Before the Amulet: Concepts and Devices in Old Siam

Chris Baker[1] & Pasuk Phongpaichit[2]

Abstract—The practice of wearing buddha amulets has evolved significantly over the past century, with a notable surge in the last two decades. However, the concepts and methods behind these amulets trace back to the Ayutthaya and early Bangkok eras, as documented in literature, laws, and foreign accounts. To combat natural dangers, sciences were developed to predict and influence natural forces through words, numbers, natural substances, and constructed devices. Among these, *yantra*s were especially versatile. Buddha amulets gained prominence first in the mid-19th century among elites, and later in the late 20th century as mass-produced items yet they remain deeply connected to their historical roots.

Keywords: Ayutthaya and Bangkok Eras; Magic; Protective Devices; Siam; Thai Amulets

Introduction

The popular, modern form of amulet is a small buddha image, either cast in metal or made from pressed clay and other ingredients. Early examples were made in the 19th century and are now highly valuable (McDaniel 2011). Around 60 to 70 years ago, over a hundred different kinds of object were worn or carried for protection and well-being, with the amulet among them, but not yet with the dominance it has since achieved. The popularity of the amulet surged after the Second World War, especially from around 1970 in parallel with the emergence of an urban society and the adoption of western styles of dress (Chalong 2005; 2013). The amulet as a pervasive object is thus a relatively new phenomenon, but its popularity is predicated on beliefs and practices which have a much longer history. In this article, we first look at the historical background to the amulet in the period prior to around 1800 CE, then briefly summarize the emergence of the physical form and associated practices of the modern amulet.

Amulets are carried for protection and good fortune in many differing cultures. Their usage is based on popular beliefs. Often such beliefs are difficult to trace because historical sources tend to reflect the beliefs and practices only of elite culture. But Thailand is an exception here. Protection is a major theme in the *Tale of Khun Chang Khun Phaen* (ขุนช้างขุนแผน), a long story which originated in an oral culture of mass entertainment and, as with other works from

[1] Corresponding author. The Siam Society, Bangkok. Email: chrispasuk@gmail.com.

[2] Chulalongkorn University (*Emerita*), Bangkok.

https://doi.org/10.69486/112.2.2024.3

such origins, was molded by its audience to reflect the society of the time and its popular culture (Baker & Pasuk 2010; 2013). While *Lilit Phra Lo* (ลิลิตพระลอ) is a court poem about royals, it draws on popular beliefs about magic in the plot (Baker & Pasuk 2020). Episodes in *Ramakien* (รามเกียรติ์), the Siamese version of the Rama story compiled at the court of King Rama I (r. 1782–1809), also draw on folk tales and folk beliefs about magic (ed. Rama I 2557). Outside of the realm of literature, the *Three Seals Law* (กฎหมายตราสามดวง, *Kotmai Tra Sam Duang*), a collection of legal texts mostly from the Ayutthaya era assembled in 1805, has laws on the use of magic (ed. Royal Society 2550: I: 412–416). In addition, foreign visitors in the 17th century recorded their own observations on magical practices.

The argument of this article proceeds as follows: in traditional thinking, natural events are seen as driven by forces articulated as deities and spirits of many different kinds. To gain protection from malevolent forces and to promote well-being, two sciences emerged. The first developed methods to predict these forces, the second to manipulate them. This science of manipulation had three main techniques: words and numbers arranged in patterns viewed as powerful; natural substances with intrinsic power; and constructed devices incorporating various forms of power which can be used in many circumstances. Adepts had special roles as repositories of this knowledge, its usage, its transfer to other people, and its transmission through history. Of all these methods, graphical devices known as *yantra*s were perhaps the most widespread because of their variety of applications and ease of use. The importance of these sciences and devices is evident from early reports of European visitors and from the attention paid to them in Ayutthayan laws. Continuities between this history and current beliefs and practices in the making and wearing of the modern amulet are evident.

The Science of the Spirits

The Workings of Nature

In the popular beliefs found in Siam in the premodern era, natural events are seen as driven by forces articulated as deities or spirits. Rather than a single system of such forces, many were developed, reflecting both the complexity of nature and the diversity of different systems of belief in the region. As Kaj Århem (2016: 19) noted, animism in Southeast Asia when compared to other regions of the world is striking because of the "proliferation of spirits—nature spirits, ancestors, and ghosts of all kinds [... and] also living physical beings and things, including humans, inserted between spirits of the Upper World and the Beings of Below (the Dead, ghosts and spirits of wild animals and plants)".

This sprawling array of forces is listed in *Ongkan Chaeng Nam* (โองการแช่งน้ำ), the water oath of loyalty, one of the earliest surviving Siamese texts. The oath invokes a wide variety of divine forces to curse those who evade pledging loyalty to the ruler. These forces include the main Hindu trinity, the Buddhist triple gem, the guardian deities of the four directions, other Hindu deities, general spirits of nature, specific named

spirits of particular localities, characters from the *Rāmāyaṇa* and other tales, fierce animals, and past kings (ed. Wright 2543; ed. FAD 2550). At the outset of an ordeal by water or fire to prove guilt or innocence, the arbiter called on a range of forces to decide the oath justly. These forces included: the guardian spirits of the city; spirits residing in "ponds, caves, wilds, forests, mountains, trees, caverns, wells, and streams"; spirits of "those who died badly, doubled over mid-road, or died in childbirth and lay groaning, or fell in water, were chomped by a tiger, stabbed by an elephant, tossed on the horns of a rhino or buffalo"; Indian gods, guardian deities, legendary figures, and minor deities such as "*rishi*, *siddha*, *vijjadhara*, *gandhabba*, all the deities, to whom the Lord [Buddha] entrusted the religion to preserve for 5,000 years"; the astrological planets; and a residual category of other divine forces "some known by name, some whose names are unknown" (ed. Royal Society 2550: I: 104–108).[3]

In these beliefs, nature is seen as fickle, dangerous and capable of malevolent actions. To combat this danger, two sciences were developed: first, methods for predicting these forces in order to avoid danger and maximize good fortune; second, methods to influence or manipulate these forces either for beneficial results or malign impact on enemies.

Predicting these Forces

The science of prediction depended on the assertion that messages about future events could be read from natural phenomena. Formal astrology, *horasat* (โหราศาสตร์), the Jyotiṣa system adopted from India, reads messages from movements of the planets (Singto 2526; Wisandarunakon 2540). Since this system required specialized equipment and knowledge, it was largely deployed in the court and little used in folk practice. More widespread were methods such as *mahathaksa* (มหาทักษา, "the great skill"), which used analogous techniques to read patterns from the calendar, including the intersections of the solar and lunar variants. Predictive messages were also read from various other aspects of the natural world, such as the shape of clouds, brightness of stars, the appearance of the moon, and the course of breath through the nostrils. Certain insects and animals conveyed messages by chattering or making other sounds. Dreams contained messages that might predict events far into the future (Wales 1983). Many of these omens and signs were documented in old manuals, including various versions of the *Tamra Phichai Songkhram* (ตำราพิชัยสงคราม, *Manual on Victorious Warfare*), a military treatise (ed. Committee for Memorial Books 2545; trans. Pattaratorn & Revire 2011).

