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Creative Engagement: *Sujavaṇṇa Wua Luang* and its Contribution to Buddhist Literature

Introduction

The *Sujavaṇṇa Wua Luang* (SWL), an apocryphal Buddhist *Jātaka* story written in Khün, employs translocal literary practices to express local values, religious beliefs and practices. The Khün composer(s) of the SWL found the complex narrative structure, compelling chain of events and prestigious classical language of the canonical *Jātaka* to be an excellent vehicle to comment upon local historical events, political and social concerns and cultural values and practices. Studying the SWL in this light will lay the basis for a new understanding of the relationship between canonical and vernacular literature in Southeast Asia.

The SWL is a non-classical or apocryphal Buddhist *Jātaka*. Traditionally these *Jātakas* tell the story of a Bodhisatta who was born as a prince and performed meritorious acts involving sacrifice of limbs, wealth, family or even his own life. These miraculous and tragic tales are among the most popular stories in all of Buddhist literature. A total of 547 *Jātakas* are canonical. However, in Southeast Asia there are over a hundred apocryphal *Jātakas*, which in many instances have little in common with the canonical tales aside from plot structure and

having a Bodhisatta as the main character. Often these non-classical *Jātakas* are grouped together in collections with classical *Jātakas*, the most common collection being the *Paññasajātaka* (50 *Jātakas*) found in manuscripts in Burma, Thailand, Laos and Cambodia.[1] The main events of both the canonical and non-canonical *Jātakas* are depicted in sculpture and painting throughout Southeast Asia and the values emphasized in them are a common theme of traditional Buddhist sermons. The questions I am concerned with are: why would writers in Southeast Asia write new *Jātakas* when there were 547 canonical ones attributed the historical Buddha himself? What can the differences between the canonical and the non-canonical *Jātakas* tell us about religious values, textual practices and historical changes in Southeast Asia in the medieval period?

Summary of the *Sujavaṇṇa Wua Luang*

A summary of the SWL is as follows: One day the Buddha overhears two monks recounting a story they heard of a woman who became pregnant after drinking the urine of a bull and gave birth to a child who would become a

Buddhist monk. The Buddha then uses this occasion to relate the story of himself in a former life when he was the Bodhisatta Sujavaṇṇa. Sujavaṇṇa was the son of the good King Jambu Ekarāja and Queen Suvaṇṇabhūma. Indra observed the queen observing Buddhist precepts and decided to bless her with Sujavaṇṇa who was actually one of his sons in the 33rd heaven. The King of the Bulls, Usubharāja, wanted to pay homage to Sujavaṇṇa. Usubharāja was invisible to humans and only left large footprints on the ground when he walked. The people became frightened when they saw these huge footprints, but Jambu Ekarāja assured them that these footprints were left by an *Arahant* (an enlightened person). After visiting the humans, the King of the Bulls decided to bathe in the river. While he was bathing, a piece of the fruit he was eating fell into the river, and a young woman named Khemavatī who was bathing down river picked it up and ate it. The fruit, combined with her practice of Buddhist precepts, caused Indra to impregnate her with a daughter named Ummādantī, who was one of Indra's wives in the 33rd heaven. Ummādantī agreed as long as Indra would assure her that she would be able to marry a future Buddha. Ummādantī was born and one day she went to a great celebration at the palace. She was so beautiful that many princes wanted to become her husband, but the other women were jealous of her and ridiculed her for being an illegitimate child that was abandoned by her father. They called her a wild beast (not aware that she was in fact the daughter of a bull) and told her to go play with the animals (foreshadowing her travels to the land of the bulls). Ummādantī begged her mother to let her go to find her father who Khemavatī told her was Usubharāja. Khemavtī allowed her and Ummādantī travelled through the forest guided by a golden deer, who, in reality, was another son of Indra.

She reached a large dirty cowshed which was the home of Usubharāja and she cleaned it before its owner returned home. Usubharāja saw this clean stable and knew that it must be the work of a great person. The gods caused Usubharāja to be sick and have to remain at home the next day where he saw the beautiful Ummādantī. She made the proper respectful salutations and offered Usubharāja puffed rice and after some miraculous

events told him that she was his daughter. The other bulls brought her delicious fruit from the forest. They built a miraculous one-pillar palace for Ummādantī and this is the reason why today bulls horns are in all different directions, because they had been twisted and turned by the work of building. Indra created a glorious park for her with fruit groves and a cyrstal clear pond. The bulls were given an endless supply of sweet grass to eat, so they no longer had to go into the forest to search for fruit.

Then Indra magically inspired Sujavaṇṇa to go into the forest to hunt deer. Carrying the sword of victory the prince entered the forest and chased the golden deer who led him to the one-pillared palace. Ummādantī allowed Sujavaṇṇa to stay in the palace because he possessed a protective mantra. Sujavaṇṇa had no way of climbing the pillar and had to chant a mantra to give him the power to reach Ummādantī. The mantra requested that the gods give him power to fly because he had achieved many of the Buddhist perfections (*pāramī*) and acquired merit for the sake of reaching Nibbāna and escaping the cycle of rebirths (*vaṭṭa-saṃsāra*). After he had flown up to Ummādantī, she tested him further with riddles involving Buddhist doctrine, which he answered with skill. The King and Queen were worried when their son did not return from his hunting excursion and consulted a *purohita* (a Brahman spiritual advisor and soothsayer), who was knowledgable in regards to the three Vedas and trained in the use of mystical diagrams (*yantra*) and *mantras*. He told the king through his interpretation of these *yantra* that the prince would return on the eighth day of the crescent moon of the seventh month (which turned out to be correct). Ummādantī and Sujavaṇṇa remained alone in the one-pillared palace for seven days (without marrying) and then flew on a magical horse first to her mother in the city of Rājagaha and then to the parents of Sujavaṇṇa in Jetuttara. They felt obligated to show respect to their parents. When the jealous women saw that Khemavatī was the mother of a glorious being, they repented for their earlier improprieties. The couple was married and had a boy and girl, who in turn married each other.

One day Sujavaṇṇa realized that everything was impermanent and decided to become a

Buddhist renunciant and go into the state of homelessness (*pabbajā*).[2] He decided to give up his flesh and his own life to anyone who requested it. He prayed to Indra, Brahma and even hell beings. Then Indra changed into the form of an old brahmin and asked for Sujavaṇṇa's limbs. The earth shook and trembled because of the great selfless act of Sujavaṇṇa. Then Indra returned the limbs to Sujavaṇṇa and Sujavaṇṇa ascended a jeweled throne to preach the word of the Buddha. He gave a sermon about the first noble truth of suffering and instructed people to maintain the Buddhist precepts, listen to sermons and take refuge in the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Saṅgha so as to annihilate *taṇhā* (craving).

Then Indra changed his form into an ogre and requested the eyes of Sujavaṇṇa. Sujavaṇṇa willingly tore them from their sockets, but then Indra returned the eyes which could even see farther then before. Sujavaṇṇa made the resolution to become a Buddha during his 199,000th life during the time of the Buddha Dhammadassī. Then he was reborn at that time as a king and gave to the poor every day and practiced the ten behaviour rules of a good Buddhist king. He also practiced meditation (*bhāvanā*) and the subjects of meditation (*kammaṭṭhāna*) and became aware of impermanence. He decided to give up anger, lying, committing adultery, destroying reliquaries, from cutting the bodhi trees and causing dissension among the saṅgha. Ummādantī also became a renunciant. They practiced the spiritual exercises to achieve the pefection of asceticism (*nekkhammapāramī*) and *jhāna* meditation. They were reborn in the 33rd heaven and lived in a jeweled palace.

The Buddha appears in the narrative again and tells the monks that he told this story so that they would be able to realize Nibbāna. He states the *ānisaṃsa*: that anyone who copies the SWL, reads it to an audience and offers the text to a temple and honours the text with flowers will obtain the three joys (living in wealth, living in heaven and realizing Nibbāna). The the Buddha identified himself as Sujavaṇṇa, Jambu Ekarāja as Suddhodhana (the father of the Buddha), Suvaṇṇbhūma as the mother of the Buddha, Mahāmāyā, Usubharāja as Sāriputta, the golden deer as Ānanda, Khemavatī as Gotamī,

Sugandha, the son of Sujavaṇṇa as Rahula (the son of the Buddha) and Indra as Anuruddha.

Linguistic Features

The SWL is written in a mixture of Pāli, traditionally associated with Theravada Buddhism, and the extremely local Khün language only spoken in and around the city of Chiang Tung (also known as Jengtung, Kengtung and Kyaington) in the Shan regions of upper, eastern Burma, about 300 kilometers from the present day northern border of Thailand. Khün is a member of the Tai family of languages and its script is similar, although certainly not identical, to Yuan, Lü or Tham, scripts which are used in Laos, eastern Burma and northern Thailand alongside the more common Fakkham and Lao scripts.[3] A Northern Thai, Shan and/or Lao person would most likely be able to understand a Khün speaker at a basic level. However, Khün is largely incomprehensible to a Central Thai speaker. Khün reveals a great deal of lexical borrowing from Chinese, Lao, Shan and Thai; however there are numerous words not traceable to any other language (although a more serious study of the Ahom language of Assam might lead to better etymologies). The manuscript of the edition that I am using for this paper was found at Wat Hnong Kham in Chiang Tung. It comprises seven *phūks* (bundles of palm leaves) and is a relatively standard length, although, due to the popularity of this *Jātaka*, there are numerous recensions, including manuscripts as long as 17 *phūks*.[4] Besides the manuscripts, the story is often depicted in art. In his edition, Anatole R. Peltier, includes numerous stitched drawings in narrative sequence on a coloured flag that depicts the story. The story is often retold at the *Cullakaṭhina* ceremony at temples in Chiang Tung at the end of the raining season. The numerous recensions, sculptures and stitched drawings all attest to the popularity of the story.[5]

Each *phūk* of the Wat Hnong Kham recension begins with a short Pāli summary of the *phūk's* contents, consisting of approximately seven to 60 words. These summaries get shorter as the narrative progresses. For instance, the Pāli summary at the beginning of the third *phūk* is of average length and reads: "*namo tassatthu*

tadā kāle devatā ummādantī gacchāma silaṃ oruyanti (then, at that time, the deities addressed Ummādantī, 'let us go to the mountain')." This is translated in Khün as "*nai kāla mūa devabut devatā fūng phan phaeo mā rap ao nāng no gaeo mūa yū plāi phāg mā neramit yang dī yū* . . . (at that time, the son of the glorious and magnificant deity went to receive the Lady of the Gem who was living at the top of a mountain, then he built a residence. . .) ."[6] Any reader of both languages will immediately see that the Khün is not an exact translation of the Pāli, in fact the Khün provides more detail and the Pāli is simply an outline, or what Lévi-Strauss might call a mytheme, of the main action of the *phūk*. If one could only read or understand the Pāli, this narrative would be quite vacuous, telling the audience little more then who went where at what time. The Pāli may not have been intended to be translated and instead was meant to provide a frame to the main Khün narrative. In addition, Pāli in northern Thailand and the Shan territories often is non-standard and its consistency of errors could simple reveal the existence of a local dialect of Pāli and/or reflect the non-standardized nature of Pāli in Southeast Asia in general. [7] The Khün seems to be using the relatively simple Pāli statements as cues to the narrative sequence of the story, but the Khün writers had a free hand in creating details, expanding on the fortunes of characters and adding branch stories not contained in the Pāli. This should not suggest that there was a Pāli original on which the Khün text is based, especially due to the frequent errors in Pāli grammar and syntax, but that the Pāli framed the story and gave it a sense of religious authority, temporal authenticity and could have been used to comment on contemporary events. We will return to these issues below.

