

A STUDY OF SAMKOK: The First Thai Translation of a Chinese Novel

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Sāmkok สามก๊ก is a Thai translation of a 14th-century Chinese novel, *San-kuo yen-i* 三國演義, by Lo Kuan-chung 羅貫中 by a team of translators under the editorial supervision of Chāophrayā Phrakhlāng (Hon), a prominent Thai poet and nobleman. The translation was started in the late 18th century and finished in the early 19th century. It was commissioned by King Rama I during a time of military and political change and was largely intended as a text of military tactics, but it became a major literary work in its own right.

Sāmkok is an important work in Thai literary history not only because it is the first work of translation made from a Chinese source, but also because it has a unique place in Thai literature as the only translation from Chinese to receive general acclaim as a literary work. To be sure, there are translations and reworkings of other foreign literature that are recognized. But *Sāmkok* is the only one from Chinese that is respected and recognized as a work of art and a great source of literary entertainment. There are several subsequent translations from Chinese fiction but none has received such a prestigious appraisal.

There are two possible approaches to studying *Sāmkok* and thereby accounting for its unique position in Thai literature. One is to study *Sāmkok* as a work of Thai literature in its own right. The other is to investigate *Sāmkok* as a translation and see how the translation treats its original by comparing the two texts to find what features are derived and what features are new.

A comparison of *Sāmkok* with the Chinese original shows the following differences. In format of presentation, *Sāmkok* changes the literary form to pure prose, rearranges the chapters, provides new chapter headings and a new table of contents. It changes the literary medium, the style, and the format so that a new genre of prose fiction is created. The language of *Sāmkok* is idiomatically adjusted to Thai usage, including the use of royal speech, special pronouns, various systems of measurement, and the lunar calendar. It changes the language and the content in compliance with Thai language usages and cultural context, with the

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result that the translation becomes natural, understandable, and appealing. And it also uses language at a high literary level and of high quality. *Sāmkok* discards the technique of creating suspense, the use of verse for narrative purposes, and the exciting way of introducing the characters. It adopted instead a simple, straightforward style of narration and made use of an omniscient narrator. Only 40% of the text of *Sāmkok* gives approximate translation, while the majority is largely a rewriting of the ideas gathered from the original Chinese. The content of *Sāmkok* also reveals a major change in the philosophical framework; it leaves out the Chinese concept of *T' ien* as the Creator and systematically adopts the Buddhist concept of *bun-kam* or the principle of moral retribution. In consequence, the idea of fate, heroism, and tragedy, which is central to the Chinese original, has changed in its meaning and significance to the story.

It becomes clear from the investigation that *Sāmkok* is drastically changed from its original. It makes a total adaptation to Thai literary conventions, to the Thai language, and to the Thai world view. *Sāmkok*, a unique Thai work of high literary quality, is not a strict translation, but a highly adaptive work. Being so, it has achieved widespread acceptance not only as a didactic work but also as a popular source of entertainment.

I

Social and Political Setting

With the sudden increase of Chinese immigrants after the fall of the Ayutthaya อยุธยา Kingdom (1350-1767), particularly during the reigns of King Taksin ตากสิน (r. 1767-1782) and King Rama I (r. 1782-1809) (1), Chinese influence on diverse aspects of the Thai life including literature was phenomenal. Immigration of Chinese to Siam was of course not a new movement, for early Chinese settlers could be found as early as the thirteenth century when the first diplomatic missions between Siam and China took place. (2) Henceforth, the growth of Chinese immigrants increased steadily but slowly.

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1. The former had Thonburi as its capital and was often referred to as the Thonburi period. King Rama I, who ruled the Kingdom after King Taāksin, moved the capital to Bangkok and proclaimed his own dynasty of Chakri.
 2. For further information as to the Sino-Thai historical relations and the early movement of Chinese immigration to Thailand during the period from the thirteenth century to 1767, see Kenneth P. Landon, *The Chinese in Thailand* (1941; rpt. New York: Russell & Russell, 1973), pp. 1-6; Likhit Hoontrakul, *The Historical Records of the Siamese-Chinese Relations* (Bangkok: n.p., 1953), p. 103; George William Skinner, *Chinese Society in Thailand: An Analytical History* (London: Oxford University Press, 1957), pp. 1-20; Phaithūn Mīkuson ไพฑูริย์ มีกุล *Prawattisāt Thai Pravechitāsastrī Thai* (Thai History), (Mahāsārakhrām: Pridā kānphim, 1978), pp. 209-214.

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It was only after the collapse of Ayutthayā that the influx of Chinese people became extraordinary.

There are three major factors that contributed to the unprecedented flow of Chinese immigrants in 18th-century Thailand. The first factor has to do with the problem of underpopulation which was a serious situation right after the devastating attack on Ayutthayā by the Burmese in 1767. The capital city of Ayutthayā was left in a state of total ruin most of its population of approximately two hundred thousand having been either plundered or evacuated as captives. The country's population which was already low relative to agricultural productivity because of war with its toll in deaths and forced emigration, was especially depleted during the ruinous wars with Burma after 1759. (3) Upon the ascension of King Tāksin who unified the country four months afterwards, there occurred a crisis in which the demand for manpower was critical, for the new ruler had only about ten thousand followers in the new capital. (4) This was 5% of the number of population of Ayutthayā city prior to its destruction. Throughout the course of Thai history such events pertaining to the lack of population or manpower had been quite common following each war between Siam and her neighbors. (5) However, the destruction of Ayutthayā and the diminution of its citizens by 1767 was so great that the new ruler was forced to build a new center of Thai civilization at Thonburī ธนบุรี as well as to make recruiting manpower the first priority. The need of manpower was at that time critical not only for agricultural cultivation which was the mainstay of the economy of the country, but also for military purposes, in view of the necessity to ensure the freedom and stability of the country. (6) Under these circumstances the movement of people from neighboring countries and China was especially welcome. Since Chinese people were recognized by the Thais as free men, the former could offer all kinds of labor services.

The necessity to reestablish international commerce with China was the second factor that resulted in the great influx of Chinese merchants and tradesmen

3. Skinner, p. 30.

4. Chānwit Kasēsiri, "Mōng Prawattisāt ton Rattanakōsin," มองประวัติศาสตร์ต้นรัตนโกสินทร์ (Viewing the History of Early Rattanakōsin Period) *Sinlapa watthanatham* ศิลปวัฒนธรรม 2, No. 18 (April 1981), 16.

5. Akin Rabhibhadana, Wilailak Mekarat, and Walwipa Burutrattanaphan, *Social History of the Thai Kingdom 1782-1873*, Part I of *Persistence within Change* (Bangkok: Thai Khadi Research Institute, Thammasāt University, 1981), p. 5.

6. Akin, p. 6.

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to Thailand during this period. With many wars going on, the country needed to have enough sources of revenues to cover military and other expenses. The Chinese played a significant role in acquiring a major amount of the state income, as Thailand's international trade depended largely on the assistance of Chinese agents and crews. Her trade with China at that time represented the country's sole economic output. (7) It is known that the government of King Rama I received a large part of the revenues from trading activities with China. (8) Due to mutual promotion in trade there was then a rapid expansion in the volume and variety of the goods of the two countries. And since the Europeans were for the most part effectively excluded from the Siam trade during this period, its growth was borne mainly by Chinese and Thai. (9) The general position of Chinese merchants and shippers improved in consequence, not only because of the increased private trade sponsored financially by Thai officials and nobles, but also because Chinese were largely used in the royal trading enterprises. (10) As a result of these developments, the Thai government could only encourage Chinese immigration. As one writer comments:

The first two Jakkri kings developed state trading and royal monopolies to an unprecedented degree. In order to increase the production of Siam's exports and provide crews for their royal ships, they encouraged Chinese immigration. Even the ships belonging to the kings brought back Chinese passengers, in direct violation of Manchu tributary and trading regulations. Writing in 1822, Finlayson stated that, because the king and his ministers wished to increase the produce of the country, "Chinese emigrants were . . . encouraged beyond all former example." From this we may assume that the upward trend in Chinese immigration, begun

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7. Skinner, pp. 11, 18; Phonlakūn 'Angkinan พลกุล อังกินันท์ *Botbāt chāo Chīn nai Prathēt Thai nai ratchasamai Phrabāt Somdet Phra Chunlachōmklāo Chāoyīhua* บทบาทชาวจีนในประเทศไทยในรัชสมัยพระบาทสมเด็จพระจุลจอมเกล้าเจ้าอยู่หัว (The Role of Chinese People in Thailand in the Reign of King Chulālongkōn), (Bangkok: Prāchak kānphim, 1972), pp. 14-5.
 8. Akin, p. 142.
 9. Skinner, p. 18.
 10. Manlikā Rū angraphī มัลลิกา เรื่องระพี *Botbāt khōng chāo Chīn nai dān sētthakit sangkhom lae sinlapakam Thai samai ratchakān thī nu' ng thu' ng ratchakān thī sī haeng Krung Rattanakōsin* บทบาทของชาวจีนในด้านเศรษฐกิจ สังคม และศิลปกรรมไทย สมัยรัชกาลที่ 1 ถึงรัชกาลที่ 4 แห่งกรุงรัตนโกสินทร์ (The Role of Chinese People in Thai Economics, Society, and Artistic Activities during the Period from the First to the Fourth Reigns of Rattanakōsin Dynasty), (Bangkok: Chulālongkōn University Press, 1975), p. 46.

