

"The Constitution of Ayutthaya", in *New Light on Thai Legal History*, Edited by Andrew Huxley, Bangkok: White Orchid Press, 1996, pp. 133-210.

NOTE: material added after publication is enclosed as [*...*]

This paper is a continuation of two earlier short studies and, like them, is intended as a contribution to the determination of the correct dates of the **Laws of the Three Seals**, and to an understanding of the Ayutthayan constitution, that is the structure of government as set forth in the laws. It involves examination of the sources of both the structure and the language in which it was described, and one purpose is to correct the errors in H.G. Quaritch Wales's *Ancient Siamese Government and Administration*, which has been followed by several subsequent historians of Ayutthaya and early Bangkok.¹ In my first study, "Prolegomena", I established classifications for the dates and royal titles of the preambles of the laws, which are mostly quite different from the reign dates and royal titles found in the chronicles of Ayutthaya and generally accepted. I concluded that nearly all of the dates are spurious and result from changes introduced when the laws were recodified; and on the basis of those two elements, preamble dates and titles, I proposed that signs of five codifications could be identified before that of Rama I in 1805. They were "A pre-1569 recension with true *śaka* dates", "laws of Nareśuor's [Naresuan] reign with true *cula* dates", "a recodification by King Indarājā/Song Tham using Buddhist era dates", "a new code prepared for King Dhammarājādhirāj/Prasat Thong", and new laws of Kings Naray and Phetracha, although not full new recensions".² My second paper was a very short version of what is presented here. Because of space limitations arguments made in "Prolegomena" cannot be repeated here, and when relevant I must refer readers to it.

This paper in no way completes the task of unravelling the complexities of the Ayutthayan laws. In particular for the lower levels of society, the *brai* and *lek* and their relations to the ruling classes and state, another study, perhaps longer than this, will be required.

NOTES

*Note on transliteration and transcription. For all Thai terminology, except proper names which have a commonly used ad hoc phonetic transcription, I have used the Sanskritic graphic system which permits exact equivalencies of written forms, and these are given in italics. Of course, when quoting others, I reproduce their spellings, for example *śaktinā* [Sanskritic], sakdina [ad hoc phonetic]. Indic terms are spelled as in the Thai texts, i.e., *koṭ* ('urn'), not *koṣa*.. All names of law texts are in bold type.

¹ Published by Bernard Quaritch, Ltd., London, 1934. See Michael Vickery, "Prolegomena to Methods for Using the Ayutthayan Laws as Historical Source Material", *Journal of the Siam Society (JSS)*, Vol. 72, parts 1-2 (January and July 1984), pp. 37-59; and "The Constitution of Ayutthaya, an Investigation into the *Three Seals Code*", paper presented at the 5th International Conference on Thai Studies--SOAS, London, 1993. See also Vickery, Review of Yoneo Ishii, et. al., *An Index of Officials in Traditional Thai Governments*, in *JSS*, 63: (July 1975), pp. 419-30.

² Vickery, "Prolegomena", p. 54. There are two series of miscellaneous laws, ***Kāṃhnat kau*** ('Old Decisions') and ***Kaṭ 36 khò*** ('Law of 36 Articles'), issued by 18th-century kings.

All of the work on Ayutthayan administration and state structure has to rely on the **Three Seals Code** together with a few European reports from the 17th century. As has long been recognized, the law texts themselves are full of unresolved problems, particularly in the dates to which they are attributed, and the possible confusion of provisions originating in different time periods. Nevertheless, there has not been an attempt to resolve the problems, and historians have continued to use the laws, or at least Quaritch Wales's interpretations of them, as though they were unequivocally true records.³

These laws, in their extant form, date from 1805 and are due to a decision of King Rama I to collate the existing Ayutthayan law texts and rewrite the whole code. The revision was accomplished in great haste, which may account for some of the anomalies to be described below.⁴ The new edition alone was considered authoritative and older manuscripts were presumably destroyed. This collection of laws is of particular interest to historians because several of the texts included outline the administrative structure of the kingdom and are thus a sort of written constitution of pre-19th century Ayutthaya.

The study of the pre-19th century administrative system of Siam would seem to have begun with the efforts of Thai royal personalities in the latter part of the 19th century to explain the existing administrative structure and account for the ways in which it differed from that set out in the old Ayutthayan laws. The impetus for such activity undoubtedly came from the intention of King Chulalongkorn and his brothers to reform the existing system, which forced them to examine closely a structure until then taken for granted.

Simply describing the existing administration should have occasioned no difficulty for these able men at the centre of the kingdom's government, but it is clear from King Chulalongkorn's two major writings on the subject, dated 1878 and 1887, that he also wished to take into account the

³ Akin Rabibhadana, "The Organization of Thai Society in the Early Bangkok Period, 1782-1873", Cornell Thailand Project, Interim Report Series, Number Twelve, Data Paper: Number 74, Southeast Asia Program, Cornell University, Ithaca, July 1969. For such awareness see also Lorraine Marie Gesick, "Kingship and Political Integration in Traditional Siam 1767-1824", Ph.D. Thesis, Cornell University, 1976, p. 9, "one cannot judge to what extent the laws were changed in the process of 'restoration'...it is clear...that certain provisions of the **Law of Provincial Hierarchy** and the **Law of Seals** [presumably *Dharrmanūn*] reflect the early Bangkok situation". Gesick nevertheless accepted that "one may assume that such provisions were only added to 'touch up' these laws while their basic provisions were retained unchanged". The important question, however, is did the basic provisions represent continuing reality or not?

⁴ The code is entitled *Kaṭhmāy trā sām dvañ* ("Laws of the Three Seals"). The best edition was prepared by Robert Lingat and published in three volumes in Bangkok in 1938-9 under the title *Pra:mvan kaṭhmāy rajakāl dī 1, cula era 1166* ('Collected Laws of the Reign of Rama I, Cula Era 1166'). It has been reprinted by Guru Sabhā in a five-volume set from which my citations are taken. References will be to 'Laws' followed by volume numbers in roman numerals and page numbers. Information on the revision of 1805 is in Lingat, "Note sur la revision des lois siamoises en 1805", *JSS* 23 (1929-30), pp. 19-28; and J. Burnay, "Matériaux pour une édition critique du code de 1805", *JSS* 31:2 (1937), pp. 155-68. Lingat, "Note", determined the length of the revision period as possibly from September to December 1805.

country's traditional laws, even when no direct reference to the laws was made.⁵ We may hypothesize that one reason for his interest in the laws was a desire to find out if some of the structures he most desired to modify did not owe their powerful situation to usurpation of functions beyond those outlined for them in the traditional law texts.

Among European scholars study of the laws has fallen into two separate channels, the first represented by the work of Lingat and Burnay, who were interested in establishing the exact texts of the 1805 compilation, finding clues to the texts antedating the reform, and investigating Siamese legal theory.⁶ Scholars of the Lingat-Burnay school would probably say that before further use of the laws in historical study is feasible, we must know more about the way in which the present code was compiled and the precise meaning of all sections of the laws. It is true, of course, that parts of the law texts are in difficult, archaic language and will require careful linguistic and textual analysis before their full value as historical source material is revealed. Extensive sections of the laws, however, may be read without much difficulty and historical scholarship has suffered from the neglect of direct investigation into these documents.⁷

The other current, illustrated by the work of Quaritch Wales, who based his writing to a great extent on earlier interpretative studies by Prince Damrong, is directly concerned with the evolution of Ayutthayan society and administration and uses evidence from the law texts together with details of 19th-century practice to illustrate the process. Nevertheless, he neglected direct investigation of some of the more interesting, and contradictory, sections of the laws, but perhaps because his reliance on the authoritative statements of Prince Damrong gave his work a quasi-official

⁵ "A Royal Essay, Traditions of Royal Lineage in Siam", 1878, text and translation in Robert B. Jones, "Thai Titles and Ranks Including a Translation of Traditions of Royal Lineage in Siam by King Chulalongkorn", Data Paper Number 81, Southeast Asia Program, Cornell University, June 1971; and "Commentary by His majesty King Chulalongkorn on the Administration of the Kingdom" (*Brah rāj tāmras nai brah pād samtec brah culacòmklau cau ayū hua drañ thaleñ brah param rājādhīpāy kee khai kār pakgron pheentin*) [1887], Bangkok 2470 [1927]. See also Michael Vickery, Review article on Robert B. Jones, "Thai Titles and Ranks", *JSS* LXII, 1 (January 1974), pp. 159-174.

⁶ In addition to the work cited in note 3, see Robert Lingat, "L'Esclavage privée dans le vieux droit siamois", *Études de sociologie et d'ethnologie juridique*, Institut de droit comparé, Paris, Domat-Montchrestien, 1931; Lingat, "Evolution of the Conception of Law in Burma and Siam", *JSS*, 38:1 (1950), pp. 9-31; and J. Burnay, "Inventaire des manuscrits juridiques siamois", *JSS* 23:3 (1929), pp. 135-203, *JSS* 24:1 (1930), pp. 29-79, and *JSS* 24:2 (1930), pp. 93-152.

⁷ As illustrations of their value for the study of Thai society, even in terms of the new domain of 'Cultural Studies', and not merely as antiquarian exotica, one need only note (1) the reason given for the initial interest of Rama I in the law texts (**Laws I**, pp. 1-3) which shows his sociological preconception, that the previous laws which gave women an absolute right of divorce must have been corrupt, or as Gesick, p. 9 considered, "clearly unjust" (2) his edict regarding linga worship, noted by Akin, p. 44, with its evidence for religious syncretism of the time, the extent of Hinduization, and the accuracy of current formulations of the greater/lesser tradition dichotomy. The first case, incidentally, offers a perfect opportunity to put gender into Thai history, as called for by Craig Reynolds at the London Thai Studies Conference (Craig Reynolds, "Predicaments of Modern Thai History", Third Conference Lecture, The Fifth International Conference on Thai Studies, SOAS, London, 9 July 1993).

status, subsequent historians have generally followed his outline of the evolution of early Siamese administration.⁸

Quaritch Wales' use of the laws

Quaritch Wales drew on the law texts in order to present a coherent evolutionary picture of the structure and development of early Ayutthayan administration--a picture which has not been carefully studied by other historians. His story begins with the final conquest of Angkor at the date found in the *Hlvāñ prasrōṭh* chronicle, 1431, with the entry "*samtec braḥ paramarāja cau* [the King of Ayutthaya]went [and] took *mōaṅ nagara hlvañ* [Angkor] ...". As a result, there was an "influx into the Siamese capital of large numbers of Khmer statesmen and Brahmans. Their influence led ... King Paramatrilokanatha (1448-1488), to undertake the complete reorganisation of the administration by the adaptation of many Khmer principles and methods ...". He divided "the population into two divisions, one military and one civil"; and this "was the administrative system...that was followed in broad principle until the reign of Rama V".⁹ These details, it should be noted, are not found in the laconic entry of *Hlvāñ prasrōṭh*, nor specifically stated in any other source, but, with respect to the Khmer influence, result from scholarly speculation oriented toward explaining the large number of Khmer terms in Thai royal and administrative vocabulary taken in conjunction with the statement of the long versions of the Thai Annals, but not *Hlvāñ prasrōṭh*, about reforms carried out by King Trailok.¹⁰ Before the reforms attributed to King Trailok, according to Quaritch Wales, Ayutthayan administration had been 'feudal', of the personal type, allegedly like Sukhothai.

The picture presented by Quaritch Wales is based on a number of assumptions supported by little or no evidence and made necessary by a preconceived idea of what the evolution of the Thai system should have been. Crucial to his conception of this evolution was a belief that certain features had originally been adopted directly from India and that others had been introduced from Angkor in the 15th century and formalized by King Trailok, and that the differences from this ideal structure which were observed from the 17th century on were due to deterioration of the original

⁸ H.G. Quaritch Wales, *Ancient Siamese government and Administration*, London 1934 and Paragon Book reprint 1965, from which my citations are taken. In order to limit the number of footnotes, the numerous page references to this work will be included in parentheses in the body of the text. The most important writings of Prince Damrong on the subject are *Tāṃnān kaṭhmāy daiy*, 'Story of the Laws of Thailand', included in his commentary to the *Royal Autograph Edition of the Annals of Ayutthaya*, pp. 403-410, and his 'History of Military Organization', published in *Collected Chronicle (Prajum baṅśāvātār)*, Vol. 14. The former, in Thai *Braḥ rāj baṅśāvātār chapap braḥ rāj hatthalekhā*, has gone through several printings. My citations are from the 6th printing, Bangkok 2511, and will be cited as 'RA'. *Prajum baṅśāvātār* has also gone through several printings. My citations are from the *Guru Sabhā* edition and citations will be abbreviated 'PB'.

⁹ *Hlvāñ prasrōṭh*, at date 793. Q.W., *Administration*, pp. 3-4, 47- 48.

¹⁰ For discussion and analysis of the different versions of the Ayutthayan chronicles, see Michael Vickery, "Cambodia After Angkor, The Chronicular Evidence for the 14th-16th Centuries", Ph.D. thesis, Yale University, 1977, pp. 0000

system. Some of his evolutionary conceptions, which are not always mutually consistent, are as follows:

- The Khmer modelled their civil administration on an existing military organisation.
- The 12th-century Khmer cabinet consisted of four chief ministers.
- King Trailok followed the Khmer model.
- In King Trailok's system there were originally four general officers, each in command of one of the four divisions (*caturaṅga*) of the army, under the chief of the military division; and in the civil division the four ministers were under the control of the head of the civil division.¹¹

Each of these statements is entirely speculative. Too little has been determined about the structure of Angkor administration, either civil or military, to yet make useful comparisons, although it seems to me that Angkor was quite different from Ayutthaya. For the second, Quaritch Wales referred to the *galérie historique* of Angkor Vat, but this relief scene depicts 19 high officials, most of whom seem to be military, and there is no way to determine whether four of them were chief ministers. Moreover, in another context Quaritch Wales presented still a different evolutionary picture:

- The army in ancient India was divided into four great departments (*caturaṅga*), infantry, cavalry, elephants, and chariots.
- Originally in Siam there were four great departments in the military division under the *kalā hom*, modelled on the Indian tradition.
- King Trailok organized the four departments of the civil division on the model of the military division.
- Later the "original arrangement became much confused". The main generals, who seem to be called *bañā rāma caturaṅga*, are all of the infantry. There are six rather than four. The elephants and cavalry, composing one of the four "original" military divisions, are in the civil division, and the "original" artisan group, corresponding to the Indian chariots, has been split up into "many small groups, each under a commander of comparatively low rank".¹²

Here the only statements based on any kind of evidence are the first, on the classical Indian system, and the last, on the Thai system as observed between the 17th and 19th centuries. There are no grounds for the postulated steps in between. As for elements of Indianization, such as the term and concept of *caturaṅga*, the process of selective borrowing and adaptation which occurred all over Southeast Asia could easily have altered the original Indian meaning long before the Ayutthaya period in which the term seems to have meant simply "military".¹³

No conclusions may be drawn about direct Angkorean influence on Thai administration and in general probably very little was borrowed, at least in the Ayutthaya period. The reforms of King Trailok, if any, and the evolution of Ayutthayan administration must be deduced from other sources -- laws, chronicles, inscriptions -- not assumed as the result of any kind of contact with Angkor.

¹¹ Deduced from Quaritch-Wales's remarks, *Administration*, p. 79, 79, n.2.

¹² Deduced from remarks in *Administration*, pp. 141-2.

¹³ See Vickery, "Review of Jones", on the question of Angkor influence, and on *caturaṅga* below.

Quaritch Wales arbitrarily assigned places in a developmental sequence to sections of the laws which are in mutual contradiction. Of course, the fault does not lie with Quaritch Wales alone, for often he was simply repeating what Prince Damrong had written; and although Prince Damrong's speculations were always interesting, and often valuable as hypotheses, we must recognize that they were only hypotheses, not solutions based on the results of careful historical investigation.

Quaritch Wales considered that the **Palatine Law** dated from 1458 (his pp. 19, 22, 171, 173), and the **Hierarchy Laws** from 1454, and "the correctness of the dates...[is] corroborated by definite statements in the Annals of Ayudhya" (173). Interestingly, he thought all the preamble dates purporting to be earlier than Trailok, and particularly those claiming to date from the 14th century, were false, and should be, in spite of the dates they contain, attributed variously to the 15th, 16th or 17th centuries.¹⁴ The last assumption was probably correct, but for the wrong reason. He believed that the preambles of certain laws with 14th-century dates "reveal the existence, at the time of promulgation, of a higher degree of administrative specialization, and of a well-developed official class, with indications that the separation of the people into civil and military divisions was already established, all of which we have abundant evidence to believe represents a stage in the organisation of society that was not reached before the reign of King Paramatrilokanatha".¹⁵

This would be a good reason if we were absolutely sure of the date of "the separation of the people into civil and military divisions". In my opinion a sounder reason for rejecting the 14th-century dates of these preambles, as I do, is the use of the Buddhist era, which all epigraphic evidence indicates was not used for dating official documents in Siam at that time.¹⁶ The matter of separation of the people into civil and military divisions is extremely complex, and cannot be thoroughly treated here, but it may be said with confidence that the conventional view that this was accomplished by King Trailok is an oversimplification.

Griswold and Prasert challenged Quaritch Wales on this point with a law found in a Sukhothai inscription, which they dated to the late 14th century, and considered as an Ayutthayan intervention in Sukhothai because some of its provisions resemble the Ayutthayan **Law on Kidnapping/Abduction (*Lák bhā*)** with a Buddhist Era date equivalent to 1355-56. In an earlier study I gave reasons why the Sukhothai text should be considered a Sukhothai law, which perhaps influenced the Ayutthayan law code after 1569, and I shall take this up again below in the section on the origins of the Ayutthayan state structure.¹⁷

Quaritch Wales would seem to have been under the misapprehension that the **Palatine** and **Hierarchy** laws, the most important for the study of administrative structure, actually contained dates equivalent to 1458 (tiger year) and 1454 (dog year) respectively. In reality the former shows the date 720, which would normally be construed as *cula* era equivalent to 1358, and the two latter laws have 1298, apparently *śaka*, and equal to 1376. It is certain, however, that the dates found in these laws are in some way inaccurate since there is discord between the numerical year and the

¹⁴ Q.W., *Administration*, pp. 172-3. He cited in this connection **Law of the Reception of Plaints**, 1899 (1355), **Law of Husband and Wife**, 1904 (1360), **Law of Witnesses**, 1894 (1350), and **Law of Offences Against the Government**, 1895 (1351).

¹⁵ Q.W., *Administration*, p. 173.

¹⁶ See Vickery, "Prolegomena", and below, especially the quotation from Roger Billard, in note 72.

¹⁷ A.B. Griswold and Prasert ṅa Nagara, *EHS* 4, "A Law Promulgated by the King of Ayudhyā in 1397 A.D.", *JSS* 57/1 (January 1969), pp. 109-148; *Lák bhā* in **Laws III**, pp. 1-20; Vickery, "A Guide Through Some Recent Sukhothai Historiography", *JSS* 66/2 (July 1978), pp. 182-2436, see 230-233; and below, pp. 000

animal cycle, and more than one attempt has been made to emend them. Prince Damrong, in his "Story of the Laws", gives the same dates as Quaritch Wales, but it is not certain whether he was responsible for the emendation or was copying from another source.¹⁸

In both cases the emendation seemed necessary because the titles contain 'Trailok', and in the case of the **Hierarchy Laws** seem to reflect an administrative organisation believed due to the initiative of King Trailok, but the emendations were made on different principles. The choice of a date equivalent to 1454 involves a completely arbitrary change of numbers in order to fit the proper animal year, dog, somewhere near the beginning of Trailok's reign; while 1458 was achieved by assuming a copyist's error of 720 for an original 820, not too arbitrary an emendation, but one which still leaves a two-year discrepancy with the animal year.

Later efforts to emend these dates involved the resurrection of the *cuḷāmaṇī* era which permits both placing the three preambles in question in the reign of King Trailok and reconciling the numerical year with the animal cycle. By this computation the **Palatine Law** is dated to 1468 and the Hierarchy Laws to 1466.¹⁹

Later, Akin Rabibhadana accepted Quaritch Wales for the **Hierarchy Law** dates, but ignored his strictures concerning the 14th-century dates of certain preambles, and for the **Palatine Law** followed Wyatt. He also accepted the *cuḷāmaṇī* era, but did not make consistent adjustments for it in his discussion. Thus after accepting that the implied *cuḷāmaṇī* date for **Dharmanūn**, AD 1743, might be the best, he accepted that there was support for the date AD 1633 in the occasional use of the title *Ekādaśaraṭh* by King Prasat Thong. If, however, the *cuḷāmaṇī* dates are accurate, then none of the extant laws may be attributed to Prasat Thong.²⁰

Still another idea was put forward by A.B. Griswold and Prasert ṇa Nagara, who suggested that the discovery of a law text in a Sukhothai inscription shows the existence of a law code as early as the 14th century and is evidence against Quaritch Wales' contention that all such preambles are false. A critic of Griswold and Prasert pointed out, however, that the date of the inscription has been obliterated and that the language is later than the period they wished to assign to it, and other Thai historians date that Sukhothai inscription in 1433. My own view is that, whatever its date, it predates the Ayutthayan law which it resembles, and which was adopted in Ayutthaya under Sukhothai influence, no earlier than the reign of Trailok, and perhaps only after 1569.²¹

As for the Annals corroborating any of these dates, the long versions, the dates of which during the 15th-16th centuries are known to be wildly inaccurate, imply that at the beginning of his reign, in 1434, King Trailok changed the titles and functions of certain officials. The true date, if we accept the *Hlvāṅ prasrōṭh* chronology, for which there is a wide consensus among historians,

¹⁸. See Vickery, "Prolegomena".

¹⁹. See further in Vickery, "Prolegomena", pp. 41-46; and on *cuḷāmaṇī* pp. 00-00 below.

²⁰ Akin, pp. 4, 20-21, 192, and Vickery, "Prolegomena", p. 43.

²¹. A.B. Griswold and Prasert ṇa Nagara, "Epigraphical and Historical Studies", *EHS* 4, *JSS* 57:1 (January 1969) pp. 109-148; and M.C. Chan Chirayu Rajani, Review of A.B. Griswold and Prasert ṇa Nagara, "Epigraphical and Historical Studies", 1-8, *JSS* 61:1 (January 1973), pp. 287-8; Dhida Saraya, *Class Structure of Thai Society in the Sukhothai and Early Ayutthaya Period, B.E. 1800-2112 (Groṅ srāṅ khòṅ jan ján nai sáṅgam daiy samāy sukhodáy lee: tan ayudhayā)*, Bangkok, 2518-2519/1975-76, Chulalongkorn University, pp. 121-127; Vickery, "A Guide Through Some Recent Sukhothai Historiography", *JSS* 66:2 (July 1978), pp. 230-232.

should be 1448, and since Prince Damrong has shown how the law texts may have influenced the composition of the long chronicle versions, any information they contain relating to the laws may have been taken from the law texts and is thus not independent evidence confirming the laws themselves.²²

We should also note that with regard to the **Hierarchy Laws** Quaritch Wales was not even consistent in his assumptions. Initially assuming them to date from 1454 rather than 1376, he then followed Prince Damrong in assigning the reforms they reflect to King Naresuan (1590-1605), and finally added that their structure better represents the 18th century.²³ There is no doubt that the laws, and in particular the **Hierarchy Laws**, contain several layers of material from different periods, but before using the laws in historical reconstruction an attempt must be made to distinguish these layers and attribute them to their true dates. It is hardly legitimate, however, to assign a law to one date to fit one argument and to a different date to answer another, and if the details of the law concerning provincial hierarchies really fit the reign of Naresuan and the date of the preamble is really in error, there is no need to attribute it to King Trailok at all.

Quaritch Wales' use of the second element which has been important in dating the laws, the royal titles contained therein, also merits some comment. Quaritch Wales followed Lingat in asserting that the "names" of kings in the laws were "merely long titles applied to many monarchs and of no use as an aid to identification". This opinion was even more strongly stated by Griswold and Prasert: "such titles are purely conventional...The same elements, or some of them, are repeated again and again ... in the same or different order; and any king might use a different combination at different times...".²⁴

Akin, on the contrary, finds "that the kings' names are not unreliable as a guide" except for "a few kings who used the same names in their laws (e.g. Prasatthong often used the name Ekathotsarot)".²⁵ The underlying assumption in both cases is that the Ayutthayan kings are accurately named in the chronicles and that where the laws differ from the chronicles it is generally the former which are inaccurate. To the contrary, it is certain that royal titles followed definite patterns, and random combinations of elements in secondary documents prove the inaccuracy of those documents.²⁶ Further discussion of Quaritch Wales analysis is included under specific topics below.

Description of the laws

It is now necessary to re-examine carefully the laws themselves in order to assess the accuracy of the formulations of Prince Damrong, Quaritch Wales, and later historians, to see if they may not be inaccurate owing to a priori assumptions and to the practice of following Prince Damrong in speculating about the evolution of the laws in cases where no direct evidence was available, and to present to students what the laws actually say rather than what Quaritch Wales believed they meant.

²² Damrong, RA, pp. 398-400.

²³ Quaritch Wales, *Administration*, p. 109.

²⁴ Q.W., *Administration*, p. 172; A.B. Griswold and Prasert ṅa Nagara, "Devices and Expedients Vāt Pā Mok, 1727 A.D.", *In Memoriam Phya Anuman Rajadhon*, Bangkok, The Siam Society (1970), p. 151.

²⁵ Akin, p. 188.

²⁶ Vickery, "Cambodia After Angkor", pp. 265-296; Vickery, "Prolegomena". pp. 46-51, p. 47 on *cákrabartti*.

First some preliminary matters.

Foreign influences

The vocabulary of the **Three Seals**, like Ayutthayan Thai in general, is characterized by a very large quantity of Khmer and Sanskrit, especially in the formation of titles, and this together with the use of a 'Dharmaśāstr' as a framework for categorizing the laws, has led some writers to concentrate on foreign origins, in India and Cambodia. As shown above, Quaritch Wales based much of his description and analysis on the assumption that the Thai had first adopted and then modified Indian structures. With respect to Khmer, conventional wisdom, established for modern western scholarship by Prince Damrong and Quaritch Wales, holds that the Khmer input was a result of the conquest of Angkor in 1431 by King Paramarāja, father of Trailokanāth, and the capture of Khmer scholars who, in the reign of Trailokanāth aided in the drafting of laws for the reforms allegedly carried out by that king.²⁷

Even radical Thai scholars, together with their praise for critical work in other areas of Thai history, have not questioned the traditionalist and royalist interpretation that the "[*śaktinā*] system was brought back from Cambodia by victorious Thai armies...in the late Sukhothai period and became firmly established under King Baromtrailokanard [hereafter Trailokanāth/Trailok] (1448-1488)". This is perhaps because the most famous Thai radical scholar, Jit Pumisak, who found something to challenge almost everywhere, accepted this royalist tradition, and Prince Damrong's date of 1453/4 for the law in question, a matter of historical interest in itself, but which cannot be pursued here.²⁸

Moreover, as Quaritch Wales wrote in one context, study of latter-day Cambodian administration "throws little light on the institutions of the ancient Khmer empire. Since the direct attack on this subject by means of the early Khmer inscriptions has unfortunately proved almost

²⁷ The most accurate record of that period of Ayutthayan involvement in Cambodia is in two chronicle fragments now catalogued at the Thai National Library as "Chronicle of Ayutthaya", nos. 222 and 223. No. 223 was published in Vickery, "The 2/k.125 Fragment: A Lost Chronicle of Ayutthaya", *JSS* 65/1 (January 1977), pp. 1- 80. No. 222 was later published in a thesis for Silpakorn University, *Kār jāṃra: braḥ rāj baṅśāvatār nai rājasamāy braḥ pād samtec braḥ buddha yòtfā culālok*, by Miss Ubolsri Akkaphand, whose supervisor Dr. Thamsook Nummond kindly provided me with a copy of the chronicle text. These two chronicle fragments prove conclusively that the stories of the Thai conquest of Angkor in mid-fifteenth century found in either the official Ayutthayan or the Cambodian chronicles, and accepted in modern works on Thai and Cambodian history, are almost totally wrong. There has been an astounding reluctance by historians to accept the new evidence. David Wyatt, in *Thailand: A Short History*, writing after the publication of "The 2/k.125 Fragment", simply retold the old tale, citing "The 2/k.125 Fragment" in "Suggestions for Further Reading", p. 324 in a manner giving the impression that it supported the traditional history. David Chandler, *A History of Cambodia*, pp. 78-9, likewise concealed the importance of this text, refusing to acknowledge that the old history might have to be rewritten.