The Pāli is not limited to these initial summaries, however, on every page of the Wat Hnong Kham edition there are intertextual Pāli words or short phrases usually followed by Khün translations. For example, in the fourth *phūk* there are intertextual Pāli words and phrases like: "*sattaṃ yojanamaggaṃ* (a path measuring seven *yojanas*)" and others like "*so mahāsatto* (the great being)." These Pāli words and phrases are often, but certainly not always, followed by a direct Khün translation which reveals a good

understanding of Pāli. The former phrase is followed by "*an wā hanād nag klāi yāo yoj nap wā dāi 7 yojanakanā* (this means the way was very far and long measuring seven *yojanas*)." The latter two words are followed by "*an wā mahāsat* (the great being)."[8] These intertextual Pāli words and phrases are extremely common. They are known as "*plae rōi*" or "thread translations," because the Pāli is weaved through the vernacular text.[9] These Pāli words add no additional information to the narrative and seem completely arbitrary; however, like Latin, French or German words and phrases often used in English texts, like *sui generis, a priori,* or *wissenschaft*, they add both a sense of prestige and scholarliness to the text as well as providing foreign words that present complex ideas or descriptions in concise ways. For example, in the fifth *phūk* the Pāli term "*sakuṇṇā* (birds)" followed by the Khün "*an wā nok dang lāi nōi yāi an yū dāo pā māi himaphān* (this means every type of bird, small and large, that lives in the Himaphan region)."[10] As you can see, the general Pāli term for birds is more concise than the Khün; however, since the text provides a lengthy translation of the term, I do not believe that the Pāli is employed for conciseness, like "*a priori,*" but instead to maintain a sense that the Khün is merely a translation of the original Pāli. The composer of the text must have known Pāli well enough to translate basic words and phrases. Furthermore, the Pāli in general adds no additional detail or semantic feature to the narrative as a whole, it seems merely to provide a consistent transition between *phūks* and a consistent reminder that the Khün is a translation of a yet-to-be discovered Pāli original. However, since there has never been any indication in inscriptions, the canon, *Paññasajātaka* collections or anthologies that an original existed, we cannot and indeed should not assume that this text is a translation of an original Pāli text.

To conclude this section on the particular linguistic features of the SWL, it should be quickly noted that Khün, like Thai, Lao, Khmer, Sinhala and Burmese, contains numerous Pāli derivitives that are so common that the speakers may not be aware that they come from Pāli. Similarly, English speakers are not always aware that many of the words they use come from German, French, Latin, or Sanskrit. These

derivatives are found throughout the Wat Hnong Kham recension of the SWL and reflect centuries of contact between the local language and the classical languages of Pāli and Sanskrit. These derivatives should not however be compared with the examples of thread translations seen above, because almost universally the Pāli terms used in thread translations are distinguished by being in the original Pāli versus a derivative form which has undergone local phonetic changes, like Khün "*dit* (direction)" for Pāli "*dis(a)* (direction)," (there are no sibilants in final position in Khün) as well as by being set apart from the other words in a given line by "*an wā* (this means)" after the Pāli word. All these examples of the use of two languages in one text demonstrate a textual example of the interplay between the classical, translocal world which Pāli and Buddhism represented and the local, vernacular world of the Khün. These linguistic features have narrative counterparts as we will see in the next section.

Cultural Values, Religious Beliefs and Religious Practices

In terms of religious beliefs, cultural values and spiritual practices the SWL has many features in common with canonical *Jātakas*. However, by closely examing the differences between canonical Jātakas we can be witness to the simultaneous processes of Buddhist acculturation and the construction of a regional cultural independence.

The SWL is different from canonical *Jātakas*, especially the *Vessantara Jātaka*, which is by far the most well known in Southeast Asia.[11] As we have seen, the SWL is very similar to the canonical type due to its main character being a Bodhisatta and because it involves self-sacrifice, renunciation and the lives of royalty and the gods, as well as some sort of journey. However, the Khün writers inserted many new features into this known form, including:

1) an emphasis on monogamy;
2) a greater attention to the value of romantic love;
3) an acceptance of sibling marriage;
4) a focus on achieving the three joys;
5) frequent references to the practice of local and/or brahmanistic magic;

6) meditative practices which included the *kammaṭṭhana* (specific objects of meditation);
7) an explicit importance placed on copying, honouring and listening to the text;
8) and a greater emphasis on the perfection of knowledge and renunciation.

Although there are many other important themes and values expressed in the SWL (like the emphasis placed on the connection between physical beauty, wealth and spiritual power, the importance of giving and the period of asceticism in the forest) these particular eight features are largely local innovations on the canonical *Jātaka* type. By focusing on them, Khün creative strategies for manipulating classical literature for their own purposes will emerge.

Local cultural values

The Khün have a great affection for romantic tales. One of the most famous love stories in Khün is the *Along Chao Sam Lo*. This story relates the story of two rich and beautiful young people who fall in love and conceive an illegitimate child, but they are not permitted to marry by the young man's mother. The young lady, U Piem, and her unborn baby, die from wounds inflicted by the mother. The young man, Sam Lo, commits suicide when he learns of her death.[12] In the *Chao Bun Hlong*, another non-classical Khün *Jātaka*, there are numerous scenes describing great feelings of passion and lust felt by young women towards one of the heroes, Bun Hlong. Besides this overflowing expression of passion, there are also passages describing undying love beween Bun Hlong and the young woman, Bimba.[13] In manuscripts Peltier copied at monasteries in and around Chiang Tung, there are seven stories that could be called romances, which laud the intense love of the main characters. For example, in the *Ratana Saeng Beu* (Peltier's transliteration: *Rttn Sēn Bbēe*), non-classical Jātaka, the hero gives up the ascetic life, because he longs for his wife and when he could not find her, he sends a parrot to fly all around the world to deliver her love letters. When he finds her, her father refuses to give her away in marriage, so the hero attacks the father's kingdom with an army and wins the girl. Truly this is more of a romance than a Buddhist morality tale.[14]

The SWL does not completely abandon the promotion of Buddhist sexual morality or

promote the attachment which love brings, but it also does not mark romantic love as a hindrance to spiritual advancement. In the SWL, Sujavaṇṇa and Ummādantī are depicted as a couple very much in love.[15] In the fifth *phūk*, Ummādantī is worried that because she is a daughter of a bull, Sujavaṇṇa will be attracted to the firm-breasted, fully human women and reject her because of her dubious ancestry when they return to the city together. She begs his faithfulness. Sujavaṇṇa assures her that he will only love her. He declares: *"thī rak khot sāi jai nāng yā dai song sai lāi yūang jai fon fūang glā bai . . . phī bao liao chāk nong sak an thāe lāe* (my love untie the knots of your heart, give up this intense doubt and that heart of yours which flitters and flutters to and fro . . . your man (literally elder brother) will truly not stray away from you even for one instance)."[16] These heartfelt expressions continue for several lines and Sujavaṇṇa states that Ummādantī is more beautiful than all other women and that he loves her *(hū pen yai kwā nāng thang lāi . . . rak nāng no thai nak nā . . .* I see you as greater than all other women . . . I love you deeply).[17] While the romantic theme and orations of love are subjects of literature in all languages and across all cultures, what is important for our purposes is that this explicit promise of monogamy as well as Ummādantī's request of faithfulness from Sujavaṇṇa is largely unknown in canonical Pāli *Jātakas*. Furthermore, the ardent love a Bodhisatta so eloquently expressed for a female is never expressed in a context where it is not designed to be a lesson against lust and attachment. For example, in the canonical *Paduma Jātaka* the Bodhisatta expresses feelings of love towards his wife by saving her from being eaten by his brothers, but does not show any passion or proclaim his love verbally. Moreover, he is punished for his attachment to her, because she has an affair with a criminal. The Bodhisatta is taught that attachment is suffering (J.II.321–23). Furthermore, in the *Suruci Jātaka* we find an example of a queen who asked her husband to be monogamous, but when she cannot bear a son for him, he marries 16,000 other women (J.IV.314–325). In the *Āsaṅkha Jātaka* it is said that women are a stain to the religious life (J.III.250). In fact, the Pāli word most commonly used for love, *sineha*, is found only in three canonical Jātakas. In the *Kaṇha*, love or affection is associated with delusion *(dose vā lobhe snehe va)* (J IV.11). In the *Guṇa*, it is used in the sense of a lion showing affection to a she-jackal who had saved his life *(sineham karomi:* I show/make affection) (J II.27). In the *Abhiṇha*, it is used to express the platonic friendship between an elephant and a dog (J.I.190). The term, *rāga*, commonly translated as "passion," is universally a unskillful *(akusala)* quality in a person and is supposed to hamper spiritual advancement. It is usually found in a triad with *dosa* and *moha* (delusion).[18] This is certainly not the case in the SWL. In this tale, Sujavaṇṇa gladly dedicates himself to his princess and promises his faithfulness. This faithfulness is maintained throughout the story. Even after Sujavaṇṇa has sacrificed his eyes and legs and has retreated to the ascetic life in the forest, he still feels attachment for his wife. He worries about her being left alone in the world and takes her with him into the forest to live as a renunciant.[19] They live there until both are freed from mental defilements *(kilesa)* and pass away together and are reborn as husband and wife in heaven. This is truly an undying love!