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in King Taksin's reign, continued without break into the nineteenth century. (11)

The third factor that attracted Chinese immigrations was the fact that the new Thai leaders were themselves of Chinese descent. The case of King Taksin whose father (12) was a native of the Ch' ao-chou 漳州 dialect was outstanding. Because of Taksin's favorable attitude towards his own ethnic group, the Chinese under his reign increased and prospered very rapidly. The Ch' ao-chou dialect people in particular received most privileged treatment from the Taksin government as they were called the "royal Chinese" (*ch'in luang* จันทหลวง) and had residential quarters of their own. (13) "Taksin's policies doubtless attracted many Teochius [Ch' ao-chou] to Bangkok, where they predominate today." (14) On the basis of eyewitness accounts of the first of Taksin's reign, a French historian recounted in 1770: "The Chinese colony is the most numerous and flourishing, by the extent of its commerce and by the privileges which it enjoys." (15) John Crawford, one of the first Europeans to visit and write about Siam after Taksin reigned, wrote:

It was through the extraordinary encouragement which he [Taksin] gave to his countrymen that they were induced to resort to the country and settle it in such numbers. This extraordinary accession of Chinese population constitutes almost the only great and material change which has taken place in the state of the kingdom during many centuries. (16)

King Rama I, who ruled after King Taksin and founded the present Čhakrī

11. Skinner, pp. 24-25.
12. King Taksin's father whose name was Tāe Hai-hong แต่ไฮฮอง was a Chinese tax farmer in the last years of the Ayutthaya period who received an honorific title of "Khun Phat" ขุนพิพัฒน์. See Landon, p. 7; Phaitūn, p. 1.
13. Phonlakūn, p. 13; Manlikā, p. 46.
14. Skinner, p. 21.
15. M. Turpin, *Histoire civile et naturelle du Royaume de Siam* (Paris: n.p., 1771), p. 9. Quoted in Skinner, p. 21 and Victor Purcell, *The Chinese in Southeast Asia* (London: Oxford University Press, 1965), p. 92.
16. John Crawford, *Embassy to Siam and Cochín-China* (n.p.: n.d.), p. 450. Quoted in Skinner, p. 21 and Purcell, p. 95.
17. The fact about King Rama I's mother's Chinese background is recorded in a letter written by King Rama IV, the grandson of King Rama I and the son of King Rama II, to Sir John Bowring printed in *The Kingdom and the People of Siam* by John Bowring, Vol. I (London: n.p., 1857), p. 66.

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จักรี dynasty, was of Chinese descent on his mother's side. (17) It was perhaps because of this Chinese background also that King Rama I, like King Tāksin, encouraged the immigration of Chinese and their full participation in trade and shipping. As a result, the Chinese made up the largest portion of the nation's immigrants and constituted quite a significant proportion of the capital's population.

The Chinese population within the early Bangkok period was estimated by William Skinner to be about 200,000 altogether, while the total population of the country was estimated to be about 5 million. (18) This number included 100,000 China-born Chinese as well as those who were born in the Kingdom but considered themselves Chinese. "They were concentrated in Bangkok and the tin mining areas of the south, and scattered in coastal towns. Bangkok was the chief center of Chinese concentration, and they probably constituted over half the population in the capital throughout the first half of the nineteenth century." (19)

The prestige of Chinese civilization had for long been high in Siam and the Chinese immigrants had well established themselves in the Thai social system ever since the beginning of the Ayutthayā epoch. (20) Yet, their impact on the Thai social, economic, and cultural life had never been so influential as compared to that of the Thonburi-Early Bangkok period. Because of the government's favorable regard, Chinese were then the sole group of foreigners in Thailand who enjoyed social rights and privileges. They were allowed to retain their national identity by keeping the custom of wearing queues and using Chinese names. (21) Unlike other aliens, the Chinese were never considered as foreigners by the Thai, perhaps due to a similar religious belief in Buddhism, and therefore they were allowed to marry Thai citizens. (22) Moreover, they were totally exempted from corvée labor which

18. Skinner, pp. 71, 79.

19. Akin, p. 101. Crawford estimated in the reign of King Rama II out of 50,000 Bangkokians there were 31,000 Chinese. Jacob Tomlin in his work written in 1844 claimed to have access to the official report of census of the year 1828 that the population of Bangkok was 77,300 of which 31,000 were Chinese. The figures reported by Crawford and Tomlin were quite close. This information is cited in Chanwit's article, p. 16. Dr. Ruschenberger, a medical officer and historian who accompanied a group of American envoys to visit Southeast Asia during 1835-1837, reported that in 1836 there were over 400,000 Chinese in Bangkok out of a total population of 500,000. This is taken from *The Chinese in Southeast Asia*, p. 98.

20. See Skinner, pp. 14-15; Phonlakūn, p. 10; Manlikā, p. 13 and Purcell, p. 91.

21. Akin, p. 102.

22. Skinner, p. 11 and Phaithūn, p. 211.

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was required for those belonging to the class of commoners of *phrai* ไพร่. (23) Being unbound by this obligation, Chinese immigrants were able to move about freely in the kingdom, to render services and labor for payment or to undertake private business, and these were again the kind of privileges the commoner class was devoid of. Occupation-wise the Chinese were mainly engaged in wage labor and entrepreneurial trades with no competition from the Thai. (24) This development largely continued throughout the nineteenth century, as one scholar notes:

By 1850 the Chinese had gained almost complete control of the interregional trade of Thailand. A number of documents mention a group of people term [sic] *sēthī* (wealthy ones) or *chāo khūa* (Chinese merchants). King Mongkut's Royal Proclamation of 1867 mentions two such *sēthī*. (25)

Being outside the formal system (which would otherwise have required that they become *phrai* and serve corvée), the limitation on upward mobility of *phrai* did not affect them. Usually, through trading in particular, they could accumulate wealth which was the most important means of moving into the upper class as noble officials. (26) The leaders of the Chinese communities, according to Skinner, were constantly incorporated into the Thai nobility. (27) One possible way to elevate one's social status was intermarriage with Thai women from noble families. (28)

Chinese art and culture were also permeating the Thai life style of the time. Chinese artistic style and technique in architecture and other forms of art introduced by imported Chinese builders and artisans were employed in constructing temples and palaces. (29) Many Chinese art objects were imported to be used as decorative

23. Akin, p. 47. In lieu of the corvée, the Chinese were required to pay head tax of about 2 *bāt* บาท a year. As for the *phrai* or commoners, different amounts of time for corvée were required according to their classification as *phrai*. In general, there were three kinds: the *phrai lūang* ไพร่หลวง, *phrai som* ไพร่สม, and *thāt* ทาส (slave). The first group, *phrai lūang*, belonging to the king, was required to serve the State corvée labor for three months annually, the second group being attached to private individuals was required to serve only one month and the slave or *thāt* one week a year. See Akin, p. 46

24. Manlikā, p. 46.

25. Akin, p. 102.

26. Akin, p. 114.

27. See Skinner, pp. 153-154.

28. It is a fact that Chinese women never emigrated in those days. Skinner, p. 3.

29. Manlikā, pp. 185, 187.

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items in the royal palaces and buildings. The influence of Chinese painting in the use of color and line was also evident on many walls in temples and palaces. (30) As for the art of Chinese play or opera, it had long been accepted by the Thai. It was recorded that by 1685 Chinese plays were already popular among Thai audiences. Two groups of French visitors in 1685–1686 and 1687–1688 witnessed the fact that the Chinese dramatic performances were much enjoyed in Siam at the time of their visits. Victor Purcell having reviewed the writings of these visitors summarized their impressions as follows:

The embassy was received with elaborate entertainment concluding with a Chinese play There were actors from Canton and others from Fukien: the Fukien were the most magnificent and the most ceremonious After the comedy there was a play by Chinese marionettes, ... Regarding the music the Abbe [a member of the French delegates] was affected by it very much.

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De la Loubère who was in Ayutthaya about three years afterwards, in 1687 and 1688, ... also speaks in amusing terms of a theatrical performance. “The one was a Chinese comedy, which I would willingly have seen to the end, but it was adjourned after some scenes to go to dinner. The Chinese comedians, whom the Siamese do love without understanding them, do speak in the throat ...” (31)

There were other Chinese customs that came to be adopted by the Thai. For instance, the custom of mourning by shaving one’s head was adopted beginning in the reign of King Rama I, as for example, on the occasion when Prince Surasihanāt สุรสีห์พนม, the brother of King Rama I, died in the year 1806. In 1809 when King Rama I died the same mourning custom was demanded by King Rama II as recorded in an official document. In another documental record written in 1817, mention is made of an order given to all royal members, nobles, officials, civil servants, and citizens to mourn for the death of a prince by shaving the head once a month until the ceremony of cremation took place. (32) Nowadays this custom is no longer practised among the Thai. It was cancelled officially in the reign of King Rama IV

30. Chānwit, pp. 18–20.

31. Purcell, pp. 89–90.

32. Manlikā, pp. 173–174.

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(r. 1851–1868) when the Western impact became more significant. (33)

It is indisputable that the significance and influence of the Chinese is indeed an indispensable subject in the study of the history of the Thonburī–Early Bangkok period. This view is shared at least by two contemporary historians. Chānwit Kasētsiri ชานวิททย์ เกษตรศิริ suggested in an article written in 1981 that the historical development in the Thonburī–Early Bangkok period should be viewed differently from that during the Ayutthayā times because of the inevitable impact of the Chinese element in the bloodline of the new rulers and in the society as a whole. (34) Loraine Gesick in her 1976 dissertation similarly perceived a new spirit and energy as being put forth by the Bangkok rulers in the task of national regeneration. Specifically, Gesick attempts to show in her research that although the founder of the Čhakrī dynasty, King Rama I, took the Ayutthayā civilization as his model, he demonstrated his creative genius in manipulating the tradition with great skill as he adapted traditional ideals to the practical necessities of the changing world. (35) Indeed, King Rama I not only restored the old institutions of the Ayutthayā Kingdom but also initiated many important new projects in order to mold a strong and civilized state under his rule. (36)

Literary reconstruction was one of the major accomplishments achieved in this reign. Aside from the effort to imitate and revive the traditional heritage of Ayutthayā literature, a new kind of inspiration emerged. It became evident that King Rama I and his contemporaries were specially fond of stories from foreign lands. Never before had the Thai enjoyed such a variety of literary tastes. Literature originating in India, Lanka, Iran, Java, Mon, and China was used as source of inspiration as it was either adapted or translated into Thai.

From India, the story of Rama, the ancient Indian hero from the great epic *Ramayāna*, was adapted in 1789, to become a Thai literary classic called *Rāmakien* รามเกียรติ์ (The Honor of Rama), this work being attributed to the King. (37)

33. Manlikā, pp. 175.

34. Chānwit, pp. 17–19.

35. Loraine Marie Gesick, “Kingship and Political Integrity in Traditional Siam, 1767–1824,” Diss. Cornell University 1976.

