Materials for the Study of the Tripiṭaka Volume 18

ข้อมูลพระไตรปิฎกศึกษา เล่ม ๑๘

Proceedings of the Third International Pali Studies Week Paris 2018

Edited by
Claudio Cicuzza



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Like the two earlier "International Pali Studies Weeks" (2014 and 2016), the third one, jointly organised by Nalini Balbir and Peter Skilling, was held from 11 to 14 June 2018 in Paris, at the École Pratique des Hautes Études, in the occasion of its 150th anniversary.

Seven scholars submitted their works for publication in this volume: Nalini Balbir, Oskar von Hinüber, Petra Kieffer-Pülz, Gregory Kourilsky, Santi Pakdeekham, Javier Schnake, and Vincent Tournier.

Front cover
Images from a manuscript kept in Wat Khao Yi San (courtesy Santi Pakdeekham)

Back cover
Images from a manuscript kept in Wat Khao Yi San (courtesy Santi Pakdeekham)

Fragile Palm Leaves Foundation
Lumbini International Research Institute

Bangkok and Lumbini 2023

Proceedings of the Third International Pali Studies Week, Paris 2018
ข้อมูลพระไตรปิฎก เล่ม 18
ISBN: 978-616-93148-2-0
9 786169 314820
ราคา 1200 Baht.

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General Editor: Claudio Cicuzza

Proceedings of the Third International Pali Studies Week Paris 2018

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1. Peter Skilling and Santi Pakdeekham, *Pāli Literature Transmitted in Central Siam,* Bangkok 2002

2. Peter Skilling and Santi Pakdeekham, *Pāli and Vernacular Literature Transmitted in Central and Northern Siam,* Bangkok 2004

3. Olivier de Bernon, Kun Sopheap, Leng Kok-An, *Inventaire provisoire des manuscrits du Cambodge. Première partie,* École française d'Extrême-Orient: Paris 2004

4. Santi Pakdeekham, *Jambūpati-sūtra*. *A synoptic romanized edition,* Bangkok and Lumbini 2009

5. Claudio Cicuzza (ed.), *Peter Skilling. Buddhism and Buddhist Literature of South-East Asia. Selected Papers,* Bangkok and Lumbini 2009

6. Claudio Cicuzza, *A Mirror Reflecting the Entire World. The Pāli Buddhapādamaṅgala or the "Auspicious Signs on the Buddha's Feet". Critical Edition with English Translation,* Bangkok and Lumbini 2011

7. Petra Kieffer-Pülz, *Sīmāvicāraṇa*. *A Pali letter on monastic boundaries by King Rāma IV of Siam,* Bangkok and Lumbini 2011

8. Santi Pakdeekham, *Piṭakamālā*. *'The Garland of the Piṭaka',* Bangkok and Lumbini 2011

9. Claudio Cicuzza (ed.), *Peter Nyunt. A Descriptive Catalogue of Burmese Manuscripts in the Fragile Palm Leaves Collection. Volume 1,* Bangkok and Lumbini 2014

10. Claudio Cicuzza (ed.), *Peter Nyunt. A Descriptive Catalogue of Burmese Manuscripts in the Fragile Palm Leaves Collection. Volume 2,* Bangkok and Lumbini 2014

11. Claudio Cicuzza (ed.), *Peter Nyunt. A Descriptive Catalogue of Burmese Manuscripts in the Fragile Palm Leaves Collection. Volume 3,* Bangkok and Lumbini 2015

12. Daniel M. Stuart, *The Stream of Deathless Nectar*, Bangkok and Lumbini 2017

13. Santi Pakdeekham, *Tāṃrā Traipiṭaka*, Bangkok and Lumbini 2017

14. Claudio Cicuzza (ed.), *Katā me rakkhā, katā me parittā*. *Protecting the protective texts and manuscripts. Proceedings of the Second International Pali Studies Week. Paris 2016*, Bangkok and Lumbini 2018

15. Olivier de Bernon, Kun Sopheap, Leng Kok An, *Inventaire provisoire des manuscrits du Cambodge. Deuxième partie. Les bibliothèques institutionnelles de Phnom Penh*. École française d'Extrême-Orient and Fragile Palm Leaves, Paris and Bangkok 2018

16. Santi Pakdeekham (transliterated), *History of the Pali Scriptures: Saṅgītiyavaṃsa* by Somdet Phra Phonnarat, Bangkok and Lumbini 2020

17. Santi Pakdeekham, *Painted Catalogue of Pāli Literature*, *Uposatha Hall of Wat Thong Nopphakhun*, *Bangkok.* Bangkok and Lumbini 2021

18. Claudio Cicuzza (ed.), *Proceedings of the Third International Pali Studies Week, Paris 2018*, Bangkok and Lumbini 2023

19. Santi Pakdeekham, *History of the Emerald Buddha and Sihiṅga Buddha Ratanabimbavaṃsa by Brahmarājapaññā Gāthā. Tāṃnān Phra Kaew Morakot by King Mongkut. Sihiṅganidāna by Bodhiraṅsī*, Bangkok and Lumbini 2022

20. Santi Pakdeekham and Peter Skilling, *King Mongkut's Anthology: Pali Inscriptions from Phra Pathom Chedi*, Forthcoming

MATERIALS FOR THE STUDY OF THE TRIPIṬAKA VOLUME 18

Proceedings of the Third International Pali Studies Week Paris 2018

Edited by
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Fragile Palm Leaves Foundation • Lumbini International Research Institute

2023

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ISBN 978-616-93148-2-0

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First published in May, 2023.

Distributed by Chulalongkorn University Book Centre
Phyathai Road, Pathumwan, Bangkok 10330, Thailand
Wholesale Siam Square Tel. (+662) 218-9889/90, Facsimile (+662) 254-9495

Art Director and Book Designer
Songwut Boonmak
for Tusita Design

Printed in Thailand by Amarin Printing and Publishing PCL



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4

Legal Concerns in 16th Century Laos: a preliminary study of the *Gurupadesa*

Gregory Kourilsky
École française d'Extrême-Orient

The *Gurupadesa* is a Buddhist legal text from Laos that was written in probably mid–16th century.[1] It results from the meeting of high-ranking monks at the Visun monastery, one of the most ancient Buddhist temples of the royal capital city of Luang Prabang, and their subsequent discussions about a series of legal issues, related to both monastic and secular affairs. Although the text is written in vernacular, it largely draws on Pali canonical and postcanonical scriptures. Yet unstudied, the *Gurupadesa* is not only a key to understanding the religious system of regulation in ancient Laos, but also constitutes a tool for comprehending the secular schemes of the population in matters of ethics, psychology and social patterns.

This paper aims to give a rough overview on the *Gurupadesa*, and to draw an outline for further research on the Thai-Lao pre-modern Buddhist legal traditions, which have hitherto been overlooked by scholars.[2]

[1] Research on which this paper is based was generously sponsored by the ACLS/Robert H.N. Ho Family Foundation Program in Buddhist Studies, the Lumbini International Research Institute and the Reyukai Foundation.

[2] In this regard, I am deeply indebted to Michel Lorrillard, who has brought this text to my attention.

Overview

The first folios of the *Gurupadesa* depict the meeting of nine high-ranking monks in Luang Prabang, the ancient capital of the Lao kingdom of Lan Xang (present-day Laos). This meeting was held at Visun monastery, and was organized under the patronage of the monarch, which in Laos, as in many Theravadin countries, is also the protector of Buddhism and, to a certain extent, ruler of the Community of monks (*saṅgha*). The aim of this meeting was primarily to reflect on the question of land incomes, along with a series of issues related to the monastery precinct and its internal regulation. The discussions addressed a wide range of topics, such as the monks' residence, the installation of *sīma* or boundary stones, the clothing of monks, the formal gift of robes (*kaṭhina*), the days of observance (*uposatha*), the objects monks are allowed to possess, and so on. Here the argumentation relies extensively on canonical and postcanonical scriptures, principally the *Vinaya* and its commentaries and subcommentaries, but also to other texts such as the *Petavatthu*, the *Jāṭakas*, the *Visuddhimagga* or the *Rasavāhinī*. These are, however, sometimes interpreted in order to make them fit with the social organization of the Lao society at the time of its composition. In this regard, the themes addressed in the *Gurupadesa* are not exclusively religious. While a significant number of the clauses are directed towards the *saṅgha*, many others pertain to the secular sphere and concern laypersons, and still others aim to regulate the relationship between the monastic order and secular power.[3]

[3] Hence, the first issue discussed deals with administrative issues concerning monasteries, in particular land demarcation, usufruct and right of use. The text stipulates that when a lord wishes to build a temple, the land granted must be legally demarcated by boundaries and according to specific procedure indicated in the *Samantapāsādikā* (*Vinaya-aṭṭhakathā*). It must be officially recorded that the donor also leaves to the benefit of the temple all revenues coming from this land – such as taxes and contributions collected –, and that the village district (*gāmakhetta*) is henceforth considered to be included in the 'income boundary' (*lābhasīma*) for the benefit of the temple. In addition, the boundary (*sīmā*) must not be delineated by monks, but by laypeople designated for this task [i 2–6]. See selected excerpts on this issue at the end of this paper.

Far from being specific to *Gurupadesa*, the association and the correspondence between the monastic code and the secular law is a common feature of legal literature of Laos, and more broadly of the legal tradition of this part of Southeast Asia.[4] One reason of this interdependence of secular and religious law is the fact *Vinaya* was certainly the first systematic written legal corpus locally available, which was subsequently translated, adapted and used as a source of inspiration for later codes. Indic *Dharmaśāstra*s (Pali *Dhammasattha*) were another important source for Southeast Asian legal literature.[5] Even in most recent – as well as contemporary – secular law codes, technical terms are mostly borrowed from Pali or Sanskrit sources. The fact that the monastery was for a long time the main if not sole place of literacy, led monks to play the role of 'legal notables' (*Rechtshonoratioren*), as Max Weber puts in when he describes the intermediate stage where, in a given society, scholars and literate men serve as legislators before legal professionals arise.[6] Another reason is that in 'Buddhist kingdoms' of Southeast Asia, rulers have a direct authority not only over the lay population but also over the monastic order. For a long time, it was kings or dignitaries who sponsored the building and renovation of Buddhist temples, ordered copies of the religious texts or collections, supported *saṅgha* reforms and nominated supreme patriarchs or abbots of the most important temples.[7] Finally,

[4] One of the most ancient legal codes written in a Thai language, the *Maṅgrai-sāstr*, has this characteristic.

[5] On Burmese *Dhammasattha*s, see Christian Lammerts, *Buddhist Law in Burma. A History of* Dhammasattha *Texts and Jurisprudence, 1250–1850*, University of Hawai'i Press, Honolulu, 2018.

[6] Max Weber, *Sociologie du droit*, Paris, Presses Universitaires de France (2013), p. 33 and 124; Andrew Huxley, 'Introduction', in Andrew Huxley (ed.), *Thai Law: Buddhist Law: Essays on the Legal History of Thailand Laos and Burma*, White Orchid Press, Bangkok 1996, p. 12. The Laws of Khun Borom (*koṭ-hmāy khun parama*), which is allegedly the most ancient Lao law code, differs from subsequent legal texts by claiming to have been established by the king, who is described as the 'lawgiver' (*cf.* Mayouri Ngaosyvathn, 'An Introduction to the Laws of Khun Borom: An Early Prototype of the Organization of the T'ai Society and Life', in Andrew Huxley 1996, p. 74).

[7] For this issue in Laos and Northern Thailand (Lan Na), see Gregory Kourilsky & Patrice Ladwig, 'Governing the Monastic Order in Laos: Pre-modern Buddhist Legal Traditions and Their Transformation under French

the fact that ordination in Buddhist Thai-Lao tradition is usually not permanent, but often of rather short duration, and, at the same time quasi-compulsory for men, has surely fostered the mixing of secular and religious jurisdictions.

Gurupadesa Manuscripts

Despite the presence of the *Gurupadesa* in several manuscript collections throughout the region, it went almost unnoticed by local and international specialists of Thai-Lao Buddhist literature. One can only find one mention of this text in the list of manuscripts of Luang Prabang established by Louis Finot in 1917, which includes a '*Gurūpadesa*' stored at That Luang monastery in Luang Prabang, but no further details are provided.[8]

The *Gurupadesa* is a rather voluminous text, as it includes about 230 folios in manuscript form, most often divided into eight to ten fascicles. Fascicle division is not consistent with particular topics or organisation of the content. However – and this is so rare in the manuscript corpus of Laos that it deserves mention – numerous *Gurupadesa* manuscripts indicate in the margins of relevant folios the topic addressed throughout the text, which considerably facilitates reading.[9] This feature clearly suggests that the *Gurupadesa* was meant for consultation rather than for continuous reading, which makes sense for a code of law. The truth is many *Dhammasāt* and other Buddhist legal codes of Lanna and Laos have the same feature. However, among the *Gurupadesa* manuscripts that are known to us, none of them has a table of contents.[10]

Colonialism', *Buddhism, Law and Society*, vol. 3 (2018), pp. 198–199. For some examples in central Thailand, see Yoneo Ishii, *Sangha, State and Society. Thai Buddhism in History*, University of Hawai'i Press, Honululu 1996, p. 62. Petra Kieffer-Pülz also has highlighted congruence between monastic and secular law in Indian Buddhism (Petra Kieffer-Pülz, 'What the Vinayas can tell us about law', in Rebecca French and Mark Nathan (eds), *Buddhism and Law. An Introduction*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge [2014], p. 58).

[8] Finot, Louis, 'Recherches sur la littérature laotienne', *Bulletin de l'École française d'Extrême-Orient*, vol. 17–1 (1917), p. 184.

[9] List of contents is given below.

[10] While Burmese manuscripts often include a table of contents in their first folio, this is extremely rare in Thai and Lao manuscripts.

Colophons do not give the name of the author of the *Gurupadesa*, nor that of the date of composition – but rather, as for most Thai-Lao manuscripts, that of the copy and the person who has produced or ordered it. Information can be inferred, however, from the opening folios of the text (see below). Although the *Gurupadesa* has now been forgotten, its regional dissemination suggests it enjoyed a widespread popularity before the colonial period. Manuscript copies have been found across the Lao cultural area, which includes present-day Laos (officially Lao P.D.R.), as well as a larger part of the Northeastern region of Thailand commonly known as 'Isan'. For instance, *Gurupadesa* is found in the cities of Luang Prabang, Vientiane, Champassak, Maha-Sarakham and Yasothon. Moreover, a manuscript written in Tai Lue script found in the city of Muang Sing shows the text circulated in the kingdom of Sipsongpanna, which is now distributed between Northern Laos, the Eastern Shan state of Burma and the Chinese province of Yunnan. Most importantly, *Gurupadesa* also circulated in the area corresponding to ancient Lan Na kingdom, as evidenced by manuscripts found in the northern Thai cities of Phrae, Lampang, Chiang Rai, Nan, and Phayao.[11]

This wide circulation is rare enough for Lao texts to be worthy of note. As a matter of fact, a very large number of Buddhist texts of Laos are actually originated in Lan Na.[12] The *Gurupadesa* is thus rather exceptional in that it reflects a transmission in the opposite direction. Its introduction in Lan Na is likely due to Venerable Khruba Kanchon (ครูบากัญจน *Grūpā Kañcana*, 1789–1878), a forest-dwelling (*araññāvāsin*) monk originated in Phrae (present-day in northern Thailand), famous for having collected and copied thousands of manuscripts throughout the region and then having stored them at Sung

[11] Most manuscripts have been identified through the following databases: Digital Library of Lao Manuscripts (http://www.laomanuscripts.net/en/index), Digital Library of Northern Thai Manuscripts (http://lannamanuscripts.net/), Lan Na Manuscripts (EFEO) (http://lanna-manuscripts.efeo.fr/), Palm Leaves Manuscript Preservation in Northeast Thailand (Maha Sarakham University) (http://www.bl.msu.ac.th/2554/bailan.htm).

[12] Although Lao historiography – as well as most historical studies on Laos – states that Buddhism came to Lan Xang from Cambodia in the mid-14th century, evidence shows that Lao Buddhist culture (texts, images, art) is an offshoot of Lan Na (Michel Lorrillard, 'D'Angkor au Lan Xang, une révision des jugements', *Aséanie*, vol. 7 [2001], pp. 19–33; see also below).

Men monastery in this very city.[13] Between 1833 and 1836, he made copies of 242 texts at Visun monastery, under the patronage of the ruler of Luang Prabang,[14] and then sent them to Phrae.[15] Among them was the *Gurupadesa*, the original copy of which is actually stored at Sung Men monastery, bearing the name of the 'Mahāthera Kañcana *araññavāsī*' as the copyist, and the king of Lan Xang kingdom as the sponsor. This very manuscript is the oldest complete copy of the *Gurupadesa* known so far. It is dated 1198 of the little era (*cūḷasakarāja*, abbrev. cs), that is, ce 1836. This exemplar is beautifully crafted, as manuscripts sponsored by kings usually are. It bears an elegant *chalak* (Sk. *śalākā*, P. *salākā*), that is, a wooden strip on which title, date, name of the sponsor and words of dedication are inscribed (see picture)



Gurupadesa, Wat Sung Men Manuscript

[13] Harald Hundius, 'The colophons of 30 Pāli manuscripts from Northern Thailand', *Journal of the Pali Text Society*, vol. 14 (1990), p. 34–36.

[14] At the beginning of 18th century, internal leadership quarrels led to the split of the kingdom of Lan Xang. Smaller – and less powerful – Lao principalities subsequently reconstituted around Luang Prabang, Vientiane, Xiang Khouang and Champasak, each placed under the ruling of different royal lineages. Reunification was a long process that started with French colonialism and ended with the advent of the new kingdom of Laos in 1945. Since then, Vientiane has remained the capital of the country, which, during that time (in 1975), became a Socialist Republic.

[15] This is attested by an inscription made at Visun monastery. The inscription, dated ce 1837, also gives details on the cost of the copies and the donation made by the king of Luang Prabang and dignitaries (see Hans Penth, Phanphen Khruathai and Silao Ketphrom, ประชุมจารึกล้านนา เล่ม ๕ จารึกในพิพิธภัณฑ์ฯ น่าน และจารึกเมืองน่านที่น่าสนใจ. *Corpus of the Lan Na inscriptions*, vol. 5, *Inscriptions in the Nān Museum and other Nān Inscriptions*, Chiang Mai University, Chiang Mai 2001, p. 279). Many of the texts of the Visun monastery collection were actually originated in Lan Na, and therefore made in this instance a comeback to their birthplace. However, some others were original local works, such as *Gurupadesa*, which were introduced to Lan Na in this circumstance.

A much older fragment has been found, however, at the Maha That monastery, in the city of Yasothorn (Northeast Thailand), whose repository (*hạ̄ trai*) contains one of the richest and oldest collection of Lao manuscripts.[16] This fragment consists of a single folio, which is a colophon bearing the title *Mūlakammaṭṭhāna-Garupadesa*, together with the year *cūḷaśakarāja* 983, that is, 1621 ce.[17] Here the presence of the term '*Mūlakammaṭṭhāna*' associated with that of '*Gurupadesa*' is puzzling, as this term usually refers to local meditation treatises that pertain to the so-called *kammaṭṭhān* tradition, which has little to do with Buddhist law.[18] In fact, this cover folio is probably related not to the *Gurupadesa* we are dealing with, but to a shorter version, in one fascicle, which is found in Northern Thailand and also in Muang Sing, the ancient capital of the Tai Lue principality of Chiang Khaeng (today north Laos). This 'lesser' *Gurupadesa* is not exactly an abridged version of the longer one. First, no mention is made of a meeting of high-ranking monks at Visun monastery, under the Lao king's patronage. In place, the first folio contains a statement, written in Pali, that the *Gurupadesa* – here to be understood in its literal meaning, i.e. 'instruction of the Master' (see below) – was taught by the Buddha himself (*gurupadesā bhagavā desito*). The following lines acknowledge that knowing this text is a requisite, together with the learning of the moral precepts (*sīla*) and the practice of meditation (*kammaṭṭhāna*), for faithful monks intending to reach the *nibbāna*.

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[16] This manuscript fragment is not listed in the provisional inventory of this collection established by Akiko Iijima ('A Historical Approach to the Palm-Leaf Manuscripts Preserved in Wat Mahathat, Yasothon [Thailand]', in *The literary heritage of Laos, preservation, dissemination and research perspectives : collected papers in Lao, Thai and English from the international conference in Vientiane, 8-10 January 2004*, The National Library of Laos, Vientiane [2005], pp. 353–357). It is mentioned in a later inventory that was established by the team of EFEO centre in Vientiane (unpublished).

[17] The accuracy of this date is confirmed by the mention of the year *ruang [rao]*, which effectually matches with 1621 ce.

[18] This tradition, which is specific to Cambodia, Thailand and Laos, has been first identified by François Bizot. For the *Mūlakammaṭṭhān* especially, see François Bizot, *Le figuier à cinq branches*, École française d'Extrême-Orient, Paris (1976).

This text likely belongs to the *gṛāṅ* genre, which refers to manuals of monastic discipline that are spread in the Thai-Lao cultural area. Written in vernacular, *gṛāṅ* are easier to understand and to assimilate for monks, and are also better suited for the local environment than the Pali *Vinaya* literature they rely on.[19] As for this one-fascicle *Gurupadesa*, it largely draws on the *Vinayasaṅgaha-aṭṭhakathā* (Pālim), of which it follows the overall structure. It happens that Pālim was apparently also an important source for the 'greater' *Gurupadesa*. This common source probably explains why both texts share the same title, and also – beyond their obvious differences – some common topics and Pali quotations. Among common topics are the determination of boundaries for a monastery, monastic robes given as a gift (*kaṭhina*), property or goods monks are authorized to possess, etc. The notion of 'heavy goods' (*garubhaṇḍa*), especially, is discussed at length (see below). On the other hand, the one-fascicle *Gurupadesa* deals with issues that are absent from the nine-fascicle version, such as ascetic practice (*duthaṅga*), collection of forsaken robes (*paṃsukūla*), and Pali verses that must recitated when receiving alms-giving or putting the monastic cloth on. In this regard, it is significant that the opening of the Pālim states that it is intended 'for [the benefit of] monks who practice the spiritual exercise' (*yogāvacara-bhikkhūnaṃ*).[20]

It is thus very likely that the aforementioned *Mūlakammaṭṭhāna-Garupadesa* fragment dated 1621 comes from the single-fascicle version, and not the nine-fascicle one. As the former was presumably composed after the latter, this fragment gives a first *terminus ante quem* for the composition of the original *Gurupadesa*. We will see later in this paper that there are strong grounds for presuming that it was written almost one century before that date.

[19] As a matter of fact, this very term appears in the title as it is reproduced in the margin of the first folio of a 'shorter' *Gurupadesa* manuscript found in Lampang, Northern Thailand: *gāṅ gurupades bhikkhu* (see references).
[20] Pālim 1.

About the title

The text can appear under slightly different titles, for instance *Vinai Gurupadeś*, *Gurupadesa lae Vineyya Hlvaṅ*, *Guru-upadesa Vinaiya Gāṃsạ̄n*, *Ṭīkā Gurupradesa Mahāvagga*, *Sabba Gurupradeśa,*[21] etc. This multiplicity of titles for a single text is actually not uncommon in Thai-Lao Buddhist literature. Here it is noticeable that most alternate titles make an explicit connection with the *Vinaya*.