Even though the canonical *Jātakas* cannot be called romantic tales and they do not promote monogomous relationships. Jaini has pointed out the prevalence of these themes in the *Paññasajātaka* collections. For example, he lauds Madame Terral, who published an edition of the Khmer/Thai version of the *Samuddaghosajātaka* from the *Paññasajātaka*, because her "translation and grammatical notes introduced to scholarship a beautiful love-story not found in the Theravāda canon or its commentaries." The *Paññasajātakas* themselves often relate tales of longing and separation of young lovers. For example, the *Sakhapattarājajātaka* describes how the Buddha courted his wife Yasodharā in past lives and in one scene Yasodharā, born in the past as Ratanavatī, attempts suicide due to the loss of her lover.[20] The *Sudhanukumārajātaka*, Jaini notes, is very similar to the well-known love story of Sudhana and Manoharā, which is performed in plays in Thailand and Burma. Jaini has related its story to a tale in the *Divyāvadāna* and the *Mahāvastu*.[21] The *Lokaneyyapakaraṇam*, a non-

canonical *Jātaka* also offers what Jaini calls "a startling defense of the superiority of monogamy over polygamy. LP is the only place in Pāli literature where a Bodhisatta refuses to accept the king's offer of a royal princess for a second wife."[22] He was not familiar with the SWL, so we cannot fault him for not noticing the support of monogamy in Khün Buddhist literature. What is important is that monogamy was a value promoted by some Southeast *Jātakas* and two of these non-canonical *Jātakas* are truly love stories. These elements, since they are largely unknown in canonical *Jātakas*, reflect a local creative insertion.[23]

There is no good ethnographic material available about Khün marriage patterns. In his travel journals, F.J. Harmand did not give any specific information about family and marriage rules among the Khün or surrounding tribes.[24] Francis Garnier did not note a particular value placed on monogamy among the Khün or their neighbours, but he did often comment on the number of Catholic converts in the area in the mid-19th century, which could have had an influence on Khün marriage rules.[25] The little ethnographic material available on Tai speaking peoples in the region points to some practice of monogamy. For example, the San Chay people in northwestern Vietnam practice strict monogamy.[26] Among the central Lao, monogamy is the rule.[27] The Bo Y and the Tho also practice monogamy.[28] While these customs may be ancient, because of the difficulty in dating the SWL, which I will discuss below, it is impossible to say if the emphasis on monogamy seen in the SWL and in other Southeast Asian non-canonical *Jātakas* was influenced by local customs and morality, local or translocal religious and secular literature or was just a creative insertion by the author or authors of the text. However, it reflects a local innovation contained within a translocal literary structure.

Besides the romantic elements of the SWL and the unusual emphasis on the value of monogamy, another local value is expressed in this story. After our heroine and hero return to Jetuttara and rule as queen and king, they have two children—a girl and a boy. When these children are of age they are married to each other. This particular event is completely

arbitrary. It plays no essential part in the plot or progression of the narrative. This is confirmed when the Buddha reveals that the people in the story who lived during one of his former lives would be reborn as well-known figures from the life of Gotama, like Sāriputta, Mahāmāyā and Ānanda. He even includes Sugandha, Ummādantī and Sujavanna's son as being Gotama's son Rāhula in a past life. Sujavanna's daughter, Saṅkharī, is not mentioned. I believe that this element of the story was added to express a local value in sibling marriage, like that honoured by Zoroastrians.[29] The only other suggestion of a non-platonic sibling relationship in the regional literature is from the *Sin Xay*, in which the king, Phaya Kutsalat, expresses his deep love for his sister and gives her half of his kingdom. When she is kidnapped by a giant snake, he pines after her, becomes depressed and abdicate the throne to become a monk, vowing to search for his sister for the rest of his life.[30] Sibling marriage or incest is unknown in canonical *Jātakas* and is twice criticised as sinful in other canonical texts. *Micchādhammamarāga* (wrong and unlawful or unrighteous passion) is used in reference to two family members marrying in the *Dīghanikāya* (D.iii.70).[31]

Religious beliefs

At the end of the SWL (*phūk* seven) the Buddha requests that the monks honour the SWL with gifts (*dai pūjā dūai vatthu gan tāng tāng*), copy (literally 'build') it and listen to it (*dai srāng lae dai fang*), preach it and write it (*dai thet lae dai kien*), study it and memorize it (*dai rien lae taem ān*), to encourage (people to know it) and call attention to it so that people can listen to its truth (*dai chak chern pok tuan thān heu dai fang dham*), etc.(188) If they perform these deeds, each one will go to Nibbāna as well as experience the three joys. These joys (*sukh ying*) are: 1) living as a very wealthy royal person (*mahāseṭṭhī lae gasatarā*) with much rice and other abundant things; 2) being reborn in heaven; and 3) realizing Nibbāna. These three joys are not seen as contradicting each other and the monks who perform the duties listed above with faith (*saddha*) will achieve them all. This *ānisaṃsa* (deed performed in hope of a receiving merit) statement at the end of their narrative with the particular emphasis

on the three joys is not found in canonical *Jātakas*, but is a common feature in Buddhist literature in Southeast Asia. *Ānisaṃsa* passages are found at the end of dedicatory inscriptions, on the bases of Buddha images, in the colophons of copies of both canonical and extra-canonical texts, and elsewhere. Their inclusion at the end of a *Jātaka* reveals its locative specificity in Southeast Asia, especially with the mention of the three joys which are found at the end of most non-canonical *Jātakas* in the *Paññasa-Jātaka* collections of Southeast Asia. What is also interesting about this *ānisaṃsa* section of the text is that it is accompanied by an unusually large number of Pāli words and phrases that are translated into Khün. This is probably because requests for merit at the end of texts and on inscriptions were quite formulaic and common in northern Thailand, Laos and eastern Burma. However, a more important point to make for our purposes is that the SWL shows local innovation by conflating the possible worldly material and the soteriological goals of the monk who studies, honours, copies and reads the text into the three joys. At the end of the canonical *Jātaka* the Buddha simply informs the audience how the characters in the story relate to him and people during his present lifetime. Only in the *Paññasajātaka* collections in Southeast Asia and independent non-classical *Jātakas* like the SWL do we find this emphasis on the three joys and the specific intructions by the Buddha that those who honour, the *Jātaka* will obtain the three joys.

Religious practices

There are a number of specific religious practices mentioned throughout the SWL which strike any reader familiar with canonical *Jātakas* as strange. The first practice is that of making *yan*. *Yan* (skt: *yantra*) are mystical diagrams used with *mantras* for casting spells of protection, causing misfortune to befall enemies, or to gain wealth, love or prestige. Their origin is sometimes traced back to the Harappan civilization of the Indus Valley (2400 BCE), but they did not become popular until their use in Tantric rituals in India and Tibet until 700–1200 CE. Today they are commonly used by Brahman priests. They are not mentioned as being employed in the Pāli canon, but they are

extremely common in Northern Thailand and Laos, where they are made by Buddhist monks and lay religious specialists alike and are found in most homes, businesses and temples or tatooed or worn on shirts by practioners of this form of magic.[32] They are used in the SWL. In the fourth *phūk* Sujavaṇṇa composes and studies a *yan*, a *man* (skt: *mantra*) and then a specifically Vedic *man* in order to prove to Ummādantī that he is not afraid of her father or her ancestry (*kien man yan lae mantapet*). What is interesting is that Sujavaṇṇa is the future Buddha. In the canon there are innumerable places where the Buddha criticizes the employment of Vedic magic and *mantras*.[33] However, the canonical texts often present ideals that may not reflect the actual practices of Buddhists at any time or in any place. The practice of composing *yan* and *man* should not be seen as separate from "Buddhist" practice, namely, the maintenance of precepts and the striving to perfect *pāramī*. For example, Sujavaṇṇa is well skilled in their usage. He is able to dispel fear and fly up to Ummādantī in the one-pillared palace owing to the power of his *man* as well as his *pāramī* and the collection of merits he has acquired aimed at true omniscience coupled with his desire to escape the round of rebirths (*vaṭṭasaṃsāra*) and realize Nibbāna.[34]

Other Brahmanistic practices that had been adapted and localized in the Khün region are explicitly mentioned in two other passages. Later in the fourth *phūk* King Jambū Ekarāja and Queen Suvaṇṇabhūmā are worried because their son did not return from his hunting excursion. They summoned their purohit (skt: *purohita*), a Brahman court priest/ritual specialist, and their Brahm (skt: *Brahman*) attendants, who were skilled in the three Vedas (*fūng chop tripet*) to tell them what had happened to their son. The purohit and the brahmins were successful in discovering where Sujavaṇṇa was and correctly predicted when he would return. In this section it is unclear how the purohita knew this, but in the first *phūk*, it states that the purohit practiced astrology (*hūrā*; Thai: *horāsāt*) to decipher a dream of Suvaṇṇabhūmā and to predict the birth of her son. This may have been the practice of the purohit in the fourth *phūk*. These practices localize the SWL, demonstrate the syncretic nature of Khün religion in general and are

elements unheard of in classical *Jātakas*, although they certainly were not only common among Buddhist and Brahmans, but local religions in the region. Finally, practices such as these are found in other works of Khün literature. For example, the *Kalasa Grüa Dok*, a romance written in Khün, but set in Benares, describes the hero getting tattooes in red ink from his waist to his feet to ward off knives and spears. In the *Chao Bun Hlong*, the mother of two banished sons ties golden threads around their wrists to prevent disease and avoid tiger, snake, scorpion and spirit attack. This is a common practice among the Khün people, but is largely unknown in India.[35]

Other practices in the SWL have more in common with canonical *Jātakas*, but take on a different role and a greater emphasis. The practice of perfecting *pāramī* is common throughout the Buddhist world, but takes on different forms in different places. In most canonical *Jātakas*, especially the *Vessantara Jātaka*, the *pāramī* of giving (Pāli: *dāna*) is most important and most commonly practiced by bodhisattas. Furthermore, 27 out of the 50 *Jātakas* in the *Zimme Paṇṇāsa* recension of the *Paññasajātaka* are primarily about the perfection of giving. The *pāramī* of giving plays a very significant role in the SWL. Sujavaṇṇa gives away his wealth, kingdom, legs and eyes. There is also a heavy emphasis on the pāramī of renunciation (Pāli: *nekkhammapāramī*).[36] The text states that Sujavaṇṇa and Ummādantī practice *nekkhammapāramī* in order to remove *kilesa* (defilements) and escape from the cycle of rebirths in *saṃsāra*. According to standard *Abhidhamma* descriptions, removing *kilesas* is the last step before realizing enlightenment. Therefore, the practice of the *nekkhammapāramī* would seem to be logically the last type of practice our heroes should perform. However, this practice is rarely the theme of *Jātakas* and the term *nekhammapāramī* is never mentioned in the canonical *Jātakas*. The most common *pāramī* in the canonical Jātakas is the *dāna-pāramī* (perfection of giving).

Practices such as *bhāvanā* (meditation) and the development of *metta* (loving-kindness) are frequently mentioned in the SWL. This is not unusual in comparison to classical *Jātakas*; however, the specific emphasis on the practice

of the *kammaṭṭhāna* (basis of action; a mode of meditation; analytical meditation) is relatively uncommon in *Jātaka* literature.[37] There are only about 14 out of 547 Jātakas which refer to a specific type of *kammaṭṭhāna* and less than half that number refer to *kammaṭṭhāna* in an uncompounded form. For example, in the *Kassa-pamandiya Jātaka*, the term *kammaṭṭhāne* is used, but no specific practice is mentioned. Whatever it might be it leads to Arahant-ship(J.III.36). This same amibiguity is found in the *Apaṇṇaka, Tittha* and *Mudulakakhaṇa*. In the *Dubbalakaṭṭha* there is a reference to a specific *kammaṭṭhāna* which was, judging from its name, used to gain awareness of death—the *maraṇasatikammaṭṭhana* (J.I.414).[38] These specific types of *kammaṭṭhāna*s are enumerated and described by Buddhaghosa. He lists 40 different types of *kammaṭṭhāna*s in the *Vissudhimagga* and they are frequently refered to the the *Dhammapada*, both are popular texts in Southeast Asia and have numerous regional vernacular commentaries.[39] The composer(s) of the SWL may have been familiar with the *kammaṭṭhāna* concept from these works, but why the writer felt the need to emphasize them as specific practices of Sujavaṇṇa and Ummā-dantī on several occasions is unknown.[40] We may speculate that since the *kammaṭṭhāna*s were supposed to be practiced only under the instruction of a trained meditation teacher, that depicting Sujavṇṇa as practicing them without any formal instruction was designed to demonstrate his imminent Buddhahood (since the Buddha is distinguished from an arahat because he achieved enlightenment on his own without teaching from another). This particular practice emphasized in the SWL warrants a study of its own and cannot possibly be fully explained here; however, what is important to note is that they cast light on some regional religious practices that are often not present or not emphasized in Pāli *Jātakas*.