36. See Prince Dhāni’s article entitled “The Reconstruction of Rama I of the Chakri Dynasty,” In *Collected Articles* by Prince Dhāni (Bangkok: n.p., 1976), pp. 145–168.

37. The *Rāmakien* by King Rama I is the most complete Thai version of the Indian epic *Ramayāna*. Phutthayōtfā Čhulālōk, King of Thailand พระบาทสมเด็จพระพุทธยอดฟ้าจุฬาโลก *Rāmakien* รามเกียรติ์ (The Honor of Rama), (Bangkok: Su’ ksāphan, 1964–1965).

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'*Unarut* อุณรุท (Aniruddha in Sanskrit, the grandson of Krishna), another piece of royal writing written in 1783, was a Thai adaptation of the story of the Indian epic *Mahabharata*. Also a religious text in Pali known as *Mahāwansā* มหาวันสา originating in Lanka was translated into Thai in 1797 at the King's command by a certain Phya Thammapurōhit พญาธรรมปุโรหิต. The tale of the *Sipsōng liem* สิบสองเหลี่ยม (The Duodecagon) which was written in 1783 under royal patronage was in fact a translation of an ancient Iranian literary work. Two other royal writings, *Dālang* ดาลัง (The Greater Tale of Inao) and '*Inao* อิเหนา (The Lesser Tale of Inao), borrowed their themes from the adventurous Panji (Inao) tales of Java. The work of *Rāchathirāt* ราชธิราช (The King of Kings) which was written in 1785 and attributed to Chāophrayā Phrakhlāng (Hon) เจ้าพระยาพระคลัง (หน) (d. 1805) was a translation of Mon history covering the years 1321-1569. *Sāmkok* สามก๊ก (Three Kingdoms) and *Saihan* ไชฮั่น (Western Han) were two works of translation from Chinese historical novels produced during this reign. The translation of *Sāmkok* was supervised by Chāophrayā Phrakhlāng (Hon) and *Saihan* by Prince Anurak Thēvēt อนรรักษ์เทเวศร์ (d. 1807), the King's nephew. (38) The King purportedly made the selection of these two works and ordered to have them translated into Thai as part of his contribution to the literary reconstruction project.

It is significant to note that until the time of King Rama I there had never been any attempt to introduce Chinese literature and use it as a source of inspiration for Thai literary work. *Sāmkok* and *Saihan* were the first two literary products from a Chinese source ever to appear in Thai.

There had, however, been some precedent, during the Ayutthaya period, for taking stories from other countries and rendering them in Thai. For instance, there exists a poetic piece which is believed to be a prototype of the *Rāmakien* story. It is called *Rāchāphīlāp kham chan* ราชพิลาป คำจันทน์ (A Royal Lamentation in *chan* (39)) otherwise known as *Nirāt Sīdā* นิราศสี่ดา (A *nirāt* (40) of *Sīdā*) dated to the

38. The work of *Saihan*, like *Sāmkok*, is an historical novel from the Chinese. Since the work is undated, one may presume that it antedates the year 1807 in which its supervisor, Prince Anurak Thēvēt, died. *Saihan* deals with the story of Chinese history from the period of the Ch' in 秦 dynasty (221-207 B.C.) to that of the Western Han 西漢 (206 B.C.-A.D. 24). The first printing edition of *Saihan* in two volumes appeared in 1874. Several printings have been made since then without any substantial editing work. The 1974 edition published by Phraephithayā represents the current standard version of *Saihan*.

39. *Chan* is a verse form consisting of rhymes and a definite metrical scheme. For more information on the kind and characteristics of *chan*, see Plū'ang Na Nakhōn เป็ลื่อง ณ นคร, *Prawat wannakhadi Thai ประวัติวรรณคดีไทย Thai Literary History*, (Bangkok: Thai Watthanā phānit, 1980), pp. 9, 25-26.

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time of King Nārāi นารายณ์ (r. 1656–1688) of Ayutthayā. It deals with Rama's journey in the wilderness in search of his abducted wife, Sīdā. (41) Also in the period of King Nārāi, the theme of 'Unarut was found in a poetic piece called 'Anirut kham chan อนิรุตกำจันท์ (Anirut ['Unarut] in chan) which was composed by the renowned poet Srīprāt ศรีปราชญ์ (fl. 1703). (42) By the time of King Borommakōt บรมโกศ (r. 1732–1758) of Late Ayutthayā, the story of 'Inao had already been a familiar theme in poetry as well as in dramatic performances. (43) And the 1783 version of *Sibsōng liem*, according to Prince Dhāni, was actually made from the 1753 Ayutthayā copy. (44)

Nevertheless, the works of *Sāmkok* and *Saihan* were significant as the beginning of a new literary trend initiated by King Rama I. And the appearance of the impact of Chinese literature on the Thai scene should be viewed as the inevitable result of the concentration of the cross-cultural influence between Thailand and China at that time.

As *Sāmkok* was the first choice for such an important project, it is appropriate, here, to look into factors that may have motivated this choice. First of all, one can pretty safely speculate that before the work was translated the Thai were already familiar with this Chinese tale -- so much so that there was at least a certain degree of popular demand for the book. By the late eighteenth century, the *San-kuo* story had already been popular in China for over 1,300 years and printed copies of the written text were then widely available. There was a good possibility that the educated people among the Chinese immigrants would have had in their possession some copies of the *San-kuo* either for the purpose of educating their offsprings or simply for enjoyment. At any rate, one can speculate that the Thai must have known of the *San-kuo* story through dramatic performances. As already mentioned,

40. *Nirāt* is a type of literature in verse written on the occasion of a journey during which the poet is separated from a loved one or from his favorite town. *Nirāt* is usually characterized by the theme of love and the melancholic mood caused by the separation.
41. Plū' ang, p. 208. The author of *Nirāt sīdā* is unknown. See Mōthayākōn โมทยากร, *Prawat wannakhadī Thai sī samai* ประวัติวรรณคดีไทยสี่สมัย (Four Periods of Thai Literary History), (Bangkok: Phitthayakhān, 1974), p. 76.
42. Plū' ang, p. 218. Information on the biography and works of Srīprāt can be found in Plū' ang pp. 116–130 and Mōthayākōn, pp. 78–83.
43. See Plū' ang, p. 286. As a matter of fact, *Dālang* and 'Inao by Rama I are revivals of versions written by King Borommakōt's daughters, Princess Kunthon คุนทอง and Princess Mongkut มงกุฎ, respectively. Mōthayākōn, pp. 95–97, 117–120.
44. Prince Dhāni, "The Reconstruction of Rama I of the Chakri Dynasty," p. 157.

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the Thai were known to have enjoyed Chinese plays since the seventeenth century. And long before that the *San-kuo* themes had been used in different types of dramatization by Chinese artists. As early as the Sui 隋 dynasty (581-618) the *San-kuo* stories were performed in puppet shows. During the Northern Sung 北宋 period (960-1127) they were dramatized in shadow plays (the *p' i-ying hsi* 皮影戲). There were plays during the Chin 金 period (1115-1234) known as *Yuan-pen* 院本 that dealt with the *San-kuo* events and figures. By the Yuan 元 dynasty (1277-1367) the themes from the *San-kuo* cycle became specially popular on stage in the *tsa-chü* 雜劇 plays. (45)

The fact that King Rama I himself was the one who selected the *San-kuo* work suggests the idea that the King possibly had some previous personal appreciation of the novel. Coming from a Chinese family on his wife's side, the King must have familiarized himself with this popular story and could very well have been attracted to it for the reason that he lived a kind of life quite similar to those of the heroes in the novel, i.e., being a warrior king and political leader in a time of chaos and disorder. So perhaps the novel's value as a text of war strategies and diplomatic tactics was what the King perceived to be worth transmitting into Thai. This speculation was earlier made by Prince Damrong in his 1928 article entitled "Tamnān nangsū *Sāmkok*" ตำนานหนังสือสามก๊ก (History of the Work of *Sāmkok*) where he says *Sāmkok* was translated perhaps "in order to bring benefit to the governmental affairs of the country." เพื่อประโยชน์ราชการบ้านเมือง (46) If one takes into consideration the political climate of the time and also the rulers' background, one can see that Prince Damrong's statement is not a farfetched conjecture.

The Thonburi period was a time of political chaos and power struggles within and without the country. In the first years of his reign, King Taksin had to fight against at least five internal political upheavals and throughout his reign the Burmese and Thai engaged in numerous battles. (47) King Taksin was apparently a brilliant military strategist and capable warrior, for he was able to unify the country in the short period of four months and eventually drive the Burmese out. Interestingly, King

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45. Winston Lih-yue Yang, "The Use of the *San-kuo chih* as a Source of the *San-kuo-chih yen-i*," Diss. Stanford University 1971, pp. 57-58. Henceforth cited as "The Use of the *San-kuo chih*".
 46. Prince Damrong Rāchānuphāp สมเด็จพระยาตราชานุกาฬ "Tamnān nangsū' *Sāmkok* ตำนานหนังสือสามก๊ก (History of the Work of *Sāmkok*)," in *Sāmkok* by Chāophrayā Phrakhlāng (Hon), (Bangkok: Bamrungsān, 1973), p. 13. Henceforth cited as "Tamnān".
 47. See Phaithūn Mikuson, *Prawattisāt samai Thonburī* ประวัติศาสตร์สมัยธนบุรี (History of the Thonburi Period), (Khōnkaen: 'Udomsin, n.d.), pp. 8, 21-33, 44-47. Henceforth cited as *Thonburī*.

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Tāksin had been assisted by voluntary Chinese troops in many battles. (48) It is possible, therefore, that King Tāksin who had knowledge of the Chinese language (49) would have at one time or other consulted the text of *San-kuo* as a guide in making moves or plans during the many wars of his times. Considering the similar nature of battles conducted during the Tāksin time and that of the *San-kuo* period, the possibility of consulting the *San-kuo* text during Tāksin's reign was fairly high. King Rama I being a close friend and King Tāksin's right-hand man throughout his reign (50) could have had experiences similar to those encountered in the *San-kuo* text. As a matter of fact, during King Tāksin's reign, King Rama I who served then as his generalissimo under the noble title *Chāophrayā Chakri* เจ้าพระยาจักรี was known to have used a certain trick in the warfare against Burma in 1775, which was similar to that used by Chu-ko Liang 諸葛亮 in the *San-kuo* story. (51) It is quite safe to assert that one of the reasons for translating *San-kuo yen-i* was the perception of King Rama I that some benefit was to be gained from the Chinese novel in the area of the knowledge of military tactics.