²⁸ Quotation from Yuangrat (Pattanapongse) Wedel, "Modern Thai Radical thought: The Siamization of Marxism and its Theoretical Problems", Ph.D. thesis, University of Michigan (1981), p. 28. Jit Pumisak [also Poumisak, Phumisak (‘Ô’Ă ÀÙÁÔËÑµÔi)], *Saṅgam daiy lum mènām cau bra:yā kòn samáy śrī ayudhyā* ('Thai Society in the Menam Chao Phraya Valley Before the Ayutthaya Period'), cited hereafter as "Thai Society"), pp. 34, 185.

barren of result, it is probable that the indirect approach via the earlier Siamese institutions--and particularly via the Siamese administration as reorganized in the fifteenth century, owing much as it did to direct contemporary Khmer inspiration--may prove the most fruitful line of study;...".²⁹ This gets dangerously close to a bad case of circular reasoning, that is, Khmer administration is believed to be the source of 15th-century Thai administration, but we really know nothing about the former. Therefore we must infer it from the Thai example and in this way reconstruct the assumed model.

I do not think the evidence warrants this assumption. First, hardly any of the Khmer titles in the **Three Seals** is found in the Angkor inscriptions. A possible exception which has been recognized is *kalāhom* (possibly Khmer *kralāhoma*), and an exception which has not usually been recognized is *kumṛtèṅ/prā:tèṅ* (Khmer *kamrateṅ/mrateṅ*).³⁰ Even one of the most common Khmer words used in the Ayutthayan, and modern Bangkok, bureaucratic hierarchy, *kram* 'group', 'department' (Khmer *krum*), does not occur in the Khmer inscriptions of Cambodia, which suggests that not only did Angkor not contribute to the vocabulary of the **Three Seals**, but that the Angkorean government structure was quite different. The few Khmer terms which are common both to Angkor and Ayutthaya, such as *braḥ* ('sacred', a rank) and *bala* ('forces, personnel'), point to assimilation much earlier than the 15th century. Both are also common to 14th-century Sukhothai, which suggests 11th- 13th centuries for the influence from Angkor, if such occurred. And in fact the rich corpus of official titles recorded in the Angkor inscriptions is quite different from **Three Seals**.³¹

A better time to search for Angkorean influence on Thai official vocabulary would be the period from Sūryavarman I (1002- 1050) to Jayavarman VII (1181-1220?) when large areas of central and northeastern Thailand were under Angkor administration, and when the assimilation of Khmer elements into Sukhothai Thai may be presumed to have occurred. The differences in the Khmer vocabularies, however, put this also in doubt with respect to Ayutthaya.

²⁹ "Administration", p. 13.

³⁰ I would like to dissociate *kalāhom*, which I take as the canonical form in Ayutthaya, from Old Khmer *kralāhom(a)*, and analyze it as Mon *kala* 'chief' + *hom* (?). The form *kalāhom* is found in the oldest parts of *Three Seals*, and *kralāhom*, most common in 18th-century decrees and in laws of Rama I seems to have been introduced (a hypercorrection?) in late Ayutthaya or Bangkok times. This would mean that the explanation proposed by Quaritch Wales, *Ancient South-East Asian Warfare*, London, Bernard Quaritch, Ltd., 1952, p. 151, was not correct, and that *kalāhom* was not connected with "Brahmanical rites before war". The derivation of *kumṛtèṅ* from *kamrateṅ* seems indisputable, but *prā:tèṅ* from *mrateṅ* is admittedly hypothetical, although I cannot think of any other possibility. It would represent either an independent Khmer development in Ayutthaya, or pre-Ayutthaya, or a misconception by scribes after the term was no longer in use.

³¹. [*On *kram*, and misconceptions about it, see my review in *Journal of the Siam Society*, Volume 62, part 1, January 1974, of Robert B Jones, "Thai Titles and Ranks Including a Translation of Traditions of Royal Lineage in Siam by King Chulalongkorn" (Data Paper: Number 81, Southeast, Asia Program, Department of Asian Studies, Cornell University, Ithaca, New York, June 1971). *]Another certain Angkorean expression is *khlon dvār* (in Khmer *khloñ dvār*) 'door officer', listed among the inner palace functionaries, **Laws I**, p. 221, and there are a few more occurrences of *khlon*. Such rare terms are just sufficient to show the strong Khmer background in early Ayutthaya.

In my earlier remarks on this subject I proposed that early Ayutthaya was Khmer, not Thai, and if so, they would have developed their own Khmer usage, which accords well with the evidence available. The extant written evidence shows that Ayutthaya was still mainly Khmer in the time of Trailokanāth, but that Thai influence was intruding. By mid-16th century the official language was probably Thai, but the script still Khmer, and a fully Thai polity was not in place until Sukhothai royalty took the Ayutthayan throne after throwing their support behind the Burmese invasion of 1569.³² Traditional scholarship established a false continuity of Thai culture between earliest Ayutthaya and Thai states in Sukhothai and Lannā. It seems now preferable to hypothesize a Khmer Sien-Ayutthaya in the 13th-14th centuries, with gradual Thai influence from the Northeast and what is now Laos, since linguists have established that the Thai language which emerged in Ayutthaya was a branch of Phuan, Phu Tai, etc., not the Thai of Sukhothai, then Sukhothai influence as Ayutthaya expanded in that direction from the end of the 14th century, and finally domination of Ayutthaya by Sukhothai, and full Thai-ization, after 1569.³³ This subject need not be pursued further here, but it must be realized that the Angkor inscriptions are of no help in understanding the **Three Seals**. Whenever, and from wherever, Ayutthaya got its Khmer, that language was used in original ways when assimilated to Thai, and **Three Seals** is not evidence for either linguistic or administrative influence from Cambodia.

A new problem which is raised by a view of early Ayutthaya as an indigenous Khmer polity, is that its administrative structure at that time may have been quite different from the Thai administrative structure and practices prevalent in Sukhothai and other Thai states in northern Thailand, Laos and northern Vietnam. When the two societies were unified during the 15th-16th centuries it is likely that the result was a mixture of elements from both, with the northern, Thai, culture and polity, victorious after 1569, imposing more of its practices on formerly Khmer Ayutthaya. Thus, as sources for the structure of government and administration found in the laws, we must consider a possibly pre-Thai Ayutthayan administration, which may have been influenced by Cambodia, but also the administrative structures of the Thai polities to the North and Northeast.³⁴ Sukhothai, however, may not have been the most important influence, and the first Thai who became influential in the Ayutthayan area may have come from a northeastern polity with a government somewhat different from Sukhothai.

It has also been established, contrary to preconceptions at the time Quaritch Wales wrote, that Nanchao was not Thai, and that the route of Thai migration, or transmission of Thai languages and culture, was out of what is now northern Vietnam and its borderlands with China. It is thus a priori relevant to search in that area for antecedents to Ayutthayan administrative structures.³⁵

³² The proposal of a Khmer early Ayutthaya, which many may have thought irresponsible, has now been made respectable by the doyen of conservative western scholars of Thailand, David Wyatt, as quoted in Suda Kanjanawanawan, "Historical expedience or reality", *The Nation*, "Focus" (8 February 1990), pp. 25, 27. In addition to work cited, see Vickery, "The Khmer Inscriptions of Tenasserim: a Reinterpretation", *JSS* Vol. 61/1 (January 1973), pp. 51-70.

³³ James R. Chamberlain, "A New Look at the History and Classification of the Tai Languages", in *Studies in Tai Linguistics in Honor of William J. Gedney*, edited by Jimmy G. Harris and James R. Chamberlain, Bangkok, 1975, pp. 49-66.

³⁴ I am not denying that some ultimate sources may have been farther afield, in India or China, but the nearest sources must be examined first.

³⁵ The basic facts on Nanchao and the ancient Thai language areas are in Wyatt, *Thailand: A Short History*, pp. 10-15. See James R. Chamberlain, "A New Look at the History and

Too much weight should not be given to the evocation of *Dharmaśāstra* /*dharmasatr/dhammasattham* in the **Three Seals** as evidence of foreign influence on Ayutthayan law. The concept of *dharmaśāstra* had been floating around Southeast Asia since Funan times, but it is usually impossible to establish the content of the *dharmaśāstra* to which reference is made. Even if the introduction to **Three Seals** says the Ayutthayan *dharmasatr* was adapted from Mon, that does not guarantee that such was the case. More important, the laws of the **Three Seals**, especially those concerning administration, are not a *dharmaśāstra*. They are texts concerning practical matters arising in the particular cultures of the Menam basin. Within **Three Seals** the *dharmasatr*, much abbreviated compared to Indian or Mon versions, had become simply an apparatus for classification which bears no evidence for external influences on the matters classified.³⁶

The nature of the early Ayutthayan polity

Most writings on early Ayutthaya have paid insufficient attention to certain details of Ayutthayan origins which indicate that Ayutthaya followed *Hsien/Sien* as a port state which took off in the late 13th century as part of the new wave of international maritime trade which started under the Sung and continued into Ming times, and that the region of Ayutthaya could only have developed in that way because most of its territory, to the south, was unsuitable for agriculture until the construction of modern drainage and irrigation facilities. Understanding was also hindered by the now obsolete belief that *Sien* was Sukhothai. Not only is there at least one Yuan dynasty record in 1299, which recorded envoys from both *Hsien* and *Su-ku-tai* at the same time, but there is an even more explicit Yuan period record which states that *hsien* [*xian* in the article in question] controlled, or was the link to, "upper water" or "go upriver" *Su-gu-di*, meaning that not only were Sukhothai and *Hsien* different places, but that Sukhothai was upriver from *Hsien*, implicitly placing the latter downstream.³⁷

Classification of the Tai languages", in *Studies in Tai Linguistics in Honor of William J. Gedney*, ed. Jimmy G. Harris and James R. Chamberlain, Bangkok (1975), pp. 49-66; F. W. Mote, "Problems of Thai Prehistory", *Sangkomsat Parithat* 2/2 (October 1964), pp. 100-109.

³⁶ See Yoneo Ishii, "The Thai Thammasat", in *Laws of South-East Asia*, Volume I, *The Pre-Modern Texts*, edited by M.B. Hooker, Singapore, Butterworth & Co (Asia) pte ltd, 1986, pp. 148, 157-9, 194-8.

³⁷ Tatsuro Yamamoto, "Thailand as it is referred to in the Da-de Nan-hai zhi at the beginning of the fourteenth century", *Journal of East-West Maritime Relations*, Vol. 1 (1989), pp. 47-58; Geoff Wade, "The *Ming Shi-Lu* as a Source for Thai History 14th to 17th Century", paper presented at the 5th International Conference on Thai Studies-SOAS, London, 1993, p. 25. I wish to thank Dr. Wade for reminding me of this information. Charnvit Kasetsiri agrees that in the 14th century the Chinese intended *Hsien*, their rendering of 'siam'/*syām* (as it was written in Old Khmer and Cham), as a name for the lower Menam basin, including Ayutthaya, not Sukhothai. See his "Ayudhya: Capital-Port of Siam and its Chinese Connection in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries", *JSS*, Vol 80, Part I (1992), pp. 75-81. On the contrary, David K. Wyatt, ignoring new work, asserted boldly in his *Thailand: A Short History*, p. 58, that *Sien* (*Hsien*) was Sukhothai. This is his only reference to that term, and in citing Chou Ta-kuan's contemporary report on Angkor, where *Hsien* is prominent, Wyatt used 'Siam'. Nevertheless, when describing Rāmādhīpāī's settlement of Ayutthaya, p. 66, he called it "a port City of some antiquity", which fits precisely the *Hsien* described by Chinese writers since the 1280s, and which name the Chinese would continue to use

Only when Ayutthaya lost out to Malacca for appointment as China's representative in the area did Ayutthayan rulers set out on the conquest of the agrarian hinterland. The earliest stage of Ayutthayan development, as a maritime polity intent on dominating the entire peninsula, is hardly at all reflected in the **Three Seals**, which constitute a body of law concerned with life in an agrarian polity. This early stage is not apparent in the Ayutthayan annals either, and modern historians have generally ignored it. The traditional legend of the chronicles, that Prince Rāmādhīpātī arrived on the empty site of Ayutthaya with his followers and decided on it because of its agricultural fertility is not at all credible. Not only was Ayutthaya at the very southern edge of the cultivable flood plain, beyond which was an uninhabitable delta before modern canals were built, but the Khmer-style temples in nearly all the cities of the delta and its immediate hinterland, Suphanburi, Ratburi, Phetburi, Lophburi, show thick previous settlement.³⁸

This has led to a skewed vision of early Ayutthayan economy and of the structure of the relevant laws. Quaritch Wales believed that in early Ayutthaya the duties of the Treasury Ministry (*glāñ*) must have been light, because "revenue was small and most of the government work was done by forced labour". Only after trade began with China, which he seems to place in early 17th century, did the duties of the *glāñ* increase and the minister came to be called *cau dā*, "lord of the landing stage".³⁹

Sarasin Viraphol has taken off from that to say that "[i]n the reign of King Trailokanāth (r. 1488-1528) [*sic*, true dates 1448-88], which may be said to have been the first period in which the Siamese court entered consciously into foreign trade, an Office of Ports (Krom ta [*kram dā*]) was organized". It had three sections, Right (*kram dā khvā*), "in charge of ports on the western side of the Malay peninsula and trade conducted primarily by Mohammedan (Persian) traders"; Left (*kram dā zāy*), "in charge of ports on the Gulf of Siam and trade in the Eastern Seas conducted primarily by Chinese merchants"; and Central, (*kram dā klāñ*), "in charge of other foreign trade in general". Like Quaritch Wales, Sarasin considers that originally the *glāñ*, to which the *kram dā* was subordinate, had little to do, "since the income of the state was primarily in the form of corvée labour".⁴⁰

for Ayutthaya until modern times. [*for the latest and most conclusive work on his see Chris Baker, "Ayutthaya Rising: From the Land or From the Sea", *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 34/1 (2003), pp. 41-62; Yoneo Ishii, "A reinterpretation of Thai history with special reference to the pre-modern period", Paper presented at 8th international conference on Thai studies at Nakhon Phanom, Thailand, January 2002.*]

³⁸ O.W. Wolters, in *The Fall of Srivijaya*, indicated some of the important clues, but did not make use of them with respect to Ayutthaya. On the natural conditions of the Ayutthaya region see Yoshikazu Takaya, "An Ecological Interpretation of Thai History", *JSEAS* vol. 6, number 2 (1975), pp. 190-195; and for the historical interpretation, see Charnvit Kasetsiri, *The Rise of Ayudhya*; and Vickery, "A New *Tāmnān* About Ayudhya", *JSS* Vol. 67/2 (July 1979), pp. 123- 86.

³⁹ Q.W., *Administration*, p. 90.

⁴⁰ Sarasin Viraphol, *Tribute and Profit: Sino-Siamese Trade, 1652-1853*, Harvard University Press, 1977, pp. 19-20, where the dates given, 1488-1528, are not the reign of Trailokanāth, but of his successor. Perhaps the most fanciful reinterpretation of the structure of the Ayutthayan central government in that of Fred W. Riggs, *Thailand the Modernization of a Bureaucratic Polity*, pp. 74, ff. The main error, which skews his entire picture, was to misinterpret *glāñ* (ᨧᩣ᩠ᨦᩣ᩠ᨦ) 'storehouse, treasury', a Khmer loanword in Thai, as Thai *klāñ* (ᨧᩣ᩠ᨦᩣ᩠ᨦ), 'center', and on the basis of this to posit a

Sarasin supplies no evidence for an increase in trading in the 15th century, and it would seem to be no more than belief in the dates traditionally attributed to certain laws, such as the **Civil Hierarchy Law**, traditionally dated to the reign of Trailokanāth, and in which the *glān* ministry, but not the '*kram dā*' as such, is included. It is more likely, however, that the time of Trailokanāth saw a decline in trading compared to the late 13th and the 14th centuries, as Ayutthaya moved inland after its attempt to control the peninsula failed.

Neither does the structure of the *kram dā* as described by Sarasin conform to what is found in the **Hierarchy Law**, and the basis for his description is uncertain, perhaps only an organization pertaining to the Bangkok period.⁴¹ In the **Civil Hierarchy Law**, which outlines the central administration, the department corresponding to the *kram dā*, which is not mentioned by that name, may be recognized from the title of its chief, *hvañ jotük śresthi*. There is no division which may be identified as *kram dā* of the left, right, or center, nor is there a division of duties corresponding to west or east side of the peninsula. There were subordinate positions under the *glān* designated as in charge of relations with groups of foreigners. One was assigned to the "*khèk* from Java, the Malays, and the English". Another dealt with the "*khèk* from England, the Ñuon [Vietnamese], and the French". Other officials were interpreters for English, French, and Dutch.⁴²

What this indicates is a section of the laws which in its present form may not be attributed to any date earlier than 1600. As for 'Right' and 'Left' *kram dā*, they are found only in laws of Rama I. Indeed nearly all references to *kram dā* in the **Three Seals** are in his **Kāṃhnat hmai** (New Decisions).⁴³

An exception to the lack of attention to the earliest phase of Ayutthayan history in the laws is the claim in the **Palatine Law** to suzerainty over, *uyòñ ta:hna:* (*hujung tanah*, 'land's end' in Malay, probably the area of Johore and Singapore), Malacca, Malayu, and *varavārī* (?). This may be one of the oldest sections of the entire **Three Seals**, although I maintain my analysis that the royal titles and date of the **Palatine Law** are quite artificial concoctions.⁴⁴

concentric arrangement of four courts centered on the *glān*, as highest among the four. Not only is this linguistically wrong, but although there are indications of old structures with the *vāñ* and *möañ* as first of the four, there is no evidence that the *glān* held that position until perhaps the 17th century when all four were hierarchically subordinate below the *Mahātdaiy*.

⁴¹ Sarasin cites two studies by Thai historians which I have not been able to consult, but in any case what is crucial is the original sources.

⁴² **Laws I**, p. 234.

⁴³ I shall demonstrate below that the part of the *Dharrmanūn* in which *kram dā* is also mentioned is a law of Rāma I. There are two references to *kram dā* in pre-Rāma I laws of the 18th century, in *kāṃhnat kau* 43 of 1736 (**Laws IV**, p. 119), and *kāṃhnat kau* 48 of 1733 (**Laws IV**, p. 136).

⁴⁴ **Laws I**, p. 70. "Prolegomena", p. 45-46, 51. The **Palatine Law** also contains details on royalty and organization of the population which are different from all other laws, and which may reflect an ancient system. Simon de la Loubère, *The Kingdom of Siam*, Oxford University Press, 1969, p. 82, confirms that Ayutthaya even as late as the reign of Naray (1656-1688) still entertained theoretical claims to suzerainty over Johore. See below, in the section on territorial organization, a detail from an older palatine law which may have been rewritten by Rāma I.

One section of the **Miscellaneous Laws** is in fact maritime law, but it is a very small part of the whole, and contains no details permitting its placement as early as the 14th century. Ayutthaya remained active in maritime trade, and those regulations could just as well have belonged to later centuries.⁴⁵ This consideration means that all of the laws dated in the 14th century, in addition to problems with their preambles, seem anachronistic in their content when related to the main concerns of the Ayutthayan government of that time. If there was an Ayutthayan code in the 14th century, it must have emphasized maritime activities, such as the laws of Malacca.⁴⁶

Nevertheless, and contrary to the rationalizations of Quaritch Wales and Sarasin, the *glānī* 'treasury' ministry, corresponding in function and etymology to the *bendahara* of the Malay maritime powers, would have been the most important ministry of early maritime Sien-Ayutthaya; and the *kram dā*, as described above, is a perfect counterpart to the *shahbandar* of the archipelagic states. Thus in spite of the anachronisms found in the extant **Three Seals** texts, the skeleton of those sections could date from the very beginnings of Ayutthaya.

The extant law corpus, then, reflects a state preoccupied with inland territorial administration and agriculture as the main economic activity, and the conventional attribution of major legal and administrative changes to Trailokanāth may therefore be true, even if the reasons traditionally proposed may no longer be accepted. There may be a connection with the short-lived move by Trailokanāth of the administrative center to Phitsnulok, in the old Thai agrarian heartland, and the failure of that change was no doubt because of the continuing importance of foreign trade at Ayutthaya.

The law texts

The Lingat edition of the laws, considered to be the most accurate text, consists of 29 laws of which 24 have titles dealing with specific matters while the other five are themselves collections of royal orders and decisions on various subjects.⁴⁷ In format most of them begin with a preamble which includes the date, the earliest of which go back to the reign of Rāmādhīpatī, founder of Ayutthaya, the titles of the king, the official to whom the law was principally addressed and the subject to be treated.

These preambles are among the most interesting, and also the most baffling, parts of the laws, and contain a number of contradictions, both among themselves and with generally received views on much of Ayutthayan history. The reason for the difficulties of the preambles undoubtedly lies in the nature of the revisions and codifications ordered by King Rama I and by several of his predecessors.

Lingat and Burnay have emphasized that King Rama I desired first of all to recover and restore the legislation of Ayutthaya, not to create something new. Even when some provision of the old laws offended his sense of justice, he adopted the working principle that the passage in question was due to the action of corrupt people who had tampered with the text and that his revision was in

⁴⁵ **Laws III**, pp. 132-6.

⁴⁶ See R.O. Winstedt & Josselin de Jong, "The Maritime laws of Malacca", *Journal of the Malaysian Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, XXIX/3 (1956), pp. 28-49.

⁴⁷ Those five are *Pet srec* (**Miscellaneous**), **Laws III**, pp. 94- 183; *Kaṭ 36 khò* (**Law of 36 articles**), **Laws IV**, pp. 229-257; *Brah rājapaññati* (**Royal Orders**), **Laws IV**, pp. 258-292; *Brah rāj kāṃnat kau* (**Old Royal Decisions**), **Laws IV**, pp. 293-354, **V**, pp. 1- 193; and *Brah rāj kāṃnat hmai* (**New Royal Decisions**), all of Rāma I before 1805, **Laws V**, pp. 193-372.

fact a restoration of the true intention of the original law. Although full evidence for this aspect of the revision of 1805 exists for only one particular case, it would be a good working hypothesis to suppose that other changes may have been made in the law texts by Rama I, but that they have been disguised through inclusion under a preamble dated in the reign of one of his predecessors.⁴⁸

There are also good reasons to suppose that similar revisions had been carried out at various times by earlier rulers, each operating according to the same principle, and thus through a desire to give an air of ancient authority to recent innovations much of the content of the extant laws may have been deliberately misdated. Furthermore, Rama I did not intend the laws as historical source material. They were the laws of his own reign even though preserving Ayutthayan tradition. Thus the **Palatine Law**, although dated in the early Ayutthaya period, was also his own Palatine Law, and the texts describing territorial administration, although not complete in all details, and in some places mutually contradictory, must have been felt by Rama I to describe adequately the ideal contemporary situation.

Dates in the laws

Nearly all of the laws are dated in their preamble, and several also contain sections dated separately. Altogether the laws contain dates expressed in three, or four, eras. Until relatively recently three eras, *śaka*, *cula*, and Buddhist were assumed, and were easily distinguishable, since in no case, within the time period involved, AD 1350-1805, could there have been a possibility of confusion in the year dates.⁴⁹ It was recognised, however, that some of the dates were in error since there was conflict between the expressed year date and the 12-year animal cycle.

Contemporary inscriptions show that in the area now called Thailand those three eras followed one another in official usage in the order *śaka*, *cula*, Buddhist, with *śaka* being used exclusively in Ayutthaya up to some time in the 16th century, *cula* then replacing it as the official era up to the end of the 19th century, and the Buddhist era becoming popular and being used in some official documents from the 17th and particularly in the 18th century.⁵⁰ In Sukhothai the sequence is the same, but the *cula* era was introduced earlier, in the 14th century, and appears concurrently with *śaka* for some time thereafter. Traditional Thai belief, on the contrary, holds that the Buddhist era was earliest and was followed by the *śaka* and *cula* eras beginning respectively at dates corresponding to A.D. 79 and 639.⁵¹ The point of going into this is that genuine law texts should be dated in the era appropriate for their period.

⁴⁸ The only certain case is that given as the impetus for the revision in the prologue, *Pra:kāś braḥ rāj prārabh*, **Laws I**, 1-3. See also Lingat, "Note", pp. 19-20, and note 7 above.

⁴⁹ That is any of the law dates lower than '1200' within this period must be *cula*, *śaka* dates are those between '1272' and '1727', and any date over '1890' must be Buddhist.

⁵⁰ As far as I know no complete table of dates has been prepared. The curious reader will have to check through, as I did, the first four volumes of the collected Thai inscriptions, *Prajum śilā cāriik*, plus, for examples of 17th-18th-century use of Buddhist Era, *Prajum cathmāy hetu samāy ayudhyā* I. The change from *śaka* to *cula* era toward the end of the 16th century is standard doctrine. See "Prolegomena", note 4; and for hitherto neglected evidence of *śaka* in early Ayutthaya see my "The Khmer Inscriptions of Tenasserim: a Reinterpretation".

⁵¹ See comments in my "The Lion Prince and Related Remarks on Northern History", *JSS* 64/1 (January 1976), pp. 326-77, and "A Note on the Date of the Traibhūmikathā", *JSS* 62/2 (July 1974), pp. 275-84.

Assuming the existence of only these three eras, we note that the two earliest laws, of 1341 and 1345, are dated *śaka*, which is as it should be, but then there follow five laws dated in the Buddhist era with dates equivalent to 1350-1356, which is inappropriate. Later B.E. dates are found in seven laws between 1358 and 1364, two laws in 1382 and 1432, and finally three laws of 1611-1614. Only the last group fall in a period in which one might reasonably expect the Buddhist era to have been in use. What this seems to indicate is that all of the laws containing B.E. dates were codified or revised, if not composed out of whole cloth, in the 17th century, and the earlier B.E. dates show a deliberate effort to provide a false aura of antiquity for certain pieces of legislation.

The same considerations apply to two *cula* era dates, 720 (1358) for the **Palatine Law** and 796 (1434) for article 15 of the **Law on Treason**, both of which must have been inserted at the earliest toward the end of the 16th century when we also find *cula* dates corresponding to A.D. 1593 and 1599, but are even more probably results of the recodification of Rama I.⁵²

A different and more difficult problem is posed by the laws between 1622 and 1669, apparently dated in *śaka* era in a period when it is believed to have fallen completely out of use in Ayutthaya. In the opposite case of laws being dated in an era not yet in use, it is easy to postulate false claims to antiquity at a time when the true sequence of eras was no longer known, but it is more difficult to find a reason for apparent misuse of the *śaka* era after it had become obsolete. One possible explanation is that these law dates are genuine and reflect a reaction by kings, one of whom at least is shown by other evidence to have been a conscious archaizer, against the Burmese-inspired *cula* era. King Prasat Thong (*prāsāda doṅ*, 1630-55), had two temples constructed according to plans copied from Angkor Vat, was responsible for the first *praṅk* built in Ayutthaya since the 15th century, and attempted to resurrect the classical name for the city of Angkor, *śrī yaśodharapura*, for one of his palaces. The chronicles also report that he came into conflict with the Burmese court over a question of calendrical reform, although the exact details of what was involved are not entirely clear.⁵³

The rehabilitation of a fourth era, *cuḷāmaṇṭī*, complicates the picture of the law dates even more. This era was known to, or had been postulated by, traditional Thai scholars and is mentioned by Prince Damrong in his "Story of the Laws", where it is also called the "law era", equivalent to *śaka* plus 300 years, but was ignored by Quaritch Wales. A few years ago an article in a Thai journal again gave it prominence and David Wyatt saw in it the possibility of explaining one of the anomalous details of the **Palatine Law**.⁵⁴

The term *cuḷāmaṇṭī* era is most properly applied to a group of twelve law dates which, while apparently *śaka* era, show a discrepancy of two years between the expressed year date and the twelve-year animal cycle. Two of these dates, as *śaka*, would be in mid-14th century, five more in the 15th century, and the remaining five in the 17th. Obviously such consistency in the 'errors' is not due to random miscopying, and some systematic explanation for the whole group is required. The *cuḷāmaṇṭī* hypothesis accounts for these dates by claiming that this era, beginning 110 years

⁵² For the **Law on Treason** see **Laws IV**, p. 132.