Creative engagement: old forms in service of new concerns

Vernacularization and localization

As should now be evident, the SWL contains many features not commonly found in canonical *Jātakas*. The first reason for these novelties

might be simply the creativity of Khün writers and storytellers. Jaini notes that Buddhist authors in Southeast Asia had a "penchant ... to embellish old canonical tales with new elements drawn from the indigenous cultures of their own native regions."[41] These writers clearly took common themes from traditional Khün, Northern Thai and Lao literature and incorporated them into the traditional form of the canonical Pāli *Jātaka*. They drew from local beliefs, practices and values.

Why did the writer(s) of the SWL choose the structure of a classical form of religious literature as a vehicle to carry their own literature? One explanation could be that the writer(s) wanted to give their new story a sense of temporal legitimacy. Canonical *Jātakas* were written in Pāli and explicitly claimed to be the word of the historical Buddha, Gotama (*Buddhavacana*), spoken over 2,400 years ago. Philologically, the SWL contains numerous Pāli passages which are translated into Khün or individual words or phrases which are either translated or must have been familiar enough to the reader to be left untranslated (thread translations). Since, there is no manuscript or any historical suggestion that there was ever an original Pāli version of the SWL, we cannot assume that the SWL is a translation of an Pāli *Jātaka* that has been lost, especially since there are numerous non-canonical *Jātakas* in Southeast Asia. Moreover, the few Pāli passages that are translated are mere *phūk* introductions or *mantras* that if strung together would not offer a clear understanding of the plot or any detail of the story. Even if there was an original Pāli version of the SWL, the numerous unique elements of the story demonstrates a plethora of local innovations. Still, by employing Pāli passages, words and phrases, throughout the text, a sense of classical/temporal authenticity is created and works to raise local innovations to the level of *Buddhavacana*.

This use of Pāli and Khün also reflects what Pollock called, "vernacularization;" namely, it took a cosmopolitan text-type, the Pāli *Jātaka*, and used the literary structure of that text-type for its own purposes. The SWL was composed in a vernacular language in such a way to emphasize its connection to some Pāli original. However, it "vernacularizes," or perhaps

regionalizes the Pāli source text or at least the genre of texts. It mimics the genre of the Pāli *Jātaka* and therefore "domesticates" it. The composers of the SWL, as Pollock writes discussing South Indian vernacular poets, "define themselves in significant if variable ways on the basis of literature they share, and they create new literatures in service of new definitions."[42] Jaini also notes that the apocryphal *Jātakas* collections use the canonical form to comment on contemporary concerns. For example, the *Mahāumaggajātaka* of the *Lokeyyapakaraṇa Jātaka* collection:

> provides a framework within which our author builds a tension between a Brahmin court-chaplain (purohita) who is identified as an adherent of the Śiva-sāsanā (Śaivism) and the Bodhisatta Dhanañjaya, the son of a merchant, who although very young, stands up for the Buddha-sāsana. One major purpose of the LP [Lokeyyapakaraṇa] would thus appear to be to show the conflict between eventual triumph of Buddhism over the Śaivism of the Śaivite court brahmans of Siam and Burma that took place during the fourteenth century [sic].[43]

Furthermore, there was a religious motivation for this localization. Jaini writes: "Buddhist monks took such canonical *jātakas* as models for their repetitive literary endeavours, much in the same way that they reduplicated Buddha-images or stūpas *ad infinitum* as an expression of their deep faith."[44] These are ongoing concerns, whether polemic or spiritual, which the canonical texts confront.

The creation of a regional identity

By working within a canonical structure, the SWL is able to carve out a place for its local creative innovations and communicate them in a form that would be familiar to other Theravādin Buddhists in the region. The one institutional and intellectual entity that most of mainland Southeast Asia, excluding Vietnam, had in common was Theravada Buddhism, known in Pāli as the *sāsanā*. Looking at Sri Lankan historical chronicles, like the *Mahāvaṃsa* and the *Dipavaṃsa*, Gananath Obeyesekere shows that Sinhalese speakers largely identified with the "*sāsanā*." Obeyesekere writes that:

It is *sāsanā* that takes place. In the doctrinal tradition *sāsanā* refers to the universal Buddhist community or church that transcends ethnic and other boundaries. This meaning coexists with another meaning that is found in post-canonical historical texts: *sāsanā* is the Buddhist 'church' that is particularized by the physical bonds of the land consecrated by the Buddha.[45]

The *sāsanā* is a conceived reality by which intellectuals across Southeast Asia understood themselves as being a part. If we understand this, we can examine regional Buddhist literature as forming a connection with the *sāsanā* that in turn defined themselves as distinct regional expressions of that *sāsanā* vis-à-vis other regional dynastic polities. The composer(s) of the SWL used the structure of classical *Jātakas* and wrote in passages, words and phrases of a cosmopolitan language which linked the Khün temporally and religiously to Sri Lanka and India (i.e. to the Buddha) and used the translocal prestige of the Theravāda. This could have been designed to authenticate the Khün region politically and religiously vis-à-vis the other Buddhist peoples around it or simply could be a sign that Khün writers wanted to participate in a larger intellectual and religious world. The *sāsanā* was a conscious concept, continually reasserted in texts, that had regional cohesive force.[46] It was a pre-modern conceptual category, like the Catholic conception of "the church," with which local agents could and certainly did identify with. The composer(s) of the SWL, either consciously or unconsciously, used a form of literature with well-known themes and characters to connect themselves to the *sāsanā* and define itself as a legitimate Buddhist polity (or at least cultural polity). This effort to distinguish itself as an innovative contributor to the Buddha *sāsanā*, is also seen in Khün temple layout and architecture. Temples in Chiang Tung possess the same elements as Southeast Asian temples; namely, a vihāra, uposatha hall, a cetiya, a sāla, etc., but the style of the temple buildings are unique when compared to other regional polities in Southeast Asia as well as to Sri Lankan and Indian Buddhist temples.[47] We have already noted the regionality of the Khün script and vocabulary and when seen in its total historico-cultural context, efforts by Khün

artisans and writers to both participate in the translocal Buddhist culture and establish their independent contribution become apparent.

The *Chiang Tung State Chronicle* also reflects an effort to create a regional identity. It provides a long history of its city, beginning with the rise of Buddhism in India to the advent of Buddhism in Chiang Tung and giving detailed information about the activities of its kings and temple abbots in service of the Buddha *sāsanā*. It is an attempt to establish a clear lineage from the Buddha to Chiang Tung Buddhist practice and institutions. This chronicle, like the *Jinakālamālī* and *Tamnān Mūlasāsanā* of Chiang Mai and many other regional chronicles, organizes the history of Chiang Tung into linear chronology that is methodical and detailed in order to convey, without a doubt, a clear, legitimate progression of Buddhism from its founding to its royal patronage in Lān Nā.[48] I believe that the SWL, like the *Chiang Tung State Chronicle*, is a further attempt to connect the Khün to the larger *sāsanā* and claim a place in its intellectual and literary history. The Chronicle also creates a sense of spatial authenticity for Chiang Tung as a place where the Buddha predicted his religion would flourish. The chronicler(s) relate a story of how the historical Buddha visited Chiang Tung and deposited eight of his hairs there. One passage reads:

> Lord Buddha, the Omniscient, with a retinue of forty-nine arahants disciples, came to the Subhāsudebba Hill during his preaching tours and left behind eight hairs of his head. He then came to Cōmḍōy and accepted honey from Gāng Āy-ūn, washed the lid of his alms bowl at Tuṅga Lake . . . and made the prophecy, saying, 'In the future this valley will be named Mönglang, the valley stream will be named namphū, and the place where I am sitting now will be named Cōmḍōy.' Having made the prophecy, the Lord came to the hill in the middle of the lake. Ānanda Thera took the Lord's iron staff and planted it in the ground and took the alms bowl to wash it in the lake at the foot of the hill . . . [and the Buddha declared] 'Six hundred and twenty-nine years after the Nibbāna of the Tathāgata a king will bring the Sāsanā and establish it in this state without a doubt.'[49]

This short passage, which is similar to visits and predictions made by the Buddha to places in Southeast Asia reported in other regional chronicles of Chiang Mai, Lān Xāng and other places, demonstrates how important it was to the chronicler(s) to state that the Buddha not only was temporally but also spatially connected to Chiang Tung. The Buddha left both a relic of his body (i.e., eight hairs), *sarīrikacetiya* and relics of use (i.e., the bowl and staff), *paribhogikacetiya.* This gave the land itself a sort of high Buddhist property value.

What this chronicle does explicitly in terms of creating temporal and spatial authenticity for Buddhism in Chiang Tung, I believe the SWL does implicitly. Although this can only be a speculative endeavour at this point without more historical evidence, the SWL does demonstrate that the only aspect of culture, practice and belief that was common to all groups of characters in the story (bulls, the poor, merchants, women, men, people from Rājagaha, people from Jettuttara, royalty, brahmans, etc.) was their general recognition of the qualities of a bodhisatta in Sujavaṇṇa and the belief in power of his perfections. Moreover, the Buddha, by associating different characters like Sāriputta with the King of the Bulls, Ānanda with the golden deer, Mahāmāyā with Suvaṇṇabhūmā, etc. demonstrates their inherent connection under the power of his teaching and to the story of his life. The Buddhist values depicted in this story unify these individual groups.[50]

The oldest manuscript of the SWL dates from 1843. Some versions of the story are undoubtedly much older, perhaps dating from the heyday of Khün and Northern Thai literature in the early 16th century before the Burmese invasion. Dating is notoriously difficult with these texts which may explain why scholars who have studied Khün literature have refrained from speculating on the original dates of any individual work.[51]

Almost all of the major works of Khün literature that are known to us have manuscripts which have been copied and re-copied several times in the last 30 years. This practice suggests, due to the climate and the shifting political fortunes of the Chiang Tung region, that the preservation of literature through copying is deemed as essential practice of monks or at least as a proper gift for monks (since almost every manuscript has been found in a monastery) and could have been going on for centuries. A date as early as the 16th century, if not earlier, may also be probable in the light of the similarity of many Khün tales to older literature from Laos and Burma from that time. However, there is no way at the present time to confirm this.

