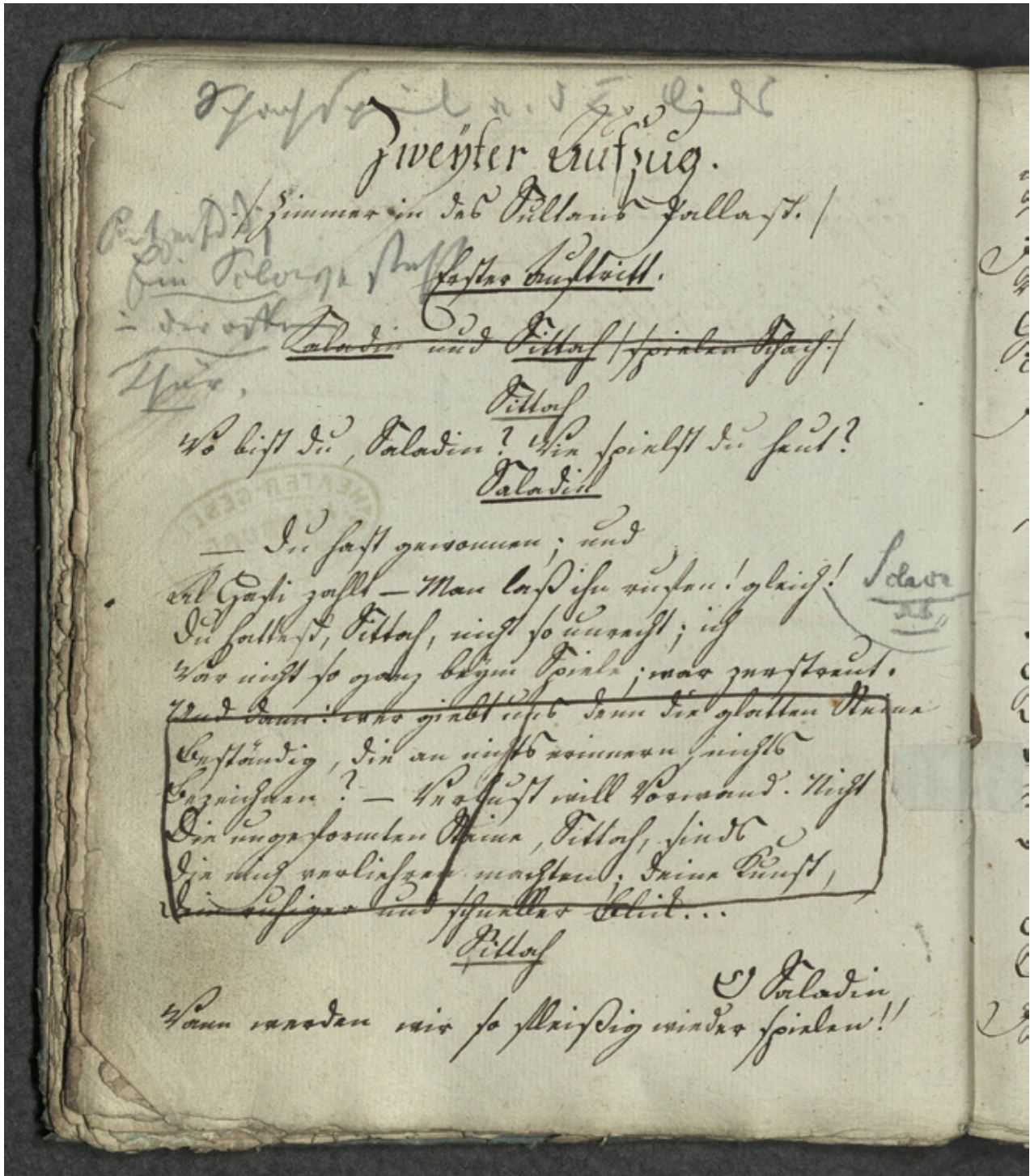


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Hamburg, State and University Library Carl von Ossietzky, Theater-Bibliothek: 1988a, fol. 23".  
Different changes in a prompt book of Gotthold Ephraim Lessing's *Nathan der Weise, ein Schauspiel in fünf Aufzügen von Lessing für die Bühne gekürzt v. Schiller* ('Nathan the Wise, a play in five acts by Lessing abridged for the stage by [Friedrich] Schiller'); first performance in Hamburg in the present version: 2 December 1803 (according to the playbill) <<https://resolver.sub.uni-hamburg.de/kitodo/HANSh3323>>. © Public Domain Mark 1.0. See the contribution by Martin Schäfer and Alexander Weinstock in this volume.

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## Article

# Demarginalising the Margin of Elephant Texts: A Variety of Interlinear and Marginal Paracontents from a Multilayered Siamese Manuscript Containing Elephant Treatises

Peera Panarut | Hamburg

## 1. Introduction

A manuscript is not always a finished entity as writing can also be added to it later by a scribe, reader or user, thereby forming various layers of writing in a single codicological unit. Additional paracontents, or those added to a manuscript later than its core content,<sup>1</sup> are not found very often in the case of pre-modern Siamese (or Thai) literary manuscripts. When they are, either between the lines (interlinear) or in the margin of a page (marginal), they provide indispensable evidence of traditional textual scholarship, revealing literary interpretations and reading practices of traditional readers and manuscript users and sometimes even study-based practices.

Vernacular Siamese literature, especially poetry, has mostly survived in the form of *khòì*-paper leprellor manuscripts called *samut thai* in Thailand.<sup>2</sup> This kind of manuscript is made of a long, rectangular piece of paper folded in an accordion- or concertina-like fashion, which is why it is also called a folding book.<sup>3</sup> A page of a *khòì*-paper manuscript used for literary texts is typically around 12 × 34 cm in size.<sup>4</sup> While the core content in a literary manuscript made of this material is usually written neatly, the interlinear and marginal paracontents may be smaller, scribbled down,

in a different hand or have been added using a different writing substance. These different hands and materials indicate various agents of writing as well as various layers of writing in the manuscript. The paracontents can appear in various places in a manuscript, for example between the lines of the core content, in the left- and right-hand margin of the page, or on any page that was originally left blank at the beginning or end of the manuscript. Furthermore, it can perform various functions, ranging from making corrections to the copied text to providing annotations, comments or interpretations about it. In cases like these, the interlinear and marginal paracontents often help contemporary readers understand or summarise the text.

Paracontents of this kind frequently appear in a single manuscript rather than several of them; notes and comments did not get copied very often,<sup>5</sup> probably because they were not considered to be part of the original author's work, but were simply added later by an individual reader. The printed editions of Thai literature that are still available to us do not always mention – let alone include – paracontents of this kind. Nowadays, only modern scholars who gain access to the actual manuscripts are aware of their existence. As a result, interlinear and marginal writing remains a marginal phenomenon in the field of Thai literary and philological studies despite its wide range of content, locations and functions.

Interlinear glosses have mostly been mentioned by modern scholars of Siamese manuscripts; remarks about other types of secondary writing are scarce. A few studies have shown that the interlinear glosses found in Siamese

<sup>1</sup> It is noteworthy that not all kinds of paracontents or paratexts are additional, given that in many cases paracontents such as colophons, paginations and cover titles were written by the same hands around the same time as the core content of the manuscript. Sometimes a colophon was written by the scribe immediately after the copying process of the core content had been completed (for example see Panarut 2019, 167–169; 450–451). These paracontents are thus arguably original, not additional, to a manuscript. On the concepts of paracontent and core content, see Ciotti et al. 2018.

