

THE THAI TALES OF NANG TANTRAI AND THE PISACA TALES

by

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An important South and South East Asian tradition of literary tales, deriving from the Indian *Pancatantra*, survives in its Thai version in a group of twenty manuscripts in the National Library in Bangkok. Printed editions are also available. The contents of the manuscripts constitute a Thai reworking of three of the "books" of a South Indian story collection called *Tantropakhyana*, an intermediate work in the transmission of the fable tradition from its origins in the Sanskrit *Pancatantra* to South East Asia. The Thai stories can be conveniently grouped under the general title of Tales of Nang Tantrai. The Sanskrit and Tamil versions of the *Tantropakhyana* from South India (which contain only three of four presumed books, and hence probably incomplete) were only rediscovered in recent years as a result of attention previously drawn by various scholars to South East Asian works that were seen later to strongly resemble them.¹ The Thai Nang Tantrai tradition, like

* The British Library, London

1) In 1957 G. Artola first identified this South Indian Sanskrit work with its apparent South East Asian offshoots in "Pancatantra Manuscripts from South India", *Adyar Library Bulletin*, XXI, 3-4, 1957, 1-78. He also identified the Tamil version, later described by A. Venkatasubbiah in "A Tamil Version of the Pancatantra", *Adyar Library Bulletin*, XXIX, 1965, 74-143.

For the Javanese version, see C. Hooykaas, *Tantri : de middel-Javaansche Pancatantra-Bewerking*, Leiden, 1929. The Lao version was first described in L. Finot, "Recherches sur la littérature laotienne", *Bulletin de l'Ecole Française d'Extrême Orient*, XVII, 1917, 1-128. The Thai versions were first noted in A. Bastian, "Einige Fabeln aus dem siamesischen Nonthuk-Pakaranam", *Orient und Occident*, III, 1, 1864, 479-498; in F.W.K. Muller, "Die sechs ersten Erzählungen des Pisacaprakaranam", *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morganlandischen Gesellschaft*, 48, 1894, 198-217, and in Sir Josiah Crosby, "A Translation of 'The Book of the Birds' (Paksi Pakaranam)", *Journal of the Siam Society*, VII, 2, 1910, 1-90.

comparable collections from Laos, Java, and South India, consists of separate books. Each book is organized around a "frame" story, within which the characters relate other shorter stories. The three known Thai books are entitled Nanduka-pakaraṇam (the tales of Nanduka the Bull), Pakṣi-pakaraṇam (the tales of the Birds), and Piśāca-pakaraṇam (the tales of the Ghosts).² A fourth book, known from other versions to be the Maṇḍuka-pakaraṇam (tales of the Frogs), has not been found in Thai.

As scholars began to look into the various literatures of Southeast Asia, it became evident that the old Javanese collection of tales connected with the name Tantri Kamandaka, the Lao collection identified as Nang Tantai, and the Thai tales of Nang Tantrai, all belonged to the same tradition, and that they resembled the Pancatantra. But unlike the Pancatantra they all began with a prologue story of the Arabian Nights type where a maiden (named Tantri in the Javanese. Tantai in Lao, and Tantrai in Thai) delights a king by relating artful tales to him night after night, and thus prolongs her own threatened life.³ According to the Tamil and Javanese versions, the maiden is said to relate four books each containing ninety stories.⁴ Such a version, encompassing 360 stories in all (one for each night of the year), probably never existed,

- 2) Pronounced in Thai Nonthuk, Paksī, and Pisāt, respectively. In this article the transliteration of the Indic names of persons and places from the Thai Tantrai fable tradition is of Sanskrit or Pali type. This is in keeping with the Indic-based international character of the Tantrai tradition. Otherwise standard Royal Institute Thai transliteration is employed.

The word *pakaranam* in literary Thai (from Sanskrit prakaraṇa, "treatise, book," or Pali yakaraṇa, "book, work") denotes a story or collection of stories, usually with a moral purport and of foreign origin. Other *pakaranam* in Thai include Sipsong Liam (the Twelve Angles, from Persian), the Vetāla tales and Hitopadeśa (both from Sanskrit), and Aesop's Fables. These works appear to have entered Thailand by the late 17th century or earlier.

- 3) In 1914 Hertel assigned a common origin to these three collections of stories, but was unable to link them clearly to any known version of the Pancatantra. See J. Hertel, *Das Pancatantra: seine Geschichte und seine Verbreitung* (Berlin, 1914), pp. 338-340.

- 4) Venkatasubbiah, p. 125. Hooykaas, p. 79.

for it would be quite interminably long in written form. The Lao version is in fact the most nearly complete in that it contains all four books, with an average of twenty, rather than ninety, stories per part. This accurately reflects the content of the Sanskrit Tāntropākhyāna which also has twenty stories in its extant complete parts.