In summary, the general climate of the social and political environment helped to encourage the rapid growth of the Chinese community in Thailand during the period under study. First, the desperate demand for manpower following the ruinous wars with Burma between 1758-1767 opened a great opportunity for the Chinese immigrants who were recognized as free men to fulfill that need. Second, as the Chinese were at that time the key instrument for Thailand's international

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48. Phaithūn, *Thonburī*, p. 213 and Landon, p. 6.
49. Phaithūn, *Thonburī*, p. 2 and Landon, p. 7.
50. At the age of eight, Thōngduang ทองด้วง -- original name of King Rama I -- and Sin สิ้น (King Tāksin) who was two years older became pages of the same lord, Chāofā 'Uthumphōn เจ้าฟ้าอุทุมพร, the third son of King Barommakōt. They both served the last two Ayutthayā rulers for nine years, 1758-1767, before Tāksin became King. While King Tāksin was leading his army against Burma at Chonburi ชลบุรี, Thōngduang decided to join him there. During the fifteen years of King Tāksin's reign, the future King Rama I fought beside Tāksin against their mutual enemies in eleven campaigns which furthered the liberation of the country from Burmese domination. In the last campaigns under King Tāksin, King Rama I known then as Phra Ratchawarin พระราชวรินทร์ was the commander-in-chief of the Thai armies. The above information is from *The Restoration of Thailand under Rama I, 1782-1809*, trans. Greeley Stahl, by Klaus Wenk (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1968), pp. 2-3. One source has it that King Tāksin was once married to the eldest daughter of King Rama I and that makes them related by marriage. See Chalōem Yūwīangchai เฉลิม อยู่เที่ยงชัย, *Prawattisāt samai Krung Thonburī lae samai Krung Rattanakōsin* ประวัติศาสตร์สมัยกรุงธนบุรีและสมัยกรุงรัตนโกสินทร์ (History of the Thonburī and Rattanakōsin Periods), (Bangkok: Teacher's Training Department, 1971), p. 23.
51. See "Introduction" by Krom Sinlapākon กรมศิลปากร (The Department of Fine Arts) provided in the 1973 edition of *Sāmkok* published by Bamrungsān, pp. 8-9:

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trading which in turn was essential as the main source of the State revenue, the government's policy regarding Chinese immigration was accordingly favorable. Third, Chinese immigrants were attracted to the country by the fact that the new Thai rulers were of Chinese descent and for that reason good treatment and attitudes on the part of the Thai authorities seemed to be guaranteed. As a result, Chinese communities became dense, especially in the capital as they constituted over half of the population. By this time, the impact of the Chinese was greater than ever in social, economic, and cultural aspects. The influence of Chinese literature appeared for the first time in the form of literary writings, which was in part made possible by the enthusiastic interest in foreign literature by the King and his contemporaries. *Sāmkok*, the first piece of translated work from a Chinese text, seemed to be the most appropriate choice for two reasons: there was a demand for this popular Chinese tale among the Thai readers; and the text contained some useful knowledge applicable quite well to the nature of military campaigns of the time.

II

Historical Background

A. The Translation of *Sāmkok*

Previous studies on *Sāmkok* done by Thai scholars have shed little light on our knowledge about the piece of Chinese literature from which *Sāmkok* was translated. Information provided in those studies is sketchy and assumptive as supporting evidence is lacking. Prince Damrong¹, who was the first scholar to examine the background history of *Sāmkok*, mistakenly mentioned the title *San-kuo chih* in referring to the Chinese work used for the *Sāmkok* project. In his essay,

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1. Sources of information on Prince Damrong's life and works are ample and voluminous. Important ones are: 1) Phitthayalāp Phru' tthiyakōn พิทยลาภพฤฒิชยากร, "Phra damrat rū' ang Somdet Phrachāo Barommawongthōe Kromphrayā Damrong Rāchānuphāp," พระเจ้าวิสิษฐเรื่องสมเด็จพระเจ้าบรมวงศ์เธอ กรมพระยาดำรงราชานุภาพ (Discussion about Prince Damrong) in *Pathakhathā rū' ang Somdet Phrachāo Barommawongthōe Krom Phrayā Damrong Rāchānuphāp lae Phra prawat lūk lao* ป่ารุกษาเรื่อง สมเด็จพระเจ้าบรมวงศ์เธอ กรมพระยาดำรงราชานุภาพ และพระประวัติลูกเล่า (A Talk on Prince Damrong and His Biography Narrated by His Daughter), (Bangkok: Su' ksāphan, 1963), pp. 1-11; 2) Phūnphitsamai Ditsakun พูนพิศมัย ดิศกุล, same source as 1) above, pp. 201-268; 3) Chakkrit Nōranitphadungkān จักรกฤษณ์ นเรนิติผดุงการ *Somdet Phrachāo Barommawongthōe Kromphrayā Damrong Rāchānuphāp kap Krasuang Mahātthai* สมเด็จพระเจ้าบรมวงศ์เธอ กรมพระยาดำรงราชานุภาพ กับกระทรวงมหาดไทย (Prince Damrong and the Ministry of Interior), (Bangkok: Thammasāt University Press, 1963); 4) Sucharit Thāwōnsuk สุจริต ถาวรสุข, *Phra prawat lae ngān khōng Somdet Phrachāo Barommawongthōe Kromphrayā Damrong Rāchānuphāp* พระประวัติและงานของ สมเด็จพระเจ้าบรมวงศ์เธอ กรมพระยาดำรงราชานุภาพ (*Biography and Works of Prince Damrong*), 3 Volumes (Bangkok: Su' ksāphan, 1965).

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“Tamnān nangsū’ Sāmkok,” Prince Damrong writes:

หนังสือสามก๊กไม่ใช่เป็นพงศาวดารสามก๊ก จีนเรียกว่า “สามก๊กจี” แปลว่าจดหมายเหตุเรื่องสามก๊ก เป็นหนังสือซึ่งนักปราชญ์จีนคนหนึ่งเลือกเอาเรื่องในพงศาวดารตอนหนึ่งมาแต่งขึ้น โดยประสงค์จะให้เป็นที่ตำราสำหรับศึกษาอุบายการเมืองและการสงคราม และแต่งด้อย่างยิ่ง จึงเป็นหนังสือเรื่องหนึ่งซึ่งนับถือทั่วไปในประเทศจีนและตลอดไปถึงประเทศอื่น ๆ

ต้นตำนานของหนังสือสามก๊กนั้น ทราบว่าเดิมเรื่องสามก๊กเป็นแต่นิทานสำหรับเล่ากันอยู่ก่อน เมื่อถึงสมัยราชวงศ์ถัง (พ.ศ. 1161-1449) เกิดมีการเล่นจิวขึ้นในเมืองจีน พวกจิวก็ชอบเอาเรื่องสามก๊กไปเล่นด้วยเรื่องหนึ่งต่อมาถึงสมัยราชวงศ์ซ่ง (พ.ศ. 1820-1910) การแต่งหนังสือจีนเฟื่องฟูขึ้น มีผู้ชอบเอาเรื่องพงศาวดารมาแต่งเป็นหนังสืออ่าน แต่ก็ยังไม่ได้เอาเรื่องสามก๊กมาแต่งเป็นหนังสือ จนถึงสมัยราชวงศ์ใต้เหม็ง (พ.ศ. 1911-2186) จึงมีนักปราชญ์จีนชาวเมืองฮังจิวคนหนึ่ง ล่อกวางตง คิดแต่งหนังสือเรื่องสามก๊กขึ้นเป็นหนังสือ 120 ตอน

The Work of *Sāmkok* is not a common chronicle. It is called in Chinese “Sam-kok-chi” [*San-kuo chih*] which means the Record of the Three Kingdoms Period. It is a work written by a Chinese scholar who composed it from materials selected from a portion of the [Chinese] historical chronicles, with the intention of making it a text for studying political and military tactics. The book is so well written that it became one of the works which is highly regarded throughout China as well as in other countries.

With regard to the history of the work, *Sāmkok*, it is known originally as a folk tale. In the T’ang dynasty (B.E. 1161-1449) [A.D. 618-906] there appeared [Chinese] opera performances in China in which the *San-kuo* story was dramatized. Later, in the period of the Yuan dynasty (B.E. 1820-1910) [A.D. 1277-1367] fictional writing increasingly flourished. There were writers who liked to write stories based on historical annals. By that time, however, the history of the *San-kuo* period had not been fictionalized. By the time of the Ming dynasty (B.E. 1911-2186) [A.D. 1368-1643]

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a Chinese scholar from Hang-chiu [Hang-chou 杭州] named Lo Kuan-tung [Lo Kuan-chung 羅貫中]² wrote the work of *Sāmkok* [i.e. the *San-kuo yen-i* 三國演義] in one hundred and twenty chapters.³

In the above passage, Prince Damrong quotes an incorrect title for the Chinese work which he is discussing. From his description about the book, it is obvious that Prince Damrong is actually referring to *San-kuo yen-i*, not *San-kuo chih* which is a completely different piece of literature written much earlier, in the third century A.D., by a Chinese historian named Ch'en Shou 陳壽 (233-297).

⁴ Later Thai scholars have failed to point out this mistake, although they are able to distinguish the work of *San-kuo chih* from the fictional version of Lo Kuan-chung.