<sup>2</sup> The paper is made from the bark of *khòì* trees (*Streblus asper*). For more details, see Kongkaew Weeraprachak 2010 and Helman-Ważny et al. 2020.

<sup>3</sup> For example in Igunma 2013, 631.

<sup>4</sup> Kongkaew Weeraprachak 2010, 3.

<sup>5</sup> Glosses have been transmitted in a few manuscripts of a royal eulogy called *Yuan Phai*. See Panarut 2021 for more details.



manuscripts can provide us with an interpretation of the core content, especially words that may now be obscure. One of the rare but impressive examples of modern editions that include glosses from manuscripts is the 2004 Fine Arts Department's edition of *Kham Phak Ramakian – The Khmer Version* ('*Khon*-Theatrical Script of the Ramayana Epic in the Khmer Language') edited by Santi Pakdeekham.<sup>6</sup> As the text was originally written in the Khmer language and script, but was transliterated into Thai script around the late eighteenth century so it could be performed at the royal court of Bangkok, it seems it was not intelligible to the Siamese in its original form. All four fragmented manuscripts of this Khmer text written in Thai script contain interlinear glosses annotating the meaning of Khmer words that the Siamese were not familiar with, which makes them key sources of information for modern readers wishing to understand the foreign text. The Fine Arts Department's edition presents the glosses both as footnotes to the core content and as a glossary at the end of the core content.

A brief survey of the interlinear glosses found in Siamese literary manuscripts has been conducted in a previous article of mine.<sup>7</sup> The article briefly mentions one particular manuscript, namely National Library of Thailand, Chan Subsection, Kò Initial, Ms no. 16 (henceforth 'NLT: ChSs: Kò: Ms no. 16'), and it emphasises its extensive glosses. This manuscript preserves a group of texts (dating from the sixteenth to the eighteenth century) commonly known as *The Collection of Old Elephant Treatises* (Thai: *Prachum Kham Chan Klòm Chang Krung Kao*). However, there are also other kinds of interlinear and marginal paracontents found in this manuscript, which deserve more research.

This article will not limit itself to interlinear glosses, but will also discuss different kinds of interlinear and marginal paracontents found in NLT: ChSs: Kò: Ms no. 16 in order to demonstrate what can be found in a single Siamese manuscript. It also reflects on the traditional practice of reading and studying this collection of elephant treatises.

## 2. Background to the text and its multilayered manuscript

Elephants have conveyed complex cultural meanings in Thai society for many centuries. They were often employed for military purposes and for transportation<sup>8</sup> as they are able to travel along mountainous routes as well as in the forest. Moreover, elephants also have ritual and symbolic meanings influenced by Indic and Khmer traditions, which made them a symbol of power and royalty for many cultures in South-east Asia in the past,<sup>9</sup> including the Siamese.<sup>10</sup> Take the White (or Albino) Elephant (Thai: *chang phüak*), for example, or any elephant with perfect auspicious marks, which was regarded as a symbol of the Emperor (Thai: *cakkaphat*; Sanskrit: *cakravartin*), the greatest king of all. His vassals were expected to send any white elephant found in their own territory to him.<sup>11</sup> Apart from that, elephants with significant auspicious marks (not the White Elephant, though) are considered royal property and are even bestowed with noble titles. This old tradition is still maintained at the royal court of Thailand to this day.

In the Siamese literary tradition, treatises on elephants form a genre of their own generally called *tamra chang* ('elephant treatises') in Thai, in which many different texts have survived in prose and verse form. Their content covers ritual texts about elephants, manuals on the care of elephants and on their medical treatment, explanatory guides on elephant typologies (to help people recognise the auspicious and inauspicious marks of each elephant from the divine families) and texts containing folklore and myths about elephants. Even though most of these elephant treatises are written in Thai, the Indic and Khmer influences on the language and content are still apparent.<sup>12</sup> Furthermore, some of these texts are accompanied by illustrations,<sup>13</sup> constituting a sub-genre of elephant treatises called *samut phap tamra*

<sup>8</sup> Kongkaew Weeraprachak 2021, 1.

<sup>9</sup> For instance, the name of Lan Xang, the Lao kingdom, also means 'land of a million elephants'. In addition, the related beliefs and cults of elephants have also been found in Burma, Cambodia and Vietnam. For more on this point, see Schliesinger 2012.

<sup>10</sup> Pamin Khruethong 2010, 87.

<sup>11</sup> Kongkaew Weeraprachak 2021, 100; Schliesinger 2012, 34.

<sup>12</sup> The names of significant auspicious elephants are mostly derived from Sanskrit, for instance, while the names of the inauspicious elephants are often in Old Khmer, see Boontuen Sriworapot 2002, 29. Sanskrit and Pali verses are often included in Siamese elephant treatises, too. Furthermore, passages of an elephant ritual text in Khmer can be attested in a manuscript from the National Library of Thailand, NLT: STWSs: Ms no. 99.

<sup>13</sup> For more on Siam's illustrated elephant treatises, see Ginsberg 1989, 33–43; Igunma 2017, 36–37; Woodward 2016, 15–18.

<sup>6</sup> Fine Arts Department 2004. The Fine Arts Department (Thai: *krom sinlapakôn*) is a government department under the Ministry of Culture of Thailand. Many institutions concerning cultural heritages such as the National Museum and the National Library of Thailand are under supervision of the Fine Arts Department.

<sup>7</sup> Panarut 2021.

*chang* ('illustrated elephant treatises'). However, the texts in *The Collection of Old Elephant Treatises* have survived in multiple manuscripts, including the manuscript in question (NLT: ChSs: Kò: Ms no. 16), albeit without any accompanying illustrations.

*The Collection of Old Elephant Treatises* consists of three different texts on elephant rituals and lore, which are probably the earliest texts on elephants to have survived in the Thai literary tradition. All of these texts appear in the form of poetry in *chan* meter, not prose. The texts in this collection are referred to as the 'old treatises' in Thai because three of them were composed in the Kingdom of Ayutthaya, the old Siamese capital between 1351 and 1767, i.e. before the founding of Bangkok, the capital of the Kingdom of Siam, in 1782. These three texts were considered old or ancient by the Siamese readers of the Bangkok period and have long been regarded as a model for the elephant texts written later by the poets of Bangkok.