Influencing these Forces

The science of influencing natural forces is often today titled as *saiyasat* (ไสยศาสตร์), but that term is rare in the older sources (Yanchot 2538). It appears only twice in *Khun Chang Khun Phaen* and only once in the Ayutthayan laws. Various other terms are used, often with Indian roots: *wicha* (วิชา), simply meaning knowledge or "*the* science"; *athan*

[3] All translations from Thai originals are by the authors, unless otherwise indicated.

(อาถรรพณ์), sometimes *athap*, *athanpawet*, deriving from the *Atharvaveda*, the fourth book of the Indian sacred texts, possibly an inventory of local belief and practice in north India at the time the Vedas were composed; *kritaya*, *krisatiyakhun* (กฤตยา, กฤษติยาคุณ) and several close variants derived from the Sanskrit term *kṛtyā* meaning "to do" and possibly "what should be done";[4] and *itthirit* (อิทธิฤทธิ์), which combines two, rhyming Pali–Sanskrit words for power or potency, creating in the resulting Thai word an extra meaning of supernatural power. These hybrid words reflect multiple traditions and blend several meanings.

Several other terms—*mon* (มนตร์), mantra, a verbal formula; *khatha* (คาถา), *gāthā*, a Pali or Sanskrit verse; *akhom* (อาคม), from Sanskrit *āgama* meaning "that which has come down"; *wet* (เวท), from Veda, the old scriptures—are used almost interchangeably for a specific exercise of skill, such as intoning a formula, and are found in various conjoined forms (*wet-mon*, *khatha-akhom*, etc.) to mean the practice of these skills in general. These words may have retained some cachet from their Indic origin but, in the Thai context, have been transformed in meaning and usage.

Another Thai-language name for these skills is *thang nai* (ทางใน), the "inner ways", a phrase nicely capturing the depth of this knowledge, its arcane origins, and its reliance on the innate talent of the practitioner. Such practitioners are sometimes called *khon wiset* (คนวิเสศ) "special people" or *khon di* (คนดี) "good people".

Words, Natural Materials, and Constructed Devices

Part of the *Atharvaveda* is an inventory of methods to manage the problems and dangers of everyday life (trans. Witney 1905; Whitaker 2004). These methods fall into three categories: forms of words and numbers, naturally existing materials, and constructed devices. The same three categories appear in sources from the Thai world in the premodern era.

Words and Numbers

In *Khun Chang Khun Phaen*, an epic poem developed in oral tradition in the late Ayutthaya era, the leading character, Khun Phaen (known in his youth as Phlai Kaeo, พลายแก้ว), is educated to follow in his father's footsteps as a soldier. This education focuses on the first category of words and numbers. Around the age of 14, Phlai Kaeo becomes a novice at a *wat* (Buddhist temple/monastery) in the remote border outpost of Kanburi (กาญจน์บุรี, the old site of Kanchanaburi). The primary stage of his education focuses on the basics.

[4] Today dictionaries give the pronunciation of กฤษติยา, the form used in the *Three Seals Law*, as *kritiya*, but most likely it was once pronounced *krisatiya*, as spelt, since the "s" is not found in the Sanskrit original, only in the Thai version. In this pronunciation, the word has many echoes. The opening syllable recalls the Hindu god Kṛṣṇa; the middle syllables *sati* mean "mind" or "mindfulness" in Thai–Pali; and the ending is *ya*, the common Thai word for medicine. These words are not simple translations from Indian originals but complex constructions.

Figure 1: Tamarind tree associated with Khun Phaen at Wat Khae, Suphanburi © Chris Baker

> The novice studied to read and write. With diligence, he soon mastered Khmer, Thai, arithmetic, the main scriptures, calculating the sun and moon, and translation of texts (trans. Baker & Pasuk 2010: 58).

"Translation" here possibly means from Pali. He is taking a minor in astrology, but his major is reading, writing, and language. When the abbot discovers that he has a bright pupil, Phlai Kaeo moves to a secondary stage, featuring *hua jai* (หัวใจ), heart formulas, highly compressed mantras that are easier to memorize and quicker to use.

> That's the end of my gut, my dear Novice Kaeo.
>
> There's only the big treatise with the heart formulas and mantras. I've been collecting them since I was a youth. Until now in my old age, I haven't shared them with anyone.
>
> This is the extent of my knowledge. Because I'm fond of you, Kaeo, I'll pass it on to you. There's everything—invulnerability, robbery, raising spirits—something for every occasion (trans. Baker & Pasuk 2010: 58–59).

For the secondary stage, Phlai Kaeo moves from the remote outpost of Kanburi to the ancient city of Suphanburi and studies with two renowned abbots who had earlier taught his own father. At Wat Palelai, he learns the application of mantras for military purposes and personal benefits.

> In the evenings he went to the main *kuti* to pay his respects, attend to the abbot, and take instruction: how to make a sword for war; how to transform a thorny branch into a buffalo charm; how to enchant dummy soldiers; how to charm a woman so that once their eyes had met, her heart would be captivated and she would never forget.
>
> His master laughed. "Young Kaeo, I know you're interested in the stuff about being a lover. Don't do damage to people's wives but old maids and widows, take them! I'll teach you everything about sacred mantras and formulas. You'll be a real gem" (trans. Baker & Pasuk 2010: 61).

Finally, Khun Phaen moves to Wat Khae **[Figure 1]**. The teaching is still mainly about verbal methods, but again includes some forecasting and new subjects such as employing spirits as spies.

> The abbot promptly began to instruct him on everything: putting an army to sleep and capturing its men; summoning spirits; making dummies with power to fight courageously; writing *pathamang*;[5] concealment; invulnerability; undoing locks and chains; all the arts of victorious warfare; all knowledge for overcoming enemies with no hope of resistance; calculating auspicious times for any action; enchanting tamarind leaves to become wasps; expertise in all covert war tactics; commanding troops in hundreds of thousands; defeating whole territories; the Great Beguiler mantra to induce strong love; stunning people; invisibility; gaining the strength of a lion; withdrawing *athan* protective powers and preventing their replacement; and keeping spirits to act as spies (trans. Baker & Pasuk 2010: 124–125).

Although the mantras and other verbal devices that Khun Phaen learns are extremely varied, most seem to influence events through two pairs of opposed forces. The first pair is attraction –repulsion. Attraction mantras induce love or sympathy. The principal example is the Great Beguiler (มหาละลวย, *mahalaluai*) which Khun Phaen uses not only to charm women but to win sympathy from those in authority, including the king. Repulsion mantras ward off danger. The principal example is the Great Prescription (มุขใหญ่, *muk yai*), conveying protection, including invulnerability against weapons.