This concern with dating the SWL is of secondary concern, though, to the purposes of this study. I mention it now to begin a discussion regarding the commentaries the SWL could have been making on local historical events. For example, the story, although similar to canonical *Jātakas* and to other works of Khün and Lao literature, has many elements that could suggest that its composer(s) had other aims besides presenting a didactic and moralizing tale in the tradition of Buddhist birth stories. The concern with bringing the world of the bulls together with the kingdom of Jambu Ekarāja might be a subtle reference to peace treaties and envoys being sent to kingdoms neighbouring Chiang Tung. The prince royal, Sujavaṇṇa, travels to major urban sites, Jettuttara and Rājagaha, to visit his parents and new in-laws and crowds come out to greet and approve of his new bride. The women from Sujavaṇṇa's birthplace repent their former ridicule of Ummādantī who was half-bull.

Could this royal procession and conciliation between two adversaries be based on an actual historical tribal alliance or perhaps be an attempt to encourage tribal peace in an area that has been traditionally occupied by many different ethnic groups and been fought over by competing dynastic polities?[52] This is a difficult period for historians to understand, due to conflicting historical sources. Barbara Andaya notes that Burmese chroniclers mentioned Chiang Tung, the city where the SWL was probably written, as a tributary state, while *The Pāḍaeng Chronicle* refers to Chiang Tung as an independent city which ruled over surrounding tribes and the ruler of Chiang Tung "was possessed of great glory and power without peer, and there was no one, either within or without the state, to rebel against his authority, nor did he submit to the ruler of Ava (Burma)."

This emphasis on Chiang Tung's power and the fact that there were "no rebellions," considering conflicting sources, may suggest that rebellions were indeed a problem. Historians do know that the area was fought over for more than 300 years. The *Chiang Tung State Chronicle* tells of wars that were continually fought between Laos (Lān Xāng), China, Chiang Mai, Burma and the Khün.[53] Not only were the kingdoms of Lān Xāng, Chiang Mai and Ava competing for power in this region, but there were many Shan groups, like the Mau Shan, Gwe Shans and other ethnic tribes like the Lü, Dai Doi and the Wa and who consistently raised armies, demanded tribute from each other and disrupted trade routes.[54] The Burmese invaded the region ten times during from 1613 to 1739. Furthermore, the Burmese often attempted to patronize local monasteries to encourage the monks to gather support for the Burmese among the populace.[55] Could the Burmese have been encouraging the writing of stories that emphasized peace between different groups of peoples?[56] The practice of marrying sons of one royal family to daughters of another royal family is a common way in Southeast Asia (not to mention of course medieval Europe, Africa and South Asia) for one family to acquire more land and power or to make alliances with other families. Chiang Tung is located on the edge of Burma, Northern Thailand, Northen Laos and Southern China. This position is not only precarious in the present, but has been an area continually conquered and re-conquered by competing forces. Its present geo-politcal location reflects its historic location between the competing empires of Burma, the Shan, Chiang Mai, Yunnan and Lān Xāng. This area has been historically unstable because of the practice of local rulers to make alliances with whichever neighbouring kingdom was the most powerful at the time and playing one faction against the other. Moreover, this area is home to several different hill tribe peoples, like the Lü, Yao, Shui, Li, Mulao and many others. These tribes speak different dialects, have different styles of dress, religious customs and occupations. The SWL's focus on the unification of two different peoples could have been a commentary on the frequent interaction the

Khün must have had with their neighbours. I am not suggesting that these motives were the only ones for the composition of the SWL or other Khün stories, but the pre-occupation with the unification of or relations with two or more kingdoms or peoples was undoubtedly influenced by socio-historic events that were taking place during the composers lives.

Pierre Bourdieu, studying regional myth and ritual, sees these cultural expressions as a strategy for "transgressing and reshuffling cultural categories in order to meet the needs of real situations."[57] In his study of the manipulation of cultural symbols by ethnic peoples to generate authenticity for their existence as a regional political entity, Bourdieu notes that through political speeches, literature and ritual, certain politically marginalized peoples attempt to draw boundaries around themselves to emphasize their very existence as a unique and definable people. "Regionalist discourse," he writes, "is a performative discourse which aims to impose as legitimate a new definition of the frontiers and to get people to know and recognize the region that is thus delimited in opposition to the dominant definition . . . the effectiveness of the performative discourse which claims to bring about what it asserts in the very act of asserting it . . ."[58] Could the use of cosmopolitan, classical and translocal genre of literature that has been localized, altered and re-configured work to help define the Khün as an independent people with their own contribution to Buddhist literature? Was this story an assertion of an autonomous culture? Were the canonical *Jātaka* or even other regional non-canonical *Jātakas* written by the Lao, Burmese, Vietnamese, Cambodian or Siamese considered the "dominant definition" against which the Khün are defining themselves? This claim to a distinct place within the Buddhist world of Southeast Asia could both work to connect the Khün culturally with its neighbours as well as separate themselves as unique. Is then, the writing of the SWL an act in service of creating the Khün culture, instead just merely a reflection of it? In the war-torn region of Chiang Tung, was the creation of local literature an act of claiming independence and a striving for cultural survival?

The practice of literature

The dynamic interplay between the local and translocal has been the subject of numerous anthropological studies in the past 30 years. Many anthropologists have examined how religious ritual and myth are used locally to deal with the anxiety produced when confronting the translocal. Insights into changes in ritual and myth may generate insight into how translocal literature, like canonical *Jātakas*, can be localized and re-told in reaction to local historical events. The practice theory was developed by Marshall Sahlins' publication *Culture and Practice Reason* in 1976 and Pierre Bourdieu's *Outline of a Theory of Practice* in 1977. Sahlins argues against structuralist understandings of ritual and myth because they tend to see their object of study as static. For example, Sahlins points out that Radcliffe-Brown saw structures in ritual and myth as stable and prescriptive, while they should be seen as relationships continually made and re-made out of practice.[59] Sahlins wanted to see how change over time and continuity worked together in ritual. He demonstrated in a much debated study of Hawaiian myth and ritual that Hawaiians used traditional systems of symbols and of social organization to understand and deal with historical events like the arrival of Captain Cook on the Hawaiian Islands in 1778.[60] This major historical event or series of events changed the ritual involving the god Lono. Cook was incorporated into the ritual and sacrificially killed. This allowed the Hawaiians to assess and negotiate the new events through established patterns. Sahlins writes that the new "event becomes . . . interpreted . . . the event is a relation between a happening and a structure (or structures): an encompassment of the phenomenon-in-itself as a meaningful value, from which it follows its specific historical efficacy."[61] The Hawaiians used their own "frames of interpretation" to articulate their feelings within existing ideological forms and to make sense of new events and ideas. Sahlins sees this reaction as a form of resistence. Jean Comaroff taken cues from Sahlins to understand how ritual incorporates new religious ideas and practices when two religious systems come into contact. Studying the Tshidi of South Africa, she contends that Zionist practices of the Tshidi

show a creative re-conceptualizing of Christian and traditional Tshidi religious practices. This re-conceptualizing reflects an attempt to use traditional symbols to maintain control of traditional religious ideas in the face of new religious ideas being brought in by foreign colonists.

This use of practice theory by anthropologists studying Thai culture is the becoming popular for those scholars working in Thailand. For example, the most recent issue of *Tai Culture* features two articles by Yoko Hayami and Kiyoshi Hasegawa that study the engagement of the Lü and the Karen people with the dominant cultures of China and Thailand respectively. Hayami argues that the Karen adopt the dominant religious practices of their rulers while holding onto their religious beliefs. She sees the Karen as localizing the dominant power's religious forms in ways that their traditional beliefs have a place within the new religious practices. Hasegawa studied the Lü, who have been Theravāda Buddhists for centuries, but continue to practice spirit cults that were the main religious forms before the advent of Theravāda Buddhism in the region. Theravāda Buddhist practices have been modified so as not to conflict with local belief; furthermore, the Chinese culture of the ruling elite in the Lü territory in Yunnan province has also been subject to a process of negotiation, where Lü beliefs and practices are able to survive.[62]

All of these particular perspectives on the practice theory have one thing in common; namely, how traditional rituals and myths are used as tools, either explicitly or implicitly, to understand and culturally incorporate contemporary events. The insights gained from this theory on ritual help us see how the SWL shows the practice theory at work in literature. Still, we cannot simply transfer the practice theory as formulated by Comaroff and Sahlins onto the SWL, but the SWL instead shows us how the practice theory can be expanded to talk about literature. Moreover, I do not see the SWL as a form of resistance to a foreign culture. Indeed, by the time the SWL was composed, the Khün had centuries of familiarity and belief in Theravāda Buddhism. Instead the SWL may be seen as an articulation of a particular under-

standing of the Theravāda in an attempt to make sense of a world in which the religion of the Buddha constituted the overarching and dominant system of belief and practice. The Khün people used a foreign, translocal literary practice and plot structure to express their local practices, beliefs, values, social and historical concerns and vernacular language. This text is a negotiation in the form of a narrative. Whereas Captain Cook was incorporated into traditional Hawaiian ritual structure, the SWL incorporates local religious, cultural and linguistic elements into a non-native literary structure. The complex narrative structure, compelling chain of events and translocal ideological commerce proved to be an excellent vehicle to express local historical events, political and social concerns and religious values. Further research along these lines might lead us far in determining the different modes of interaction between classical, translocal literature and local, vernacular literature among the various peoples of Southeast Asia. Hopefully, with these theoretical tools, we can see the evolution of Pāli and vernacular local Buddhist literature as processual and dynamic reflecting strong ties to the past and engagement with the present.

Conclusion: where do we go from here?

This study of the *Sujavaṇṇa Wua Luang* has elucidated the ways in which classical Buddhist narratives found in the canon and local Buddhist-influenced literature in Southeast Asia interact with each other. What I have attempted to show is that Khün *Jātakas* cannot be seen as merely bad translations, evidence of lost classical *Jātakas* or word commentaries on classical Pāli canonical texts. The new elements in texts like the SWL reflect local innovations and creative engagement with canonical stories. Clearly, the structure, sequencing, themes and lessons of the SWL are very similar to the canonical *Jātaka* form. Still, numerous novel features brought out in this study reflect the Khün composer(s)' explicit efforts to incorporate local elements into the classical form in order to emphasize local practices, values and beliefs. These new elements might be: 1) an effort to communicate Buddhist lessons in a way that would be more conducive for a local audience to understand; 2)

conscious attempts to raise themes and motifs of local literature to the level of canonical Buddhist literature; 3) subtle comments of socio-historic events that were shaping the lives of the composers and the audience; 4) efforts to create a sense of temporal authenticity for the text by linking it to classical literature and the words of the Buddha or; 5) attempts by the composers to emphasize their place and unique contribution to the Buddhist *sāsanā*, which was the one over-arching unifying agent of the multiple cultures of Southeast Asia. Certainly these motivations for employing a classical form of literature to express local ideas, make sense of local events or legitimize local literature are not mutually exclusive and could all have been factors in the creation of stories like the SWL. What is important to note is that the Khün writers actively appropriated a classical literary structure and used it as a vehicle to carry their own religious beliefs and cultural practices. Like a banner flying high above a citadel, the SWL used a familiar method of communication to assert its cultural independence and individuality.