The three texts appear in the following order in the collection:

1: *Dutsadi Sangwoei* (henceforth 'text I') is the earliest of the three, possibly dating from the sixteenth century.<sup>14</sup> It was supposed to be recited in a royal ritual performed before catching elephants. Although the text is attributed to Khun Thép Kawi, a court poet and royal scribe at the royal court of Ayutthaya, the beginning of text I was apparently adopted from an Old Khmer text from the Late Angkorian period.<sup>15</sup> Since it contains a wealth of Old Khmer and Sanskrit words, text I is the most difficult part of this collection for Thai readers, traditional and modern alike, at least since the early nineteenth century. Apparently, text I was still being recited in royal elephant rituals at the royal court of Siam in the nineteenth century.<sup>16</sup>

2: *Klòm Chang Krung Kao* ('text II'), dated to the seventeenth century by modern scholars, was used for a ritual performed after catching elephants; once they had been caught in the forest, they would be soothed by the recital and consecrated in the ritual. Text II is believed to have been originally composed when King Narai of Ayutthaya (r. 1656–1688) acquired a white elephant in 1660.<sup>17</sup> Even though Khmer influence can be attested in text II, there is no

doubt that this text was originally written in Thai, whereas the use of Khmer at the royal court of seventeenth-century Ayutthaya seems to be less apparent.<sup>18</sup>

3: *Khotchakam Prayun* ('text III') is an explanatory text on auspicious and inauspicious marks of elephants and on the family and group of elephants. This text is more a manual for recognising and categorising characteristics of significant elephants than a ritual text like the other two in the collection. The text is dated 1748 and attributed to Luang Ratchawang Müang, a noble official from the Department of Royal Elephants at the royal court of Ayutthaya.

Despite the different dates of their composition and different content and functions, these three elephant texts have been transmitted together as a collection ever since the Early Bangkok period (after 1782), if not earlier. Fifteen manuscript copies of the complete *Collection of Old Elephant Treatises* have survived.<sup>19</sup> The manuscript NLT: ChSs: Kò: Ms no. 16 is the only one that contains extensive paracontents (Fig. 1), thus constituting the only multilayered manuscript of *The Collection of Old Elephant Treatises*. The manuscript is a blackened *khòi*-paper leporello document. The core content is in neat handwriting in yellow ink, while the paracontents between the lines and in the margins are written in scribbled white chalk. The manuscript is undated, but seems to have been produced in the mid-nineteenth century, which the handwriting suggests.

We do not know whether these interlinear and marginal paracontents were added by the scribe who originally copied the core content, but judging from the handwriting, all the additional writing in the manuscript was added by a single person, possibly a reader or user. Although this paracontent is extensive, having been added to many parts of the manuscript, it does not appear on every single page. Perhaps it was added later whenever it was deemed necessary. The variety of interlinear and marginal paracontents found in this manuscript represents an intriguing case of a multilayered Siamese written artefact.

<sup>14</sup> Boontuen Sriworapot 2002, 41.

<sup>15</sup> Santi Pakdeekham 2004, 125.

<sup>16</sup> Boontuen Sriworapot 2002, 23.

<sup>17</sup> Boontuen Sriworapot 2002, 43.

<sup>18</sup> For more details on the significance and influence of the Khmer language in fourteenth- and fifteenth-century Ayutthaya, see Kanittanan 2004.

<sup>19</sup> Panarut 2019, 112.

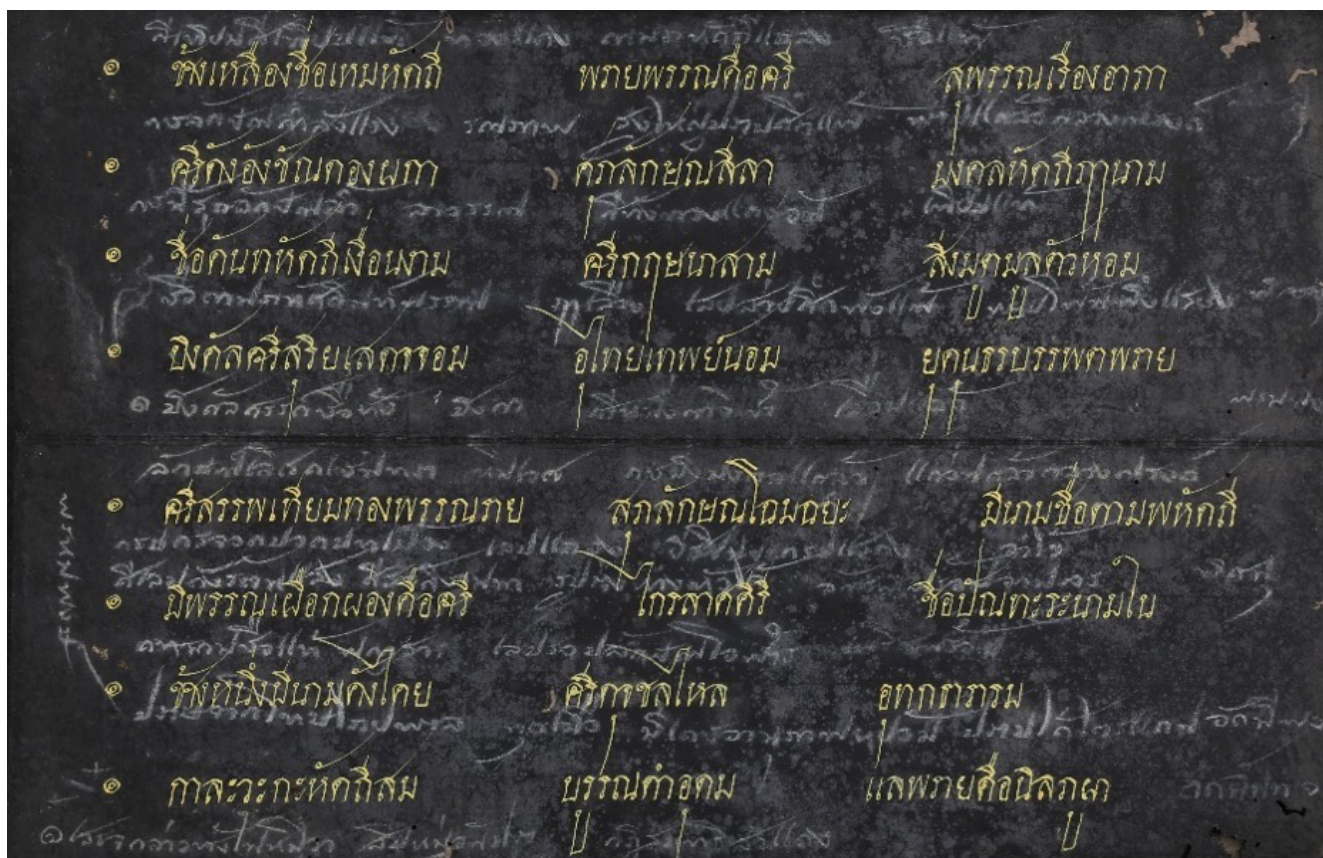


Fig. 1: Paracontents between the lines and in the page margins written in white chalk from the multilayered manuscript of *The Collection of Old Elephant Treatises*, contrasting with the core content written in yellow ink. (NLT: ChSs: Kò: Ms no. 16: recto, pp. 51–52.)

### 3. A variety of interlinear and marginal paracontents

As is usually the case for Siamese literary manuscripts, which were intended to preserve literary texts so they could be read or consulted in the future, the core content in our particular manuscript was written in relatively large letters. The space between the lines was also prepared so that diacritics (e.g. vowels and tone marks) could be inserted above and below the consonants in the main line, making it easier for readers to read and understand the core content. Furthermore, the scribe(s) who worked on it often left the left- and right-hand margins blank, which means that the writing in each line is aligned properly on each page. Even though the scribe may not have prepared any space for paracontents at all originally, many Siamese literary manuscripts contain paracontents in the margins or between lines of the core content, so it was obviously quite common to add it.

