

Thesis Title	A Comparative Study of Pali Pathamasambodhi in the Lanna and the Central Thai Versions	
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Abstract

This thesis is a study of the Buddha's biography in literary works in Pali from 4 fascicles of Lanna palm-leaf manuscripts of Wat Lai-Hin, Ko-Kha district, Lampang province, which were inscribed in 2135 B.E. The main objective of this study is to compare biographies of the Buddha in the Lanna Pali Pathamasambodhi and in the Central Thai version with the focus on the plot, subject matter and styles of writing.

It is found that the biographies of the Buddha in Pali, which were written in Thailand, were influenced by the concepts and writing styles from Sri Lanka. The influence came through two channels. First, it was passed on and spread from the neighbouring countries such as Myanmar and Pegu. The other way was attributed to the monks in Thailand who went to continue their study of Buddhism and Pali language in Sri Lanka. There are a number of various versions of literary works on the biography of the Buddha which were written in Thailand. Despite differences in the titles, all of the literary works reflect the attitudes and concepts of Theravada Buddhism which regards the Buddha as an ordinary person who, through practices of perfection in numerous lives as a Bodhisatta, attained Buddhahood, the highest goal in life.

The comparative study of Pali Pathamasambodhi in the Lanna and the Central Thai versions reveals that the concepts about the Lord Buddha in both versions were strictly based on the old Theravada Buddhism. The differences of concepts between the Lanna and the Central

Thai versions lie in the subject matter about Sakya clan, which is present only in Central Thai version, with details depicting the Buddha as a historical figure.

With regard to the comparative study of plot and subject matter in the two versions, it is found that the Lanna version has no complete plot and has been shortened to have only chapter 9 [Dhammacakkappavattana Parivatta]. In addition, the theme is very similar to the biography of Buddha in the Sanskrit text [Lalitavistara]. In the Central Thai version, however, the plot and subject matter are absolutely complete and much longer than the Lanna version with the addition of two more chapters in the introduction [Vivahamangalaparivatta Pubbabhaga and Pacchimabhaga] and the expansion of chapter 14 [Dhammacakka Parivatta] that makes it a 30-chapter text.

As for the styles of writing, it is found that both versions are synthetically and semantically correct and complete. The difference is that in the Lanna version simple words for communication and expressions are used, whereas in the Central Thai version literary works are used so as to praise the Buddha.

Finally, the study also focuses on the values of Pali Pathamasambodhi as the Buddhist literature, as a literature for rituals and as a work of art. All of these values reflect the faith and respect the Buddhists have for the Buddha, the Perfect One, who inspires all creative works in paintings and sculpture. In addition, the Lanna version is often recited during auspicious occasions in order to bestow holiness and sacredness onto Buddha images.