Besides the title of the text, the very word *gurupadesa* is not homogeneous throughout manuscript collections. It is found with different spellings, such as *Garupadesa*, *Gurupradesa*, *Gurupradeśa*, *Gurupadessa*, *Gurūpadesa*, *Guru-upadesa*, *Gurupadeḍ*, *Gulupradeḍ*, etc. These multiple spellings reflect some confusion that may have arisen over time with regard to the meaning of this title. The most obvious way of understanding this term is to interpret it as the Pali compound *guru-upadesa* (> *gurūpadesa* / *guru 'padesa*), which means literally 'instruction of the master', and would in this context refer to the Teaching of the Buddha.[22] In fact, this reading is explicitly stated in the first book, where the compound *gurupadesa-lābhi* is explained as "who have received the instruction of the Master" (i 41). This word, however, occurs with this spelling neither in the *Tipiṭaka* nor in its commentaries (*aṭṭhakathā*s and *ṭīkā*s). Only the form *garūpadesa* occasionally appears, with this very meaning, in later texts such as the *Subodhālaṅkāra* and *Kaccāyana-suttanidesa,*[23] but more especially in

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[21] Sk. *śabda*. Here this word refers to a literary genre where a Pali text is translated or explained word by word in vernacular. See below.

[22] It happens that *upade* (< P. *upadesa*) refers to a category of Burmese legal texts (Christian Lammerts, *Buddhist Law in Burma*, p. 178–180). These texts, however, seem to have become widespread only in the colonial period, that is, much later than the supposed date of composition of *Gurupadesa*.

[23] Subodh 156, Kacc-nidd 397 (*cf*. Javier Schnake, 'Le Dhamma par le jeu d'esprit et de la langue : le *Vajirasāratthasaṅgaha*, text pali du Nord de la Thaïlande (XVIe siècle)', PhD dissertation, École pratique des Hautes Études, Paris 2018, p. 122, notes 763 and 764). *Kaccāyana-suttanidesa* is a sub-commentary on *Kaccayāna Grammar*, written by Burmese monk Chapaṭa at the end of 12th century. *Subodhālaṅkāra* is a work on poetics written in 12th century in Ceylon by the *thera* Saṅgharakhita, the author of *Vuttodaya* (Kenneth R. Norman, *Pāli Literature, Including the Canonical Literature in Prakrit*

Burmese treatises pertaining to the *nīti* genre, namely the *Dhammanīti*, *Kavidappaṇanīti*, and *Saddanīti*.[24] Two occurrences are also found in the *Vajirasārattha-saṅgaha*, a Pali text allegedly written in Lan Na in 1534,[25] which here obviously draws on one of the aforementioned texts. As for the spelling *gurupadesa*, only two occurrences are found so far – again with the same meaning, i.e. 'instruction of the master'. The first one is in the *Saddhammopāyana* (Saddh), a treatise in verse that the fundamentals of the Doctrine, written by the mahāthera Ananda. Its place and date of composition is unknown but a Burmese inscription attests it was known in Pagan in mid–15th c. The second occurrence is in the *Kaccāyanasāra-navaṭīkā*, an undated sub-commentary on the *Kaccāyana* grammatical treatise written by a certain Rataññu, of which one sole copy – originated in Siam (central Thailand) – has come to us.[26] In other words, the compound *garūpadesa* occurs almost exclusively in Burmese Pali writings. As for the variant *guru*° (in place of *garu*), it corresponds to the lexical form of the term as it commonly appears

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and Sanskrit of all the Hīnayāna Schools of Buddhism, Otto Harrassowitz, Wiesbaden 1983, pp. 164 and 167–168).

[24] Dhn 3, Kavid 9-10, Sadd I (Be) 409–410. *Saddanīti* is a Pali Grammar written at Pagan (Burma) by Aggavaṃsa in 1154. The two other *nīti*, probably of later composition (ca. 15th century), gather together series of worldly wisdoms partly based on Sanskrit *subhāṣita*s (Kenneth R. Norman, *Pāli Literature*, pp. 175–176).

[25] Vaj-s 122. *Vajirasāratthasaṅgaha* is a compendium containing linguistic and esoterical analysis of Pali words and verses. For an in-depth study of this fascinating text, see Javier Schnake, 'Le Dhamma par le jeu d'esprit'.

[26] 'Kaccā[ya]nasārataṇṭhassa katāṭikā purātanā kiñcāpi sā pana yasmā dujjānā ākulāgato sotūnaṃ mandabuddhīnaṃ subodhatthāya sādhukaṃ **gurupadesā**lambanavaṭikaṃ karissaha (…)'. *Cf.* Jacqueline Filliozat, 'Catalogue des manuscrits en pali de la bibliothèque de l'École française d'Extrême-Orient', unpublished work, École française d'Extrême-Orient 2004, pp. 151–152. The text presents itself as a new (*nava*) *ṭikā* on the *Kaccāyanasāra*, in opposition to the 'former' one (*purātanā*). The later (*Kaccāyanasāra-ṭikā*) was written in the Mon city of Thaton (southern Burma) by a monk named Mahāyasam, probably in 14th century (Mabel H. Bode, *The Pāli Literature of Burma,* Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland, London 1909, pp. 36–37). As for Rataññu, he was probably a Burmese or Thai scholar living around 14th–15th centuries.

in Thai-Lao writings, and conforms to the Sanskrit spelling rather than the canonical Pali one.[27]

Another peculiarity in the spelling of this title is the form '*gurupradeśa*' (or '*gurupradesa*') that appears on the front page of many manuscripts. This spelling suggests the second term of the compound would be Sanskrit *pradeśa* (or Hybrid Sanskrit *pradesa*) instead of Pali *upadesa* (or Sanskrit *upadeśa*). Here again the presence of such a Sanskrit-derived form would not be surprising, as Thai-Lao lexicons include many Sanskrit loan words. The vernacular term *pradēt* (< Sk. *pradeśa*), in particular, is very common and has the same meaning as in Sanskrit, that is, 'district', 'region', 'land', or simply 'place'.[28] Therefore, *gurupadeśa* (or °*padesa*) may also be understood as 'the land of the master(s)'. Here *guru* would refer either to religious teachers or monks, or to the Buddha himself. In both cases *gurupadesa* would be meant for the Buddhist monastery precinct, or even, in a broader sense, to the whole principality or kingdom as a Buddhist land. Although this reading cannot be traced in Pali literature,[29] the issues of place and territory are precisely at the core of several parts of the *Gurupadesa*. The issue of land donation by kings for the benefit of the *saṅgha*, as well as the procedure of *sīmā* (boundaries) installation for establishing a monastery are topics that are discussed at length, and several times within the text.[30] In the relevant passages in vernacular, the word for referring to the piece of land given by kings in order to become a monastery is *bhūmi-pradeśa* (3 occurrences), while in the corresponding passages in Pali, which are excerpts from *Vinaya* commentarial literature, it is the word *padesa* that is used for the

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[27] In this regard, one can mention a *Ṭīkā-guruvineyya*, written in Tai Lue script and dated c.s. 1194 (c.e. 1832) (PLMP Code: 01012901008_00). Its content is different from the *Gurupadesa*.

[28] Since the Lao writing system was drastically simplified after Communist revolution (1975), Sanskrit etymologies are not visible anymore in the modern Lao (*viz*. *padēt*, instead of ancient form *pradēś*).

[29] However, the word *Buddha-desa* ('the land of the Buddha', or 'Buddha-land') occurs in Buddhist chronicles of Lan Na (Patrice Ladwig, 'Worshipping Relics and Animating Statues. Transformation of Buddhist statecraft in contemprorary Laos', *Modern Asian Studies*, vol. 48 [2014], p. 7)

[30] See note 3.

same purpose (5 occurrences).[31] The repeated use of this word at the beginning of the text might have caused confusion among copyists who came to misinterpret *upadesa* ('instruction') into *pradeśa* ('land'). Or, this double meaning could as well have been willfully established.

Whether intended or not, such an ambiguity might also have been supported by the fact that a significant part of the *Gurupadesa* deals with the notion of *garubhaṇḍa*, which in the *Vinaya* refers to 'heavy [or valuable] belongings' of the Saṅgha, as opposed to *lahubhaṇḍa* ('light [or not valuable] belongings') .[32] When it comes to the *garubhaṇḍa* issue, a confusion is precisely observable in the text between the forms *garu* and *guru*. Indeed, the word *garubhaṇḍa* is often, although not always, spelt *gurubaṇḍha*. In a manuscript dated ce 1901, for instance, the former spelling (*guru*°) occurs 51 times, while the latter (*garu*°) only 17 times.[33] Moreover, the spelling *guru*° can even occur within Pali sentences that are otherwise faithfully quoted from commentarial texts.[34] But although in Sanskrit *guru* also has the sense of 'heavy' – besides that of 'master' – this is not the case in Pali. It must be added that this confusion is not limited to *Gurupadesa* manuscripts. It is also encountered in the Lao adaptation of the *Garubhaṇḍa-vinicchaya-kathā* – the 20st chapter of the *Vinaya-saṅgaha-aṭṭhakathā*[35] – whose title consistently appears with the spelling '*Gurubhaṇḍa*'.[36] This very spelling is also found in some Northern Thai manuals pertaining to the aforementioned *gr̥̄ṅ* genre that concern the ordination. These stress the importance for the candidate to the *pabbajjā* and *upasampadā*

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[31] For an illustrative example, see below the paragraph "On boundaries (*sīmā*)".

[32] Vin I 305–312, III 90–92, V 217–218. See below for details on how this issue is discussed in the *Gurupadesa*.

[33] Manuscript stored at Pajāniyamavālavāt monastery in Vientiane, Laos (see references). The other manuscripts examined for this study have similar inconsistency.

[34] Viz. *g**u**rubhaṇḍa-vinicchayo* [VIII 34.$_1$]; *g**u**rubhaṇḍāniyeva* [viii 50.2].

[35] Pālim 301–308.

[36] Two examples are a manuscript dated cs 1045 (ce 1683) stored at the Luang Prabang Provincial Museum (PLMP Code: 06018515002_02), and another manuscript (undated) stored at the That Tum Phavang monastery, Nongbok district, Khammuan province (PLMP Code: 12030815001_00).

to distinguish between 'heavy' (*guru*, viz. *garu*) and 'light' (*lahu*) syllables when pronouncing the requested formulas in Pali[37]

It is, finally, worth noting that the form *guru* is also found in the *Gurupadesa* in other compound words, such as *guru-ṭṭhāna*, normally spelt *garu-ṭṭhāna* in canonical and postcanonical Pali writings. This example is significant as it precisely means 'the place of the master'. Also noteworthy is the fact that the word with this very spelling is, here again, occasionally found in some *ṭīkā*s originated in Burma.[38]

In light of the above, one can suppose that the scholarly monks who initially wrote the *Gurupadesa* had in mind an unequivocal meaning of the title they gave to their work, that is, 'Instruction of the Master' (*guru-[u]padesa*). Over centuries, during which the command of Pali language among the Lao Saṅgha has tended to decline, misspellings, and even misunderstandings by copyists have likely led to confusion between *upadesa* and *padesa* (or *pradeśa*). This ambiguity may also have been purposely retained, as it is sometimes the case in Thai-Lao Buddhist literature.[39]

As for the form *guru*, it is very likely the mark of a Mon-Burmese trend of Buddhist literacy. This influence was probably not exerted directly by the Mon or Burmese, however, but rather through the kingdom of Lan Na, which played a significant role – as it is highlighted below – in the diffusion of Buddhism in Lan Xang from 16th century onward.

Historical data and tentative dating

The opening folios of the *Gurupadesa* provide substantial information about the context in which it was produced:

> [i 1–2] The whole Community of monks, who is well-versed in the *Tipiṭaka*, have gathered in the royal capital city of the

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[37] *Cf.* François Bizot, *Les traditions de la pabbajjā en Asie du Sud-Est. Recherches sur le bouddhisme khmer, IV*, Vandenhoek & Rupert, Göttingen 1988, p. 63.

[38] F.e. Sv-pṭ I 298, Vsm-mhṭ I 354.

[39] For an illustrative example, see Gregory Kourilsky, 'The *Uṇhissavijaya-sutta* in Thailand and Laos: a Philological Approach', in Claudio Cicuzza (ed.), *Katā*

land of the Million Elephants (*sattanāganahuta-mahānagara-rājadhāni*). Among those who attended were:
- His Great Excellency the Royal preceptor and abbot of the Ratana monastery (*braḥ mahā saṅgha somděc vāṛa-rāja-g[u] rū ratanārāmādhipati*);
- the Venerable forest-dwelling monk of the Sal tree [abode] (*braḥ mahā sāla-vanavāsī kŏk pao*$_2$);
- the Great General of the Dhamma of the Si Phum monastery (*mahā-dhammasenā văt bhummā*);
- [Venerable] Mahāpaññāvisesa;
- the Patriarch and abbot of Savanthevalok monastery (*mahāsaṅgharājā svagga[deva]lokārāmādhipati*);
- the Great Master Srī Suvaṇṇagūhā, patriarch and abbot of the Visun monastery (*mahāsāmi srī suvaṇṇagūhā saṅgharājā vijula-mahā-vihārādhipati*);[40]
- the Patriarch Dhammarāso, abbot of the Great Cetiya monastery (*mahāsaṅgharājā dhammarāso mahā-cetiyāramādhipati*);
- the Patriarch and abbot of the Manorom monastery (*mahāsaṅgharājā manorāmavihārādhipati*);
- and the Great Minister of the Community in charge of the Great Reliquary in the city centre (*mahā-saṅgha-nāyŏk mahā-dhātu klāṅ mịịaṅ*).

Altogether, they have conducted the meeting while gathered within the Visun monastery. This venerable assembly have scrutinized all the texts of the Dhamma, after His Majesty the ruler of the kingdom of a Million Elephants (*sŏmděc mahārāja-dasalakkha-kuñjara*) had raised questions concerning *lābhasīma* [i.e. income boundary] that accrue to

me rakkhā, katā me parittā. Protecting the protective texts and manuscripts, Fragile Palm-leaves Foundation and Lumbini International Research Institute, Bangkok and Lumbini 2018, pp. 1–54.

[40] Some manuscript copies suggest that "the Great Master Srī Suvaṇṇagūhā" and the "abbot of the Visun monastery" are two different persons (*Mahāsāmi srī Suvaṇṇagūhā lae Mahā-saṅgharājā Vijula-mahā-vihārādhipati*). It is difficult to decide which of these readings it right. The same could be said for the monk "Mahāpaññāvisesa", which could be himself "the abbot of Savanthevalok monastery", though all examined manuscripts are consistent in suggesting these are two different persons.

> royal dignitaries and ministers (*senāmaccarājamantrī*)[41] on territories they administer, and on their right to take out some parts of the land of villages or principality to their own benefit. The Community of monks considered that royal dignitaries and ministers who, without having obtained royal permission, come to seize a village or principality territory that is not their own property (*attano santakam*?), act not suitably. This applies to everyone. Whosoever would act *sandamati* (?) differently from this statement, would have no authority [to do so]. The abbot of Visun monastery has been designated responsible for answering these Dhamma-related questions, by taking the Commentaries (*aṭṭhakathā*), Subcommentaries (*ṭīkā*) and Pali glossaries (*gaṇṭhi*) as numerous witnesses.

Just this passage alone makes the *Gurupadesa* an original piece in the context of Thai-Lao Buddhist literature, which usually doesn't provide information on the inner working of the Saṅgha. The religious corpus of Laos, and of Northern Thailand as well, largely consists of didactic texts, sermons, narratives, and technical manuals, but a text that depicts internal discussions and debates of the Buddhist clergy is exceptional.[42]

Moreover, although information given in this passage does not include its date of composition, there are a number of significant elements that enables us to make assumptions with regards to the context in which it was written.[43] First, the fact that the meeting of

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[41] Such local rulers, who were granted with pieces of land by the king, are literally said to 'eat the villages and principality' (*kin bān*$_2$ *kin mị̄ang*), meaning they have the privilege to collect taxes from this delimited area.

[42] Another case of this kind is the *Gambhīra-bhikkhu*, which records the disputes between the monks of Pa Daeng and Suan Dok monasteries in 15th century Chiang Mai. See François Bizot, '*Les traditions de la pabbajjā*', pp. 77–84.

[43] Authors and dates of composition of Thai and Lao Buddhist texts are usually unknown. When a manuscript bears a colophon, it gives the name of the copyist or of the sponsor of the manuscript, and the date the copy was completed (sometimes to one-hour accuracy). Exceptions are Pali texts that have been written during the 'golden age' of Lan Na (15th–16th century), which more than often indicate the authors' names, and the place and date of composition of the text. For an excellent overview of colophons of Northern


"Vat Vixun", drawing by Delaporte

these Lao Buddhist dignitaries took place at the Visun monastery is significant. It is indeed one of the most important and oldest temples (*văt*) of Luang Prabang (see picture).[44] According to chronicles, King Visun (Vijularāja,[45] r. 1501–1520) ordered its construction in cs 875 (ce 1513), to honour the promise he made some years ago if he had a son — which eventually came true this very year. The new temple, which took almost four years to be completed, was allegedly built on the site of an older temple built by hermits (*mahāṛśī*), located at the foot of Phu Si Hill, at the opposite side of the present-day royal palace of the city. This location was chosen by the great patriarch of the Saṅgha (*braḥ mahāsāmi cao*$_2$) and three royal 'brahmins' (*ācāry*), who followed a prediction written in a text brought back from the Khmer city of Angkor (*nagara hlvaṅ*). When the construction was completed, King Visun decided the Visun monastery would from then on house the Prabang Buddha image, the palladium of the kingdom of Lan Xang, which was until then kept in Manorāma monastery. The importance

Thai manuscripts, see Harald Hundius, 'The colophons of 30 Pāli manuscripts', p. 1–173.

[44] A drawing by the French traveller Louis Delaporte shows that the *vihāra* of Visun monastery was originally entirely made out of wood, and had a shape 'similar to a coffin' (Ernest Doudart de Lagrée, Francis Garnier, Louis Delaporte, *Voyage d'exploration en Indo-Chine, effectuée pendant les années 1866, 1867 et 1868 par une commission française*, vol. I, Hachette, Paris 1873, p. 323). This temple was destroyed by a band of Chinese warriors known as the 'Black Flags' in 1887, and then rebuilt in masonry in 1898. Since 1942, Vat Visun has also been a museum for religious art (Thao Boun Souk [Pierre-Marie Gagneux], *Louang Phrabang, Six cents ans d'art bouddhique*, Quartz International, Vientiane [1974], p. 25 and 28).

[45] This name is probably a deformation of Pali *vijjulatā* ('flash of lighting'), as Lao chronicles state that numerous lightings were seen in the sky at the moment of his coronation (Michel Lorrillard, 'Les chroniques royales du Laos. Essai d'une chronologie des règnes des souverains lao (1316-1887)', PhD dissertation, École Pratique des Hautes Études, Paris 1995, pp. 117–118) .

of Visun monastery under the reign of Visun is highlighted by the fact this king was, after his death in 1520, cremated there.[46] His son and successor, Phothisarath (Bodhisālarāja, r. 1520–1548), kept Vat Visun under his patronage, and was even ordained in this temple. There, he received (in 1525) a religious teaching by two high dignitaries who had been well instructed in the *Tipiṭaka* in the neighbouring Lan Na kingdom.[47]

From the mention of Vat Visun and other easily identifiable monasteries (see below), and that of the Pali designation *sattanāganahuta-mahānagara-rājadhāni* ('the royal capital city of the Million elephants [kingdom]'), one can be certain that the *Gurupadesa* was elaborated and written in the city that is now known as Luang Prabang (present-day in northern Laos).[48] This city, which appears in the Lao historiography under different names,[49] was the royal capital of the Lao kingdom of Lan Xang (*lān$_2$ jāṅ$_2$*. 'million elephants',[50] in Pali *sattanāganahuta*, literally 'hundred times ten thousand elephants'[51]) since the mid-14th century and until ca.1560. From then on, King Setthathirat (Jeṭṭhādhirāja, 1548–1571), fearing Burmese incursions, decided to move the capital of the kingdom to Vientiane (*vīaṅ căṇḍana*,

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[46] These details are related in the *Khun Borom* chronicle (*Nidāna Khun Purŏm*), and also in *The Chronicle of the building of Visun monastery* (*Tāṃnān sāṅ$_2$ văt Vijūn*) (*cf.* Michel Lorrillard,'Chroniques royales', pp. 119–120, and Suneth Phothisane, 'The Nidān Khun Borom', pp. 242–243). These sources say the *vihāra* was originaly made with different types of precious wood gathered in the forest by dignitaries.

[47] The first of these religious dignitaries, the Braḥ Saṅgharāja Mahā sī Căṇḍo, was originated in Phitsanulok and educated in Nan. The second one, Samuddhaghosa, received his Buddhist education in Chiang Mai (Michel Lorrillard, 'Chroniques royales', p. 125).

[48] This name is repeated later in the text.

[49] Common vernacular names are Muang Swa (*mịịaṅ jvā*), Muang Siang Dong Siang Tong (*mịịaṅ jyaṅ tậṅ jyaṅ dậṅ*), Muang Lan Xang Hom Khao (*mịịaṅ lān$_2$ jāṅ$_2$ rậm khāv*), lit. 'the country of one million elephants and white parasol'. For Pali names, see below.

[50] This name could be a local interpretation of the Chinese name of the Mekong river (*lancang*), on the banks of which most ancient Lao cities were built.

[51] On a scholarly discussion on this name, see George Cœdès, 'À propos des anciens noms de Luang Prabang', *Bulletin de l'École française d'Extrême-Orient*, vol. 18 (1918), pp. 9–11.

P. *candapūrī* 'the sandalwood city'), downstream from the current spot on the Mekong river.[52] Accordingly, the term *mahānagara* ('capital city') is associated in local sources with Luang Prabang for the period earlier than ca. 1560, and to Vientiane after this date.[53] In this light, the fact that the *Gurupadesa* refers to Luang Prabang as *sattanāganahuta-mahānagara-rājadhāni* suggests it was written while this city was still the capital of the kingdom, that is, before ca. 1560.[54]

Also noteworthy is the presence of the royal title *mahārāja-dasalakkhakuñjara*, meaning 'the great king of the Million elephants [kingdom]'. Here the word for 'elephant' is not *nāga* like before but *kuñjara*, and 'one million' is expressed by the compound *dasalakkha* ('ten times one hundred thousand') instead of *sattanahuta* ('one hundred times ten thousand'). As it happens, the word *dasalakkhakuñjara* for referring to Lan Xang appears only in 16th century sources, and as far

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[52] Michel Lorrillard, 'Chroniques royales', p. 146.

[53] Vientiane could be as well qualified as a 'royal city' (*rājadhāni*) before this date, especially as Phothisarath is said to have provisionally moved to this city in 1533 (Michel Lorrillard, 'Chroniques royales', p. 126). When this is the case, however, the name *candapūrī* is always added so as no confusion with Luang Prabang is possible (for ex. in the Phothisarath edict of 1535, mentioned below). After ca. 1560, both cities are renamed (viz. *caṇḍapūrī śrī sattanāganahuta lān₂ jāṅ₂ rāṃ khāv*, 'the sandalwood city in the Great [kingdom] of Lan Xang or the Million elephants and the White Parasol', and *śrī sattanāganahuta lān₂ jāṅ₂ rāṃ khāv hlvaṅ braḥ pāṅ*, 'the [city of] the Phra Bang, in the Great [kingdom] of Lan Xang or the Million elephants and the White Parasol', respectively). See Louis Finot, 'Notes d'épigraphie', *Bulletin de l'École française d'Extrême-Orient*, vol. 15–1 [1915], p. 31, and Michel Lorrillard, 'Chroniques royales', p. 147 and note 2. As for the status of Vientiane as *mahā-nāgara*, it is evidenced as soon as 1563 by a two-side inscription recording a treaty of demarcation between kingdoms of Ayutthaya (Siam) and Lan Xang (Laos) (see A. B. Griswold and Prasert na Nagara, "An Inscription of 1563 A.D. Recording a Treaty Between Laos and Ayodhyâ in 1560", *Journal of The Siam Society*, vol. 67–2 [1979], p. 59).