The original scribe who produced this multilayered manuscript of *The Collection Old Elephant Treatises* does not seem to have prepared any space specifically for additional paracontents; no extra room was left for them, while the layout and space between the lines correspond to

the conventional layout found in other literary manuscripts. The pages of NLT: ChSs: Kò: Ms no. 16 are 34 × 10.5 cm in size. The writing in the core content is approximately 0.7 cm high, runs over four lines on each page and has an oblong format. There is around 2.2 cm of space for the left- and right-hand margin and the space between the lines is 1.5 cm.<sup>20</sup> This layout obviously does not provide much room for other writing, but there was still enough to add corrections, glosses, explanations and other notes to the manuscript in a smaller size script (approx. 0.3 cm). If we compare the layout of this manuscript to that of Siamese palm-leaf manuscripts, which were often used for religious texts, the space between the lines of a palm-leaf manuscript is even more limited.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>20</sup> The page layout of NLT: ChSs: Kò: Ms no. 16 is regular for a Siamese literary manuscript. The other manuscripts of *The Collection of Old Elephant Treatises* have a similar page layout and writing space, take NLT: ChSs: Kò: Ms no. 17, for example, dated 1817, which is 35 × 11 cm in size.

<sup>21</sup> For example, in NLT: PLS: MS no. 2280/1, a Siamese palm-leaf manuscript entitled *Mahā Vamsa* dated 1785 (dimensions: 54.8 × 4.6 cm) from the National Library of Thailand, the space between the lines is only 0.5 cm, which is rather small for diacritics above and below the consonants of the core content. However, the left- and right-hand margins of each leaf (4 cm in



The paracontents found in the manuscript in question look different in different texts in the collection, except for the corrections, which can be found in all three texts. The glosses only appear in text I, while the interlinear citations, which make references to other texts, and the marginal notes helping to classify elephants are only found in text III. Despite their different functions, the handwriting and the substance used for all the paracontents in this manuscript (chalk in this case) appear to be identical.

The interlinear and marginal paracontents in this manuscript, which will be discussed in more detail in the following section, consist of interlinear corrections, additions, glosses, notes referring to other texts, and marginal notes.

### 3.1. Interlinear corrections

Interlinear corrections can be seen in all three texts in the manuscript. Of all the kinds of paracontents found in Siamese literary manuscripts, interlinear corrections are the most common. Any mistakes made while copying the core content were usually corrected by using the space between the lines. Sometimes corrections were made by the original scribes themselves, as the handwriting and ink indicate.<sup>22</sup> The errors were occasionally marked by strikethroughs and a cross sign, while the corrected words were added above or below the line of the core content. In NLT: ChSs: Kò: Ms no. 16, the method of making corrections varied (see Figs 2–4). In some cases, the mistakes were underlined and the corrected word was added between the lines. In other cases, cross marks were added. Judging by the similarity of the handwriting and the writing material used (white chalk in this case), the interlinear corrections found in all three texts in this manuscript seem to have been made by the same person, who may not necessarily have been the original scribe of the core content.

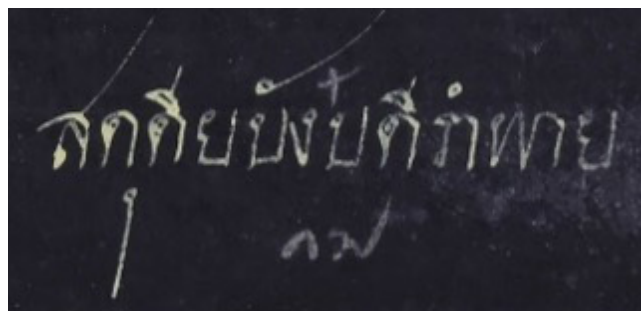


Fig. 2: An example of an interlinear correction from text I, in which a cross sign has been drawn above the core content. The omitted word was added underneath the line. (NLT: ChSs: Kò: Ms no. 16: recto, p. 13, line 4.)



Fig. 3: An example of an interlinear correction from text II. In this case, the error was underlined and the corrected word was written underneath. (NLT: ChSs: Kò: Ms no. 16: recto, p. 47, line 3.)

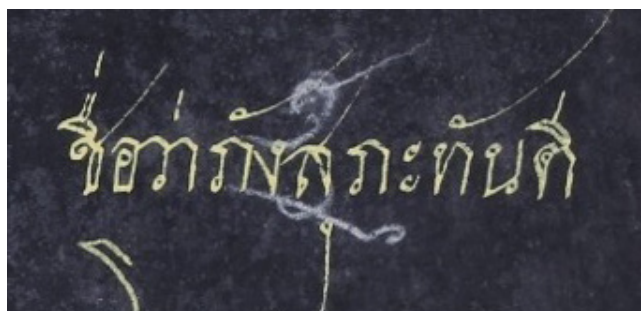


Fig. 4: An example of an interlinear correction from text III. The error was underlined and the corrected word written above it. (NLT: ChSs: Kò: Ms no. 16: verso, p. 21, line 3.)

width) are larger than those of the paper manuscript discussed here creating more space for paracontents such as pagination and other additional notes in the margin of the leaf.

<sup>22</sup> For example, in a manuscript of a dramatic play entitled *Suwanna Hong* (NLT: KBLKhSs: Ms no. 182), the interlinear correction is written in a hand and a yellow ink very similar to the core content.

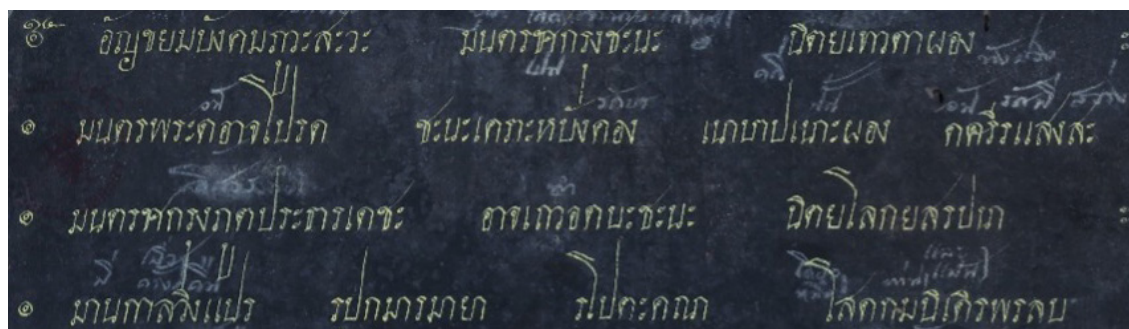


Fig. 5: An example of the extensive glosses written above or below the lines of the core content found in text I of the manuscript. (NLT: ChSs: Kò: Ms no. 16: recto, pp. 3–4.)



Fig. 6: Glosses written above the lines of the core content found in text I of this manuscript (stanza 11). Obscure terms and foreign words have mainly been annotated, while the words commonly known in Thai have not. (NLT: ChSs: Kò: Ms no. 16: recto, p. 6, line 3.)