The second opposed pair is constraint–release. Constraint mantras prevent an event or action. The Subduer (สะกด, *sakot*) is principally used to immobilize enemies during battle. Release mantras remove constraints. The Great Loosener (มหาสะเดาะ, *mahasado*) opens locks and chains, induces a smooth childbirth, and removes other blockages.

Throughout the tale, Khun Phaen uses these verbal devices not only as a soldier, but also in his love life and in his everyday confrontations with adversities such as the stratagems of his rival, Khun Chang, and the authority of the king.

Natural Materials

The second category of skills uses materials found in nature and believed intrinsically powerful (ขลัง, *khlang*), often because of some unusual property that defies natural laws. A prominent example is mercury, a metal that acts as a liquid. This quality enables mercury to convey protection by flowing to any part of the body threatened by penetration. Other examples are cat's eye, a semi-precious stone; and hard,

[5] *Pathamang* (ปถมัง): mantra, abbreviated to the initial letters of each word, written in Khom script and used in various ways, including collecting powder to anoint something or to enclose in some device.

Figure 2: Adept's knife, Luang Pho Khun, 1993 © shopee.com

stone-like cores found in plants or animal's eggs. Other *khlang* materials have undergone an unusual transformation through exceptional power, such as the splinters of tusks that have become lodged in trees or anthills by charging elephants in musth.

These materials are used in various ways. Some are inserted under the skin and are believed to be capable of moving to block the intrusion of a blade or bullet. In *Khun Chang Khun Phaen*, the Chiang Mai military commander, Saentri Phetkla (แสนตรีเพชรกล้า), makes extensive use of these devices:

> He had a jet gem embedded in his head, golden needles in each shoulder, a large diamond in the middle of his forehead, a lump of fluid metal in his chest, and herbal amber and cat's eye in his back. His whole body was a mass of lumps and bumps in ranks and rows. Since birth he had never been touched by a weapon, and did not carry even the scratch from a thorn (trans. Baker & Pasuk 2010: 631).

Constructed Devices

The third category of skills uses constructed devices. Simple forms mentioned in *Khun Chang Khun Phaen* include water, betelnut, or powdered clay sacralized by reciting formulas; spirit oil extracted from a corpse; beads made with sacralized powder and powerful herbs; and lip wax, especially that made from the face mask of a corpse.

One important role of these constructed devices is to transfer an expert's power in these skills to somebody else. A *mit mo* (มีดหมอ), adept's knife **[Figure 2]**, has to be made by an adept using special materials and observing strict practices, and is "activated" through a ritual, often convoking many different spirits and deities to endorse the knife's power. Other people can then use the knife to tap the adept's own powers instilled in the article. Such knives are not primarily weapons but protective devices. They are kept at home to ward off danger, carried into battle where they convey invulnerability, steeped in water to make medicine, and placed on the subject's head during ceremonies to overcome spirit possession.

Figure 3: Shrine in a mural illustrating the forging of Skystorm at Wat Palelai, Suphanburi © Muangsing Janchai

Among the four forces, the knife has the force of repulsion but can also be used to defeat the protective forces of enemies. Khun Phaen uses an adept's knife to neutralize the local spirits and other protective devices before breaking into Khun Chang's house.

Skystorm (ฟ้าฟื้น, *fa fuen*), the sword that Khun Phaen has specially made, is a superlative version of an adept's knife. The construction of this device is described in great detail. First, to find the ingredients, Khun Phaen must leave the city and go to the wild periphery:

> He stuck a kris enchanted by a teacher in his belt, and left at dawn for the upland forests. In search of what he needed, he delved into every nook and cranny, passing through villages of Karen, Kha, Lawa, and Mon, and sleeping along passes through the mountains (trans. Baker & Pasuk 2010: 317).

He collects an array of metals. Some have associations with power, such as ore from the mine used for the raw material of royal swords. Some have associations with protection through sympathetic magic, such as the bolt from a city gate **[Figure 3]**.

> Metal from the peaks of a relic stupa, a palace, and a gateway. Metal fastening for the corpse of a woman who died while with child. Metal binding from a used coffin. Fixing for a gable board. Diamond bolt. Bronze pike. Copper kris. Broken regal sword. Metal goad. Bolt from a gateway. Mushroom nail. Five-colored smart metal. Household metal. All genuine articles. Fluid metal. Ore cast at the Phrasaeng mine. Iron ore and metal from Kamphaeng and Namphi. Gold. Bronze. Nak from Aceh. Genuine silver. Forest copper (trans. Baker & Pasuk 2010: 317–318).

The manufacture is done by adepts with rituals at every stage.

> Then on an auspicious day, the fifteenth of a month in which the first waxing [day] fell on a Saturday, wood was cut to make an eye-level shrine, and many offerings prepared—pairs of golden candles, pig's head, duck, chicken, and a *baisi*. [...] The metalsmith's skills were famed throughout the city. He dressed handsomely in white lower and upper cloths, made a circle of sacred thread, blew onto a yantra, and waited to find an auspicious time. They found a time of kingly power with the sun at midday in the house of the lion. [...] A handle, made with victoriflora wood, inscribed with a yantra of the Buddhist wheel of the law, was fitted over the metal stock. The hair of a fierce and evil spirit was put in the handle, and dammar poured in to seal it (trans. Baker & Pasuk 2010: 319–320).

This sword is an assembly of power of various sources and kinds. In some modern manuals for making an adept's knife, the recipe is adapted from this passage in *Khun Chang Khun Phaen*.

Similar constructed devices appear in *Ramakien*, the Thai version of the Rāma story composed at the court of King Rama I. Although the frame story is based on the Indian *Rāmāyaṇa*, thus this is a work of court culture, the story is padded with episodes drawing on local folk tales and folk beliefs. While those in the "good" side of the conflict, including Rāma and Hanumān, have their weapons provided by the gods, those in the "bad" side under Thotsakan (ทศกัณฐ์), the equivalent of Rāvaṇa, must construct their own magical weaponry. Thotsakan goes to study with a *rishi* in the forest.

> "I come here to learn the arts and sciences with you, venerable teacher [...]". Thotsakan studied carefully, tended to the venerable teacher, and gained expertise in no time. He memorized the Three Vedas and magical mantra [ไตรเพทเวท-มนต์] (ed. Rama I 2557: I, 54–55).[6]

[6] Translations from *Ramakien* are by Frederick B. Goss, here used with permission.

Figure 4: Mural of Inthorachit in the hollow tree at Wat Phra Kaeo, Grand Palace, Bangkok © Vittorio Roveda

He has a spear that was given to his father by Śiva but perfects its power using a process similar to Khun Phaen's manufacture of Skystorm. He starts by going off to the wilds at the foot of Mount Meru. He collects a variety of ingredients including sand, gems, and "soil from seven landings". He makes a hearth with skulls and molds images of deities to throw into the flames. Before beginning the manufacture, he takes a purifying bath and dresses with a topknot "like a great ascetic sage". He starts to chant mantra for three days and nights (ed. Rama I 2557: III, 247–248).