[54] This very Pali name given to Luang Prabang appears for instance in an inscription dated circa 1510, previously stored in Bangkok (see Lucien Fournereau, *Le Siam ancien. Archéologie, épigraphie, géographie,* Ernest Leroux, Paris 1895, pp. 146, 150, and George Cœdès, *op. cit*.). It also occurs in the *Amarakaṭa-Buddharūpa-nidāna*, a chronicle on the Emerauld Buddha image written in ca. 1570 (see below).

as we know in only three occurrences.[55] The first is in the *Jinakālamālī* chronicle, written in Lan Na between 1516 and 1527. When it comes to the events of the year cs 885 (ce 1523), this Pali chronicle mentions the actual king of Luang Prabang – i.e. Phothisarath – by naming him as *dasalakkhakuñjara-nagare narādhipati*.[56] The second occurrence is found in the *Amarakaṭa-Buddharūpa-nidāna*, a chronicle of the Emerald Buddha written by a certain Ariyavaṃsa during the second half of the 16th century.[57] Here again this name is associated with Phothisarath. A third occurrence is found in a Lao chronicle written in vernacular, entitled *Phuen Khun Burom* (*bị̀ịn*$_2$ *khun parama*) – after the name of the mythical king who founded the Lao kingdom. This chronicle said Phothisarath have been enthroned with the title '*braḥ bodhisāla-rājādhipati dasalakkha kuñjara rājādhirāja*'.[58] As a matter of fact, the title *mahārāja-dasalakkhakuñjara* will never be found again in Lan Na or Lao sources, neither in chronicles, nor in the epigraphy, for referring to kings of Lan Xang – not even his immediate successor, Setthathirat.[59] This leads to the assumption Phothisarath

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[55] A third variant – with the same meaning – is *Dasasatasahassagajenda* (viz. '10 x 100 x 1000 elephants'), which is found in the *Aḍḍhabhāganidāna* chronicle. See Michel Lorrillard and Javier Schnake, 'Récit des statues de Buddha Aḍḍhabhāga et Amarakaṭa', unpublished note [2020].

[56] Jkm 127.

[57] Cf. Michel Lorrillard and Javier Schnake, 'Récit des statues'.

[58] See Suneth Phothisane, *Nidāna Khun Borom*, pp. 48 and 246–247. The manuscript examined by Suneth Phothisane is dated *cūḷasakarāja* 1018 (CE 1656).

[59] King Setthathirat is named in different ways according to sources, and also according to the period of his reign. The *Amarakaṭa-Buddharūpa-nidāna* says he took the name of '*bra[ḥ] jeyya jeṭṭhādhirajā tiprasiddhi bra[ḥ] bavaṃ*' when he ascended the throne of Lan Na in 1545 (cf. Michel Lorrillard and Javier Schnake, 'Histoire des statues'). When Setthathirat was residing in Chiang Saen (present-day in northern Thailand), where he moved only three years after he ascended the throne of Lan Xang (viz. ca. 1551–1560), he is named accordingly (for ex. *samděc parama bopitr braḥ jeṭṭhādhirāja cao*$_2$*jīaṅ sèn* [Ban Don Sing inscription, dated 1555]). After have definitively moved to Vientiane (ca. 1560), Setthathirat usually appears in the epigraphy under the name *braḥ jaiya jeṭṭhādhirāja*. As for Lao and Northern Thai chronicles, they call him *samděc upayovarāja* (Michel Lorrillard, 'Les inscriptions du That Luang de Vientiane : données nouvelles sur l'histoire d'un stūpa lao', *Bulletin*

could be the king who is mentioned in the *Gurupadesa* as the initiator of this religious meeting, which thus can be dated back to his reign, that is, between 1520 and 1548.

Scrutinizing the style and content of the *Gurupadesa*, it would indeed not be surprising if it were written during this period, or shortly after, while Buddhism in Lan Xang was receiving a strong influence by Lan Na. It was stated above that Phothisarath had been instructed by two elder monks who originated in this kingdom, at the time he ordained at Visun monastery (ca. 1525). Moreover, he took a princess of Chiang Mai as a wife. This allowed Setthathirat, his son by this queen, to ascend to the throne of Lan Na in 1545, before returning to Luang Prabang a couple of years later (1548) in order to rule Lan Xang after the death of his father.[60] Shortly afterwards, he will try to retrieve his power over Chiang Mai, but to no avail. This demonstrates the strong relation that existed between both kingdoms at that time. La Na kingdom was then experiencing a 'golden age' in terms of Buddhist practice and Pali literacy, led by reformist monks who claimed to belong to a 'Sinhalese trend' (*laddhi-Laṅkā*). The *Sīhaḷabhikkhu*s, as they called themselves, were established at the beginning of 15th century in a new lineage ordination in Chiang Mai, and then throughout Lan Na and its dependencies.[61] Supported by devoted kings such as Tiloka (Tilokarāja, 1441–1487) and Phra Mueang Kaeo (Braḥ Miịaṅ Kèv$_2$, 1495–1526), this new trend of Buddhism flourished in Lan Na until Burmese incursion and stranglehold on the kingdom in 1558, which put an end to this movement. Several sources show that religious culture in Lan Na had, at that time, a deep impact on Lan Xang, especially on literature, epigraphy and art.[62] The *Jinakālamālī*

de l'Ecole française d'Extrême-Orient, vol. 90–91 (2003), p. 303; Suneth Phothisane, 'The Nidāna Khun Borom', p. 257).

[60] Michel Lorrillard, 'Les inscriptions du That Luang de Vientiane', p. 303.

[61] These events are recorded in local historiography, especially in chronicles such as the *Jinakālamālī* and different versions of the *Mūlasāsana*, as well as in stone inscriptions. For a good overview, see Hans Penth, *Jinakālamālī Index*, ดรรชนีชินกาลมาลี, Pali Text Society and Silkworm Books, Oxford and Chiang Mai 1994, p. 80f.

[62] Michel Lorrillard, 'Pour une géographie historique du bouddhisme au Laos', in Yves Goudineau and Michel Lorrillard (eds), *Recherches nouvelles sur le Laos*, École française d'Extrême-Orient, Paris and Vientiane 2008, pp. 130f.

chronicle, for instance, reports that in 1523 Lan Na king Mueang Kaeo sent a delegation of monks to Luang Prabang carrying a copy of the *Tipiṭaka* set in sixty volumes, to be offered to the king of Lan Xang (i.e. Phothisarath).[63] Whether or not the word '*Tipiṭaka*' has the same meaning as today in this context (i.e. the collection of canonical scriptures in Pali), it so happens that most ancient manuscripts of Laos date from this period, and all of them are in Pali.[64] In other words, this delegation from Lan Na could have well been the starting point of the Buddhist manuscript culture in Lan Xang. As for Setthathirat, he went back from Lanna with religious images, including the sacred and coveted Emerald Buddha (*braḥ kèv*$_2$).[65] Moreover, the Burmese stranglehold on Lanna from 1558 have certainly led a part of the local elite – including monks, scholars and craftsmen, to move to Lan Xang during his reign.

The cultural influence of Lanna is also perceptible in the epigraphic habit of Lan Xang, which barely existed before Photisarath.[66] Eight

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[63] Jkm 127. The English translation established by N.A. Jayawickrama says that this gift was made in order to convert the Lao king. This interpretation is certainly speculative, as the Pali text only says '*pasādajananatthaṃ pesesi*', which literally means 'in order to cause him satisfaction' (cf. N.A. Jayawickrama, *The Sheaf of Garlands of the Epochs of the Conqueror, Being a Translation of Jinakālamālīpakaraṇaṃ of Ratanapañña of Thailand*, The Pali Text Society, London 1978, p. 183).

[64] The most ancient dated manuscript that is found in Laos is a fragment of *Parivāra* (5th book of the *Vinaya-piṭaka*), which bears the year cs 882 (ce 1520). This predates the Lan Na delegation, but it could have been copied earlier in Lan Na, where the oldest manuscripts are dated from the second half of the 15th century. Almost every Lan Na and Lao manuscript from the 15th-16th centuries are Pali texts. In Laos, the majority of them were found in Luang Prabang, but several collections have been found in other areas, such as Champasak (south) and Thakhaek (center).

[65] After have been moved from one city to another at least since 15th century (Chiang Rai, Lampang, Chiang Mai, Luang Prabang, Vientiane), the Phra Kaeo Buddha image is now installed in Bangkok, at the temple of the same name (viz. Wat Phra Kaew), located within the royal palace.

[66] Only a couple of Lao inscribed stones predate 1523, and not all of them have been authenticated with certainty. Moreover, some 15th–16th century inscriptions that have been found in the present-day territory of Lao P.D.R. (especially in the western province of Sayaburi) actually pertain to the Lan Na historical tradition (Michel Lorrillard, personal communication).

inscriptions dated from his reign have been recorded so far, and 25 for the reign of his successor, Setthathirat.[67] Significantly, the two systems of writing used in Laos during this period, that is, the *fak kham* and 'Dhamma' (Tham) scripts, are originated in Lan Na.[68] Similarity in terms of rhetoric, style and thematic is also obvious between Lanna and Lan Xang inscriptions.

The epigraphy dating from the reigns of Phothisarat and Setthathirat also echoes the reformist Buddhist movements that had previously occurred in Lan Na. At least two royal edicts (*rāja ajñā*) from Phothisarath's reign, and one from Setthathirat's reign (dated from 1527, 1535 and 1555, respectively) aim to promote a renovated form of Buddhism, by 'cleansing' (*jāṃrā*) certain places from spirits (or from their cult?) and condemning monks who do not conform to the discipline.[69] The first one, found in Saṅghaloka (or Savanthevalok) monastery in Luang Prabang (see below), explicitly mentions the Mahā Saṅgharājā Sī Căndo, which is very likely the same Lan Na monk who acted as the religious preceptor of Phothisarat when he was ordained at Visun monastery a few years earlier. This monk, precisely, appears again in the latest among these three inscriptions – dated 1555, that is, during the reign of Setthathirat – which was also found in Luang Prabang. This inscription is another royal edict, which also aims to combat spirit cults and 'wrong views' (*micchādiṭṭhī*).[70] Between those two dates, there is another edict of Phothisarath, also engraved on stone, which is dated 1535. This edict was not found in Luang Prabang, but in the vicinity of Vientiane, at Daen Muang monastery in Nongkhai, on the other side of the Mekong river (present-day in Thailand). This edict is not only an exhortation towards observing the right doctrine for monks, but also a directive on monasteries' land and properties, especially regarding rice fields, fruit trees, manpower, and taxing authority over villages.

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[67] Michel Lorrillard, 'Religion et pouvoir royal au Lān Xāng', *Péninsule*, 80 (2020), pp. 71–73.

[68] *Fak Kham* script is itself derived from an older script, originated in Sukhothai.

[69] Inscription of Saṅghaloka (or Savăndevaloka) monastery, dated 1527, today kept at the Royal Palace museum of Luang Prabang ; inscription of Daen Muang monastery, dated 1535. See Michel Lorrillard, 'Religion et pouvoir royal', pp. 79–80.

[70] Michel Lorrillard, 'Religion et pouvoir royal', pp. 80–81.

The latter inscription suggests that some dignitaries were in the habit of misappropriating temples' assets, goods and 'servants' (*kha*) that are traditionally allocated to their service.[71] It just so happens that, as said above, the question of whether the dignitaries have the right to seize land for their own benefit was precisely the focus of the meeting of the monks at Visun monastery, the initiative of the king, and then of the writing of the *Gurupadesa*. Both documents eventually state that the Buddhist monastery property as well as land revenues must not be diverted to the profit of lay dignitaries.[72] As a matter of fact, nearly all subsequent inscriptions recorded from Phothisarath and Setthathirat's reigns, even later ones, are likewise royal edicts or ordinances recording ruler's lands donation to Buddhist monasteries.[73] These included "servants" (*kha*) allocated to arable acreage alongside with taxing authority over surroundng villages. Most of them also explicitely prohibit lords and commoners to seize these lands or to take advantage of their resources. However, the Daen Muang edict is the only one that aims to legislate about the monastic land issue at a general scale. The other ones all concern specific monasteries and villages, thereby acting as a proof of land ownership or title to land. This is also the only inscription that associate the monastic land issue

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[71] See Michel Lorrillard, 'Chroniques royales', p. 367. This royal ordinance concerns temples located in the vicinity of Vientiane. M. Lorrillard suggests that this ordinance existed in multiple copies in order to be enforced in other parts of the kingdom.

[72] In addition to the passage reproduced above, *Gurupadesa* makes other statements in the same vein. For example, that 'it must be officially recorded that the donor also leaves to the benefit of the temple all revenues coming from this land – such as taxes and contributions collected – and that the village district (*gāmakhetta*) [the temple belongs to] constitutes henceforth an 'income boundary' (*lābhasīma*) for the temple' [i 2]. As for the Vat Daen Muang inscription, it claims that 'rice fields, villages, betel and areca nuts, coconuts and sugar palm trees, as well as slaves (or servants) belong to the monks and monastery […]. Whoever will misappropriate them for the benefit of dignitaries must give them back [to the monastery]' (lines 14-17, from French translation established by Michel Lorrillard, *op. cit*.).

[73] One exception is the aforementioned treaty of demarcation between kingdoms of Ayutthaya (Siam) and Lan Xang (Laos), dated 1563 (see note 52). For a provisional record of Lao inscriptions, see Michel Lorrillard, 'Chroniques royales', p. 360–443.

with religious reforms, which is in strong resonance with *Gurupadesa*. Parallels that can be drawn between *Gurupadesa* and the Vat Daen Muang inscription are such that it is not unreasonable to assume that both were written at the same period, that is, in the mid-16th century.

The legal dimension of the two inscriptions dated of the reign of Phothisarat that have come down to us strengthen the presumption that it was a particularly prolific time in terms of the production of legislation.[74] *Khosarāt* and *Soy Say Kham* codes of law, for instance, are said to have been written during this period.[75] The stone inscriptions produced by his successor Setthathirat follows on this dynamic while keeping the memory of Phothisarath's action in this domain.[76] It is significant that the one Lao legal text the historiography dates prior to 16th century, the *Laws of Khun Borom* (*kaṭ-hmāy khun purŏm*),[77] is also the only one that contains almost no reference to Buddhism.[78] By contrast, all other Lao codes of law known to us extensively draw on Pali scriptures, to such an extent that they can unambiguously be qualified as Buddhist texts. In other terms, sources available suggest that the emergence in Laos of what might be called a 'Buddhist law' is concomitant with the spread in Lan Xang of a reformed Buddhism coming from Lan Na, under Phothisarath's and Setthathirat's reigns.

Names or title of the participants in the meeting at Visun monastery provide further hints on the socio-historical context in which *Gurupadesa* was written. One can first observe that most of the religious titles are similar to those used in Lan Na in the same period (15th–16th centuries), such as *adhipati* ('abbot'), or *rājaguru* ('royal

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[74] This dynamic seems to have continued during the reign of his son Setthathirat, as is suggested by the 1555 edict that is the object of the Don Sing inscription (see note 69).

[75] Sarassawadee Ongsakul, *History of Lanna*, Silkorm Books, Chiang Mai 2005, p. 105; Sommai Premchit & Puangkham Tuihhiew, **กฎหมายโคสาราษฎร์** *Khosarat Custom Law*, Social Research Institute, Chiang Mai 1977.

[76] The aforementioned 1555 inscription explicitly draws on the Phothisarath edict of 1527 (see note 69).

[77] *Laws of Khun Borom* is allegedly written by King Visun himself. See note 6.

[78] A single vague mention of the 'Three jewels', together with a couple of isolated Pali terms, are the only hints of the presence of Buddhist religion in this text, which anyhow only addresses secular issues (Mayouri Ngaosyvathn, 'An Introduction to the Laws of Khun Borom', pp. 74–77).

preceptor'). Some of these titles are even restricted to this very period, as *dhammasena* ('general of the Dhamma'), which occurs in the Lan Na epigraphy and historiography only during the reign of king Mueang Kaeo (1495–1526). As for *saṅgharājā* ('head of the Community'), it is an honorific title that is widespread in Sri Lanka and mainland Southeast Asia. In Thai and Lao principalities, this title traditionally refers to abbots of royal monasteries – and not to the head of the whole Buddhist order, as it will be the case in Ayutthaya from 17th century onwards, and later on in other *mueang*. *Saṅgharāja*s (or *mahā*°) are appointed by kings and are endowed with specific attributes, such as umbrellas and sedan chairs.[79] This passage of the *Gurupadesa* lists four *saṅgharāja*s, residing in temples situated very close to each other, and also to the actual royal palace.

Mahāsāmi, here attached to the abbot of Visun monastery (*mahāsāmi srī Suvaṇṇagūhā saṅgharājā Vijulla-mahā-vihārādhipati*), is another borrowing from Lan Na (and, indirectly, from Burma and Sri Lanka), where this title appears all over scriptural sources, in epigraphy as well as in chronicles. It is consistently linked with the two Sinhalese forest-dwelling (*araññavāsī*) trends of Buddhism, which were widespread throughout the Thai Buddhist cultural area (Sukhothai, Lamphun, Chiang Mai, Chiang Tung, etc.) from the 14th century onwards.[80] In 15th–16th century Lan Na, kings supported temples affiliated with one or the other of these 'Sinhalese' lineages, and used to appoint their monks as the head of the *saṅgha*. This term appears with the same connotation in the Lao chronicles, which state that a *mahāsāmi* was granted by king Sam Saen Thai (Sām Sèn Dai, 1374–1416) to Braḥ Devā Laṅkā – one of the two Khmer monks who are said to have

[79] Nicolas Gervaise, *Histoire naturelle et politique du Royaume de Siam*, Claude Barbin, Paris 1688, p. 185–188; Simon de La Loubère, *Description du Royaume de Siam, tome I*, Henry & la veuve de Theodore Boon, Amsterdam 1691, p. 343–345; Étienne Aymonier, *Le Cambodge, tome II, Les provinces siamoises*, Ernest Leroux, Paris 1901, p. 20.

[80] The first of these 'Sinhalese trends' (*laddhi-Laṅka*) was brought to Sukhothai from Martaban (Lower Burma) in ca. 1370 by the Thai monk Sumana, who received ordination under a master of the forest-dwelling lineage of 'Laṅkā', Udumbara(giri)-mahāsāmi (Jkm 84). The second one was established by Lan Na monks who allegedly were reordained to Lanka and set up a new ordination lineage in Chiang Mai ca. 1430 (*cf.* Jkm 92–94).

brought 'Sinhalese' Buddhism to Lan Xang – when he appointed him to be the abbot of the Kaeo monastery (Văt Kèv$_2$), a temple that was built by precisely that king.[81] Another Lao occurrence of *mahāsāmi* is found in the royal edict of 1535 mentioned above, where it precisely refers to the head of all temples of the city of Vientiane.[82] Thus, sources suggest that in 16th century Lan Xang, *mahāsāmi* was the title given to the Supreme Patriarch – although possibly only at a regional level –, in accordance with the Sinhalese tradition.[83] Moreover, it seems that it was the custom for Lao kings at that time to install the *mahāsāmi* in the temple they ordered to build soon after they ascended to the throne.[84] There, *mahāsāmi* presided over monks in official procedures, such as the appointing of dignitaries, which conferred them with political prerogatives. The fact that the abbot of Vat Visun hold this position at the time of the composition of *Gurupadesa* confirms this monastery hold then a prominent position in Luang Prabang. It is also likely that Visun monastery was related to one or the other of the Sinhalese forest-dwelling trends of Buddhism that had previously arose in Lan Na, and most probably to that of *Sīhaḷabhikkhu*s, given that it was supported by Lan Na King Muang Kaeo.

Also meaningful is the title *mahā-saṅgha-nāyaka* (°*nāyŏk* in vernacular), which in this passage is given to a high-ranking monk who is in charge of the central reliquary of the city (*mahā-dhātu klāṅ mịịaṅ*, see below). Epigraphy attests to the use of this title – which literally means 'the head of the Order' – at Sukhothai and Ayutthaya in the 14th–15th century,[85] and at the beginning of the following century in

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[81] Suneth Phothisane, *Nidāna Khun Borom*, p. 209. The name of this monk (Devā Laṅkā) clearly connects him to Lanka.

[82] *Cf*. Michel Lorrillard, 'Religion et pouvoir royal', pp. 79–81.

[83] This is confirmed by the epigraphic data.

[84] For instance, King Sam Saen Thai was ordained at Vat Kaeo, and Photisarath at Vat Visun.

[85] See A. B. Griswold and Prasert na Nagara, "Epigraphical and Historical Studies, N° 12. Inscription 9", *Journal of The Siam Society*, vol. 62–1 (1974), p. 95, 96, 112; A. B. Griswold and Prasert na Nagara, "Epigraphical and Historical Studies no 20: The Buddhapāda of Văt Pavaranivesa and its Inscription", *Journal of The Siam Society*, vol. 66–2 (1978), p. 118; A. B. Griswold and Prasert na Nagara, "An Inscription of 1563 A.D.', p. 61, 69; Peera Panarut and

Lan Na[86] and Lan Xang.[87] As *mahāsāmi*, *saṅghanāyaka* is a title that is originated in Sri Laṅkā. In Thai as well as in Burmese sources, it appears to be always borne by a member of the order of forest-dwelling congregation claiming the Sinhalese tradition.[88] Most likely it referred at that time to the head of an *araññāvāsī* fraternity, although it is not impossible that the other congregations came to call their own leader alike. Sources suggest it was of the prerogative of the king to appoint monks as *saṅgha-nāyaka*.[89]

One thing must also be said about the toponyms that are attached to most of the names of the participants of the gathering at Visun monastery. Some of them can be identified with actual temples or religious edifices in Luang Prabang, while others are subject to conjecture:

The *Ratanārāmā* is very likely the temple that is referred to as Vat Kaeo – *kèv*$_2$ means gems, as well as *ratana* – in the chronicles, which ascribed its building to King Fa Ngum (1353–1374), founder of the Lan Xang kingdom in the mid-14th century.[90]

The 'Sāl tree forest' that is said to be the place where one of the participants resides, is hardly identifiable, but it should be noted that

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Volker Grabowsky, 'Royal appointment on the Golden Leaves. *Suphannabat* as an Epigraphic Tradition of the Siamese Royal Court'[forthcoming]).

[86] Cf. Jkm 116; George Cœdès, 'À propos des anciens noms de Luang Prabang', p. 10; Prasert ṇa Nakhorn et al., จารึกล้านนา ภาค ๒ เล่ม ๑ จารึกจังหวัดเชียงใหม่ ลำปาง ลำพูน แลแม่ฮ่องสอน *Lanna Inscriptions, part II, vol. I, Inscriptions from Chiang Mai, Lampang, Lamphun and Mae Hong Son. Texts*, Amarin Printing House, Bangkok (2008), p. 97, 409.

[87] Cf. Thawat Punnothok, สิลาจารึกอีสาน [Inscriptions from Isan], Ramkhamhaeng University, Bangkok [undated] p. 241.

[88] In addition to the preceeding note, see Sas 93, 133, and Sommai Premchit and Donald K. Swearer, "A Translation of the Mūlasāsanā Wat Pā Daeng: The chronicle of the founding of Buddhism of the Wat Pā Daeng tradition", *Journal of the Siam Society* 65–2 (1977), pp. 89, 91, 110.