### 3.2. Interlinear glosses

Interlinear glosses explaining the meaning of obscure and foreign words have been added to this manuscript extensively, but only for text I as the text was adopted from an Old Khmer text full of Khmer and Sanskrit words. The beginning of text I is likely to be a direct transliteration of Khmer script into Thai without a translation being offered. Due to the closely related literary and poetic tradition in Khmer

and Thai culture,<sup>23</sup> the Khmer text transliterated into Thai script still forms proper stanzas in the Thai metrical system and can be read with Thai pronunciation, although it is quite difficult for Siamese readers to understand. Interlinear glosses in this manuscript provide Thai meanings of the Khmer and Sanskrit words (Fig. 5), which are neither loanwords nor familiar to Thai speakers. The glosses have not been added to every single word, obviously, but to each word that the writer considered difficult

Table 1: Transliteration of core content and glosses shown in Fig. 6 into Modern Thai script (the core content is highlighted in grey).

และ ปลา เนื้อ ข้าว	ท่าน หังปวง สิ้น	องค์
และมิญญามงขบายสุรา	นักสกลสพนา	ตน
		บุชادنุพระไพร

Romanised form:

Lae pla nua khao	than thangpuang sin	ong
Nae min nu mangsa bai sura	nak sakon sop na	ton
		bucha tanu phra phrai

English translation:

And	fish meat rice	lords entirely completely	Lord
And with the entire	(sacrifices of) fish, meat, rice and alcohol	to the lords, (I) worship the lords of the forest	Body

<sup>23</sup> For more on this point, see Santi Pakdeekham 2007.



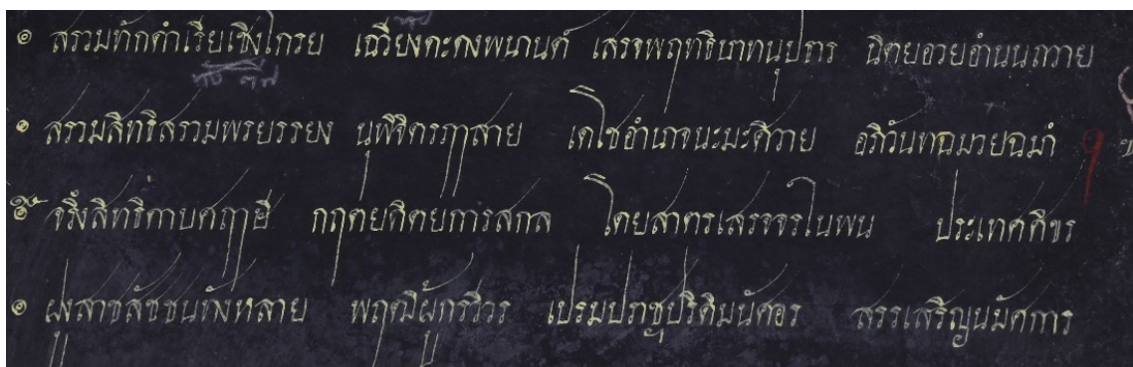


Fig. 7: An example of the interlinear glosses from the latter part of text I (stanzas 45–48), in which only a few words in stanza 45 (line 1 above) are annotated, namely *damria* (annotated as ‘elephant’), *choeng* (‘foot’) and *chawiang* (‘left [hand]’). (NLT: ChSs: Kō: Ms no. 16: recto, p. 14.)

to understand. When the core content is read with the help of these interlinear glosses, the meaning of the whole line or stanza can be understood by the reader or user of this manuscript.

The words that have not been annotated seem to be Khmer loanwords commonly used in Thai, such as *sura* (‘alcohol’) and *bucha* (‘worship’). The other words are annotated, so presumably they were not understood by Siamese readers (Fig. 6).

As the beginning of text I (stanzas 1–21) is believed to be directly adapted from Khmer poems, more glosses seem to have been required than in the latter part (stanzas 22–60), in which the Khmer poems contain more Thai words. Santi Pakdeekham argues that the latter part was originally composed by the Siamese poet Khun Thepkawi, although it was influenced by a Khmer text, while the beginning of the poem (stanzas 1–21) is a direct adaptation of the Old Khmer text in Thai script.<sup>24</sup> In short, then, more glosses were required at the beginning and fewer of them appear in the latter part, as can be seen in Fig. 7.

When the Khmer poems in text I were first adapted to Thai around the fifteenth or sixteenth century, the text must have been intelligible for the royal courtiers of the Early Ayutthaya period, in which the Khmer language is believed to have been spoken along with Thai.<sup>25</sup> However, the later generations of Ayutthaya royal courtiers seem to have spoken less Khmer. In the late eighteenth century, even the educated Siamese of the Early Bangkok period would not have found the language of text I comprehensible, especially the beginning of it. In this case, the glosses added will have helped them to make sense of each stanza of text I, unlike text II and III, which were originally composed in Thai and thus easier for Thai readers to understand. No glosses or annotations are found in texts II and III of this particular manuscript.

<sup>24</sup> Santi Pakdeekham 2004, 116–125.

<sup>25</sup> Kanittanan 2004, 378–379.

### 3.3. Interlinear citation

As for text III, which explains the categories and characteristics of significant elephants from four divine families,<sup>26</sup> the paracontents between the lines do not annotate obscure words in the core content, but cite other texts with related content, perhaps in order to compare them. One example is the five stanzas cited from another elephant poem called *Khlong Khotchalak* or *Tamra Laksana Chang Kham Khlong* (‘Poems on Elephant Typologies in Khlong Meter’) written between the lines of the core content. In the part of text III explaining what the ‘Ten Elephants of the Brahma Family’ are, five stanzas of *Khlong Khotchalak* concerning the same group of elephants have been added between the lines as Bangkok readers (including the scribe of the interlinear and marginal paracontents) must have been more familiar with *Khlong Khotchalak* than the texts from *The Collection of Old Elephant Treatises*.

Even though different versions of *Khlong Khotchalak* were transmitted in the Early Bangkok period, the interlinear citations mentioned here correspond to stanzas 8, 9, 28, 31 and 98 of the version found in several manuscripts from the National Library of Thailand.<sup>27</sup> This version is slightly different from the printed edition.<sup>28</sup>

By comparing stanza 26 of the core content with the stanza of the interlinear paracontents (cited from stanza 8 of *Khlong Khotchalak*) as shown and translated in Fig. 8 below, we can see that the details appear to be different in the two texts even though they speak about the same type of elephant (a *pingkhala*).

<sup>26</sup> The four divine families of significant elephants named after four Hindu gods are called Brahma, Vishnu, Ishvara (Shiva) and Agni, see Kongkaew Weeraprachak 2021, 5–23.

<sup>27</sup> Namely NLT: STWSs: Ms nos. 25, 34, 36, 39.

<sup>28</sup> The printed text of *Khlong Khotchalak* (first published in Fine Arts Department 1938, 1–32) is based on the manuscript NLT: STWSs: Ms no. 21 (dated 1782).

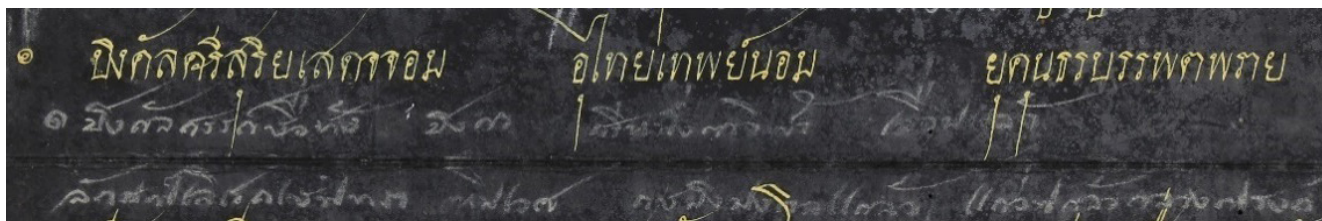


Fig. 8: The interlinear paracontents cited from stanza 8 of *Khlong Khotchalak* and written below the line of the core content (stanza 26 of text III) was presumably added to compare the different details in the two texts. (NLT: ChSs: Kò: Ms no. 16: recto, pp. 51–52.)

