

Thesis Title A Study of the Concept of Karma in Thai
Literature in the Ayutthaya Period
Name Miss Puangkaew Oransombat
Concentration Thai
Department Thai
Academic Year 1987

ABSTRACT

This thesis is a result of an analysis of the concept of Karma in Thai literature in the Ayutthaya Period, based on the following hypotheses

1. There is a trace of Buddhist influence as well as those of Animism and Brahmanism in the concept of karma in the literature in the Ayutthaya Period
2. The concept of karma presented in some works of the Ayutthaya Period is deviated from that of Buddhism because of literary objectives.

The thesis is divided into 5 chapters. The first one is an introduction. The second deals with the concept of karma in Buddhism. The third analyzes and traces the concept of karma, as well as other beliefs, in nine pieces of literary works in the Ayutthaya Period. The fourth discusses the deviation of the concept of karma due to literary objectives. Conclusion and recommendation are provided in the last chapter.

This study reveals that the first work of the Ayutthaya Period, Ong Karn Chaeng Nam shows distinct thoughts of animism. No trace of karma appears. In Phra Law, the concept of karma plays an important role along with animistic belief. From then to the middle of the Ayutthaya Period, the concept of karma gains stronger status in Thai literature while animism becomes less important. Towards the end of the Ayutthaya Period, the concept of karma is very distinct and associated with the concept of rebirth in the sense of life after death. However, in some works of the Ayutthaya Period the concept of karma not only becomes indistinct but also appears as a mere convention due to literary objectives. The examples are Sue Kho Kham-Chan, Kam Sruan and Thwa Thosamat.