[89] In present-day Laos and Burma, *saṅghanāyaka* is a committee of high-ranking monks within the administration of State.

[90] According to *Nithan Khun Borom* and the Vat Kaeo chronicle (*tāṃnān văt kèv*$_2$), this name was given because Kaeo monastery was built in order to host the Emerald Buddha statue (*braḥ kèv*$_2$ *marakaṭa*) (Michel Lorrillard, 'Chroniques royales', p. 67). This temple does not exist anymore, but a small reliquary was still visible at the same place up to the beginning of the 20th

the name *bodhi-sāla-rāja* (‘Phothisarat’) was given to the future king after his grandmother had dreamt of this tree species (*shorea robusta*) the night before he was born.[91] More generally, Sal trees are mentioned in Pali scriptures, and have a religious significance since the *parinibbāna* of the Buddha took place “in the Sal Tree Grove of the Mallans” (*Mallānaṃ sālavane*).[92] In addition, the mention of a ‘venerable forest-dwelling monk of the Sal tree [abode]’ (*braḥ mahā Sāla-vanavāsī*) in the list of participants confirms that the distinction between *araññavāsi* and *gāmavāsi* was acknowledged in Luang Prabang at that time.

The Si Phum monastery (*văt* [*sī*] *Bhumma*) was located south of Luang Prabang royal palace, before being rebuilt by King Anuruddha in 1796, under the name of Vat Mai (‘the new monastery’), which still exist today.[93]

The Manorāma monastery is one of the oldest temples of the city, as it was built in 1372 by king Sam Saen Thai. It housed the Phra Bang Buddha image prior to its installation at Vat Visun in 1513.

The *Svagga[deva]lokārāmā* is easily identified as the temple that bears today the name of Vat Sankhalok, but which is called Savanthevalok in ancient sources. Located about 5 km southward Luang Prabang, this temple is the main object of the aforementioned 1527 inscription, which states that it was built this same year under the patronage of Phothisarat in a place that was believed to be inhabited by malevolent spirits.[94] Thus, the mention of this monastery in the text allows one to determine the *terminus post quem* of the composition of *Gurupadesa* as 1527.

Identification is more problematic for the *mahā-cetiyārama* (‘the monastery of the great reliquary’). This toponym doesn’t appear in

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century (Thao Boun Souk [Pierre-Marie Gagneux], ‘*Louang Phrabang*’, p. 54).

[91] Suneth Phothisane, *The Nidān Khun Borom*, p. 246.

[92] S I 157.

[93] Louis Finot, ‘Recherches’, p. 8. Mention can also be made of another monastery named Si Phum, situated in Maha Sanakham province, where was found an inscription dated from King Phothisarath (Michel Lorrillard, ‘Religion et pouvoir royal au Lān Xāng’, p. 72, note 17).

[94] Michel Lorrillard, ‘Religion et pouvoir royal’, p. 79.

written sources available to us, nor does it correspond to any building in present-day Luang Prabang. On the other hand, one actual monastery of this city bears a name referring to a 'great reliquary', namely the Vat That Luang (*văt dhātu hlvaṅ*). Although recent in its actual form (1818), it actualy recovers a more ancient monument, possibly dating back the Khmer period –which is not uncommon in Thai-Lao religious architecture.[95]

Finally, the "great reliquary in the city centre" (*mahā-dhātu klāṅ mịạṅ*) can reasonably be identified with the *cetiya* that is now part of the Maha That monastery (*văt mahā dhātu*), which is indeed situated at the centre of the old city. In this regards archaeological evidence suggests it was the custom in Thai principalities to have relics enshrined in a *cetiya* built at the centre of main cities, which has a particular symbolic and cosmological significance.[96] With its square base and multiple niches on the upper parts sheltering gilded standing Buddha statues, the Maha That indeed follows the architectural style of 16th century Lan Na. Information on this building is given by an inscription dated 1548 that was found on site. According to this inscription, the king's grandmother (*braḥ rāja ay[y]akā mahādevā*) dedicated the 'great reliquary' (*tăṅ$_2$ mahā-dhātu*) and granted the monastery with land and manpower in 910 of the Little Era (ce 1548).[97] The name of the king is not given, but it can be assumed that it is Setthathirat. Indeed, Lao chronicles record that Setthathirat, then reigning over Lan

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[95] Thao Boun Souk [Pierre-Marie Gagneux], '*Louang Phrabang*', p. 39. A similar case is that of the That Luang of Vientiane, the biggest reliquary in Laos, and also its principal religious building. Built by king Setthathirat in 1566, it also hides an older structure that probably dates from the Khmer period (Michel Lorrillard, 'Les inscriptions du That Luang de Vientiane', pp. 295–296).

[96] Monasteries bearing the name 'Wat Maha That' exist, for instance, in the historical centre of the cities of Ayutthaya, Sukhothai, Lopburi, Si Sacchanalay, Phitsanulok, Lamphun and Luang Prabang – not in Vientiane, however. The Ramkhamhaeng inscription (end 13th century) explicitly mentions holy relics (*braḥ dhātu*), as well as a *cetiya*, that have been installed 'at the centre of the city (*klāṅ mịạṅ*)' of Sri Sacchanalay (A. B. Griswold and Prasert na Nagara, 'The inscription of King Rāma Gaṃhèṅ of Suhodaya (1292 A.D.)', *Journal of The Siam Society* 59–2 [1971], P. 201 AND 217).

[97] Louis Finot, 'note d'épigraphie', p. 28.

Na, left for Lan Xang after the death of his father (viz. Pothisarath), which precisely occurred in 1548. Once back in Luang Prabang, he temporarily ordained – as the Thai-Lao tradition requires[98] –, and built there 'a big reliquary and a big temple' (*mahā dhātu mahā vihāra*), in order to fulfill his duty of filial piety.[99] The fact the inscription mentions solely the Queen mother (viz. Photisarath's mother) is consistent with Setthathirat having been a monk at that time. Therefore, the mention in the *Gurupadesa* of the 'great reliquary in the city centre' – viz. Maha That monastery[100] – would put the *terminus post quem* of its writing off to 1548. It may be noted, however, that this contradicts the above-set assumption that the text was written during Phothisarath's reign (see above).

It can be noted that all religious buildings that are mentioned in the preamble of *Gurupadesa* have been already existing in the mid–16th century. Conversely, no mention is made of important monasteries built after this date. In this regard, the absence of Vat Xieng Thong, erected in 1560 by King Setthathirat and which acted as a royal access of the city from the adjacent river banks,[101] is particularly significant. This support the hypothesis formulated above that ca. 1560 is a possible *terminus ante quem* of the composition of the *Gurupadesa*.

From the basis of the above, two hypothesis could be drawn in the dating of the composition of the *Gurupadesa*. The first one is it was written under Setthathirat's reign, but before he moved the capital of the kingdom to Lan Xang to Vientiane, that is, between 1548 and ca. 1560. This would imply to assume the honorific name *mahārāja-dasalakkha-kuñjara* could also have applied to Setthathirath, even though this is not attested by evidence. Conversely, to deny this possibility would lead to put back the dating of this text to Pothisarath's reign, from the mission

[98] On the ordination as a way to manifest filial piety in the Thai-Lao tradition, see Gregory Kourilsky, 'La place des ascendants familiaux dans le bouddhisme des Lao', PhD dissertation, École pratique des Hautes Études, Paris 2015, p. 556f.

[99] Michel Lorrillard, 'Chroniques royales', p. 142.

[100] It could at first sight seem surprising that the *Gurupadesa* here refers solely to a reliquary, while making no mention of a monastery (*ārāma*). However, the mention of a *mahā-saṅgha-nāyaka* that is assigned to this building (see above) entails the existence of a proper monastery.

[101] Thao Boun Souk, '*Louang Phrabang*', p. 109, 114.

of scholarly monks sent from Lanna to bring the *Tipiṭaka* to Luang Prabang – that is, 1523–1548. In turn, this second hypothesis compels to question the actual reading of the Maha Dhat monastery inscription (1548), or to assume the 'great reliquary in the city centre' is actually a different place. The only way to solve this contradiction is to suppose that *Gurupadesa* was ordered at the end of the reign of Phothisarath, and achieved during the early years of the reign of his son, Setthathirat – achievement marked by the meeting of the nine high-ranking monks. In this case, it could be rather precisely dated circa 1548.

In any event, the *Gurupadesa* can with some certainty be dated to the mid-16th century, which makes it the oldest known Buddhist text originated in Laos.

Style and Content

Like most Buddhist texts of the Thai world, the *Gurupadesa* is a bilingual Pali-vernacular work. Here the main text is written in the Northern Lao dialect, which mostly consists of translations, glosses, and explanations of Pali utterances faithfully quoted and reproduced from the canonical or postcanonical Scriptures. Here, the considerable amount and diversity of Pali sources used by its authors makes the *Gurupadesa* a remarkable piece.

The *Gurupadesa* is actually not an easy text to read. This is not because the writing is particularly elaborate, but rather the opposite, that is, because of a very refined and laconic style devoid of any superfluous elements, which thus sometimes verges on unintelligibility. Additionally, the use of specific and sometimes archaic vocabulary – some of which is absent from modern dictionaries – creates further difficulties for the contemporary reader. The truth is, several parts written in Lao are understandable only in light of the Pali utterances they draw upon. In this matter, the authors demonstrate a level of command of Pali language that is hardly seen again in Laos in the subsequent periods.

The fact is that the 16th century is the only period for which original Pali writings are attested in Lan Xang. Examples are *Aḍḍhabhāgabuddharūpanidāna* (a chronicle of the Phra Bang Buddha

statue written by Ariyavaṃsa[102]), *Amarakaṭabuddharūpanidāna* (a chronicle of the Emerald Buddha by the same author, mentioned above) and *Ganthābaraṇa-ṭīkā* (a commentary of a 15th century Burmese grammatical treatise, written by a certain Suvaṇṇaraṃsi ca. 1585[103]). Once again, these works must be seen in the framework of the 'golden age' of Pali literacy in Lan Na, during which numerous original Pali texts were produced by Thai scholarly monks.[104] Furthermore, although Buddhism in these countries is usually considered as belonging to the Theravāda tradition, monolingual Pali literature represents only a small minority of the corpus, and only a part of it is actually comprised of canonical texts. The vast majority of Buddhist literature circulating in the Thai-Lao world is written in vernacular, interspersed with Pali words or sentences that the vernacular is supposed to translate or rely on. This 'lifting of words' (*yạī săb*)[105] from Pali into the vernacular was indeed a particularly suitable method to adapt Pali texts to local contexts, norms and social structures, while ensuring that the content was faithful to the Teaching of the Buddha (*sāsanā buddh*). This process led to hybrid writings – which might be qualified as 'original adaptations' – in which Pali and vernacular have different status and uses, and as such are both original and conform to 'the Pali Canon'.[106] Scholarly monks had recourse to several methods to compose their

[102] Hans Penth, 'Buddhist Literature of Lān Nā on the History of Lān Nā's Buddhism', *Journal of the Pali Text Society* 23 (1997), p. 48; Michel Lorrillard and Javier Schnake, 'Récit de la statue du Buddha Amarakaṭa'.

[103] The colophon says *Ganthābaraṇa-ṭīkā* was written at Vijaya monastery in Vieng Chan, then the capital of the Lan Xang kingdom (present-day Vientiane, Laos). See George Cœdès, 'Note sur les ouvrages pâlis composés en pays thaï', *Bulletin de l'École française d'Extrême-Orient*, vol. 15–1 (1915), p. 41.

[104] See Oskar von Hinüber, 'Lān Nā as a Centre of Pāli Literature During the Late 15th century', *Journal of the Pali Text Society* 26 (2000), pp. 127–128; Gregory Kourilsky, 'Writing Pali Texts in 16th century Lan Na (Northern Thailand): The Life and Work of Sirimaṅgala', *Journal of the Pali Text Society* 34 (2020), pp. 115–171.

[105] See Justin McDaniel, *Gathering Leaves and Lifting Words: Histories of Buddhist Monastic Education in Laos and Thailand*, University of Washington Press, Seattle 2008, p. 125. Also see Trent Walker, 'Unfolding Buddhism', PhD dissertation, University of California, Berkeley 2018.

[106] Justin McDaniel rightly compares this method of writing to what Mikhail Bakthin called 'heteroglossia' (Justin McDaniel, *Gathering Leaves*, p. 121).

work, leading to different literary genres, among which the most characteristic are (*nāma-*)*săb* (word-by-word translation or gloss), *nissaya* (development in vernacular after a short Pali extract), and *vohāra* (translation or explanation of a quoted extensive Pali passage).[107] These three methods are used in the *Gurupadesa*. In some instances, the Lao authors have apparently also relied on commentarial literature for translating or explaining canonical passages in vernacular. This is visible through similar specific vocabulary that is found both in the Lao gloss and in commentaries but absent from the *Pāḷī*.[108]

References to Pali texts are only occasionally indicated in the *Gurupadesa*, but the presence of extensive identifiable quotations allows one, more often than not, to guess which source the authors have relied upon. The canonical *Vinaya* was naturally a main inspirational corpus, but even more so the *Vinaya* commentarial literature, such as the *Samantapāsādikā* and the *Kaṅkhāvitaraṇī*. Later *Vinaya* condensations or digests, such as *Vinayavinicchaya* or *Vinaya-saṅgaha-aṭṭhakathā,*[109] were also a privileged source, as well as other texts that are unknown to us. This preference given to later texts is not so surprising, as the Thai-Lao received Buddhism at a time when the Pali *Vinaya* and Commentary had for long been somewhat overshadowed in the Sinhalese and Burmese Buddhist traditions by shorter compendia.[110] Indeed, monastic community life had drastically changed between the life of the Buddha and the establishment of monasteries in Sri Lanka, and even more so in Southeast Asia where Buddhist practices reflect late developments or local innovations. A

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[107] In practice, these categories do not follow such strict features, and largely overlap in terms of style and method of 'lifting words' (Justin MacDaniel, *Gathering Leaves*, p. 120 and 131). Other categories exist, such as *ānisaṃsa* ('advantage', i.e. homelies), *niyāya* (tales), *nidāna* (stories), *ovāda* (didactics), etc.

[108] For instance, the 'five things (*pañcavuttā*) not to be disposed of' by monks that are mentioned in the *Parivāra* (Vin V 216) are glossed with the term *pañca garubaṇḍhāni* by the Lao authors, in the same way as in commentarial literature.

[109] Also known as *Pāḷimuttaka-vinaya-vinicchaya-saṅgaha* (Pālim).

[110] Petra Kieffer-Pülz, "Translocal Debates and Legal Hermeneutics: Early Pali Vinaya Texts in the Adjudication of Sīmā Procedures, c. 1200–1900 CE," *Buddhism, Law & Society* 2 (2016–2017), p. 103, 107.

number of monastic rules substantially evolved from the canonical *Vinaya* up to the *aṭṭhakathā*s (f.e. *Samantapāsādikā*, 4th/5th cent. ce), then to later *ṭīkā*s (f.e. *Vimativinodanī-ṭīkā*, ca. 12th cent. ce), and even later to treatises written by Burmese or Thai scholarly monks (f.e. *Sīmāvisodhanī*, 1587).[111] In this regard, manuscripts and epigraphical data of Burma, Thailand and Laos show that late *Vinaya* commentarial literature was more widespread in local Buddhist communities than the *Pāḷi-Vinaya*, and therefore more positively referred to in legal literature.[112]

While texts on discipline naturally serve as a major source in *Gurupadesa*, other canonical and non-canonical Pali works are also quoted or mentioned. Among these are *Petavatthu* and *Visuddhimagga*, as well as grammar treatises *Vuttodaya* and *Saddabindu*. *Jāṭaka* narratives also provide a wide range of illustrative situations for defining legal cases or classifications. Additionally, some passages of the *Gurupadesa* have parallels to later texts that were especially

[111] An illustrative example of such an evolution is the procedure for establishing monastery boundaries (*sīmā*). On this issue, see Petra Kieffer-Pülz, 'Rules for the sīmā Regulation in the Vinaya and its Commentaries and their Application in Thailand', *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies*, 20/2 (1997), p. 141–145.

[112] The Kalyāṇī inscription of Pegu (1476), in particular, mentions – besides the *Vinaya*'s *aṭṭhakathā*s and *ṭīkā*s – later texts such as *Vinayavinicchaya-pakaraṇa* together with its *ṭīkā*, *Vinaya-saṅgaha-pakaraṇa*, *Sīmālaṅkāra-pakaraṇa*, and *Sīmālaṅkāra-saṅgaha* (see Taw Sein-Ko, *Kalyānī Inscriptions Erected by King Dhammacetī at Pegu in 1476 AD. Text and Translation*, Government Printing, Rangoon 1892, p. 61). Moreover, Burmese legal literature has, for centuries, continued to refer to texts such as Pālim, as evidenced by the writing on a subcommentary of this text, entitled *Vinayālaṅkāra-ṭīkā*, by the Burmese monk Tipiṭakālaṅkāra in mid-17th century (D. C. Lammerts, 'Genres and Jurisdictions: Laws Governing Monastic Inheritance in Seventeenth-Century Burma', in *Buddhism and Law. An Introduction* [Rebecca Redwood French and Mark Nathan], Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2014, p. 194–195).

disseminated in mainland Southeast Asia, such as *Sotatthakī-mahā-nidāna*[113] and the *Vajirasārattha-saṅgaha.*[114]

Although constant references are made to Pali scriptures, and especially to *Vinaya* literature, the *Gurupadesa* is not so much a set of monastic rules as it is a civil code. To be convinced of this, it is enough to recall that the writing of this text was ordered by the king in order to determine whether locals lords should enjoy usufruct rights on land (see above). More broadly, numerous clauses concern laypeople and address secular matters such as homicide, adultery, theft, drunkenness, inheritance, bondage and so forth. Here Lao legislators have endeavoured to systematically refer to Pali utterances or narratives to serve as a basis to implement clauses of secular nature. The method often consists of taking a narrative involving monks or nuns drawn from the *Vinaya*, which is then used to extrapolate elements of civil law, in a way that can sometimes appear as a bit strained. In this regard, it is significant that several topics addressed in the *Gurupadesa* are also found in the *Laws of Khun Borom*, and all the more, are found with very similar wording.[115] These similitudes show that the *raison d'être* of 'Buddhist' legal texts in this region was not so much to implement a totally new legislation but to provide legitimacy to pre-existing rules, social hierarchies and governance organisation.

Gurupadesa also has a standardization purpose. A number of clauses aim to enforce standards and classifications – most often borrowed from Indian norms – concerning individuals, actions or things, which are also found in other Lao legal texts. The 'ten categories of spouse',

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[113] *Sotatthakī-mahānidāna* is a Pali text written some time before the 14th century by a monk named Culla-Buddhaghosa, which relates the history of the Bodhisatta over a considerable period of time (20 *asaṅkheyya* and 100,000 *kalpa*) (Javier Schnake, 'Le Dhamma par le jeu d'esprit', p. 166–172. See also Nicolas Revire, 'Buddhas of the Past and of the Future: Southeast Asia', in *Brill's Encyclopedia of Buddhism*, vol. II, Brill, Leiden 2019, pp. 109–120).

[114] See note 25.

[115] For instance, 'when a foster child runs away', 'when a foster child runs away death caused by horses or buffalo', 'on the ten (or twelve) kinds of wife', 'on fining [differently] poor and rich people', 'on lords visiting each others [in secrecy] at night', etc. See contents of *Gurupadesa* below. For the list of clauses addressed in the Laws of Khun Borom, see Suneth Phothisane, 'The Nidān Khun Borom', p. 483–485.

the 'four kinds of child', and the 'twenty-five categories of theft'[116] are just examples here, to which must be added a list of equivalence for Indic on weights and measures.

In terms of the multiplicity of monastic and secular issues it addresses, *Gurupadesa* is similar to many Lao and Northern Thai legal texts of subsequent periods. In this matter, the extensive reliance on the Sinhalese *Vinaya* and its commentarial exegesis led its authors to face a contradiction. As a monastic code, the *Vinaya* originally deals with issues that are exclusively related to a group of men that organized themselves apart from the secular society, namely the *saṅgha* in North India at the time of the historical Buddha. Therefore, this corpus logically does not deal with secular topics. Insofar as in Buddhist kingdoms of Southeast Asian law finds its legitimacy in the 'teaching of the Buddha' (the Pali scriptures), the question of where the secular law lies is crucial. This issue was already raised in Burma, for instance, where the *Dhammasatta* (Burmese *Dhammathat*) are also both of monastic and secular nature. Burmese legislators had two main ways of solving this problem. One was to reinterpret some passages of the *Vinaya* with the sense of the law the legislator wanted to establish – which led in some case to clauses that clearly contradict the *Pāḷī*.[117] The other one was to refer to texts other than the *Vinaya*, in particular the Indic *Dharmaśāstra* literature, which was originally written in Sanskrit (from earlier *Dharmasūtra*s) but was subsequently turned into Pali in circumstances that remain to be elucidated.[118] Indeed, the *Dharmaśāstra*s (which is a broad category that includes different kinds of texts) deal with a large variety of secular issues, such as indebtment,

[116] On the twenty-five categories of theft (*pañcavīsati avahārā*), see details below.

[117] Christian Lammerts, *Buddhist Law in Burma*, p. 75 and 87.

[118] The hypothesis formulated by Robert Lingat, which has been generally agreed with, is that it was the Mon who first translated Sanskrit *Dharmaśātra*s into Pali *Dhammasattha*(s). This or these Pali version(s) would then have provided a basis for later vernacular *Dhammasat* (Robert Lingat, 'La conception du droit dans l'Indochine hînayâniste', *Bulletin de l'École française d'Extrême-Orient*, 44/1 [1951], p. 168). However, Christian Lammerts has since questioned this hypothesis, and suggests that Buddhist '*Dharmaśāstra*s' (or '*Dhammasattha*s') could have previously circulated in India but subsequently disappeared (D. C. Lammerts, *Buddhist Law in Burma*, p. 87).

land property, and theft, but also with topics related to judicial systems, duties of a king, etc, which make it a formidable source of inspiration for legislators. The fact is, many vernacular law codes in Southeast Asia are structured around the eighteenth kind of litigation (sk. *vyavahāra*) defined in the *Dharmaśāstra*s, and many of them even have the term '*Dhammasattha*' in their title.[119] The *Gurupadesa*, however, uses neither of these two ways. *Vinaya* rules are extensively quoted and adequately translated, although sometimes adapted in order to fit with local customs. This text doesn't belong to the *Dhammasattha* literature, and seems to barely be inspired by Burmese legal texts – and even less so by Indic *Dharmaśāstra*s.[120] Even when dealing with secular topics, the legislators here still rely on Buddhist scriptures, which may be quoted *in extenso* or slightly modified. Ultimately, if one wants to classify the *Gurupadesa*, it may be thought analogous to what in Pali terminology is labelled as *vinicchayakathā* ('deciding discourse').

While undoubtedly a legal text, the *Gurupadesa* is not organised as a list of clauses or articles. The topics it deals with, which are in considerable number, are put one after another in a fashion that appears to the modern reader to be a bit anarchical, if not chaotic. Moreover, instructions that are strictly related to the monks or the monastery are not always separated from those concerning lay people. Except in its last part, entirely dedicated to monks, the text thus alternates between monastic and secular topics without any distribution in specific chapters. As said before, *Gurupadesa* manuscripts don't include a table of contents. Nonetheless, in most manuscripts topics addressed are indicated as paratextual elements in the margins of the corresponding folios, which is of a great help when one is looking for a particular subject or clause. It must be noted, however, that not all of them are indicated.