⁵ Perhaps one reason behind this restraint of criticism is the fact that Prince Damrong has been regarded by the Thais to be the most outstanding and the most

2. *Lo Kuan-chung, the supposed author of San-kuo yen-i*, was variously known as Lo Pen 羅本, Lo Kuan 羅貫, and Lo Tao-pen 羅道本. Little is known of Lo Kuan-chung's life. He was either a native of T' ai-yuan 太原, or of Ch' ien-t' ang 錢塘 in modern Hang-chou. It was believed that he lived during the late Yuan and early Ming periods, approximately between the years 1330 and 1400. Many historical romances and plays were attributed to him but the lack of knowledge about him makes it difficult for later scholars and writers to accept Lo's authorship. For more information on Lo Kuan-chung's life and works, see *Dictionary of Ming Biography*, Vol. I, ed. L. Carrington Goodrich and Chao-ying Fang (New York: Columbia University Press, 1976), pp. 978-908; Winston Yang, "The Use of the *San-kuo chih*," pp. 62-64; Hsieh Wu-liang 謝允量, *Lo Kuan-chung yü Ma Chih-yuan 羅貫中與馬致遠* (Lo Kuan-chung and Ma Chih-yuan), (Shanghai: Shang-wu yin-shu-kuan, 1930), pp. 12-61; Chao Ts'ung 趙聰, *Chung-kuo szu ta hsiao-shuo chih yen-chiu 中國四大小說之研究* (The Study of the Four Great Chinese Novels), (Hong Kong: Yu-lien ch' u-pan-she, 1964), pp. 114-117; Wu Shuang-i 吳雙翼, *Ming Ch' ing hsiao-shuo chiang-hua 明清小說講話* (Discussion of the Ming and Ch' ing Fiction), (Hong Kong: Shanghai shu-chu, 1976), pp. 30-31; Wen Chi 文輯, ed., *Chung-kuo ku-tien hsiao-shuo chiang-hua 中國古典小說講話* (Discussion of Traditional Chinese Fiction), (Hong Kong: Shanghai shu-chu, 1973), p. 68.

3. "Tamnān," p. 8.

4. A good discussion on the author and the text of the *San-kuo chih* can be found in Winston Yang's dissertation.

5. See Prapin Manomaivibool ประพิน มโนมัยวิบูลย์, "Sāmkok: Kān su' ksā priēphiep," สามก๊ก: การศึกษาเปรียบเทียบ (Sāmkok: A Comparative Study) Thesis, Chulālongkōn University 1966, p. 43; Sang Phatthanōthai สังข์ พัทธโนทัย "Khamnam khōng phūtaeng," คำนำของผู้แต่ง (Author's Introduction) in the *Phichai songkhrām Sāmkok* พิชัยสงครามสามก๊ก (The Military Tactics in Sāmkok), (Bangkok: Sūn kānphim, 1969), pp. 1-3.

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knowledgable historian in the country.⁶ His writings seem to be automatically accepted as factual knowledge. In any case, there remain in the above quotation a few items of incorrect information about the *San-kuo yen-i* that have not yet been rectified by later scholars and writers. First of all, it is not at all true to say that by the Yuan times "the history of the *San-kuo* period had not been fictionalized," because a work in the genre of historical narration or *chiang-shih* 講史 known as the *San-kuo-chih p'ing-hua* 三國志, 平話 (A *P'ing-hua* of the History of the Three Kingdoms Period) had already appeared in the Yuan dynasty.

⁷ Both Western and Chinese scholars believe that the *San-kuo yen-i* has, to a certain degree, made use of the narrative framework of the *P'ing-hua*, and that the latter presented popular history while the former rendered popularized history.⁸ It is also incorrect to state that Lo Kuan-chung wrote his work "in one hundred and twenty chapters," as the earliest surviving edition of Lo's original writing was divided into 240 chapters.⁹ The abridgment in the organization of the chapter divisions was actually done a few hundred years later by Mao Tsung-kang 毛宗崗 (fl. 1679)¹⁰ in the early Ch'ing 清 period (1644-1911).

Since the appearance of Prince Damrong's article in 1928, there have never been any studies focusing specifically on the background history of the Chinese work that was used for the translation of *Sāmkok*. Subsequent studies on *Sāmkok*

6. In Thailand Prince Damrong is called "the Father of Thai History" as he is the author of many important surveys and treatises in the field. He wrote, moreover, numerous essays that touch on a wide range of topics. See the list of his works in the sources given in note 1 above.

7. Yang, p. 52.

8. See, for examples, W.L. Idema, "Some Remarks and Speculations Concerning *P'ing-hua*,"

T'oung Pao, 60, Nos. 1-3 (1974), pp. 156-157; Yang, pp. 52-57, 66-79; Cheng Chen-to 鄭振鐸, "San-kuo yen-i te yen-hua," 三國演義的演化 (The Evolution of *San-kuo yen-i*), *Hsiao-shuo yueh-pao* 20, No. 10 (Oct. 1929), pp. 1546-1553, 1557-1558; Chao Ts'ung, pp. 105-113; Li Ch' en-tung, *San-kuo Shui-hu yü Hsi-yu* (*San-kuo yen-i, Shui-hu chuan, and Hsi-yu chi*), (Peking: Ta-tao ch' u-pan-she, 1946), pp. 6-16.

9. The earliest surviving text of *San-kuo yen-i* in 240 *chüan* was published in the year 1522 and is preserved in the Peking Library. Sun K-ai-ti 孫楷第, *Chung-kuo t'ung-su hsiao-shuo shu-mu* 中國通俗小說書目 (Bibliography of Chinese Popular Fiction), (Peking: Tso-chia ch' u-pan-she, 1957), p. 30. See also note 15 below.

10. Scholars, such as, Chao Ts'ung and Winston Yang, believe that the revision of the novel by Mao Tsung-kang was completed in the early years of the Ch'ing dynasty, probably before 1679. See Chao Ts'ung, p. 119 and Yang, p. 82. The latter source also includes information on Mao and his works.

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including those by Sang Phatthanōthai สังข์ พัชโรทัย and Prapin Manomaivibool ประพิน มโนมัยวิบูลย์ rely exclusively on Prince Damrong's information ¹¹, and therefore are still lacking in sufficient evidence to identify the right version of the *San-kuo* text from which *Sāmkok* was translated. Since there is no surviving external evidence that has the information to clarify the point in question, it seems necessary to resort to the method of textual investigation in order to determine this version.

Based on the discrepancies in form and content, the work of *San-kuo chih* by Ch'en Shou seems very unlikely to have been the work used as the translation model of the Thai version. The *San-kuo chih* is a collection of biographies of important personages of the Three Kingdoms period (A.D. 220–280), organized into 65 *chüan* 卷 or chapters. It contains altogether 442 biographies of which 230 are those of Wei 魏 figures, 83 of Shu 蜀, and 129 of Wu 吳. ¹² The 230 biographies of Wei figures constitute the first 30 *chüan*, the 83 of Shu make up the following 15 *chüan*, and the 129 of Wu take up the remaining 20 *chuan*. The author of *San-kuo chih* derived his sources from earlier historical records and categorized the compiled materials into different types of biographies, namely, the annals of the emperor known as *chi* 紀, exclusive biography or *chuan-chuan* 專傳, combined biography or *ho-chuan* 合傳 and appended biography or *fu-chuan* 附傳. Each biography is presented in chronological order with concise and compact language strictly following the style of traditional Chinese historiography.

¹³ As one writer remarks:

Like other historians of the old school, Ch'en Shou, in his *San-kuo chih*, seldom thinks of working historical facts into a unified structure that will be in accord with reality; he makes no attempt to "evoke," "conjure" and "revive" past events. He fails to work

11. Prapin, p. 43 and Sang, pp. 1-3.

12. Nine of the 442 biographies are not listed in the Table of Contents. However, there are twenty-five biographies not found in the text but listed in the Table of Contents. Winston Yang places the responsibility for such mistakes on later careless scribes. Yang, p. 21.

13. Szu-ma Ch'ien's 司馬遷 biographical style of writing in the *Shih Chi* 史記. Following Dennis Twitchett's study entitled "Chinese Biographical Writing," Yang is inclined to believe that there was a model for this type of biographical writing already existing before the time of the *Shih chi* (first century A.D.). See Yang, p.44, footnote 54. Dennis Twitchett's article can be found in W.G. Beasley and E.G. Pulleyblank, eds., *Historians of China and Japan* (London: Oxford University Press, 1961), pp. 95 - 114.

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up his historical sources and to combine the facts he has found in successive chains. What he has done is to arrange them in certain categories. He has made no attempt to create any sort of coherent picture of the *San-kuo* period; he has merely presented the material that has been preserved in a most accessible form to the reader he conceived of the *San-kuo* period as a series of concrete events and overt acts; he views history as a registration of them which should be exact and dispassionate, without any projection across the scene of the personality of the registrar. At its best, his work is but a reliable yet impersonal record of unconnected events.¹⁴

In contrast to the biography form of *San-kuo chih*, *Sāmkok* is presented in the form of narrative fiction which has the characteristics of contextual unity and thematic cohesiveness. Unlike the *San-kuo chih* with unconnected pieces of biography, the different episodes in *Sāmkok* are linked together by the plot scheme to produce certain thematic meanings and to create a variety of lively and imaginatively interesting characters. With these qualities, *Sāmkok* most likely originates from the novel *San-kuo yen-i* by Lo Kuan-chung. The length of the Thai translation and its general content show closer affinity to the *San-kuo yen-i* text than any other fictionalized version of the *San-kuo* story. For instance, the *San-kuo chih p'ing-hua* which is the only extant version written before Lo's novel can hardly be the work from which *Sāmkok* was translated because, firstly, the length of texts is not comparable, and secondly, the stories contained in the two texts do not match. The *P'ing-hua* consists only of three *chuan* while *Sāmkok* has eighty-seven chapters -- a length that is close to that of *San-kuo yen-i*. The story of the *P'ing-hua* starts with a tale of moral retribution dealing with the disintegration of the Han empire into three separate states, and it ends with the death of Chu-ko Liang. *Sāmkok* neither contains such a moral tale nor stops short at that death scene. In fact, the story line of *San-kuo yen-i* is found to be closely followed in *Sāmkok*.

It has been known that many revised versions and different editions have been made since the completion of Lo's original writing at the end of the fourteenth century.¹⁵ The version that was revised and edited in early Ch'ing period by the scholar named Mao Tsung-kang and his father Mao Lun 毛倫 (fl. 1616-1670)¹⁶

14. Yang, pp. 38-39.

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became today's standard version. In previous studies by Thai authors, it has been commonly agreed that the Mao Tsung-kang version is the one used by the translators of *Sāmkok* simply by virtue of the fact that the translation was done during the time when the Mao version had already become, for over one hundred years, the sole popular standard text and the most widely read version of the *San-kuo* stories in China. The following textual comparison will provide more solid evidence that *Sāmkok* was actually translated from the Mao Tsung-kang edition of the *San-kuo yen-i* text.