His son Inthorachit (อินทรชิต) constructs a magical arrow by a similar process. The site is an epitome of wildness. He goes to the peak of a remote mountain, finds a massive hollow tree, converts the hollow into a shrine, and conducts ceremonies to induce local *nāga* spirits to inject their venom into the arrow **[Figure 4]**.

> The hoots and howls of spirits and ghosts and the cries of phantoms echoed around, a bone chilling noise making every fiber of hair stand on end. Cicadas screeched a desolate cry (ed. Rama I 2557: II, 470).

Thotsakan's nephew, Maiyarap (ไมยราพ), also constructs a device by going to a remote mountain, collecting ingredients including soporific mushrooms, making a ritual hearth with skulls, and dressing as a *rishi* with a topknot, sacred thread, and prayer beads before starting an elaborate ritual (ed. Rama I 2557: II, 327–328).

Adepts and *Yantra*

Adepts

Crucial to the use of all three methods is the adept, usually called *mo* (หมอ), a

doctor, a learned person. The skill of the adept is a combination of innate ability and education. Thotsakan and his kinfolk have an innate ability conferred by descent from the gods. Khun Phaen acquires his ability through education. Other adepts develop their ability through ascetic practice, drawing on the Indic tradition that self-denial conveys exceptional ability.

Perhaps the most famous adept in old Thai literature appears in the poem *Lilit Phra Lo*, a courtly romantic tragedy that probably dates from the early 16th century. The poem gives the adept the name of Phu Chao Saming Phrai (ปู่เจ้าสมิงพราย), literally: grandfather, lord or king, tiger or king, spirit. This spirit's name is found in the text of the water oath of loyalty, mentioned above. He was possibly a prominent local spirit of the place at the time this text was composed and the name was passed down in later years.

In *Lilit Phra Lo*, two sister princesses wish to use an adept's skills to induce love in the king of a neighboring country. They launch a kind of executive search to find the very best adept available. The searcher explains to the princesses why this adept, whose name we translate as Old Lord Tiger Spirit, is the best:

> beneath the sky,
> throughout the world, there's none
> that bears comparison
> to him—Old Lord Tiger Spirit.
> If he says, "Die!", they die before your eyes.
> If he says, "Live!", they come to life at once.
> Who he enchants, they come as called.
> Who he seeks out, cannot stay still
> and comes to him as bid (trans. Baker & Pasuk 2020: 32).

Old Lord Tiger Spirit himself explains to the princesses that his powers come from his training, asceticism, and association with the wilds.

> I am a lord divine of mountain peaks.
> The title they have given me, "Old Lord",
> does mark the mass of merit I have made.
> I'll live this world a million years until the era ends.
> My gloried powers are fruit of merit made.
> Good works are capital that cools the heart
> (trans. Baker & Pasuk 2020: 46).

In modern representations, Old Lord Tiger Spirit is portrayed as a classic *rishi* with tangled hair and a long beard, always sitting cross-legged. In the original poem, however, he is quite different. His form is completely plastic. He can appear as a handsome young man, or an old crone, or disappear completely. He is both an adept and a spirit, stressing the thin line between these two roles. He is so revered that the princesses treat him as royalty.

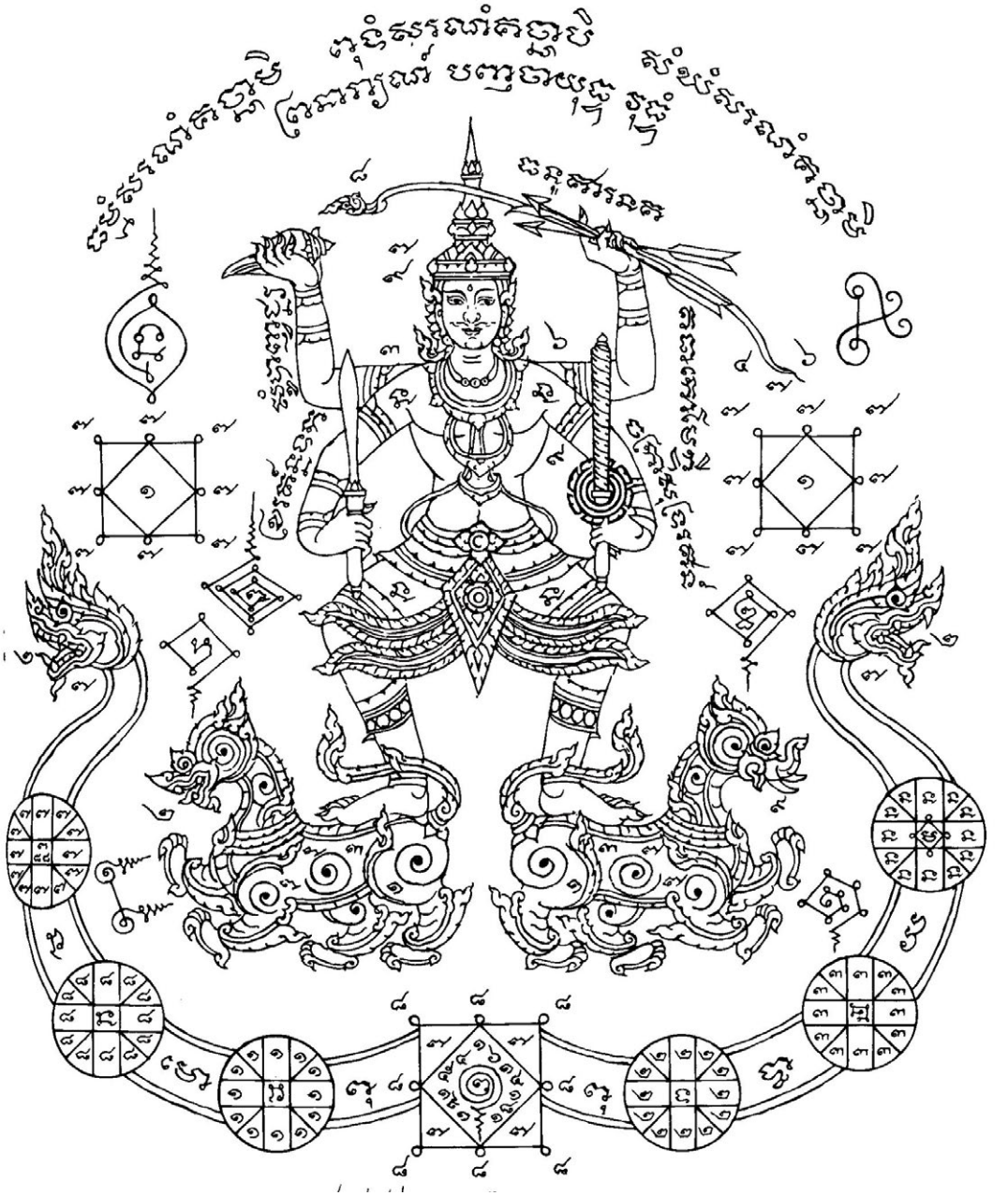

Figure 5: A Narai *yantra* that appears in *Khun Chang Khun Phaen* © Natthan 2553: 167

He lives in the remote mountains and this association with the wilderness enhances his abilities. He constructs devices for love magic and delivers them by bowing a massive *yang* tree (*Dipterocarpus alatus*) down to the ground to use as a catapult. When adepts on the other side manage to counter this magic, he recruits all the wild spirits from the forests and mountains to rout the city spirits defending the king, allowing the love-magic to be successfully delivered. Old Lord Tiger Spirit's ability is a delicate blend of learning, asceticism, and the wild power of the periphery of forest and mountain.

