

The role and symbolism of stupas in Southeast Asia sub-region are invented to have symbolic functions based on the concept of Sri Lankan Buddhism. Supported by the rulers since the 14th century, the tradition to revere the relic of the Buddha housed in a stupa, as a result, has generated the beliefs and faith with an important role in legitimizing the ruling class in a Theravada state. It can be said that stupas are symbolism which reflect the rights and power of the rulers as represented in the use of space having both physical and social as well as the creation of heterotopias and utopias.

The study on the tradition to revere the stupas associated with the twelve-year cycle in Lanna has indicated that stupas are mythological invention, which serve as an ideological tool base on the local cultural beliefs and the Lanna cosmological concept. Relying on the complex twelve-year animal cycle or *naksat*, the importance of stupas and cultural network, the Lanna rulers invented the tradition to revere stupas associated with the twelve-year animal cycle as a tool to counter the Siamese political influence during the political reform that would incorporate northern Thai into the modern nation-state of Siam.

From careful analysis of the context in which the formulation linking the stupas with the *naksat* was invented, it can be concluded that there were three social reason behind this invention, they are, ethnical hierarchy, cultural differences and political conflicts. These are three main factors that caused suspect and conflict between Lanna and Siam. Therefore, the time around 1868-1885 was when Lanna started to move, challenge and react against Siamese influence by adhering to religious mythology and beliefs as an important mechanism to create a set of discourse without any clear explanation about its origin and real purpose.