⁵³ RA, p. 429, date 994 *cula*, 1632 AD; p. 435, date 1001-1002 *cula*, 1639-40 AD.

⁵⁴ Prince Damrong, in RA, p., 406, a hypothesis which could account for only a few of the earliest dates; Phipat Sukhathit, "*Śakarāj cuḷāmaṇṭī*", *Silpākon*, 6/5 (January 1963); David Wyatt, "The Thai 'Kaṭa Maṇḍiarapāla' and Malacca", *JSS LV*, 2 (July 1967), pp. 279-86. Note that '*cula*' ('small') and '*cuḷ*' - in *cuḷāmaṇṭī* (Sanskrit *cūḍāmaṇi*) are of quite different etymological origins.

later than *śaka*, had been in use, for laws only, in the early Ayutthaya period, and was then forgotten, resulting in its dates being misunderstood as *śaka*. The 110-year difference is just enough to make the year dates and animal cycle synchronisms of these laws coincide, and to keep all of them reasonably within the Ayutthaya period.⁵⁵

Jit Pumisak believed that all the *cuḷāmaṇī* dates were really *śaka*, and proposed that there had been two systems of calculating the *śaka* era in Thailand, a 'fast' system with the expected normal animal synchronisms, and a 'slow' *śaka* with a two year difference in animal synchronism. One fault in this explanation is that he used the Buddhist era as the base and repository of the true animal year, which is obviously not true. Animal synchronisms belonged in origin with the *śaka* and *cula* eras, and the corresponding Buddhist year depended on calculations which differed from place to place and at different times.⁵⁶

Phipat Sukhathit who resurrected this era, assumed that six more law dates in which there are varying discrepancies between the year and animal cycle, must also have been in the *cuḷāmaṇī* era, and arbitrarily emended one or another figure of the 4-digit dates to make them fit the required pattern.⁵⁷ But some of these odd dates are very likely the result of careless scribal work, or deliberate arbitrary alteration at later dates, and it would be equally legitimate to emend them to fit the *śaka* pattern. The only dates suitable for consideration in the *cuḷāmaṇī* hypothesis are those showing the regular two-year discrepancy with the animal cycle.

One more law which shows this typical discrepancy, but which was not considered by Phipat, apparently because its expressed date is of the *cula* rather than *śaka* pattern, is that of the **Palatine Law**, 720. It was this date however, and only this one, which Wyatt considered in his use of the *cuḷāmaṇī* era for historical interpretation. He accounted for its unique features by supposing that it had been converted to *cula* era from an original 'true' *cuḷāmaṇī* date, 1280, by a scribe who misunderstood 1280 as *śaka* and subtracted 560 rather than 450, the correct figure for converting *cuḷāmaṇī* to *cula*.⁵⁸

In "Prolegomena" I argued that all the *cuḷāmaṇī* dates must have been devised in a single codification, that they must all be studied together, not in isolation to 'solve' ad hoc problems, and that acceptance of *cuḷāmaṇī* would have to involve the demonstration that all the laws in question could be better understood by adding 110 years to their dates.⁵⁹ It is extremely unlikely that *cuḷāmaṇī* was used briefly in the 14th or 15th century, then abandoned for one hundred years, used again for a few law texts, neglected for 150 years more, and finally adopted for a third time in the 17th or 18th century. The time at which all of these dates were composed must have been at, or shortly after, the last date in the pattern, 1643, if we do not accept the *cuḷāmaṇī* hypothesis, or 1753 if we do. Admitting the latter date makes it difficult to accept Wyatt's idea of misconversion of the sole **Palatine Law** date, which would then most probably have occurred during the last, 1805,

⁵⁵ If the *cuḷāmaṇī* hypothesis is correct, the problem of late *śaka* dates noted above would disappear.

⁵⁶ Jit, *Thai Society*, p. 37, and p. 44, where he credits Dhanit Yupu with the discovery of the double *śaka* systems, 'fast' and 'slow'. See comment by Roger Billard in note 72 below.

⁵⁷ See note 54 above and "Prolegomena", pp. 41-42.

⁵⁸ Wyatt, "Kaṭa Maṇḍiarapāla".

⁵⁹ Vickery, "Prolegomena", pp. 45-46.

revision, for there would still have been scholars at court who could remember the use of a *culāmaṇī* era 50 years earlier and who would have been able to cope with it correctly and consistently. My solution was that the '*culāmaṇī* era' consists of *śaka* era years given a mystically auspicious character by the attribution of false Buddhist era synchronisms, which involves artificial and inaccurate animal-year designations, and that the author of that innovation was probably King Prasat Thong. The **Palatine Law** date, even more anomalous, was probably imitation *culāmaṇī*, devised in the 1805 recodification of Rama I.⁶⁰

Royal titles in the laws

Another problem of the law preambles is that the royal titles they contain combine terms in ways unknown to the Ayutthayan Annals, which have served as the major source for historical synthesis, but comparison with inscriptions shows that in some cases the laws preserve original titles more accurately than the Annals. For example, the law *răp fòh* (**Institution of Litigations**) dated BE 1899 (AD 1355), two sections of the **Slavery Law** (*dāśa*) dated 1359 and 1387 in the *culāmaṇī* pattern, and a section of the **Miscellaneous Law** (*pet srec*) of apparent *cula* era 1146 (AD 1784), especially the first-named, show a set of titles unknown to the Annals, but preserved in several 15th century inscriptions, the Ayutthayan origin of which has been demonstrated; and 12 other law preambles dated between the 15th and 17th (or 18th) centuries, depending on whether or not the *culāmaṇī* hypothesis is accepted, show a title generally believed to represent that attributed in the Annals to a king reigning between 1605 and 1610, but also apparently found in inscriptions of mid-18th century.⁶¹

Together with the preservation of some genuine titles lost from the chronicles, the laws also complicate the picture by combining certain titles in ways which are not found elsewhere. The best example is the combination of *rāmādhīpatī*, given in the annals for rulers in 1350-1369 and 1491-1529, with *trailokanātha*, ostensibly 1448-1488, found in the **Palatine Law** and **Law of Provincial Hierarchies** which contain apparent *cula* and *śaka* dates belonging to the reign of Rāmādhīpatī I, but have so far been attributed, either arbitrarily, or via the *culāmaṇī* era to King Trailok, in part to account for details in the text such as mention of Malacca, which are clearly anachronistic for the earlier period.⁶² We should note, however, that all scholars recognize the possibility of later interpolation in the texts, and thus the presence of these anachronistic details does not in itself show that the law was not originally drawn up in the reign of Rāmādhīpatī I. Another point to consider is that the absence of the title *trailokanātha* from all known inscriptions of the 15th century suggests that this title was not contemporary, but is a later attribution, and thus all such preambles may have been attempts at archaizing undertaken at a later time.

⁶⁰ Vickery, "Prolegomena", pp. 43, 46.

⁶¹ **Laws II**, pp. 27, 287, 317; **Laws II**, p. 173; Vickery, "The Khmer Inscriptions of Tenasserim"; Vickery, "Prolegomena". Jit Pumisak, "Thai Society", pp. 45-46, asserted that the 1146 date, which he misread as 1156, was *śaka*, thus AD 1234, and over 100 years before the accepted date for the founding of Ayutthaya. This is certainly a fantasy to be rejected. The law of 1146 belongs to Rama I of Bangkok. Note, however, that I am not rejecting Jit's argument that a pre-Ayutthayan polity existed in the lower Menam Chao Phraya basin.

⁶² Wyatt, "Kaṭa Maṇḍiarapāla".

Analysis of all the titles together shows that they fall into two large groups, containing either *rāmādhīpatī* or *ekādadhā(daśa)raṭh* as major title, and a third, smaller group including three laws with *cākṛabartī* titles, although not in the reign of the king generally known by this title, and two more laws with *rāmādhīpatī*, but preceded by *cākṛabartī*. Many of these titles, especially those of the *eka-* type, are in preambles set at dates where the title in question is otherwise unknown, another reason, in addition to confused dates, why the content of such laws may not without detailed study be attributed to the reign apparently designated.⁶³

More on old recensions and original dates

There is still further evidence, beyond that discussed in my "Prolegomena", which proves that certain sections of the laws represent recodifications, and in some cases are out of place, that is they were originally composed for a date, perhaps even a context, different from that with which they are associated in the **Three Seals**. In most such cases the original date was almost certainly later, and they have been replaced in an earlier context, no doubt, as I suggested in "Prolegomena", in order to give them a patent of antiquity. If this is certain, it may still be impossible to determine the correct original date and context. There are also contexts in which earlier existing laws have been incorporated, with changes, in later revisions.

Perhaps the clearest case of the latter is the introductory statement to the **Law of 36 Articles**. It says that (an) unidentified defunct king(s) (*samtec braḥ buddha cau hlvañ nai braḥ param koṭ* [i.e. 'Boromakot', but not the one conventionally known by that epithet]) promulgated 42 laws (40 *răp sǎñ* and 2 *khanòn*); but now the recent king *samtec braḥ buddha cau hlvañ nai braḥ param koṭ* has removed ('cleansed') 6 articles (5 *kaṭ* and 1 *răp sǎñ*), leaving 36 (22 *kaṭ* and 14 *răp sǎñ*).⁶⁴ These 36 articles date from 1650 to 1756, two years before the death of the king known conventionally as Boromakot (*param koṭ*).⁶⁵

Three sections, in two different laws at different dates, and identified not by date, but by near textual identity, were already noted by Lingat and Burnay, who suggested that the purpose had perhaps been to make an innovation appear as ancient practice. Burnay, in fact believed that the heterogeneous laws and decrees at the end of the **Three Seals**, the *Kāmhnat kau* ('old decrees') and *Kāmhnat hmai* ('new decrees'), the latter all of Rama I between 1782 and 1804) were destined to eventually be incorporated into an appropriate section of one of the main laws.⁶⁶ This is an acceptable hypothesis, but the three cases cited by Burnay seem rather to indicate something else, the use by the author of a recension, in the last case Rama I, of a slightly modified older text as part of his own new laws.

⁶³ Vickery, "Prolegomena", p. 47 and end table, where the *cākṛabartī* laws are respectively nos. 17, 20, 25, 9, and 26. It may not be assumed that all the titles in the laws are more genuine than those in the chronicles, although some of the latter are inaccurate.

⁶⁴ Yes, the breakdown into categories is inconsistent. See **Laws IV**, p. 229.

⁶⁵ The epithet *param koṭ* (<*koṣa*) 'great urn', is a posthumous title by definition (see Wyatt, *Thailand*, p. 127). Since this law emanates from the officials of the two main state councils, the *lūk khun sālā* and the *lūk khun ṇa sār* (*sālā*) *hlvañ* (on which see below), it may be that they issued it soon after the death of the Boromakot who died in 1758, and referred to all previous kings in the same posthumous style.

⁶⁶ Burnay, "Inventaire" I, p. 157, with reference to Lingat.

The three examples are: (1) article 22 of **Kāṃhnat kau** dated 1085/AD 1723 and article 14 of **Pān phnèk** dated 1093/1731, (2) article 14 of **Kāṃhnat kau** dated 898/1527 and the first section of **Pān phnèk** dated 1052/1690, (3) article 5 of **Kāṃhnat hmai** dated 1146/1784 and article 5 of **Pān phnèk** dated 1086/1724.⁶⁷

In all cases but **Kāṃhnat kau** 14 the dates appear to be absolutely coherent, and in the first two cases the date of the article in the heterogeneous decrees is earlier than the corresponding text in the main law, **Pān phnèk**. The first two cases, assuming accurate dates, agree with Burnay's hypothesis about the incorporation of heterogeneous laws into main laws when a new recension was prepared, but not for the purpose of providing false patents of antiquity. In the new recension the old decision was updated when it was incorporated. Burnay did not take note of slight differences in the texts, which mean that the new text was considered to be a new law, and as such acquired a new date. In the first case, which is a question of the assignment of children from mixed marriages of *phrai som* and *phrai hlvañ*, the **kāṃhnat kau** refers to coupling of a male *phrai hlvañ* with a female *phrai som* belonging to officials of the left and right *bala röan*, whereas **Pān phnèk** refers to female *som* of officials in *dahār* and *bala röan*. There is an implication of a change in organization of the population, or a change in the attribution of *phrai som* to officials; and indeed we know that at the latest stage division of population into *dahār* and *bala röan*, not into left and right *bala röan* was what mattered, although there had been a period in which left and right divisions of both *bala röan* and *bala dahār* had existed.⁶⁸ The other cases also contain slight differences in wording.

There is nevertheless certain evidence among the laws of back-dating. In "Prolegomena" I did not consider the indication of year of the decade in my analysis of the dates of the preambles, and only seven of those dates contain this element. They are, in chronological order:⁶⁹

law title

Ājñā hlvañ	1895 BE [1351]	hare	fifth	(<i>peñśák</i>)
Ājñā rāṣ	1902 BE [1358]	dog	third	(<i>trñiśák</i>)
Ājñā hlvañ	1976 BE [1432]	pig	sixth	(<i>chòśák</i>)
Kra:pat sük	796 c [1434]	tiger	sixth	(<i>chòśák</i>)
Kāṃhnat kau	961 c [1599]	pig	first	(<i>ekaśák</i>)
Pān phnèk	1052 c [1690]	horse	second	(<i>dośák</i>)
Phua mia	1166 c [1804]	rat	sixth	(<i>chòśák</i>)

The first anomaly in this respect is that so few of the preamble dates contain indication of the decade, since that was an essential element in traditional Ayutthayan and post-Angkor Cambodian

⁶⁷ These six contexts are found respectively in Laws V.36, II.12, V.1-3, II.1-3, V. 206, II. 24. Burnay called *pān phnèk* '*mūlakhatī vivād*'. The subject is "division of *brai/phrai* (Also Akin's description, p. 187).

⁶⁸. See the discussion of provincial organization below.

⁶⁹ BE is Buddhist Era, *c* is *cula* era, and the dates in brackets are AD equivalents. The ordinal numbers are the number in the decade. These laws are found respectively in **Laws IV**, pp. 1-106; 106-115; 115-164; 293-354; **Laws II**, pp. 1-26; 205-284.

dates.⁷⁰ It was used in *cula* and *śaka* era dates, and always corresponded to the units figure. It thus provides a quick preliminary check on the accuracy of a recorded year, and an additional check is that six of the animal synchronisms were always odd and six even. Its absence from most of the law preambles already suggests transposition which would have rendered the original decade number inaccurate, and rather than rewrite it, it was suppressed.⁷¹

A second anomaly is that in the first three of the above dates the decade number appears to be based on the BE date, something which was never done in true dates, at least of the Sukhothai and Ayutthaya periods.⁷² Moreover, dog years were always even and pig years always odd. This proves that those three dates, as I suggested on other grounds in "Prolegomena", were deliberate falsifications. Not only that, but 'third' for 1902 proves another stage of recopying, from an earlier 1903, one of the easy copyist's errors due to similarity of numbers.⁷³ Since a Buddhist Era year never ends in the same figure as the corresponding *cula* or *śaka* year these anomalies indicate (1) that the decade numbers were devised after recalculation from original *cula* or *śaka* to Buddhist era dates, and (2) that the original *cula* or *śaka* dates probably corresponded to the animal years given, which in the first two cases are still accurate when the dates are transposed back to *cula* or *śaka*, and in the third only one year off. Although the errors may be identified, and the probable cause, recopying the law into an earlier context, is rather certain, there is no way, with only these elements, to even hypothesize the correct original date. Animal x, nth of the decade, recurred every 60 years.

In the four *cula* dates of this series the indication of the decade agrees with both the year date and with the animal synchronism, and there is no objective way to fault these dates, although, as I indicated in "Prolegomena", there are other reasons to reject the preamble of the **Law on Treason (*Kra:pat śiik*)** dated 796.⁷⁴ That entire law deserves study as a mixture of texts from different times, including one clear example of back-dating which probably occurred in the recension of 1805. Article 68 is dated 955 [AD 1593], apparently *cula*, and the responsible king is entitled *Ekādadharaṭh*, who is recorded as making provisions for soldiers who fought for his elder brother "*cau fā nareś jeṣṭhādhipatī*". In fact, Naresuan reigned until 1605, but at the time of Rama I there

⁷⁰ In Angkor dates it occurs only rarely. For its importance in post-Angkor Cambodian historiography see Vickery, "Cambodia After Angkor, The Chronicular Evidence for the Fourteenth to Sixteenth Centuries", Ph.D. Thesis, Yale University, 1977.

⁷¹ This may have been a result of the haste in revision, noted above, for scholars were quite capable of calculating true dates when laws were back-dated.

⁷² As Roger Billard wrote (cited in Griswold, *Arts asiatiques*, 1960, p. 202, n. 2), "...c'est bien l'astrologue qui s'est trompé de deux ans dans le millésime bouddhique qui pour lui, soyez-en assuré, n'est que le résultat d'une addition faisant passer de l'ère C.S., la seule usuelle et la seule échelle des temps indispensable à la chronographie et à l'astrologie, à l'ère mahasaka, puis à B.S. Cette erreur sur le millésime B.S. ne me surprend pas du tout (cf. l'écart d'un an entre les actuels millésimes B.S. de Ceylon d'une part, et de Birmanie, Siam, Cambodge, et Laos d'autre part), car je suis bien persuadé que B.S. n'a pas été une ère civile, un comput réel et suivi (le détail de sa technique est tout à fait artificiel et au demeurant non uniforme), mais une ère solennelle, un décompte effectué chaque fois que besoin dans les occasions solennelles".

⁷³ On this problem see Burnay, "Matériaux critiques", pp. 157- 60; and Vickery, "Cambodia After Angkor", pp. 15, 327-8, Annex I, p. 6.

⁷⁴ **Laws IV**, p. 132. Vickery, "Prolegomena", pp. 39, 49-50.

was a belief that the reign change from Naresuan to 'Ekādaśaraṭh', whose true title was *rāmeśvara*, occurred in 1593.⁷⁵

The 'dog, third of the decade' fits still another pattern which strengthens the case for transposition. The **Three Seals Code** includes three dates in three different laws with this false conjunction. In addition to the introduction to *Ājñā rāṣ* /**Civil Offences** it is found in undated passages in *Ājñā hlvaṅ*, article 106 and in *Pet srec*, article 46, and these passages show other similarities.⁷⁶ In the second and third the day dates are Thursday, fifth month, tenth of the waning moon in the first case and fifth of the waning moon in the second.

The principal royal titles in the three laws are: (1) *braḥ cau rāmādhīpatī ...param cākṛabartti rājādhīrāj*, (2) *braḥ mahā cākṛabarttiśra...mahārājādhīrāj*, (3) *braḥ param mahā cākṛabartti rājādhīrāj*.

Emphasis is on the term '*cākṛabartti*', which is rare among the royal titles in the laws, and is never found in the laws at a date within the reign of the king who has traditionally been given that title (1548-1569).⁷⁷

In the second and third the responsible official to whom the king addressed his communication was one or another of the law court officials, who in the **Hierarchy Law** follow the 'brahmans', and whose titles there include the formula *braḥ...subhāva:dī śrī mandātulrāj/maldhātulrāj* found in the laws under discussion.⁷⁸ In the contexts under discussion they were accompanied by subordinate officials, *nāy dāv rāj paṇḍity*, and the clerk, *nāy sām khlā*. As principal official in the introduction to a law the *mandā/maldhātulrāj* is found in only one other context, article 86 of *Pet srec*, associated with a date 1565 and a royal title in *Ekādadharaṭh*. *Nāy sām khlā* is equally rare, found in only one other context, the introduction to **Lāk bhā/Kidnapping**, where he is called the clerk of *braḥ subhāva:tī* without the title *mandā~*, etc. They are associated, however with a king entitled *samtec braḥ cau rāmādhīpatī śrī param cākṛabarttirāj*. Although there are several rather low officials in the **Hierarchy Law** with the title *rāj paṇḍity*, none is associated with the law court judges, and this *nāy dāv rāj paṇḍity* is not identifiable. It is probably, however, the same title, incorrectly written in the *nāy dau rāj paṇḍity* of the **Slavery Law**. The form *dāv*, may be presumed correct because it is an ancient pan-Thai title, which was not important in late Ayutthaya or Bangkok.⁷⁹

⁷⁵ Vickery, "Prolegomena", p. 51 and note 33; Vickery "Cambodia After Angkor", chapter IX, "The Chronology of the Ayutthayan Chronicles".

⁷⁶ Laws, IV, p. 79 and III, p. 111.

⁷⁷ Vickery, "Prolegomena", p. 47.

⁷⁸ 'Laws', I, p. 266. They were *braḥ kṣemarāj suphāvātī...*, and *khun hlvaṅ braḥ kraīśrī rāj subhāvātī...*

⁷⁹ **Laws II**, p. 331. This is an appropriate place to cite the two indexes of the *Three Seals* produced in Japan, the first is the *KWIC Index of the Three Seals Law* (1981) of 75 large volumes listing every occurrence of every word alphabetically. The second is *The Computer Concordance to the Law of the Three Seals* in five volumes, by Yoneo Ishii, Mamoru Shibayama, and Aroonrut Wichienkhiew, Center for Southeast Asian Studies, Kyoto. Without them careful research on the laws would be impossible, and I wish to thank the Museum of Ethnology, Osaka, for giving me a set of the first. Both, naturally, contain a few defects, and the more serious are in the *Concordance*,

There can hardly be doubt that the two passages from *Ājñā hlvañ* and *Pet srec* belong to a single recension which was probably undertaken later than the main dates of those laws; and with somewhat less certainty the introduction to *Ājñā rāṣ* and article 86 of *Pet srec* may also be attributed to that recension.

There are two more preamble dates which add evidence to the argument that laws were recopied to an earlier date and certain elements which would be discordant either revised or suppressed. The **Law on Debts** (*Kū hnī*), now dated *śaka* 1278/AD 1356, and the **Palatine Law** of *cula* 720/AD 1358, both contain the animal synchronism phrase, *jvat* (rat) *nāksātṽ* (asterism) *śak*, which, with respect to the animal, is incorrect in both cases, 1278 being monkey, and 720 dog.⁸⁰ The redundant *śak* at the end cannot be other than a relic of an original number of the decade, which always ended in *śak*. Obviously here, when the laws were recodified, the decade number was suppressed rather than calculate a fake. The identical, and incorrect, phrase in these two laws whose expressed dates are only two years apart, suggests that they both were first promulgated in the same year.

Day dates, which include day of the week, the month, and day of the waxing or waning phase of the moon may also be checked for coherency. That is, did the *nth* of a certain month, waxing or waning moon, really fall on day *x* in a given year?⁸¹ This might seem like an attempt to introduce a degree of precision into the method which cannot be sustained by the nature of the material. The law texts are not like a stone inscription, or an original manuscript, in which we may be rather certain that a date written is what the original writer intended. All of the **Three Seals** texts have been copied at least once from their originals, and except for the *Kāṃhnat hmai* of Rama I, they have been copied, and probably tampered with, more than once. Thus the very meaning of accuracy, or certain types of inaccuracy, in the dates is itself problematical. When we know that a certain text has undergone recopying, it may be legitimate to accept that certain day dates which when calculated are only one day off are in fact accurate, if the error involves two numbers, such 4 and 5, which are easily confused. Other apparent errors of only one day may nevertheless be correct because of arbitrary adjustments made in the old calendars to maintain the succession of days from one year to the next. When faced with a series of mostly coherent dates within a definitely established historical period, such as the *Kāṃhnat hmai* of Rama I, the few cases of one-day error may be ignored.

One problem, that of the *cuḷāmaṇī* dates, seems to be resolved by examination of the day dates. In "Prolegomena", as noted above, I proposed that the *cuḷāmaṇī* years were really *śaka* dates with falsified animal synchronisms. Now, having checked the day dates, I find that this is probably true. In all cases the true year dates associated with the given animal years, two years later than the expressed year, are incoherent with the expressed day dates, but three of the year dates as given are totally coherent and two more are if we accept an error of one day. This is good evidence that the true dates were the years expressed, understood as *śaka*. Five more are incoherent either

which is arranged in such a way that it is impossible to make an immediate comparison of contexts in which the same person has different *yāśa*, for each official is listed with *yāśa* as an integral part of the entry.

⁸⁰ *Nāksātṽ* is a deformation of *nakṣatra*, itself used incorrectly in Ayutthaya and Cambodia as a designation for animal synchronism.

⁸¹ I did not check this in "Prolegomena", and Prof. Huxley suggested that it might be useful.

way, and two lack one of the elements required for the check.⁸² Furthermore, the dates 110 years later, which *cuḷāmaṇī* is supposed to represent, are all incoherent with the expressed day dates. This is also true for the date of the *Palatine Law*, which I described in "Prolegomena" as imitation *cuḷāmaṇī*.

Within the texts of some laws there is also easily identifiable evidence of later additions to what were probably older basic texts. It is rather certain that the nearly identical provisions concerning domestic animals which follow one another in the *Pet srec Law*, with Khmer used to designate cattle and water buffalo (*go, kra:pü*) in one and Thai (*vua, gvāy*) in the next, the section with Khmer was earlier than that with Thai.⁸³ It is impossible on this basis, however, to attempt any suggestion of absolute date, other than that such use of Khmer probably predates the reign of King Mahā Dharmarāja (1569-1590), the quisling prince of Sukhothai who became king after supporting the Burmese in their conquest of Ayutthaya.

Two cases in which the back-dated insertions may be attributed to Rama I are a section in the **Treason Law** discussed above, and in lists of provinces in the *Dharrmanūn* law as described below.

Still another clue to relative, and perhaps in some instances almost absolute, dating is the inconsistent attribution of *yaśa* ranks within the **Three Seals**. That is the same official, identifiable by his *rājadinnām* and/or *tāmhñèñ* may be given a *yaśa* inconsistent with the date of the text in question, and even mutually inconsistent within the same law. It is known from other sources that *khun* would have been an appropriately prestigious title for ministers in the early 15th century, that King Trailok may have raised them from *khun* to *braḥ*, that titles with the prefix *òk* were in use in the 17th century, and early 18th, but were discontinued sometime before the reign of Rama I, and that in his day, when the **Three Seals** was composed, ministers should have been ranked *cau bañā*.⁸⁴

There are two conventional modern descriptions of the *yaśa* grades, which may be compared with a list recorded for the late 17th century by La Loubère. Below are Quaritch Wales's list, and two lists from R.B. Jones, the second of which is that of La Loubère.⁸⁵

<i>samtec cau braḥyā</i>	<i>samtec caubraḥyā</i>
<i>cau braḥyā</i>	<i>caubraḥyā bañā</i>
<i>braḥyā (òkñā)</i>	<i>braḥyā òkñā</i>
<i>cau hmün</i>	<i>braḥ òkbraḥ</i>
<i>braḥ (òkbraḥ)</i>	<i>hlvañ òkhlvañ</i>

⁸² The coherent dates are 1369, 1387, and 1555 (*Dharrmanūn*), the dates off by one day are 1359 and 1373 (in which one number is a 5 which could have been miscopied from 4), the incoherent dates are 1263, 1267 (the two earliest dates in the laws), 1374, 1555 (*udhar*), and 1565, and the two dates which lack the day of the moon phase are 1544 and 1557. See pp. 56-6 of "Prolegomena", where these dates are numbered respectively 24, 27, 35, 23, 25, 1, 2, 26, 36, 38, 34, 37.

⁸³ Examples are **Laws III**, pp. 98, 102, 108-9.

⁸⁴ These points are explained in the discussion below.

⁸⁵ Quaritch Wales, "Administration", p. 35; Jones, pp. 127-128; La Loubère, p. 79; Vickery, "Review of Jones".

