

A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE THAI
SANSKRIT AND CHINESE SWAN MAIDEN

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by

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Introduction

The Siamese people living on the Chao Phraya Plain in central Thailand, the people forming the majority of the inhabitants of Northern and North-Eastern Thailand as well as neighbouring Laos who are known, ethnologically speaking, as the Lao people, and furthermore also the Thai people living in the Sipsong Panna area of Yunnan Province of China, together all belong to the Thai race. As well as having in common the culture of the Thairrace, they have also received the culture of India, and are even now devout followers of the Theravada Buddhism. Also, amongst the Thai people of these areas, the 547 Jataka tales contained in the Pali Tipitaka sutra have become well known as tales used in sermons at Buddhist temples.

Apart from the 547 Jataka tales of the Pali Scriptures, there have also been handed down amongst the Thai people Pannasa Jatak tales, known in Thai as the Panyasa Chadok or 50 Jatak tales⁽¹⁾. These 50 Jataka tales are said to have been written down in Pali by a monk in Chiang Mai in Northern Thailand around the 15th-17th centuries A.D.⁽²⁾ The Panyasa Chadok differs from the Jataka tales of the Pali Buddhist Scriptures in that it has provided a great deal of subject matter for the Thai literature of later generations. Its tales have become poems and plays, and there are also those which are believed to be indigenous to the Thai people and have been handed down from generation to generation. Of the tales in the Panyasa Chadok, the tale of Prince Suthon or that of Prince Suthon and Princess Manora have come to be the best known and most loved by the Thai people. However, these are not tales such as those taken by the people of Thailand as being indigenous

to the Thai race, but rather have a strong link with Indian tales, and furthermore bear a close resemblance to the tale of the Swan Maiden of China and Japan.

The Thai race live in the central part of the Indo-China peninsula, that is to say, in Thailand, Laos, the Shan States in Burma, and also in the northern areas of Vietnam. As is indicated in the name "Indo-China peninsula", it lies between India and China and is in a position to be easily influenced by both India and China. Here I would like to investigate to what degree the Thai people's 'Tale of Prince Suthon and Princess Manora' concurs with Indian tales, and in which points they differ, and also examine what sort of relationship pertains between the Thai tale and the Chinese Tale of Swan Maiden. Furthermore I shall also take up the characteristics of the Thai people's 'Tale of Prince Suthon and Princess Manora' from the point of view of cultural history more than from that of literature.

1. The Thai people's 'Tale of Prince Suthon and Princess Manora'

It is said that the oldest version of 'Prince Suthon and Princess Manora' handed down in Thailand is that found in the Pali language Pannasa Jataka. Today, this has been translated into Modern Thai in Thailand and is called by its name as pronounced in Thai, Panyasa Chadok (ปัญญาสชาดก). The second tale in this collection, "Suthon Chadok", is the tale of 'Prince Suthon and Princess Manora'. For the most part, tales written in plain Modern Thai and collected together in collections of narratives of all sorts are quotations or adaptations from the Panyasa Chadok. The Manora Nibat Wat Matchimawat edition (มโนห์รานิบาตฉบับวัดมณีนิมิต หนองคาย) of Southern Thailand are versions of 'Prince Suthon and Princess Manora' written in the dialects of the respective areas, but it is completely unclear as to when they were written. The Laotian Story of Thao Sithon (มหานิทาต์ลาว) is also the same tale versified in the Lao language, but here too its date of origin is unknown. From the contents however one

can see that both these tales are of the same lineage as "Suthon Chādok" of the Panyāsa Chādok. The 'Prince Suthon and Princess Manora' as handed down amongst the Thai people of the Sipsong Panna area of Yunnan Province in China is available in Zhao Shutun (王松 他撰「召樹屯(傣族民間敘事長詩)」, 雲南人民出版社, 1979.), translated by Wang Sun and others and in Bai Hua's The Peacock (白樺, 「孔雀」, 中國青年出版社, 1979.), both of which are translations into the Chinese language. 'Zhao Shutun' refers to 'Prince Suthon' and 'Peacock' to 'Princess Manora'. From such things as the contents of the tales, the names of the characters and place names, these tales too can be seen to be of the same lineage as "Suthon Chādok" of the Panyāsa Chādok.