Many studies have been done to show the textual differences between the Mao Tsung-kang version and Lo's original work.¹⁷ The discrepancies lie in stylistic improvements¹⁸ and a number of minor revisions of content. It is the latter aspect

15. Discussions on the original work of Lo Kuan-chung's novel and its different versions and editions can be found in the following sources: 1) Liu Hsiu-yeh 劉修業, *Ku-tien hsiao-shuo hsi-ch'ü ts'ung-k'ao* 古典小說戲曲叢考 (Compiled Investigations of Traditional Fiction and Drama), (Peking: Tso-chia ch' u-pan-she, 1958), pp. 63 - 72; 2) Meng Yao 孟瑤, *Chung-kuo hsiao-shuo shih* 中國小說史 (The History of Chinese Fiction), (Taipei: Wen-hsing shu-tien, 1966), Vol. III, pp. 304 - 312; 3) Yang, pp. 59 - 64; 4) Liu Ts' un-jen 柳存仁, "Lo Kuan-chung chiang-shih hsiao-shuo chih chen-wei hsing-chih," 羅貫中講史小說之真偽性質 (The Nature of the Authenticity in Lo Kuan-chung's Historical Novel), *i Hsiang-kang chung-wen ta-hsueh chung-kuo wen-hua yen-chiu-so hsueh-pao* 香港中文大學中國文化研究所學報, 8, No. 1 (1976), 171 - 185. According to Liu Ts' un-jen's recent study, Lo Kuan-chung's original work assumes the general title of "San-kuo chih chuan" 三國志傳 from which the later editions of the *San-kuo yen-i* were derived." (p. 233) Perhaps the most important among the later editions of Lo's *San-kuo chih chuan* is the Ch' iao-shan-t'ang 喬山堂 publication of 1609 under the title. *Hsin chin ch' uan hsiang t' ung-su yen-i san-kuo chih chuan* 新鐫全像通俗演義三國志傳 (New Engraved and Illustrated Version of Popular Elaboration of the Story of the Three Kingdoms Period) which is now preserved in the British Museum. Liu believes that this Ch' iao-shan-t'ang edition is a reprint of an early original copy that precedes even the 1522 Chia-ching edition entitled *San-kuo chih t'ung-su yen-i* 三國志通俗演義 (Popular Elaboration of the Chronicle of the Three Kingdoms Period). See Liu, pp. 184 - 185. Liu Ts' un-jen's finding about Lo's earliest extant text has obviously challenged the idea shared among previous scholars that the Chia-ching edition is the earliest surviving edition of Lo's original writing. See Cheng Chen - to, p. 1545; Sun K' ai-ti 孫楷第 "San-kuo chih p'ing-hua yü San-kuo chih chuan t' ung-su yen-i," 三國志平話與三國志傳通俗演義 (*San-kuo chih p'ing-hua and San-kuo chih chuan t' ung-su yen-i*), in *Ts' ang-chou chi* 滄州集 (The Ts' ang-chou Collection) by Sun K' ai-ti (Peking: Chung-hua shu-chü, 1965), pp. 109 - 120; Li Ch' en-tung, p. 13; Chao Ts' ung, pp. 118 - 123; Meng Yao, p. 309; Yang, p. 9, footnote 20.

16. These dates are taken from Yang, p. 14.

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that is significant and useful to the problem at hand. If the text of *Sāmkok* shows similarity to the Mao version in those changes, we show for the first time beyond any reasonable doubt that *Sāmkok* was translated from the Mao version.

Mao Tsung-kang made the revision of the content in three different ways: deletion, addition, and alteration. There are at least two incidents that are removed from the revised version. The first is the incident about Chu-ko Liang attacking Szu-ma I 司馬懿 at the Shang-fang 上方 valley by using fire, which appears in chapter 103 of the Mao text. In Lo's original text the scene also includes the story that Chu-ko Liang wishes to harm Wei Yen 魏延 in the same attack by using the same means. The Wei Yen episode is not found in the Mao text; nor does it appear in *Sāmkok*.¹⁹ Another minor deletion is found in the episode about the fight between Chu-ko Chan 諸葛瞻 and Teng Ai 鄧艾 in chapter 117. Teng Ai made the diplomatic move to settle the conflict by asking for Chu-ko Chan's submission. The latter received the letter of proposal in great hesitation. It was his son, Chu-ko Shang 諸葛尚, who disagreed and insisted on making the final decisive attack. This last incident which shows the important role of Chu-ko Shang in the fight is omitted in the Mao text and the same is omitted in *Sāmkok*.²⁰

As for the addition of content that is found in the Mao version, *Sāmkok* appears to include all of Mao's additional passages. For instance, the matching of the opening and ending statements about the cyclical pattern of history²¹ is an important

17. Important works are: 1) Cheng Chen - to, pp. 1572 - 1576; 2) Sun K' ai - ti, pp. 119 - 120; 3) Meng Yao, p.308; 4) Hsieh Ch'ao - ch'ing 謝朝清, "San - kuo yen - i chih yen - chiu yü hsing - ch'eng 三國演義之研究與形成 (The Study and Development of *San - kuo yen - i*)," *Hsin T'ien - ti 新天地*, 7, Nos. 2 - 3 (1968), pp. 20 - 21; 5) Chao Ts' ung, pp. 121 - 123.
18. The stylistic improvements in the Mao version include refinement of the language, clarity of diction, polishing of lyrical passages, and reorganization of chapter division.
19. See Lo Kuan - chung 羅貫中, *San - kuo yen - i 三國演義* (The Elaboration of the Three Kingdoms Period), (Taipei: San - min shu - chu, 1978), ch. 103, pp. 656 - 657, and Chaophraya Phrakhlung (Hon) เจ้าพระยาพระคลัง (หน), *Sāmkok สามก๊ก* (Three Kingdoms), (Bangkok: Ruamsan, 1973), Vol. II, ch. 78, pp. 836 - 838. The San - min edition of *San - kuo Yen - i* and the Ruamsan edition of *Sāmkok* are the two main texts used in this research. Henceforth the first volume of *Sāmkok* will be referred to as "*Sāmkok*, I" and the second volume of *Sāmkok* as "*Sāmkok*, II"
20. See *San-kuo*, ch. 17, p. 739 and *Sāmkok*, ii, ch. 86, p. 1044.
21. See *San-kuo*, ch. 1, p. 1 and *Sāmkok*, I, pp. 1-2; *San-kuo*, ch. 120, p. 759 and *Sāmkok*, II, ch. 87, p. 1086.

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example of evidence to support the view that the Thai author of *Sāmkok* was actually working with the Mao version. Furthermore, the Mao text and *Sāmkok* agree in the scene where Ts'ao Ts'ao arranged to share his possessions among his wives and concubines before his death²², and also in the scene in which Sun fu-jen 孫夫人 committed suicide by plunging into the Ch'ang-chiang river.²³ Since these two incidents represent details which were incorporated by Mao Tsung-kang, it is obvious that the Ch'ing revised version was used for the translation of *Sāmkok*.

Moreover, one finds that a number of changes in the content made by Mao so as to adhere to historical facts are reproduced in the Thai version. The *Sāmkok* text follows the Mao text even in the minor details. One of the most interesting episodes that has gone through changes in the Mao version is the scene narrating how Ma T'eng 馬騰 meets his death at Hsi-ch'ang 許昌. Here are some points of difference between the Lo text and that of Mao and *Sāmkok*.²⁴

Lo text

- Ma T'eng with his two younger sons and nephew left for Hsu-ch'ang to report to Ts'ao Ts'ao in response to the latter's letter of summons leaving Ma Ch'ao 馬超, his eldest son, in charge of Hsi-liang 西涼 city.

- After Ma T'eng's arrival at Hsu-ch'ang, Ts'ao Ts'ao conferred on him an official title and provided him with material rewards.

- One day during his stay in the capital, Ma T'eng had the chance to be in audience with Emperor Hsien who commis-

Mao text and *Sāmkok*

- Before making the decision to leave Hsi-liang, Ma T'eng consulted with Ma Ch'ao as the former became suspicious of Ts'ao Ts'ao's intention.

- Han Sui 韓遂 was appointed as Ma Ch'ao's assistant at Hsi-liang.

- When Ma T'eng approached Hsu-ch'ang, Ts'ao Ts'ao immediately sent Huang K'uei to order Ma T'eng to settle his troops outside the city and entered Hsu-ch'ang with a few of his senior officials.

(This scene is not in either the Mao or *Sāmkok* texts.)

22. This scene can be found in *San-kuo*, ch. 78, p. 489 and *Sāmkok*, II, ch. 62, p. 450.

23. This can be found in *San-kuo*, ch. 84, p. 524 and *Sāmkok*, II, ch. 65, p. 541.

24. Textual comparison between the Mao and Lo texts of the scene about Ma T'eng's death is treated in detail in Cheng Chen-to, pp. 1574-1575. See *San-kuo*, pp. 353-354 and *Sāmkok*, II, pp. 69-74.

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sioned the former to eliminate Ts'ao. And Ma T'eng agreed to carry out the Emperor's wish.

- Huang K'uei 黃奎 agreed to cooperate with Ma T'eng in the assassination plan against Ts'ao Ts'ao. Unfortunately, Ts'ao secretly learned of the scheme from member of Huang K'uei's household

- Ma T'eng was captured by Ts'ao's force even before the assassination could be carried out. Only Ma Tai 馬岱 was able to make the escape.

- There are an extra few lines of dialogue between Huang K'uei and his concubine discussing the details of the plan.
- Having learned of Ma T'eng's secret scheme, Ts'ao Ts'ao made plans with his four able generals.

- Ma T'eng was attacked unguarded from four sides by Ts'ao's generals as planned. All were captured and executed including Huang K'uei and all his clansmen.