The Thai collection of tales diverges far wider from the Indian versions than either the Lao or Javanese. These are quite close in order and content of their stories to the Sanskrit and Tamil. The Thai adapters may have added numerous stories to the relatively simple original frameworks. Moreover as there is no notion of textual integrity in the copying of Thai manuscripts, the scribe himself frequently altered the text, adding or substituting vocabulary or phrases at his own discretion. Consequently no two of the National Library manuscripts listed below are identical in their overlapping sections. Such alterations are generally of a minor nature however. Other possible explanations for the divergence are that the Thai translator worked from a faulty text, or that local oral versions were later set down in writing. Some evidence survives of a Lao oral version in northeast Thailand in 1908.⁵

Prince Damrong stated that the Thai Tantrai tales were first published by the Royal Press (โรงพิมพ์หลวง) under the direction of Prince Singharā Krommaluang Bodint Phaisānsōphon (กรมหลวงบดินทรไพศาลโสภณ) in 1868-69, and based on manuscripts dating back to the first reign of the Bangkok dynasty (1782-1809).⁶ Copies of early Thai printings of the Tantrai tales are not known, with the exception of an 1876 copy of the Nanduka tales in the Department of Oriental Manuscripts and Printed Books of the British Library. Summary translations in English also appeared anonymously in the pages of the Siam Repository in 1869,

5) Jean Brengues, "Une version laotienne du Pancatantra", *Journal Asiatique*, 10e ser., 12 (1908), 361-362.

6) Nithan Iran Ratchatham (Bangkok; Khurusapha, 1963). I, 75, 143. Very few of the Tantrai manuscripts in the present National Library collection appear to date earlier than the fourth reign (1851-1868).

1872 and 1873.⁷ Full and competent translations of the Paksi and Nanduka tales appeared later, in the pages of this journal in 1910 in J. Crosby's "A Translation of 'The Book of the Birds' (Paksi Pakaranam)", and in E. Lorgeou's French translation of the Nanduka tales in 1924 as *Les entretiens de Nang Tantrai* in the series *Les Classiques de l'Orient*. Meanwhile the Pisaca tales, although early noted in English and German (above, notes 1 and 7), fell into obscurity. For this reason a detailed summary of the Pisaca tales is offered here.

The main theme of the Pisaca tales in Thai is marriage between ill-matched parties. The frame-story concerns the chief of a nation of ghosts. When a human princess floats to his shores in a boat after a flood, he wants to marry her, the ghost king and his four chief ministers argue at length over the merits and demerits of intermarriage between different species. Ten shorter tales are related in support of the two sides of the argument. This ancient theme appears in the famous Mouse-maiden story in the third book of the Pancatantra, in which marriage should occur only when the two parties are well suited to each other: "Only between two persons who are well-matched in means and blood should there be marriage or friendship, but not between the high and the low."⁸ The Thai tales enumerate matches between humans and yaksas, humans and kinnaris, humans and an "elephant-maiden" and an "eagle-maiden", and between birds of different species. No overt moral is drawn, but the ghost chief is defeated and punished after his union with the princess. Another theme developed in the secondary tales of the Pisaca collection is the folly of hasty action, or of failure to heed good advice. Fifteen stories illustrate this theme with kings who commit foolish actions out of infatuation, greed or stupidity, and suffer the consequences.

7) "Nonthuk Pakaranam. A la Arabian Nights." *Siam Repository*, 5 (April, 1873), 211-221. "The Beautiful Prapapan in the Land of the Spirits", *Siam Repository*, 4 (Oct. 1872), 466-471, 476-479; 5 (Jan, 1873), 83-84, 102-104, 112-112, 123-124. Another work of the same genre appeared as "Translation of the Sip-songleum. The twelve-sided dome." *Siam Repository* 1 (Oct. 1869) 290-293.

8) Franklin Edgerton, *The Pancatantra Reconstructed* (New Haven, 1924), volume 2, p. 281,

The remainder of the frame story relates how King Kṛiṣṇurāja saves the princess from the ghosts. When war ensues, he enlists the aid of armies of good spirits (thēphārak, เทพรักษา, Skt. devārakṣa). The Thai frame story is most probably a Thai invention, rather than a borrowing from an Indian prototype. Its terms of reference are largely Thai. The propitiation of spirits, a main element in the plot, is a feature of Thai animism which is still prevalent today, harmoniously embraced by the tolerant Buddhism of Thailand. The names of many of the spirits and ghosts in the Pisaca tales are also non-Indic. The Pisaca frame story caters perfectly to the Thai preoccupation with ghosts and spirits, although it is overlaid with the trappings of a respectable literary fable, such as a royal court, palaces, rulers and their four chief ministers. The Thai taste for ghosts stories is still strong today, as a visit to any Thai book store should attest.

A survey of the various names of characters and places in the Thai Tantrai manuscripts reveals a confusing variety in their spelling, resulting from the chaotic orthography which prevailed in old Thai script. Apparently the printed text "restored" Sanskrit type spelling to names of Indic origin.