Table 2: Transliteration of core content and glosses shown in Fig. 8 into Modern Thai script (the core content is highlighted in grey).

ปิงคัลศรีสุริยเสดจจอม	อุไทยเทพย่นอม	ยุคนธรรพตพราย	
ปิงคัลศรรค์ชื้อช้าง	ปิงคา	ศรห์นิงดาวีฟาร์	เลี่ยมแล้ว
ลักษณเเลิศคเขนทรา	หิมเวศ	คขมิงมงคลเกล้า	แก้วนกล่ากลางนรงค์

Romanised form:

Pingkhan si suriya sadet còm	uthai thep nòm	yukhonthòn banphot phrai	
Pingkhan san chü chang	pingkha	si nüing ta wila	lïam laeo
Lak loet khachenthra	himawet	khot ming monkhon klaeo	kwaen kla klang narong

English translation:

[The] pingkhala [elephant] has a skin colour like the sun rising over the great mountain.

[The] pingkhala [elephant] has a glimmering colour like a cat's eyes,

the best of elephants from the Himavanta Forest, auspicious and powerful in battle.

The core content was only compared with *Khlong Khotchalak* in this part, perhaps because the details about the elephant differ here. Interlinear citations of *Khlong Khotchalak* cannot be found in any other stanzas of text III in this manuscript. Perhaps the paracontents were not actually finished or were only added to the part in which the details in the two texts are different. As Fig. 8 shows, the core content of text III of *The Collection of the Old Elephant Treatises* states that the skin of the elephant called *pingkhala* is the colour of the rising sun, but the other text describes the colour as 'glimmering cat's eyes'.

Furthermore, the paracontents between the lines found in text III consist of Pali verses summarising the description of the elephants in each group and family, perhaps for memorisation or comparison with other Pali texts (Fig. 9). As these verses are in Pali, but partially rendered in Sanskrit orthography, these paracontents appear in Khôm (a variation of Old Khmer script in Thailand, the sacred script for notating Pali in Siam until the second half of the twentieth century), not in Thai script like other paracontents in the same manuscript. This additional Pali verse below the line provides a summary of the description of the eight elephants of the eight directions added between the lines, where the core content mentions elephants of this specific category.

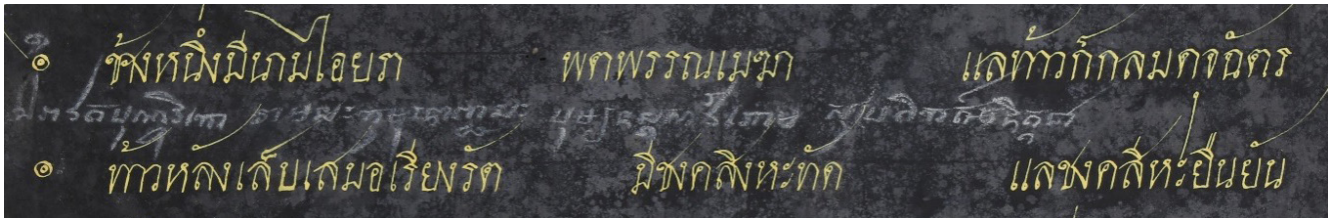


Fig. 9: Interlinear citation (Pali verse in Khôm script) summarising the description of the eight elephants of the eight directions. (NLT: ChSs: Kò: Ms no. 16: recto, p. 53, lines 2–3.)

This interlinear paracontent in Khôm script reads ‘erāvata-puṇḍariko vāmanakumudoñjana puṣyadantasāravabhoma supraditśacadiggajā’, which states the names of elephants of the eight directions as ‘erāvata (‘the name of Indra’s elephant’), puṇḍariko (‘white lotus’), vāmana (‘small’, ‘dwarf-fish’), kumuda (‘lotus’), añjana (‘ointment’), puṣyadanta (‘flower tusk’), sāravabhoma (‘well-sounding ground’) and supraditśa (‘well-established’)’.<sup>29</sup> The origin of this Pali verse is yet to be identified, but the verse is likely to be part of other elephant texts in Pali and may have been used as a mnemonic verse to memorise the names of all eight types of elephant. This verse added as an interlinear citation may have been useful for manuscript readers and users who wanted to learn the names of significant elephants, as there is also a mnemonic verse attached to the core content.

Interlinear citations of Pali verses in Khôm script were only added to this manuscript occasionally. This particular case shows that interlinear space has been used to compare different texts written in the same language as well as texts in different languages and scripts (Pali and Khôm). Layers in a Siamese manuscript can therefore be multilingual and multiscriptual at the same time.

### 3.4. Marginal notes

Apart from these interlinear paracontents, the additional notes found in this manuscript also appear in the left- and right-hand margins. This paracontent was written by the original scribes in many cases and provides the title or a short summary of the various parts of the texts, which acts like a heading. The notes are often written vertically in the left-hand margin of the page. The reader had to rotate the manuscript in order to read this vertical writing properly, but its vertical direction may have caught the reader’s eye more easily. The marginal headings by the original scribes are attested in different Siamese literary manuscripts.<sup>30</sup> Our manuscript (NLT: ChSs: Kò: Ms no. 16) also

contains vertical headings written by the same hand and with the same yellow ink as the core content, which were probably added by the original scribe (see Figs 10–11). However, the headings provided by the original scribe might not have sufficed, as there are several additional headings in the left-hand margin which have been added in white chalk in a scribbled hand, providing more headings in the text, as shown in Figs 12–13 below. This scribbled hand is the same as the one used for the interlinear corrections, glosses and citations.

Apart from the headings added to the left-hand margin, the marginal paracontents sometimes provide a summarising list of particular elephants, perhaps helping readers to understand the core content as well as memorise the elephants in this category. The example below (Fig. 14) shows a list of the ten elephants in the Brahma family in the right-hand margin of the page.

The summarising list of ten elephants in the Brahma family<sup>31</sup> in the right-hand margin of this page reads as follows:

จันทน	chathan (Pali: chaddanta, ‘having six tusks’)
อุโบสถ	ubosot (Pali: uposatha, ‘ceremonial hall’) <sup>32</sup>
แหม	haem (Pali: hema, ‘gold’)
อัญชนะ	anchana (Pali: añjana, ‘ointment’)
คันธ	khantha (Pali: gandha, ‘scent’, ‘odour’) <sup>33</sup>
ปิงคละ	pingkhala (Pali: piṅgala, ‘reddish-yellow’, ‘brown’)
ตามพ	tampha (Pali: tamba, ‘copper’)
บันทฤก	bantharik (Pali: paṇḍarika, ‘having a white colour’)
คังคย	khangkhai (Pali: gaṅgeyya, possibly related to the Ganges River)
กาลวก	kalawaka (Pali: kālavaka, ‘having a black colour’)

<sup>29</sup> Most of these names are in Pali, but Sanskrit variations also appear (e.g. *puṣyadanta*).