<i>camün</i>	<i>khun òkkhun</i>
<i>hlvañ (òkhlvañ)</i>	<i>hmün òkhmün</i>
<i>ca</i>	<i>òkbǎn</i>
<i>hmün</i>	
<i>bǎn</i>	

Both Quaritch Wales and Jones missed *òkbañā*, perhaps through neglecting to consult the law texts directly, and La Loubère's work is evidence that this title was perhaps not in use in his day. In Jones's case there is also a misunderstanding of the correspondence between *brahyā* and *bañā*. The laws themselves list the titles without *òk* as *bañā*, *braḥ*, *hlvañ*, *khun*, *hmün*, *bán*.⁸⁶

Now the evidence from the laws, contemporary foreign sources, and Bangkok practice in the 19th century indicates that the titles with and without *òk* were used concurrently for an at present indeterminable time which included most of the 17th century, with the *òk* titles gradually dropping out of use in the 18th century.⁸⁷ The combined evidence of the preamble and body of the **Civil Hierarchy Law**, which call the *vāñ* minister respectively *cau bañā* and *òkbañā*, also indicates that these titles were equivalent, and we know that *cau bañā* was used for the *glǎñ*, who is called *òkbañā* in the law, at least as early as 1622.⁸⁸ In **Dharmanūn** all the *òk* titles are gone, supporting the other evidence that in spite of its 17th-century date, this law is mainly a composition of the time of Rama I (see further below).

Thus we should conclude that *cau bañā* equals *òkbañā*, but may indicate a later usage and that the five ministers with one or another of these titles were equivalent both as to *śaktinā* and *yaśa a*.⁸⁹ The hierarchy of *yaśa* ranks should then read:

samtec cau bañā

⁸⁶ **Laws I**, p. 314; Q.W., *Administration*, p. 36, was of the opinion that *hlvañ* was "probably of Khmer origin" and *braḥ* and *brahyā* "Indian titles". It is now known, however, that *hlvañ* is Thai, *braḥ* Mon-Khmer, and probably adopted into Thai from Khmer, while *brahyā* may be a conflation of *braḥ* with Mon *bañā* (see Vickery, "Review of Jones"). Quaritch Wales was correct in taking *khun* as old Thai, but his theory of *hlvañ* added later, and *braḥ* and *brahyā* "added in comparatively recent times" has no basis in the evidence.

⁸⁷ Evidence for the early 17th century in the works of Jeremias van Vliet, (1) "Description of the Kingdom of Siam", translated by L.F. Ravenswaay, *JSS VII* (1910), pp. 1-108, (2) "Historical Account of Siam in the XVIIth Century", *Selected Articles from the Siam Society Journal VII* (1959), pp. 31-90, and (3) *The Short History of the Kings of Siam*, Translated by Leonard Andaya, edited by David K. Wyatt, Bangkok, The Siam society, 1975. La Loubère, pp. 80, 96, records uncertainty among his Thai informants about the use of *òk*. The title *òkbañā* is recorded in 1739, and *okñā*, and *okbraḥ* in 1748. See **Law of 36 Articles**, article 34, **Laws IV**, p. 253, **Kāṃhnat kau** 44, **Laws V**, p. 120, and **Kāṃhnat kau** 48, **Laws V**, p. 138.

⁸⁸ The double titles for the *vāñ* are in **Laws I**, pp. 219, 237; *Records of the Relations Between Siam and Foreign Countries*, Vol. I, p. 131.

⁸⁹ Although we should note that La Loubère, p. 79, considered that *bañā* outranked *okñā*.

<i>cau bañā</i>	<i>òkbañā</i>
<i>bañā</i>	<i>òkñā</i>
<i>braḥ</i>	<i>òkbraḥ</i> etc.

All of the *òk* titles but one are simply *òk* prefixed to a known title which has been used by itself. The exception is *òkñā*, for the element *-ñā* has never been recorded as a title, and has no relevant meaning in any of the languages which might have been involved. Strictly as a hypothesis at this point, I suggest that the term *òkñā* resulted from the affixation of an ancient Thai/Tai term of respect, *òk* (/ɔk/), to another term of respect, *ñā*, representing, as in modern Lao, Sanskrit *ājñā*.⁹⁰ Then *òk* was separated out in a new sense and prefixed to a series of other titles. Besides the standard hierarchy, the **Provincial Hierarchy Law** lists '*òkmöaṅ*' for some governors of fourth class provinces.⁹¹

The epigraphical history of *òk* titles starts with Sukhothai Inscription 93 of 1399, in which the titles of persons, presumably dead, to whom merit was offered were, *samtec bò* ['father?'] *òk* and *samtec pū brañā* ['ancestor/grandfather *brañā*'] *bò òk*. Then in 1403, Inscription 46, there was a *samtec mee òk* who has been construed as a queen; and in 1412, Inscription 49, a certain *òkñā Dharrmarāja* seems to have been a king.⁹² This last is the highest recorded status of the title *òkñā*, which declined in value in Ayutthaya.

Political Structure

The royal family

Two different types of royal family organisation are outlined in the laws, one in the **Palatine Law** and the other in the **Law of the Civil Hierarchy**. The two are mutually irreconcilable. Quaritch Wales assumed these to be sequential, that of the **Palatine Law** being followed by that of the **Hierarchy Law**. This, however, involves a contradiction with his analysis of the dates which placed the former in 1458 and the latter in 1454. In both cases he mixes in details of 19th-century actuality which are not mentioned in the laws, such as the use of the title *cau fā* and the *kram* titles of royal princes. In this he followed an earlier description apparently based on the opinions of Thai royalty, but this mixture of material from diverse sources merely confuses, since it is not known when the 19th-century institutions first came into use.⁹³

⁹⁰. In Black Thai there is a kinship term, *ok*, in the expression *ok ao, pu* of the first generation senior to ego. See Câm Trong, "Some Questions of Ancient History and Culture of the Thai Ethnic Nationality in Vietnam", *Proceedings of the International Conference on Thai Studies*, The Australian National University, Canberra, 3-6 July 1987, pp. 200-205. This term is not listed in Dorothy Crawford Fippinger, "Kinship Terms of the Black Tai People", *JSS* 59/1 (January 1971), pp. 66-82.

⁹¹. **Laws I**, pp. 323-324.

⁹². See Griswold and Prasert *EHS* 1, 2, and 4.

⁹³. Quaritch-Wales, *Administration*, pp. 22-27 cited E. Gibert who probably drew on an essay by King Chulalongkorn or on earlier information from King Mongkut. An English translation of Gibert[BibI] is in Appendix I to Carl Bock, *Temples and Elephants*, Bangkok, White Orchid Press, 1985 [London 1884], pp. 405-20. See also Jones, and Review by Vickery. The title *cau fā* is found only twice in the entire **Three Seals Code**, once in a law of Rama I in 1794 (**Laws IV**, p. 221), and once in a section of the **Treason Law**, which although dated 1593, must be an insertion made in the time of Rama I (see above).

The **Palatine Law** first, in its preamble, lists the royalty who were in the king's presence at the moment of proclamation of the law as:

-*samtec braḥ cau hnò buddhāñkūr surivañś*

-*samtec braḥ barrṇameśvara*

-*bañā ekasatrāj braḥ mahā uparāj,*

of whom the last might be interpreted as two individuals, although the conjunction *lee*, which separates all the other names in the list, is missing.⁹⁴ The title *ekasatrāj* is a garbled rendering of something else, perhaps *ekādaśarath*.

A similar list occurs in article 158 of the law detailing the individuals who accompany the king on certain occasions, thus: *samtec hnò braḥ buddha cau, samtec braḥ barrṇameśvara cau, braḥ rājakumār*.⁹⁵

The title which requires particular notice here is *barrṇameśvara*, which, as far as I have been able to determine, is not used elsewhere for Thai royalty and has not been discussed by Quaritch Wales or by his predecessors, King Chulalongkorn and Prince Damrong. Restored to its superficially apparent Sanskrit form, the term consists of *varṇam-ésvara*, which is impossible. The first element is a masculine noun meaning "colour, caste" (correctly written *varṇa*) and the second is the form of *śvara*, "lord", in combination with a word ending in the vowel *a*. Correctly compounded, these two terms would result in *varṇeśvara*.

This type of confusion indicates the probability of a folk etymology based on a term no longer understood, and I would suggest restoring it as *parameśvara*, a royal title well attested among Malay and Javanese royalty as well as at Angkor. Whether its occurrence in the **Palatine Law** indicates that the Thai once used this title, which has been preserved in no other source, or that parts of the **Palatine Law** have been taken over from a foreign source is a problem which remains to be solved.⁹⁶ Mon influence is seen in the use of *bañā* for a member of the royal family, and the term *surivañś*, found in Sukhothai royal epigraphy, may indicate incorporation into Ayutthayan titles after the reign of King Maha Thammaracha. In fact, all the anomalies suggest the last quarter of the 16th century.

A somewhat different hierarchy of princes appears in the third article of the law which deals specifically with "royal sons and grandsons", *braḥ rājakumār braḥ rājanātā*, ranking them in accordance with the status of their mothers.⁹⁷ The list, which seems in fact to include only *braḥ rā jakumār* (sons), is: *samtec hnò braḥ buddha cau*, born of *braḥ āgamaheṣī* (Chief Queen); *braḥ mahā uparāj*, born of *mè hyua möaṅ*; no title, born of a king's daughter, who "eats" (*kin*) *möaṅ*

⁹⁴ **Laws I**, p. 69.

⁹⁵ **Laws I**, p. 138.

⁹⁶. According to the Ayutthayan chronicles the third and youngest son of King Thay Sa (1709-1733) was named *Parameś*, and it would be interesting to know if this title was given to a certain prince in each generation. Unfortunately the chronicles do not offer that type of detail.

⁹⁷ **Laws I**, p. 70.

ek; no title, born of a king's granddaughter, who "eats" *möaṅ do*; *braḥ yauvarāj*, born of *braḥ snam* (king's commoner wives).

Earlier studies have treated this list as a prescriptive statement for ranking royal children in general, although admitting that no specific instance of the ranks *hnò braḥ buddha cau* or *braḥ yauvarāj* had been recorded elsewhere and that instances of a *braḥ ágamaheṣṭī* being appointed were extremely rare. In another context I suggested that it merely recorded the position of certain royal children at a particular time, and I would now like to elaborate on this a bit.⁹⁸

The two highest titles, *hnò braḥ buddha cau* and *braḥ mahā uparāj*, would seem to have been one of a kind, that is, there would not have been at a given time more than one of each. Thus these two titles cannot be taken as general designations for sons of a *braḥ ágamaheṣṭī* or a *me hyua möaṅ*, for each of these ladies could have had several sons. What the law seems to be saying is simply that at a certain time the princes holding the positions of *hnò braḥ buddha cau* and *braḥ mahā uparāj* were sons of the *braḥ ágamaheṣṭī* and the *me hyua möaṅ* respectively.

The same would seem to hold true for the fifth rank of the list, although within the context of known Thai documents it cannot be said what this rank was. At the time of the promulgation of this law it was held by a prince born of a commoner mother, of whom there must have been many, with many sons, who could not all have been *braḥ yauvarāj*.

Only the third and fourth positions can be easily interpreted as general, prescriptive designations, that is, that princes "born of kings' daughters" 'eat' *möaṅ ek* and those "born of kings' granddaughters" 'eat' *möaṅ do*, of which there were undoubtedly several in all periods.

The statements on *lūk hlvaṅ* and *möaṅ ek, do*, etc. have been the source for very speculative descriptions of provincial administration from Prince Damrong through Quaritch Wales to Charnvit Kasetsiri. Prince Damrong, followed by Quaritch Wales, considered that there were *möaṅ lūk hlvaṅ* at the four cardinal points ruled by sons of the king "as almost independent kingdoms", and Charnvit, not citing Prince Damrong, amplified this with a theory of step-by-step shift northward from Lophburi to Chainat to Phitsanulok of the northern cardinal *möaṅ lūk hlvaṅ*.⁹⁹ As I demonstrated in my review of Charnvit, there is no basis for such speculative amplifications in the sources, and the law terminology suggests a much less contrived explanation, that rather than being functional governors, it may have been that *kin möaṅ* meant only that *lūk hlvaṅ* and *hlān hlvaṅ* princes were assigned *möaṅ* as appanages for their support, as was often done in Burma.¹⁰⁰

An entirely different royal family structure appears in the **Law of the Civil Hierarchy**.¹⁰¹ First, in the preamble, the Minister of the Palace (*vāṅ*) enquires concerning the rank (*śakti*) of:

- braḥ anujādhirāj*-the king's principal younger brother
- braḥ rājakumār*-royal sons
- braḥ rājaputr*-royal sons

⁹⁸ Q.W., pp. 22-24; Vickery, "Review of Jones".

⁹⁹ Quaritch Wales, *Administration*, p. 103; Charnvit Kasetsiri, *The Rise of Ayudhya*, pp. 21, 26-27, 52, 97-98, 125, 127-28, 137.

¹⁰⁰ Vickery, "A New *Tāṃnān*", pp. 158-60; Victor B. Lieberman, *Burmese Administrative Cycles*, Princeton, Princeton University Press (1984), pp. 36, 80.

¹⁰¹ **Laws I**, pp. 219-220.

-*braḥ rājanatā*-royal grandsons.

Then in article 2 of the law, the ranks of princes, and their *śaktinā*, are listed as follows (with *śaktinā* in parentheses attributed if the prince in question headed a *kram*):

- <i>samtec braḥ anujādhirāj</i>	20,000 (50,000)
- <i>samtec braḥ cau lūk dhoe</i> -royal sons	15,000 (40,000)
-either of the above, if <i>mahā uparāj</i>	100,000
- <i>braḥ anuja</i> -royal younger brothers	7,000 (15,000)
- <i>braḥ cau lūk dhoe</i>	6,000 (15,000)
- <i>samtec braḥ cau hlān dhoe</i> -royal grandsons	6,000 (15,000)
- <i>braḥ cau hlān dhoe</i>	4,000 (11,000)
- <i>hmòm cau</i> -king's great grandson	1,500

Although entirely different from that of the **Palatine Law**, this list has been credited to the same reign. We should note here that the princes are listed simply by birth title, not by rank. The only rank mentioned is *mahā uparāj*, which could be held either by the king's most important younger brother or by a son. Another thing to note is that the rank of princes is not linked to that of their mother. If the two laws really belong to the same time period, these features lend weight to my contention that the **Palatine Law** is speaking of the ranks of particular individuals rather than setting forth a general system.

The **Law of the Civil Hierarchy** also lists potential royal mothers, but of no higher rank than *snam*. Its article 4 shows four *snam ek* (first class) entitled *dāv insurendr*, *dāv śrī sutācān*, *dāv indradevī*, and *dāv śrī culālākṣ*. Of these at least two are attested elsewhere, *śrī sutācān* as the title of the ambitious widow of King Jayarāja (1534-1547) of the chronicles and Queen *śrī culālākṣ* as a Sukhothai queen in an early Bangkok literary work.¹⁰² The great differences between these two laws make it difficult to attribute their statements on the royal family to the same reign, and we should also note the absence of terminology, such as *cau fā*, which became common at some time in the late Ayutthaya period and has been in use ever since. In contrast to the **Palatine Law**, though, the **Civil Hierarchy Law** is easy to understand as a general prescriptive statement applicable to any royal family, since any number of brothers or sons could receive the designated amount of *śaktinā*.

It is significant that in the **Palatine Law** the *braḥ mahā uparāj*, who in the Bangkok era, and perhaps since the end of the 17th century, was heir apparent, prince of the Front Palace, is only second in rank of princes, and that in the **Hierarchy Law** this office could be filled either by the king's principal younger brother, *braḥ anujādhirāj* or by a son.

These statements reflect an old practice which was in process of change in the 17th century, and which had entirely disappeared by the time of Rama I. Under ancient Ayutthayan practice the heir apparent was not the king's son, but his younger brother, if there were one. Both Joost Schouten and van Vliet are insistent on this point. The former wrote that in principle, "when the King

¹⁰² **Laws I**, p. 221. Queen *Culālākṣṇ* was the alleged author of the story of *Nān nabhamāś*, written in the early Bangkok period, but presented as a Sukhothai work.

dies, it is not his Son, but his Brother who is heir to the crown; but in case he have no brother, then indeed his Son steps in by course, whose Brothers do succeed successively; lastly all the Sons of the eldest Brother, who hath reigned, follow by turns". According to van Vliet, "there is a fundamental law...which calls the brother of the deceased King to the throne, and excludes the son". King Song Tham defied it and appointed his son to the exclusion of his brother, which set the scene for the series of coups which brought Prasat Thong to the throne.¹⁰³

The importance of this rule, in principle, is also seen in the identification of King Trailokanāth in van Vliet's *The Short History of the Kings of Siam* as brother of his predecessor, which is found in no other source. When Prasat Thong became king he named his brother heir, *fāy hnā*. The brother, as heir, according to the 17th-century observers, was not *mahā uparāj*. That title was reserved for a person, who might or might not be a prince, who was a sort of Prime Minister or Chancellor, and who was not the king's heir. The process of change is seen in La Loubère's remark, some 50 years after Schouten and Van Vliet, that the preferred heir to the throne was son of the queen, but that succession was uncertain.¹⁰⁴

The Central Administration

According to Quaritch Wales

The structure of the central administration, below the king, as described by Quaritch Wales, was first two chief ministers, *agramahāsenāpatī*, "heads of the civil and military divisions, or divisions of left and right". On the civil side there were also four ministers, *senāpatī*, known collectively as the *catustambh*, or four columns. Quaritch Wales believed they had at one time been directly under the *agramahāsenāpatī* of the civil division, by analogy with the military division in which "there were four general officers, each originally in command of one of the four divisions (*caturaṅga*) of the army".¹⁰⁵ In addition, the civil division included departments for six *mantrī*, or councillors, directly responsible to the king, and a number of other departments.

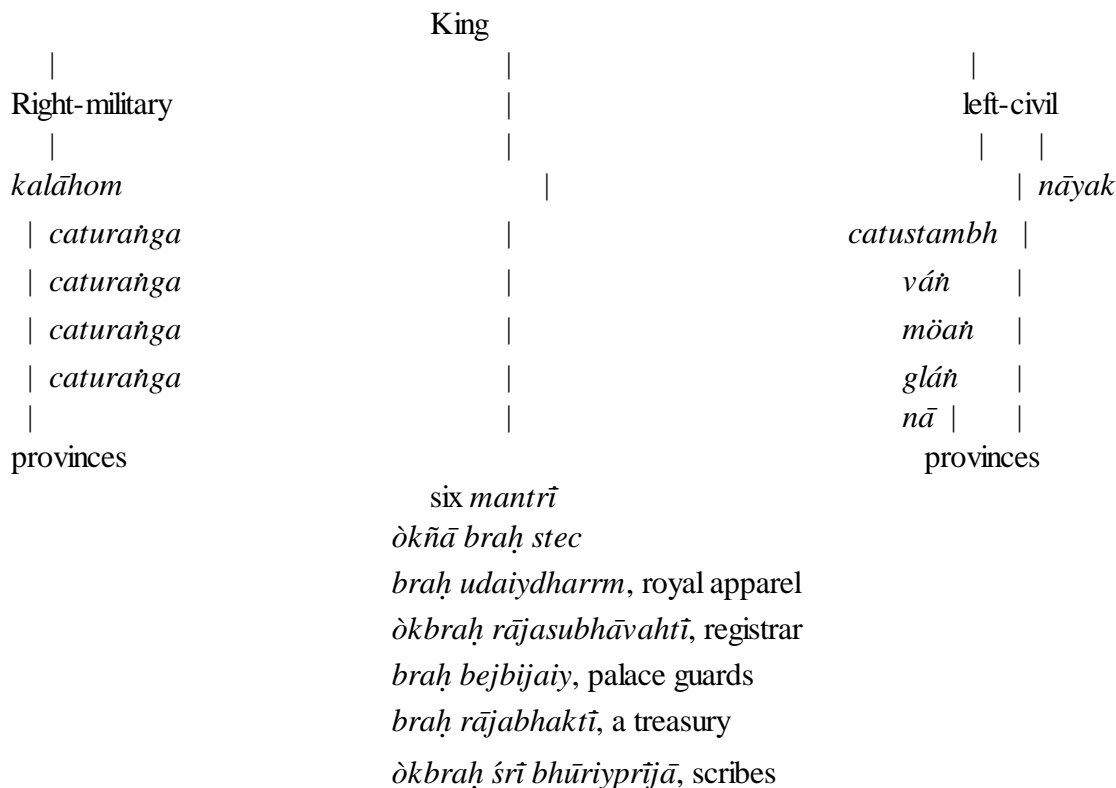
On the military side of the central administration, Quaritch Wales believed that the military division formed a kind of professional army, although "in time of war the civil division was called upon to fight", that there had been professional armies both in the capital and major provinces, the former under the *kalāhom*, and that this situation was maintained "until the abolition of the distinction between *dahār* and *bala rōan*", which had been established by King Trailok, in the 15th century. He also believed that Siam retained the ancient Indian division of military forces into four departments (*caturaṅga*), infantry, cavalry, elephants, and chariots, except that "the last mentioned were replaced by artisans, or as we should say, engineers". However, according to Quaritch Wales,

¹⁰³ Francis Caron and Joost Schouten, *A Description of the Government, Might, Religion, Customes, Traffic and the Remarkable Affairs in the Kingdom of SIAM*, 1636, English translation 1671. reprint Chalernmit Historical Archives Series, February 1969, p. 131; van Vliet, "Historical Account", p. 32.

¹⁰⁴ Van Vliet, *Short History*, pp. 63, on Prasat Thong's brother, p. 87; Vickery, "Review Article on van Vliet, *The Short History of the Kings of Siam*", *JSS* 46/2 (July 1976); La Loubère, p. 102.

¹⁰⁵ Quaritch Wales, *Administration*, p. 79, where the language, with respect to which side was 'left' or 'right' is not clear, but in his *Ancient South-East Asian Warfare*, p. 151, he said that military officials were on the right (south) side of the king in audience. In fact, although left-right distinctions are found in several sections of *Three Seals*, they never coincide clearly with a civil-military division, nor with geographical relationships.

"the original arrangement became much confused", a statement made necessary by the fact that in the Ayutthayan system the great generals were all infantry commanders and the organization depicted in the Law of the Military Hierarchy is not at all like that postulated by Quaritch Wales.¹⁰⁶ The structure of two chief ministers, four other ministers, and six councillors has generally been accepted by subsequent scholars, and in diagram form would appear as illustrated below.



The Central Administrative structure according to the laws

In this section I propose to outline what the laws say, and engage in some comparison with other relevant sources.

The first text to examine is not a law, but the passage from the long versions of the Ayutthayan annals, all of which apparently date from a revision made in *cula* 1157 (1795), recording changes in the central government administration. Quaritch Wales believed that it contained "definite statements ... with regard to the reforms carried out by King Paramatrailokanath" corroborating "the correctness of the dates of issue of those laws--the hierarchy laws of A.D. 1454 ...", and which, according to Akin, "state that King Trailok gave honorific names to the nobles according to their sakdina [sic], and appointed the two chief ministers".¹⁰⁷ In the texts where it occurs, this passage comes immediately after the entry recording King Trailok's assumption of the throne at a date corresponding to 1434; but it is now known that the dates in this portion of the

¹⁰⁶ *Administration*, pp. 80, 140-1.

¹⁰⁷ Quaritch-Wales, p. 173; Akin, p. 192.

annals are incorrect.¹⁰⁸ In the *Hlvāñ prasrōṭh* chronicle, which at present is accepted as chronologically accurate, the statement on administrative reforms is not included, but if interpolated from the long versions would fall in 1448.

It is not, however, certain that the inclusion of this passage in the annals, even with a correction of the date, represents independent corroborative evidence. Prince Damrong showed that some of the law texts were used as sources in the revision of the chronicles, were misunderstood, and led to errors in some of the dates of the latter.¹⁰⁹ Thus the statement in the annals about King Trailok's reforms could have been drawn from the very laws which the annals are supposed to corroborate. A detail which may, however, indicate early independent composition is the use of the title *khun* for ministers. In the earliest extant Ayutthayan chronicle fragment, devoted to the period of Trailok's father, the highest ranking officials are *khun*.¹¹⁰

Since the passage in question plays such an important role in all discussion of early Thai administration and since the translations of it to date appear to me inadequate, I reproduce it here in full with my own translation as well as the versions of Quaritch Wales, David Wyatt, [*and Richard Cushman*]. Wyatt's version is in his translation of an abridged chronicle of Ayutthaya which includes only a portion of the passage found in the complete annals, but enough to illustrate the main points I wish to make.¹¹¹

A text: *braḥ rāj dān jūa khunnāñ tām tāmhnèn nā*

B MV: [the king] granted names [to] the nobles according to grade of *nā* [rice land?]

C QW: established the names, offices, and *śaktinā* grades of the dignitaries

D Wyatt: then he gave titles to the nobles and assigned them ranks of paddy land

[*E Cushman: Then he bestowed titles on the nobility of position and rank*]

A *hai ao dahār pen samuha braḥ kalāhom*

B let take *dahār as* multitude/cohort [of] *braḥ kalāhom*

C making the head of the soldiers *samuha braḥ kalāhom*

D organizing the military as (under the) *samuha braḥ kalāhom*

[*E he had the [head of the] soldiers made Chief Minister Phra Kalahom*]

A *ao bala rōan pen samuha nāyak*

B take *bala rōan as* multitude/cohort [of] *nāyak*

C making the head of the civilians *samuha nāyak*

¹⁰⁸ On the recension of 1157 and the incorrect dates, see Vickery, "Cambodia After Angkor", Chapter IX.

¹⁰⁹ Damrong, RA, pp. 398-400.

¹¹⁰. See Vickery, "The 2/k.125 Fragment", p. 54.

¹¹¹. RA, p. 73; Quaritch-Wales, "Administration", p. 78; David K. Wyatt, "The Abridged Royal Chronicle of Ayudhyā of Prince Paramānuchitchinōrot", *JSS* 61/1 (January 1973), p. 36; [*Richard D. Cushman, *The Royal Chronicles of Ayutthaya*, p. 15, from which I have considered only his translations of the Royal Autograph text*].

D and the (civil side of government) under the *samuha nāyak*
[*E the [head of the] civilians made Chief Minister Nayok*]

A *ao khun möaṅ pen braḥ nagarapāl möaṅ*

B take *khun* [of the] *möaṅ* as *braḥ nagarapāl möaṅ*

C making *khun möaṅ braḥ nagarapāl möaṅ*

D.....

[*E the Khun Müang made Phra Nakhòn Banmüang*]

A *ao khun vāṅ pen braḥ dharmādhikaraṅ*

B take *khun* [of the] palace as *braḥ dharmādhikaraṅ*

C making *khun vāṅ braḥ dharmādhikaraṅ*

D.....

E the Khun Wang made Phra Thammathikòn

A *ao khun nā pen braḥ kṣetr*

B take *khun* [of the] fields as *braḥ kṣetr*

C making *khun nā braḥ kṣetr*

D.....

E the Khun Na made Phra Kaset

A *ao khun glāṅ pen braḥ koṣādhīpatī hai thūa śaktinā*

B take *khun* [of the] treasury as *koṣādhīpatī* let [them] hold *śaktinā*

C making *khun glāṅ braḥ koṣādhīpatī* all with *śaktinā*

D..... each bearing the *śaktinā*

[*E and the Khun Khlang made Phra Kosathibòdi each bear the rank of*]

A *hmün*

B 10,000

C grade 10,000

D of 10,000 as a basis throughout [?]

[*E ten thousand *sakdina*.*]

My translation differs from the conventional treatment of this passage, and some of the differences will be justified later. With respect to the four lower ministries, this passage does not indicate that Trailok created anything new. He raised their *yaśa* from *khun* to *braḥ*, and gave them new *rājadinnām* or *tāmhnèn* titles, formed from Sanskrit terms, and certainly not taken from Angkor. It is possible that the sense of the passage is that the offices of the *nāyak* and *kalāhom* were created at this time, although it might also mean only the assignment of certain groups of people (*dahār*, *bala röan*) to *kalāhom* and *nāyak* offices which already existed.

The structure of all six phrases concerning the officials is the same and this structure is in no way obscure, but is very simple Thai--*ao x pen y*, 'take x as y', being equivalent, as Quaritch Wales

saw, to colloquial English 'make x y'. Where my translation differs from the standard versions is in adhering rigidly to this structure for the phrases dealing with the first two officials. In the other four cases the translation 'make x y' had always been accepted.