	Prince Suthon	Princess Manōrā	North Panchān
Panyāsa Chādok	Phra Suthon	Nāng Manōrā	Uttara Panchān
Manōrā Nibāt	Sī Suthon	Nāng Manōrā	Udōn panchān
Sīthon Manōrā	Sīthon	Nāng Manōrā	Penchān
Thāo Sīthon	Thāo Sīthon	Nāng Manōrā	Penchān
Zhao Shutun	Zhao Shutun	Nan Muluna	Banjia
Peacock	Zhao Shutun	Nan Ruona	Panjia

It can be surmised that the tale as written in Pāli was copied and passed on by Buddhist monks, translated into the dialects of the various regions, and conveyed even more widely among the people until the present day. Here I would like to introduce the outline of "Suthon Chādock" from the Thai Panyāsa Chādok as a typical example of the tale of 'Prince Suthon and Princess Manora' as passed down amongst the Thai people.

In a land called North Panchan there ruled a king by the name of Āthitwong, and his queen was called Chanthathēwī.

An incarnation of a Bodhisattva lodged within the womb of the queen, a prince was born and was given the name of Prince Suthon.

In this land called North Panchān there was a pond which waters were as crystal clear as a jewel, and in this pond there dwelt a dragon king by the name of Chomphūchit. Thanks to this dragon king, North Panchān had become a land where crops would bear fruit in abundance. To the south lay the land of Panchān, and there foodstuffs were insufficient

and the inhabitants were poor. The king of this land, Nantharat, was jealous of the fertile country neighbouring him and thought to kill the dragon king, and so he called together the Brahman monks and said, "If you capture the dragon king alive, or kill him and bring him here, I shall turn over half the country to you." One Brahman monk requested a drug with which to kill the dragon king, went into the forest, stood nearby the pond and was about to recite a curse. The dragon king changed his appearance in to that of another Brahman monk and surreptitiously watched the scene from the vicinity of the pond. Then along came the hunter Buntharik passing by, and he happened to meet with the dragon king who had transformed himself into a Brahman monk. The dragon king asked Buntharik from which country he came. Buntharik replied that he came from North Panchan, and then the dragon king asked if he knew the reason for the wealth of foodsuffs and the ease of living in North Panchan. Buntharik replied that it was thanks to the dragon king that it was so. Thereupon the dragon king asked him what he would do if this dragon king was being hounded by danger, and Buntharik replied that he would cut off the head of the person attempting to do the harm. Then the dragon king declared, "In fact I am that dragon king", and that as the Brahman monks of the neighbouring country were trying to kill him, he requested that the monk be captured. Therupon the hunter captured the Brahman monk trying to murder the dragon king and killed him outright.

The dragon king took the hunter down to the land of the dragons at the bottom of the pond, where he entertained him lavishly in tanks for seven days, then giving him a present of precious jewels, escorted him back to the surface. Upon parting the dragon king said, "If you should want to see me again, please say so to the dragon gatekeeper. He will bring you to me." The hunter returned safely to his home. One day, as Buntharik went into the forest to do some hunting, he found a recluse's hermitage. He paid his respects to the hermit, and when he went on further, found a beautiful garden in which there was a square pond filled with clear water upon which bloomed lotus blossoms. According to the hermit, a group of Kinnari were wont to come to this pond to bathe. On the day of the full moon, the seven Kinnari Princesses of the king of Kailat Mountain,

Thumrat, bathed and played in the pond attended by one thousand ladies-in-waiting. The hunter saw their beautiful figures, and deciding to capture one, asked the hermit how to do so. The hermit replied that the only way to capture them was with a "dragon rope" from the land of the dragon king. The hunter went to the land of dragon king, received a "dragon rope", and returned to the human world,. He went back to the vicinity of the pond in high spirits and awaited the arrival of the Kinnari princesses. Just then the Kinnari princesses flew down, removed their wings and tails and began playing in the water. The hunter crept stealthily closer, and when he threw the "dragon rope" it caught on a Kinnari called Manora, and he was able to capture her, although the other Kinnari princesses escaped.