I believe that this method of examining texts like the SWL could be used in looking at other non-canonical Jātakas in Northern Thailand and Laos. Texts like the SWL are found in other scripts and in temple libraries in neighbouring cities and towns, which attests to their literary popularity as well as their effectiveness as religious pedagogical tools. Therefore, before individual texts can be seen as reflecting a specific people's cultural practices or religious teachings, one must determine their origin (as much as that is possible). This will hopefully lead to an accurate determination of the language, socio-historical context and location in which they were originally composed. Then one can examine the text as a creative endeavour to promote local doctrinal and ethical teachings as well as cultural customs versus a passive use of literary genres written for the sake of prestige, profit or pulp entertainment. Furthermore, by examining versions of a text like the SWL written in languages like Yuan and Lao with an eye to their differences, the same process of appropriating well-known texts and genres for the purpose of asserting local creativity or remarking on local concerns may be observed.

Where do these speculations about and insights into the SWL lead us in future research? First, the SWL calls into question the notion of a closed Buddhist canon in Southeast Asia. As mentioned in the introduction, the SWL is one of perhaps hundreds of non-canonical *Jātakas* that are attested in various places and in various languages in Southeast Asia. Like the well-known *Paññāsa Jātaka* collections of Burma, Laos, Thailand and Cambodia, which contain dozens of *Jātakas* not found in the Pāli canon, the SWL clearly adapts the structure of the canonical *Jātaka*, but adds new elements. However, the prevalence of these non-classical texts and the fact that their manuscripts are often found bound with canonical *Jātakas* suggests that these non-classical *Jātakas* might have been considered canonical or least reflect an effort to expand the number of texts usually thought of canonical. This might indicate that the notion of the closed canon commonly held today was only loosely interpreted at individual monasteries which copied, created and kept these collections of canonical and non-canoncial *Jātakas*. We must expand our notion of the canon to understand the relation between local Pāli and vernacular Buddhist literature in Southeast Asia. This study of the SWL hopes to show the importance of comparing local Pāli and vernacular literature in the study of Buddhism in Southeast Asia even if we blur the lines between concepts of canonical and non-canonical.[63]

Second, this study suggests one more way to re-interpret the notion of the Indianization of Southeast Asia promoted by the pioneering scholars George Cœdès, Paul Mus and D.G.E. Hall. They emphasized in different ways the way in which Southeast Asian literature, art, religious belief and ritual could be traced back to Indian culture. While these individual studies taught later scholars much about the importance of seeing South Asian antecedents to Southeast

Asian culture, studying Pāli and Sanskrit and locating points of contact between the two sets of peoples, they tended to depict Southeast Asian peoples as passive receptors of Indian cultures with very little creative innovation of their own.

The SWL shows us the richness and diversity of vernacular Buddhist literature in Southeast Asia and the importance of not only studying it diachronically in relation to its possible classical antecedents, but also synchronically in relation to other similar types of local literature among the various linguistically, ethnically and culturally related peoples of mainland Southeast Asia. A longer version of this paper compared the SWL, not only to classical *Jātakas*, but also to Lao, Khün, Burmese and Thai narratives. I hope to include these findings in a later publication. I believe that this comparison is essential in order to further understand the origins, evolution, motifs, linguistics and lessons of Southeast Asian Buddhist literature, because it allows us to see individual works in their total context both socially and historically. This diachronic and synchronic thick description of religious and secular literature in the different culturally, historically and linguistically distinct regions of Southeast Asia will allow us to see how doctrines, practices, literary styles, lexical items, cultural values and artistic expression have constantly changed and adapted over the centuries in these regions in response to foreign influences. The nature of the geography, historical position, languages, literatures and cultures of the peoples of Southeast Asia demands an understanding of the ways these cultures have creatively engaged with each other and with influences from the peoples of China, India and Europe. The SWL, as I hope to have shown, is an excellent example to justify this methodology. Furthermore, I hope that now the SWL can be seen as both a representative example of local Khün literature and a precious and unique contribution to worldwide Buddhist literature.

Notes

[1] These collections of 50 *Jātakas* are different in each manuscript tradition (Burmese, Lao and Cambodian). Only 15 *Jātakas* are common to all three recensions. There is also a collection of ten Jātakas found in Laos. See Sachchidanand Sahai, *The Rama Jataka in Laos: A Study in the Phra Lak*

Phra Lam, Vol. 1 (Delhi: B.R. Pub., 1996): p. 9. Probably the best overall study on the *Paññasajātaka* is in Thai and written by Niyada Lausunthorn. She gives a detailed history and analysis of the various recensions of the *Paññasajātaka* in Southeast Asia and attempts to connect them to canonical *Jātakas* and the *Jātakaṭṭhakathā* in Pāli as well as Sanskrit birth stories. While she is rarely expansive in her discussion of these similarities and the obvious Indian antecedents to certain individual *Jātakas* in the collections of fifty, she does provide the reader with a detailed philological comparative evidence. In the second part of her book she demonstrates that Thai poetical literature that has been inspired and influenced by the *Paññasajātaka* collections. This is an excellent source for anyone interested in the study of Thai literature. The weakness of Niyada's work is that she does not highlight (except for pp. 111–19) *Jātakas* that demonstrate Southeast Asian creativity. She mentions individual *Jātakas* that were drawn from local historical chronicles and folktales (like the *Suvaṇṇasaṅkhājātaka* being very similar to a folktale from Uttaradit province), but does not speculate on the nature and reasons for the Southeast Asia creativity, nor does she consider in depth the effects local poetical literature may have had on the *Jātakas*. See Niyada Lausunthorn, *Paññasajātaka: prawat lae kwām samkhan thī mī to wanakam roi krong khong thai* (Bangkok: Mae Kamphaeng Pub., 1997). For more information on the *Paññasajātaka* collections in general see Jaini, Padmanabh, "The Apocryphal Jātakas of Southeast Asian Buddhism," *Indian Journal of Buddhist Studies*, vol. I.1 (1989): pp. 22–37. Jaini's research has uncovered that often times the titles of the various stories were common in the different collections, but the contents were quite different. See also: Sap Phrakopsuk, *Vanakhadijathok* (Bangkok: Wat Porohit, 1984): introduction; and the study by Prince Savang Phouvong, et al., sous la direction d' Henri Deydier, *Un Fragment inconnu du* Paññasajātaka *laotien*, ed. by Jacqueline Filliozat and Anatole Peltier (Chiang Mai-Paris-Vientiane: École Française d'Extrême-orient, 1995–97): 3–4. This source gives specific information on the Lao manuscripts of the *Paññasajātaka*, as well as a brief introduction to the different Indochinese collections in general. The researchers found over 2000 manuscripts of these collections, demonstrating their popularity. The popularity of *Jātakas* is also proven by the thousands of representations of different *Jātaka* stories, especially the *Vessantarajātaka*, on temple murals, bas-reliefs and even in modern children's stories. For examples of these depictions of Jātaka stories see: McGill, Forest, "Painting the 'Great Life,'" in *Sacred Biography: Buddhist Traditions of Southeast Asia* (Honolulu: Univ. of Hawaii Press,

1997): pp. 195–217. Arunsak Kingmanee, "Suvanna-Jataka on the Bai Sema of Wat Nonsila-atwararam," *Muang Boran*, vol. 22.2 (1996): pp. 138–161. There are also dozens of editions of individual *Jātakas* like the *Vessantara, Mahosadha* and *Mahājanaka*, which give abridged vernacular versions of the Pāli original including pictures depicting dramatic scenes. There are also comic book versions of these *Jātakas*. For a good example of one of these popular, abridged editions see the Lao: *Prawetsanthonhom* (Vientiane: Sūn gān kon kwā, 1993): pp. 1–67; English readers should see Elizabeth Wray, Clare Rosenfield and Dorothy Baily's *Ten Lives of the Buddha: Siamese Temple Painting and Jātaka Tales* (New York: Weatherhill, 1972). This book shows how ten popular *Jātakas* are depicted on murals. Short summaries of the stories are given to accompany the murals.

² Peltier, Anatole-Roger (ed.), *Sujavaṇṇa Wua Luang* (Chiang Tung: Publié á l'occasion de l'offrande du Cullakaṭhina Monastère du Wat Tha Kradas, 1993): p. 174.

³ One of the most notable characteristics of epigraphy in Southeast Asia is the unusually large number of scripts employed to write both classical and vernacular languages (for a general introduction to epigraphy in Thailand and Laos see George Cœdès' *Prachum Charuksayam: Phak Thi Nung, Charuk Sukhothai*. Bangkok: Bangkok Times Press, 1924.pp. 13–23. This edition also includes a French translation by Cœdès. French readers see pp. 1–5 of the French section. See also his "On Some Siamese Inscriptions." *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, vol. 34, 1865: pp. 27–38), Natwipha Chalitanon's *Prawatisat Niphon Thai*. Bangkok: Thammasat University Press, 1984: pp. 29–82; and Lefevre's "Étude." *BEFEO*, no. 50.2, 1962: pp. 395–405). Readers of Thai should consult the introduction to each chapter of Katannyu Chuchun's *Aksonboran Thi Chai Banthuk Wannakam Thai* (Bangkok: Khanakammkan Wichai Haeng Chat (National Research Council), 1987) for a good summary of the history of Thai scripts.

⁴ See Peltier, *Sujavaṇṇa Wua Luang*, p. 242. Note: all translations of both Pāli and Khün are by Justin McDaniel, unless otherwise noted.

⁵ Peltier also found a version of the story in Lao in Vientiane and at the Chiang Mai University Social Research Institute manuscript collection in Chiang Mai, Northern Thailand. There are also incomplete Lüu versions. Ibid.

⁶ Ibid., p. 66.

⁷ See Norman, K.R. "Pāli Literature." *A History of Indian Literature, vol. 7, pt. 2*. Ed. by Jan Gonda. Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1983: pp. 140–144 for notes on the particularities of Northern Thai Pāli; namely: "unhistorical gemination of consonants and the converse, unusual retroflexion of dentals, and

unusual spellings(144). Charles Hallisey, in a personal communication, notes the common confusion of number and gender in Southeast Asian Pāli. See also Jaini, Padmanabh (ed.), *Paññasajātaka or Zimme Paṇṇāsa*, Vol. II. (London: Pali Text Society, 1983): p. xlii. Jaini provides a word list of particular anomolies in the spelling of many Pāli words in the *Paññasajātaka*. Still, these common idiosyncrasies of Southeast Asian Pāli cannot account for all the anomolies of the Pāli in the SWL. Saddhatissa has a different opinion and calls the non-standardized Pāli of Laos, "poor Pāli." He notes that in many non-classical texts in Laos there is the use of Pāli words and phrases which reflect a poor knowledge of grammar. See his "Pāli Literature from Laos," in Narain, A.K. and L. Zwilling (eds.), *Studies in Pāli and Buddhism* (Delhi: B.R. Pub., 1979): pp. 330–332.

