



**JSS**

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*Mom Chao Sakolvarnakorn Voravarn*





## A Message from the President

You are now reading the first issue of the *Journal of the Siam Society* in its newly revised format. The *Journal* has been published by the Society for the past 85 years, and over the decades has earned for itself a reputation as a distinguished scholarly publication of great value to all who are interested in the history and culture of Thailand.

The Council of the Society has decided, however, that it is time to enhance the appearance and presentation format of the *Journal*, to give it a livelier and more modern image and tone, while retaining its high scholarly standards and content.

In addition, the *Journal* henceforth will be issued quarterly, and we look forward to diminishing the interval between the receipt of contributions and their publication, to the benefit of authors and readers alike. We trust that the mission of the *Journal* to disseminate the latest contributions to learning in the fields of Thai and related cultures will serve the needs of both professional scholars working in technical specialties and of lay enthusiasts seeking to increase their knowledge.

This first issue of the new *JSS* has been made possible by the generosity of Council Member M.R. Chirie Voravarn, and commemorates the centenary of her eminent father, Mom Chao Sakolvornakorn Voravarn, to whose memory it is dedicated.

Mom Chao Sakolvornakorn Voravarn was born on 9 June 1888, the eldest son of Krom Phra Narathip Prapanpong. He had degrees in economics (Cantab.) and law. He served in the

Ministry of the Interior, and was Director General of Public Health for twenty-five years. Mom Chao Sakolvornakorn Voravarn also served in the Office of the Judicial Council, and was a professor at Thammasat University until his death in 1953. As a member of the Siam Society Mom Chao Sakolvornakorn Voravarn was a contemporary of Major Eric Seidenfaden.

The Siam Society wishes to express its deepest appreciation to M.R. Chirie, and salutes the memory of one of its most distinguished Members.

We are honored and pleased to welcome three internationally famous photographers to the *Journal*. Luca Invernizzi Tettoni has provided photographs of distinction for many handsome books on Thai culture, such as *The Arts of Thailand*, *Thailand from the Air* and, most recently, *Thai Style*. Fred B. Werner, a friend of the Society of long standing, has recently revisited the Society's home to present to us a range of selections from his extensive portfolio. Teddy Spha Palasthira, Member of the Council, winner of many creative awards, author of *A Print Point of View*, and an accomplished travel photographer, has derived much of his inspiration from scenes viewed on study trips conducted by the Siam Society. We invite contributors to take advantage of our improved capability to illustrate our articles, especially with color.

The redesigned *Journal* is now before you. We would welcome your comments and suggestions.

Dr. Piriya Krairiksh  
President  
The Siam Society

# Editor's Note

The Honorary Editor wishes to thank Euayporn Kerdchouay, Kaset Pitakpaivan, Peter Rogers, Barent Springsted and Anothai Nunthithasana for their help in preparing this issue of the *Journal of the Siam Society*.

Thanks also are due to The Guide Book Company Limited of Hong Kong for permission to use the map of the Erhai Lake area by Unity Design Studio on p. 41, and the photographs on pp. 42 and 44 by Tom Nebbia and Patrick Booz, respectively, all from *Yunnan Province: A Complete Guide*, by Patrick R. Booz, published by Passport Books, Lincolnwood, Illinois, U.S.A.

# In This Issue

ASPECTS OF THE NORTH—Lan Na, Sipsongpanna, Northern Laos—constitute, with one exception, the theme for this issue.

HANS PENTH discusses the founding of Chiang Rai by King Mang Rai, with comments on where, how and why the nucleus of the new city-state was established as it was. He examines early Lan Na government and the role of the Burmese-appointed officials, especially Mang Phara Saphäk, and then notes how plans for the revival of some relics of Chiang Rai's past were carried out in 1985-88 with due respect for authenticity.

Four of our articles relate to Sipsongpanna and the Dali-Nanzhao kingdom. CHEN LUFAN is the author or co-author of two of these. One, written with DU YUTING, sets forth further arguments against the theory of a mass migration southward by the Tai peoples under the pressure of Kublai Khan's conquest of Dali; the other describes outstanding examples of the cultural heritage of the Dali Kingdom, such as the Nanzhao Civilization Memorial Tablet, the Three Pagodas of Dali and the Pictorial Scroll of Nanzhao History preserved in Kyoto.

OSKAR VON HINÜBER turns his attention to an epigraphic analysis of two inscriptions from a tomb at Dali. Rubbings of these were examined in 1985 by a party from Thailand led by the Honorary President of the Siam Society, Her Royal Highness Princess Galyani Vadhana. Dr. von Hinüber points out that these inscriptions, written in the *siddham* script, were described by Walter Liebenthal over four decades ago. The wording in one of them, however, as recorded in photographs taken on Her Royal Highness Princess Galyani's visit, casts doubt on Liebenthal's suggested date of the introduction of the text to China.

We then review the participation of elements from Sipsongpanna—Tai Lu' and Chinese republicans—in the rebellious activity in Northern Laos between 1914 and 1916. GEOFFREY C. GUNN places this armed insurrection in perspective along with other uprisings against authority going back to the early days of colonial rule, and studies the motives and goals of the insurgents.

ERIK COHEN focuses on the impact of "indirect tourism" on the folk crafts of the Hmong (Meo) in Thailand and Laos.

The sponsored production of folk crafts through a variety of external agents, such as patrons, traders, missionaries, governmental agencies and non-governmental organizations, exerts an important commercializing influence on traditional designs, leading to the stifling of creativity and innovation.

E. PAUL DURRENBERGER and NICOLA TANNENBAUM take up the elements of personal power and potency central to both the Lisu highland and Shan lowland religions. They analyze the religious ideologies of both and argue that the similarities are not consequences of highlanders borrowing from the lowlands or attempts to incorporate aspects of "civilization" into their cultures, but part of a general system of Southeast Asian religion with various manifestations in different economic and social settings. Furthermore, they maintain that to view lowland societies through Theravada Buddhist lenses obscures the fundamental structure of these societies.

We leave the Tai North to consider the debate over Sukhothai Inscription No. 1 that is a lively topic of attention at the present. Once again we present a contribution from HANS PENTH, who sets forth some of the results of his own study of the subject, the substance of which he presented before the Siam Society in a lecture on 24 January 1989. Dr. Penth, correcting previous interpretations of the inscription as well as various commentaries on its dating, suggests that the fragile evidence available at present appears to place it within a period of about two decades beginning with 1292.

Also, we inaugurate in this issue a special feature, "Archaeology in Thailand—What's New?" for which our guide is PORNCHAI SUCHITTA, Member of the Council. Dr. Pornchai invites attention to a new listing of sites in Thailand, the finding of 13th-14th century decorated stoneware near Suphanburi, and the possible position of Chaiya as an economic center for Srivijaya.

In a review article, DAVID FILBECK examines CHOLTIRA SATYAWADHNA's detailed study of *The Lua of Nan Province*, a book he describes as a well-written work of value that is enjoyable to read. He comments that its interdisciplinary approach makes it informative and interesting while placing great demands on the author's ability.