From a Bangkok, or 17th-century perspective, the precedence given the *möaṅ* minister over the *vāṅ* and *glāṅ* seems peculiar, for in the earlier period the *vāṅ* and *glāṅ* were both more important, and in the later period the *glāṅ* at least was. The **Hierarchy Law**, however, also lists the *möaṅ* minister first after the *cákrī samuha nāyak*, even though this appears anomalous both with respect to the time of Rama I who was responsible for the laws as we now have them, and to what may be presumed to have been the structure on which the next earliest codification was based.

The list is also peculiar in the inconsistency in the new titles for the four lower ranking ministers. The ministers of *möaṅ*, *nā*, and *glāṅ* are named by reference to their new *tāṃhnèṅ*, which are incomplete, whereas the *vāṅ* minister is listed with his *rājadinnām*. His *tāṃhnèṅ* was *maṅḍiarpāl*. parallel to *nagarpāl* of the *möaṅ* minister. This suggests an insertion into the chronicle at a later time, not a current entry at the date in question.

The terms *dahār* and *bala röan*, modern Thai "soldier" and "civilian", have been left untranslated to emphasize that they may not have had this meaning in the early Ayutthaya period.

As a result it is necessary to separate *samuha* from the words immediately following, contrary to 19th century usage in which *samuha braḥ kalāhom* and *samuha nāyak* were inseparable titles for the chiefs of the military and civil ministries. In this passage the separation is necessary, however, for it would be nonsense to translate, "take the *dahār* as chief of the military, take the *bala röan* as chief of the civilians". The separation is grammatically permissible since *samuha*, before becoming an inseparable part of various Thai titles, was a Sanskrit term meaning "group", "band", "multitude", as Quaritch Wales translated it in another context, and is so attested for Thai by the *Royal Institute Dictionary*.¹¹² What the standard treatments of this passage show are not a translations, but rather descriptions in terms of the 19th-century situation which had to be achieved by emending and adding parenthetically what was not included in the original text.

There are still other passages which legitimize my treatment of *samuha* in the translation in question. The first is in the section of the **Civil Hierarchy Law** concerned with the elephant forces, the title *samuha braḥ gajapāl*, which by analogy with the versions of Quaritch Wales and Wyatt cited above, should mean 'chief of the elephant guards'. Interestingly, however, in the table of ranks of the elephant guards there are four officers whose titles contain the same expression *samuha braḥ gajapāl*, as *tāṃhnèṅ*. The first two, one of the left and one of the right, have 5000 *śaktinā*, and they are followed by two more with 3000 *śaktinā*, also respectively left and right.¹¹³ On either side, of course, there could be only one chief, and this suggests that interpretation of such titles should be "so-and-so, of the cohorts (*samuha*) of the elephant guards---of the left side/right side".

A second example is in the *kalāhom* department where the titles of two officials, one the chief with 10,000 *śaktinā*, and another of 3000 *śaktinā*, both end with *samuha braḥ kalāhom*, whereas there cannot have been more than one person with the title *samuha braḥ kalāhom* in the sense of 'chief of the military division'. In both cases we should translate, '*cau bañā mahāsenāpatī /braḥ dharrmatrailok* of the cohort of the *braḥ kalāhom*'.

¹¹² Quaritch Wales, 1934, p. 85

¹¹³ **Laws I**, p. 250.

The only apparently complete table of organisation of the central administration is that found in the **Hierarchy Laws, Civil, Military, and Provincial**, which are replete with problems of date, titles, and organization, some of which I have treated in "Prolegomena" and noted above.¹¹⁴

They contain two separate preambles dated 1298 dog year and the royal titles in both are close enough so that it is clear the same king was intended. That date, however, is clearly in error. The year 1298, presumably *śaka*, was a dragon year, and the nearest dog years were 1292 and 1304, six years either way. Three different attempts at emendation have been made to place them within the reign of King Trailok, but such a procedure is hardly to be recommended, especially when the emendations cannot be justified on paleographic grounds.

Both preambles contain exactly the same copyist's error, which does not involve figures easily confused, and is unlikely to have happened twice independently, and thus the preamble of one of these laws was probably copied from that of the other, after the erroneous date had been established. Thus an earlier stage consisted of only one of these laws, or of parts of both included under a single preamble.¹¹⁵

The clearest evidence of such composition is that the preamble-type section of the joint **Military and Provincial Law**, with the date and royal titles, does not come at the beginning, but in the middle, between the military ranks and those of the provinces. At a glance it would seem that this preamble should mark the beginning of a separate law on provinces, while the *kalāhom* and the rest of the military *kram* belonged in the preceding law with the other great ministries and councillors. This, however, would violate the separation of civil (*bala rōan*) and military (*dahār*) departments believed to have been instituted by Trailok. If, on the other hand, it can be shown that this division was not felt necessary until later, the suggested earlier arrangement of the two laws is easier to accept.

The collation of the dates and royal titles of the two laws below shows that *a priori* the derivation of one from the other may not be determined. Some elements of both are suspect. The first contains not *trailokanāth*, the expected title, but *trailokanāyak*, found in no other text, while the second adds *rāmādhipatī*, inappropriate in every way with respect to current views on Ayutthayan regnal periods.¹¹⁶

I *śubhamāstu* 1298 *sunākkha sāñvācchara: kālpākṣya dāsamī tṛṣṭhī ādityavāra*

II *śubhamāstu* 1298 *śaka sunākkha sāñvajcha:ra: kālpākkhe dāsamī tithī yāñ ādityavāra*
1298 dog year 10th Sunday

I *braḥ pād samtec braḥ param trailokanāyak tilak phū pen cau klau*

II *braḥ pād samtec braḥ rāmādhipatī śrī param trailokanāth*

His Majesty (.....royal titles.....)

I *bhūvamaṇḍala sakal āñācākr āgapurisotam param pabitr braḥ buddhi cau ayū*

II *param pabitr braḥ buddhi cau ayū*

¹¹⁴ **Laws I**, pp. 219-327.

¹¹⁵ Burnay, "Inventaire" I, p. 156 recognized that the "deux morceaux sont, en réalité, les deux divisions d'une même loi".

¹¹⁶. See respectively **Laws I**, p. 219 and 316.

.....
 I *hua sathity ña braḥ dhinán penca: rátnamahā prāsād toy purbābhimukh cūñ*
 II *hua sathity ayū ña: braḥ dhinán penca rátnamahā prāsād toy pūrbhābhimukh*
) while in the (.....name of palace.....) on the East
 I *cau bañā dharrmādhīpatī śrī ratna maṇḍiyarpāl krāp páṅgam dūl braḥ karruṇā* II
cau bañā dharrmādhīpatī śrī rátna mahā maṇḍiyarpāl krāp páṅgam dūl braḥ karruṇā
 (.....the Palace Minister.....) addressed His Majesty

One revelation of late tampering is that the official to whom the law is addressed in both preambles is the *cau bañā* ... etc., Minister of the Palace (*ván*) whose *yaśa* title in the body of the laws is still *òkbañā*. As noted above, the period in which the *òk* titles were abolished is uncertain, and this particular official was known as *cau bañā* as early as the first part of the 17th century.¹¹⁷ The preamble might then be at least that early, with the body of the laws even earlier. Since, however, his *yaśa* within the law is *òk bañā*, it is preferable to impute the preamble to Rama I. Also of interest is that these laws which concern the entire administrative structure are addressed to the *ván*, illustrating his capacity as *agahmahāsenādhīpatī*, and perhaps indicating that the original law dates from a time before the *cákri* and *kalāhom* had attained their high positions.

In the **Hierarchy Laws** the principal officers are listed according to the familiar four-fold ranking system, in the order in which they occur of *yaśa* (hierarchical titles), *rājadinnām* (formal titles indicating the position held), *tāṃhnèñ* (grade of office), and *śaktinā* (numerical dignity marks), although in some cases it is difficult to make a distinction between the second and third of these types of rank.¹¹⁸

In the law texts, because the use of *yaśa* is inconsistent, *śaktinā* is the best indicator of levels of rank, and thus I list below the heads of the main departments accordingly. There were nine officials in the Civil Hierarchy with the highest *śaktinā* of 10,000 who, together with the *kalāhom* and two other officers listed in the Military Hierarchy, seem to have made up the highest level, below the king, of the central government. They were:

<u>10,000 [hmün]śaktinā</u>	
<i>cau bañā</i>	<i>mahā uparāj</i>
<i>cau bañā cákri śrī aṅgrakṣ</i>	<i>samuha: nāyak agramahāsenādhīpatī...eku</i>
<i>bañā yamarāj</i>	<i>kram braḥ nagarpāl [mōañ]</i>
<i>òk ñā baldeb rājasenāpatī krahsetrādhīpatī [nā]</i>	
<i>òk bañā śrī dharrmarāj</i>	<i>koṣādhīpatī [glán]</i>
<i>òk bañā dhārmādhīpatī</i>	<i>maldīarpāl [ván] aga:mahāsenādhīpatī</i>
<i>òk ñā braḥ satec</i>	<i>śrī subaharāj...</i>

¹¹⁷. See note 88 above. He was not, however, given this title in La Loubère.

¹¹⁸. They are listed here in the order followed in actual titles. Akin, pp. 21, lists them as "four related methods of ranking...the *sakdina* [sic], the *yot* [*yaśa*], the honorific names [*rājadinnām*], and government position [*tāṃhnèñ*]".

braḥ mahārājgrū bramacāriyādhipatī śrī buddhācāry
braḥ mahārājgrū braḥ rāj pra:rohitācāry...buddhācāry
cau bañā mahāsenāpatī samuha braḥ kalāhom
òk bañā śrī rāj tejojaiy
òk bañā śrī rāj tejojaiy dāy nām

The titles have been segmented to facilitate comparison of *yaśa*, *rājadinnām* and *tāmhnèn*, and ellipses indicate portions which have been omitted. In the case of the first named, there seems to be no *rājadinnām* preceding the *tāmhnèn*, and in fact, since this title seems to mean *cau bañā* of the *mahā uparāj*, there is not even a *tāmhnèn* in the sense this is found in the other titles. For the two *mahārājgrū* I find it difficult to distinguish these two elements. Words in brackets are the conventional designations for the ministers of 'city', 'fields', 'treasury', and 'palace' respectively.

With respect to the structure outlined by Quaritch Wales there are several things to note here. Judged by *śaktinā* all of these positions would appear to be co-ordinate, equal ranking branches of the administration, but if their *yaśa* is examined differences appear, not all of which are easy to explain.

A second point is that there were indeed, as Quaritch Wales and other writers have indicated, two "chief ministers", *ag(r)amahāsenādhipatī*, but the *kalāhom*, chief of the "military division", was not one of them. They were the *cākrī*, chief of the 'Civil Division', and the *vān*, Minister of the Palace, although the *cākrī* who was *śrī aṅgrakṣ*, 'royal bodyguard', was superior, shown by his designation *ek u*.

The *yaśa* of the other five ministers of 10,000 *śaktinā* seem to be *bañā (mōaṅ)*, *òkñā (nā* and *braḥ satec*), the latter of whom, according to Quaritch Wales, was chief of church administration, but who, for La Loubère, was governor of the city of Siam.¹¹⁹ Although *braḥ* would seem to be the *yaśa* of the two Brahman officials, the *mahārājgrū*, this is not certain, as will be indicated. If the law is not corrupt it would seem to indicate two levels of rank set up at different times, one providing for 10,000 *śaktinā* and another with two or three different grades of *yaśa*.

The picture, however, is further complicated by evidence that some of the *yaśa* titles had more than one type of meaning. Thus the official who was head of church administration or governor of the city was *òkñā braḥ satec*, apparently combining two *yaśa* titles. But *braḥ* besides being third or fourth highest *yaśa* title had a very old function as a high title meaning 'sacred' or 'royal', especially in a Khmer context, and *satec* also, in Khmer, could mean 'king'.¹²⁰ Another example of

¹¹⁹ Quaritch-Wales, p. 93; La Loubère, p. 88. There may have been a complete change in the duties of this official, for Loubère's description is clear and convincing, but all references to the *braḥ satec* in the laws show him to have had religious functions.

¹²⁰. The title *braḥ/vrah pāda*, 'royal feet', was the Old Khmer equivalent of 'His Majesty', and was preserved in Ayutthaya, as can be seen from the preamble of the law in question which refers to the king as *braḥ pāda samtec braḥ parama...etc.*

this Khmer use of *braḥis* in the *tāṃhnèṅ* of the *cau bañā mahā senāpatī*. The title indicating either church official or city governor, then, was *òkñā* by *yaśa* and *braḥ* was part of his *rājadinnām*.

This distinction is important in assessing the rank of the two Brahman officials, *braḥ mahārā jagrū*, etc., who seem to have no *yaśa*, but whose titles, combining *rājadinnām* and *tāṃhnèṅ*, use *braḥ* in the Old Khmer sense, and who are both outside the *yaśa* hierarchy and perhaps as high as the highest *yaśa* level. That they indeed were outside that hierarchy, and belonged to a different part of the administration is seen in the **Dharmanūn Law** where they are not listed as possessing any seals, meaning that they did not have executive authority.¹²¹

Neither can the *bañā* rank for the *mōaṅ* minister be automatically considered to represent only the third level *yaśa*, for the title *bañā*, like *braḥ*, has an older meaning, the 'senior nobles of the realm' in the Mon kingdoms, and an independent ruler in the northern Thai principalities.¹²²

One final remark on the officials of 10,000 *śaktinā* level concerns the first listed, the *cau bañā mahā uparāj*. It would appear from a 19th-century point of view that he was the chief officer of the Front Palace Establishment, thus *cau bañā* of the *mahā uparāj*, although Quaritch Wales thought that it was a different office, to which La Loubère had referred, and which had long been abolished. It was not to be confused with "the *braḥ Maha Uparāja*...a very exalted prince with the *śakti nā* grade of 100,000", who was heir apparent and prince of the Front Palace, *vāṅ hnā*.¹²³ Quaritch Wales, influenced by 19th-century practice, conflated two or three things which should be kept separate. The section of the **Hierarchy Law** which lists the *śaktinā* rank of 100,000, calls the official in question just *mahā uparāj*. This was also the rank cited by La Loubère who wrote "*Maha Obarat*", also called *cau bañā mahā uparāj*, describing him as a Viceroy who represented the king and performed regal functions when the king was absent. In neither case is he identified with the Front Palace, and in La Loubère it is clear that he was not the heir apparent.¹²⁴

Van Vliet, fifty years earlier, had still more interesting things to say about him, and about the ministers of the central government in general. In his "Description of the Kingdom of Siam" he provided two different lists of the ministers. In the first he described the four ministers who were involved in collecting revenue. They were *òkñā vāṅ*, "president of the king's council", *òkñā baldeb*, "chief purveyor of the kingdom" [Minister of Fields (*nā*)], *òkñā cákrī*, "chief of the army and the navy and minister of interior", and *òkñā braḥ glān*, "chief of the king's warehouses, keeper of the great seal and intermediary for the foreigners". Van Vliet added that each of them had about one-fourth of the administration of the country and received one-fourth of the revenues.¹²⁵ If this is

¹²¹ See below, pp. 41-42, on the possible comparative significance.

¹²² H.L. Shorto, "The 32 Myos in the Medieval Mon Kingdom", BSOAS 26/3 (1963), pp. 578-9.

¹²³ Quaritch Wales, *Administration*, p. 77, 23, 31.

¹²⁴ La Loubère, pp. 95, 102. La Loubère legalistically refused to call him 'Chancellor', because he did not have use of the king's seal. Here and below I transcribe the *ad hoc* renditions of Thai titles by European writers in the graphic system of Thai transliteration, even within quotations from those authors.

¹²⁵ Jeremias van Vliet, "Description of the Kingdom of Siam". The two lists of ministers are on pp. 27-28 and 59. The identity of the 'great seal' attributed by van Vliet to the *glān* is uncertain.

accurate, it suggests a provincial organization quite different from anything known later, a matter to be discussed below.

Van Vliet's second list was more complete. Here he placed the *òkñā uparāj* before the six ministers as "first mandarin and *stadholder*", seemingly duties similar to those ascribed by La Loubère. Van Vliet also said if a king died without a designated successor the *òkñā uparāj*, *vāñ*, *baldeb*, *cákrī*, and *braḥ glāñ* had to represent the king and rule until a new king was chosen.¹²⁶ Thus clearly the *uparāj* was not then the heir apparent. The heir apparent was, however, termed 'front', *fāy hnā*, and in Van Vliet's day was supposed to be a brother of the king.¹²⁷ Following the *òkñā uparāj* were again the *òkñā vāñ*, "president of His Majesty's secret council", *òkñā baldeb*, "chief purveyor", *òkñā cákrī*, "chief over the political, military, ecclesiastical and civil affairs", *òkñā kalāhom*, "general over the elephants and over the armed forces afoot and on horseback", *òkñā braḥ glāñ*, "counsel and leader of all foreign affairs at the court and keeper of the great seal", and *òkñā yamarāj*, "chief judge for criminal and civil cases in [Ayutthaya]". Note that the *mōañ* minister is last. The significance of the 'great seal' of the *glāñ* is still not explained.

Van Vliet's observations are valuable as evidence that the structure of the central government as outlined in the **Hierarchy Law** is not aberrant, but represents reality at a certain time. The *vāñ* was really a sort of first minister, ranking even above the *cákrī*; and the *kalāhom*, not only was not a prime minister, but was inferior to both, being merely a 'general', while overall control of the military, as well as civilian affairs, lay with the *cákrī* in the so-called 'civil division'. In this respect the structure of the **Hierarchy Law** postdates van Vliet, and seems to fit approximately the time of La Loubère. The *yaśa*, consistently *òkñā* as recorded by van Vliet are in accord with this, for in the **Hierarchy Law** all but the *baldeb* and the *yamarāj* among the six ministers have higher ranks. La Loubère did not provide a full coherent list, but noted that both the *braḥ glāñ* and the *braḥ satec* were *òkñā*, and the former sometimes *bañā*, and the *yamarāj* *òkñā*, but he did not provide the *yaśa* of the *cákrī* or *kalāhom*.¹²⁸

In the **Dharmmanūn Law**, which shows several signs of editing at the time of the 1805 codification, the *cákrī*, *glāñ*, *vāñ*, and *kalāhom* ministers are ranked as *cau bañā*, and the *mōañ*, *nā*, and *braḥ satec* as *bañā*.

The real chief minister's post in the 17th century, however, was one which disappeared, and by the late 18th century had been assimilated to heir apparent. This was the *òkñā uparāj* or *mahā uparāj*, whose status resembled a *stadholder* for van Vliet, and a viceroy for La Loubère.

Turpin, in the time of King Taksin, wrote that "they formerly had an 'Oberat' (*uparāj*), whose functions and privileges were about the same as our ancient Palace Mayors (*maires de palais*)". By his time that office had been abolished, and he implies that the *uparāj* had been non-royal. Turpin otherwise described a four-minister government, under the *bañā cákrī*, "chief of the State Council...and all the business of the provinces", a *braḥ glāñ*, who was "first minister", in charge of foreign affairs, the *bañā yamarāj*, in charge of justice, and a *bañā baldeb*, in charge of

¹²⁶ Van Vliet, "Description", p. 59.

¹²⁷ Van Vliet, "Historical Account", p. 87, concerning King Prasat Thong.

¹²⁸ La Loubère, pp. 80, 88.

land, including management of the royal domain, inheritance, and corvée, which implies registration of the population.¹²⁹

Possibly the two references to *mahā uparāj* in the **Hierarchy Law**, one with 100,000 *śaktinā* and one with 10,000, represent in the first instance a 19th-century interpolation after the term *uparāj* had become a very high royal title for the heir apparent, or else 100,000 was *śaktinā* for a royal prince in that position, and 10,000 was *śaktinā* for a non-royal person.

At the next lower level were officials who had *śaktinā* of 5,000, namely:

* <i>braḥ udaiydharm</i>	royal apparel
* <i>òkbraḥ rājasubhāva:tī...braḥ surásvatī klān</i>	central registrar
<i>braḥ bedrājādhipatī...samuha: braḥ gajapāl</i>	elephant corps
<i>braḥ surindrājādhipatī...samuha: braḥ gajapāl</i>	elephant corps
* <i>braḥ bejbijaiy cāñvāñ kram lòm braḥ rājavāñ</i>	palace guards
<i>braḥ rājagrū</i> (2)	brahmans
* <i>braḥ rājabhaktī</i>	a treasurer
* <i>òkbraḥ śrī bhūriyprījārāj...śrī sārālákṣṇa</i>	scribes

[rewritten as: **braḥ udaiydharm*, royal apparel; **òkbraḥ rājasubhāva:tī...braḥ surásvatī klān*, central registrar; *braḥ bedrājādhipatī...samuha: braḥ gajapāl*, elephant corps; *braḥ surindrājādhipatī...samuha: braḥ gajapāl*, elephant corps; **braḥ bejbijaiy cāñvāñ kram lòm braḥ rājavāñ*, palace guards; *braḥ rājagrū* (2), brahmans; **braḥ rājabhaktī*, a treasurer; **òkbraḥ śrī bhūriyprījārāj...śrī sārālákṣṇa*, scribes]

All of these, except the second-named officer of the elephant corps and the brahman officials, were supposed to be chiefs of independent *kram* directly subordinate to the king, and five of them, marked with an asterisk above, plus the *òkñā braḥ satec* with 10,000 *śaktinā*, were considered in the 19th century to form the group known as the six *mantrī* (councillors).¹³⁰ The treasurer is generally known as chief of the *glān mahā sampatī*, a treasury separate from that of the *koṣādhipatī* (*glān*), although this designation does not figure in his titles. Their *yaśa*, *braḥ* and *òkbraḥ*, are all equivalent, although the two forms are unlikely to have been used at the same time, and are evidence for hasty editing when the new code was produced..

The officials of this level do not form a coherent group, nor can any number of them be classified as a special group of king's councillors, as they were in the Bangkok period. The *braḥ udaiydharm*, in charge of royal apparel, was mentioned by La Loubère, who considered him, and

¹²⁹. François Henri Turpin, *Histoire Civile et Naturelle du Royaume de Siam*, 2 vol., Paris, chez Costard, Librairie, r. S. Jean de Beauvais, M.DCC.LXXI, Vol. I, pp. 94-98.

¹³⁰ Quaritch-Wales, pp. 80-81; Akin, pp. 68-69, is unclear, saying only "some of the important *krom* [*kram*] which were directly under the king" were The Registrar, and "another *krom* which...should have been [sic!] an important *krom*, was *Krom Lukkhun*", the Brahmans. **Laws I**, pp. 244, 248, 250, 250, 260, 265,267, 272 respectively.

all palace officials, to be more influential than indicated by their ranks, because of their proximity to the king. Interestingly, La Loubère gives him *yaśa* of *òkñā*, higher than that recorded in the **Hierarchy Law**, the reverse of the situation of the highest level officials who are accorded higher *yaśa* in the law than they had in the 17th century. The same is true of a deputy of *braḥ udaiydharrm, rājvaṅṣā*, whom La Loubère called *òkbraḥ*, but who in the law is classified as *khun*.¹³¹ These discrepancies suggest the editing process, with lower ranking departments neglected when ranks were updated in a new recension.

The 'military' division

The structure of the military does not appear as Quaritch Wales described it, or as it was in the 19th century; and I would prefer to speak of *dahār* division, without prejudice about its meaning, since a clear civil/military distinction is not deducible from the laws, nor from van Vliet, La Loubère, or Turpin.

The form of the law text itself is anomalous, as has been described above; and before the recension of Rama I it would appear that the *kalāhom* and the rest of the military sections were included in a single text with, and following, the 'civilian' departments. Indeed, some departments with clear military duties, such as the elephant corps, the cavalry, and certain others, are still included in the civilian part of the law, and their subordination to one or another of the great ministers is not clear. Van Vliet implied that the elephant corps was under the *kalāhom* in his day, but it was separate when La Loubère wrote, as it is in the **Hierarchy Law**, and with equivalent rank, *òkbraḥ* according to La Loubère, *braḥ* in the law.¹³²

The first officer mentioned in the *dahār* division is of course the *cau bañā mahāsenāpatī ...samuha braḥ kalāhom* with *śaktinā* of 10,000. Subordinate to him are two more fairly important officers, *braḥ [yaśa] dharrmatrailok [rājadinnām] samuha braḥ kalāhom [tāmhnèṅ]* and *hlvaṅ [yaśa] śrī sāvarājbhāktī [rājadinnām] śrī samuha braḥ kalāhom [tāmhnèṅ]*, the first with 3,000 *śaktinā* and the second with 2,400.

Then there are six officers who all seem to be included under a heading *bañā rāma caturāṅ ga cāhvāṅ āsā 6 hlau*, which I shall only attempt to translate to the extent of '*bañā rāma caturāṅ ga* chiefs of the 6 groups/types of *āsā* (volunteers?)'. The first two, like the *cau bañā mahā senā patī* have *śaktinā* of 10,000. Their *yaśa*, *òkbañā*, may also be equivalent to that of the *kalāhom*; and their *rājadinnām* (they have no *tāmhnèṅ*) ends, like his, with *a:bhaiybirīyaparākramabhāhu*. Furthermore the second in command of their *kram*, the *bahlat dūl chlòṅ*, held *śaktinā* of 1,000, like the *bahlat* of the *cau bañā mahā senāpatī*, and the third ranking officer in their *kram*, again like the corresponding officer under the *cau bañā mahā senāpatī*, held 800 *śaktinā*. All the evidence of the law text, then, is that these officers were of equal rank with the *cau bañā mahā senāpatī* and headed their own distinct *kram*, not included under the *kalāhom*.¹³³

They are followed by four officers of 5,000 *śaktinā* and with *braḥ* as their *yaśa*. Each was chief of a separate *kram*, with no indication of subordination to a superior *kram*. A relationship to

¹³¹ La Loubère, pp. 102, 96-97; **Laws I**, p. 244.

¹³² La Loubère, p. 89, with a comment on van Vliet; **Laws I**, pp. 244, 250.

¹³³. **Laws I**, pp. 278-280.

the *bañā rāma caturaṅga*, mentioned above, may be discerned in the description of the seals of office of these four persons, in all of which a Ramayana motif is dominant, thus "Bālī holding a sword", "Aṅgata holding a flag", "Aṅgata seated on a dais", and "Haṇumān holding a tree branch".¹³⁴

There is nothing in the law text to justify Quaritch Wales' supposition of an original four-branch *caturaṅga* which then broke down into a six-fold arrangement. On the contrary the occurrence of this term in the titles indicates that for the Thai of Ayutthaya it no longer had its original Indian meaning and was simply a term used in connection with the military. It is found, not necessarily exclusively, in the titles of the following officials of the *kram* under discussion:

- bañā rāma caturaṅga*, discussed above
- khun caturaṅga vijaiybahlāt*, 800 *śaktinā* (*kram* 2)
- khun còm caturaṅga pahlāt khen* (*kram* 5)
- khun caturaṅga bayuhbahlāt khen*, 800 *śaktinā* (*kram* 6)
- hmün mahā caturaṅga samupāñjīy*, 400 *śaktinā*
- hmün hmū caturaṅga samupāñjīy*, 400 *śaktinā*

The last two belonged to two *kram* listed immediately after the six major ones. In addition to the above, the law on *dahār* shows a large number of lesser *kram*, that is, with lower *śaktinā*. Some of them provide evidence on the time at which the structure recorded in the law came into being. The next highest rank in terms of *śaktinā* were two officers with 3000, then several with 2000. Among the latter were the commanders of the "Great Right" and "Great Left" *tāmrvac*, respectively entitled *Hlvañ bireṇṇdeppatī* and *Braḥ inṇdeppatī*. These titles are well known in Ayutthayan history as belonging to the officers, then ranked *khun*, who in 1548 led the coup against *khun* Voravongsa, enabling King Mahā Cakraphat to take the throne; and as a reward the former of the two officers, who was a member of the old royal family of Sukhothai, was granted the status of ruler of Phitsanulok, with a traditional Sukhothai royal title *samtec mahā dharmarājādhirāj*.¹³⁵ This was a step in the return to power of Sukhothai royalty which culminated with the Burmese invasion in 1569. The background of *Inṇdeb/Indradeb* is not given in the chronicles, but they say his reward was to be named *cau bra:yā śrī dharmasokarāj*, title of the governor of Sukhothai in the **Hierarchy Law**. The RA chronicle, however, in contrast to its predecessors, says he was given that title as governor of Nakhon Sri Thammarat. RA is probably in error, particularly since the

¹³⁴ **Laws I**, pp. 280-82. Bālī and Aṅgata, like Haṇumān, were monkey heroes in the *Rāmāyāna*, including Thai and Khmer versions.

