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Introduction

When setting out to catalogue northern Thai inscriptions, I did not foresee that a mere listing could end up as a catalogue of this size. But just as with the *Glossary* (Vol. 1) the lack of a proper source of information made it necessary to be as comprehensive as I possibly could.

There is a large number of publications, such as serials, monographs or academic theses, and, as the catalogue reveals, nearly all inscriptions have already been published in one form or another. But that is where the problems in documentation begin: In most of cases publications and even institutions go their own way and frequently ignore each other's conventions and range of information provided. Inconsistencies between publications and institutions abound making it often impossible to reconcile and consilidate information. To give a concrete example: A single inscription may be documented under four different names, such as[1]

จารึกหัวแสนกัลยากินเมืองพยาว | ศิลาจารึก ลพ./๑๙ อักษรไทยฝักขาม ภาษาไทย | จารึกวัดพญาร่วง | Wat Phaya Ruang

and up to six different registration numbers[2]

พช. 32 | พช. 332 | 332/18 | LB19 | ลพ๑๙ | 1.5.1.1.

Every institution follows its own system or conventions of naming, inventorizing and cataloguing. Under such conditions research is very time-consuming and difficult. Publications in Thailand are written almost solely in Thai. Publication of metadata in English is sporadic and fragmentary. The reasons for this are varied and will not help to solve the situation.

This catalogue of stone inscriptions is even for Thailand the first of its kind; there is no other epigraphic catalogue in print.[3] It combines and compares all available metadata, all indices and all available publications.

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1   *cariɨk hǎw sēn kǎlayākin mɨ̌ɨṅ bayāw | śilācārɨk lb./19 ǎkṣɨ̌r dayy fǎk khām bhāṣā dayy | cārɨk bañā rawaṅ*[1] | Wat Phaya Ruang

2   *bj.32 | bj. 332 | 332/18* | LB19 | *lb19* | 1.5.1.1 — where in this example "*bj.*" refers to พิพิธภัณฑสถานแห่งชาติ (National Museum), and is not a provincial code

3   The Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn Anthropology Center's online database http://www4.sac.or.th is fed by data mainly from one single source, the Fine Arts Department's print publication. It is neither comprehensive nor does it resolve the issues outlined here.

Every source is treated equally. Publications and indices in European languages are included in the same way as Thai publications. Building this catalogue was a Sisyphean task and was very time consuming. The main catalogue now covers all stone inscriptions from the northern provinces of Thailand (Lampang, Phrae, Nan, Phayao, Chiang Mai, Lamphun, Chiang Rai and Lamphun).

The National Research Council of Thailand (NRCT) gave permission to conduct research on this subject. Inscriptions are movable objects and references as to their current location not always reliable. It took time and patience to locate the original stones, to photograph and measure the objects, to compare the metadata and text editions. The Fine Arts Department กรม ศิลปากร, [kram śilpākar] an agency of the Ministry of Culture (formerly the Ministry of Education) is in charge of Museums and Antiquities, through the NRCT did not allow the taking of ink rubbings or squeezes (because of possible surface damage). So a systematic comparison of texts required going though all published material, looking for documentary deficiencies and taking my own photographs wherever the documentation was inadequate.

Additional metadata were gathered on my own during visits of temples and institutions such as local museums.[4] Information on some of the inscriptions is published here for the first time. Creating a complete inscriptional text corpus for my original doctoral thesis required first establishing a comprehensive catalogue of inscriptions with reliable metadata; incorporating duplicates of epigraphs (when in reality there is only one) or leaving out an inscription would have distorted any result. Without this catalogue, a proper inscriptional corpus could not have been compiled. It constituted the very basis for my own research, and it will surely be tool as important and useful for any other researcher.

In addition to all data already compiled I supply new unpublished metadata. It is important that all information is published in English, giving researchers without knowledge of Thai access to the huge mass of inscriptional material for the first time. A text carved in stone does not change over time (unlike its supporting material), but readings and interpretations by different philologists may differ.

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4   I conducted field work in Thailand in March and April of 2005, 2006, 2008, and
    library and archive work in Thailand in February-April 2007 and July-October 2007.

Conventions of inventorizing inscriptions in Thailand

In the following the main conventions of registering inscriptions in Thailand are explained. A guide to the catalogue of inscriptions proper then follows. Three different systems used by three different institutions and local museums are to be recognized:

1. The Office of the Secretary to the Prime Minister

This office published intermittently eight volumes of the "Corpus of Inscriptions" (CI) [ประชุมศิลาจารึก praḥjum śilācāri̇k] since its inception. The series was initiated before the Second World War by George Cœdès (1886-1969), then director of the Vajirañan National Library of Thailand and curator of its inscriptions collection, under the title *Recueil des Inscriptions du Siam*, of which he himself edited the first two volumes, published in 1924 and 1929.