Yantra

The most prominent device in *Khun Chang Khun Phaen* is the *yantra* (ยันตร์, *yan* or เลขยันต์ , *lekyan*). *Yantra*s combine all three of the methods noted above: they are constructed devices using words and numbers, natural materials, and other elements. They may include verbal formulas, usually in Pali and often written in Khom script; sequences of numbers; and images or symbols of powerful figures such as gods **[Figure 5]**, buddhas, and fierce animals. They are assemblies of power, made by an adept, perhaps using special materials, and activated by the recital of mantras. They are flexible because they can be inscribed on many different materials and worn or deployed in many different ways. They may be painted on clothing such as shirts or bandanas; tattooed on the skin; soaked in oil or water that is then applied to the skin; drawn on a slate after which the chalk is collected and inserted in a receptacle; inscribed on soft metal such as tin or gold which is then rolled around a string and worn around the neck or waist in the form known as *takrut* (ตะกรุด); and various other ways. In *Lilit Phra Lo*, Old Lord Tiger Spirit delivers love magic by inscribing *yantra*s in a projectile which is launched by his tree-catapult.

Although the primary usage of *yantra*s today is for protection, manuals show varieties for both of the opposed pairs of forces described above, namely attraction–repulsion and constraint–release. Manuals for making *yantra*s describe how they should be drawn, what mantras should be intoned at different stages of the drawing, what medium each is suitable for, and what is the specific protection each convey, such as invulnerability to firearms, invulnerability to sharp weapons, countering malicious magic, avoiding epidemic disease, and so on.[7] Designs are specifically drawn in powder which is then collected and applied to the face before meeting an official, noble, monk, or other important person (Thep 2508: 95, 108). Specialized designs steeped in water are used for irrigating plants.

Ideas in Practice

Foreign Visitors

Nicolas Gervaise (1662–1729), who visited Siam in the 1680s, wrote at length on the monkhood, probably drawing on the knowledge of Bishop Louis Laneau (1637–1696), who had been in Siam since 1669. He noticed that the most

[7] The great archivist of all aspects of these sciences was Thep Sarikabut (เทพย์ สาริกบุตร; 1919–1993) who published a six-volume compendium, from which extracts are regularly published to this day (Thep 2516; So Sima 2555).

popular monks were those who offered services of predicting and manipulating the forces of nature.

> Those monks who [...] dedicate themselves to [...] meditation on celestial things and the mysteries of religion [...] are considered to be of exceptional holiness and [...] to have miraculous visions and frequent revelations. Those who predict the future are the most highly esteemed and richest [...]. They never leave the pulpit without being showered with presents (trans. Villiers 1998: 131).

He did not report seeing any particular devices, except in the treatment of the sick.

> When they [monks] are summoned to a sick-bed, they first recite some prayers and then they put all round the patient [...] small pieces of paper on which are written phrases in Pali [...]. They are also involved in fortune-telling and revealing hidden things [...]. They also give to the sick, to travellers and to infants certain magic characters which they claim possess the virtue of protecting them from all kinds of danger (trans. Villiers 1998: 130–131).

The Dutchman, Jeremias van Vliet, who visited Siam from 1629 to 1642, also noticed practices associated with sickness which resemble forms of spirit possession known today.

> In case of sickness they have strange feasts with many ceremonies, gambling, drinking, dancing, jumping [...] sometimes women are engaged, who by old age are bent and stiff [...] [yet] are able to make such demonstrations and strange jumps as is not in accordance with their weak nature and high age (trans. Van Ravensway 2005: 161).

Laws

Among the laws from the Ayutthaya era collected into the *Three Seals Law* in 1805 is a law on magic, called *wet-withayakhom and krisatiyakhun* (เวทวิทธยาคมและกฤษติ-ยาคุณ). The date in the law's preface is clearly corrupt, but the law possibly dates to the early 17th century. There are several other clauses on magic scattered through other laws in the collection.

The law is relaxed about the use of magic for benign purposes, such as to induce love, as practiced by Old Lord Tiger Spirit in *Lilit Phra Lo*. If a woman or man uses love magic,

> the woman is only trying to make the man love her, or the man trying to make the woman love him, in hope it will have benefit for their well-being in the future; if the man or woman has the bad fate to fall sick and die, the female adept or male adept is not at fault; it is the karma of the deceased; even the gods pass on so how can humans remain? (ed. Royal Society 2550: II, 514).

Most of the law is concerned with the malicious use of magic, such as hiring an adept to harm someone. The respect for the adept's power is apparent. If someone is proved to know about "herbs, medicines, and lore to make people die", they are sentenced to death because "in future they will use" this knowledge. If such an adept is found guilty of using malicious magic to kill someone in a provincial town, the governor is forbidden (on pain of death) from executing the wrongdoer and ordered to send the wrongdoer to the capital where the wrongdoer is not admitted to the city but detained at one of the four customs posts on its perimeter. If the adept is proven guilty, the authorities are required to locate the adept's teacher and execute both of them. The mode of execution is unique, tossed on the horns of a *sarabha* (ษารภา), which may be a deer or possibly a fabulous animal, stronger than a lion or elephant, supposed to have eight legs, and to inhabit the snowy mountains (ed. Royal Society 2550: II, 514).

In a law on judicial procedure, practicing malicious magic is classified among the most serious offences alongside stealing from the palace, forging money, stripping gold from a buddha image, and engaging in sex while in the monkhood (ed. Royal Society 2550: I, 294).

In late Ayutthaya times, monks and others professing magical abilities had a prominent role in the many revolts of this era. King Rama I, who became ruler of the new Bangkok kingdom in 1782, was intent on suppressing the practice of magic, particularly within the monkhood. In the third of his Sangha Laws, issued only a year after his succession, he strengthened the hierarchy within the monkhood to suppress these practices.

> Do not let [monks] go off at will, just one, two, or three persons, to set up a hideaway where they make a show of observing the precepts and prayer, behave in ways to make people devoted to them, display their knowledge of lore [วิชา, *wicha*], boast of their potency [อิทธิฤทธิ, *itthirit*], fabricate that they are superhuman, set themselves up as persons-of-merit [ผู้มีบุญ, *phu mi bun*], claim they have met adepts [คนวิเสศ, *khon wiset*] who have lore brought from caves and mountains, and have ideas of taking their gang to seize the royal wealth and create chaos for the realm and the religion (ed. Royal Society 2550: I, 1010).