Summary of the Pisacapakaranam

Frame story

There was once a king named Somdet Thao Bālarāja of Cakravardīnagara who had a daughter named Prabhābāla, and she was beautiful like the dew on a lotus petal. This king was wise and great, kind and generous and he took only reasonable taxes from his people. Once all his vassals, ministers, and officials gathered together and decided to build a great palace to present to the king in a coronation, because of his goodness and kindness. But on his coronation day, in a great deliberative assembly with all his vassals and ministers, the king asked that if he should perchance be going beyond his earned merit in accepting such honors (and hence be destined to suffer from them in occupying the palace), then a clear omen should manifest itself to all. And indeed just at that very moment, by a miracle the rains stopped and the wind ceased and there was silence. Right there before the king's very eyes

the portico (nā muk) of the palace cracked and fell down. Seeing this, the vassals were frightened and said to the king: "What has happened is our fault and we beg forgiveness. The portico has broken and fallen down because we did not build it carefully." When the king denied that they were responsible, they protested that his kindness was truly without end, and begged him to take his place in the palace anyway. Then the king asked them how they proposed to build a palace which would be strong and stable.⁹ First the minister Citravijaya suggested using wood coming only from the very heart of the trees to build a beautiful palace, but the king asked how such a palace could endure, when the wood would decay and rot. Next the minister Riddhivijaya proposed a palace all of gold, but the king said that rust would destroy it (sic). A third minister, Kalavijaya, was in favor of a palace made from pañcaloha, but again the king objected, saying that rain and sun would cause it to rust away. Finally the minister Utravijaya proposed a palace all of stone, most beautifully ornamented with designs and pictures. This time the king agreed, and construction was undertaken, and in two years the great palace was completed. For seven days the anointing and installation of the king were celebrated with various entertainments.

One night King Somdet Thao Balarāja dreamed that his palace sank down to the lower world (nāgavibhava) in a flood. In fear the king awoke from his bed. The next morning he mounted his throne and called for his sages and astrologers (phrakhrū, purōhit) to explain the dream. They said that it was a bad omen and that in seven days a flood would drown the palace, killing many people. All the people fearfully began to prepare boats and rafts to escape the flood. And the king had a royal boat prepared for the beautiful princess, his only daughter. Locking her safely in the boat, he entrusted the key to the princess's pet monkey who knew human speech, with an order to let no one onto the boat. After seven days the royal boat was swept away in a great flood, and floated off to the land of Bhūtalayanagara.¹⁰

9) Only the portico has fallen down, but the ministers build a completely new palace.

10) Müller's text gives the name Dattalainagara.

In that land Kalpapralaya was the king of pisacas, and he had four ministers, Khamot Dan Phluang, Khamot Maya, Khamot Dan Luang, and Khamot Duang Phrai,¹¹ as well as many followers. Taking his retinue to the shore of the sea and seeing the boat there he sent Khamot Maya to investigate. When he heard about the beautiful girl guarded by the monkey, the king of pisacas proposed to take her as his queen. But the minister Khamot Maya objected, saying: "From the most ancient times the kings of the pisacas have never had a human being for their queen. I never heard of such a thing". And to prove the unsuitability of such a match, Maya told how the jackals once decided to take refuge with the lion king.

1. Jackals Take Refuge With Lion

Once a great lion lived with his wife in a cave abounding with precious stones. Merely by his roar this lion would kill animals and then eat only their two eyes as his food, leaving the rest. At that time there also lived a jackal named Sankhavadana who ruled over the other jackals with the assistance of four ministers, Sunakkhang, Sunuga, Sumitra, and Sukula. Once he announced to his pack that since food was becoming hard to obtain he wanted them to become subjects of that lion who left his prey to rot, eating only the eyes. But the jackal minister Sunakkhang reminded them that the lion was of a different specie (jāti), and that joining with him would result in trouble, for the lion would criticize and blame the four ministers. And when the jackal chief Sankhavadana pointed out that once they had enough food to eat they would be happy in every other respect as well, Gāmasunakkhang asked to relate how the greedy monkey fell down from the tree.

2. The Greedy Monkey

A bank of monkeys once resided happily in a vast śālmali tree, living on the śālmali flowers according to the season. But then a certain monkey, tasting the fruit of the tree and liking it, in greed climbed up the tree in search of other fruits. Falling down from there, he died. (End of story 2)

11) Khamot is used here as a title for the four ministers; its ordinary meaning is spirit or ghost. The only Indic element in these four names is Māyā.

Such is the result of greed for food, continued the jackal minister, and we ought to continue living happily the way we do now. But the leader of the jackals replied: "Even the gods in heaven have their leader, and so must we beasts." The minister Sumuga then told how a man once died of sorrow when he could not obtain the girl he loved.

3. Unrequited Love

A certain man once fell in love with a beautiful girl in the town of Gāmajanapada, and wanted her for his wife. He sent an old match-maker to request her, but the girl was not pleased with him. So great was his grief, that he died from it. (End of story 3)

"This", continued the jackal, "is like your desire to bring us under the lion's power." But Sankhavadana would not listen. Then the jackal Sumitra told how Nang Trilogamāvadi disrupted the demons' penance.

4. Two Demons Foiled by Indra

Once two asuras (demons) who were brothers, Misumbha, and Mitsumbha practiced penance (tapas) together, and so diligently that the magic seat of Lord Amarindrādhirāja informed him of their activity.¹² So Lord Indra sent Nang Trilogamāvadi down to undo the evil power of the two asuras. Seeing the beautiful angel appear before them, each of the brothers claimed that she was the product of his own penance, and claimed her for himself. And fighting together over her, they died, whereupon the angel returned to heaven. (End of story 4)

"Such a story shows the wisdom of continuing to live on happily as we are now", ended Sumitra. But Sankhavadana disagreed again, and next Sukula asked to relate about the lion and the elephant.

