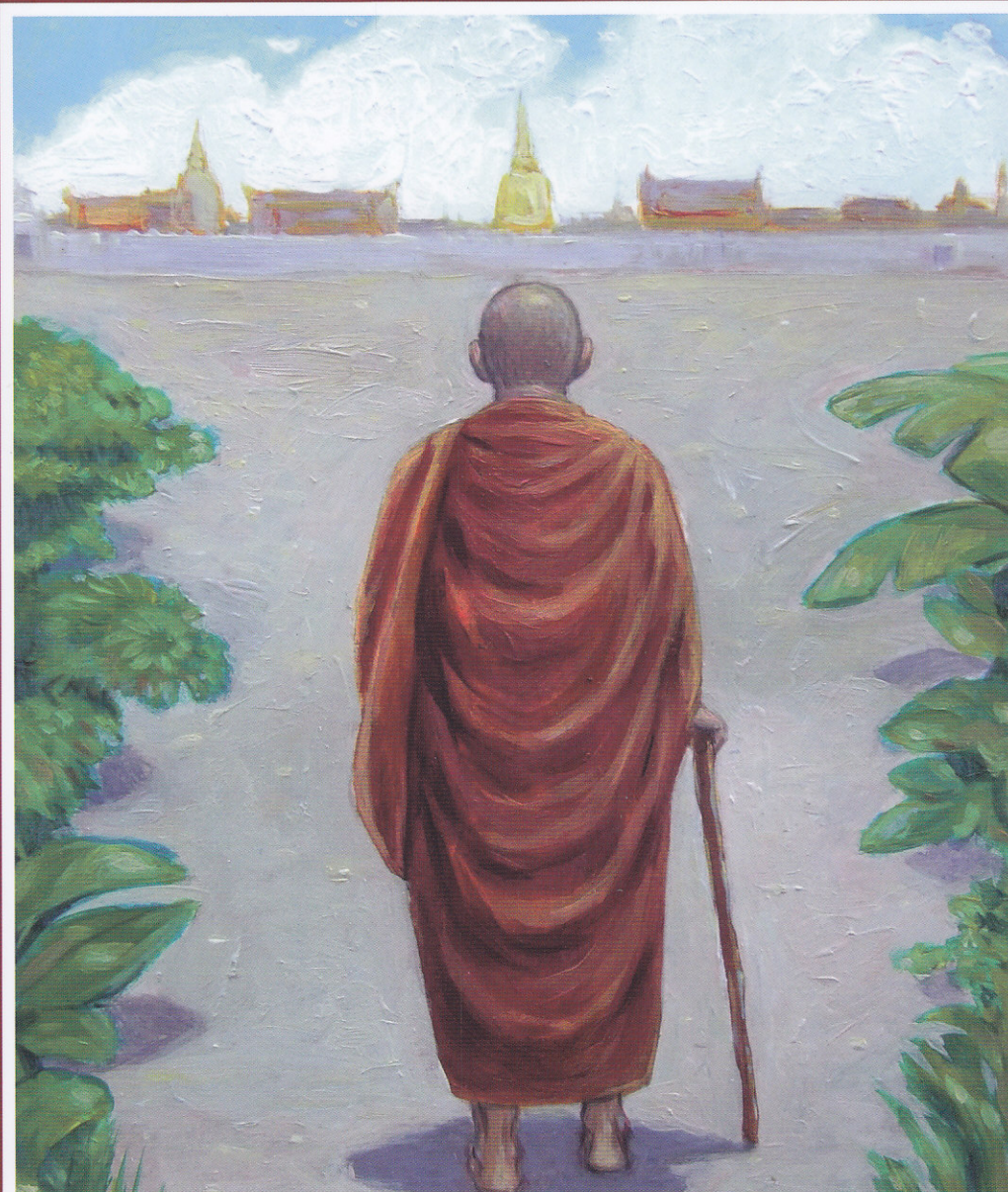




THE SUPREME PATRIARCH AND HIS WALKING STICK

**The Meditation Legacy of Suk Kaithuean and its
Implications for Theravāda Buddhism in Thailand**



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Abstract

This book explores the history and practice of the *Matchima* meditation system currently taught at Wat Ratchasittharam. Practitioners claim that it is a system passed down by Venerable Suk Kaithuean who was the fourth Supreme Patriarch (Sangharat) of the Bangkok era (1819-1822). The research focused on five main themes comprising of physical space, perceptions of history, philosophy, pedagogical methods and the perspectives of the practitioners with the aim of obtaining a holistic understanding of this meditation system. By examining the differences and commonalities between the manuscript, which the Venerable Suk had inherited and had based his teachings on, and the living *Matchima* tradition now taught at the temple, this book reveals that the *Matchima* meditation system, was once part of an ancient meditation tradition, which had evolved over time to fit the needs of a changing Thai society. However, despite its adaptation, it still retains certain esoteric practices that set it apart from contemporary meditation systems. The book also claims that despite popular conceptions of a monolithic and inflexible Theravāda Buddhism that was believed to have been institutionalized since the fourth reign, the *Matchima* meditation system represents an aspect of Theravāda spiritual practice that is constantly evolving, adapting itself and has even contributed to the rise of other meditation traditions. This proves that Theravāda Buddhism in Thailand, when viewed from a different lens is actually more flexible, dynamic and multifaceted than previously conceived.

Contents

List of tables, graphs and figures	i-iv
Notes on language	v
Acknowledgements	vi-vii
Preface	viii-xv
1 Introduction, research aims and significance	1
2 Contemporary meditation movements in Thailand	8
3 The creation of a monolithic Theravāda Buddhism in Thailand	34
4 The manuscript of the Venerable Suk and the <i>Yogāvacara</i> tradition	53
5 The <i>Matchima</i> meditation system as a ‘living tradition’	75
6 Comparing the ‘living tradition’ with the ancient manuscript	158
7 Philosophical implications and historical context	170
References	192
Appendices	202
Glossary	223
The author	231

List of Tables

Table 1: Common features of contemporary meditation traditions	30
Table 2: The five joys and their five attributes	65
Table 3: The nine bases and their location/properties	67
Table 4: The ‘living tradition’ - facets, details and approach	76
Table 5: Have you practiced other meditation methods before?	146
Table 6: How often do you practice and which days at the temple?	148