

Thesis Title	Forests as Appeared in the Tipitaka and the Villagers' Beliefs : A Case Study of the Villagers' Beliefs in Forest Conservation in Nan.
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### Abstract

The purpose of this research was to study forests as appeared in the Tipitaka and the villagers' beliefs. It was a case study of the villagers' beliefs in the forest conservation in Nan. This research consisted of two parts. First, the documentary research was conducted from the Tipitaka (Buddhist Canon) and other relevant documents. Second, the field research is undertaken from sampling 16 monks, some are "forest ordination projectors", and 50 villagers who participated in the project at Ban Hadket, Tombon Muang Chang, Amphor Muang, Nan.

Findings from the documentary research conveys that forests as appeared in the Tipitaka includes important elements such as environment and resource to the utilization of wealth for all societies in different ways. The ways of resource management according to social organization conditions shaped the worldview, belief and culture of a community.

Forests as appeared in the Buddhist view convey two meanings as environment and natural resource.

First, forests appeared as natural resource, supplying four basic living factors; food, dwelling, clothing and medicine. The essential purpose of using forest was to attain the ultimate spiritual goal of self-control. The way to seek resource and management by moral means for the further sufficient dhamma practice.

Second, forests as an environment suitable for the Enlightenment reflect calmness which are rooted to motivate spirit to achieve reality of ultimate goal. Forests are one sample of any concrete things that reflect Dhamma such as Samāṇalagaṣṇa (soullessness).

So forests are an instruments to teach Dhamma. When one gets harmony with reality, one's attitude is indifferent to anything. This attitude is called 'conservative'.

Findings from field research indicate that the villagers' attitude to forests are fundamental to supply the four requisites and economic wealth associated with their profession as farmers. So they often go into forests to search for their means of survival such as food and house-building (42%). This villagers' attitude is partly different from that of the monks' in that forests do not only supply substantial utilized materials but also the source of knowledge (81.25%). Besides, both monks and villagers agree to these issues; Forests are symbol of calmness (monks 100%, villagers 100%), even though they are sometimes the origins of dangerous things. Forests are spiritual-beings (monks 56.25%, villagers 82.00%). If forests are extinct, man will also be so (monks 93.75%, villagers 84.00%). Man should be permitted (by spiritual-beings) to use any material from forests (monks 56.25%, villagers 64.00%). And both groups agree that forests have been drastically destroyed by selfish capitalists and some villagers (monks 81.25%, villagers 96.00%). So they share the same opinion to reform some rituals in order to resolve this problem, and also to change their ethical behavior by means of learning within their cultural framework and by creating public consciousness for mutual responsibilities (monks 93.00%, villagers 92.00%).