Towards the Buddha Amulet

Modern amulet culture—the practice of carrying a small buddha image (or similar) constantly on the person, usually on a cord around the neck, for purposes of protection and good fortune—is a relatively recent development. In the sources used here, or in any other Ayutthaya-era source we know, or in the writings and visuals of foreign visitors, there is no trace of this device. In one scene Khun Phaen and his son wear "bandeaus bearing a buddha image tied round their head" (ประเจียดประจุพระ โพกศีรษะ) but the exact form is

Figure 6: Phakhawam or Phra Pit Ta image © Muangsing Janchai

not clear.[8] A *takrut* appears once in *Ramakien*, while a few mentions of *khrueang khong thon* (เครื่องคงทน), devices for invulnerability, occur without any detail. The discovery or manufacture of the devices known today can be traced back to the mid-19th century, but no earlier. In this section, we look at objects which may have contributed to the form of the modern amulet and trace its emergence in two phases: the first among the elite from the mid-19th century, the second in a mass market in the later 20th century.

Three kinds of past objects may have contributed to the form of the modern amulet. The first are so-called votive or molded tablets, known as *phra phim* (พระพิมพ์), small images of a buddha usually made by pressing clay into a mold (Pattaratorn 1997). The earliest examples of these tablets have been found at many early archeological sites. These images were often made in large quantities to be placed inside stupas or affixed in rows on the walls of *wat* buildings to enhance the religiosity of these sites. Pattaratorn suggests they were made as acts of merit or for use in meditation. Although they were possibly carried around, there is no reference in any early sources to them having the function of personal protection.

The second past object is the *phakhawam* (ภควำ), a word collapsed from Phra Gavampati, an early disciple of the historical Buddha. This is usually a small, almost spherical metallic image, showing the fat monk with hands over eyes and sometimes extra pairs of arms for covering other orifices, hence they are also known as Phra Pit Ta (พระปิดตา). In *Khun Chang Khun Phaen*, these images are not worn habitually but used on special occasions, especially placed in the mouth to give power to speech. They were also carried into battle for protection and steeped in water used to induce invulnerability **[Figure 6]**.

The third is the *phra kring* (พระกริ่ง), small buddha images with a hollow cavity containing a ball that tinkles. The originals are believed to have been made by Khmer King Sūryavarman II (r. 1113–1150), the builder of Angkor Wat. In the 1920s a cache of *phra kring* was found in a pot buried at the summit of the Phnom Bakheng near Angkor Wat (Damrong 2545: 109–111). Others were made in China. The image is believed to represent Bhaiṣajyaguru, the Mahayana Buddha of healing, and thus held to

[8] In 2010, we translated this as "bandeaus bearing Buddha amulets" (Baker & Pasuk 2010: 659). This is the only such mention in the work among many similar scenes of preparing for battle. It appears in a passage rewritten, probably in the mid-19th century, and not in the earlier version of the scene.

convey protection against illness and adversity. Although these objects may have been around in Siam for a long time, there is no evidence prior to the mid-19th century.

The practice of wearing the amulet on a cord is prefigured by the *takrut*, sheets of soft metal inscribed with a mantra, rolled around a cord, and worn around the neck.

As Bangkok gradually asserted its authority over the hinterland in the 19th century, members of the royal and noble elite went to the provinces on official duties. Some took this opportunity to visit *wat*s with monks who had a reputation for spiritual power. Sometimes they brought back souvenirs of *phra phim* tablets unearthed from the crypt under a *wat* or the insides of a stupa. These were known as "broken-wall (กำแพงหัก) buddhas". Four of the five amulets in the *benchaphakhi* (เบญจภาคี) or "League of Five", which are the most valuable amulets today, originated in this way, the first possibly found in Kamphaeng Phet in 1849 and the others from Lamphun, Phitsanulok, and Suphanburi (McDaniel 2011: 195).

By the late 19th century, some abbots began to manufacture amulets modelled on famous buddha images. In 1897, metal medallions based on the Phra Chinnasi (พระชินสีห์) image, which had been brought from Phitsanulok to Wat Bowonniwet in the Third Reign (1824–1851), were made to commemorate King Chulalongkorn's return from visiting Europe (Tambiah 1984: 213, 220–221). The elite also took an interest in *phra kring*. Prince Damrong Rajanubhab (2545: 101–111) recorded that his grandfather had secured one from Cambodia during the Fourth Reign (1851–1868). Kromphra Pavares Variyalongkorn (กรมพระปวเรศวริยาลงกรณ์; 1809–1892), the prince who succeeded King Mongkut as abbot of Wat Bowonniwet, made a batch of *phra kring* some time before his death in 1892 (Tambiah 1984: 220–223). King Chulalongkorn (r. 1868–1910) sought out buddha amulets during his upcountry tours. At this stage, these objects were probably not carried regularly on the person, but were stored or placed on a domestic altar.

Today the most famous of the early amulet-makers is Somdet To (สมเด็จโต, also known as Phra Phutthachan, พระพุฒาจารย์), a monk who lived from around 1788 to 1872. According to one of the many versions of his life, he was a son of King Rama I, fathered on a northern peasant girl. Somdet To was appointed abbot of Wat Rakhang in Bangkok, had a close relationship with King Mongkut, and became famous for his ascetic practice and supernatural powers (Tambiah 1984: 219–220; McDaniel 2011: 26–34, 195). He played a part in unearthing some of the tablets which became popular as amulets and made several types of protective devices, including *yantra*s and the buddha amulets known as *somdet* (สมเด็จ) after the title given to him by King Mongkut. They are among the most desired and most expensive in the market today.

Somdet To also wrote a handwritten manual on various practices including amulet making, showing their close similarity to the creation of *yantra*s. In his description, the amulet is made from powerful materials (enchanted powder, precious metals, herbs used in lore)

following strict rules, including the recitation of mantras, and finally is "activated" by ritual. Also as with *yantra*s, an amulet is effective only if made by a monk or adept famous for supernatural power, such as Somdet To. These instructions have been repeated and refined in later manuals by several learned monks (McDaniel 2011: 196–198).

By the early 20th century, monks famous for asceticism and supernatural power produced amulets in many parts of Siam. The habit of acquiring amulets spread more widely as mobility increased with the coming of roads and railways. Nobles and members of the emerging commoner middle class made pilgrimages to honor famous monks and brought back their amulets as mementos.

