

Thesis Title	A Comparative Study of the Central Thai, Lanna Thai, North Eastern Thai and Southern Thai Versions of the Candaghat Literary Text.
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Academic Year	1998

ABSTRACT

This research is a comparative study of the Central, the Lanna (Northern), the North Eastern and the Southern versions of the Candaghat, a rework of a jāṭaka tale, in order to give light to its literary history, purpose and popularity. Both literary and social aspects will be studied.

The result of this study reveals that the story of the Candaghat originated from the Paṇṇāsa Jāṭaka, a Lanna collection of non-canonical jāṭaka tales. The Candaghat Jāṭaka was rewritten in a folktale of Northern Region. Later it was transmitted to the North Eastern, the adjacent region where there was influence of Lanna in the past. The Northern and the North Eastern versions are, therefore, closely similar. The Central version is likely to be derived from the Paṇṇāsa Jāṭaka too. The story follows those of the North and the North Eastern versions, with the exception of the versifications and the dictions. The Southern version is believed to derive from the Central since it shares the development of the story with the latter, only with a slight difference at the end.

The Candaghat is a jāṭaka tale which aims at instructing the readers/listeners of the law of Karma and the benefit of gratitude and merit. The composer is capable in narrative technique, as we can see in each version that the poetic dictions are imaginative and clearly narrate story.

The concept and social value in all four versions of the Candaghat reflect the beliefs and thoughts of the people who are in common as being Thai but slightly different with their local characteristics. A folk literature such as the Candaghat is therefore meaningful and worth reading as a reflection of the local people's thoughts and worldviews.