5. Lion and Elephant

Once in the forest of Vriksadhārana lived two friends, a lion and an elephant. The lion proposed that they move away to the forest of

12) Lord Indra and the asuras are mortal enemies, and the asuras can gain power to do evil through penances. But Indra has a magic seat, wonderfully soft to sit on, which turns hard whenever the asuras gain strength to do evil.

Himavanta¹³ to escape the risks of living near men who could put a house on the elephant's back and ride him back and forth. But the elephant called his friend a coward and let him go off alone. Soon a hunter found the elephant and captured him for his king. (End of story 5)

"And such is the fruit of ignoring a friend's good advice." Sankhavadana, heeding nothing, brought his whole pack to bow before the lion, asking for protection and permission to eat the animals killed by the lion's magic roar. The jackal chief attended the lion in his cave every day, and became acquainted with the lioness. And she complained to her husband that it was not fitting for the king of the beasts to mix thus with the lowly jackals. She then related how the crow deceived the hansas.

6. Crow Deceives Hansas¹⁴

A crow saw a flock of hansas nesting in a great banyan tree and devised a scheme to eat all the baby hansas. Binding his mouth up, he faced east on a branch of the banyan and pretended to pray. In the morning when the hansas saw him there refusing to speak, they called their chief to question him, but the crow would not answer. Finally he told them that he was fasting in the way of sages who eat only air. The hansas believed him and went off together each day to find food. Then the crow would remove his muzzle and eat the little birds and eggs. The hansas began to blame each other for the missing young, but the hansa chief set four birds to spy on the crow. Seeing him eating the eggs and baby birds, they berated him until he flew away. (End of story 6)

"And it is also bad to have these jackals so near to us", the lioness concluded.

Soon Sankhavadana thought up an evil scheme to deceive the lion and kill him, and take a lioness for his wife.¹⁵ First he complained to

13) The Himavanta forest on the lower slopes of Mt. Kailāsa where Indra dwells.

It cannot be reached by ordinary human beings.

14) The hansa is a mythical Indian bird something like a swan.

15) As it turns out it is the lion's daughter he obtains,

the lion that the other animals were insulting him because he had taken refuge with the lion. Hearing this, the lion taught the jackal his magic roar so that he could kill any animal who insulted him. But the lion himself became unable to use the magic roar after that, and the jackals no longer had food to eat. Seeing an elephant in the forest, Sankhavadana decided to incite the elephant to kill the lion. So he befriended the elephant and told him how the lion had lost his powers. The elephant agreed to kill the lion, so Sankhavadana led him to the lion's cave, entered and pretended to the lion that he had just sighted an elephant trespassing in front of the lion's cave. Bounding out from the cave, the lion gave a roar, but his power was of course gone, and the elephant killed him.¹⁶ And so he died, because he would not listen to his advisors. The lioness came out to help her husband and the elephant killed her too. Delighted, Sankhavadana and his jackals ate up the two carcasses, then he took his seat in the lion's place in the cave and told the lion's daughter that her parents were dead and that she was to live under his protection. But suspecting treachery on the jackal's part, she planned to take revenge, and agreeing to his proposal she only asked permission to go take leave of her grandparents and gain their blessing for a happy union. When she journeyed to her grandparents' cave far away and told them what had occurred, her grandfather hurried back with her and with a mighty roar killed the jackal for his evil schemes. (End of story!)

With this the pisaca minister Maya concluded his story, saying: "And so your majesty's plan to marry this princess is wrong." But paying no heed, Kalpapralaya, the king of the pisacas, next ordered his minister Khamot Dan Phluang to bring the princess up from the boat. The latter demurred, and asked to tell a story he had once heard about the pregnant kinnari.¹⁷

16) At this point in the text the narration abruptly changes from rather straightforward prose to a semi-verse form, poorly composed and often vague and ambiguous. The verse form which commences here is *rai*, with four syllables to a line and a rhyme scheme, but other verse forms occur later in the text as well.

17) Kinnara (fem. kinnari) and vidyadhara are two types of lesser celestial beings.

7. The Pregnant Vidyādhara

A long time ago there was once a pair of kinnaras, husband and wife. The wife was with child, but when the king of Vārāṇasi went out and went forth to conduct a great festival all the devas, kinnaras, and vidyādharas, wanted to be present, including the pregnant kinnari. So she implored her husband to let her go. He agreed, and she magically coughed up the embryo from within her, giving it to him to swallow. And she went off to the celebrations, staying there for many days. Meanwhile the embryo was ready to be born, but found no way to escape from inside its father who died in pain. (End of story 7)

Once again the king of the pisacas refused to listen, this time ordering Khamot Dan Luang to go and bring up the princess. But the third minister also requested to tell a story.