<sup>30</sup> Panarut 2019, 176–177.

<sup>31</sup> For more details of these ten elephants, see Kongkaew Weeraprachak 2021, 9–10.

<sup>32</sup> For more meanings of the Pali word *uposatha*, see Davids and Stede 1966, 151.

<sup>33</sup> The other text calls this type of elephant *mangkhala* (Pali: *maṅgala* ‘auspicious, prosperous, lucky’), see Kongkaew Weeraprachak 2021, 10.



Vertical heading →

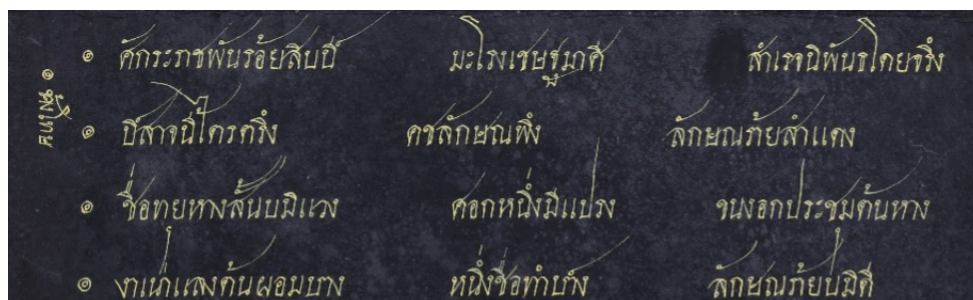


Fig. 10: An example of a vertical heading in the left-hand margin added by the original scribe in yellow ink. It reads ช้างโทะษ ('inauspicious elephants'), giving the category of the content of the core content as its heading. (NLT: ChSs: Kò: Ms no. 16: verso, p. 24.)

Vertical heading →

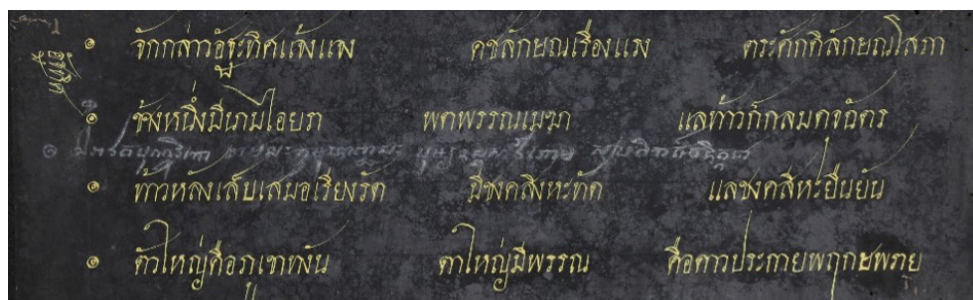


Fig. 11: An example of a vertical heading in the left-hand margin added by the original scribe in yellow ink. It reads ช้างทิศ ('elephants of] eight directions'), giving the category of the content of the core content as its heading. (NLT: ChSs: Kò: Ms no. 16: recto, p. 53.)

Additional vertical heading →

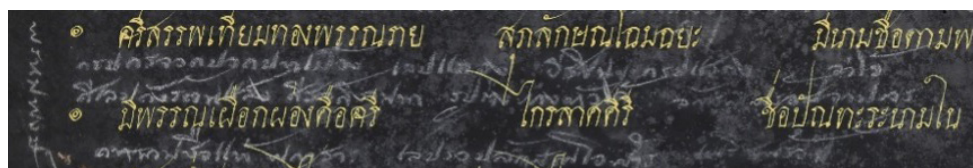


Fig. 12: An example of a vertical heading in the left-hand margin, possibly added later. It reads พรหมพงษ์ ('Brahma family'), labelling the family of the elephants described in the core content as its heading. (NLT: ChSs: Kò: Ms no. 16: recto, p. 52.)

Additional vertical heading →

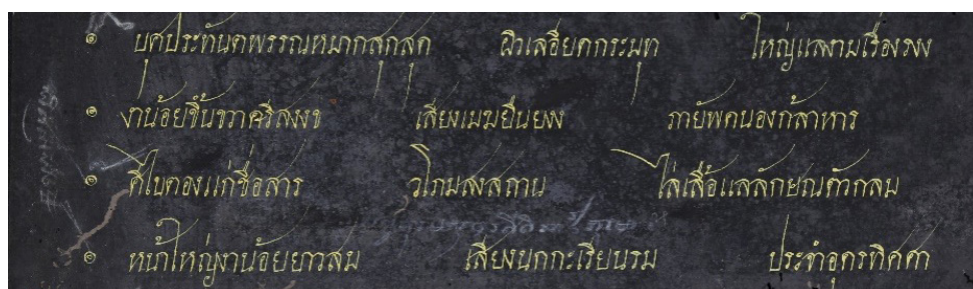


Fig. 13: An example of a vertical heading in the left-hand margin, possibly added later. It reads พิศณุพงษ์ ('Vishnu Family'), labelling the family of the elephants described in the core content as its heading. (NLT: ChSs: Kò: Ms no. 16: verso, p. 3)

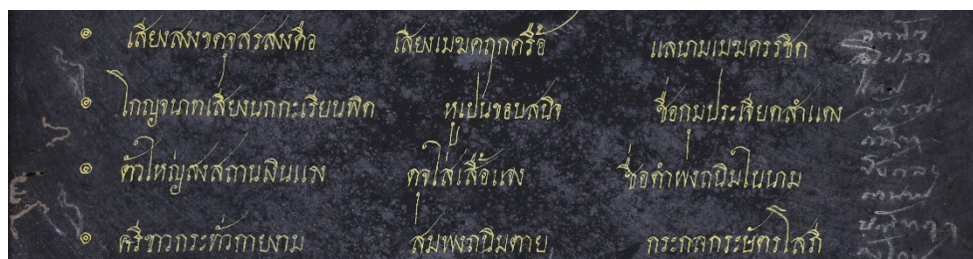


Fig. 14: A list of the ten elephants in the Brahma family written as a note on the right-hand margin of the manuscript folio. (NLT: ChSs: Kò: Ms no. 16: verso, p. 13.)

As text III from *The Collection of Old Elephant Treatises* consists of different categories of elephants, the marginal space in this manuscript has been used to record both the additional headings of the content and the summarising list, possibly with the intention of helping readers and users navigate the content, understand its meaning and memorise the different categories of elephants.

In this multilayered manuscript, the additional interlinear and marginal paracontents appear in different places with different kinds of content and functions. All of this paracontent was written in white chalk by one and the same hand. Interlinear corrections were added between the lines of the core content throughout the manuscript, covering three different texts in all. Interlinear glosses were only provided in text I, especially the initial part covering stanzas 1–21 as the text is rather obscure, both in language and content. Furthermore, the space between the lines was also employed for interlinear citations, comparing the core content with others, while the margin of the pages was used for additional headings and the summary. Thus, all in all, there is a variety of paracontent in this one Siamese literary manuscript.

The handwriting of the additional words and the similarity of the ink used suggest that they were added by the same scribe. However, it is not quite as easy to find a satisfactory answer to the question of whether or not the various types of writing belong to exactly the same layer and were all added to the manuscript at the same time. Perhaps all the interlinear and marginal paracontents next to the core content were planned and added around the same time; this is suggested by their layout, i.e. the fact that none of them were written above pre-existing entries. Nevertheless, different kinds of interlinear and marginal paracontents may have been added separately. Unfortunately, there is no clear-cut answer to the question of them being layered.

