

Thesis Title

A Study of the Mahavessantara Jataka,
the Lao Version of Wat Saensukharam, Luang Prabang
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Name

Concentration

Thai Epigraphy

Department

Oriental Languages

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Abstract

The purpose of this thesis is to study the Lao version of Buddhist literary work entitled the Mahavessantara Jataka of Wat Saensukharam, Luang Prabang, the Democratic Republic of Lao people. The thesis is divided into 6 chapters. Chapter One contains the following topics: introduction, aims, limitation and method of the study. Chapter Two deals with the characteristics of Lao characters and their orthography. From the study we find that both Lao characters and their orthography are similar to the Thai counterparts. Chapter Three deals with the sources of the story, the purpose of its composition. From the study we find that there are certain common and different features between the Thai version and the Lao version. It seems that the Lao of Lan Chang Kingdom acquired the original text from Lanna Kingdom and altered it at certain places to suit the social conditions of Laos. Chapter Four deals with the analysis of the text in the following aspects: The plot, the roles of the characters in the story, and rhetorical values. Chapter Five deals with the analysis in the following aspects: Social life and custom of the Lao people, their way of life according to 12 Heets and 14 Klongs (Codes of conduct) which is closely related to that of the Thai people since both people belong to the same ethnic origin. In addition Buddha's teaching which is the religious principles guiding the two peoples is also investigated. Chapter Six deals with the conclusion and suggestion. We find that much benefit can be derived from the study from various aspects such as history, archaeology language, the better understanding between the two people, conservation of art and custom of both countries and lastly the promotion of the practice according to the Buddha's teaching which will lead to social harmony as a whole.