8. King Dhārapāla Marries a Kinnari

Long ago King Thao Dhārapāla of Vārāṇasi found the egg of a kinnara in the forest when he was out on an excursion. Bringing it home, a beautiful kinnari was born from the egg, and the king raised her to the age of fifteen. Enraptured by her beauty, he had a palace built for her in the royal garden. But a vidyādhara named Virirunmuga saw her and also fell in love with her. He stabbed and killed the king in his room and carried off the kinnari to Himavala. (End of story 8)

King Kalpapralaya, still not impressed, told Khamot Duang Phrai to go for the princess, who in turn told his tale.

9. Fatal Ride on a Hansa

Once upon a time the great king Daśavijaya was asked by his queen to prove his love for her by obtaining a beautiful golden hansa bird for her to ride to Himavanta on. King Daśavijaya sent his hunters out, promising them a reward. The hunter Ngira and six men found a great flock of hansas and trapped all 500 of them, except for the chief and his four ministers. When the chief of the hansas found out why the king wanted the birds he offered to go himself if Ngira would release his

followers. The hunter agreed after the hansa chief took an oath. When they reached the capital, King Daśavijaya was delighted and asked the hansa chief to carry his wife and himself through the air. And the bird carried them on his back, but they both fell off and died, because of the king's foolish and excessive love for his wife. (End of story 9)

But still King Kalpapralaya would not listen to the advice, saying "You tell old tales, but I do not agree with you at all. Human beings can live together with non-humans (tīrachān)." And he told how a king once had a kinnari for his wife, to the benefit of all.

10. King Sutarāja Marries a Kinnari

In Sutradhāni the king, Sutarāja, lived with his queen Patirājā-kalyā. One day the king went out with his soldiers and ministers into the forest. While admiring the forest birds he saw a fair kinnari singing sweetly, and instructed the old brahman hunter named Kuru to have the hunters catch the kinnari for him, promising a reward. The kinnari, whose name was Candakinari, became the king's consort and after a ten-month pregnancy she laid an egg the size of a conch shell. In fear of this unnatural occurrence the people came and asked their king to leave their city. But at his request they let him stay until the egg hatched, at which time a perfectly formed male child came forth from it, handsome beyond compare like a god, and when that child was born jewels rained down from heaven upon the whole city. The delighted people begged their king's forgiveness. Seven days later the mother died, but when the prince reached his seventh year, four magic trees (kalpavrikṣa) sprang up at the four cardinal points, and all the people prospered. (End of story 10)

"And so you say trouble will result from this human princess", said King Kalpapralaya, "but jewels rained from heaven when King Sutarāja married the kinnari." Then the king of the pisacas went down to the boat himself, where the monkey opposed him, and the faithful monkey related how King Ratanarāja got his queen from the elephant's tusk.

11. Ratanarāja Marries the Elephant's Maiden

An albino elephant prince in the great forest of Himavanta was taught by his father to fight bravely and fear nothing. On his father's death he became chief of the white elephant herd, but the chief of the black elephants challenged him to battle in hopes of annexing the 500 white elephants to his own herd. In fierce combat the white elephant was defeated and fled to a fig tree, where he rested in dejection. When King Ratanarāja happened along and saw him in such a state, he went and consoled him, and learning of the battle, he asked whether no one had ever given him advice on fighting. Only then did the white elephant remember his father's advice, and gratefully felt his spirits begin to return, while the king's followers tended his health with forest fruits, bananas and sugar cane. In three days he had recovered and went off trumpeting a challenge to the black elephant. He came across a beautiful young female elephant in the forest.¹⁸ The two elephant chiefs battled for seven days. This time the black elephant was defeated and he died. The victorious young elephant became ruler of his enemy's 500 followers and wives and brought the maiden¹⁹ in his tusk to King Ratanarāja in return for his kindness. Having presented her together with many fruits, he took leave of the king and set off with his men and his new wife. On the road they passed the night under a banyan tree

18) The manuscript reads *hen khot chom yong*, "he saw an elephant maiden". Later on in the story, after defeating the black elephant, this creature is presented to King Ratanarāja as a concubine out of gratitude. But in the printed text the verse reads *lae hen chom yong*, "he saw a young maiden" (presumably) human." Perhaps the editor of the printed text changed the wording from this manuscript so that it would not involve a union between man and elephant. But it is also possible that he was working from a different manuscript. The *Siam Repository* translation omits this vague and ambiguous sentence. This tale as a whole is so poorly told, with such ambiguity and repetitiveness, that it may represent the original translator's attempt to patch up a story which he was unable to understand in the original.

19. Or elephant maiden. It is quite possible that the elephant maiden assumed the shape of a human in order to become Ratanarāja's concubine; in such stories the Thai expect the heroes to be able to change their shapes.

in which two spirits (*devarakṣas*) dwelt.²⁰ They too fell in love with the beautiful maiden and stole her away. When the king awoke he could not find her and died of grief. (End of story 11)

Concluding his tale, the monkey warned the *pisaca* chief not to hurry in the matter of the princess, lest he be like *Ratanarāja* who died out of love for the elephant girl. King *Kalpaprālāya* replied: "I have two more things which clearly prove the justice of my case. But one of them is locked in my heart. The other is outside."²¹ Then the monkey asked him to tell these two things in detail, but instead of complying *Kalpaprālāya* told how once, by keeping silence, a prince could walk on water.