However, only slowly did the amulet become the dominant protective device. Official patronage played a role. Since the Ayutthaya era, military leaders had distributed protective devices to their troops, mostly *yantra*s in various forms. Senior officers of troops sent to engage with the French in Cambodia in 1940 were presented with amulets bearing the image of a monk, not with a buddha as is common today (Textor 1960: 526; Ruth 2011: 131–132). During the scares caused by the bombing of Bangkok during the Second World War, the devices sought for protection were mainly *yantra*s and sacred water (Lawan 2527: 228–229; cited by Chalong 2013). In the 1950s, Robert B. Textor drew up an inventory of 118 supernatural devices found in a village outside Bangkok. Simple amulets made from plaster were manufactured by this village's monks. Textor's informants estimated that 90 to 100 percent of households had at least one, but another 20 different devices were owned by the same percentage of households (Textor 1960; 1973). Writing in the 1960s and looking back to the recent past, William Wood (1965: 88) placed the buddha amulet as just one among many protective devices in everyday use: "There are dozens of different kinds—tattoo marks, written formulas, knotted strings, tiny images of the Buddha, precious stones, dried seeds, needles in the body, and others too numerous to mention". Amulets were popular but not yet dominant.

Chalong Soontravanich (2005; 2013) traced the final rise to dominance of the modern amulet in two phases. The first took place in the era of lawlessness, banditry, and gangsterism after the Second World War. A small amulet market appeared in Bangkok. Experts authored two weighty biographies of Somdet To, compiled a compendium of known amulets, and identified the *benchaphakhi* "League of Five" amulets of highest value, headed by the Somdet type. Businessmen sponsored the production of amulets by famous monks in batches of several thousand. The Prime Minister, Phibun Songkhram (in office 1938 to 1944 and 1948 to 1957), distributed amulets to Thai troops sent to Korea in 1950 and to his constituents during the 1957 election (Textor 1960: 526). Soldiers who volunteered to fight in Vietnam in 1967 were given buddha amulets by their commanding officers, by monks at the Temple of the Emerald Buddha, and by the Prime Minister (Ruth 2011: 45, 48, 67, 131–132). When Barend Terwiel surveyed supernatural

practices in a Ratchaburi village in 1967, he found people wearing various protective devices including tattoos, *yantra* designs, sacred thread, and splinters of wood, but:

> Undoubtedly the most popular [protective] object which is worn on a cord or chain around a man's neck is the image of the Buddha. These images can be cast from metal, or carved out of piece of wood, ivory or resin, but the most common traditional ones are those manufactured from a mixture of many ingredients, pressed in a mold and baked (Terwiel 1975: 62).

The second phase, according to Chalong, took place against the background of the war against communist insurgency in the 1970s and early 1980s, and was fostered by the spread of mass media including newspapers, magazines, and television. In this era, businessmen and generals made merit by sponsoring the production and distribution of amulets to soldiers and villagers in the areas of communist activity. By the 1980s, amulets had become prominent enough to warrant a major study by a leading international anthropologist, Stanley Tambiah (1984: 197), who noted the "roaring trade", "vast popular literature", and floods of "newspaper articles and daily gossip" about fortunes made and calamities evaded. Enterprising monks began manufacturing amulets on a large scale to raise funds for constructing *wat* buildings and schools. Among the most popular were amulets produced by Luang Pho Khun (หลวงพ่อคูณ; 1923–2015), who emerged as the most famous forest monk of the era. The price of his amulets soared in 1993 when survivors of two disasters, a factory fire and a hotel collapse, publicly attributed their good fortune to their Luang Pho Khun amulets (Pattana 2012: ch. 5; Jackson 1999). The popularity of amulets reached another stage in 2006–2007 when a particular physical form, known as Chatukham-Ramathep (จตุคามรามเทพ), was no longer tied to a particular origin but effectively "franchised" for production at several places, which competed by adding value in production materials and methods and by price-cutting, creating a brief marketing frenzy (Pattana 2012, ch. 7; Reynolds 2019).

Tailpiece

Many of the protective devices listed by Terwiel and Textor some 60 years ago have virtually disappeared. The multiple ways that *yantra*s were used by Khun Phaen have been narrowed down to some specialized sites such as the interiors of taxicabs. The amulet has become dominant. Yet, while the device may have changed, much else about the pursuit of protection and well-being has remained the same.

The role of the adept remains central, and education has a large role in the development of an adept. Craig Reynolds has described in detail the career of Butr Phantharak (บุตร พันธรักษ์; about 1903–2006), also known as Khun Phan (ขุนพัน), a 20th-century southern policeman who had a reputation for skill in *saiyasat* and a key role in the

Figures 7a–b: Amulet of Luang Pho Dapphai (หลวงพ่อดับภัย), Chiang Mai, 2518 BE (= 1975 CE) on the obverse (a) with *yantra* on the reverse (b) © tookrangsit.99wat.com

expanding popularity of the amulet. Butr's education was more physical than that of Khun Phaen but showed the same pattern of great dedication to study under successive teachers (Reynolds 2019: 33–42).

As with earlier devices, especially *yantra*s, amulets are assemblies of power of different kinds. They are made with exotic ingredients, often found in the wild periphery. They often incorporate words and numbers. They must be made by an adept, preferably with a reputation for asceticism. The production is attended by chanting and offering rituals.

The clearest and simplest link to this older tradition is that many amulets have a small *yantra* inscribed on the reverse **[e.g, Figures 7a–b]**.

Acknowledgments

Thanks to Paul McBain and Thomas Bruce for organizing the original conference; to two reviewers for helpful comments; and to Nathan Badenoch and Narumi Shitara for permission to reuse passages from our article on "Protection and Power in Siam" originally published in *Southeast Asian Studies* (2013). Thanks to Craig Reynolds, Justin McDaniel, and Nathan McGovern for advice.

References

Primary Sources

• Committee for Memorial Books and Records for Celebration of the King's Age Equaling that of King Rama I (คณะกรรมการจัดทำหนังสือที่ระลึกและจดหมายเหตุพระราชพิธีสมมงคลพระชนมายุเท่าพระบาทสมเด็จพระพุทธยอดฟ้าจุฬาโลกมหาราช), ed. 2545 BE (2002 CE). ตำราพิชัยสงครามฉบับรัชกาลที่ 1 [*Manual of Victorious Warfare, First Reign Edition*]. Bangkok: Ruansin.

• Damrong Rajanubhab, Prince (สมเด็จฯ กรมพระยาดำรงราชานุภาพ). 2545 BE (2002 CE). นิราศนครวัด [*Journey to Angkor*]. Bangkok: Sinlapa Watthanatham.

• Fine Arts Department (FAD = กรมศิลปากร), ed. 2550 BE (2007 CE). ลิลิตโองการแช่งน้ำ [Poem of the Water Oath]. In วรรณกรรมสมัยอยุธยา เล่ม ๑ [*Literature of the Ayutthaya Era*, Vol. 1], 1–23. Bangkok: Fine Arts Department.

• Pattaratorn Chirapravati & Revire, Nicolas, trans. 2011. *Divinations au royaume de Siam : le corps, la guerre, le destin*. Paris : Presses universitaires de France.