The hunter took up Manora's wings and tail and was walking along with her when they met with Prince Suthon and the hunter presented Manora to him, Prince Suthon took Manora as his own wife and returned to the capital.

The North Panchan country was being attacked by a neighbouring country and on the orders of the king Prince Suthon left for the front. Whilst the prince was away at war, the king had a nightmare, and was afterwards advised by a wicked soothsayer at the court to hold a religious rite at which a Kinnari should be killed. As far as Kinnari went, in the capital there was only Princess Manora, the consort of Prince Suthon who was at war. When she heard she was to be killed she said, "If that is the case, then before I die please lend me my wings and tail which you have kept. I will die with them on. "When her mother-in-law, the queen, gave her the wings and tail, Manora wheeled her way through the sky back to Kailat Mountain where her parents lived. On the way she stopped off at hermitage of a recluse living in a forest in the Himalayas and told him part of the story from start to finish, and asked that if her husband, Prince Suthon, should come along he should be handed a woollen cloth and a jewelled ring. As the place where she was going henceforth was a place where lived immortals, he should be urged not to search for her. However while saying this, she also informed him of a method whereby her husband would be able to pursue her by protecting his body with the woollen cloth.

Meanwhile, Prince Suthon, who had smashed the enemy and returned victorious, heard of his wife, Princess Manora's running away, and following her tracks, left for the Himalayan forest, where he came across the hermit and received the articles Manora had left with him. After travelling for seven years seven months and seven days and surmounting a host of difficulties, he found his way to Sawannakhon (the capital of Heaven) where Princess Manora lived. The day he arrived was exactly the seventh day after Princess Manora's return home and it was the day on which a grand ceremony to rid her of the reek of human beings was to be held. Seven Kinnari came along bearing gold water jars with which to draw the water in which Manora would bathe, and Prince Suthon put Manora's jewelled ring into one of their gold water jars. When the Kinnari went and poured the water they had drawn over Princess Manora, the jewelled ring tumbled out of the water jar poured by the last Kinnari and slipped onto Princess Manora's little finger. She then knew that her husband was in the vicinity, sent for him and introduced him to her father King Thumrat.

The king enquired about Prince Suthon's ability with the longbow, and so the prince lined up seven sugar palm trees, leaned against them seven planks made from fig-tree wood, and having a thickness of three sok (1 sok = 50 cm), and on top of that, planted a stone pillar in the earth in front of the planks, then stood up seven iron plates, each four sok thick, and lined up in front of this an oxcart loaded with sand, and then shot an arrow through it all. The king asked, "Then can you lift up the stone throne so heavy that it takes someone with the strength of one thousand to do it?", and Prince Suthon picked it up effortlessly. Next the king said, "Well then, are you able to correctly pick out which is your wife, under any sort of circumstances?", and he had seven identical sisters dressed in completely identical clothing, and had the prince pick out Princess Manora from amongst them. Prince Suthon was told secretly by a God in Heaven that Manora was the one upon whose head a golden fly had alighted, and thus was successfully able to pick her out. Thereupon the king made over the throne to Prince Suthon.

Thus it came to pass that Prince Suthon was again able to live together with Manora. However he heard the words of his mother in a dream, and so, in order to repay his indebtedness to his parents,

decided to return to his country. After decided thusly, Princess Manora said she would accompany him, and they returned to the world of human being. There they were enthroned and ruled the country peacefully, and upon dying went to Paradise. (emphasis added) This tale as told in Thailand, if one reduces its contents even more, can be further summarized as follows.