12. Walking on Water

The king of *Puramadhāni*, by name *Madarāja*, had two sons named *Siddhi* and *Deveśra*, who took leave of their father and went to study the branches of knowledge (*śilpaśāstra*) with a great teacher (*navadīṣa-pamokkha*). After their course they took leave of their teacher and travelled to a wide river. The younger brother hurried into the water first, reciting the *vedas* aloud, but he sank down to his neck. The elder brother followed, but he recited the *vedas* silently to himself and could walk on the surface of the water until he reached the other side with dry clothes. When he reached home his father had died, and the ministers gave the throne to him. (End of story 12)

"And so silence is better than speech", said *Kalpaprālāya*. "Nor should you oppose my marriage to your princess with your delays. The auspicious moment has come." But the monkey asked him to tell first what auspicious thing he had in his heart. *Kalpaprālāya* replied that it was his deep love for the princess that he called auspicious (*mangala nai sandan*), and asked again for the key so that he could see her. Finally the monkey agreed and King *Kalpaprālāya* went into the boat. And when the princess caught sight of him, she immediately fell in love, but pretending

20) This passage about the spirits in the banyan tree is given twice, so that it is almost impossible to follow the train of events. It appears at first that there are two trees and two pairs of spirits,

21) *Kalpaprālāya*'s double talk here must be interpreted from the context of what follows. Literally he says "I have two auspicious good tales, one in my heart and one outside."

indifference she asked him where he came from, what his name was, whether he was devatā or deva, Indra or a gandharva, kumbhanda, asura, yakṣa or vidyādhara, immortal or mortal, a pisaca, or Ventai the garuda. He told her that he was the king of the pisacas²² and wanted to make her his chief queen. She protested that she was only a helpless poor orphan in trouble, a laughable match for a great king like him. Moreover he was of a different race and language, and she told him a story.

13. King Marries Commoner

Once King Tiśarāja ruled in Kālutiti and he had a thousand beautiful concubines on the left and on the right. He had two great and powerful ministers, one of whom toured with the king to various parts of the land while the other watched over the capital. The latter, whose name was Tiśasena, had a beautiful daughter named Peñcaśrī who was like Venus and the moon in beauty. Once the first minister saw the beautiful Peñcaśrī in the course of his inspections and thought that she ought to be given to the king as his wife. So he told the king about her in audience, and smiling the king sent for Tiśasena who agreed to present his daughter to him. The king was enchanted by Peñcaśrī's dazzling beauty when she was brought, and asked her how she felt about the prospect of becoming one of his wives. She replied that such a union ought to have something auspicious to bode well for it, but in fact she was of such low estate next to him that their union would only tarnish his glorious race which was brilliant like the full moon. And she told how the chief of the birds regretted taking the *sai* bird as his wife.

14. Bird Chief Marries *sai* Bird

A handsome large bird who was ruler over a flock of 500 asked for the hand of a little *sai* bird²³ whose family gave her only out of respect

22) Manuscript O ends at this point and the next MS takes up the story three pages later on the printed text. Hence, three pages of the printed text have no manuscript counterpart in the library collection.

23) Crosby was unable to identify the *sai* bird in the "Book of the Birds", in which it figures in two stories. But it is clearly a small bird. See Crosby, 56, note 1.

for the suitor's high position. Soon they were both unhappy because they came from unequal species, so they went to consult the worthy pond heron (*nok yang*) who told the chief to marry some bird from his own group. The two separated and then they were both happy. (End of story 14)

"Nor should you", continued *Peñcaśrī*, marry me of such low estate, lest we be unhappy later like the *sai* bird and her lord." And King *Tiśa* agreed, sending *Peñcaśrī* back to her father. (End of story 13)

Thus spoke the princess *Prabhābāla* to King *Kalpaprālāya* of the *pisacas*. But he retorted that true love is in itself sufficiently auspicious, and told a story.

15. The Demon's Riddles

King *Brahmadata* of *Kosainagara* had a wife named *Sukhadevi* who was adulterous, so he had her put to death. In sorrow, he led his retinue out into the forest and camped under a banyan tree with hanging roots, in which dwelt a demon (*yakṣa*) named *Sutramitra*. Enraged at the invasion of his home, the demon, because of his excitement, became visible to the king and accused him of trespassing. King *Brahmadata* denied any evil intent and offered to leave. But the demon insisted that he answer fourteen riddles first. If he could, the demon said he would honor him; otherwise he would eat him up together with all his men and his animals. The king was asked to name nine things long known in the world (*kao prakan nan yu nai loki*), four kinds of love, and the one thing one must depend on in the world.²⁴ The king had a special seat (*dharmāsana*) prepared, and after concentrating, told the demon that the nine things known to everyone were the nine doors of the body and none other, the four kinds of love were love of self, love of parents, love of children and wife, and love of property, and that the one thing a person must depend on is one's own self. The demon was extremely pleased to hear all fourteen riddles answered correctly by the wise king and presented to him his daughter *Sunanda*, together with advice on living wisely

24) The riddles are phrased so vaguely that their content can only be surmised by examining the context and the answers given by *Brahmadata*. Similar riddles occur in *The Book of the Birds*, Crosby, 64-71.

according to dharma, and gave him seven kinds of gems. The king took leave of the demon to depart with his new queen, soldiers, horses, and elephants. The demon took his retinue out to gather jewels in a jeweled cart and gave them to Brahmadata. Then he left for his banyan tree, and the king lived happily ever after with Sunanda. (End of story 15)

So Kalpapralaya told the princess to come and be his queen without worrying about their different origins. To her further misgivings, Kalpapralaya reassured her that people fall in love because they once in an earlier life loved one another deeply enough to meet again in the present. She said: "Your beautiful words make me feel very happy, but still I feel some doubt, so tell me openly how you feel."