The list below details topics as they appear, in the form of captions, in the margins of the one manuscript kept at the Pasaninyom Valavat

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[119] Christian Lammerts, *Buddhist Law in Burma*, p. 59. Some texts entitled '*Dhammasattha'*, however, have no connection with the Sanskrit *Dharmaśātra* or its derivatives. It is the case, for instance, of the Lao *Dhammasāt hlvaṅ*, which is arranged in accordance with the Buddhist five precepts (P. *pañcasīla)*.

[120] *Gurupadesa* refers, at least in one instance, to the local legal corpus as 'the ancient *dhammasatta* texts' (*kambī porāna Dhammasatta* [III 36]).

monastery of Vientiane, dated ce 1901 (see references).[121] Captions here are given transliterated into modern Lao script and translated into English.

[121] Apart from minor discrepancies, issues indicated in the margins are generally consistent from one manuscript to another.

Topics listed in a Gurupadesa manuscript

Fascicle I

[I 4]	ຈາສີມາແລ	About [monastic] boundaries (*sīmā*)
[I 19]	ທາຍົກຫີ້ ໝາກໄມ້ແກ່ກິກຂຸຄວນແລ	Proper way for donors to offer fruits to monks
[I 26]	ໃຫ້ຂອງແກ່ກັນດ້ວຍຈາວິສາດຄວນເອົາຄືນບໍ່ຄວນເອົາຄືນ	Whether or not an object given by mutual agreement can be taken back
[I 27]	ໄດ້ຂອງດົກເສຍໃນດິນ ເຈົ້າຂອງມາຖາມຄວນຄືນໃຫ້	In case an object falls in a land property, it must be given back to its owner if he asks for it
[I 29]	ໃຫ້ທານດ້ວຍ[ອະກັບປິຍະ]ໂວຫານຄວນ ເອົາຄືນບໍ່ຄວນ ຢູ່ນີ້ແລ	Whether or not a gift made [to monks] with [improper] words is to be returned
[I 41]	ບໍ່ຮູ້ໄຕ່ຄຳເມືອງ	[Whosoever] doesn't know how to investigate a case [should entrust scholarly wise men]

Fascicle II

[II 4]	ຈາໄຕ່ຄຳປຣະກອບດ້ວຍຄຸນ ຈຶ ປຣະກາຣ	Judging a case by means of the twelve kinds of virtue
[II 8]	ມະຫາສາຣີບຸດເປັນອົງອາດ	[Story of] Mahāsāriputta showing his greatness
[II 12]	ໂພຣິສັດເຈົ້າເທດສນາແກ່ຊາວເມືອງທັງຫຼາຍແລ	The *Bodhisatta* instructs the population
[II 17]	ບຸຄຄະລະດ່າທ່ານ ຕີທ່ານບໍ່ຄວນໃໝ	When insulting or beating someone is not considered as an offense
	ຄົນກະທຳເມດຸນສັມມ້ ບໍ່ຄວນໃໝ	[Case of] someone who has had illicit sexual intercourse but must not be punished

[II 20]	ຄົນ ๔ ຄົນຈຳຫີ້ຂ້າທ່ານ ຢູ່ນີ້ແລ	Four different cases of homicide
[II 22]	ອັນລະຕິຍກ ກ່າວໃຫດກ່ຳພຣະເຈົ້າ	Heretics (*aññatiṭṭhi*) make false accusation against the Buddha
	ເຂົ້າຂອງເສຍໃນເຮືອນ	Loss of an object in a house
[II 23]	ຄົນມາຈອດເຮືອນຂອງເສຍໃຫ້ຜູ້ມາຈອດໃຊ້ແລ	Individuals visiting a house and causing damage
[II 24]	ຄົນສອງຄົນ ຜິດກັນ ມາຈອບກັນ ດ່າກັນ ຢູ່ນີ້ແລ	Two people who have been in conflict in the past come together and insult each other
[II 25]	ລູກ ๔ ຈຳພວກຄວນແທນເຮືອນ ຢູ່ນີ້ແລ	Four categories of descendants who shuld inherit property [from their forebears]
[II 26]	ຫາລູກຍິງຊາຍ ບ່ໄດ້ແລ	[Inheritance law] if a descendant cannot be found
[II 28]	ຄົນຫງ່ອຫາງຮ່ວມກັນ ຖິ້ມກັນ ລູກຜິຄວນແທນຄົວເຮືອນ	If people leave the matrimonial home, children must retrieve the parental house
[II 29]	ຂາຍລູກເຜື່ອໝາຍລຸນຈັກເອົາຄືນ ຢູ່ນີ້ແລ	Cases of parents willing to get back a child they had previously sold
[II 31]	ຕີລູກຕີເມຍ ແລ່ນຂຶ້ນເຮືອນທ່ານ	Battered [servants], spouses and children take refuge in someone else's house
[II 32]	ຄົນ ๒ ຄົນຜິດກັນ ໃຫດສະເໜີກັນ ຄວນໃໝ່ຜູ້ຮັ່ງແລ	[Case where] two people argue and accuse each other [of something]; the wealthiest is to be punished
[II 33]	ຄົນຮູ້ຈັກມາຈອດເຮືອນ ແລລັກເອົາຂອງເຮືອນໜີ	When an invited person steals something in the host's house
[II 34]	ຄົນຮູ້ຈັກມາຈອດເຮືອນ	When a stranger comes into the house [and steals]

[II 35]	ດ້ຍິນຄຳຂ້າງດຽວບໍ່ເພິ່ງຕັດແລ	If one hears one single version of the facts, one should not judge
[II 36]	ຄົນຜູ້ຖ່ອຍແລອຸດົມ ໄປລັກຂອງທ່ານແລ້ວ ເສບເມຍທ່ານ	Unfortunate man and wealthy man committing larceny and seducing a married woman
[II 39]	ມ້າຂັບກັນຕາຍ ຄວາຍຊົນກັນຕາຍ ຢູ່ນີ້ແລ	On death caused by riding a horse, or a butt given by a buffalo
[II 40]	ໝົດຊະໝາກໄມ້ເກີດໄກ້ບ້ານໄກ້ເຮືອນໃຜ ເປັນຂອງຜູ້ນັ້ນ	Fruits [having felt from] a tree that is close to a house belong to the owner [of this house]
[II 44]	ໝາກມ່ວງ ປູກເຂົ້າ ກ້າເຫຼືອງ	[About rights] on mangos [or other fruits], rice plants and seedings
[II 45]	ປຣະເມຍແລ້ວ ທ່ານມາມັກແລຈຳທ່ານໄປລັກ ໄປຂ້າ ຕີດ່າທ່ານ	Holding back, abducting or killing one's wife after divorce
[II 48]	ຜູ້ ຄ ລືມຂອງ ຜູ້ ຄ ເອົາໄວ້	When one takes with him something another has forgotten

Fascicle III

[III 1]	ເມຍ ໂດ ຈຳາພວກ ຢູ່ນີ້ແລ	The ten kinds of spouse
[III 8]	ໃຫ້ໃໝຜູ້ຍິງ ໂ ທໍ່ ຜູ້ບໍ່ໄປຫາຜູ້ຍິງມາຫາຜູ້ຊາຍ	[In cases of adultery,] the woman must endure a double sentence if she has looked for her lover
[III 9]	ຂ້າທ່ານປຣະກອບດ້ວຍອົງຄ້ ຄ້ຊ	15 kinds of homicide
	ລັກຂອງທ່ານປຣະກອບດ້ວຍອົງຄ້ ຄ້ຊ ຢູ່ນີ້ເນີ	15 kinds of theft
[III 10]	ມັກເມຍທ່ານ ເສບເມຍທ່ານຜູ້ອື່ນ	When one loves, or has sexual intercourse, with a married woman

[III 11]	ຫລ່າຍທ່ານໃຫ້ເສຍຂອງ	Cheating and swindling
	ກົນເຫຼົ້າເມົານັກ ຖືກເມຍທ່ານ	[Nine types of misconduct] related to drunkenness
[III 13]	ຜູ້ນີ້ໂທດໃໝ ແລ້ວຫາຍບາບ ແລ	Individuals who flee after being convicted
[III 14]	ຈາໄດ້ຂ້າພໍ່	About parricide
[III 15]	ຂ້າທ່ານຜູ້ມີຄຸນ ແລພໍ່ຕົນ ຂາໄດ້ຕົກນາຣົກທໍ່ນັ້ນ ຢູ່ທີ່ນັ້ນ	Murdering a virtuous man, as well as one's own father, leads to hell
[III 25]	ໃຈນຈັກໂຄບເອົາຂອງນານັກ ແລ	Case of a thief who seizes abundant loot
[III 27]	ຂ້ຽໄດ້ເຂົ້າຂອງ	[Cases where] servants can get property
[III 29]	ຕິກຂຸນອນຫລວມ(ຮ່ວມ) ຫ້ອງກຸຕິດອນກິກຂຸນີ ໃນນີ້	*A bhikkhu* being convinced to have slept in the residence of *bhikkhunī*
[III 30]	ກິກຂຸຕີອຸ້ມເດກນ້ອຍນີອາບັດ ບໍ່ນີຢູ່ນີ້	Whether or not a *bhikkhunī* holding a child [in the monastery] commits an offense (*āpatti*)
[III 31]	ກິກຂຸຕີຄວນນອນຮ່ວມກຸຕິ	*Bhikkhunī* must reside altogether in the same *kuṭi*
	ຄຸຣຸກັຫຈ໌ຄວນແຈກແກ່ໝູ່ບໍ່ຄວນ	'Heavy goods' (*gurubhaṇḍa*) that may or may not be distributed [among individual monks]
[III 32]	ກິກຂຸແລກຂອງກັນ	[Permission for] monks to exchange things
	ທ້າວໝຣະຍາໃຫ້ຂອງກັບນີໃຜບໍ່ຄວນເອົາ ໜີ	Things not to be accepted from the lord's hand
[III 33]	ກິກຂຸອັນຄວນໄຫວ້ແລ ບໍ່ຄວນໄຫວ້ນີ ๑๑ ຈຳພວກແລ	Whether or not a monk must pay respect to someone (11 different kinds)
[III 35]	ທ້າວໝຣະຍາຫ້ານບໍ່ໃຫ້ຖືຫອກດາບໝອຍຖື ກໍນີໂທດ ແລ ເມີ	Those who infringe the lord's prohibition to carry spears, swords and stones must be punished

[III 36]	ທ້າວອຸພຍະຍາຄວນເອົາສັມມ໌ພຍະເຈົ້າແລສັມມ໌ບູຮານເປັນໃຫຍ່	Lords must expand Buddhist law and traditional law
[III 37]	ກິກຂຸເສບເມຖຸນສັມມ໌ ພາຍບົນແລພາຍຕ່ຳ	Heavy and lower monastic offense involving sexual intercourse
[III 38]	ລັກເອົາຈິດຕາທ້າວພຍະຍາມາຈ້ຳຈີດ	Usurping the lord's seal
[III 39]	ພຍະເຈົ້າອະນຸຍາດ ໃຫ້ກິກຂຸແປງກຸຼ	The Buddha allows monks to share *kuṭi*
[III 40]	ກະທຳເກີນອາດຍາທ້າວພຍະຍາ	[Case where] overstepping an ordinance of the ruler [is not punishable]
[III 41]	ກະທຳເຫຼືອເກີນອາດຍາເປັນໂທດ	[Case where] overstepping an ordinance [of the ruler] is punishable
[III 42]	ກັ້ງບັ້ງໂທດທ່ານໄວ້ມີໂທດ	Concealing an offense committed by [monks or laymen] is an offense
[III 44]	ບໍ່ມີຜິດທ້າວພຍະຍາຄວນຫອດເສຍ	In the absence of fault, the lord must have all the charges withdrawn
	ຄົນ ๑๑ ຈຳພວກ ເປັນພະຍາບໍ່ມີຮູ້ຄຳຫນັກເບົາ	11 kinds of lords unable to separate out the essential from the subsidiary
[III 45]	ຫ້ນຄົນຄຣະຫັດມີໂທດ ຄວນໃຫ້ທ່ານໄຕ່	When a layperson commits a fault, [court men] should [be mandated] to investigate the case
	ພິກຂຸໃດຕ້ອງອາບັດບໍ່ບອກແກ່ກິກຂຸທັ້ງຫຼາຍ ອຳໄວ້ມີອາບັດ	A monk who commits an offense without telling other monks commits another offense
[III 46]	ບໍ່ຄວນໄປຄ້ຳຄືນຜູ້ດຽວ ແລ	It is not appropriate [for a *bhikkhunī*] to go alone at night
[III 48]	ໄປເມື່ອຄືນຄົນດຽວ ໃນມີຄູ່ ຄໍເປັນໂທດ ແລ	A woman going alone at night without her husband is at fault

Fascicle IV

[IV 1]	ເມີ ຜິດຜູ້ໃຫຍ່ໃສ່ສິນໃໝ່ນັກ ຜູ້ນ້ອຍໃສ່ສິນໃໝ່ເບົາແລ	High-ranking people committing offenses must receive heavy sentences; low-ranking people, lower sentences
[IV 2]	ກິກຂຸ ๔ ຄົນລັກເອົາຂອງຂະນາສົກ ແລ	Four senior monks having arranged together to remove goods
	ໜໍເອົາຄູ່ ຈີ ນາສົກໄດ້ຖຸລລະໄຈ	One senior monk having incited three novices [to steal] commits a *thullaccaya* offense
	ລູກສິດ ຈີ ຄົນເອົາຄົນນາສົກ ເປັນປາຣາຊິກ	Three novices having incited a man to steal commit a *pārājika* offense
[IV 3]	ຜູ້ມີປັຍຍາບາບໄດ້ນ້ອຍ ຜູ້ໃບ້ບາບໄດ້ຫຼາຍ	The wise gets few sins, the fool gets a lot
	ຜູ້ຍິງຢູ່ໃນເຮືອນ ກິກຂຸຢູ່ນອກເຮືອນໄດ້ເປັນປາຣາຊິກ	When a woman is within a house, a monk standing outside may commit a *pārājika* offense
[IV 4]	ກິກຂຸຢູ່ຜູ້ດຽວ ບໍ່ມີຄົນ ບໍ່ມີສັດ ພອຍເປັນປາຣາຊິກ ຢູ່ໃນນີ້	[Case of] one monk who commits a *pārājika* offense in the absence of any man or living creature
[IV 5]	ຢູ່ຜູ້ດຽວເປັນໂທດ	Even when alone, one can commit offense
[IV 6]	ລູກເດ້ໜີໄປເຮືອນ ໜ້າບໍ່ໄດ້ຂອງໜ້ຽ	When child run away from home without coming back
[IV 7]	ໂລບເອົາຂອງພຣະຍາໃຫ້ແກ່ທ່ານ ຄືວ່າໄຮ່ນາຣົ້ວສວນ	Swindling someone in regard to goods he received from a lord, such as field or land
[IV 8]	ຂຸນໜຶ່ນ ຂຸນພັນ ເມືອງດຽວກັນ ຄວນນາຊຸນນຸນການ ບ້ານເມືອງແລ	When several mandarins of one same principality are bound to rule altogether
[IV 9]	ເປັນໜ່ໃຊ້ໜ່ຊື່ເມຍທ່ານ ຢູ່ນີ້ເມີ	Acting as matchmaker when it involves a married woman
[IV 10]	ຄົນຖືຂອງທ້າວພຣະຍາ ແລ	Commoners taking a lord's belonging [without his consent]

[IV 11]	ທ້າວໝຣະຍາຫີ້ຍົດສັກຜູ້ໃດກໍ່ຄວນຄຣົບ ແລ	Men granted with title by the ruling lord must be honoured
[IV 12]	ຄຳອັນຄວນ ບໍ່ຄວນມ້າງ	Whether or not words must be rendered out-of-date
[IV 13]	ອັນໄດ້ຂ້າພໍ່ຄົນບໍ່ໃຊ້ສັຕິ ອັນໄດ້ຂ້າແມ່ຄົນບໍ່ໃຊ້ສັຕິ	Killing one's father or mother without being in full command of his faculties
[IV 15]	ຄຳອັນຄວນໄຕ່ດູ ຍັງຄຸນແລໂທດ ຢູ່ນີ້ເນີ	Words that must be scrutinized in order to know whether they are right or wrong
[IV 16]	ໄຕ່ຄຳບໍ່ຊອບ ຄໍໄດ້ບາບ ໄ[ດ້]ໂທດ	To carry out an erroneous judgment brings demerit and [deserves] sentencing
[IV 17]	ຕັດໄມ້ທ່ານຫວງໄວ້ເປັນໂທດ	To cut and store wood that belongs to [someone else] is an offense
[IV 18]	ກິກຂຸກ່ຽວຄຳລ່າຍທັ້ງປວງ ຢູ່ນີ້ແລ	Monks telling lies of different kinds
[IV 19]	ນຸ່ງຜ້າສະເໝີທ້າວໝຣະຍາຄໍມີໂທດ	Dressing like the ruling lord is an offense
[IV 21]	ກະທຳສັງໝະເພດ ມັນຫີ້ສະໜາກແກ່ກິກຂຸທັ້ງໜ້າຍ	Causing dissension among the Order (*saṅghabheda*) by giving a ticket to monks
[IV 22]	ຮົ່ມໄມ້ນີ້ໂຄດກວ້າງເຄິ່ງໂຍດຊະນະ ຕິກຂຸໄວ້ຜ້າບໍ່ມີອາບັດ	A monk [who took up residence] under the shade of a banyan tree can keep his [additional] robe, provided that he keeps a distance of less than half a *yojana*
[IV 23]	ກ່ຽວຄຳຫຍາບກ້າ ເຊິ່ງຜູ້ຍິງໜ້າຍຄົນ ຄໍໄດ້ອາບັດ ຄູ່ຜູ້ຍິງ ຂ້າສັດໜ້າຍຕົວ ຄໍໄດ້ບາບຄູ່ຕົວສັດ	He who addresses women roughly and ill-manneredly commits an offense towards these women; [in the same way,] he who has killed animals commits an offense against them
[IV 25]	ອັນປຣະກອບດ້ວຍຣາຄະ	Those who are driven with passion (*rāga*)
	ຜູ້ຊາຍ ຂ້າທ້າວໝຣະຍາ	When a man kills a lord

[IV 26]	ກິກຂຸສະແຫວງຫາຜ້າອາບນ້ຳຜິດແລບໍ່ຜິດ	Suitable and unsuitable ways for monks to search for bathing cloth
[IV 27]	ຕິຕຖິມາຂໍບວດ	[When] a heretic aims to ordain [as a Buddhist monk]
[IV 28]	ຕິຕຖິມາບວດກຽ່ງວໂທດ	[When] a heretic who aims to ordain slanders [the Religion]
[IV 29]	ຄົນຜູ້ໃດຂໍຢູ່ຍິນດີດ້ວຍ ເຮົາຄວນລ້ຽງ ຜູ້ໃດບໍ່ຊື່ບໍ່ຄວນລ້ຽງ	Those who act in a courteous manner must be welcomed; those who are dishonest must not
[IV 30]	ກິນຊີ້ນຜູ້ຊີໄດ້ກະທຳຜິດຄວນໃຫນຕານຄຳອັນຫນັກ	[A monk who] eats prohibited meat should be severely blamed
[IV 31]	ອວດວ່າຕົວຮູ້ຫຼັກ ບໍ່ຟັງຄຳສອນພໍ່ແມ່ເຖົ້າແກ່	On presumptuous persons, who do not listen to parents and elders
[IV 33]	ຜູ້ໃດໄປອາສາທ້າວພຣະຍາຣົບເສິກ	[About] people who have volonteered to fight a war for the lord
[IV 34]	ຜູ້ໃດບັງຄັບທ່ານໄປກະທຳຜິດ ເປັນຕົ້ນວ່າລັກຂອງ ທ່ານ	[About] people who have incited someone else to commit unlawful acts, such as stealing
[IV 35]	ບັງຄັບຊາຍຜູ້ ຈ ໄປເອົາດອກໄມ້ກັບເມຍທ່ານ	[Case of] a man who has been incited [by a *bhikkhuṇī*] to take flowers from a married woman
[IV 36]	ກິກຂຸຕົນດຽວ	[Case of] a monk staying apart [from the Community]
[IV 37]	ຄົນກະທຳຜິດທ້າວພຣະຍາ ທ່ານເອົາໄພເສຍຕ່າງ ເມືອງ	A man has been guilty with regard to the lord by having lost his money in another city
[IV 38]	ຈາສິມຢູ່ນີ້ເນີ	About [monastic] boundaries (*sīmā*)
[IV 40]	ຄັນນະນາສິມ ຢູ່ຫນີ້	Different kinds of [monastic] boundaries

[IV 42]	ສິມນ້ຳຢູ່ຫນີ້	[Monastic] boundary fixed by [a throw] of water

Fascicle V

[V 1]	ສິມມານະຂັນ	Section on the boundaries
[V 7]	ອຸໂປສະຖະ ຄ ຢູ່ຫນີ້ເນີ	The nine [kinds of] *uposatha*
[V 12]	ປາຜິໂມກຂຸທເທສະ ຫ ປຣະກາຣ	The five kinds of *Pāṭimokkuddesa*
[V 14]	ກິກຂຸ ມີ ໒ ຕົນ ອຸໂປສົຖ ຕົນດຽວ ຢູ່ນີ້	The *uposatha* ceremony with one, two or three monks
[V 17]	ກິກຂຸ ມີ ໒ ຕົນ ປຣະວາຣະຕາ	*Pavāraṇā* ceremony with two or three monks
[V 18]	ກິກຂຸຕົນດຽວປະວາຣະຕາ	*Pavāraṇā* ceremony with one single monk
[V 19]	ເຂົ້າສາກ	Food distributed by ticket (*salākabhatta*)
[V 29]	ອະກັປປິຍະວັຕຖຸ	Belongings not suitable for monks (*akappiyavatthu*)
[V 39]	ບາດເປັນ ອະກັປປິຍະວັຕຖຸ ມີ ຄ ລູກ ແລ	Four kinds of almsbowl considered as *akappiyavatthu*

Fascicle VI

[VI 1]	[ກິກຂຸທັງຫຼາຍຣຣົງ ຕິຈີວະຣະກົ່ວ ຕິຈີວະຣະວິປປະວາສ...]	[On the monastic cloth (*ticīvara*)]
[VI 15]	ກະຖິນະກັມມ່ຢູ່ນີ້	On the *kaṭhina* ceremony
[VI 17]	ກິກຂຸຕົນດຽວເຂົ້າວັສສະ ຮັບກັນຖິນ	Offering *kaṭhina* cloth to an individual monk who has kept the early-rain retreat
[VI 19]	ສີຜ້າກະຖິນ ປູຂຶ້ນ ບໍ່ຂຶ້ນ ຢູ່ນີ້	Suitable and unsuitable colours for *kaṭhina* cloth

[VI 20]	ກິກຂຸເຫັນຜ້າ ທວງວ່າງາມ ຄວນເປັນກັນຖິນແລ	A monk finds a cloth beautiful and wishes to make a *kaṭhina* cloth [with it]
[VI 21]	ປູກະຖິນດ້ວຍຜ້າ ມີ ຜືນ	Only *kaṭhina* that is constituted of three pieces of cloth [can] be put on
[VI 22]	ລັກຂະຕະຜ້າກັນຖິນກຳ ຄວນອະທິຖານ ບໍ່ຄວນ ຢູ່ນີ້ແລ	Characteristics of *kaṭhina* cloth to be observed
[VI 27]	ຜ້າເຫຼືອງ ແດງ ຂາວ ເປັນກັນຖິນ ແລ ບໍ່ເປັນ	Whether yellow, red and white coloured cloth can be use as *kaṭhina* cloth
[VI 32]	ຄຳປູກະຖິນແລ	Words [monk must pronounce] when putting on *kaṭhina* cloth
[VI 35]	ອະຣິຜຖານ ຜ້າຂຶ້ນ ບໍ່ຂຶ້ນ ຢູ່ນີ້	Decision as to whether or not a cloth is suitable for making a *kaṭhina*
[VI 38]	ອານິສົງສ້ ๕ ແລ	Five kinds of advantages [associated with *kaṭhina*]