(1) In North Panchan, Prince Suthon is born as an incarnation of a Bodhisattva.

(2) In a pond in North Panchan there dwelt a dragon king. This dragon king was about to be killed by a Brahman monk from the neighbouring country but was saved by a hunter. The dragon king shows his thanks by entertaining the hunter in the land of the dragons.

(3) The hunter obtains a dragon's rope from the dragon king and captures Princess Manora, one of seven Kinnari who come to bathe in a pond.

(4) The hunter presents Princess Manora to Prince Suthon.

(5) Prince Suthon takes Princess Manora as his wife.

(6) Whilst Prince Suthon is off at war, Princess Manora was to be killed through the ungrounded accusations of a soothsayer at the court, but has her wings and tail returned and goes back to Heaven.

(7) Prince Suthon follows Princess Manora's tracks using the method she taught him and meets with Princess Manora.

(8) He solves the three difficult problems set by the father of Princess Manora, becomes her husband again and they return to the world of human beings.

In minor details, there are some differences amongst all the versions of the tale of 'Prince Suthon and Princess Manora' handed down in all the regions of Thailand and Laos. For example, in that of Southern Thailand, Princess Manora is the eldest sister, whereas in that of the other regions she is the youngest sister. In the Chinese translation of the tale as told by the Thai people of the SipSong Panna area, the section where the couple return to the human world is missing. Nevertheless, in points (1) to (8) of the story's outline, there is remarkable agreement and one could say that they are almost completely the same.

2. A Comparison with the Indian Tale 'Sudhanakumara Avadana'

It is though that many of Thailand's Panyasa Chadok stories have their origin in the Indian Avadana, and indeed 'Prince Suthon and Princess Manora can be considered as a tale originating in the 'Sudhanakumara Avadana' of the Divya Avadana. Fortunately there are two versions of Japanese language translations⁽³⁾ of the 'Sudhanakumara Avadana' and so it is possible to obtain a full portrait of the tale. The plot of the story is more or less identical to that of the Thai people's version introduced above, and furthermore, if the names of the characters and the place names are restored from their Thai pronunciations to the Sanskrit/Pali language versions, then one can see that there is no doubt as to their being related. For example, if one restores the most important names of characters and place names to Sanskrit/Pali, then they are as follows :

Thai	Sanskrit/Pali
Suthon	Sudhana
Manora	Manohara
Thumrat	Duma Raja
Chomphuchit	Jamachitra
North Panchan	Utara Pancala

However, although names of characters and the story's motifs coincide, if one undertakes a detailed comparison, there can be seen to exist several differing points which can be considered as being additions or alterations peculiar to the Thai people's version. The most important points that differ can be presented as follows, in the order that they appear in the plot of the tales :

(1) The king and queen of North Panchan

/Thai/ King Athitwong (Sun Family)

Queen Chanthathewi (Moon Goddess)

/Indian/ King Mahadana

The queen's name is unknown

(2) The number of Kinnari which fly to the pond

/Thai/ Seven sisters including Manora and one thousand ladies-in-waiting

/Indian/ Manohara and five hundred Kinnari

- (3) The manifestation of Manora's power of flight
 /Thai/ Wings and tail
 /Indian/ A jewelled hairpin
- (4) The time needed for Prince Suthon's pursuit
 /Thai/ Seven years seven months and seven days
 /Indian/ Not mentioned
- (5) The time that elapsed before Manora was able to meet
 prince Suthon again
 /Thai/ Seven days
 /Indian/ Not mentioned

If the tale of 'Prince Suthon and Princess Manora' was transmitted along with Indian culture, there arises the question of why differences such as those just mentioned arose when it was transmitted to the Thai people. It seems, however, that it is possible to obtain a solution to this question when one examines and compares the Thai 'Prince Suthon and Princess Manora' with the tale of the Swan Maiden as passed down in East Asia, especially China.