Kalpaprālaya: Nor should you keep things from me either. Tell me who you are and from what stock you come, and how you really feel.

Princess: Here I am all alone and sad, far from home, missing my mother and father. I may die from my unhappiness.

Kalpaprālaya: Are you telling me what is really in your heart, or are you saying this out of fear of me?

Princess: I cannot see my heart, but I know what is the right thing.

Kalpaprālaya: We understand each other then.²⁵

Then the princess bowed to the king of the pisacas and agreed to be his wife, providing that he care for her faithful monkey. And returning into the forest he built a golden palace for her there, and she lived happily in it with her monkey and attendants.

16. King Kṛṣṇurāja²⁶

At that time there was a king named Kṛṣṇurāja in the capital of Trimahānagar. While hunting in the forest with his four forces²⁷ he came across the palace made by the pisaca king Kalpapralaya for the

25) This is a sort of stylized banter in very obscure terms in which neither party answers the other's questions, reminiscent of the Thai *lam tat*.

26) Although this is numbered as one of the tales, it is actually a continuation of the main story.

27) Caturaṅga; that is, chariots, horses, elephants, and infantry.

princess Prabhābālā, invisible to all but himself.²⁸ Meeting the beautiful princess who was alone in the palace, he found out who she was and how the great flood had brought her to the land of the pisacas, and how the pisaca king, who was out in the forest, had made her his queen. King Kṛṣṇurāja promptly offered to make her queen of Trinagar, and to her objections he pointed out that leaving her husband, who was after all a spirit, to whom her parents had not given her, and who had left her alone in the palace, was by no means a sin. The princess agreed to his proposal, but feared that the pisacas would follow them and take revenge. And humans had no power against the pisacas. But Kṛṣṇurāja said he had two sages who possessed such magic powers that even if the pisacas should pursue them, they could prevent them from entering his land. So she consented, again stipulating that her monkey be well cared for, and went off joyfully to be the queen of Trinagar.

But Kṛṣṇurāja had a nephew, Devarāja, ruler in Lodanagar, and when he heard about the union he came with his forces and his four ministers, by name Divasena, Brahmasena, Yuddhasena, and Ākāśasena, and protested to his uncle that it was most unfitting for him to marry someone who had been the wife of a pisaca. And he told how the king of the garudas lost his people by a foolish act.

17. Foolish Garuda King

The king of the garuda birds ruled birds of many species from his palace in the simphli (śālmali) tree. Once when he was moulting he lost all his feathers, but instead of remaining appropriately shut within his palace, he went out so that all the birds saw him in that state, incapable of flight. They no longer feared him, because he had acted without prior consideration. (End of story 17)

Then the minister Divasena told about King Ātūrārāja.

28) Apparently the fact that he alone can see the palace implies that he and the princess were meant for each other. But invisible though it is, he sends a man to investigate it for him.

18. Careless King Swallows Snake

King Ātūrarāja lost his way in the forest and out of thirst rode down to a stream to drink. Greedily scooping up the water he did not notice a small snake (asaraviṣa) which he swallowed, and which grew, and grew, swelling his stomach until he was powerless. Then his ministers exiled him. (End of story 18)

And the minister Brahmasena related another tale.

19. King Brings Bones to Life

King Māyantarāja of Tulanagar, knowing the magic arts (silpaśāstra), while chasing some game, left his followers and came across an eagle devouring a corpse. Gathering the bones, he restored them to life and brought the man back to his capital where he taught him all his knowledge of magic and made him his general. But that man whom he restored to life killed the king and took over his realm. (End of story 19)

Then the minister Yuddhasena told about the girl in the eagle's beak.

20. Eagle Brings Maiden

King Vijaya of Vijayanagar who knew how to foretell the future once saw from a star in the sky that an eagle would come bearing a lady in his beak on that day, so he prepared noisemakers, firecrackers, pebbles, and cannon, ordering his soldiers to create a great uproar when the bird came, so that it would drop the lady. And so it happened. The girl landed safely because after she fell from the eagle's beak the bird caught her in its claws. The king made the beautiful girl his queen, but she took his trusted minister as her lover when the king was out hunting,

and the two of them killed the king and usurped his throne, all because he had taken a strange girl as his wife. (End of story 20)

Finally the minister Ākāśasena asked to tell his tale.