Fascicle VII

[VII 1]	[ມະຫາປະເທສ ๔ ປຼະາການ]	['The four great authorities' (*cattaro mahā-apadesa*)]
[VII 9]	ອະຣິຖານຜ້າ ປັຈຈຸຜ້າ ຢູ່ຫນີ້ທັງສິນນາ	Resolution to wipe off one's [monastic] robe
[VII 12]	ສະລະຜ້າ	Abandoning one's [monastic] robe
[VII 14]	ຮັບບັງຊະກຸຣ	Receiving a forsaken robe (*paṃsukūla*)
[VII 15]	ກິກຂຸຊື້ຜ້ານຸ່ງ ແລກຜ້າກັນ	Monk buying or exchanging his robe
[VII 19]	ກິກຂຸຕົນດຽວຮັບກັນຖິນ	Individual monks receiving *kaṭhina* robe
[VII 21]	ພຣະພຸທສະເຈົ້າຕັ້ງສິກຂາບົດ	The Buddha sets up rules of training (*sikkhāpada*)

[VII 23]	ພຣະເຈົ້າຫຼິງເຫັນນາຊາວມັຄຄະສະ ນັບຕາຜ້າ	The Buddha sees fields of Magadha, and [decides the monastic] robe should be laid out in [similar] grid pattern
[VII 25]	ສີຜ້າກິກຂຸຄວນສຣົງ ແລບໍ່ຄວນ ຢູ່ນີ້ຄຸນເຮີບ	Suitable and unsuitable colours for monastic cloth
[VII 27]	ສີຜ້າຢູ່ນີ້ ເຈົ້າຄຸນເຮີບ	More on colour for [monastic] cloth
[VII 30]	ອາວະຫານ ໒໕	25 categories of theft (*āvahāra*)
[VII 33]	ທອດໝຽນ ມີ ນີ້	[Stealing by] removing an object
[VII 35]	ຝາກຂອງໄວ້ດອມກັນ ແລ	[Stealing] an object one has been entrusted with
[VII 37]	ລັກຂ້າຍິງຊາຍທ່ານຫນີ	Stealing and killing an animal that has been released by its owner
	ລັກນົກຍູງທ່ານ	Stealing a peacock
[VII 46]	ລັກດ້ວຍຕາຊັ່ງຕາຍອຍ	Stealing by cheating with weighting and coining
[VII 48]	ເຫັນຂອງທ່ານເອົາໄປໄວ້ແລ້ວ ເຈົ້າຂອງຫນີລວດເອົາມີ ໂທດ	Stealing an object in absence of its owner

Fascicle VIII

[VIII 1]	ປະຜິສິນນະວະຫານ ຢູ່ນີ້	Stealing committed in secret (*paṭicchannāvahāra*)
[VIII 2]	ກຸສາວະຫານ	Stealing a blade of grass [used for casting lot] (*kusāvahāra*)
[VIII 6]	ຈາຜ້າຄວນອະທິຜຖານ	Requirement for [monastic] cloth
[VIII 8]	ຈານຳປັຄຈະໂຄຣົດ	The five products of the cow (*pañcagorasa*)

[VIII 27]	ລັກຂະຕະບາສ ຢູ່ຫນ້ໍ	Characteristics of a *pāda* [as a unit of measure]
[VIII 31]	ຄະຣຸພັນ	Heavy belongings (*garubhaṇḍa*)
[VIII 32]	ຄະຣຸພັນ ຢູ່ຫນ້ໍ	Heavy belongings (continuation)
[VIII 44]	ຄຸຣຸກັຕຈ໌	Heavy belongings [(continuation and ending)]
[VIII 51]	ທັນຕະກະຖາ ຢູ່ນ້ໍ	*Dantakaṭṭhā* [objects made of ivory within the *garubhaṇḍa* category]

Fascicle IX

[IX 1]	ຄຸຣຸກັຕຈ໌ ແລ	On heavy belongings
[IX 9]	ມັຕຕິກາກັຕຈະ ຢູ່ນ້ໍເຈົ້າເຮັຍ	Objects made of clay [within the *garubhaṇḍa* category] (*mattikā-bhaṇḍa*)
[IX 10]	ອັຈຈະຍາຫ່ານ ຢູ່ນ້ໍ	
[IX 11]	ມັຕຕິປະຣິກຂານ	Set of necessaries [of a dead monk] (*matti-parikkhāra*)
[IX 12]	[ນາຕຣາຕ່າງໆ]	[Miscenalleous (weights and measures, currencies, etc.)]

Selected excerpts (translated and commented)

Excerpts given and commented below illustrate the variety of topics addressed in the *Gurupadesa*, as well as the diverse methods used by its authors in relying on Pali texts for elaborating their argument. Here, the main text in vernacular is given in English translation. In order to avoid repetition, Pali quotations or extracts are only transliterated in the main text, as the vernacular usually translates or explains the Pali. When necessary, however, translation from the Pali is given in the footnotes, together with sources that could have been identified.

Unless otherwise stated, passages below are reproduced from the manuscript of the Pasaninyom Valavat monastery of Vientiane, dated ce 1901 (see references). Numbers in brackets refer to fascicles (in Roman numerals) and pages (in Arabic numerals).

On income boundary (*lābhasīma*)

> [i 3–6] When whatever His Majesty the King, his councillors, dignitaries or members of his court, wishes to build a temple as an act of religious devotion towards the Three Jewels, he should determine and officially mark out boundaries [of the land granted] – which can be one *gāvuta* as well as half a *yojana* large – and legally record them. Then he must issue a document stating: 'from now on, I leave taxes and levy coming from this land to the benefice of the monastery of ours'; and also: 'this village district (*gāmakhetta*) becomes henceforth a '*lābhasīma*' [i.e. income boundary] for this monastery.
>
> In saying this, we rely on the *Cīvarakhanda* [section] of the Commentary (*aṭṭhakathā*) on the *Mahāvagga*, which says:
>
> > lābhasīmā nāma n' eva sammāsambuddhena anuññātā, na dhamma-saṅgāha-kattherehi ṭhapitā; [api ca kho] rājarājamahāmattā vihāraṃ kāretvā, gāvutaṃ vā aḍḍhayojanaṃ vā yojanaṃ vā samantato paricchinditvā 'ayaṃ amhākaṃ vihārassa lābhasīmā' ti [nāmalikhitake thambhe nikhaṇitvā 'yaṃ etth' antare

> uppajjati, sabbaṃ taṃ amhākaṃ vihārassa demā' ti sīmaṃ ṭhapenti, ayaṃ lābhasīmā nāma].[122]

Anyone who, guided by a deep faith, gives [the Community of monks] a land (*bhūmi-pradesa*) or field by saying the word '*sīmaṃ dema*'[123] acts rightly. [In this case,] the monks must not plant boundary [stones or posts] themselves, since such land is priceless indeed. Rather, it must be said by the attendants of the temple (*ārāmika*): 'the limit of our land goes up to this place'. In this way, would the boundary markers be planted beyond these limits, the fault would not be attributable to monks – indeed, offense[124] easily occurs. In fact, if this is the prince or dignitaries, [i.e. the donors], who themselves plant the boundary [markers] by pronouncing the appropriate word (*kappiya-vohāra*) '*paccaye paribhuñjatha*',[125] this will be particularly suitable. In saying this, we rely on the *Rājasikkhāpada* [section] of the *Samantapāsādikā*, which says:

> kiñci sassuṭṭhānakaṃ bhūmippadesaṃ sandhāya 'sīmaṃ demā' ti vadanti, vaṭṭati. sīmaparicchedanatthaṃ pana thambhā vā pāsāṇā vā sayaṃ na ṭhapetabbā. [kasma?] bhūmi nāma anagghā, appakenāpi pārājiko bhaveyya. ārāmikānaṃ pana vattabbaṃ "iminā ṭhānena amhākaṃ sīmā gatā" ti. Sace pi hi te adhikaṃ gaṇhanti, pariyāyena kathitattā anāpatti. yadi pana rājarājamahāmattādayo

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[122] Sp V 1136. 'What is called "*lābhasīmā*" [i.e. income boundary] is neither authorized by the Omniscient nor set up by the sacred Scriptures. However, when prince or dignitaries build a monastery, after having completely determined it as [measuring] one *gāvuta* or half a *yojana*, and having erected posts bearing their name [and uttered] "this is an income boundary of the monastery of ours", they install the boundary [saying] "what arises within this place, we give it all to our monastery": this is what is called "*lābhasīma*".'

[123] 'I donate [this] delimited area'.

[124] The Pali (below) makes explicit that this is an offense entailing exclusion (*pārājika*).

[125] May you enjoy [the use of] the requisites.

> sayam eva thambhe ṭhapāpetvā "cattāro paccaye paribhuñjathā" ti denti, vaṭṭati yeva.[126]

[Moreover,] when a piece of land (*bhūmi-pradet*) is legally granted by a prince or a dignitary to someone – whether religious or layperson –, this land becomes a *visuṃ gāma* [i.e. an area separated from the village] whose limits (*sīmā*) have been rightfully fixed by the word of an official act (*kammavācā*). In this connection, the *Uposathakhanda* [section] of the Commentary (*aṭṭhakathā*) on the *Mahāvagga* states:

> yam pi ekasmiṃ yeva gāma-kkhette ekaṃ padesaṃ, 'ayaṃ visuṃ gāmo hotū' ti paricchinditvā rājā kassaci deti, so pi visuṃ gāma-sīmā hoti yeva. tasmā sā ca itarā ca pakati-gāma-nagara-nigama-sīmā, baddha-sīmā-sadisā yeva honti.[127]

From these three commentarial texts, it is understood that the village headman (*gāmabhojaka*) must be informed by the prince, the minister or the dignitary, that such village district or field has been raised as a *lābha-sīmā* [i.e. income boundary] for the benefit of the Three Jewels. [The latter] should utter: 'from this place, this is the delimited dwelling area of ours; and from that place, this is the delimited dwelling area of yours'. This is

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[126] Sp III 682. 'Whoever is willing to donate a piece of land must utter "we give this boundary". However, the limit and boundaries – posts or stones – should not be installed by oneself. [Indeed,] what is called land is priceless, offenses entailing exclusion (*pārājika*) easily occur. It must be said by the monastic attendants (ārāmikā) that "the limits of our [land] goes up to this place". If they evaluate it exceedingly, the offense would be because of their word. But if the donor – the king or a dignitary – has by himself the posts installed, and makes the donation [saying] "May you enjoy the use of the four requisites (*cātaro paccaye*)", this is all well'.

[127] Sp V 1051–1052. 'Once the ruler has defined an area in a given village district [by saying the word] "may this be a separate village", and donates it to someone, it [then] becomes a separated village boundary. Therefore these [new boundaries] are alike determined boundaries (*baddhasīmā*), [that is,] just like a bounded normal village, city or market-town'.

the right word to say. In order to be completed, there is another exhortation [to be pronounced]. When the village leader raises this *lābha-sīmā*, and receives the piece of land that was rightly granted by the lord, he says in turn 'as for the piece of land that lords have officially delimited and marked out with this fence – or any kind of enclosure –, I reciprocally declare "from this place, this is the village district of us; and from that place, this is the village district of yours".' This means that starting out from the moment the piece of land [in question] has been separated and demarcated in the way described beforehand, the person who is the head of whichever of these districts enjoys in each district '*attano santaka*', that is, what belongs to him [by right]. The one who is [called] 'headman' (*bhojanaka*) is the person who has separated the piece of land that has been given by the donor and raised it as *lābha-sīmā* [i.e. income boundary]. In saying this, we rely on the *Sāragaṇṭhī-Vinaya*,[128] which on the *gāma-sīmā* issue says the following:

> paṭhamakappehi lābha-hetunā 'ettakaṃ ṭhānaṃ mayhaṃ gāmakhetta[ṃ] hotu, ettakaṃ ṭhānaṃ tumhākaṃ gāmakhettaṃ hotū' ti vatti-pākārādīhi aññamaññaṃ gāmakhetta[ṃ] paricchinditvā paricchindita-kālato pa[ṭ]ṭhāya. yo puggalo tesu khettesu attano santaka bhavena, yaṃ kiñci upabhoga paribhoga-saṅkhātaṃ ayaṃ bhuñjituṃ labhati. So kassa khetassa

[128] A *Sāragaṇṭhī-Vinaya* is recorded in the Burmese corpus, but is said to have been written in 19th century. (C.E. Godakumbura, *Catalogue of Cambodian and Burmese Pāli Manuscripts*, Copenhagen, the Royal Library [1983], p. 83–85). Unless this dating is inaccurate, *Gurupadesa* must refers here to another text. This title could also refer to the *Gaṇṭhīsāra* (*Gaṇḍhisāra* in some sources), a condensed manual ascribed to the Burmese scholarly monk Chapaṭa (12th century) (Mabel H. Bode, *The Pāli Literature of Burma,* p. 18).

> i[ss]aro gāmabhojako tv eva saṅkhya[ṃ] gacchati. te ca gāmavisuṃ-gāmakhettan ti saṅkhya[ṃ] gacchanti.[129]

Comment: The issue of *sīmā* or boundaries, which are used to delineate the sacred space in which the 'acts of the Order' (*saṅghakamma*) can take place, is discussed at length in the *Gurupadesa*. Discussions on this issue rely on a variety of canonical and postcanonical sources, some of which are not known to us. While in the *Vinaya* the determination of *sīmā* is the prerogative of the monks, this very passage assigns this task to the ruler. Epigraphical evidence shows that this custom was the rule in Lan Na in the 15th and 16th centuries. In particular, the inscription of Mahantaram monastery (Chiang Mai, 1491) relates how King Phaya Yot Chiang Rai (1487–1495) granted a monastery with a *visuṃgāma*, by the means of the same Pali formula (viz. "*ayaṃ visuṃ gāma hotu*"), thus illustrating the procedure depicted in the extract above.[130] Another inscription dated 1525 – thus contemporary with the assumed date of composition of the *Gurupadesa* – that was found in Chiang Rai province states that the king ordered a dignitary to plant the *baddhasīmā* of the temple.[131] Here again the *Gurupadesa* seems

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[129] 'Starting out from the moment the village district is fixed by virtue of the reciprocal declaration [made] first – "may this area be to the dwelling-place of mine, may this area be the dwelling of yours"–, after it has been delineated with fence and enclosure, that individual is allowed to enjoy whatever is called "*upabhoga*" and "*paribhoga*" according to what is his own property among these districts. The head of which[ever] field is called the village headman (*paribhojaka*). And these [places] are called [respectively] "the village[district]" and the "separate village district".' (I am grateful to Petra Kieffer-Pülz for having edited and translated this passage).

[130] See Hans Penth and Silao Ketphrom, ประชุมจารึกล้านนา เล่ม ๑๐ จารึกในจังหวัดเชียงใหม่ ภาค ๒. *Corpus of Lan Na Inscriptions Vol. 10, Inscriptions in the Chiang Mai Province Part 2*, Chiang Mai University, Chiang Mai 2001, 17–37.

[131] See Hans Penth, Phanphen Khruathai and Silao Ketphrom, ประชุมจารึกล้านนา เล่ม ๑ จารึกในพิพิธภัณฑ์ฯ เชียงแสน. *Corpus of Lan Na Inscriptions Vol. 1, Inscriptions in the Chiang Sän Museum*, Chiang Mai University, Chiang Mai 1997, pp. 105–113. Another case is the inscription of Wat Pa Ku Kaeo (1559), where two *thera* are said to delimit the *khaṇḍasīmā* and the *mahāsīmā* of the temple (cf. Hans Penth, Hans, Phanphen Khruathai and Silao Ketphrom, ประชุมจารึกล้านนา เล่ม ๓ จารึกในพิพิธภัณฑ์ฯ ลำพูน. *Corpus of Lan Na Inscriptions Vol. 3, Inscriptions in the Lamphūn Museum*, Chiang Mai University, Chiang Mai 1997, p. 225.

to be in line with the 'second Sinhalese trend', as determining *sīmā* according to the Sinhalese tradition was at the core of the religious reforms conducted in Lan Na led by the *Sīhaḷabhikkhu*s (above). As a matter of fact, this issue has been constantly discussed over centuries in Theravadin communities of Mainland Southeast Asia, especially in Burma and Thailand.[132] Notwithstanding a series of reforms on this issue, the Thai-Lao and Khmer traditions have maintained specific features, such as having nine *sīmā* stones instead of eight, which are installed through a dedicated ritual.[133]

As for the issue of monastery receiving income (*lābha*), it is connected to the questions raised by the king that is said to have been the origin of the writing of *Gurupadesa* (see above). This very issue is actually at the core of the majority of the epigraphy of Lan Xang and Lan Na, which often consists of records of donation (of land, wealth or manpower) for the benefit of a monastery.[134] As *Samantapāsādikā* clearly prohibits monks from defining the income boundary (*lābhasīmā*), this has to be done by a designated layperson or the donor himself (king or dignitary). Here it is said that when a village district (*gāmakhetta*) is given to a specific person or monastery, the recipient is entitled to enjoy the income from this village or to use the inhabitants as 'servants' (*kha*). In this case, the recipient is called *gāmabhojaka*. While this title is also mentioned in the *Samantapāsādikā* in connection with the topic of *visuṅgāmakkhetta*, it refers here to the village headman (Thai-Lao *nāy pān*$_2$), who may also act on the behalf of the *Saṅgha.*[135] In this extract, the Pali sources the vernacular relies on are clearly

[132] The Kālyāṇi inscription (1476) of Lower Burma is an illustrative example of such discussion on the proper way to consecrate the *sīmā* (*cf*. Taw Sein-Ko, *Kalyānī Inscriptions*, pp. 10–11 and 58–60). 19th century texts such as Burmese *Sīmavinicchaya* (1861) and Thai *Sīmāvicāraṇa* show this matter was repeatedly raised until a late period.

[133] Madeleine Giteau, *Le bornage rituel des temples bouddhiques au Cambodge*, EFEO, Paris 1969; François Bizot, *Les traditions de la pabbajjā*, p. 105, 114–116.

[134] The comparison with the 1491 inscription mentioned above suggests that this act of 'recording' (*caṛik*) the donation is precisely the engraving of the stone inscription.

[135] Here again, I thank Petra Kieffer-Pülz for having shared her view on this topic.

indicated. The Pali, however, is not straightforwardly translated, but reproduced after the statement in vernacular. This to give the latter some legitimacy, as the vernacular and the Pali may sometimes slightly differ. While the first passages draw on the *Samantapāsādikā*, the source that the last part is said to rely on is the *Sāraganṭhī-Vinaya*, which cannot be identified with certainty.[136]

On the monastic cloth

> [vii 5–6] All kinds of cloth that monks are allowed to wear – that is, robes made with discarded cloth (*paṃsukūla*), or robes given by others (*parehi dinna*) – whether finished or not finished –, can be divided into two categories: *kāla-cīvara* [i.e. 'robe material given at the right time'], and *akāla-cīvara* [i.e. 'robe material given not at the right time']. The *bhikkhu* who has completely kept the earlier-rain retreat (*purimavassa*)[137] can wear a *kaṭhina* cloth [under specific conditions]. A cloth that has accrued to him[138] during the period starting on the first day of the waning moon of the first lunar month [in the Lan Na calendar],[139] and ending on the full moon of the second lunar month, is considered to be a '*kāla-cīvara*'. A cloth that has accrued to him during the period of eleven months, starting from the first day of the waning moon of the second lunar month, up to full moon of the first lunar month [of the next year], is

[136] See note 126.

[137] The *Samantapāsādikā* distinguishes between 'earlier rains retreat' (*purima-vassa*) and 'later rains retreat' (*pacchima-vassa*), which correspond to the two possibilities for starting the three-month annual retreat during the rainy season (Sp V 1076 and 1143). In Thailand and Laos, such a distinction usually does not apply, as all monks normally start the retreat at the same moment. This is perhaps because the rainy season lasts only three months (approximately), versus about four in India.

[138] This refers to the ceremony of making robes (*kaṭhina*) to be offered to monks at the end of the rain. Here the Lao gives a non-literal translation of the Pali *atthatha* ('spread out'). *Cf.* I. B. Horner, *The Book of the Discipline*, Vol. II, The Pali Text Society, Oxford 1940, p. 26, note 3.

[139] See comments below.

called '*akāla-cīvara*'. A monk who wears a *kaṭhina* robe that has accrued to him within the period of five months starting on the first day of the waning moon of the first lunar month, up to the full moon of the sixth lunar month, is considered as '*kāla-cīvara*'. The cloth that has accrued to him after that time, that is, within the period of seven months starting from the first day of the waning moon of the sixth lunar month up to the full moon day of the first lunar month [of the following year] is called '*akāla-cīvara*'. As for the monk who keeps the early rains retreat (*purimavassā*), but who has missed the proper day, as well as the *bhikkhu* who keeps the later rains retreat (*pacchimavassa*), the cloth that would have previously been made during the whole period of twelve months would be in any case considered as '*akāla-cīvara*'. In this connection, the *Parivāra-pāḷī* says:

> akālacīvaraṃ nāma anatthate kaṭhine ekādasa māse uppannaṃ, atthate kathine satta māse uppannaṃ.[140]

That is what the Scriptures (*pāḷī*) say [on this matter].

> [viii 4 – 5]
> anujānāmi, bhikkhave, āyāmena aṭṭh' aṅgulaṃ sugat' aṅgulena catur' aṅgulaṃ vitthataṃ pacchimaṃ cīvaraṃ vikappetun ti[141]

This is what the Buddha says in the Scriptures (*pāḷī*). Here 'eight finger-breadths' and 'four finger-breadths' refer to the size of a human finger, which was the system of measure at the

[140] This passage is actually not in the *Parivāra*, but in the *Suttavibhaṅga* (Vin III 203–204 and Vin IV 246): '"If robe-material [should accrue] not at the right time" means: some that has accrued during the eleven months when the *kaṭhina* cloth is not [formally] made' (Trans. I. B. Horner, *The Book of the Discipline*, Vol. II, p. 26).

[141] Vin I 297. 'I allow you, monks, to assign as the least robe one that is eight finger-breadths in lengths and four finger-breadths wide according to the accepted finger breadth' (I. B. Horner, *The Book of the Discipline*, Vol. IV, Luzac & Company, London 1962, p. 423).

> Buddha's lifetime, before his Extinction (*parinibbāna*). In this regard, the Buddha said: "men are of three kinds: *uttama-purisa*, *majjhima-purisa*, *pakati-purisa*". *Majjhima-purisa* refers to a man of average height at this time. *Pakati-purisa* has members that are shorter than that of the *majjhima-purisa*. Three finger-breadths of a *majjhima-purisa* equals one single finger-breadth of an Awaked One; three hand spans of a *majjhima-purisa* equals one single hand span of an Awaked One; three cubits of a *majjhima-purisa* equals one single cubit of an Awaked One. One and a half finger-breadths of a *pakati-purisa* equals one finger-breadths of a *majjhima-purisa*; one hand span and six finger-breadths[142] of a *pakati-purisa* equals one single hand span of a *majjhimapurisa*, [etc.].[143]

Comment: In the first extract, the authors explicitly mention the Pali source they rely on, albeit not always accurately.[144] Here again, the Pali extract is not translated, but comes as a conclusion – and as a reliable source – to a more extensive passage written in vernacular. Although it uses a number of specific keywords in Pali (*kaṭhina*, *kāla-cīvara*, *purima-vassa*, etc.), the text deviates from the *Vinaya*, especially by using local calendar norms. Here months are given according to the T(h)ai calendar system, where a particular number is assigned to each lunar month. Particularly significant is the fact that it is the Lan Na reckoning of the months that is used, and not that of Lan Xang, the former being two months later than the latter.[145] Indeed, the *kaṭhina* period is described as beginning in the first lunar month, which coincides in Lan Na with the end of the rains retreat (*vassa*) – as prescribed in the *Vinaya*. For its part, the Lao (or 'Sukhothai') calendar reckons the full moon of the eleventh month as the start of the *kaṭhina* period. This detail shows the authors of *Gurupadesa* were inspired by

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[142] That is, 1.5 hand spans (one hand span equals 12 finger-breadths).