3. A Comparison with the Chinese Tale of the Swan Maiden

Concerning the Chinese tale of the Swan Maiden there is the research of Professor Hisako Kimijima, through which one is able to become acquainted with the characteristics of this tale. According to Kimijima, the main Chinese Swan Maiden tale is of the difficult-problem type, and a typical tale can be summarised as follows :

- (1) A man saves (a) an animal. Or he raises one. He meets (b) a mountain wizard.
- (2) Through (a) or (b) he learns how to find the place where heavenly maidens have come to bathe.
- (3) He hides the robe of feathers of one of the maidens and takes her as his wife.
- (4) Either a child is born or the man becomes absent.
- (5) For some reason or another, the maiden gets hold of her robe of feathers and flies away.
- (6) Through the guidance of (a) or (b) the man gives pursuit into the heavens.
- (7) The father of heavenly maiden poses difficult problems. Through the help of the maiden he solves them, and they both live happily together back on earth.⁽⁴⁾

(7) The father of heavenly maiden poses difficult problems.

Through the help of the maiden he solves them, and they both live happily together back on earth. (4)

Kimijima also states that this type, "remains in areas relatively distant from the centre of civilization, and starting with the minority tribes of South-West such as the Miao and Thai tribes, it is distributed in the south from Hainan Island to each of the provinces of Yunnan, Tibet, Sichuan, Guizhou, Hunan and Guangxi, and then going further northwards, in Zhejiang, Jiangsu and Shandong and as far as the Daur tribe of Inner Mongolia". (5) Furthermore she also states that there are two other types of Swan Maiden tale, being (1) the Vega type, and (2) the seven stars type. The former is seen as a conjunction of this tale with the tale of the Weaver, and is said to differ from the difficult-problem type in that the man who goes to heaven in pursuit of the heavenly maiden is (7) obstructed by an angel or by the mother of the king, and becoming part of the Milky Way, the two meet once a year on the seventh day of the seventh month. This tale is called the Tale of the Weaver and is also passed down in Japan. Concerning the latter type, i.e. the seven stars type, Kimijima says that the subject of the tale shifts to the celestial nymph, and in the end, the tale is either (a) related to the Pleiades tale, or (b) becomes a founder's tale. That is to say, this is a tale which becomes a seven stars tale or becomes a forefather's tale. Kimijima also explains that while the Weaver type is distributed in the northern areas in China, the seven stars type is often found in the southern areas of Yangzi River.

It can be seen that the difficult-problem type of Swan Maiden tale in China is very similar in content to the 'Prince Suthon and Princess Manora' of the Thai people. Especially if one follows up the tale without the 'a child is born' motif in (4), they almost coincide. In China, along with the difficult-problem type there also exist the Vega type and the seven stars type of Swan Maiden tale, but in actual fact, the Thai people's 'Prince Suthon and Princess Manora' is not necessarily unrelated to these two types itself. Giving first points in which it is related to the Vega type, when Prince Suthon goes off in pursuit of Princess Manora, he needs seven

years seven months and seven days before he is finally able to come across her. On the other seven days. As the Indian 'Sudhanakumara Avadana' does not mention anything concerning this period of time, it is original to the Thai people, and in the phrase "On the seventh day of the seventh month of the seventh year he was able to meet her" one can see similarities with the "In the period of one year they are able to meet once only on the seventh day of the seventh month" of the Chinese Swan Maiden tale in the setting of the time, the seventh day of the seventh month. Going on to points in which it is related to the seven stars type, in 'Prince Suthon and Princess Manora', 'sun' and 'moon', from the viewpoint of the earth the most familiar celestial bodies, are used in the names of Prince Suthon's parents. Furthermore, in relation to the seven Kinnari flying down from heaven, at the time of the Thai new year, Songkran, seven angels, "Songkran girls", appear, each angel representing one of the following seven heavenly bodies: sun, moon, Mars, Mercury, Jupiter, Venus or Saturn, and all seven are sisters. While in this case however the seven angels are the daughters of the Kapila Brahma God and are not Kinnari, in Thailand too there is the custom of likening seven sisters to the seven heavenly bodies, and the Kinnari themselves form a group of seven sisters. Then there is also the fact that when calling Manora after she had married, she was called "Manora Thewi" (Goddess Manor), which expresses a sacredness different from humans or animals. This is similar to taking Chinese heavenly maidens as being stars, and one might say that there is here a common expression of emotion. Names of people or descriptions related to the sun, moon, the planets or movements of the heavenly bodies do not appear at all in the Indian 'Sudhanakumara Avadana'.