¹³⁵ **Laws I**, pp. 286-289. The story is in RA, pp. 79-82, where the titles are in more correct etymological spelling, *birendradeb*, i.e., *vīrendradeva*, and *indradeb*. These two titles are very Angkorean in form, though not found in Angkor records. Note that in Angkor all titles ending in *-deva* denoted persons, usually living, not gods.

governors of Phichay and Sawankhalok were involved in the coup, which appears to have been a reaction of northern nobles.¹³⁶

In the **Hierarchy Law** these two *kram* contain the unusual number of nine titles belonging to officers mentioned in the "2/k.125 Fragment", which is a story of the 1430s-1440s, the time when the old Sukhothai kingdom was being absorbed into Ayutthaya. There is also one title, *śrī yodhā*, found in inscription no. 86 in Phitsanulok, and *In śaraśākti* (Nāy Inda Saraśakti), who is prominent in a Sukhothai inscription.¹³⁷ This suggests that in origin these *kram* were originally from the north and commanded by Sukhothai princes, and remained as such from the time of Trailok until the end of the 16th century.

The state councils: *lūk khun śālā* and *lūk khun sār hlvañ*

Quaritch Wales's description of the two state councils is also misleading. The first was the "*lūk khun śālā*, a council of ministers and heads of chief departments of state, presided over in the absence of the king by the head of the civil division". The second was the *lūk khun śālā hlvañ*, a supreme court of Brahman judicial advisers", which "...consisted of twelve Brahman officials (who strangely enough, alone among officials retained the old Thai appellation *lūk khun*)". Their chiefs were the *braḥ mahā rāja guru purohita* and the *braḥ mahā rāja guru mahidhara*.¹³⁸

These two councils are not found in any laws before the 18th century, and the expression *lūk khun* itself is absent from the **Hierarchy Law**, thus never associated with the brahmins except as members of that council when that council is treated in other laws, and in its use it is clear that *lūk khun* was not a special designation for brahmins. In Sukhothai *lūk khun* meant simply high-ranking officials, and reference to them in 18th-century laws among the **Three Seals** indicates the same.¹³⁹ Where the brahmins are listed in the **Civil Hierarchy Law** it is impossible to determine whether there were 12, or over 20.¹⁴⁰ Moreover, in three lists of the members of the *lūk khun sār/sān hlvañ*, as it is called in the laws, dated 1743, 1758, and 1783, the number of members were respectively 11, 7, and 7, not all the same, and not all brahmins.¹⁴¹

lūk khun śālā

1743

1758

1783

¹³⁶ RA, pp. 79-82. The Pāncāndanumās Chronicle (*Braḥ rāj bañśāvatār kruñ śrī ayutthayā chapāp pāncāndanumās [cöm]*), which was a source for RA, p. 32, just gives him that title without reference to Nakhon Sri Thammarat; **Laws I**, p. 320.

¹³⁷ A.B. Griswold and Prasert ṇa Nagara, *EHS* 1, "A Declaration of Independence and its Consequences", *JSS* 56/2 (July 1968), pp. 207-250, see p. 231.

¹³⁸ Q.W., *Administration*, pp. 74, 80-81.

¹³⁹ The Sukhothai evidence is the comparison of the near bilingual Khmer and Thai inscriptions (nos. 4 and 5) of Lithai in which the officials who welcomed an important monk on his arrival in Sukhothai were called *āmātya mantrī rājakula* in no. 4 and *lūk cau lūk khun* in no. 5. See also, **Palatine Law**, article 78, **Laws I**, p. 102; and article 80, p. 103.

¹⁴⁰ **Laws I**, pp. 265-66.

¹⁴¹ The three lists are respectively in *Kāmhnat kau* 11, dated 1743, **Laws IV**, p. 324; *Kaṭ 36 khò*, 1758, **Laws IV**, p. 229; and *Braḥ rāja paññat 2*, 1783, **Laws IV**, p. 261.

<i>cau bañā abhāyāraja</i>	<i>cau bañā śaraśrī</i>	<i>cau bañā rātanābibit</i>
<i>ṇarārddhitej</i>	<i>cau bañā jāṃnāñ</i>	([acting] <i>samuha nāyak</i>)
<i>bañā kra:lāhom</i>	<i>parirākṣ</i>	<i>cau bañā mahāsenā</i>
<i>bañā braḥ glān</i>	<i>bañā kra:lāhom</i>	<i>bañā baldeb</i>
<i>bañā baldeb</i>	<i>bañā dharmā</i>	<i>cau bañā bejbijaiy</i>
<i>bañā rāj subhāva:tī</i>	<i>bañā baldeb</i>	<i>bañā śrī dhārmādhirāj</i>
<i>bañā sampātibāl</i>	<i>bañā rāj bhāktī</i>	<i>bañā yamarāj</i>
<i>bañā rāj bhāktī</i>	<i>bañā yamarāj</i>	<i>bañā braḥ glān</i>
<i>bañā rātnādhipeṭ</i>	<i>braḥ kāṃbèṅ</i>	<i>bañā dhārmā</i>
<i>braḥ mahā āṃmāt</i>	<i>cahmūn samō cairāj</i>	<i>bañā dharrmatrailok</i>
<i>braḥ asura:senā</i>		<i>bañā sudharmamantrī</i>
<i>braḥ vijitṇa:rañ</i>		<i>bañā sura:senā</i>
<i>braḥ birendeb</i>		<i>bañā bibādakoṣā</i>
		<i>bañā rājnikun</i>
		<i>bañā mahā āṃmāty</i>

This does appear to have been a council of the officers in charge of the most important government departments, although only in the 1783 list was the first-named, presumably the presiding officer, the [acting] head of the 'Civil Division'. In 1743 and 1758 the council was headed by officers who are not mentioned in other contexts of the laws, although *cau bañā abhāyāraja* is mentioned in the chronicles. The head of the *kalāhom* was always second or third, and was followed by the other principal ministers, though in varying order. [NOTE: in printed text this Par is before the lists, and begins "The first does..."]

lūk khun sār hlvañ

<u>1743</u>	<u>1758</u>	<u>1783</u>
<i>braḥ śrī mahosath</i>	<i>braḥ rāj grū braḥ grū</i>	<i>braḥ mahā rāj grū</i>
	<i>bijeṭ</i>	<i>mahidhar</i>
<i>hlvañ ṇāṇapra:kāṣ</i>	<i>braḥ cákra:pāñī</i>	<i>braḥ grū bijet</i>
<i>hlvañ deb rāj dhātā</i>	<i>braḥ dharmasātr</i>	<i>braḥ grū birām</i>
<i>hlvañ dharmasātr</i>	<i>braḥ kṣem</i>	<i>braḥ deb rāj dhātā</i>
<i>hlvañ áthyā</i>	<i>khun lvañ braḥ kraist</i>	<i>hlvañ áthyā</i>
<i>khun rāj ṛddhānan</i>	<i>khun rāj biniccai</i>	<i>hlvañ dharmasātr</i>
<i>khun nanda:sen</i>	<i>khun śrī dharrmarāj</i>	<i>hlvañ ṇāṇapakāṣ</i>
<i>khun rājbiniccai</i>		
<i>khun ājñā cák</i>		
<i>khun purindhar</i>		
<i>khun deb ājñā</i>		

In the list of 1743 the first title, presumably the president of the court, was the chief of the medical *kram*, which in the **Hierarchy Law** precedes the brahmans' *kram*. If it be argued that the

doctors were also brahmans, then that *kram* increases in membership to over 40 officials. The sixth and seventh of the list, *khun rāj ṛddhānan* and *khun nanda:sen*, are found in the outer section of the palace department (*vān nòk*) with *yaśa* of *òkbraḥ*; and the last four, *khun rājbiniccai*, *khun ā jñā cāk*, *khun purindhar*, *khun deb ājñā*, belonged to the department of the *cákrī*, or *mah ātdai*.¹⁴²

In the lists of 1758 and 1783 all the names belong to the 'brahman' group in the **Hierarchy Law**, except the last in the 1758 list, *khun śrī dharrmarāj*, who elsewhere appears only in *kām hnat hmai*, where he is described as the one who received cases to be judged in the court.¹⁴³ Thus this was not just a council of brahmans, but of judicial officials from various ministries, including brahmans. There seems to be vague reference to one or another of these councils in the 17th-century European writings. Schouten noted a college of 12 councillors with one president who decided all appeals, and this is the number of the *lūk khun śālā* in 1743. Van Vliet, on the contrary, wrote that "...in [Ayutthaya] is a court of nine councillors, ...five *òkñā*, two *òkbraḥ* (*òkbraḥ Olak* [probably *ālakṣṇ*], chief secretary of the king, is one of them) and two *òkhlvān*". *Òkñā yamarāj* [the *mōan* Minister] was president for life, and this council was the highest court of justice. The king's 'chief secretary' was probably *òkbraḥ śrī bhūriyprījārāj senāpatī śrī sāralakṣṇ*, one of the officials with 5,000 rank described above.¹⁴⁴ La Loubère surprisingly, given his interest in and knowledge of law, had little to say about the law courts and councils in the capital, although going into some detail about provincial courts. He concurs with van Vliet that the *òkñā yamarāj* was the "President of the Tribunal of the City of *Siam*".¹⁴⁵ If these 17th-century references are to the council known in the 18th century as *lūk khun śālā*, the position of the *yamarāj* had suffered a serious decline.

Another group of central government officials whom La Loubère considered important were four officers who commanded the forty-four *mahātlek*, and were entitled "*Meuing [hmün] Vai, ...Sarapet, ...Semeungtchai, ...Sii*". "All four are very considerable *Nai*...and though they have only the title of [*hmün*], they cease not to be Officers in chief". They are identifiable in the **Hierarchy Law** as respectively, the four *hmün vaivaranāt*, *sāra:bejbhaktī samōcairāj*, and, apparently, *śrī saurāk*, who are not mentioned by Quaritch Wales and who in the **Hierarchy Law** come after the royal family, *mahātlek*, the harem, and minor palace personnel.¹⁴⁶

Conclusions about the central government before Rama I

When the **Hierarchy Law** is read without prejudice it shows a table of organization different from that hypothesized on the basis of 19th-century practice as the culmination of an evolution from the government of King Trailokanāth. The evidence of 17th-century European

¹⁴². All these six are listed in the **Civil Hierarchy Law**, pp. 225, 238-9. The association of the first-named with the *sār hlvañ* is mentioned in *Kāmhnat kau* 16, **Laws V**, p. 11, dated 1643; and *Kāmhnat kau* 50, **Laws V**, p. 155, dated 1740, lists the last three as representatives of the *cakrī* on the *sār hlvañ*.

¹⁴³. *Kāmhnat hmai* 6, 1784, p. 210.

¹⁴⁴. Schouten, p. 13; Van Vliet, "Description", p. 69.

¹⁴⁵. La Loubère, pp. 82-88.

¹⁴⁶. La Loubère, p. 10; **Laws I**, p. 223.

observers, moreover, demonstrates that the structure of the **Hierarchy Law** very closely approximates the existing government structure between Naresuan and Naray, with some of the differences due to revisions made in 1805. It is not possible to infer anything about the pre-Naresuan government, let alone the system which prevailed at the time of Trailokanāth, or of Rāmā dhipatī I in mid-14th century.

For comparison let us view this structure in a diagram, which is a composite of the evidence of the **Hierarchy Law**, van Vliet and La Loubère, and which has been designed to facilitate comparison with other systems.

Table One Government Structure in the 17th-18th centuries

The King	
Heir apparent, king's brother	
<i>Mahā uparāj</i>	
10,000/100,000 <i>śaktinā</i>	
(not the heir apparent)	
'Civilian'	'Military'
<i>śaktinā</i> 10,000	<i>śaktinā</i> 10,000 each
Two 'chief ministers'	three chief generals
<i>vān cākṛī*</i>	<i>kalāhom tejo dāy nāṃ</i>
Four other ministers	Four <i>mahātlek</i> officers
(<i>catustambh</i> /4 pillars)**	'Brahmans'
<i>mōaṅ/yamarāj</i>	2 <i>mahā rāj grū</i>
<i>baldeb</i>	<i>śaktinā</i> 10,000
<i>glān</i>	2 <i>braḥ rāj grū</i>
<i>braḥ satec***</i>	<i>śaktinā</i> 5,000
	4 <i>palāt</i> (deputies)
	<i>śaktinā</i> 3,000
<i>śaktinā</i> 5,000****	<i>śaktinā</i> 5,000
	four officers
Royal apparel; Registrar; Elephant corps (2);	
Chief, Palace Guards; Treasurer, <i>mahā sampatī</i> ; Chief of scribes	

*Van Vliet indicates the *vān* was more important, while in La Loubère the *cākṛī/mahātdaiy* seems preeminent, and in the **Hierarchy Law** both are 'chief minister', with the latter more chiefly. There appears to have been a change in their statuses between Prasat Thong and Naray which is reflected in the law.

**In the Bangkok period the 'four pillars' were the *vān*, *mōaṅ*, *glān*, and *nā*. Van Vliet, without using that expression, said in one context that the four principal ministers were the *vān*, *nā*, *cākṛī*, and *glān*, thus showing the structural importance of '4' ministers in the information provided by his informants.

***The inclusion of the *braḥ satec* among the '4 pillars' is strictly hypothetical, for purposes of external comparison. La Loubère, who shows no awareness of '4 pillars', gives considerable importance to the *braḥ satec*, calling him "Governor of the City of *Siam*", a status which fits his *śaktinā* of 10,000 in the law, and which implies the *tāmhñèṅ 'braḥ nagarpāl'*, given in the Law to the *yamarāj*, chief of the *mōaṅ*. None of the references to '*catu stambh/stam*' in the **Three Seals**, most of which are in laws of, or imputable to, Rama I, includes the *braḥ satec*, but they exclude the two chief ministers, in those contexts the *mahātdaiy* and the *kalāhom*. If this exclusion prevailed at a time when the *vān* and *cākṛī* were chief ministers, and the *kalāhom* only a general, then the *braḥ satec* was the only other central official of status to be one of the 4 pillars.

****There is no indication in the **Hierarchy Law**, nor in Van Vliet or La Loubère, of the hierarchical link between all of these officials and the King. The officer of the royal apparel, as La Loubère noted, was probably always of the royal household, but the others might well have been subordinate to the *vān* ministry.

This table of organization of the central government, based on the **Three Seals** together with evidence from the 17th-century Europeans Schouten, van Vliet, and La Loubère, may not be imputed to a time before 1600, nor can the laws which reflect this system be imputed to an earlier date. We might in that case hypothesize that the system, and the legislation reflecting it, were from a Sukhothai structure imposed on Ayutthaya after 1569 by Kings Dharmarājādhirāja and Naresuan.

Besides this structure, there are still a few sections of the laws which name some of the principal ministers with other titles and with the *yaśa* of '*khun*', which by the 17th century was relatively low, but which earlier had been at or near the top of the hierarchy in several old Thai societies. These contexts are not in the **Hierarchy Law**, nor in any of the later **Decisions**, so it may be inferred that they are not late innovations back-dated in a few of the laws, but parts of earlier laws.

Most noticeable of these titles is *cau khun hlvañ sab ḷ nagarpāl*, the last term of which is the *tāmhnèñ* of the *mōañ* minister. Evidence that he was not simply a lower-ranking officer in that ministry is his position as the principal official to whom a king Rāmādhīpaḥ addressed his communication of a law, one of those included in **Miscellaneous**, at a date B.E. 1900 [A.D. 1359].¹⁴⁷ This relationship is reiterated on the next page, saying that the king spoke to *cau khun hlvañ sab ḷ* "and all the officials (*mukkh mantrī*)".

A similar context is in **Crimes Against the Government**, at a date lacking indication of the year, and obviously inserted within a previously existing text. There *khun sab ḷ rāj senāpat ṭ* reported to the king on offences committed by certain persons. Usually the '*rāj senāpat ṭ*' indicates a central government minister.¹⁴⁸

A third occurrence of the same title is in **Theft**, at a date B.E. 1910 [A.D. 1364], when *khun sab ḷ jaiy* made a report to a king Dharrmarājā Mahā Cākṛabarrī. Following this the king took counsel with the *khun malḍiarapāl*, the *khun phèn*, and the *khun śri mahosath*. The first of these three holds the *tāmhnèñ* of the palace ministry (*vāñ*), the second is unknown in **Three Seals**, and the third is listed in the **Hierarchy Law** as chief of the medical department.¹⁴⁹

What appears here is a structure of four principal ministers ('four pillars?'), of which the Minister of the City (*mōañ, nagarpāl*) was premier, and was followed by the Palace Minister (*vāñ, mandiarapāl*), and two others of which the fourth, now listed as medical chief, might originally have been a Minister of Rites. The *khun phèn*, whose title suggests *phèntin*, the kingdom, literally 'the surface of the land', sounds like an early version of the *mahātdaiy* Minister, that is a minister in charge of all general administration, with the duties of the *nā* as well. In this connection we may recall the remark made above, about the anomaly of the *mōañ* minister having precedence in the passage of the Annals attributing a reorganization of the ministries by King Trailokanāth, and his precedence, after the *cākṛī* in the **Hierarchy Law**, even though he did not have such precedence either in the 17th century or in the time of Rāma I. The rank of *khun* for ministers indicates early date, as seen in the 15th-century events described in the "2/k.125 Fragment", and as in the ranks before the reforms attributed to King Trailok, and they are ranked in the same order.

Perhaps in *khun sab ḷ jaiy nagarpāl* we have a relic of a time before the 17th century, even from early Ayutthaya, when the four principal ministries were those suggested by these obscure contexts. A possible hint of earlier importance of the *mahosath* officer is that in the listing of his section in the **Hierarchy Law** he is called *śrī aṅgrākṣ*, 'royal bodyguard', a title borne by no other minister in the **Hierarchy Law** except the *cākṛī*, and that right after the *mahātdaiy* section in the same law there is a peculiar inserted and partially dated (without year date) section in which the

¹⁴⁷. **Laws III**, p. 114.

¹⁴⁸. **Laws IV**, p. 89.

¹⁴⁹. **Laws III**, p. 290.

brah śrī mahosath is the principal officer receiving royal instructions concerning messengers in the *mahātdaiy*.¹⁵⁰ In a diagram it would be:

cau khun hlvañ sab ṛ jaiy nagarpāl (mōaṅ)
khun mañdiarapāl (vāñ)
khun phèn (= mahātdaiy/nā?)
khun śrī mahosath

External comparison

Hardly anything of this structure or terminology may be related to what is known of Angkorean organization; and at Angkor there was no system of numerical ranking, such as the system of *śaktinā*. One surprising possible connection with Angkor is the status of heir apparent, whom both Schouten and van Vliet insisted should be a brother of the king, not a son, unless there were no brothers.¹⁵¹

Relevant comparison, however, may be made with the Tai of northern Vietnam, Laos and southern China.

I have not found a fully detailed description of the Black and White Tai, but the available studies show comparable features. The traditional Black and White Tai political system described by George Condominas consisted of hierarchies of identically structured entities, from the household (*hüön/rüön*) upward through village (*bān*) to supravillage (*mōaṅ*), which "designates circumscriptions of different sizes" and different hierarchical importance, with the larger enclosing the smaller, and ranging from a small principality to a large state like Thailand. Above the *mōaṅ*, however, was the *cu*, grouping 12 *mōaṅ*, and ruled by a *cau mōaṅ* or *ātñā (ājñā)*¹⁵²

Among those Tai peoples there are clear traditional distinctions between nobility, commoners, and servile categories. All of the rulers of these groups are entitled *khun*, 'chao'/*cau*, ("which serves to designate the chiefs and princes and...is perpetuated...for the members of ruling

¹⁵⁰. **Laws I**, pp. 262, 227.

¹⁵¹. Schouten, p. 13; van Vliet, "Historical Account", pp. 32, 87. The importance of this, in principle, is seen in the identification of Trailokanāth as brother of his predecessor in van Vliet's *The Short History of the Kings of Siam*, p. 63, a detail in contradiction with all other sources (on the value of this source see Vickery, review article, *JSS* 64/2 (July 1976), pp. 207-36). Although the evidence is not perfectly consistent, it is likely that when feasible, succession in pre-Angkor and Angkor Cambodia was brother-to-brother. All Thai systems emphasize primogeniture.

¹⁵². Georges Condominas, *From Lawa to Mon, from Saa' to Thai*, Department of Anthropology, Research School of Pacific Studies, Australian National University, Canberra, 1990, pp. 35-36, 39. See review of Condominas by Michael Vickery in *Thai-Yunnan Project Newsletter*, Australian National University, Number Thirteen, June 1991, pp. 3-9. Further details about the *mōaṅ* and *cu* levels are from Pán Phomsombat, a Black Tai living in Vientiane, "Kān pokkhoñ Tai Dām" ('Black Tai Administration'), Typescript in Lao (26 pp.), kindly supplied by James Chamberlain.

families and high-ranking administrative titles"), 'tao'/*dāv* ("nobles"), or 'phia tao'/*bañā dāv*, "hereditary chiefs of the *mōaṅ*.¹⁵³

The Black Tai also had a system of '*śaktinā*' remuneration for high-ranking officials. A *cau mōaṅ* was entitled to rice land producing 1000 *hāp* of paddy along with one village or more, about 100 households, of people to cultivate his fields, care for his animals, construct and repair his buildings. As in Ayutthaya, these remunerations were attached to the function, not the person, and a *cau mōaṅ* who left his post lost them to his replacement. Lower levels of the hierarchy received land of 400, 50, 30, etc. *hāp*.¹⁵⁴

Among the Lue in southern China there was a king, the *cau phèntin*, a title also known in Ayutthaya and Sukhothai.¹⁵⁵ There was also an *uparāj* who was viceroy and who was supposed to be the king's first younger brother. As in 17th-century Ayutthaya, he was not heir apparent, the latter, unlike 17th-century Ayutthaya, being the king's eldest son.

The next level of government was the 'four great pillars of state', all members of the royal family, and consisting of a president with three other ministers, "His First Lordship'...minister of the administration of government, of finances and the revenue office--actually Prime Minister", the "minister of Justice and the Recorder of Population", and the "minister of the government's rations", which sounds very much like the 'purveyor' known to Van Vliet in Ayutthaya.¹⁵⁶

The business of government was conducted in two councils, Royal Outer Council (*sanām nòk*) and a Private Council (*sanām nai*), both under direct control of the king. The first included the 'four pillars' and other officials, including a representative of the *sanām nai*. The second, much larger, was under the presidency of the *cau hlvaṅ pasāt* [*prāsāda*], the Palace Minister. It included a large number of other officials who were also all members of the royal family, which itself was ranked in four grades of members.¹⁵⁷

These councils are reminiscent of the two *lūk khun* councils of Ayutthaya, although in Ayutthaya they did not have the same importance as organs of the central administration. As noted above, in Sukhothai the term *lūk khun* just meant high-ranking officials.

The highest rank of royalty consisted of eight persons, called the 'eight pillars of state'. They may be interestingly compared with some of the high-ranking Ayutthayan officials. As noted, the first was the Palace Minister, a situation like that recorded by van Vliet for early 17th-century Ayutthaya. The second was the *cau hlvaṅ nā phèn*, "supervisor of the civil administration, officer of the royal entourage", a description precisely parallel to that of the Ayutthayan *cákrī*, Chief Minister of the

¹⁵³. Condominas, pp. 40-44. The peculiar view of Condominas and Haudricourt (n. 28) that *khun* and *cau* are of Chinese origin would not be shared by most specialists in Thai linguistics. Note that *phia/fia* is from Mon *bañā*.

¹⁵⁴. Pán Phomsombat, pp. 9-10.

¹⁵⁵. Jacques Lemoine, "Tai Lue Historical Relation with China and the Shaping of the Sipsong Panna Political System", in *Proceedings of the International Conference on Thai Studies*, The Australian National University, Canberra, 3-6 July 1987, pp. 121-34. A difficulty with Lemoine's study is that it is entirely based on Chinese research, not on direct study of Lue documents or fieldwork; and apparently Lemoine is unfamiliar with Lue or other Thai languages. Thus many of the Lue terms are unrecognizable in his rendition, and some of his definitions, done through Chinese, seem inaccurate.

¹⁵⁶ Lemoine, p. 122. Their Lue titles are among the most unclear in Lemoine's exposition.

¹⁵⁷ Lemoine, pp. 122-3. The precise number of members is not clear from Lemoine's exposition.

mahātdaiy. His title '*phèn*' is also like that of a *khun* who followed a *khun malđiarpāl* ('palace') in a listing of officials which I have interpreted as ministers at a time preceding the raise in ranks attributed to Trailokanāth, and this coincidence points to a relationship between old Ayutthayan ranks and those of other Thai political systems. The term *phèn* probably refers to the surface of the land, as in *phèntin*, a term appropriate for a minister in charge of civil administration.¹⁵⁸

Following these two top ministers, the other six of the 'eight pillars' were a *cau hlvañ* of the right and one of the center (the left *cau hlvañ* was among the second rank of royalty) with military and hunting duties, a *cau hlvañ nā jāñ* in charge of elephants, a *cau hlvañ nā hòk* in charge of spears and rifles, a financial officer, and a *cau hlvañ* who was in charge of bookkeeping and head of the palace bodyguards. All of these functions are found in the Ayutthayan **Hierarchy Law**, and even almost in the same order. If the *cau hlvañ* of the right and center are assimilated to sections of the Ayutthayan *mahātdaiy*, such as the *kram* of the *hlvañ mahā āṃmātyādhīpatī* and of the *hlvañ cā sènpatī* with 3000 and 2400 *śaktinā* respectively, then the elephant corps follows later in the law, preceding an important palace treasury, the *glāñ mahāsampatī*, which precedes the department of scribes.¹⁵⁹

All Lue officials were ranked according to a numerical system of *nā* ('field'), based on numbers of measures (*hāp*) of rice to which they were entitled. Lemoine believed that "the Lue na: system...has probably been adapted from the sakđina system of the Central Thai after it had been established in Ayudhya by King Trailokanath in 1454".¹⁶⁰ On the contrary, whenever this system was adopted in Ayutthaya, it was probably part of a body of administrative traditions from a more ancient background in Thai areas to the north, and, as I shall argue below, the Ayutthayan Thai, the Black Tai, and the Lue would have adopted it from a system still farther to the north.

Also of comparative interest is that in the Lue system the *cau hlvañ* in charge of the *hāñ* 'soldiers', called "Great General leading the troops to the front", equivalent to the Ayutthayan *kalā hom*, was an official of the second rank, below the 'eight pillars', as the *kalāhom* appears in the **Hierarchy Law** when its 'military section' is viewed, as the text indicates it should be, as a continuing part of the main, 'civilian' part of the law. There were also Lue military ranks of *khun hā n*, 'army officer', and *phyā hāñ*, *cā hāñ*, *seen hāñ*, terms which must be compared with the Ayutthayan /thahaan/ (*dahār*).¹⁶¹

This term itself is mysterious. It does not seem to be Thai, is not found in Sukhothai inscriptions or in the Black Tai chronicles, nor in the best-known White Tai dictionary, and the Indic

¹⁵⁸ See above, p. 37 [167] for the earlier Ayutthayan structure. Lemoine, p. 124, says that *phèn* (his 'phae:n') means 'peacock', and the minister in question "cared for the peacock feathers...and during the great pageants...would carry the peacock feathers behind the *cau phèntin*". This explanation of *phèn* seems most unlikely. There is a word /pheen/ (written *bèn*), meaning the spreading of a peacock's (*nòk yuñ*) tail, and in Vientiane Lao it is also glossed as an ancient military rank, but only equivalent to *nāy bán*, 'chief of a thousand'.

¹⁵⁹. **Laws I**, pp. 224-226, 250, 267, 272.

¹⁶⁰. Lemoine, p. 132.