The more complicated question – and one that requires more research – is whether we can identify the person (or people) who added the interlinear and marginal paracontents in this manuscript. Although it is difficult to find the answer, the former owner of the manuscript, at least, can be deduced from the history of the National Library's acquisition of the manuscript. According to records kept by the National Library of Thailand, this manuscript was donated to the library by Phin Sanitwong in 1908 along with a large group of other manuscripts that once belonged to his family.

Sanitwong is actually the name of a princely family that has included a host of scholars in the service of the royal court ever since the nineteenth century. Our manuscript may well have been in the possession of this family, then, and the paracontents it contains could have been added by several of its scholars. There are various possibilities. It may have been penned by Prince Sai Sanitwong (1846–1912), the donor's father, who was a famous court physician in the late nineteenth century. However, considering that core content and paracontents are directly concerned with traditional knowledge of elephant lore and rituals, the paracontents were most likely written by Prince Wongsathirat Sanit (1808–1871), who was the founder of the princely household, a royal physician, a famous diplomat, a prominent consultant to the King as well as an expert on court tradition.<sup>34</sup> Prince Wongsathirat Sanit was one of the most influential traditional scholars of the royal court during his lifetime. Phin Sanitwong, the donor of the manuscript, was his grandson.

Although the donor could have acquired the manuscript from other agents than his own family, the core content and the paracontents concerning the elephant rituals and typologies suggest that the original owner of the manuscript and the author of its paracontent were both members of the royal court, as matters concerning elephant rituals and typologies have nothing to do with commoners' lives. Apart from that, the author of the interlinear and marginal paracontents must have been a scholar due to his (or her) knowledge of annotating an old ritual text such as text I and supplementing citations and notes on the elephant typologies in text III.

#### 4. Functions, authority and traditional textual scholarship

Given their wide range of forms and content, the paracontents in this multilayered manuscript had a variety of functions and at the same time demonstrated how a traditional text was meant to be read and studied in traditional Thai society, an aspect that reflects textual scholarship among the Siamese in the nineteenth century.

The paracontents in this manuscript served various purposes. Interlinear corrections ensured the accurate transmission of the core content, while interlinear glosses enabled the reader to grasp the meaning of the core content, which makes them fall under the category of paracontentual commenting. Interlinear citations and marginal paracontents

<sup>34</sup> See Orawan Sapploy 2009.

providing a list of significant elephants (e.g. the list of elephants from the Brahma family and the list of elephants of the eight directions) also facilitated a better understanding of the text. In addition to this, the marginal paracontents stating categories of elephants as vertical headings also have a structuring function, helping the reader to navigate the manuscript and its content.<sup>35</sup>

Although interlinear and marginal paracontents may often have been regarded as peripheral and less important than the core content by the readers of such manuscripts, paracontents of this kind still shaped the text in question and its interpretation. In this sense they had authority over the text. Regardless of whether or not they were inserted by the original scribe, interlinear corrections exerted authority over the textual transmission of the core content, as they corrected errors after the proofreading process, making the text more accurate and possibly even more complete than before. Sometimes a letter, a syllable, a word or even a whole line or stanza is omitted in the core content in our manuscript – a scribal phenomenon which is also quite common in other literary manuscripts. Thanks to the interlinear corrections that have been made, the manuscript contains texts written the way in which they should have been copied in the first place. Readers and users of our manuscript had to spot and read the additional corrections between the lines, otherwise the text would never have been read and approached in its correct form. Furthermore, the additional interlinear glosses and notes that were inserted possessed authority over interpretation as well, as in the case of text I in the collection, which is rather obscure. Interlinear glosses and interlinear citations were indispensable for readers of traditional works who were not experts in Khmer and Sanskrit, as they are required for a better understanding of the obscure words. Without them, the whole stanza, or indeed the whole text, may not have been understood by any reader in the traditional period.

For modern scholars, these additional kinds of writing provide significant evidence of traditional textual scholarship, knowledge which was often transmitted orally and left no visible traces. Scientists can reconstruct how the copied text was proofread and how corrections were made. The interlinear glosses, furthermore, reflect how the text was read, or rather studied and interpreted, revealing an attempt by a traditional reader to comprehend an obscure text such

as text I and to compare text III with other related texts in Thai and Pali. The interlinear and marginal notes in text III also show how the content of the text was categorised and marked to ensure better comprehension and memorisation as well as better navigation when searching for a particular part of the text. Although they partially appear in text III, the interlinear citations or the comparisons with other texts also reflect the intertextuality within traditional manuscript culture, in which one text has been made in reference to another, especially when the details in two texts are different. The interlinear and marginal paracontents in this manuscript therefore indicate the traditional knowledge and understanding of a text, which do not necessarily correspond to that of a modern reader. They also showcase that an old text from the Ayutthaya Kingdom such as *The Collection of Old Elephant Treatises* has been read and studied closely by scholars of a later era, in this case the early Bangkok period.

## 5. Conclusion

Although a Siamese literary manuscript containing interlinear and marginal paracontents is not very common, the case of this multilayered manuscript of *The Collection of Old Elephant Treatises* exemplifies different types of interlinear and marginal paracontents that can be found in a single manuscript. The space between the lines and in the margins, which was originally left blank, was employed for adding corrections, annotations, citations, summarising lists and headings, regardless of the manuscript's original function; these no doubt served as a reminder for private study or for teaching purposes. Reading interlinear and marginal paracontents can help to uncover aspects that the core content alone cannot reveal, namely the interpretation and practice of reading the text in the traditional period.

Although philology has been defined by Sheldon Pollock as 'the study or the discipline of making sense of text',<sup>36</sup> modern philologists need to learn how to make sense of paracontents as well since paracontents such as interlinear notes reflect how the texts were read and used. They are clearly useful in making sense of the core content that was copied and in understanding the purpose of its carrier, the manuscript. Although interlinear and marginal paracontents are often located in the marginal area of a manuscript (i.e. between the lines in the left- and right-hand margin

<sup>35</sup> Ciotti et al. 2018; cf. Ciotti and Lin 2016, vii–viii.

<sup>36</sup> Pollock 2009, 934. Other definitions of philology exist as well, of course, such as 'the study of the written record in its cultural context' (Simon 1990, 19) and 'historical text curatorship' (Gumbrecht 2003, 2).



of the page), their meaning in the field of Thai literature and philology is not always marginal, and the dynamics of their content, form, function and layering constitute a subject of serious research in its own right. The research on the paracontents in the multilayered manuscript of *The Collection of Old Elephant Treatises* discussed in this article is the paradigmatic attempt to demarginalise interlinear and marginal paracontents in Siamese manuscripts, so that their existence and significance can be brought into the focus of future research.

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#### Abbreviations used

ChSs	Chan ('poems in <i>chan</i> meter') Subsection, Literature Section, NLT
KBLKhSs	Klòn Bot Lakhòn ('dramatic plays') Subsection, Literature Section, NLT
NLT	National Library of Thailand, Bangkok
PLS	Palm-leaf Manuscript Section of the NLT
STWSs	Sattawasat ('zoology') Subsection, Secular Treatise Section, NLT

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