The points that differ in a comparison of the 'Prince Suthon and Princess Manora' of the Thai people and the Indian 'Sudhanakumara Avadana' are those points where the former bears similarities to the Chinese Swan Maiden tale. The Thai race, which today inhabits the central part of the Indo-China Peninsula and forms the nations of Thailand and Laos, migrated southwards into the Indo-China Peninsula from the tenth century onwards. Before that they inhabited the

Yunnan-Guizhou Plateau of South-West China, where they were called southern barbarians by the Chinese race. The Yunnan-Guizhou Plateau too is a distant area from the centre of the Chinese civilization. The Thai race migrated to the Indo-China Peninsula and, from the Mon and the Khmer races who were there before them, received the culture of India, which led to their culture having a different aspect to those of the Chinese cultural sphere. Transmitted tales too are almost all inherited from India. Especially conspicuous is the fact that 'Prince Suthon and Princess Manora' is descended from the Indian tales. What is the meaning then of the fact that the contents of this tale of Indian descent correspond almost exactly with that of the difficult=problem type of Swan Maiden tale as handed down by the tribes in areas on the periphery of China, relatively distant from the centre of civilization? Is it that these barbarian tribes to the north and south are handing on the old form of the tale, due to their having been left behind by the development of culture and civilization? Or is it that this tale is of a different origin from that of the Chinese Swan Maiden tale? However, if this² were the case, how would one best interpret the fact that within the Thai people's 'Prince Suthon and Princess Manora' which is of Indian descent, there has also been added on elements related to the very Chinese seven stars and Vega types which cannot be overlooked.

My interpretation is as follows. It is without doubt that the Thai race inhabited the area of South-West China and that the main part of the race later moved southwards into the Indo-China Peninsula. However, the Thai language spoken by the Thai race belongs, together with Chinese, to the Sino-Tai branch of the Sino-Tibetan language family and is the language which has been most closely related to Chinese from ancient times. With orally transmitted tales too it is thought that the older the tale handed down, the greater chance of being of the same stock. The main part of the Thai race formerly lived on the periphery of China in areas at a relative remove from the centre of civilization, was influenced by the surrounding tribes, and finally moved southwards into the Indo-China Peninsula. Today, they have been accepted into the Indian cultural circle and consequently

at first glance their tale seems to be totally of the difficult-problem type, but even so I consider that elements handed down from ancient times are to be found concealed therein.

4. Visits to Strange Lands

In both the 'Prince Suthon and Princess Manora' of the Thai people and the Indian 'Sudhanakumara Avadana', before going on to the main plot of the story, there is a story about a dragon who lives in a pond. The dragon's life is saved by a hunter, who is then invited to visit the land of the dragons and does so. The role of the dragon is, "when the time comes, to bring forth rain-bearing clouds causing the grain crops to flourish and spill across the earth, and there to be sufficient food and drink throughout the land"⁽⁶⁾. The existence of this dragon became an object of envy for the king of the king of the neighbouring country, and though the dragon was about to be killed by Brahman monks from that country, a hunter saved him, and so the dragon king invited the hunter to his own home and entertained him with various sorts of foods and drinks, presented him with jewels, and

back to the surface. The Thai version and the Indian version of the foregoing story are practically identical, except that in the Thai version the dragon king entertained his visitor in thanks for a period of seven days. This story takes the form of the dragon's repayment of kindness, and visit to a strange land by the hunter who visits that of the dragons. If one adds to this story the motif of the prohibition "Don't open the jewelled box !" being broken, and the extraordinary difference in the passage of time between the time spent in the strange land and the period of time on the surface, then it becomes almost the same as the contents of the Japanese 'Urashima Taro' tale. Here I introduce the outline of the 'Urashima Taro' tale.