¹⁶¹ The full title of this military officer in Lemoine, p. 123, is "Tsao-long [*cau hlvañ*] Tsoeng Ha:n", of which I am unable to interpret the third term. In Ayutthaya-Bangkok Thai it could be construed as 'foot' and would be unproblematical, but it seems unlikely that this Khmer loan would have penetrated into Lue.

etymologies which have been proposed are unconvincing.¹⁶² It is worth noting that in Rhade, Western Cham and Jarai, 'soldier' is *kahan*, *dahan*, and *to'han*, respectively, and in Malay *tahan* means 'resist', 'defend'. Although the evidence is not exhaustive, I wish to propose that this is an element of the early Chamic influence on the Thai/Tai which may also be discerned in the origins of the their scripts.¹⁶³

Surprisingly, the evidence in the inscriptions of Sukhothai, Ayutthaya's nearest Thai neighbor, is not very helpful. There is little indication of the number, titles, or hierarchy of ministers, nor whether a *śaktinā* system was in use. Most of the same *yaśa* terms were in use, and had higher status, in particular the lower ones, such as *khun*, used for chiefs of major *mōaṅ*. The term *nāy* could also indicate someone of high rank, as in the title *nāy in śaraśākti* in 15th-century Sukhothai.¹⁶⁴

One Sukhothai record with some links between more distant Thai structures and Ayutthaya is inscription no. 38 with its text of a law promulgated some time between the end of the 14th and middle of the 15th century.¹⁶⁵

Following the royal introduction, there is mention of a state institutional form found in no other Sukhothai or Ayutthayan text, four officials ranking just below the king and called *braṇā baṇṇ*, each followed by the name of a place, in order Sagāpūrī (*braṇā baṇṇ kṣetr* [fields]), *śrī* Sejanā laiypūrī, *dvaiynadī śrī* Yamanā ['double river Yom'], and Nagòrdaiy, the last of whom was 'elder brother', apparently of the king. If *baṇṇ*, inexplicable in Thai, is the Mon *biṅ*, *buiṅ*, /pàŋ/ 'surround', they were subordinate provinces surrounding Sukhothai, where Mon influence at that time would be expected.¹⁶⁶ Whatever their precise role, they show a generic resemblance to the four 'Phya Luang'

¹⁶². A Sanskrit etymology has been proposed (<Sanskrit *dahana* 'reducing to ashes'), but it is unacceptable. See Robert K. Headley, Jr. "Some Sources of Chamic Vocabulary", In *Austroasiatic Studies*, p. 465.

¹⁶³. See Michael Vickery, "Pitdown 3--Further discussion of the Rām Khamhaeng Inscription", Part 3, "The development of Thai/Tai scripts" *JSS*, [*This is a corrected version. It was also published in *JSS*, volume 83, Parts 1 & 2 (1995), pp. 103-198, but with so many typographical errors that it is unusable.]. The greater difference between Ayutthayan and Sukhothai administrations than between Ayutthayan and those of the Lue or Black Tai may give support to the linguists, such as James Chamberlain, who propose that the Sukhothai and Ayutthayan Thai languages are from different sources farther to the Northeast.

¹⁶⁴ He was author of inscription no. 49, dated 1412. See Griswold and Prasert, *EHS* 1, "A Declaration of Independence and its Consequences", *JSS* 56/2 (July 1968), pp. 207-250. In one section of the **Military Hierarchy, Laws I**, p. 288, the same title *in śaraśākti* is given to a *pra:tēṅ* with *śaktinā* of only 300.

¹⁶⁵. Griswold and Prasert, *EHS* 4. I do not have space for a more thorough discussion of the problems in dating this law. Readers should note, however, that other Thai scholars do not subscribe to the emendations made by Griswold and Prasert to fit it into their historical reconstruction. See Dhida Saraya, *Class Structure of Thai Society in the Sukhothai and Early Ayutthaya Period (B.E. 1800-2112)* [in Thai], pp. 121-127.

¹⁶⁶. H.L. Shorto, *Dictionary of the Mon Inscriptions*, p. 263. The third form is the modern Mon pronunciation. Vickery, "Some New Evidence for the Cultural History of Central Thailand", *The Siam Society's Newsletter*, Volume 2, Number 3 (September 1986), 4-6.

(*bañā hlvañ*) who administered the villages of the Lue kingdom, of whom one was a 'Field Luang' and two were Luang of water courses.¹⁶⁷

This inscription is also important for an organization of the population which shows links between the Tai areas in Vietnam, the Lue, and Ayutthaya. The population, as among the Black and White Tai and Lue, was organized in work groups under local chiefs, called in Sukhothai *lūk khun mun tvān*, and *lūk khun mun nāy*. *Mun nāy* are familiar from the Ayutthayan laws, and *tvān* is Mon for 'village'.¹⁶⁸ Griswold and Prasert wished to attribute this structure to Ayutthayan influence, on the grounds that Sukhothai society was not so strictly organized, but in this they neglected the evidence of inscription 107, from Prae, and dated by them to the 1330s-1340s. It lists *lūk cau lūk khun*, *mun nāy*, *brai dai*, which could be interpreted 'officials' and 'group chiefs' and 'peasants', or 'officials' and 'group chiefs of peasants', or 'officials who are group chiefs of peasants', showing that the institution of *mun nāy*, chief of a mobilized population group, was well established in the early Sukhothai period, and that Sukhothai continued the rigid social hierarchy of the northeastern Tai which was also reproduced in Ayutthaya.¹⁶⁹

Griswold and Prasert also saw evidence of *śaktinā* in inscription 38, which, considering it was an Ayutthayan document, they did not fear to exaggerate. One brief but vague relevant context (Face 1, line 39) is a statement that offenders would be fined according to their *śakti*. This does resemble Ayutthayan practice, and I am inclined on this point to accept the interpretation of Griswold and Prasert, but as evidence that Sukhothai followed the practice of numerical ranks which was widespread in the Thai/Tai areas, not devised in Ayutthaya by King Trailok.

The primary source of the Thai structures

The similarities in state structures among different Thai/Tai peoples are not surprising now that it is realized that their ancestors inhabited a rather limited area of what is now northern Vietnam and southeastern China until sometime between one and two thousand years ago.¹⁷⁰ That area at that time was under very strong Chinese influence, and the similarities are so striking that one wonders why they have not been emphasized earlier. I cite details from the Ming, but "[d]uring the 1300 years from the early T'ang to 1906 the basic structure [such as the six ministries] remained the same".¹⁷¹

All officials, from the emperor's sons down had a numerical rank like *śaktinā*, based on bushels of rice. Emperors' sons had 10,000, and civil officials, ranked in 9 grades, had salaries of

¹⁶⁷. Lemoine, p. 128, note 21.

¹⁶⁸. Barend Jan Terwiel, "Ahom and the Study of Early Thai Society", *JSS* 71/1-2 (1983), pp. 42-62; see p. 47.

¹⁶⁹. Griswold and Prasert, *EHS* 21, "The Second Oldest Known Writing in Siamese", *JSS* 67/1 (January 1979), pp. 63-67.

¹⁷⁰. In order to avoid time-wasting controversy about a matter which is of no relevance for the present subject, I shall maintain agnosticism here about more precise dating of the time of the Thai dispersal.

¹⁷¹ Charles O. Hucker, "Governmental Organization of the Ming Dynasty", in John L. Bishop, Editor, *Studies in Governmental Institutions in Chinese History*, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1968, pp. 57-124, reprinted from *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 21 (1958), pp. 1-66; quotation from Edwin O. Reischauer and John K. Fairbank, *East Asia The Great Tradition*, London, George Allen & Unwin (1960), p. 274.

1044 down to 60 bushels. Besides that, officials were given two types of titles, prestige titles, and dignities, which included 'Pillars of State'.¹⁷²

The Ming central administration, largely copied from the Mongols, was divided into General Administration, Surveillance (Censors), and Military, although "the division was not a neat one, and there was much overlapping".¹⁷³ At first, when the Ming Dynasty was founded there were two Chief Councillors, called 'Prime Minister', one of the left and one of the right (but the distinction was not civil/military), and six lower ministries, but in 1380 the offices of the Chief Councillors were abolished. In the original system there had been four ministries Finance, Ceremonies, Justice, and Public Works. Then in 1368 the number was increased to six, Personnel, Revenue, Rites, War, Justice, Works.¹⁷⁴ All of these offices were present in the Ayutthayan system, although the identity of the Ayutthayan office corresponding to the Chinese Ministry of Rites might be disputed.

Note that the Chinese Ministry of War belonged to the civilian side of the administration. The military proper, paralleling the six ministries, had Five Chief Military Commissions. The population was divided into two major categories, civilian families and military families. The former paid land taxes and did corvée, while the latter had to provide sons for the army.¹⁷⁵

Paralleling the six civilian ministries and the five military commissions was the Censorate, consisting after 1380 of two Censors-in-Chief, two Vice Censors-in-Chief, and four Assistant Censors-in-Chief. I do not think it is a coincidence that they parallel the structure of the Ayutthayan 'brahman' department with two top level officials of 10,000 *nā*, two second level of 5,000 *nā*, and a third level with 3,000 *nā*. Besides surveillance, which cannot be imputed to the Ayutthayan officials, the Chinese censors also performed judicial services very much like those of the *śālā lūk khun* and *sār hlvañ*. Just as La Loubère noted for Ayutthaya, Hucker says, "the Ming governmental system did not give a special autonomous status to the judiciary...[e]very local magistrate was chief justice of his territory". There was a review procedure upward to the capital, where there was a Grand Court of Revision, containing "two Courts of Review...one of the left and one of the right". This also resembles the so-called 'Brahman' department and the two *śālā of lūk khun*, which included two courts, *kram bèn*, under the *braḥ kaṣemarāj*..., and the *khun hlvañ braḥ kraśrī*..., who are seen in various laws to have been responsible for judicial review.¹⁷⁶

Finally, with respect to policy, the "most important court deliberations" included a "group of men called the Nine Chief Ministers...the respective functional heads of the six Ministries, the Censorate, the Office of Transmission, and the Grand Court of Revision...usually supplemented by the various Military Commissioners-in-Chief"...etc.¹⁷⁷ This looks very much like the group of Ayutthayan officers with 10,000 *śaktinā*, plus perhaps some of those with 5,000, listed above.

In summary, I feel confident in concluding that the origins of the structures of the central authorities in early Tai/Thai states, including what may be deduced for Ayutthaya from the law texts, should be sought in Chinese state structures, probably going back to the Han, when the Thai must have first come into contact with Chinese officialdom, continuing through subsequent centuries of the

¹⁷² Hucker (pagination from Bishop), pp. 66, 69, 74; Wang Yü-ch'üan, "An Outline of the Central Government of the Former Han Dynasty", in Bishop, op. cit., pp. 5, 10, 19, 27.

¹⁷³ Hucker, p. 85. Note that the Mongols were carrying on from the Sung.

¹⁷⁴ Hucker, p. 90.

¹⁷⁵ Hucker, pp. 114-5.

¹⁷⁶ La Loubère, pp. 82-88; Hucker, p. 114; **Laws I**, p. 266.

¹⁷⁷ Hucker, p. 123.

slow Thai movement west and southwestward, and reinforced again when close diplomatic contact was established between Sien and the Yuan (Mongol) dynasty, followed by the Ming contact with early Ayutthaya. Of course, different Thai polities preserved or modified different features of the structures adapted from China to fit their different social structures or under the influence of other neighbors such as the Khmer and the Mon.

Territorial organization

The Ayutthayan provincial organization is a different matter. I have been unable to establish parallels with a Chinese system, nor with the territorial systems of other Thai/Tai polities. The **Three Seals Code**, however, is interesting in showing different provincial structures at different times.

Quaritch Wales' view of the provincial administration, apparently based on Prince Damrong's hypotheses, was that prior to King Trailok, Ayutthaya had been surrounded on the four cardinal points by four provinces--Lophburi, Nakhon Nayok, Prah Pradeng and Suphanburi termed *möaṅ lūk hlvaṅ*, each ruled by one of the king's sons, a system supposedly set up by King Rāmā dhipaṅī I in 1351. If this were true it would also reflect the Lue and Tai structures, in which royalty had great administrative responsibilities, and the Sukhothai institution of four *baṅā baṅṅ* around the capital (above p. 40).

Then King Trailok placed these four provinces directly under central government control, that is, under the ministers in the capital, and the princes who had formerly ruled them were sent farther afield to rule newly subjected provinces called *braḥyā mahānagara*. The central portion of the kingdom, or *vāṅ rājadhāṅī*, was divided into a number of minor provinces called *möaṅ nòy*, later fourth-class provinces, administered by officials appointed by the ministers.¹⁷⁸

The kings' sons who governed the *braḥyā mahānagara* were first-class *cau fā* sons and their provinces, known as *möaṅ lūk hlvaṅ*, were also called *möaṅ ek*. There were also *möaṅ hlān hlvaṅ*, or *möaṅ do*, governed by second class *cau fā* princes, although it is not clear where they were. Beyond the provinces were vassal states called *möaṅ prahdesarāj* with their own sovereigns.¹⁷⁹

About 130 years after King Trailok, King Naresuan abolished the *braḥyā mahānagara* and divided the outer provinces into three classes, *ek, do, trī* (one, two, three), but here Quaritch Wales introduced the odd statement that the law which provides this information, the **Law of the Military Hierarchy**, reflects "more particularly the condition of things in the eighteenth century".¹⁸⁰

The next stage supposedly came about in 1691 when the two chief ministers acquired control of the northern and southern provinces respectively, a situation that prevailed in the 19th century with the exception that at the latter date a few of the gulf coast provinces had been given to the *kram dā* of the *glāṅ* ministry. The reason for this change was surmised by Prince Damrong to have been a rebellion in Nakhon Sri Thammarat, an opinion which Quaritch Wales followed in *Administration*. In a later work, however, he modified his opinion as follows: "Siamese soldiers [according to La Loubère] formerly wore red, the colour of ... Mars which presided over the south, and that is why military officials were on the right (south) side of the king in audience. No doubt it

¹⁷⁸ Q.W., *Administration*, pp. 105-06.

¹⁷⁹ Q.W., *Administration*, p. 107.

¹⁸⁰ Q.W., *Administration*, p. 109

was because of this that, when about 1691 the administration of the country was divided between the heads of the military and civil divisions, the former (*kalāhom*) was given charge of the southern provinces".¹⁸¹

Quaritch Wales ignored the logical contradiction between his two explanations. In the first place he followed Prince Damrong in hypothesizing that the southern provinces had been given to the *kalāhom* because of a revolt in Nakhon Sri Thammarat, which was in the south, and this is the only reason for postulating the date 1691 for this development. If in fact the division of the provinces was due to astrological consideration there is no reason to choose the date 1691. Rather we should expect it to have occurred at the very beginning of the creation of the ministries in question, that is, in the reign of King Trailok, if we accept that he was responsible for the functional division of the ministries. Quaritch Wales was also wrong in assuming, as I shall demonstrate later, that the division of the administration into sections of the left and right corresponded either to a civil/military dichotomy, or to a geographical division.¹⁸²

When Rama I prepared a new code in 1805, responsibility in the central government for provinces was indeed divided among *mahātdaiy*, *kalāhom*, and *glāñ*, and this situation prevailed until the reforms of King Chulalongkorn. This division appears in the laws in **Dharmmanūn**, dated 1633 if *śaka*, although Prince Damrong and Quaritch Wales said the division should have occurred in 1691. David Wyatt, apparently accepting the ostensible date of **Dharmmanūn**, wrote that the division was accomplished by King Prasat Thong (1629-56).¹⁸³ It is certain that development outlined by Quaritch Wales, with *möañ lūk hlvañ* at the four cardinal points, and royal princes sent farther and father afield, is to be rejected, or at least it cannot be sustained by any of the law texts. Neither can the concept of the *vāñ rājadhāñī*, which is not mentioned at all in the laws.¹⁸⁴ Three important, ostensibly valid, lists of dependent territories are found in the laws. The first, in the **Palatine Law**, is of 20 vassal 'kings' (*kra:sātr*) who presented gold and silver flowers to the central government and eight chiefs (*bañā*) of great cities (*mahā nagar*). Then the **Provincial Hierarchy Law** lists forty-eight first, second, third and fourth class provinces; and the third, in the **Law of Procedure (Dharmmanūn)**, lists the provinces administered respectively by the *cau bañā cākri* (*mahātdaiy*), the *kram braḥ kra:lāhom*, and the *koṣādhīpatī* (*glāñ*). There is a fourth list in one of the early laws of Rama I, dated 1783, indicating 16 great cities (*mahā nagar*), which, according to an old, perhaps then still existing, **Palatine Law (Kaṭ maṇḍiarapāl)**, were considered foreign polities (*tāñ möañ*). This is proof of one modification introduced into the new **Palatine Law** revised under the direction of Rama I twelve years later. The purpose of the order containing the old list is of some social interest, but which is beyond the subject of the present study. It concerned

¹⁸¹ Q.W., *Administration*, pp. 103-110; *Ancient South-East Asian Warfare*, p. 151.

¹⁸² He did acknowledge, *Administration*, p. 81, that the laws are inconsistent in this respect.

¹⁸³ Quaritch Wales, *Administration*, p. 86, 113; Wyatt, *Thailand A Short History*, p. 108. Wyatt offers no source for his statement, and it is apparently based on the dates recorded in the law. Wyatt, however, in his "Kaṭa Maṇḍiarapāla", proclaimed himself a believer in *culāmañī* era, to which the dates of **Dharmmanūn** belong, and he should thus impute them to 1743, the reign of King Boromakot. This illustrates the adhocery prevalent in most standard treatments of old Thai sources.

¹⁸⁴. For the argument about *möañ lūk hlvañ* see Vickery, "A New Tāṃnān About Ayudhya", *JSS* 67/2 (July 1979), pp. 158-160.

differential fines for women who were unfaithful to husbands posted in foreign territories or in the same polity.¹⁸⁵

Even though the **Palatine** and **Hierarchy Laws** are believed to date from the same reign, their lists are in certain respects contradictory, indicating composition at different times, while the third list in **Dharmmanūn**, outlining an entirely different structure, is found under a preamble dated 1555, year of the pig, which fits the *cuḷāmaṇī* pattern and is equivalent to A.D. 1743 if that hypothesis is correct, or 1633 if only *śaka* era is assumed. In spite of the recorded date, Prince Damrong and Quaritch Wales preferred to place the three-fold provincial division in 1691, but it is not attested in any other document until the reign of Rama I (1782- 1809).¹⁸⁶

The territorial statements in the laws must also be compared with two lists found in the annals, a list of sixteen vassal states (*pra:deśa rāja*) included in the post-1157 chronicles near the beginning of the reign of Rāmādhīpaī I, that is, at approximately the same time at which the **Palatine** and **Hierarchy Laws** would at first glance appear to be dated, and a list of provinces assigned to the *kalāhom* and to the *kram dā* department of the *glān* ministry by Rama I in 1782 and included in the chronicle of his reign.¹⁸⁷

An interesting feature of all these lists is that they are found in material compiled during the reign of Rama I, but at different dates, and it is legitimate to wonder to what extent the lists owe their present form to the preconceptions of that time rather than to the true situation at the dates assigned to them.

The earliest list in terms of date of composition of the extant source material is the last one cited above, that of 1782, which lists twenty *mōaṅ* assigned to the *kalāhom* and nine to the *kram dā*, a part of the *glān* ministry, with the statement that "in the Ayutthaya period the southern *mōaṅ* were placed under the *kram dā* because the *kalāhom* had done something wrong".¹⁸⁸ Rama I stated further that he was taking 19 *mōaṅ* from *kram dā* and one from the *mahātdaiy* to give to the *kalāhom* while eight *mōaṅ* were left with the *kram dā* and a ninth, taken from the *mahātdaiy* territory was to be added to the territory of the *kram dā*. The king's explanation implies two previous arrangements, the one immediately preceding 1782 when all southern provinces would have been under the *kram dā*, and an earlier one with all southern *mōaṅ* under the *kalāhom*. We also know of a third, still earlier structure because La Loubère observed that the *mahātdaiy*, in La Loubère's words the *Cakrī*, assuming them to have been the same, had general control over all the provinces of the kingdom.¹⁸⁹

¹⁸⁵. See **Laws I**, pp. 70, 317-26, 176-7 respectively, and **Laws IV**, p. 260 for the list of *mahā nagar* in an old **Palatine Law**. Here is another case for the new gender historians.

¹⁸⁶. Quaritch-Wales, pp. 86, 113, 117, 153.

¹⁸⁷. On the 'post-1157 [1795] chronicles' see Vickery, "Cambodia After Angkor"; RA, p. 67, and *Brah rāj baṅśāvātār kruṅ rātanakosindr chapāp hōsamut hēn jāti rajakāl dī I* ('Royal Ratanakosin Chronicle, National Library Edition, Reign 1'), Bangkok, Klang Vithaya, 2505 [1962], cited hereafter as Reign I, pp. 26-7.

¹⁸⁸ Reign I, p. 26.

¹⁸⁹ La Loubère, p. 89. La Loubère's list of the "State Officers", starts with the *Cakrī* ('Tchakry') and *Kalāhom* ('Calla-hom'). He only records the title *mahātdaiy*, p. 84, as one of the provincial officials, *òkbrah mahātdaiy*, explaining the term incorrectly as 'Great Tai', i.e., as though it were

The two intermediate stages, if the statements in the Reign I chronicle are historically accurate, must then have been tried sometime between the reign of King Naray and 1767, and no other sources, it seems, give evidence of these changes. The provinces left with the *mahātdaiy* in 1782 are not listed, and the implication is that all other provinces were subordinate to that ministry. The only specific statement in this connection is that *cha:jōn drau* (Cha Choeung Sao) "in ancient times was subordinate to the *braḥ kalāhom* [and] later fell to the *mahātdaiy*. Let it remain as in the beginning/as before (*tām tōm*)", which although ambiguous must have been intended to mean, "let it remain with the *mahātdaiy*", for it is absent from the other two lists, and if the intention had been to leave it with the *kalāhom* as "in ancient times" it, like *bej(r)apurī* (Phetchaburi/Phetburi), would have been listed as taken from the *mahātdaiy* for the *kalāhom*.¹⁹⁰ Again, one wonders what documents existed showing the change in status of this province.

The names of *mōaṅ* in these lists are clear, although they are not all of equal status today, some being *caṅhvāt* ('province'), others *amphoe* (district within a province). Note should be taken of *ta:nāvsri* and *mṛt* (Tenasserim and Mergui), an area which was frequently a bone of contention between Siam and Burma up to the 19th century. It is also interesting to observe that in the 1782 list Nagara Sṛi Dharmmarāja, which in other lists comes first among the southern provinces, is here only third, doubtless reflecting the fact that it was temporarily in disgrace in the early years of the reign of Rama I.¹⁹¹

The next list in date of composition is that found in the 1157 [1795] chronicle at a date corresponding to 1351 A.D. It bears a good deal of resemblance to the list in the **Palatine Law** where the presence of *malāka* has been taken as sufficient evidence for emending the law date to the reign of King Trailok.¹⁹² In 1350 Malacca had not yet been founded, but it was claimed as a vassal by Ayutthaya in the 15th century and was attacked by King Trailok in 1455. The list in the 1157 chronicle has not been discussed in detail as far as I know, although the inclusion of *malāka* is grounds for rejecting it also as a 14th-century record. It also includes *javā*, which could in no period have been a Thai vassal, although La Loubère bears witness that exaggerated territorial claims, such as Ayutthayan pretensions to Johore, may always have been standard practice. This list of 16 vassals is divided into two distinct groups, seven northern and nine southern provinces. With respect to anachronistic names, the northern group may be subject to the same criticism as *malāka*, for current doctrine holds that 14th-century epigraphy shows *biṣṇuloka* designated as *sōn kve*, *svarrgaloka* as *sajjanālaya*, *nagara svarrga* as *paṅkā* or *pra bān*, *kāṃbeṅbej* as *jakaṅrāv*, and some scholars believe that *bicitr* was known as *sra:lvaṅ*.¹⁹³

mahā, not *mahāt*, *daiy*. The parallel term, *mahātlek*, for the corps of pages, proves the point. Their etymology still requires explanation.

¹⁹⁰ Reign I, p. 27.

¹⁹¹ Reign I, pp. 81-82, at date 1795. Klaus Wenk, *The Restoration of Thailand under Rama I, 1782-1809*, Tucson, 1968, pp. 103-4, shows Songkhla detached from Nakhon Sri Thammarat and made a third class province, perhaps even promoted to first class, and in general it was the leading city of the South during the reign of Rama I between roughly 2328/1785-2334/1791 (exact dates not possible).

¹⁹² Wyatt, "*Kaṭa maṅḍiarbāl*".

¹⁹³ These identifications are from the *EHS* of Griswold and Prasert; La Loubère, on Johore, p. 82.

Thus the insertion of this list at the place it is found in the chronicles seems clearly to be erroneous and due to a late compiler, and it is legitimate to wonder if it was not done deliberately in 1795 on orders of Rama I who wished to supply ancient authority for theoretical inclusion of certain territories under Thai suzerainty.

An interesting observation may also be made about some of the southern provinces on the list. Third in order after *malāka* and *javā* is *ta:nāvsrī*, which the first Europeans in Siam found to be an important Ayutthayan port and the status of which as an Ayutthayan dependency in mid-15th century is shown by contemporary epigraphy. Fourth is *nagara śrī dharrmarāja*, and then we find *da:vāy* (Tavoy), *mo:ta:ma:* (Martaban), and *mo:lamlön* (Moulmein), areas which like Tenasserim were fought over by Burmese and Thai but which seem most often to have been in Burmese hands. The first mention of Tavoy in the Ayutthayan annals is found in the year of King Trailok's death, 1488, when it was taken by the Thai. Although there is no contemporary evidence, the Mon chronicles make the Moulmein-Martaban area the scene of a growing Mon kingdom in the 14th century and it is very improbable that it was an Ayutthayan dependency. Thus these names are further evidence for the anachronistic character of this list.

The appearance of these trans-peninsular ports in the various lists is interesting from another point of view, that of the date of their inclusion in the extant texts. The list of 1782 included only Tenasserim and its close neighbour Mergui, and in fact at that date Tavoy was in Burmese hands. However, before the composition of the second list in 1795 Tavoy had in 1792 been taken by Rama I, although not held very long, and troops had been dispatched northward to Martaban. I suggest then, that the inclusion of these *mōaṅ* in a list composed in 1795, but dated to 1351, and which in other respects is clearly anachronistic, indicates deliberate tampering by Rama I in order to give his claims the weight of history.

The **Palatine Law** of 1805 presents still another type of list. Like the 1157 chronicle it contains a group of vassal states, 16 in the north, which are not mentioned in the other lists, and four in the south, about which the same judgement may be made as for *malāka* and *javā* in the 1157 list. The northern portion also contains some clear anachronisms. First is *nagara hlvaṅ* (Angkor) which, according to the best source, was not conquered until 1431. Then there is *śrī satanaganahuta* (Luang Prabang and/or Vientiane), which was not seriously threatened by the Siamese until the reign of King Taksin, and several other northern states which, although occasionally the object of Ayutthayan invasions in earlier reigns, remained outside of Ayutthayan control until the reign of Rama I. Of course, we could say that some, such as *jiaṅ hmai* on several occasions, and *tòṅ ū* or *sen hvī* in the reign of Naresuan, might have been attacked by Ayutthaya and have figured for that reason in theoretical claims, but this will not do for others such as *jiaṅ ray*, *jiaṅ ruṅ*, *jiaṅ sen* and *gotrapòṅ* (near Thakhek), which, like *śrī satanaganahuta*, were not objects of Siamese expansion until the reigns of Taksin or Rama I. The list is thus not a coherent whole for any period earlier than the end of the 18th century, and it is significant that just before compiling the laws, Rama I had successfully carried out campaigns which added several of these territories to his kingdom as vassals. On the other hand, when the chronicle of 1157 was being written (1795) he was entirely preoccupied with campaigns in the south and this is reflected in the territorial claims of that list.

A second part of the same **Palatine Law** section lists eight *bañā* of "great cities" (*mahā nagara*) who took the water oath and were thus more closely connected to the capital than the 16 vassal princes who merely offered "gold and silver flowers". A glance at the list shows that seven of

them, four in the north and three in the south, correspond to vassal states of the 1157 chronicle. Only *nagara rājasima* in the Northeast is not found in the earlier list.