⁸ Peltier, *Sujavaṇṇa*, p. 99.

⁹ I thank Dr. Prapod Assavavirulkaharn, professor of Sanskrit and Pāli at Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok for an explanation of the practice of thread translations.

¹⁰ Peltier, *Sujavaṇṇa*, p. 137.

¹¹ See footnote 1.

¹² See Peltier, Anatole-Roger (ed.), *Along Chao Sam Lo* (Chiang Mai-Paris: École Française d'Extrême-Orient, 1988).

¹³ See Peltier, Anatole-Roger (ed.), *Chao Bun Hlong* (Chiang Mai-Paris: École Française d'Extrême-Orient, 1992).

¹⁴ See Peltier, *La Litterature Tai Khoeun*, pp. 227–28.

¹⁵ See Peltier, *Kalasa Grua Dok*, introduction. He notes that romance is one of the most dominat subjects of all Khün literature.

¹⁶ Peltier, *Sujavaṇṇa*, p. 126.

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 128.

¹⁸ See J.I.61 as an example.

¹⁹ Peltier, *Sujavaṇṇa*, chp. 7.

²⁰ Jaini, *Paññasajātaka*, Vol. I, pp. 100–128.

²¹ Ibid., Vol. II., p. xviii and Vol. I. pp. 129–159.

²² Jaini also points out another story in the *Lokaneyyapakaraṇam* in which the author states that one of the main characters should not be faulted for being sexually promiscuous. See Jaini, "The Apocryphal Jātakas," p. 32–33.

²³ We cannot say that monogamy was a value of the Khün people in general. In fact there are numerous narratives in Khün which mention men having two or more wives and they are not criticized for this practice. See manuscripts 16,135, 188, and 202 of Peltier, *La Littérature Tai Khoeun*.

²⁴ See Harmand, F.J., *Laos and the Hilltribes of Indochina* (Bangkok: White Lotus, 1997).

²⁵ Garnier, Francis, *Further Travels in Laos and in Yunnan* (Bangkok: White Lotus, 1996): pp. 169–184.

²⁶ Dang Nghiem Van, Chu Thai Son and Luu Hung, *Ethnic Minorities in Vietnam* (Hanoi: The Gioi Pub., 1993): p. 126.

²⁷ Ibid., p. 134.

²⁸ Ibid., pp. 111 and 140.

²⁹ There are other Khün stories that speak of family customs not found in most of South Asia. For example, in the *Kalasa Grüa Dok*, a Khün romance, there is mention made of divorce as if it was a common practice. Divorce is largely unknown in Indian literature. Furthermore, practices like smoking opium, eating magic tubers for super-human strength, performing the *yāt nām* ceremony, summoning soothsayers who can bring people back to life and shape-shifting magic through the power of silk-thread are present in Khün stories. See Peltier, Anatole-Roger, trans., *Kalasa Grüa Dok* (Chiang Mai: Chiang Mai University Social Research Institute: 1989).

³⁰ See Thao Nhouy Abahy, *Sin Xai*, p. 361.

³¹ This term, although used for incest, is also used for any unrighteous passion in the *Dhammasaṅgaṇi* (189, 201, 214).

³² For a excellent study of the history of *Yan* and their use in modern Northern Thailand see Daniel Levy's 'Yan in Northern Thailand', a thesis completed in partial requirement for a Bachelor of the Art and Sciences, Harvard University, 2000. See also Khanna, Madhu, *Yantra: the Tantric Symbol of Cosmic Unity* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1994) and Chaichomphu, Insom, *Yan Lae Katha Khong Thi Muang Nua* (No date or location for publication). This last source gives detailed information on the particular symbols and *mantras* used with particular *yantras*.

³³ See Levy, *Yan in Northern Thailand*, pp. 75–78. Levy notes that there has been a continual tension throughout the history of Buddhism over whether magical practices involving mantras should be permitted or forbidden by Buddhists. There are several textual examples which confirm Levy's point. For example, a passage from the *Brahmajāla*, the first sutta of the *Dīgha-Nikāya*, the Buddha mentions fire ritual (*aggi-homaṃ*) and offering oblations from a spoon (*dabbi-homaṃ*) within a list of "low arts" such as palmistry, divination, astrology, drawing blood from the right knee as a sacrifice to the gods (*lohita-homaṃ*), looking at the limbs and saying a mantra to predict whether a person will have a good birth (*aṅga-homaṃ*), poison *vijjas*, mouse *vijjas*, mantras to protect against arrows (*saraparittānaṃ*) etc. that ascetics and brahmans perform for those who provide them with alms. At the end of this list he states that these practices are for the "man of a low-class" (*puthujjano*) and Gotama remains aloof from them.,

This suggests that those ascetics and brahmans (*samana-brāhmana*) who receive alms and perform these deeds are fooling the faithful (*saddhā*). For other examples of the Buddhist criticism of Vedic magic see M.I.1.2.3.12 (82), Dh.VIII.107 and Th.2.143. However, the Buddhist texts occasionally acknowledge the efficaciousness of the magic coupled with the association of its practice with the world of attachment and desire is explicitly seen in the *Samyutta Nikāya*. The *Aggika* section contains a noteworthy passage in which the Buddha refuses alms from the Brahman skilled in the three Vedas, because his fire rituals and mantras are producers of mental poisons and Buddhas do not chant verses from the Vedas. By refusing this rice offering from the brahman, the Buddha emphasizes that he is not one of those who sacrifices or attends to the fire. Futhermore, he is not a *vijjācaranasampanno* (one who is proficient in the ritual and knowledge (of brahmans). The Buddha is one who *khīnāsavam kukkuccavūpasantam*. This section follows a chapter in which the Buddha warns against the dangers of attachment, because it *na brāhmano sujjhati koci loke.*(S.VII.1.3.1) The two sections that follow the *Aggika* section tell about the attachment to the visible world that is associated with bearing children and accumulating wealth. Taking all of these polemical passages as a group we can see an explicit polemic against those members of society who participate in activities that foster a connection to the visible world of existence. However, by criticizing these activities, the Buddhist texts undermine the very basis of Vedic religion and epistemology. The criticism of Vedic magic did not just come from the Buddhists, there was also an occasional internal critique by Upanisadic writers. For example, two *Upanisads* that provide the most explicit attacks on Vedic magic and Vedic practice and learning in general are the *Maitri* (MaiU) and the *Mundaka* (MuU) *Upanisads*. The dating of these two texts are far from confirmed and the authorship, of course, is unknown. Both of these texts are later Upanishads, meaning that they were probably composed sometime between the 3rd and the 1st century BCE in comparison to the BĀU and the CU which were probably composed in the 6th and 5th centuries BCE. Their late date and their more direct critique of Vedic practices might suggest a Buddhist, Jaina or Ajivika influence. See especially MuU.1.2.7–13, and MaiU.4.3.

³⁴ Peltier, *Sujavanna*, pp. 104–106.

³⁵ Peltier, *Kalasa Grüa Dok*, p. 19.

³⁶ Peltier, *Sujavanna*, pp. 173–74.

³⁷ This was the primary focus of one of the most important scholastic Lao religious texts, the *Mūlakammatthāna*. This, Saddhatissa notes, was an important meditation manual for the Lao, giving

detailed instruction of 40 *kammatthānas*. See Saddhatissa, "Pāli Literature From Laos," p. 329.

³⁸ See also J.I.116 for another example. These practices are well-known in Thailand. They were practices by one of the most famous forest monks in Thailand and Laos named, Achan Mun Bhuridatta Thera. See Achan Maha Boowa Nyanasampanno, ed., *The Venerable Phra Acharn Mun Bhuridatta Thera: Meditation Master* (Udon Thani, Thailand: Wat Pa Ban That, 1982): pp. 45 and 221. A modern monastery in Central Thailand has its monks sit staring at rotting corpses when meditating. See a description of these practices in No author given, *Suat Mon Lae Phakinnakadhammawinai* (Phichit, Thailand: Wat Pha Kao Noi, 1997).

³⁹ On a recent research trip to northern Thailand and Laos I was able to collect dozens of manuscripts of vernacular commentaries of the *Vissudhimagga, Dhammapada* and numerous other Pāli texts. These manuscripts have been continually composed, copied and recopied from the 16th century onwards and are some of the most common texts in various temple libraries throughout the region.

⁴⁰ Ibid., pp. 173–76.

⁴¹ Jaini, "The Apocryphal Jātakas," p. 22.

⁴² Pollock, Sheldon, "The Cosmopolitan Vernacular," *Journal of Asian Studies* (1998) 8, 27. See Pollock's critique of the prevailing "paradigm for understanding the social foundations of Sanskrit cosmopolitan culture, namely, legitimation theory and its logic of instrumental reason: Elites in command of new forms of social power deployed the mystifying symbols and codes of Sanskrit somehow to secure consent." Ibid., 13.

⁴³ Jaini, "The Apocryphal Jātakas," p. 31.

⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 35.

⁴⁵ Gananath Obeyesekere, "Buddhism, Nationhood and Cultural Identity: The Pre-colonial Formations," Rough Draft of Unpublished Paper: p. 1.

⁴⁶ For the contemporary debate on notions of regional and national consciousness reflected in literature see Keith Taylor, "Surface Orientations in Vietnam: Beyond Histories of Nation and Region," *Journal of Southeast Asian History* 57, no. 4 (1998): pp. 949, 970; Wheeler's "Challenges to Narrative History: Bifurcated History and Surface Orientations." Unpublished paper, January, 1999: pp. 1–23; Prasenjit Duara, *Rescuing History from the Nation: Questioning Narratives of Modern China* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1995); John Breuilly, "Approaches to Nationalism," in *Mapping the Nation*, ed. Gopal Balakishrishnan (New York: Verso, 1996): pp. 146–174; Ernst Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Ithaca: Cornell Univ. Press, 1983); Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism*. London: Verso, 1991

(revised from 1983); Hobsbawm, Eric. *Nations and Nationalism since 1870.* Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1987; Chatterjee, Partha. *Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World: A Derivative Discourse.* Minneapolis: Univ. of Minnesota Press, 1993.

⁴⁷ See Sao Sāimöng Mangrāi, *The Pāḍaeng Chronicle and the Jengtung State* Chronicle (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Center for South and Southeast Asian Studies, 1981): pp. 7–10.‘ See also plates: 1, 5, 6, 7, 11, 13, 14, 15, 17, 18 and 19 for examples of Khün temple architecture. Anyone familiar with South and Southeast Asian Buddhist temple architecture will noticed the major differences in Chiang Tung temples immediately.