There are still three other episodes that illustrate the fact that *Sāmkok* corresponds well to the Mao version rather the Lo text.²⁵

B. The Date and the Author

It is very unfortunate that the prefatory section of the original text of *Sāmkok* has not survived to give us some light on the questions of date and authorship. According to Thai traditional custom any literary project under royal sponsorship was supposed to state in its preface the date of writing and the purpose of the work itself. The following, for instance, is an introductory passage from *Rāchāthirāt* ราชธานีราช, a work under royal command, providing background information on the work.

พระพุทธศักราช 2328... พระบาทสมเด็จพระพุทธยอดฟ้าจุฬาโลก พระพุทธเจ้าอยู่หัวเสด็จออกพระที่นั่งจักรพรรดิพิมาน...มีพระราชโองการ...สั่งว่าเรื่องราวพระเจ้านครราชสีมาซึ่งทำศึกกับพระเจ้าฝรั่งมังฆ้อง เป็นมหายุทธสงครามมีในพระราชพงศาวดารรามัญนั้น ที่แปลออกจากรามัญภาษาเป็นสยามภาษาถวายสมเด็จพระอนุชาธิราชกรมพระราชวังบวรฯ แปลกเปลี่ยนกันกับที่ได้ทรงฟังสังเกต

25. These three episodes are discussed in Cheng Chen-to, pp. 1572-1575. They are: 1) Liu Pei's conversation with Ts'ao Ts'ao in *San-kuo*, pp. 131-132 which is found in *Sāmkok*, I, pp. 421-425; 2) Kuan Yu's response to the royal appointment in *San-kuo*, p. 161 and *Sāmkok*, I, pp. 525-526; 3) Ts'ao Hou's 曹后 reaction to Ts'ao P'ei's usurping the kingship from Emperor Hsien in *San-kuo*, p. 497 and *Sāmkok*, II, pp. 468-469.

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ไว้แต่ก่อน จึงทรงพระราชดำริดัดแปลงข้อความในเรื่องราชาธิราชที่ยังขาดเหลือ ค้างเกินอยู่นั้นให้เรียบเรียงขึ้นเสียใหม่ไว้เป็นสยามภาษาด้วยพระราชหฤทัยประสงค์ จะให้เป็นศิลาจารึกประ โยชน์แก่พระบรมราชวงศานวงศ์ข้าทูลละอองธุลีพระบาท ผู้น้อยผู้ใหญ่ฝ่ายทหารพลเรือน จะได้สดับจำไว้เป็นคติบำรุงสติปัญญาไปภยหน้า ข้าพระพุทธเจ้าเจ้าพระยาคลังหนึ่ง พระยาอินทรอัครราชหนึ่ง พระภริกรมย์รัศมีหนึ่ง พระศรีภูริปริชาหนึ่ง ข้าทูลละอองธุลีพระบาทพร้อมกันทั้งสี่นาย ขอรับพระราชทานพระบรมราชวโรกาสเรียบเรียงข้อความในเรื่องราชาธิราชโดยกระแสร พระราชบริหาร

In the year of 2328 of the Buddhist Era [A.D. 1785] . . . Phrabāt Somdet Phraphutthayōtfā Chulālōk [Rama I], the King, appeared in audience at Chakraphat Phimān Hall. He ordered . . . that the story of Phrachāo Rāchāthirāt who made war with Phrachāo Farang Mangkhōng — an epic war recorded in the annals of the Raman [the Mon] — which was translated into Siamese for Somdet Anuchāthirāt Krom Phrarāthchawang Bawōn [younger brother of Rama I], differs from what has been heard. [The King] therefore would like to make an adaptation of the story of *Rāchāthirāt*. As for those neglected and missing episodes, the King ordered that they be retold in Thai with the intent of making the work a useful source of intellectual enlightenment in the future for the royal family and for military and civil servants great and small. I, Chāophrayā Phrakhlāng, together with three persons, Phraya 'Inthara' akkharāt, Phra Phromratsamī, and Phra Srīphūripričā, respectively took this grand occasion to compile the story of *Rāchāthirāt* in response to His Majesty's command. ²⁶

The loss of the prefatory page of *Sāmkok* has consequently raised some unresolved speculations on the problem of the date of writing among concerned scholars in Thailand. It still remains unsolved as to the exact year in which the translation of *Sāmkok* was completed. However, there is strong evidence to believe that the work was launched and perhaps finished during the reign of King Rama I. The work of *Sāmkok* is referred to by name in the lyrical text of the dramatic piece

26. Chāophrayā Phrakhlāng (Hon) เจ้าพระยาพระคลัง (หน), *Rāchāthirāt* ราชาริราช (King of Kings), (Bangkok: Khlang Witthayā, 1970), pp. 1-2.

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called *Khāwī* ภาวีย์ which was composed by King Rama II (1767–1824), the son of Rama I. ²⁷ This indicates that the Thai version of the *San-Kuo yen-i* novel had been available and well-known at least before Rama II wrote his work which was, unfortunately, undated. At any rate, it is known that during the reign of Rama II (r. 1809–1824) a few new projects of translation, like that of *Sāmkok*, were ordered by the King to follow the rich literary spirit of the past. One of these projects was dated the year 1819, and it is believed to have been undertaken in order to follow in the tradition of *Sāmkok*. ²⁸ One can now say for sure at least that by 1819 *Sāmkok* was already appreciated by its readers.

But it is tempting to believe that *Sāmkok* was finished even before Rama II succeeded to the throne in 1809. One of the reasons is that Prince Damrong received words passed down from his ancestors (he was the great grandson of Rama I) indicating that the *Sāmkok* project was ordered by Rama I to be handled under the supervision of Čhaophraya Phrakhlāng (Hon). ²⁹ Although this information regarding the authorship is based on hearsay, it may very well have a pretty good degree of truth as one detects the similarity of language between *Sāmkok* and *Rāchāthirāt* which was attributed to the same Phrakhlāng and dated 1785. ³⁰ In fact, Thai literary historians have attributed the work of *Sāmkok* to Čhāophrayā Phrakhlāng (Hon). ³¹ Accordingly, the safest approximate date of *Sāmkok* should be the period between 1782, the year Rama I became King, and 1805, the year Čhāophrayā Phrakhlāng (Hon) died.

It is interesting to note that, although Prince Damrong had assigned a time before 1805 as the date of *Sāmkok*, he expressed a doubt, however, as to whether Čhāophrayā Phrakhlāng (Hon) really conducted all of the editing of the translation. Prince Damrong's suspicion is based on his impression that the language of *Sāmkok* shows two different styles and qualities. According to him, the first fifty-five chapters of *Sāmkok*, which contain beautifully polished Thai prose, must have been written by Čhāophrayā Phrakhlāng (Hon), whereas the remaining thirty-two

27. "Tamnān," p. 12.

28. "Tamnān," p. 13.

29. "Tamnān," p. 11.

30. See comparison of language between the two texts in article to be followed.

31. This information on the authorship of Phrakhlāng can be found in a number of texts on the history of Thai literature. Recommended works are listed in the Bibliography.

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chapters demonstrate a different and less elegant style of prose writing.³² The implication here is that perhaps Čhāophrayā Phrakhlāng (Hon) died before the translation was finished and therefore the task was taken over by another literary person. Sang Phatthanōthai seems to agree with Prince Damrong on this point, and for the same reason.³³ However, neither scholars provide any illustrations to substantiate their view, although their doubt can raise an important question concerning the date of completion of *Sāmkok* : was *Sāmkok* finished after 1805? But such a question is hardly appropriate since it is impossible to prove whether or not Čhāophrayā Phrakhlāng (Hon) actually edited the language of the entire *Sāmkok* text due to the lack of knowledge about those individuals who gave assistance in and contribution to the translation project. The cause for the language of the later chapters being less polished than that of the early ones could very well be the fact that such a huge work (about Čhāophrayā Phrakhlāng (Hon) could not therefore be personally involved in the whole task. In any case, it is still reasonable to believe that Čhāophrayā Phrakhlāng (Hon), who was a very highly respected official and outstanding poet and prose writer of his time, was entrusted by the King with such a grand and important project.

Čhāophrayā Phrakhlāng (Hon) was originally known by the given name Hon หน or Honthāng หนทาง, and he was the son of a Thonburī nobleman, Čhāophrayā Surabodin Surinrū' chai เจ้าพระยาสุรบดีรินทร์ สุรินทร์ฤๅไชย, originally known as Bunmā บุญมา, and Thanphūying Čharōen ท่านผู้หญิง เจริญ.³⁴ Čhāophrayā Phrakhlāng (Hon) began his official career in the reign of King Tāksin of the Thonburī era. During the reign of King Rama I Čhāophrayā Phrakhlāng (Hon) advanced rapidly in office and was promoted to one of the highest ranks.³⁵ Perhaps his literary genius and ability was even more appreciated. He composed eleven classic pieces of literature in prose and poetry which even today are regarded as pieces of valuable

32. "Tamnān," p. 31.

33. Sang, "Author's Introduction," p. 4.

34. Information on the family history of Čhāophrayā Phrakhlāng (Hon) is provided in Natthawut Sutthisongkhram อนุวัณิ สุตธิสงคราม 29 Čhāophrayā 29 เจ้าพระยา (Twenty-nine Čhāophrayā), (Bangkok: n.p., 1966), pp. 441-452, and in *Wannakhadi* วรรณคดี (Literature), ed. Krom Sinlapākōn กรมศิลปากร (Department of Fine Arts), (Bangkok: Bannākhān, 1972), pp. 9-12.

35. In the Thonburī period, the Phrakhlāng was first appointed as Lūang Sōrawichit หลวงสรวิชิต in charge of Uthaihāni อุทัยธานี city. After that he was promoted successively to higher positions, being given the titles Phrayā Phiphatthanakōsā พระยาพิพัฒน์โกษา, Čhāophrayā Phrakhlāng, and then Čhāophrayā Mahā Kōsāthibadi เจ้าพระยามหาโกษาธิบดี. He was best known by the title Čhāophrayā Phrakhlāng which is found attached to all of his literary works.