Now I wish to emphasize again that both of these lists are in documents composed for Rama I, and both are placed at dates very close together in the 14th century. Some of the same anachronisms are found in both, but obviously the differences between them are such that both cannot be true for the same date whether this is held to be the reign of Rāmādhīpātī I or of Trailokanāth. The differences must then be explained as the result of one or more stages of composition in later periods, and the only period for which it is possible to investigate this problem is the reign of Rama I. I have indicated above reasons why *da:vāy*, *mo:ta:ma:* and *mo:lamlōn* would have been included in the list of 1795 but not that of 1782. Now we see that the last two have been dropped from the list of 1805. By this time Thai pretensions to these towns were being given up, although Tenasserim was still in Thai hands and Tavoy was still desired.

The absence of Songkhla from the latest list is due to its diminished status once Nakhon Sri Thammarat had been restored to its earlier position, and the inclusion of Nakhon Ratchasima among the great cities in 1805 reflects the increasing attention given by Rama I to the North and Northeast. The name *sajanālai* instead of *savarrgalok* may be due to conscious archaizing, but both names were still currently known. Only the omission of *candapūr* cannot be explained by reference to the events of the first Bangkok reign.

Another territorial list in the 1805 law collection is that of the **Brah̄ Dharmanūn (Law of Procedure)**, with a date probably intended as equivalent to 1633. This list, like that of 1782, shows the three-fold division of provinces under the ministries, with the difference that those under the *mahātdaiy* in the 1782 list are only implied. The ministerial attributions are identical. Some not included in both are small provinces subordinate at times to a larger neighbour, such as *hlāñ suon*, *padiv* and *drai yog* of the earlier list which are missing in 1805 and were probably included in *jumbòr* and *kañcanapūri* as they are today. The 1805 list adds *davāy*, which has been discussed, and shows *nagara śrī dharrmarāja* restored to its prominent position. The name *pāñtabān* is most likely equivalent to *pāñsa:bān* in the modern province of Prachuapkhirikhan, and *sāmgok* is possibly the *amphoe* of the same name in Pathumthani.

It is clear that the date of 1633 is too early for this list since La Loubère in 1688 observed that provincial administration was entirely under the *cákrī*. Prince Damrong proposed 1691, not on any textual grounds, but because King Phetracha had to deal with a rebellion in Nakhon Sri Thammarat in that year and might have found such an organisation more efficient for military operations. However, the date intended by the compiler of the laws may not simply be ignored, and we must take into account the statement of Rama I implying two earlier stages after the reign of King Naray, one in which all southern provinces were under the *kalāhom*, and one with all of them under the *glāñ*. He did not pretend that a division such as he made in 1782 had ever existed previously. Just as 1633 is too early for this type of division so is the *cuḷāmañī* date of 1743 occasionally attributed to this law equally inappropriate, for at the latter date all the southern provinces, according to the 1782 statement of Rama I, should have been under either the *kalāhom* or the *glāñ*. Had the system he desired, and finally instituted, been in existence in 1743 his solution would most likely have been simply to adopt it on the grounds that there had been an Ayutthayan precedent for it only 40 years earlier.

Akin has noted the name *kruñ kau* (Ayutthaya in the Bangkok period) as evidence of an insertion by Rama I.¹⁹⁴ I would go further and suggest that the list is entirely the work of Rama I, as is probably the division of the provinces among the three ministries. Another clue, besides *kruñ kau*, to tampering with the **Dharmmanūn** list is the inclusion of *bej(r)apurī* under the *kalāhom*. In 1782 Rama I said he was taking that province from the *mahātdaiy* to give to the *kalāhom*, and if the date of the **Dharmmanūn** is even approximately accurate that province would have been under the *mahātdaiy*. Moreover the **Hierarchy Law**, even though the threefold provincial division is not mentioned, lists *bej(r)apurīy* under the *pra:tèn senāṭ khvā*, and all other provinces under that *pra:tèn* belonged to the *cākri* in the **Dharmmanūn** law (see further below).

In fact, the statement by Rama I on the development of ministerial control of the provinces seems to be convincing evidence that the structure he finally set up had never existed before. He wished to share out provincial administration, and the perquisites thereof, among his ministers, who were also his close allies and supporters, and in searching for historical justification he hit at different times upon two different rationales.¹⁹⁵ In 1782 he explained that Ayutthayan practice had been to give southern provinces to the *kalāhom*, although he himself would also let the *glān* retain some, but 23 years later he simply inserted his system into the laws under an Ayutthaya period date to make it appear that his system was the traditional one.¹⁹⁶

It appears then, that all of the territorial lists so far discussed were drawn up in their entirety at different times in the reign of Rama I and reflect the preoccupations of that time. They are thus of no value as source material for any earlier period, which is not to say that there were no earlier lists which in part formed the basis for those of Rama I. His use of *malāka*, *javā*, *malayū*, *varavari*, *uyònta:hna:*, *toñ ū*, *jiañ krai*, *jiañ krān*, for example, the location of some of which may have already been entirely unknown, seems to be certain evidence that earlier lists were still extant.

Indeed, proof of the existence of earlier, and different, lists is the *Brah̄ rāj paññāti 2*, of 1783, in which Rama I included a list of 16 *mahā nagar* said to have been in an old **Palatine Law**, and considered as foreign territories (*tāñ möaṅ*). They were, in modern orthography, Phitsanulok, Satchanalay, Kampheng Phet, Tak, Nakon Ratchasima, Phichay, Phetchabun, Takuapa, Takuatung, Patthalung, Songkhla, Thlang, Chanthabun, Nakon Sri Thammarat, Tenasserim, Tavoy. Among all the lists of provinces it is the most peculiar geopolitically, and there is no evident reason why precisely those 16 *möaṅ*, and not others, should have been considered outside the Ayutthayan polity, unless this list is an authentic ancient relic from the time before Ayutthaya and Sukhothai were fully unified, but when Ayutthaya already exerted some political hegemony over the Sukhothai area. This would have been between 1419 and the 1440s. The number 16 for the listed *möaṅ* may indicate a relationship with the lists in the **Palatine Law** of Rama I and the 1157 chronicles, although the names are mostly different. Perhaps the number 16 was of traditional or ritual significance.¹⁹⁷

¹⁹⁴. Akin, p. 192.

¹⁹⁵. For discussion of Rama I as first among equals at the beginning of his reign, see David K. Wyatt, "Family Politics in Nineteenth-Century Thailand", *Journal of Southeast Asian History* 9/2 (September 1968), pp. 208-228.

¹⁹⁶ A date which he intended as 1633. This list is evidence against *cuḷāmaṇī*.

¹⁹⁷ In traditional Indian geography there were 16 great continents, *mahājanapada*.

The one remaining long territorial list, that of the **Law of Provincial Hierarchies**, shows an entirely different character and seems to be a genuine period piece, although perhaps not of the 14th to 15th centuries. Its 48 provinces cover, with the exception of the vassal states (the Chiang Mai, Lao, and southern Malay areas), the entire kingdom of Siam as it was constituted in the early 19th century. They are also divided into first, second, third and fourth class provinces, another 19th-century feature. Most of the governors, however, have *yaśa* ranks which fell out of use sometime towards the end of the Ayutthaya period. For example, all of the second class governors are *òkñā*, the third class governors are either *òkñā* or *òkbraḥ*, and those of the listed fourth class provinces are *òkbraḥ*, *òkmöaṅ* or *braḥ*, only the last of which was still in use by the reign of Rama I. The governors of the two first class provinces, Phitsanulok and Nakon Sri Thammarat, are entitled *cau bañā*, appropriate for the time of Rama I. The *òk*- titles are generally used as described by La Loubère, but that author believed the titles were distributed strictly according to the status of the *möaṅ*, which is not the case in the law.

Furthermore the first, second and third class provinces are not distributed among the three ministries, but, along with most of the fourth class provinces, are subordinate to four different officials called *pra:tèṅ*. Only the very last statement of the law says that, "the fourth-class *möaṅ* subordinate to the *mahātdai*, *kra:lāhom*, *kram dā* hold *śaktinā* as follows: *cau möaṅ* 3000...",¹⁹⁸ which, for the reasons outlined above, must be an insertion of Rama I, and applies to the last 34 provinces listed without, however, specifying which provinces were under which ministry. The statement can refer only to these 34, and not to the other fourth-class provinces dependent on first, second, and third class provinces, because the latter are elsewhere given *śaktinā* of 1600, 1000 and 800 respectively.

Two more law contexts are relevant for the study of territorial organisation. The first, in section 8 of the **Palatine Law**, sets forth the order of precedence of kings' sons (*lūk dhoe*) administering ('eating') provinces, and then lists the *möaṅ lūk hlvaṅ* (*möaṅ* of kings' sons) as *biṣnuluk*, *savarrgalok*, *kāmbeṅbej*, *labapūri*, and *siṅpūri*, and the *möaṅ hlān hlvaṅ* (*möaṅ* of kings' grandsons/nephews) as *inpūri* and *braḥmpūri*. These statements may not be construed as indicating more than that certain princes received livings from certain provinces, like their contemporaries in Burma, situations which do not affect the classifications of the provinces in the other laws. It would seem that this type of exploitation of *biṣnuluk*, *savarrgalok*, and *kāmbeṅbej* could only have prevailed after 1569.¹⁹⁹

The second statement, in the preamble of the **Law on Abduction/Kidnapping**, speaks of slaves and members of the corveable population fleeing to *jaliaṅ*, *sukkhodai*, *duṅ yāṅ*, *pāṅ yām*, *sòṅ kev*, *saḥlvaṅ*, *jāvtānrāv*, and *kāmbeṅbej*.²⁰⁰ It is interesting for preserving certain archaic names found in other sources, such as the Sukhothai inscriptions, but missing from the laws. These archaic names show that we are dealing with a text which may really have had its origin in the 14th century, but the Buddhist era of its date, (1899/AD 1355-56) is probably due to a later recodification. This is the Ayutthayan law text which bears some resemblance, especially in this list of names, with the law inscribed in Sukhothai inscription no. 38, and which convinced Griswold and

¹⁹⁸ **Laws I**, p. 326.

¹⁹⁹ **Laws I**, p. 72.

²⁰⁰ **Laws III**, p. 1

Prasert that the latter represented an Ayutthayan intervention in Sukhothai near the end of the 14th century. I have argued the contrary, that it was a Sukhothai law later adapted in Ayutthaya, with that list of names, inappropriate for the situation in Ayutthaya, maintained unchanged. There are two periods when such Ayutthayan appropriation could easily have occurred, the time of Trailok, which is reflected in that list of names, or in the new unification of Sukhothai with Ayutthaya after 1569.²⁰¹

Below are the provincial lists which have been described. The names are in the order of the **Hierarchy Law**, with names not in that text inserted as closely as possible to their geographical location, in general from North to South. Numbers under the other headings show the order of the provinces in those lists. The list headed '**Pal**' is the **Palatine Law**, and that entitled '**Old**' is the old **Palatine Law** to which Rama I referred in his **Paññāti** of 1783.

The provincial lists

Hierarchy				<u>Rama I</u>			
<u>name</u>	<u>class</u>	<u>pratèh</u>	Dharmmanūn	<u>1782</u>	Pal	<u>1157</u>	Old
Nagar hlvañ					1		
Śrī sātanaṅaṅahut					2		
Jiañ hmai					3		
Tòñ ū					4		
Jiañ kraì					5		
Jiañ krān					6		
Jiañ saen					7		
Jiañ ruñ					8		
Jiañ rāy					9		
Saen hvī					10		
Khemarāj					11		
Brae					12		
Nan					13		
Tai dòn					14		
Gotrapòn					15		
Rev kaev					16		
Biṣṅulok	1+	<i>senāṭ khvā</i>	<i>cakrī</i> 1		I	10	I
Nagar śrī dh	1	<i>inpañā zāy</i>	<i>kalā</i> 1	<i>kalā</i> 3	V	4	XIV
Savarrgalok]	2	<i>culādeb zāy</i>	<i>cakrī</i> 2			13	
Sájanālaiy]					II		II
Śúkkhodai	2	<i>culādeb zāy</i>	<i>cakrī</i> 3		III	11	
Kāmbenbej	2	<i>senāṭ khvā</i>	<i>cakrī</i> 4		IV	15	III
Tāk							IV
Bejapūrrṅ	2	<i>senāṭ khvā</i>	<i>cakrī</i> 26				VII

²⁰¹. See footnotes 17 and 165 above.

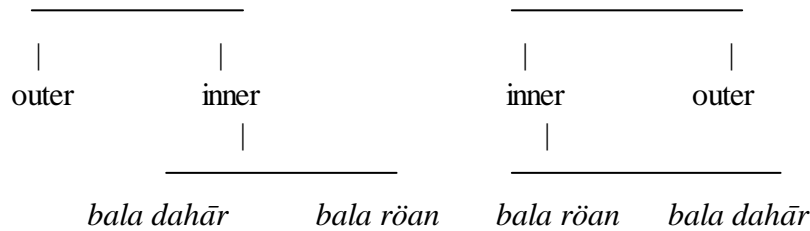
Nagarrājaśimā	2	<i>culādeb zāy</i>	<i>cakrī</i> 31		VI		V
Tahnāvśrī	2	<i>inpañā zāy</i>	<i>kalā</i> 14	<i>kalā</i> 11	VII	3	XV
Mṛt			<i>kalā</i> 15	<i>kalā</i> 12			
Davāy			<i>kalā</i> 16		VIII	5	XVI
Motama						6	
Molamlön						7	
Kra:				<i>kalā</i> 13			
Sāmgok			<i>kalā</i> 17				
Bijaiy	3	<i>senāṭ khvā</i>	<i>cakrī</i> 5			12	VI
Bicitr	3	<i>senāṭ khvā</i>	<i>cakrī</i> 7			14	
Nagar svarrg	3	<i>culādeb zāy</i>	<i>cakrī</i> 6			16	
Candapūrrṇ	3	<i>inpañā zāy</i>	<i>glāñ</i> 1	<i>kram dā</i> 7		9	XIII
Trāt			<i>glāñ</i> 2	<i>kram dā</i> 8			
Jaiyā	3	<i>inpañā zāy</i>	<i>kalā</i> 4	<i>kalā</i> 4			
Hlāñ suan				<i>kalā</i> 5			
Bádaluh	3	<i>inpañā zāy</i>	<i>kalā</i> 2	<i>kalā</i> 2			X
Saṅkhā			<i>kalā</i> 3	<i>kalā</i> 1		8	XI
Jumbhòr]	3	<i>inpañā zāy</i>	<i>kalā</i> 5	<i>kalā</i> 6			
Padiv]				<i>kalā</i> 7			
Bejpuriy	4	<i>senāṭ khvā</i>	<i>kalā</i> 6	<i>kalā</i> 20 (< <i>mahāt</i>)			
Jaiynāth	4	<i>senāṭ khvā</i>	<i>cakrī</i> 9				
Indpuṛiy	4	<i>senāṭ khvā</i>	<i>cakrī</i> 11				
Brahmpuṛiy	4	<i>culādeb zāy</i>	<i>cakrī</i> 12				
Singpuṛiy	4	<i>culādeb zāy</i>	<i>cakrī</i> 13				
Labpuṛiy	4	<i>senāṭ khvā</i>	<i>cakrī</i> 15				
Srapuṛiy	4	<i>senāṭ khvā</i>	<i>cakrī</i> 16				
Udaiydhāñiy	4	<i>culādeb zāy</i>	<i>cakrī</i> 10				
Manoromy]	4		<i>cakrī</i> 8				
Añ Dòn]	4	<i>ṣārabhāṣ khvā</i>					
Vīśejaijāñ			<i>cakrī</i> 17				
Kruñ kau			<i>cakrī</i> 18				
Savarrgapuṛiy]	4	<i>culādeb zāy</i>					
Sarrgpurī]			<i>cakrī</i> 14				
Kārpuriy	4	<i>inpañā zāy</i>	<i>cakrī</i> 25				
Kāñicanapuṛī]				<i>kalā</i> 18			
Drai yog]	4	<i>inpañā zāy</i>		<i>kalā</i> 19			
Subándpuṛiy	4	<i>culādeb zāy</i>	<i>cakrī</i> 22				
Śrīsavát	4	<i>senāṭ khvā</i>					
Nagar jaiśrī	4	[<i>culādeb zāy</i>]	<i>cakrī</i> 23				
Rajpuṛiy	4	<i>culādeb zāy</i>	<i>cakrī</i> 24				
Vīśē] jaiy	4	[<i>senāṭ khvā</i>]					
Chajjōn drau	4	<i>senāṭ khvā</i>	<i>cakrī</i> 21	<i>mahāt</i>			

Nagar nāyak	4	<i>senāṭ khvā</i>	<i>cakrī</i> 19		
Prācinpuṛiy	4	<i>culādeb zāy</i>	<i>cakrī</i> 20		
Nandapuṛiy	4	<i>inpañā zāy</i>	<i>glāñ</i> 5	<i>kram dā</i> 1	
Dā cin	┌	----*			
Sāgarpuṛi	└		<i>glāñ</i> 8	<i>kram dā</i> 3	
Mae klòh	┌	----*			
Samudrsahgrām	└		<i>glāñ</i> 7	<i>kram dā</i> 9 (< <i>mahāt</i>)	
Pāk nām	┌	----*			
Samudrprākār	└		<i>glāñ</i> 6	<i>kram dā</i> 2	
Jan	┌	<i>inpañā zāy</i>			
Jalpuṛi	└			<i>kram dā</i> 4	
Prānpuṛiy		<i>inpañā zāy</i>	<i>kalā</i> 8	<i>kalā</i> 10	
Kuy		<i>inpañā zāy</i>	<i>kalā</i> 7	<i>kalā</i> 9	
Glòh vān			<i>kalā</i> 9	<i>kalā</i> 8	
Pāntabān			<i>kalā</i> 10		
Thalān			<i>kalā</i> 11	<i>kalā</i> 17	XII
Rayòh		<i>inpañā zāy</i>	<i>glāñ</i> 3	<i>kram dā</i> 6	
Pān lamuñ		----*	<i>glāñ</i> 4	<i>kram dā</i> 5	
Dā Ròh		----*	<i>cakrī</i> 27		
Pua Jum		----*	<i>cakrī</i> 28		
Kāmbrān		----*	<i>cakrī</i> 30		
Jaipātān		----*	<i>cakrī</i> 29		
Takuaduñ			<i>kalā</i> 12	<i>kalā</i> 15	IX
Takuapā			<i>kalā</i> 13	<i>kalā</i> 14	VIII
Bāññā				<i>kalā</i> 16	
Uyòntahnā				17	
Malākā				18	1
Javā					2
Malāyū				19	
Varavāri				20	

*These are in the Hierarchy Law, but not under a *pra:tèn*, thus probably new in the time of Rama I. They are found in the *Dharrmanūn*, which is further evidence linking this law to Rama I.

As noted, the **Hierarchy Law** contains two levels of organization, the latest being classification of provinces as first, second, third, and fourth, and an earlier, partly concealed structure in which each of the provinces is listed as subordinate to (*khün*) one of four *pra:tèn* entitled *culādeb zāy*, *inpañā zāy*, *senāṭ khvā*, and *ṣārabhāṣ khvā*, although the last included only one fourth class province, Ang Thong. There is no mention of the three territorial ministries to which the provinces were supposed to be subordinate until the very end of the law, where they are mentioned only with respect to the fourth class provinces.

A search through the various ministries reveals that all had rather low-ranking officials called *pra:tèn*, the meaning of which term seems to have been lost already in the Ayutthaya period. None



The provincial law, in addition to showing the provinces under four *pra:tèn<kamrateñ* subordinate to the registrar's department rather than the *kalāhom* or *cákrī*, also divides them between the "forces" (*bala*) of *dahār* and "forces" of *rōan*, and both of those groups were divided between left and right. This is quite different from the division between *dahār*, under the *kalāhom*, and *bala rōan*, under the *cákrī*, which was a feature of the 19th-century Thai administration, with its origins attributed to King Trailok. Moreover, there are very few cases of one-to-one correspondence between the two structures. Most of the *dahār* provinces of the provincial law later became *mahātdaiy* (*bala rōan*) provinces and vice versa.

Space limitations do not permit further discussion of the categories of the working and serving population, but the laws are full of references to relationships and classifications of ordinary people which do not conform to the system known from the nineteenth century. This still awaits serious study.

Some conclusions on law recensions and development of the central government

This does not purport to be 'final conclusions', for the problems concerning organization of the ordinary population have hardly been touched, but only further conclusions beyond what were proposed in my earlier papers.

The more detailed investigation seems to confirm--at least it does not weaken--the conclusions about dates, titles and recensions made in "Prolegomena". None of the law dates may be imputed to any time before King Trailok (1448-1488), and most of them were devised, when they are not true contemporary dates, after the reign of Naresuan (1590-1605). In particular, the very early Buddhist era dates, ostensibly from the time of Rāmādhīpātī I of Ayutthaya, were recalculated in the 16th century.

To be sure, recalculation implies that there were earlier texts with some different type of date, and what was their origin? Here I would like to give more emphasis to one of my conclusions in "Prolegomena". That is, the true principal title of the king reigning 1448-1488 was *rāmādhīpatī*, not *trailokanāth*, but this was no longer recognized in the 16th century. Thus laws of mid-15th century, with the royal title *rāmādhīpatī*, along with changes in their texts, were redated to the first reign of Ayutthaya as understood from the chronicles. King Trailok was probably the reformer he is reputed to have been, and probably responsible for more legislation than is now recorded either in his name or in his reign.

Perhaps the only portions of text which reflect the time of Rāmādhīpātī I are those laying claim to suzerainty over the southern part of the Malaysian peninsula, for Ayutthayan policy at that time was to control that economically strategic area, and later to compete with Malacca in the China trade. Those sections of the law, however, could also be imputed with equal plausibility to the time of Trailok, who still tried to invade the peninsula as far as Malacca.

Probably a very early text is the first section of the **Abduction Law** with its list of Sukhothai-area provinces, including some ancient names which could be attributed to the 14th

century. This text seems to imitate the Sukhothai law in inscription no. 38 dated between 1371 and 1433. It would be reasonable to take this law as having been adopted by King Trailok during the time he ruled in Phitsanulok over a joint kingdom of Sukhothai and Ayutthaya.

Among the hidden structures is an apparent four-minister central government with the *möaṅ* minister in first place, and in which all have *yaśa* of *khun*. This reflects the time just before the reign of Trailok, as seen in the "2/k.125 Fragment", and in the statement about central government reforms imputed to Trailok in the Ayutthayan chronicles. To a certain extent that reform by Trailok may be accepted, at least the raising of rank of the *möaṅ*, *vāṅ*, *glāṅ* and *nā* ministries. The prominence of the *cákrī* and *kalāhom*, however, especially their control over two divisions of the population, must be imputed to later reforms and recensions, most probably the last, in the time of Rama I of Bangkok.

Because of the Khmer titles, *kamrateṅ*, of the important officials over the provincial administration, this structure hidden in the **Provincial Hierarchy Law** may be one of the oldest layers of administration in the **Three Seals**. A precise date cannot be assigned, but it must predate 1569 when Ayutthaya came under the Sukhothai royalty, and it is probably at least as old as the reign of King Trailok who was still using Khmer officially. This Khmer usage does not mean recent influence from Angkor, for the Ayutthayan area was itself mixed Khmer and Mon, and a similar provincial organization cannot be identified from Cambodian records.

Van Vliet, in the early 17th century, implied a provincial division not seen in the laws, and possibly related to the *kumṛtèṅ*. He said that each of the four important ministers, respectively *vāṅ*, *baldeb*, *cákrī*, and *glāṅ*, had about one-fourth of the administration of the country and received one-fourth of the revenues.²⁰³ Originally *kamrateṅ* was high enough to be a ministerial rank, and van Vliet's remark suggests that in the oldest Ayutthayan four-department central government structure, which was maintained until Rama I, the four ministers were *kamrateṅ* > *kumṛtèṅ*. Over time ministerial titles changed, and relative importance among the four varied, with provincial *kumṛtèṅ* themselves becoming relatively minor officials in the Registrar's Department.

At the time when this structure was active, and the provinces under the Registrar, the latter, as the **Civil Hierarchy Law** still suggests, was under the Minister of the Palace (*vāṅ*), whose pre-eminence was reported by van Vliet as late as the 17th century. There is obviously a contradiction here, and perhaps van Vliet was writing in a time of transition. Contradiction concerning control over provinces is also seen in the 18th-century description by Turpin, in which provinces and governors were under the *cákrī*, but land and corvée under the *baldeb*. Perhaps such contradictions were inherent throughout the Ayutthaya period, not to be resolved until the 19th century.

Before the time of Trailok, and indeed until after 1569, it is difficult to accept that the provinces of the old Sukhothai kingdom were subordinate to the degree implied in the laws, and their inclusion may have come about only in the time of Naresuan, as Quaritch Wales noted. That would have been when the **Provincial Law** in its present form was drawn up, with the old *kumṛtèṅ* assimilated to the lower rank of *pra:tèṅ*. An indication that this must have been after 1569 is in the titles for the governor of Phitsanulok. Until 1569 that post maintained the traditional Sukhothai royal title of *Mahādharmarājādhirāj* and Sukhothai royalty were governors, until the last of that rank became King of Ayutthaya following the war with Burma. With Sukhothai royalty ensconced in Ayutthaya, their old territory would have become ordinary provinces, as seen in the **Provincial Law**

²⁰³ Jeremias van Vliet, "Description of the Kingdom of Siam".

where Phitsanulok, although one of only two first class provinces, no longer has a governor with a Sukhothai royal title. The eighteenth-century description of Siam by the French writer Turpin suggests that the change in title for governors of Phitsanulok did not occur until the reign of Taksin, for Turpin, writing, apparently in 1768, said that Phitsanulok was "formerly under the rule of hereditary Seigneurs, and justice is still rendered today in the name of [emphasis added] its ancient masters, and in their palace". In that year there was an expedition against Phitsanulok, but when he wrote Turpin did not know its results. It was successful, and in 1770 Taksin "promoted the Čau [sic! Phráyā] Yomarāt to Čau Phráyā Suraśī and ordered him to rule in Phitsanulok", and the title of the governor of Phitsanulok in the **Provincial Hierarchy Law** is *cau bañā suraśrī biśamādhirā j.*²⁰⁴ This officer was the younger brother of the Cakrī who later became Rama I. What is new in the organization of the **Provincial Law** is the division into four classes of provinces, with no relationship to the four *kumṛtèn/prā:tèn*.

One aspect of the structure under *kumṛtèn*, the division of both type of 'forces', *bala röan* and *bala dahār* among groups of the right and of the left, still appears in an early 18th-century law, but was changed in a new version of the same law less than a decade later, as described above (pp. 14-15). Of course, the division of the population under the *kumṛtèn* represents a quite different order from that between *dahār* 'soldiers' and *bala röan* 'civilians' known in the 19th century, and perhaps from the 18th. Understanding the significance of the titles of the *kumṛtèn* would help, but only one of them seems to have a clear meaning. That is the *prā:dèn/kumṛtèn senāt*. In Burmese *senāt* is 'firearms'; and in the Burmese administration people were divided into villages by type of service. Did the same type of service division prevail in Thailand? More discussion of this must await study of the serving population.

The overall structure of the central government, which may be excavated from the many textual layers of the **Hierarchy Laws**, with its clear similarities to Tai, Lue, and Chinese systems, should probably be attributed to no date earlier than 1569 when Mahā Dharmarājādhirāja of Phitsanulok, of the old Sukhothai royal family, became king in Ayutthaya, to be followed by his two sons, Naresuan and Ramesuan (traditionally known as 'Ekādaśaraṭh'). It was after this that Ayutthaya really became Thai. Of course, King Trailok may have begun to assimilate northern Tai/Thai practices during his reign in Phitsanulok, and absolute dating of these administrative practices may not be possible.

²⁰⁴. Turpin, Vol I, p. 26, translated from the original French, Vol II, p. 341; Jiří Stránský, *Die Wiedervereinigung Thailands unter Taksin 1767-1782*, Hamburg and Tokyo, Gesellschaft für Natur- und Völkerkunde Ostasiens, e.V., 1973, p. 91, translated from the original German.

Correction of the Yomarāt's *yaśa* is based on Stránský's index.