[143] The text goes on with measurement equivalences between all three kinds of men and a Buddha, leading to deductions concerning the appropriate sizes of the different monastic cloths.

[144] See note 138.

[145] Because Tai calendars originally rely on agricultural activities, the numbering of months differs according to localities.

norms of Lan Na, or even that some of them themselves were Lan Na monks.

As for the classification into 'three categories of men' established according to their height that is mentioned in the second excerpt (viz. *uttama-purisa*, *majjhima-purisa*, *pakati-purisa*), it comes from neither the Pali Canon, nor the Commentaries. Such categorization can be found, however, in later texts with the same wording, for instance in the *Sīmavisodhanī*.[146]

On nuns

> [iii 29–30] asaṃvāso [bhikkhūhi ca bhikkhunīhi ca],
> sambhogo ekacco [tahiṃ na labbhati].
> sahavāsenānāpatti:[147]
> pañhā mesā [kusalehi] sucinti[148] ||

Puggalo, means 'an individual'; **asaṅvāso** 'who cannot leave together with', that is, who is not entitled to perform certain communal activities, such as *uposatha* and *pavāranā* ceremonies;[149] **bhikkhudavāyehi**[150] 'together with the two religious orders', that is, both communities of monks and nuns (*bhikkhunī*); **sambhogo** 'being in union with'; **ekacco** 'certain'; **bhikkhuṇīhi**; 'among the nuns'; **na labhati** 'is not allowed to' – which implies that others **tasmiṃ puggale** 'among them' are;[151]

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[146] 'Tivīdhā hi purisā: uttamapuriso, majjhimapuriso, pakatipuriso ti' (Sīm 51). *Sīmāvisodhanī* is a treatise on the monastery boundary stones (*sīmā*) that was written by a Burmese monk named Saggarbuddhi in ce 1587 (Petra Kieffer-Pülz, 'Vinaya Commentarial Literature in Pali', in *Brill's Encyclopedia of Buddhism*, vol. I, Brill, Leiden 2015, p. 439). Its date of composition is thus later than that of the *Gurupadesa*, but it may be that it reproduces, at least partly, Pali passages of older texts that are not always known to us.

[147] (Ee)(Be) *avippavāsena anāpatti*.

[148] Vin V 216. (Ee) *cinti[tā]*.

[149] *Cf*. Sp VII 1351: *tasmiṃ puggale puna uposatha-pavāraṇādi-bhedo saṃvāso n' atthi*.

[150] (Ee) *bhikkhūhi ca bhikkhunī hi ca*.

[151] Not in the Pali. See Sp VII 1351, and note 147.

anāpatti 'there is no offense'; **sahavāsena**[152] for the nuns who stay, sleep, and shelter under the same roof with this individual; **sahaseyyāpatti**[153] 'there is no offense'.

Esā pañhā[154] meaning 'this issue'; *kusalehi* 'clever men'; *sucintita* 'have well reflected on'. They actually have explained it by means of the following [other] issue: if someone who is not in communion with monks or nuns, that is to say, a person that is certainly not a monk, neither a nun, actions made in communion with him are, for some of them, reprehensible – for instance [actions of] '**methuna sambhoga**' nature[155] –, while other are not. This means the nuns who have slept together within the same monastic premise (*kuṭi-vihāra*) with such a person have not necessarily committed a *sahaseyyāpatti* [i.e. an offense related to cohabitation]. For those who would ask questions about this, the Commentary (*aṭṭhakathā*) gives this clarification:

> assā vissajjanaṃ dāraka-mātuyā bhikkhuniyā veditabbaṃ, tassā hi puttaṃ sandhāy' etaṃ vuttan ti.[156]

To decipher this riddle, the wise [would] base his reflection upon [the circumstance of] a nun who is the mother of a young child. Indeed, this question has been raised by the Elders during a congregation (*saṅgayanācārya*) about a *bhikkhuṇī* who was in that case. They related [this story] and elaborated it as follows: a *bhikkhunī* became pregnant while she was still a housewife. However, she was not aware of her situation, and was ordained as a nun (*pvat pĕn bhikkhuṇī*). Only afterward did she realize [her pregnancy] and, shortly thereafter, she gave birth to a young boy. The nun's child was not in communion with the nuns, for

[152] (Ee) *avippavāsena.* Lit. 'living altogether'.

[153] *sahavāsenāpatti* in the Pali.

[154] (Ee) *pañhā mesā*.

[155] I.e. intimate relations.

[156] Sp VII 1391. 'The answer [from the wise] must be understood from the nun who is the mother of the child; indeed this has been said in relation to her son'.

> the very reason that a little boy cannot be a monk, and even less so a nun. Some '**sambhogā**' [or unions] – for instance when a nun, driven by '**kāya-samsaggara**, [that is, connected with passion]',[157] enjoys pleasure[158] and delight with a man – are bad, and are therefore heavily punishable. But other '**sambhogā**' [or unions] – for instance, when a nun carries her own child in her arm, cuddles him and breastfeeds him, or gives him a mouthful of food – are righteous, and are thus not punishable.

Comment: The opening verses are – with some variations – from the *Sedamocakagāthā* section of the *Parivāra*, without being explicitly mentioned, however.[159] These verses are not immediately translated, but most of the words they contain are glossed in vernacular, in a way similar to that of the Commentaries. Besides, some Pali words that are absent from the verses are added in the gloss in Lao, some of which, however, appear in the *Aṭṭhakathā.*[160] The gloss in vernacular is not a straight translation of the relevant passage. The conclusive sentence that follows is also not a faithful translation of the verses, but rather a contextual interpretation. The inference is that the compilers in these cases have either relied on another *Vinaya* commentarial text, or acted on their own initiative.

It is striking that the *Gurupadesa* deals with regulations that concern *bhikkhunī*. Yet the ordination (*pabbajjā* and *upasampadā*) for women is not evidenced in Mainland Theravādin Southeast Asia before modern times. However, several Thai-Lao texts explicitly mention nuns, or female ordination. Examples are *Ānisăṅ pvat* (P. *Ānisaṃsā pabbajjā*, 'The Advantage of the Ordination') and *Paramatthamaṅgala.*[161] One

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[157] *Cf.* Sp VIII 1394.

[158] *sēb-methuna-dhamm* < P. *sevā-methuna-dhammā.*

[159] Other verses of the *Sedamocakagāthā* are quoted and explained in the *Gurupadesa*, which is not without interest for Pali studies (see below).

[160] *Cf.* note 147.

[161] For the former, see Gregory Kourilsky, 'La place des ascendants familiaux', dans le bouddhisme des Lao', PhD dissertation, École pratique des Hautes Études, Paris 2015, p. 560. For the latter, Claudio Cicuzza, 'The Benefits of Ordination according to the *Paramatthamaṅgala*', in Peter Skilling, Jason A. Carbine, Claudio Cicuzza, Santi Pakdeekham (eds), *How Theravāda is*

thus wonders whether the term *bhikkhunī* must in these cases be taken literally, or if it is rather meant for 'mae chi' (*mè*$_{1}$ *jī*), that is, the non-ordained women who have chosen to spend a part of their life in the monastery.[162] But the truth is, there is likely a more prosaic reason why *Gurupadesa* mentions *bhikkhunī*, irrespective of whether real nuns existed in Lan Xang: to offering legitimacy to clauses that concern laywomen – or even men. Indeed, related cases involving *bhikkhuni* are systematically followed with a secular clause which it rests upon.

On 'heavy belongings' (*garubhaṇḍa*)

> [viii 32–36] (…) a '*gurubhaṇḍa*'-type[163] object that has been offered to an individual monk, and thus not to the whole Community, must however be used in communion with the Order (*saṅghika*). It must not be used as a material for this monk's own enjoyment only. In fact, it does not belong to him personally. On this matter, the Commentary (*Aṭṭhakathā*) says:
>
> > attanā laddhāni pi pariharitvāna puggalika-paribhogena na paribhuñjitabbāni, saṅghika-paribhogena paribhuñjituṃ vaṭṭanti.[164]
>
> This clarifies objects [considered to be] '*gurubhaṇḍa*': **attanā laddhāni pi** 'anything given to other than the Community of monks', **tena bhikkhūna**[165] 'which a particular monk'

Theravāda? Exploring Buddhist Identities, Silkworm Books, Chiang Mai 2012, p. 361–366.

[162] Having their head shaved and wearing a conventional white-cloth, 'mae chi' (or 'mae khao' *mè*$_{1}$ *khāv*, lit. 'women in white') are subject to specific monastic rules, which are not those listed in the *Bhikkhunī-Pātimokkha*.

[163] On this spelling (*guru* < *garu*), see above.

[164] Sp VI 1241, Kkh 136: *saṅghika-paribhogena vā gihivikaṭāni vā vaṭṭanti*. 'Those obtained by oneself, even having looked after them, are not to be used according to an individual's use, [but] they are suitable according to a Sangha's use or [as] offered by a householder' (Kenneth R. Norman et al, 'Overcoming Doubts', p. 469–470).

[165] Not in the Pali.

pariharitvāna ‘has kept with him’, **na paribhuñjitabbāni** ‘should [not] be used’ **puggalika-paribhogena** ‘as a material for the enjoyment of this monk only’; **saṅghika-paribhogena paribhuñjituṃ** ‘the vocation (*sabhāva*) of this material of enjoyment is to be for the use of the whole Community of monks’; **vaṭṭati**, ‘here is what is suitable’. In other words, anything that is offered to a monk becomes the property of the [whole] Community. Therefore, ‘of mine’ must be understood as ‘of the Community of monks’. One must remember this (…). Now, we are first going to define [the notion of] ‘*bhājaniya-bhaṇḍa*’:

> patto ayathālakaṃ tamba-loha-thālakan ti, imāni [pana bhājanīyāni] tīṇi mahantāni vā [hontu] khuddakāni vā bhājanīyāni.[166]

imāni tīṇi lohabaṇḍāni ‘these three kinds of vessels’, which are [made] with copper or bronze’, **patto ayathālakaṃ tamba-loha-thālakaṃ iti** ‘like iron bowls, copper plates, dishes’, **mahantāni** ‘either big’, **khuddakāni** ‘either small’, **bhājanīyāni** ‘may be distributed [among individual monks]’.

> añjanī-añjanisalākā-kaṇṇamalaharaṇī sūci-paṇṇasūci-khuddako pipphalako khuddakaṃ arakaṇṭakaṃ[167] kuñcikā tāḷaṃ kattarayaṭṭhi-vedhako natthudānaṃ bhiṇḍivālo lohakaṭṭi[168] lohaguḷo lohapiṇḍi lohacakkalikaṃ aññam pi vippakataṃ lohabhaṇḍaṃ sabbaṃ[169] bhājanīyaṃ

[166] Pālim 304–305.
[167] Sp ārakaṇṭakaṃ
[168] Sp *lohakutti lohakūṭo*.
[169] Sp *omit*.

añjanī 'a receptacle for collyrium',[170] **añjani-salākā** 'a stick for [painting the eyes with] collyrium',[171] **kaṇṇamalaharaṇī** 'a sharp grater for [cleaning] the ear wax', **sūci** 'a needle', **paṇṇasūci** [is meant for] *lekhanī*, that is, a stylus or stencil.[172] What is called **khuddako pipphalako** [is] a small knife sheath,[173] **khuddakaṃ arakaṇṭakaṃ** [refers to] a very sharp iron [object], such as an iron [instrument] for peeling, **kuñcikā tāḷaṃ** 'key and latch', **kattara-yaṭṭhi-vedhako** [refers to] the [metal] tip of a staff,[174] **natthu-dānaṃ** 'a tobacco box or case'.[175] What is called **bhiṇḍivālo**[176] [is] a metal tip used to be thrusted in the wall, for hanging [things] on the wall for decoration, for instance; **lohakaṭṭi** 'a metal wedge', **lohaguḷo** is an iron stick of a good value, or metal bar [viz. used as a currency]; **lohapiṇḍi** 'a metal lump that is found in gourds';[177] **lohacakkalikaṃ** 'an iron ring'; **aññam pi lohabhaṇḍaṃ** means any other object in metal, **vippakataṃ** whatever it is finished [or not]; **sabbaṃ** 'all these' **bhājanīyaṃ** 'can be distributed [among individual monks]'.

Comment: Dealing with properties or belongings of the *saṅgha* and the monks, the *Vīnaya* distinguishes between the *garubhaṇḍa* ('heavy – or valuable – belongings') from the *lahubhaṇḍa* ('light – or inexpensive – belongings'). *Garubhaṇḍa* include monasteries and monastery land, dwellings, buildings, as well as smaller but valuable objects such as

[170] Lao translates as *pōk yā tā dāṅ*, where *pōk* refers to a cylindrical box made with a section of bamboo; as for *yā tā*, it literally means 'medicine for the eye'. Indeed, *añjanī* refers in the *Vīnaya* to a collyrium pot (Vin I 203, 204).

[171] Vin I 204.

[172] Here the meaning of the gloss in Lao is uncertain.

[173] PTS Dic. 'scissors' (with an interrogation mark, however).

[174] As all the lists include specifically metal objects, the tip in question is obviously also in metal. Also see 'comments' below.

[175] *Natthu-dānaṃ* is translated as 'a nose dropper' in Kenneth R. Norman et al (*Overcoming Doubts*, p. 468). Although the Lao does not make here any reference to the nose (*natthu*), this meaning can nevertheless be inferred from the act of snuffing tobacco.

[176] Kkh *bhindivālaka*, 'a spear'.

[177] Uncertain reading (*gumbăn* < P. *kumbhaṇḍa* ?).

building materials, metal vessels, tools, mattresses and chairs.[178] At the opposite, *lahubhaṇḍa* refers to lighter or less valuable belongings, such as cloth, food, sandals, water strainers, and so on. *Gurupadesa* addresses at length, and in several places, the issue of *garubhaṇḍa* – often spelt *guru°* (see above). In this case, the purpose is to determine which objects are suitable for distribution among individual monks. Notions of *garubaṇḍa* and *lahubaṇḍa* were subject to extensive developments in post-canonical *Vinaya* literature (especially Sp, Pālim and Kkh). Although the source in this passage is only vaguely identified as 'Commentaries' (*Aṭṭhakathā*), it obviously draws on these later works.[179]

The methods of writing of these passages are of two kinds: (1) free rephrasing in vernacular of the instructions contained in the Pali; (2) word by word translation or gloss from the Pali, in the style of *nissaya* or *săb* (see above).

'Heavy-goods' listed in commentarial *Vinaya* literature are sometimes described by means of technical terms, for which it is not always easy for modern scholars to guess the object they refer to. Here the translation or gloss in vernacular can be helpful to clarify some of them. For example, *bhiṇḍivālo* is defined in the *Gurupadesa* as 'a metal tip used to be thrusted in the wall, for hanging [things] on the wall for decoration'. In the Kkh, we find *bhindivālaka*, 'a spear',[180] which does not really make sense in a list of small iron objects dedicated for monks. Also, the Lao explanation for *lohaguḷo* ('an iron stick of a good value, or iron bar', viz. used as a currency) sheds light on the meaning of that term that remains obscure in Pali.[181] A noteworthy example is the term *kattara-yaṭṭhi-vedhako*, which *Gurupadesa* holds as a single compound word, while an alternative reading considers *kattara-yaṭṭhi* ('a *bhikkhu*'s staff') and *vedhako* ('a piercer') to be separate.

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[178] Vin I 305–312; Vin III 90–92; Vin V 217–218.

[179] The division of 'heavy-belongings' and 'light belongings' was localized in later Buddhist legal texts, for instance in the *Gatiloka-gatidhamma* (lit. 'worldly cases and Dhamma cases'), which assimilates the former with communal property, and the latter with personal property.

[180] Cf. Kenneth R. Norman et al, *Overcoming Doubts*, p. 469.

[181] Lit. 'a metal protuberance' (Kenneth R. Norman & al, *Overcoming Doubts*, p. 469, note 7).

Here the Lao reading fits with the *Vinayatthamañjusa*, which also considers *kattara-yaṭṭhi-vedhako* as a single word, glossing *vedhako* as '*valayam*' ('a ring').[182] Some scholars have suggested this latter term could refer to the metal rings attached to *bhikkhu*'s wandering sticks in certain Buddhist schools, the purpose of which was to make noise to announce his coming to the faithful.[183] While the Lao gloss (*khva$_2$ mai$_2$ dao$_2$* 'the [metal] tip of a walking stick') could fit with this interpretation, it could also refer to the pitchfork that is attached at the end of some monks' staffs, which were in the past used in ascetic practices.[184] As shown in certain Thai illustrated manuscripts, wandering monks used a specific kind of forked stick – usually of two branches – to touch corpses or skeletons. This practice is linked to 'the meditation on the foul' (*asubha*), as defined in Buddhist scriptures.[185] In the Thai-Lao tradition, it is also believed that a monk touching a dead body with a stick (or a rope) can transfer merit to the dead.

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[182] Kkh-nṭ 425.

[183] *Cf*. Kenneth R. Norman et al, *Overcoming Doubts*, p. 469, note 4. While the 'clanging stick' is authorized in Mūlasarvāstivādin tradition, as well as in other Central and Eastern Asian schools of Buddhism, it is not the norm in the Theravāda practice. However, mention is made in a subcommentary of the *Vinaya* of a staff (*kataradaṇḍa*) furnished with iron rings or bells at its extremity (*katttarayaṭṭhikoṭiyaṃ kata-ayovalayā*) (Sp-ṭ II 121 and 128).

[184] Although there is evidence of *kakkhara* in Thailand, these are limited to the location and period connected with the ancient Mon civilization (Nicolas Revire, 'À propos d'une "tête" de *khakkhara* conservée au Musée national de Bangkok', *Aséanie*, vol. 24 [2009], pp. 117–119, esp. note 18). They thus concern old Mon, and not Thai-Lao, Buddhist practice. In this regard, mention is made by F. Bizot of a 'clanging stick' used among Tai Lue Buddhist communities in Northern Laos, but as Revire points out, elements he provides are too vague and tiny to be convincing (see François Bizot, 'La place des communautés du Nord-Laos dans l'histoire du bouddhisme', *Bulletin de l'École française d'Extrême-Orient*, vol. 87–2 (2000), pp. 521– 523; Nicolas Revire, 'À propos d'une "tête" de *khakkhara*', p. 120, note 22).

[185] M I 56 (*Sammādiṭṭhi-sutta*), D II 296 (*Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna-sutta*), Vsm 230 *f*. Examples of such forked sticks are visible at the National Museum of Thailand (Bangkok), where these are characterized as 'walking stick[s] of Lao monks', as opposed to single-point *bhikkhu*'s staff used in Central Thailand. For a nice and thorough study of Thai manuscripts showing this practice, see Jana Igunma, 'Meditations on the Foul in Thai Manuscript Art', *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Universities*, vol. 5 (2015), pp. 65–81.

The forked stick (Kh. *crat'*) is also still used in specific rituals in Cambodia.[186] Ultimately, the Lao gloss ('a [metal] tip') corresponds rather well to the literal meaning of Pali *vedhako* ('a piercer').

On theft and damage

> [ii 23–24] Case when, in a house, a given object, initially in a good condition, becomes damaged after the passage of a group of individuals, is evidenced [in the *Jāṭaka*s] as follows:
>
> āgantuke jane cāpi ghare nāseti santakaṃ amacco tassā [āgantukassa daṇḍaṃ] paṇeyya nanrikā (?) viya vā yassa[ṃ ghāṭeti][187].
>
> **jano cāpi** 'when individuals' āgantuke 'visiting a house' **santakaṃ**, 'which is the property of a given householder', **ghare** 'and in this very house' **nāseti** 'one [of them] causes damage', **amacco** 'the ruler' (*cao$_2$ mịạṅ*) **paṇeyya** 'must decree' **daṇḍaṃ** 'a fine' āgantukassa 'to this individual, who came' **nanrikā viya** 'just like a teal'; **ghāṭeti** 'indeed he would kill' **vā yassaṃ** 'such a duck'. This is in the *Sattanipāta* collection of the *Jāṭaka*s.
>
> [iii 9–10] There exist five ways of stealing others that are subject to heavy punishment, as the following utterance explains:[188]

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[186] Especially in the *Chak mahāpaṃsukūla* rite, in which the ascetic simulates his own death and rebirth (François Bizot, *Le don de soi-même. Recherches sur le bouddhisme khmer III*, École française d'Extrême-Orient, Paris 1981, pp. 27–28, and plates 26–28).

[187] I was not able to trace this sentence – here very corrupt – in the *Jātaka* collection, neither in any Pali text.

[188] This extract is from the National Library manuscript dated be 2476 (ce 1934). See references.

> parapariggaha-bhaṇḍaṃ ca parapariggaha-saññitā theyyasmiṃ ekagga-cittañ ca ṭhānācāvanam eva ca payogañ ca ti pañcaṅgā adinnā sahatthi matā.[189]

adinnā ['seizing that which is not given'] **sahatthi** 'with one own's hand' **pañcaṅgo** 'in the five circumstances', **iti** 'explicated as follows': **parapariggahabhaṇḍaṃ ca** 'the object [grasped] was so far kept by someone else'; **parapariggaha-saññitā theyyasmiṃ ekagga-cittaṃ** 'with having a firm intention to steal'; **ṭhānācāvanam eva ca** 'and having actually taken away [this object] from the place where it was kept'; **payogañ ca** 'fearing of being discovered' ; **matā** 'it is appropriate' **yassa puggalassa**[190] 'for such a person' **mahāvipāko** 'to endure heavy punishment'.

[vii 30–31] What is called 'the 25 categories of theft' (*pañcavīsati avahārā*) is explained in this way. The root division of theft is in five parts, called 'the five *pañcakaṃ*'[191]. The five *pañcakaṃ* are the following: (1) *nānābhaṇḍa-pañcaka*; (2) *ekabhaṇḍa-pañcaka*; (3) *sāhatthika-pañcaka*; (4) *pubbapayoga-pañcakaṃ*; (5) *theyyāvahāra-pañcaka*. Each of these root divisions – the five *pañcakaṃ* – is in turn distributed in five *avahāra*. The *avahāra* sub-divisions are defined as follows. The five *avahāra* that are included in the *nānābhaṇḍa-pañcaka* are: (1) *ādiyeyyāvahāra*; [(2) *hareyyāvahāra*; (3) *avahareyyāvahāra*] (4) *iriyāpatha-vikopeyyāvahāra*; (5) *ṭhānācāveyyāvahāra*. Not only are these five *avahāra* the sub-divisions of the *nānābhaṇḍa-pañcaka*, but of the *ekabhaṇḍa-pañcaka* as well. Thus, this sub-division is applicable to both *nānābhaṇḍa-pañcaka* and *ekabhaṇḍa-pañcaka*. In other words, these two *pañcakaṃ*, that is, *nānābhaṇḍa-pañcaka* and *ekabhaṇḍa-pañcaka*, use the same terminology [for their subdivision]. In this connection, the commentary (*Aṭṭhakathā*) says:

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[189] I was not able to trace this (uncomplete) sentence in any Pali text.