As mentioned in the introduction to the *Glossary* (Vol. 1), the documentation of an inscription consists of a *scheda* (documentation sheet) followed by a two-column text, with the original transcription to the left, the modern Thai rendering to the right. The numbering of the inscription has become now arbitrary and is consecutive; in the beginning, in Cœdès's days, the numbering reflecting, at first, a chronological order in which the epigraphs were written; the second volume was confined to inscriptions in Mon, Khmer, Pali, Sanskrit and Tamil, excluding Thai material. The latest volume to appear, volume VIII, counts no. 327 as the last number in their inventory. The inscription name is added to the number, to form a sort of 'documentary unit' under which an epigraph is known. There is no further information on the inscription besides number and name. An additional list at the end of the main part assigns CI numbers to FAD numbers in a synopsis.

2. The Fine Arts Department

The catalogue and numbering scheme of the Fine Arts Department (FAD) - or more appropriately the epigraphic division of its National Library in Bangkok - is more detailed than the preceding one. Numbering is here consecutive (i.e. serial) for each of the 78 provinces of Thailand. Provincial names are abbreviated by two letters (e.g. ลพ - Lb. for Lamphun).[5] Then follows the serial number and the name of the

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5   The abbreviatory system for Thai provincial names is a government standard.

inscription. It should be noted - and this is a major cause for confusion - names given by the FAD and the CI are in many cases not the same.

   3. Social Research Institute of Chiang Mai University (SRI CMU)
The third institution documenting inscriptions - in this case only from northern Thailand - is the "Archive of Lanna Inscriptions" (ALI), part of the Social Research Institute of Chiang Mai University. It has catalogued the largest number of northern inscriptions. The institute publishes inscriptions sporadically in a book series called "Corpus of Lan Na Inscriptions" (CLI or SRI, abbreviations may alter). Descriptive conventions for cataloguing inscriptions are done here in a different way in comparison to the CI or FAD publications. The unique CLI numbering-system 'encodes' also other meta-information, as will be explained below. The name of the inscription follows the reference or object number. Again, names of inscriptions as they appear in CI, FAD and CLI may not be identical.
   The CLI number is a 4-digit code like, for example, "1.5.1.1". The first digit stands for the region, the second for a specific northern province, the third for the material (support) the inscription is written on. The fourth digit stands for the type of inscription. The codes are as follows:

1.x.x.x — Region:
1 = Lan Na; 2 = Outside Lan Na; 3 = Unknown.

x.1.x.x — Province:
1 = Mae Hong Son; 2 = Chiang Mai; 3 = Lamphun; 4 = Chiang Rai; 5 = Phayao; 6 = Lampang; 7 = Nan; 8 = Phrae; 9 = Tak.

x.x.1.x — Material:
1 = Stone; 2 = Wood; 3 = Metal; 4 = Composite.

x.x.x.1 — Type:
1 = Inscription; 2 = Buddha Image.

This 4-digit inscription code classifies inscriptions by adding metadata. This system differs from that of CI and FAD. Their numbers are unique while CLI numbers not - adding another source of confusion -. So, for

instance, there are 95 inscriptions numbered "1.5.1.1" because all these happen to be stone inscriptions from the province of Phayao. Inscriptions having the same name normally get a serial number attached to that name.

4. Local usage

Local museums that hold inscriptions usually assign in their very own inventory lists a unique inventory number, unique to that locale. This number is then marked on the epigraphic object (slab, image), generally in paint.

All these conventions - they cannot be regarded as proper systems, or even standards - have flaws but they are all being used in contemporary scholary studies (history, archæology, art history, linguistics), making it often difficult to identify an object. In addition, all these separate conventions run parallel to each other. Publications citing inscriptions make mostly use of only one of these conventions. If there is a cross-referencing it is not done directly, a factor that just calls for 'duplicates' and mix-ups.

This catalogue uses predominantly the FAD conventions. The ALI's CLI has more northern inscriptions inventorized than the FAD. The FAD has already published nearly all of its registered inscriptions, amounting to 93 percent of registered material. There are just 24 percent of the inscriptions published by the CLI. FAD's unique inscriptions number is also more practical.

The main part of the catalogue combines all conventions and names, and assigns all information to its proper stone. Known and published metadata have all been reviewed by inspecting inscriptions in situ or in repositories (museums, monasteries) on my own. New data and information from my own research have also been added. I have provided an image for every inscription as it was indispensable to identify the inscribed object when naming conventions proved unreliable or contradictory. Fortunately, the NRCT permitted photography of inscriptions in temples, institutions and museums. Every inscription is treated separately in the catalogue. Literature on every inscription is therefore directly traceable and transparent. Additional literature can be found in the bibliographies of each volume.

The catalogue of stone inscriptions is the first of its kind. Existing data are merged and combined here with my own new, additional, information. Some data may already be known to the reader, but the

comprehensiveness and the removal of ambiguity adds to the usefulness of this catalogue which cannot be found in other publications. It is also the first time that all metadata of all stone inscriptions are published in English. This catalogue is comprehensive and includes all discovered stone inscriptions in northern Thailand.[6]

Lists following the catalogue of stone inscription's main part are added to provide additional information and may assist in one's own research.

6   The catalogue includes all relevant and for research available resources until December 2011.