Once upon a time there lived in a sea-coast village a Young boy named Urashima Taro. One day he Happened to see a turtle being beaten by naughty boys, and he rescued it from the cruel hands of the boys. A few days after, the turtle appeared before Taro and with Taro on it's back it visited the Ryugu (the Palace of dragon) which was on the bottom of the very deep sea. There Taro received a very warm welcome from

the beautiful Princess and enjoyed a spell of pleasant days. When at last he was leaving the Palace, the princess gave him a small casket as a souvenir. Taro returned to the native village on the back of the turtle, but could not find his house, because he had been away from home for 300 years. And then he opened the casket. Smoke rose out of it, and Taro suddenly became an old man with gray hair.

In the Japanese Urashima Taro tale, it is established that upon opening the casket the difference between the passage of time in the strange land and that on the surface is revealed at a stroke, and the several days that elapsed in the strange land are really several centuries on the surface. This difference in the passage of time is not mentioned in either the Thai or the Indian version. However, in the Thai people's 'Prince Suthon and Princess Manora', when Prince Suthon goes to visit the country where Princess Manora lives, it takes him seven years seven months and seven days while for Princess Manora the same period is only seven days. As Prince Suthon the distance that Princess Manora flew, it is only natural that there should be a difference between the time that elapsed, but, although the same period of time passed for each of the pair between their parting and their reunion, on the one hand it lasted seven years seven months and seven days while on the other it was only seven days. In fact, from the point of view of astronomy, it is said that the earth's twenty-four hours are only a little less than a fifty-three minutes of a lunar day. The difference between the passage of time on the earth and on other heavenly bodies actually exists. Supposing that it were that the first part of the story, concerning the visit to the country of the dragons, became independent of the latter half of the tale, and became the 'Dragon Woman' legend of China or the Japanese Urashima Taro tale, then would it not be possible to consider that this temporal difference be expressed on the one hand on the occasion of Prince Suthon's visit to a strange land and on the other when Urashima Taro visits a strange land? Be that as it may, the extraordinary passage of time occurring in a visit to a foreign country is not found in the Indian tale, but appears in the Thai people's

tale and is also connected with the Chinese 'Dragon Woman' tales⁽⁷⁾ and Japan's tale of Urashima Taro.

The universe related in the 'Prince Suthon and Princess Manora' of the Thai people and the Indian 'Sudhanakumara Avadana' is a ternary universe comprising the heavenly world, the earthly and the subaquatic world. Princess Manora is placed in the heavenly world, Prince Suthon in the earthly world, and the dragon king in the subaquatic world as the leading character in each respective world. Also, the hunter mediates between the earthly world and the subaquatic world and the hermit fulfills the function of intermediary in relations between the leading character of the heavenly world and that of the earthly world. The dragon king of the subaquatic world gives his services for a human being of the earthly world, and Princess Manora of the heavenly world too returns again to earth to live together with Prince Suthon. Though one can see that all is divided into a ternary universe, the tale's main stage is the human world. The other worlds form the plot for nebulous mythological places, spurring on one's sense of adventure and curiosity, yet men can visit these worlds and catch a glimpse of places which are said to be yet untrodden by man and inhabited by animals other than human beings.

