Mothers'. The goddesses are: Brāhmī, Maheśvarī, Ānandī, Vaiṣṇavī, Varāhī, Mahendri, and Chāmundā. Maheśvarī is the consort of Maheśvara or Śiva and thus has the same vehicle and same weapons with him.

they are still so attached to the knowledge handed down to them by their predecessors that they do not reject it.

Thai Brahmins in Bangkok claim that they still read Grantha script which was formerly used in recording their mantras. A Brahmin and a khrū phithī phrām in Nakhōn Sī Thammarāt admit, however, that they note down in Thai their mantras and instructions for ceremonies and rites. A Brahmin in that city says that all his texts and manuscripts in both Thai and Grantha scripts were taken from him to be kept in the National Library in Bangkok a long time ago.

ILLUSTRATIONS



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มุกดา

I. Siva Parvatesha (Siva treads on MULEKHANI)



II. Phra Sarasēsuan Prāp Mūlākhani
 (Śiva conquishes Mūlākhani)



IV Phra Kōṅḥanānēsūan



V. Phra Mahā Vikhinēt Pai Krasīya Samut
(Vishnesvara goes to the Ocean of Milk)



VI. Phra Vighnēsūān Yū'n
(Vighnēsvara - standing)



VII. Phra Siwabut
(Siwaputra)



VIII. Phra Chhwa'n Wang
(Devatana - seated)



11. Phra Phēwakan
(Devakarma)



ย. พระเชวakan
(Devakarma)



x1. Śaivya tries to uproot
Kailāsa.
Stone: Kōlūr, India.

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