• Rama I, King (พระบาทสมเด็จพระพุทธยอดฟ้าจุฬาโลกมหาราช), ed. 2557 BE (2014 BE). บทละครเรื่อง รามเกียรติ์ [*Ramakien Drama Script*]. Bangkok: Ran Nakhonsat.

• Royal Society [of Thailand] (ราชราชบัณฑิตยสถาน), ed. 2550 BE (2007 CE). กฎหมายตราสามดวง ฉบับราชบัณฑิตยสถาน [*Three Seals Law, Royal Society Edition*]. Bangkok: Royal Society of Thailand.

• Van Ravensway, L.F., trans. 2005. Description of the Kingdom of Siam (1638). In *Van Vliet's Siam*, ed. by Chris Baker et al., 99–178. Chiang Mai: Silkworm Books.

• Villiers, John, ed. & trans. 1998. *The Natural and Political History of the Kingdom of Siam* [*by Nicolas Gervaise*]. Bangkok: White Lotus [Original Edition 1688].

• Wright, Michael (ไมเคิล ไรท์). 2543 BE (2000 CE). โองการแช่งน้ำ [*The Water Oath*]. Bangkok: Sinlapa Watthanatham.

Secondary Sources

• Århem, Kaj. 2016. Southeast Asian Animism in Context. In *Animism in Southeast Asia*, ed. Kaj Århem & Guido Sprenger, 3–30. London & New York: Routledge.

• Baker, Chris & Pasuk Phongpaichit, trans. & ed. 2010. *The Tale of Khun Chang Khun Phaen*. 2 Volumes. Chiang Mai: Silkworm Books.

———. 2013. Protection and Power in Siam: From *Khun Chang Khun Phaen* to the Buddha Amulet. *Southeast Asian Studies* 2(2): 215–242.

———. 2020. *Kings in Love: Lilit Phra Lo and Twelve Months, Two Classic Thai Poems*. Chiang Mai: Silkworm Books.

• Chalong Soontravanich. 2005. Buddhist Amulet Culture in Thailand and its Rise to Supremacy. Unpublished paper presented at Sophia-AGLOS Symposium, Tokyo, 14 October 2005.

———. 2013. The Regionalization of Local Buddhist Saints: Amulets, Crime and Violence in Post-World War II Thai Society. *SOJOURN: Journal of Social Issues in Southeast Asia* 28(2): 179–215.

• Jackson, Peter A. 1999. The Enchanting Spirit of Thai Capitalism: The Cult of Luang Phor Khoon and the Post-Modernization of Thai Buddhism. *South East Asia Research* 7(1): 5–60.

• Lawan Chotamara (ลาวัณย์ โชตามระ). 2527 BE (1984 CE). ชีวิตชาวกรุงเมื่อครึ่ง

ศตวรรษมาแล้ว [*Life of Bangkokians Half a Century Ago*]. Bangkok: Phrae Phittaya.

• McDaniel, Justin. 2011. *The Lovelorn Ghost and the Magical Monk: Practicing Buddhism in Modern Thailand.* New York: Columbia University Press.

• Natthan Manirat (ณัฐธัญ มณีรัตน์). 2553 BE (2010 CE). เลขยันต์ แผนผังอันศักดิ์สิทธิ์ [*Yantra: Sacred Diagrams*]. Bangkok: Museum Siam.

• Pattana Kitiarsa. 2012. *Mediums, Monks, and Amulets: Thai Popular Buddhism*. Chiang Mai: Silkworm Books.

• Pattaratorn Chirapravati, ML. 1997. *Votive Tablets in Thailand: Origin, Styles, and Uses*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

• Reynolds, Craig J. 2019. *Power, Protection and Magic in Thailand: The Cosmos of a Southern Policeman.* Canberra: Australian National University Press.

• Ruth, Richard A. 2011. *In Buddha's Company: Thai Soldiers in the Vietnam War*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press.

• Singto Suriya-arak (สิงห์โต สุริยาอารักษ์). 2526 BE (1983 CE). โหราศาสตร์ไทย [*Thai Astrology*]. Bangkok: Kasem Bannakit.

• So Sima (ส. สีมา). 2555 BE (2012 CE). เทพย์ สาริกบุตนักโหราศาสตร์ชั้นครู ผู้เคยให้ฤกษ์คณะรัฐประหารจน ต้องหนีบวช [Thep Sarikabut, Expert in Astrology, Who Had to Flee Into the Monkhood after Predicting For a Coup Group]. ศิลปะวัฒนธรรม [*Art & Culture*] 34(1); reproduced at: https://www.silpa-mag.com/culture/article_24960.

• Tambiah, Stanley J. 1984. *The Buddhist Saints of the Forest and the Cult of Amulets: A Study in Charisma.* Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

• Terwiel, Barend J. 1975. *Monks and Magic: An Analysis of Religious Ceremonies in Central Thailand*. London: Curzon Press.

• Textor, Robert B. 1960. *An Inventory of Non-Buddhist Supernatural Objects in a Central Thai Village*. PhD Dissertation. Ithaca: Cornell University.

———. 1973. *Patterns of Worship: A Formal Analysis of the Supernatural in a Thai Village*. 4 Volumes. Human Relations Area Files, New Haven, Connecticut.

• Thep Sarikabut (เทพย์ สาริกบุตร). 2508 BE (1965 CE). ประชุมมหายันต์ ๑๐๘ [*Collection of 108 Great Yantras*]. Bangkok: Soemwit Bannakhan.

———. 2516 BE (1973 CE). พระคัมภีร์พระเวทย์ พุทธศาสตราคม ฉบับสมบูรณ์ [*Manuals of Buddhist Lore, Complete Edition*]. 6 Volumes. Bangkok: Utsahakam.

• Wales, H.G. Quaritch. 1983. *Divination in Thailand: The Hopes and Fears of a Southeast Asian People*. London: Curzon Press.

• Whitaker, Jarrod L. 2004. Ritual Power, Social Prestige, and Amulets (*maṇi*) in the Atharvaveda. In *The Vedas: Texts, Language and Ritual*, ed. by Arlo Griffiths & Jan E.M. Houben, 565–580. Groningen: Egbert Forsten.

• Wisandarunakon, Luang (An Sarikabut) (หลวงวิศาลดรุณกร, อั้น สาริกบุตร). 2540 BE (1997 CE). คัมภีร์โหราศาสตร์ไทยฉบับสมบูรณ์ [*Standard Thai Astrology, Complete Edition*]. Bangkok: Sinlapasan [2nd Edition].

• Witney, William Dwight, trans. 1905. *Atharva-Veda Samhita; Translated with a Critical and Exegetical Commentary*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

• Wood, William A.R. 1965. *Consul in Paradise: Sixty-eight Years in Siam*. London: Souvenir Press.

• Yanchot, Achan (ญานโชติ, อาจารย์). 2538 BE (1995 CE). คัมภีร์ไสยศาสตร์ ฉบับสมบูรณ์ [*The Complete Manual of Supernaturalism*]. Bangkok: Sinlapa Bannakhan.