However, when these tales telling of a ternary universe enter the realm of literature and become versified or are turned into dances or dramas, then this first section concerning the visit to the land of the dragons is often omitted. The dance called 'Nora' handed down in Southern Thailand (whose name incidentally results from the omission of the first syllable of 'Manora') is a dance representing Princess Manora only. Another example is the 'Dance of the Peacock' of the Thai people of the Sipsong Panna area in Yunnan Province which also represents Princess Manora only in the form of a dance. Thus it is not at all strange that the missing part, the story of the visit to the land of the dragons, should itself act independently and be handed down as the 'Dragon Woman' legend or the tale of Urashima Taro.

Conclusion

The Thai people's 'Prince Suthon and Princess Manora' which I have taken up here are all part of a literary tradition and are not orally transmitted tales. Of oral tales there are one or two examples to be found here and there, but in Thailand, lacking as it is in research studies, one cannot even imagine to what extent variations are to be discovered.

Be that as it may, the Thai people who inhabit the interval between the two great civilizations of India and China are bathed on the surface at least in the brilliant civilization of India, though due to their lengthy residence in the area of South-west China, they can be thought of as handing down deep within themselves the ancient Chinese culture of the South-west of the Yangzi River. The tale of 'Prince Suthon and Princess Manora' originates in India, but here too one can see expressed Chinese elements not to be found in India.

From India to South-east Asia, from South-East Asia to East Asia and further on to Japan, there is no doubt that by widening the range of comparison, the tale of the Swan Maiden comes to present some different aspects, and one is able to understand the many meaning which were concentrated in this one story by the people of ancient times. Thus I have introduced here in this paper the tale which corresponds to the tale of the Swan Maiden for the Thai people, 'Prince Suthon and Princess Manora'. I await and look forward to your comments.

Notes

- (1) The following book was recently published in the Pali language. Padmanabh s. Jaini (ed), Pannasa-Jataka or Zime-Pannasa (in the Burmese Recension) Vol. 1 Jatakas 1-25, The Pali Text Society, London, 1981. "Zimme" is the Burmese name for Chiang Mai in the north of Thailand. Also, Kazuko Tanabe, "Pannasa-Jataka chu no Sudhana Jataka (1) "(Sudhana Jataka in the Pannasa-Jataka (1), Bukkyo Kenkyu (Buddhist Studies) No. 10, 1981, introduces part of a manuscript written in the Khmer script and preserved in the National Library of Thailand, and has translated into Japanese up to the part where Manohara is captured.
- (2) Damrong Rachanuphap, Somdet Krom Phraya, "Phranipphon Khamnam" Panyasa Chadok Chabap Ho Samut Haeng Chat Phak Nung, Sinlapa Bannakhan, 1956.
- (3) Komei Nara (trans.), "Avadana" Genshi Butten (Primitive Buddhist Literature), Chikuma Shobo, 1974. Yutaka Iwamoto, Bukkyo Seiten Sen Dainikan Butsuden Bungaku Bukkyo Setsuwa (A Selection of Buddhist Scriptures, Vol. 2, Buddhist Literature Buddhist Tales), Yomiuri Shinbunsha, 1974.
- (4) Hisako Kimijima, "Chugoku no Hagoromo Setsuwa--Nihon no Setsuwa to no Hikaku--" (The Swan Maiden Tale of China-- A Comparison with Japanese Tales--), Chugoku Tairiku Kobunka Kenkyu (Studies on the Ancient Culture of Mainland China), Vol. 1, Chugoku Tairiku Kobunka Kenkyukai, 1965, p.18.
- (5) *ibid.*, p. 18.
- (6) Nara, p. 297.
- (7) Hisako Kimijima, "Urashima Setsuwa no Genkyo ni Kansuru Ichikasetsu--Doteiko no Ryujo Setsuwa o Chushin to shite--," (A Hypothesis Concerning the Original Home of the Urashima Tale -- Based on the Dragon Woman Tale of the Dongting Lake), Mukashi-banashi Kenkyu Nyumon (An Introduction to the Study of Folklore), Miyai Shoten, 1976, p. 95.