⁴⁸ There are several other shorter extant *tamnāns* written in Thai Yuan including the *Tamnān Muang Ngon, Yang Chiang Saen,* the *Tamnān Muang Suwannakhomkham,* the *Tamnān Singhanawatikuman* and others which attempt to create temporal and spatial authenticity for their respective *muang* (city-states) through linking their muang with the lineage of the Buddha and justifying their temples as authentic "depositories of merit." Wyatt notes that they are "localized in their subject, they are at the same time universal in quality." Wyatt, however, dismisses their political motivation for authenticity when their local power was being threatened by Chiang Mai, Lān Xāng and later Ayutthaya. (Wyatt, *Studies in Thai History*, 5–11). These histories are designed to justify local rule associated with the local leaders' possession of Buddhist relics. This subject of relics is too vast to be discussed here and I encourage the reader of Thai to consult Sanguan Chothisukrat's *Prachum Tamnān Lān Nā Thai, Vols. 1&2* (Krung Thep: Odeon, 2515 [1972]); and, Prasert na Nagara. *Tamnānmunlasatsāsanā Chiang Mai Chiang Tung* (Krung Thep: Ekasanwichakan Samakhom Prawattisat, 1994). Camile Notton's *Annales du Siam, I–III: Chronique de Xiang Mai* (Paris, 1932) is also an excellent collection. For a brief history of later Sri Lankan and mainland Southeast Asian chronicles in Pāli see: Norman, K.R. "Pāli Literature," in *A History of Indian Literature, vol. 7, pt. 2,* ed. by Jan Gonda (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1983): pp. 140–144. See also: Schweisguth, P. *Étude sur la littérature Siamoise.* Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1951: 43–44; and, Frankfurter, O., "Events in Ayudhya from Chulasakaraj 686–966." *JSS* 6, no. 3 (1909): 38–62;. A.P. Buddhadatta. (*Jinakālamālī.* London: PTS, 1962: 125–26). See also Cœdès' "Documents sur l'histoire politique et religieuse du Laos occidental," *BEFEO,* XXV, nos. 1–2 (1925); as well as the English translation entitled: *The Sheaf of Garlands of the Epochs of the Conquerer.* Trans. by N.A. Jayawickrama. London: PTS, 1968, and Swearer, Donald and Sommai Premchit. *The Legend of Queen Cama:*

Bodhiramsi's Camadevivamsa a Translation and Commentary (Albany: SUNY Press, 1998): pp. 63–6. Northern Thai inscriptions usually focus specifically on establishing temporal authenticity through detailed succession lists, but by the fact of their immobility they can be seen as suggesting a value to the place they occupy. For a good example of one of these lists concerning the royal line of King Mangrai inscriptions see: Cham Tongkhamwan, "Kham An Silacharuk Wat Phra Yun Changwat Lamphun," *Sinlapakon* 1 (1957): 61–69; as well as the *That Phanom Chronicle.* Pruess, James (ed.). "The That Phanom Chronicle: A Shrine History and its Interpretation." *Cornell Univ. Data Paper,* no. 104. Swearer, Donald and Sommai Premchit, "A Translation of *Tamnān Mulasasana Wat Pa Daeng*: The Chronicle of the founding of Buddhism of the Wat Pa Daeng Tradition," *JSS,* vol. 65, part II (1977).

⁴⁹ Sao Sāimöng Mangrāi, *The Pāḍaeng Chronicle and the Jengtung State Chronicle,* pp. 211–12,

⁵⁰ In the *Chiang Tung State Chronicle* there is an example of inter-regional warfare and shifting alliances. Sao Sāimöng Mangrāi's translation reads:

> [T]he Khüns mustered together five thousand men and came to fight in the direction of Jenglek, but were unsuccessful, and they went to seek help partly from the Lüs and partly from the Yeus [Shans, known to Thais and Tai-Yuans as Nio]. Fāghamraep [Khamhaepph of Hsenwi] brought a contingent to help. Hmün Benglöng, Hmün Naen, and Fāghamraep brought forces to fight Saen Yī. The Lüs, Löes, and Yāngs took Jenggöng in the rear. Saen Yī was defeated and fled. Hmün Benglöng and Hmün Naen led in driving out the Yöns up to Hinköngūa great number of Yöns were killed and very many elephants and horses lost. The defeated Saen Yī retreated to Jengsaen. Brayā Kaeuyödjenggrāy ordered the execution of Saen Yī at Jengsaen and allowed Prince Jenggong to rule Möngbhyāk [a substate and sixty miles south of Kengtung City].(Sao Sāimöng Mangrāi, *The Pāḍaeng Chronicle and the Jengtung State Chronicle,* p. 243).

Swearer and Sommai's specific study of the reigns of Lān Nā monarchs in the 15th and 16th centuries unequivocally establishes this link. Swearer, Donald and Sommai Premchit. "The Relationship between the Religious and Political Orders in Northern Thailand (14th to 16th centuries)." *Religion and Legitimation of Power in Thailand, Laos and Burma.* Ed. Bardwell Smith. Chambersburg, PA: Anima Books, 1978: 31.

⁵¹ Although Anatole-Roger Peltier has cornered the market in studies of Khün literature, he has almost completely refrained from performing any research on or speculating on the dating of most of the Khün

texts he has produced editions for. The very few other scholars that have worked on Khün material have also been unable or unwilling to conduct any serious investigation into the dating of these texts. I imagine that the SWL could have composed as early as some of the non-classical *Jātakas* in the *Paññasajātaka* collection, making the text as much as 400 years old.

[52] For good sources on the frequent periods of political instability of Southeast Asia in the medieval periods (1350–1820) see Stuart-Fox, *Lao Kingdom of Lāng Xāng*, chapters 3–4; D.G. Hall's *A History of Southeast Asia* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1955) pp. 182–300; and, Tarling, Nicholas, ed., *The Cambridge History of Southeast Asia*, vol. 1, parts 1 & 2 (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1999): 137–167 (part 1) and 75–89 (part 2).

[53] Sai Sāimöng Mangrāi, *Jengtung State Chronicle*, pp. 231–265 (see esp. p. 243 for an example of inter-regional warfare).

[54] Ibid., pp. 201–204.

[55] Andaya, Barabara, "Political Development between the Sixteenth and Eighteenth Centuries," *Cambridge History of Southeast Asia*, p. 85.

[56] For example, in the *ānisamsa* section of the *Saṅkhapattarājajātaka*(10) of the *Zimme Paññasajātaka* collection, there is a line that reads: "*sīmam janapadam khemi, subhikkham bhavatu niccam . . .*" ("let the boundaries of the kingdom be secure (and) prosperous forever)."(P.I.10,123) This is an explicit example of this non-canonical *Jātaka* inserting political concerns into the text, especially since various Burmese kingdoms over the last 900 years have been occupied with maintaining peace and security in the border areas of their kingdoms. Also remember that Chiang Tung has been on the borders of Burma since the 16th century.

[57] Bourdieu, Pierre, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, trans., by Richard Nice (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1977): p. 133. See also his article "Structures, Habitus, Power: Basis for a Theory of Symbolic Power," in *Culture/Power/History: A Reader in Contemporary Social Theory*, ed., Nicholas Dirks, Geoff Eley and Sherry Ortner (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1994): pp. 155–99.

[58] Bourdieu, Pierre, *Language and Symbolic Power* (Oxford: Polity Press, 1991): p. 223.

[59] Sahlins, Marshall, *Islands of History* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1985): p. 26.

[60] This study was attacked by G. Obeyesekere in *Apotheosis of Captain Cook: European Myth-making in the Pacific* (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1992) and Sahlins offered a lengthy rejoinder with the book *"How Natives Think" about Captain Cook for Example* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1995).

[61] Sahlins, *Islands*, p. xiv.

[62] See Yoko Hayami, "Buddhist Missionary Project in the Hills of Northern Thailand," *Tai Culture* 4.1 (1999): 53–76; and, Kiyoshi Hasegawa, "Buddhism and Spirit Cults among the Tai Lüu in Yunnan," ibid.: 32–51.

[63] K.R. Norman believes that a canon of religious texts can either be closed or open. By closed, he means that it consists of a fixed number of texts or utterances to which all additions would be considered the work of theologians, but not the work of the prophet or first promoter of the faith. Norman's study of the canonical tradition of Theravadan Buddhists shows that even though they claim to have a closed canon, many of the works contained therein are not and do not claim to be the words of the Buddha. Therefore, other parameters for canonicity, whether they be chronological, topical or other must be examined. (Norman, *A Philological Approach*, p. 140) Even the canon was considered closed before the common era, there are texts like the *Milinda Panha*, *Petakopadesa* and the *Nettipakarana*. Origen used the term canon as an adjective with the phrase *scriptuae canonicae*, but the first nomitative use was not until the fourth century. (Childs, Brevard, *Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1979): p. 50). In the Jewish tradition, the definition of canon was simply "sacred writings" that would not "defile the hands." However, examining the philological evidence, we see that the canon meant simply a collection of texts written in a fixed historical period. These texts were decided as sacred by consensus and usually were determined as canonical by their status of being taught as the divinely inspired words of God. Marvin Pope, in his translation and historical study of the *Song of Songs*, elucidates the difficulty in defining canonical and non-canonical works. He gives detailed comparative philological evidence (by connecting to Egyptian love poems or extracting its secular topics) to show that it could be considered non-canonical in the basis of date, literary integrity, authorship, language style and topic. (Pope, Marvin, trans. and commentary, *The Anchor Bible: Song of Songs* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Co., 1977; pp. 18, 29–33, 41–49, 66–67, 72 and 85) In scriptural traditions throughout the world and across history, canonicity is often defined, not necessarily arbitrarily, but definitely eclectically based on multiple and over-determined factors. Childs writes:

> The term canon has both a historical and theological dimension. The formation of the canon of Hebrew Scriptures developed in a historical process, some lines of which can be accurately described by the historian. Semler was certainly right in contesting an exclusively theological definition of canon in which the element of development was subsumed

under the category of divine Providence or *Heilsgeschichte* of some sort. Conversely, the formation of the canon involved a process of theological reflection within Israel arising from the impact which certain writings continued to exert upon the community through their religious use. To seek to explain the historical process leading towards the formation of the canon solely through sociological, political, or economic forces prejudices the investigation from the start. (Childs, *Introduction*, p. 58).

This shows us that the canonical process is not on-going and limitless as maintained by James Saunders, but restrictive. However, the restrictions come under shifting rubrics of historical, literary, etc. Jonathan Z. Smith believes that the necessarily limiting function of the word canon that separates canon from commentary is a "radical and arbitrary reduc-tion."(Smith, Jonathan Z., *Imagining Religion: From Babylon to Jonestown* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1982): p. 43) He states that the only formal element that truly defines a canon is "closure." (Ibid. p. 48) The reduction "represented by the notion of canon and the ingenuity represented by the rule-governed exegetical enterprise of applying canon to every dimension of human life is that most characteristic, persistent, and obsessive religious activity." (ibid.) The making of the canon was a natural development of a religious people who seek to define their religion.