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national literature. ³⁶ Among them *Sāmkok* stands out as the most well-known and most widely read among the Thai readers of past and present. ³⁷ Čhāophrayā Phrakhlang (Hon) died in 1805, four years before the death of Rama I. ³⁸

A word should be mentioned about the translators who worked for Čhāophrayā Phrakhlang (Hon) in the project. It is most likely that some native Chinese scholars were summoned to help with the translation since there was not an individual Thai scholar at that time who was competent in both the Thai and Chinese languages. ³⁹ It is believed that the King commissioned two groups of scholars: a group of knowledgeable Chinese to translate the Chinese text and a group of Thai scholars to improve and edit the translated text. Sang Phatthanōthai who did comprehensive glossaries of the names of characters and places in *Sāmkok* and in *San-kuo yen-i* gave an interesting opinion on these two groups of the translating committee as follows:

เข้าใจกันมาว่า พระบาทสมเด็จพระพุทธยอดฟ้าจุฬาโลกมหาราชที่ 1 โปรดให้เจ้าพระยาพระคลัง (หน) อำนวยการแปลเรื่องสามก๊กออกจากภาษาจีนเป็นภาษาไทย...จะต้องมีผู้ทรงอำนาจในราชการ ซึ่งมองเห็นความสำคัญของเรื่องสามก๊กเป็นกำลังสนับสนุนอย่างแข็งขัน

จากการแปลเรื่องสามก๊กออกเป็นภาษาไทยนั้นสังเกตได้ว่าจีนฮกเกี้ยนคงจะทำหน้าที่เป็นบรรณาธิการ เพราะชื่อบุคคลและสถานที่ต่าง ๆ ที่ถอดเสียงจากภาษาจีนออกมาล้วนเป็นเสียงจีนฮกเกี้ยนเป็นส่วนใหญ่ นอกจากนั้นคงจะมีจีนแต้จิ๋ว และ กวางตุ้ง และ ไทหลำ เป็นคณะบรรณาธิการในการแปลด้วย

It has been understood that Phrabāt Somdet Phraphutthayōtfā Čhulāōk, the First Ruler [Rama I], commissioned Čhāophrayā Phrakhlang (Hon) to supervise in translating *Sāmkok* from Chinese into Thai ... There must have been powerful officials who perceived the importance of *Sāmkok* and consequently gave strong support

36. The list of Čhāophrayā Phrakhlang (Hon)'s works are included in the biographical pieces already cited in note 34 above.

37. See the "Introduction" of *Wannakhadi*, p. 10.

38. There is no record as to Čhāophrayā Phrakhlang (Hon)'s date of birth.

39. "Tamnān," p. 30.

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to the project.

One may notice from the translation of *Sāmkok* into Thai that a Fukienese was most likely the chief editor, since the names of people and places transcribed from the Chinese in the translation were, for the most part, pronounced in the Fukienese dialect. In addition, however, there were probably also speakers of Ch' ao-chou, the K' e-chia, the Cantonese, and the Hainanese dialects, who served as members of the editorial committee for the translation.⁴⁰

Being in charge of the project, it was Čhāophrayā Phrakhlāng (Hon)'s duty not only to polish the Thai translation but also to assure that the two groups of scholars were able to cooperate and communicate well with one another. For such a difficult position Čhāophrayā Phrakhlāng (Hon) appeared to be the most appropriate person. The position of Phrakhlāng in those days was equivalent to that of the present-day the Ministers of Finance and Commerce combined. The Phrakhlāng was endowed with the authority to govern and control the Chinese immigrants in the country as well as to handle the trade with China. With such administrative power and cultural exposure, the Phrakhlāng must have received the kind of respect from both groups of translators which was needed to maintain his superior status and the success of the translation.

C. Different Editions

Due to the difficulty in gaining access to the early editions of *Sāmkok* which are preserved as rare books in the Library of the National Academy of Thailand, the present work must, unfortunately, rely on secondary sources. The following information on the different editions of *Sāmkok* is derived mostly from two pieces of writing by Prince Damrong.⁴¹

There are altogether three different editions of the *Sāmkok* text. The first edition, which is comprised of ninety-five *samutthai* สมุดไทย (volumes), is the original work purportedly edited by Čhāophrayā Phrakhlāng (Hon). This 1805 edition was circulated for about sixty years in the form of hand-written copies using various implements, such as, lead pencil (*sen dīnsō* เส้นดินสอ), powdered pencil (*sen fun* เส้นฝุ่น), and realgar (*sen hōradān* เส้นหรดาน). Most of these copies of *Sāmkok* were reproduced under the order and sponsorship of rich and noble people who wished

40. Sang, "Author's Introduction," p. 4.

41. These two sources are: 1) Prince Damrong's "Introduction" to the 1928 edition of *Sāmkok* reprinted in the 1973 edition by Bamrungsān, pp. 1-7; 2) "Tamnān," pp. 34-39.

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to have possession of this work in their library collections. A few of these hand-written copies originally owned by noble members are now kept as rare books in the Library of the National Academy of Thailand. Prince Damrong in 1928 remarked that not all of the *Sāmkok* copies in the National Academy Library are complete and that only the one which originally belonged to Kromlūang Wōrasētsudā กรมหลวงวรเสถรรฐสุดา appears intact. Since these Library copies are now inaccessible to the public, there is no way to check whether Prince Damrong's above statement remains true.

A printed edition of *Sāmkok* appeared for the first time in 1865 when the first publishing company in the country, owned by the American missionary, "Mō Bratlē" หมอบรัดเลย์ or Dr. Bradley (d. 1871), began to publish Thai literary works.⁴² The text of this printed edition represents the revised version made from three different copies⁴³ of the hand-written edition. Dr. Bradley, who did the editing, rearranged the printed work into a four-volume set. According to Prince Damrong, about fifty sets were sold to King Rama IV (r. 1851–1868) who had all along given encouragement to the progress of publication.⁴⁴ Dr. Bradley's first printed edition of *Sāmkok* was so popularly received by the reading public that the work was reprinted five times during the period of sixty-three years, from 1865 to 1928. The last three publications of *Sāmkok* were not printed by Dr. Bradley and in them many minor mistakes were made.

The third edition of *Sāmkok* appeared in early 1928 on the day the cremation of HRH Princess Sukhumān Marasri สมเด็จพระนางเจ้า สุขุมาลมารศรี พระอัครราชเทวี was held.⁴⁵ This new edition of *Sāmkok* was provided as a funeral gift for this event. The selection of the funeral gift was made by the Princess's son, Prince

42. Dr. D.B. Bradley was a medical doctor who came to Thailand in 1835 as a member of the American missionaries. He was the first person to introduce the use of printing presses into the country and he owned the first printing company of Thailand. The first publication of Thai books appeared on June 3, 1836. Dr. Bradley also published the first newspaper, the *Bangkok Recorder*, which was launched on the 4th of July, 1844. His contributions during the 36 years he spent in Thailand are considerable, especially in the area of modern medicine, the technique and progress of publication, and the growth and circulation of Thai language texts and literature. For more information, see Nāi Hōnhūai นายโหนหวัย, *Mō Plattē kap Krung Sayām* หมอบรัดเลย์กับกรุงสยาม (Dr. Bradley and Siam), (Bangkok: Phraepitthayā, 1954) and Khurusaphā คุรุสภา, ed., *Prachum phongsawadān* ประชุมพงศาวดาร (Compiled Chronicles) Vol. 18 (Bangkok: Su'ksaphan, 1965).

43. One of these copies belonged to Somdet Čhāophrayā Barommaha Srīsurīyawong สมเด็จพระยาบรมมหาศรีสุริยวงศ์, who sponsored the translations of at least eighteen Chinese historical novels during the reigns of Rama IV and V (1851–1910).

44. "Tamnān," p. 35.

45. She died on July 9, 1927.

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Bōriphat เจ้าฟ้าบริพัตร, who had a special interest in and a deep appreciation for the *Sāmkok* novel. With great concern for the degraded quality of the existing printed text, Prince Boriphat requested that Prince Damrong, who was then the President of the National Academy of Thailand, make a comprehensive textual re-examination so that the language of *Sāmkok* could be preserved in its original greatness of quality. Prince Damrong, similarly concerned with the problem, accepted Prince Bōriphat's proposal, which promised full financial support for the project of editing and printing.⁴⁶ Three men were commissioned to the responsibility for the publication: Phrayā Potchanaprichā พระยาพจนปรีชา as the chief editor, Khun Wannarakwīchit ขุนวรรณรักษ์วิจิตร as the editor's assistant, and Phra Phinitwannakān พระพิณิจวรรณการ who arranged the table of contents.⁴⁷ In doing the research and documentation, Prince Damrong was assisted by Phra Čhēnčhīn' aksōn พระเจนจันอักษร, A Thai expert on Chinese, and by Professor George Coedès. In re-examining the text, three different versions were used as sources, namely, the original hand-written edition of *Sāmkok*, the Bradley early printed version, and the Mao Tsung-kang version of *San-kuo yen-i*.⁴⁸ Since then the revised National Academy edition has been used as the standard text of *Sāmkok* in Thailand. The main purpose of this 1928 edition was to preserve the original body and quality of the 1805 edition. However, the new edition bears some extra features. It provides explanatory footnotes to the main text, gives the equivalent Thai year of the Buddhist Era in parenthesis following the Chinese year, and incorporates illustrations portraying some of the major scenes along with the main text.

From the above discussion, it is clear that the Mao Tsung-kang version of the *San-kuo yen-i* novel is the original Chinese text that was used for the translation of *Sāmkok*, and it was probably completed by Čhāophrayā Phrakhlāng (Hon) before the year 1805. The 1928 edition of *Sāmkok*, which is the current standard text, is valuable to the present study exactly because of its achievement in preserving the style, the text, and the language originally embodied in Čhāophrayā Phrakhlāng

46. Prince Damrong's "Introduction," p. 2.

47. Prince Damrong's "Introduction," p. 4.

48. The hand-written copy used for the 1928 edition was owned by Kromlūang Wōrasētsudā กรมหลวงวงศาธิราชฤทธิอา, and it is now preserved in the Library of the National Academy of Thailand. As for the Bradley edition, many copies were borrowed from individual owners. Prince Damrong failed to give the bibliographical information regarding the Chinese text of *San-kuo yen-i* that was used by the editor of the 1928 version.

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(Hon)'s version. It is therefore quite legitimate to use the Mao version of *San-kuo yen-i* and the 1928 edition of *Sāmkok* as sources for the textual comparison.

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