[190] Not in the Pali. These two words occur nevertheless in all versions examined.

[191] The five groups of five.

> tattha nānā-bhaṇḍa-pañcakañ ca eka-bhaṇḍa-pañcakañ ca ādiyeyya, hareyya, [avahareyya], iriyāpathaṃ vikopeyya-ṭṭhānā, cāveyyā 'ti imaṃ[192] padānaṃ vasena labbhanti.[193]

This is an exact quote. Here '*eka-bhaṇḍa*' refers only to objects that are endowed with a consciousness (*viññāṇa*), while '*nānā-bhaṇḍa*' might refer to any object whether it has a consciousness or not. In this connection, the Commentary (*Aṭṭhakathā*) says:

> eka-bhaṇḍa-vasenaṃ pi ca saviññāṇaken' eva labbhati, nānā-bhaṇḍa-vasenasaviññāṇakāviññāṇaka-missakena.[194]

Comment: The first passage illustrates Lao legislations that take over Pali scriptures for describing and dealing with offences committed by the laity. Here the issue of damaging property allegedly draws on a relevant sentence of the *Sattanipāta* of the *Jāṭaka*. This sentence, however, is not found in this collection. The second passage, which deals with theft by using the same method, draws on an unknown Pali text.

In the first two extracts, the gloss does not always strictly follow the order of the words in the Pali. The authors have 'syntactically rearranged' Pali sentences in order to make them fit with the Lao syntax, and thus make the translation intelligible.[195]

As for the classification into '25 categories of theft' (*pañcavīsati avahārā*), it is found in the *Vinaya* commentarial literature, first and foremost in the *Samantapāsādikā*.[196] The two Pali sentences in the second excerpt are faithful quotations from Sp, although the source is not given. In the last extract, however, the author has brought minor

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[192] (Ee) *imesaṃ*.

[193] Sp II 304.

[194] Sp II 302.

[195] On 'syntactical rearrangement' of bilingual Buddhist texts of Southeast Asia, see Trent Walker, 'Unfolding Buddhism', pp. 318–320 and 346f.

[196] The classification into 25 kinds of theft is also found in the Brahmanic *Dharmaśātra*s, as well as in the Burmese *Dhammasatta*s, but formulated in different terms (D. C. Lammerts, *Buddhist Law in Burma*, p. 73–74 and 96).

changes to the Pali, probably to make it more intelligible out of its original context. Another possibility is that he draws on a source other than Sp.

The 'twenty-five categories of theft' (*pañcavīsati avahārā*) is a topic that is at the core of the premodern legal tradition of Laos and Lan Na, and is included in several other texts, which sometimes even bear this very title. Different contents, however, can hide under this title.

Prohibition for nuns and laywomen to go alone at night

> [iii 46–47] sikkhāpadā buddhavarena vuttā[197]
> saṅghādisesā caturo bhaveyyuṃ.
> āpajjeyya ekekapayoga[198] sabbe.
> pañhā mesā kusalehi cintitā[199] ||

Here: *sikkhāpadā* refers to 'the rules of training'; *buddhavarena*; 'that the Buddha, the Holy One'; *vuttā* 'has uttered'; *caturo* '4 in number'; *saṅghādisesā* being the name given to the formal meetings of the Community; *bhaveyyuṃ* 'should be called'; *eko puggalo*[200] that is, 'one individual'; *āpajjeyya* 'could undergo to' ; *sabbe* refers [here] to 'the all four formal meetings of the Community'; *ekekapayoga* likewise *eko payogena*. This means that to hold the all four formal meetings of the Community in one single time is enough [in certain circumstances].

[**saṅghādisesā caturo** ti] ayaṃ pañhā aruṇugge gāmantarapariyāpannaṃ nadipāraṃ okkantabhikkhuniṃ sandhāya vuttā[201]
This riddle relies on the case of a nun who had gone down to the riverbank, had entered a neighbouring village, and finally came

[197] (Ee) *vaṇṇitā*.
[198] (Ee) *ekapayogena*. See below.
[199] Vin V 217.
[200] Not in the Pali.
[201] Sp VII 238.

back to her abode only at the first light of dawn, at the moment the gong sounded [in the monastery] and of the call to prayer. This means this nun left her permanent dwelling and went to the village, alone, during night-time. Then, she went down to the riverbank afterwards, very likely when the dawn was [already] breaking. Accordingly, this nun'[s behaviour] requests four formal meetings of the Community (*saṅghādisesa*). First, this nun shut herself away from the monks during night-time; second, she went alone to another dwelling; three, after that, she went, on her own initiative, down to the river bank; four, her [going] alone may have endangered the other [members of the Community]. Acting in this way, the nun has committed four offenses (*āpatti*) at once, in a short period of time.

[In the same way,] any lay woman of any kind – in particular a young lady from a good family – going alone with ill intentions while it is still dark or not bright enough, is at fault, as soon as she crosses the doorstep and goes down the stairs.[202] And this in four ways: first, by having not obtained consent from the master [of the household]; two, by exposing herself to danger, such as being robbed; three, by [inciting] people to think badly of her; [four ?...]. The ruling lord, when informed [of the misconduct], will accordingly apply an [appropriate] penance (*dandakamma*), such as beating, binding, tying up, or fining. In the case of a man going out at night with ill intentions, he is at fault by the same four ways aforementioned.

Comments: This passage exemplifies the way the authors of *Gurupadesa* have endeavoured to rely on Pali scriptures to implement original secular clauses. In this case, the connection between the Pali, which relates to a misbehaviour of a *bhikkhunī*, and the following prohibition for young (i.e. unmarried) women to go out at night is, at the least, tenuous. The formal parallel between the four offenses committed by the *bhikkhunī* – leading to a rule that concerns *saṅghādisasa* –

[202] Lao traditional houses are built on stilts. The rooms for habitation are on the upper level, while the lower level is reserved for weaving or feeding domestic animals.

addressed by the Sp excerpt, and the four reasons[203] why a laywoman should not go out at night by her own, sounds somewhat artificial. As for the penances required for the culprit, who may be beaten, it is no exaggeration to say they drastically depart from the spirit of the *Vinaya*.

This passage is also of interest because it rests on the *Sedamocakagāthā* section of the *Parivāra* of the *Vinaya-piṭaka*, which is known to be particularly difficult to decipher. This section is constituted of riddles that are made with opposing or contradictory statements drawn from different parts of the *Vinaya.*[204] In this regard, the *Gurupadesa* is interesting as it allows one to know how these riddles could possibly be deciphered, or at least how they were understood by 16th century Lao scholarly monks – in this case with the help of the Commentary. Here the Lao gloss is not immediately readable, as Pali words have not been syntactically rearranged. For this reason, the authors have added a synthetic sentence, which makes the meaning straightforward.

In addition, the Lao version of the Pali verses shows minor discrepancies with regards to modern editions, as shown by the variant *ekekapayoga*, in place of *eko payoga*. It is particularly significant that this variant was emphasized by the Lao authors themselves.

On the Buddhas of the past

> [viii 13–15] Metteyyo, Uttamo, Rāmo, Paseno Kosalābhibhū, Dhīghasoṇi ca Saṅkicco,[205] Subho, Todeyya-brahmāno || Nālāgīrī Pālileyyo, Bodhisattā ime dasa anukammena sambodhiṃ papuṇisanti anāgate.[206] || cintitaṃ satta-saṅkhyeyyaṃ, nava-

[203] Actually, manuscripts consulted only list three reasons, although all of them state they are four in number.

[204] I.B. Horner, *The Book of the Discipline*, Vol VI, The Pali Text Society, Oxford 2004, p. xxxi.

[205] Smn *Caṅkī ca*.

[206] Smn 632, 633. *Cf.* Javier Schnake, 'Le Dhamma par le jeu d'esprit', p. 169. These verses also appear at the very end of a Burmese version the *Anāgatavaṃsa* (*cf.* Ivan P. Minayeff, 'The Anāgata-vaṃsa', *Journal of the Pali*

saṅkhyeyya' vācakaṃ; kāya-vācā catu-khyātaṃ[207] samāvisati paṇḍitā paññādhikassa sambhāra ettakā anunādhikā ti || Dasāyu: di ko a pa pā dha si ti | Sidrāyu: so nā su su su su pī pu | ca re | vi dho | si lo | ta ve nahuti | ka gho | ga ko | ro ka | ve re na | na de go saṅkhyā ||

[The syllable] DI is meant for the Buddha Dipaṅkara; KO is meant for the Buddha Koṇḍañña; A is meant for the Buddha Anomadassī; PA is meant for the Buddha Paduma; PA is meant for the Buddha Padumuttara; A is meant for the Buddha Atthadassī; DHA is meant for the Buddha Dhammadassī; SI is meant for the Buddha Siddhattho; TI is meant for the Buddha Tissa. These nine[208] Buddhas' life-span was *dasāyunahuti*, that is, 100,000 years.

[The syllable] SO is meant for the Buddha Sobhita; NĀ is meant for the Buddha Nārada; SU is meant for the Buddha Sumaṅgala; SU is meant for the Buddha Sumana; SU is meant for the Buddha Sumedha; SU is meant for the Buddha Sujāta; PI is meant for the Buddha Piyadassī; PU is meant for the Buddha Pusso.[209] These eight Buddhas' life-span was *sidrāyu-nahuti* (?), that is, 900,000 years.

[The syllable] RE is meant for the Buddha Revata, whose life-span was CA-*nahuti*, that is, 60,000 years.[210] [The syllable] VI is meant for the Buddha Vipassī, whose life-span was DO-*nahuti*, that is, 80,000 years old. SI is meant for the Buddha Sikhī, whose life-span was SO-*nahuta*, that is, 70,000 years old. VE is meant for the Buddha Vessabhū, whose life-span was TA-

Text Society, vol. 2 [1886], p. 37). However, it seems absent from other known versions of this Pali text, allegedly written by the Elder Kassapa during the beginning of 13th century.

[207] Sīm 7 and 80.

[208] The list given above includes only eight syllables, but PĀ is actually an amalgamation of PA and A (according to the Pali rule of *sandhi*).

[209] Usually Phussa in the Pali tradition.

[210] In this passage, figures are expressed by means of syllables associated to the word *nahuti* (viz. *nahuta*, 'ten thousand'). For further explanation, see comments below.

> *nahuta*, that is, 60,000 years old. KA [is meant for the Buddha] Kakussandha, whose life-span was GHO-*nahuta*, that is, 40,000 years old. KO is meant for the Buddha Koṇāgamana, whose the life-span was GA-*nahuti*, that is, 30,000 years old. KA is meant for the Buddha Kassapa, whose life-span was RO-*nahuti*, that is, 20,000 years old. [Syllables] VE RE are meant for the whole 24 Buddhas, whose life-span was not below *eka-nahuti*, that is, 10,000 years old. GO is meant for the Buddha Gotama, whose life-span was only 80 years old.
>
> Preceding *gāthā* are given according to the numbers given in the *Saddabindu*.

Comments: This excerpt deals with the successive Buddhas who have appeared in different aeons (Sk. *kalpa*), and their respective life-span. This topic appears in the Pali canon (D II 3–4, Bv 9f), although under a very different form.

The two verses '*Metteyyo, Uttamo, Rāmo* (…) *sambodhiṃ papuṇisanti anāgate*',[211] which refer to Buddhas of the future, are not in the Pali Canon or commentaries, but appear in several texts widespread in Southeast Asia, especially a Burmese version of the *Anāgatavaṃsa* ('the chronicle of the future'),[212] and also some '*Iti pi so*' propitiary verses, which have circulated in the form of manuscript compendia.[213] These verses are also included in the *Sotatthakī-mahānidāna* (Smn,

[211] In the future, Metteyya, Uttama and Rāma will attain Enligthment.

[212] See Ivan P. Minayeff, 'The Anāgata-vaṃsa', p. 37. These verses are absent from other known versions of this Pali text allegedly written by the Elder Kassapa during the beginning of 13th century, which tells the events that will occur before and after the future Metteyya will be born. For a recent edition of the Anāgatavaṃsa, see Kenneth R. Norman, 'The Anāgatavaṃsa Revisited', *Journal of the Pali Text Society*, vol. 28 (2006), p. 1–37.

[213] For instance in a Pali recitation entitled *Gāthāsahassāvagga* (see Jacqueline Filliozat, 'À propos de la litanie *iti pi so.* Aperçu des documents conservés en Europe', Data Filliozat, EFEO, unpublished document [2007], p. 35). The Southeast Asian recitations beginning with *iti pi so* certainly originated from the verses taught by the Buddha in the *Dhajagga-sutta* (S I 219) and is reproduced in several parts of the Canon (Vin I 35, 242, M III 238, S II 69), which lists the virtues of the Master (*Buddhaguṇa*): *iti pi so bhagavā arahaṃ sammāsambuddho vijjācaraṇasampanno sugato lokavidū anuttaro purisadammasārathi satthā deva manussānaṃ buddho bhagavā*". These

14th century), which had a considerable influence in Burma, Thailand, and, apparently, also in Laos.[214] The following verses (‘*cintitaṃ satta-saṅkhyeyyaṃ* (…) *catu-khyātaṃ*’) are also found, with a slightly different wording, in the Smn, and with the same wording, in the *Sīmāvisodhanī*.[215]

As for the association of the Buddhas of the past with the first syllable of their respective names, and their use as a basis for the elaborating *mantra* (‘DI KO A PA PĀ DHA SI TI…’), it corresponds to the ‘*ādi-saṅkheta*’ (‘concatenation’) method that consists in condensing words or sentences by way of syllables.[216] Although this method is borrowed from ancient Indian practices, it is unusual in the Theravāda tradition of Sri Lanka, while being very popular in Southeast Asia. As for this particular passage, a parallel in Pali is found in Ratanapañña’s *Vajirasārattha-saṅgaha* (written in 1534).[217]

Finally, the way of indicating figures – here corresponding to the life-span of each Buddha of the past – by means of syllables follows the Indian *kaṭapayādi* method, in which each Sanskrit (or Pali) letter matches a number from zero to nine (viz. KA = 1, KHA = 2 […], JHA = 9, ÑA = 0, ṬA = 1, THA = 2, etc.). This is not found in the corpus of the Mahāvihāra of Sri Lanka. The text that introduced the *kaṭapayādi* method into the Pali corpus is the *Saddabindu*, a 13th century text on Pali grammar written in Burma, which *Gurupadesa* explicitely refers to at the end of this enumeration (‘*Saddabindusaṅkhyā’*, viz. ‘the figures according to the *Saddabindu*’).[218]

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verses led to dozen of variations and developments that seem to be specific to this part of Southeast Asia.

[214] On the *Sotatthakī-mahānidāna*, see note 112.

[215] On this text, see note 144.

[216] Javier Schnake, ‘Letters and Numbers: Protective Aspects in the *Vajirasāratthasaṅgaha*’, in Claudio Cicuzza (ed.), *Katā me rakkhā, katā me parittā. Protecting the protective texts and manuscripts*, Fragile Palm-leaves Foundation and Lumbini International Research Institute, Bangkok and Lumbini 2018, p. 160.

[217] Vaj-s 220. On this text, see note 25.

[218] On the *kaṭapayādi* method and its different variations in India and Southeast Asia, see Javier Schnake, ‘Le Dhamma par le jeu d’esprit’, p. 283–298. On *Saddabindu*, *cf.* Friedgard Lottermoser, ‘Minor Pāli Grammar Texts: The

The fact *Gurupadesa* alludes to these methods show reformist movements in Lanna and Lan Xang, despite promoting the use of Pali language and Scriptures, did not establish against practice that was stranger to the Mahāvihāra tradition. Rather the opposite, the use of syllables in an esoteric and protective ways likely draws from late Pali literature composed in Burma, from where these movements had their source.

Conclusion and further Research

The *Gurupadesa* is a Buddhist code of law that was written in Luang Prabang, quite certainly in the mid-16th century, during Phothisarath's reign or the beginning of that of Setthathirat. The venue in Lan Xang of a religious delegation coming from Lan Na with a copy of the Tipiṭaka, in 1523, provides a reliable *terminus post quem* for its composition. As for the *terminus ante quem*, it could be established at the moment King Setthathirat moved the capital of the kingdom to Vientiane, that is, ca. 1560. Another possibility is that it was composed in a period straddling both reigns, which would allow to date it circa 1548. In any case, this makes *Gurupadesa* the oldest original Lao Buddhist text that has come to us.

Its nature and content, as well as the circumstances of its composition – partly explicated in the opening folios – exemplify the situation in the kingdom of Lan Xang at that time, in terms of its religion, politics and intellectual life. Lan Xang was then directly connected to the neighbouring kingdom of Lan Na, with whose population they shared a similar language and culture, and whose ruling elite were blood-related. This strong connection permitted the religious vivacity that Lan Na had been experiencing for one century, thanks to the reformist movement of the *Sīhaḷabhikkhu*s, to eventually reach the Lao kingdom, in particular the royal capital Luang Prabang. Evidence suggests that it is from this period that Pali manuscripts started to circulate in the Lao cultural area. The fact is that the very large number of Pali passages or extracts authors of *Gurupadesa* have

Sadda¬bindu and its "new" subcommentary', *Journal of the Pali Text Society*, vol. 11 (1987), pp. 80–82.

drawn on, as well as the wide range of references – from Canonical scriptures to later Burmese writings – bear the mark of the 'Golden age' of Pali literacy that widespread throughout Lan Na and beyond. Other details, such as the use of the Lan Na calendar instead of that of Lan Xang in some passages, make certain the influence of the Northern Thai kingdom on this text.

Despite the undeniable impact Lan Na had on Lan Xang in matters of religious culture, it is still the case that Lao Buddhism has rapidly found its own identity. Emphasis on legal concern is one of its distinctive features. The reign of Phothisarath, in particular, was very productive in terms of 'Buddhist law', as evidenced in epigraphy and manuscript corpora. While the Burmese incursion in Lan Na and then in Lan Xang put an end to the 'Golden age' of Pali literacy in both kingdoms, Lao scholarly monks have continued to produce Buddhist codes of law, which will, over time, become slightly less reliant on the *Vinaya* and commentarial literature.

As for the *Gurupadesa*, it offers a unique insight into monastic intellectual life in the Lan Xang kingdom in the 16th century, but also gives important information regarding the worldviews of the monks: their concerns, their relationships with the monarchy, as well as their ways of arguing and reasoning. It is also noteworthy to point out that, although it dealt with a local affair, the text also circulated outside Luang Prabang, not only in several parts of Laos but also – at least in an abridged version – in Northern and Northeast Thailand, and even among the Tai Lue living on the edge of China.

Furthermore, studying the *Gurupadesa* allows us to get a better grasp of the skills in text composition of Lao monks less than two centuries after the founding of Lan Xang kingdom. It is also a primary source for information about the literary corpus known in the area at a time marked by religious reform and Buddhist vivacity. Usually, it is assumed that canonical scriptures were not widespread in Lao cultural areas, and that Lao monks had only limited proficiency in Pali. However, the *Gurupadesa* includes numerous Pali sentences and quotations borrowed from a huge number of canonical and postcanonical sources. An examination of some of these sentences and phrasings, and of the role they have played in specific debates and arguments, reveals that a wide range of Pali texts were actually known

and referred to in Luang Prabang, at least at this particular time. In this regard, the study of the *Gurupadesa* also offers insight into the ways in which Sinhalese monastic codes and commentaries, and more broadly Indian Buddhist values, were understood and adapted by local populations and applied to Lao society.

Abbreviations

Dhn	Dhammanīti
Jkm	Jinakālamālī
Kacc-nidd	Kaccāyana-suttanidesa
Kavid	Kavidappaṇanīti
Kkh	Kaṅkhāvitaraṇī
Kkh-nṭ	Kaṅkhāvitaraṇī-abhinavaṭīkā (Vinayatthamañjusa)
M	Majjhimanikāya
Pālim	Vinayasaṅgaha-aṭṭhakathā (Pāḷimuttavinicchaya)
S	Saṃyuttanikāya
Sadd	Saddanīti
Sīm	Sīmāvisodhanī
Smn	Sotatthakī-mahānidāna
Sp	Samantapāsādikā (Vinaya-aṭṭhakathā)
Subodh	Subodhālaṅkāra
Sv-pṭ	Dīghanikāyaṭṭhakathā-ṭīkā
Vaj-s	Vajirasāratthasaṅgaha
Vsm-mhṭ	Visuddhimagga-mahāṭīkā
Vin	Vinaya
Vsm	Visuddhimagga

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[219] The date given in DLLM is BE 2476. However, the last fascicle is dated from the following year.

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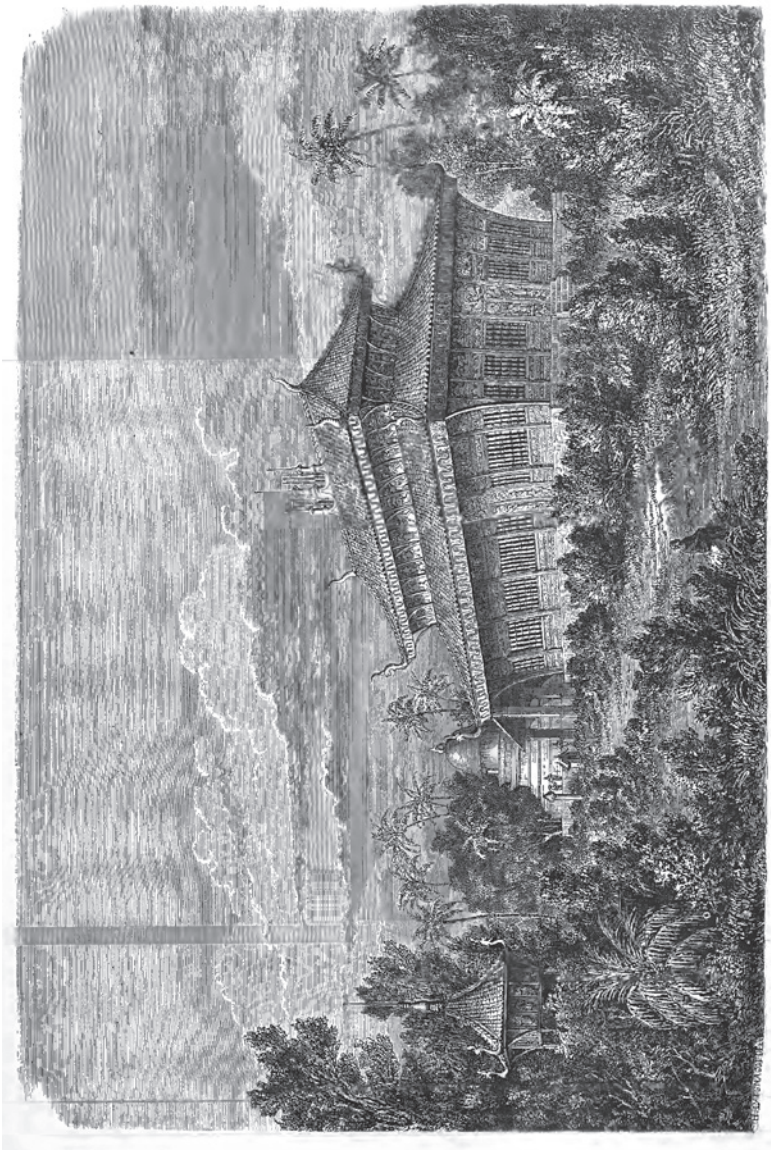

"Vat Vixun", drawing by Delaporte