21. The Treacherous Minister

King Viriyayanta of Vijitnagar was braver and wiser and more learned in the śāstras and the arts than any other. He had a minister, Viriyantañ, who governed a region bordering on the territory of another kingdom belonging to Matangavijaya of Matanganagar. That minister decided to betray his king, and when the king was out hunting with all his forces, he informed the other king that the capital was unprotected. King Matangavijaya happily took advantage of the information and seized the city of Vijitnagar with ease. And as all the ministers and wives and concubines were being kept in the city as hostages, Viriyayanta could not win it back, and his soldiers deserted him. The deceitful minister advised the king not to retreat, but to duel on elephants with the other king. Suspecting nothing, he took his advice and was killed, because of his heedless behavior. (End of story 21)

Thus did the four ministers and their king warn Kṛṣṇurāja against a hasty union with the princess Prabhābāla. And King Kṛṣṇurāja became enraged at them all, so out of fear they returned to Lodanagar.

Then King Kṛṣṇurāja called the great sage Gotama-mahārṣi, paid honor to him, and related how he had found Prabhābāla and made her his queen, explaining that he did not fear the pisaca spirits, though he had when he was young. On learning that the king had made offerings (saphon) to the pisacas when his sons were born for the sake of their protection, seeing no harm in a little bit of homage, the sage rebuked him, saying that it did not matter whether the homage was little or great, and that he had done wrong in neglecting to honor the devarakṣas.²⁹ For the protection of his kingdom, the sage told Kṛṣṇurāja to spread

29) The Thai believe in good and bad spirits; the former are called devarakṣas, the latter *phi* or pisacas.

sand, which he himself would consecrate, around the city and all the vassal cities in the land, and to affix prayer flags (yanta) on all the gates of the city to inform the good spirits of the land of his homage so that they would help protect him and his land. But Kṛiṣṇurāja wanted to know how he could be sure that the sand and the prayer flags would really protect them from the pisacas. The sage replied that when he himself felt something special within himself, or in his eyesight, then the measures taken would have been effective. "But even if you feel it, I still need a witness to prove it", said the king, asking forgiveness for his scepticism. So the sage took a minister, Midasena, and put him in the proper state of concentration, first bathing him for purity, consecrating the sand, and reciting vedas. Afterwards the minister confirmed to the king that his sight and his mind were indeed altered from their natural state.

So the king sent officials to build spirit houses (śāla) for the devarakṣas in the land and in vassal states, and had them maintained with offerings, as they had been in former times. The king himself made the prayers to the devarakṣas, as was done in former times, asking protection for his kingdom and for his vassals, for the people, elephants and horses. He had the holy sand scattered, and had a minister named Devyasena fix the prayer flags on all the gates. Then the two great spirits of the land, Phra Sṃa Mṃang and Phra Song Mṃang, sent their pisaca soldiers³⁰ to all the cities announcing to the spirits there the homage of the king, and inviting them to come receive the offerings and help protect the land. And they set watches to guard the gates night and day.

When Kalpapralaya returned home, meanwhile, and found the princess Prabhābāla gone, in a rage he called his four ministers and ordered them to attack Trinagar at once, leaving only the king and Prabhābāla aside for him to deal with himself. Accordingly the pisaca minister Dan Phluang ordered the pisacas under his command to enter the bodies of all the pregnant women in Trinagar and to create trouble

30) Apparently certain pisacas were followers of the devarakṣas.

there until they died, then bringing the bodies back with them.³¹ Khamot Maya then ordered his forces to enter Trinagar and frighten the people with invisible laughing and weeping, making themselves visible in the homes of powerful personages, and spreading sickness about. The scheme of Dan Luang, who was in charge of pisacas specializing in plagues, was to create epidemics by spreading diseasing substances in the water, air, rain, and sunlight, then to place inauspicious things around doors and gates, and prevent doctors from attending the sick. He also ordered his forces to make themselves visible to the people and make noises, and to bring back all captured prisoners. Finally Duang Phrai, Lord of the forest pisacas, told his followers to poison all the animals belonging to important men in Trinagar. Then each minister dressed himself according to his own direction.³² When the *devarakṣas* of Trinagar saw the pisacas coming from all four directions, they challenged them at the place where the sand was scattered, beyond which the pisacas could not penetrate. By stopping the wind and waters, blocking the sun, and burying the harmful substances, they prevented the pisacas from spreading their diseases by these channels. And the pisaca magician who had brought the disease-causing substances was caught and imprisoned along with other pisacas. The two great spirits of Trinagar questioned the magician prisoner when he was presented to them, and his captors were richly rewarded. They sent their first queen to attend and protect Prabhābāla and inform King Kṛiṣṇurāja of what had transpired. The latter quickly relayed the good news to his governors, and making little elephant and horse dolls he presented them to the Phra Song Mưang who turned them into real creatures. The captive pisaca magician was forced on pain of death to make prayer flags to protect the whole land, and then to swear and pledge that he would do it honestly without deceit, on pain of death.

31) According to a Thai belief, the ghost of a pregnant woman is endowed with exceptional power and for this reason the remains of pregnant women are not cremated. The pisaca minister's idea was to augment the pisaca forces by the addition of these potent spirits.

32) Each minister corresponds to one of the cardinal directions, and has colors and marks which identify him.

Reporting back to their king, the four pisaca ministers advised Kalpapralaya to proceed cautiously when he angrily began to lay plans to reduce the land of Trinagar to a mushroom field of white bones. And Khamot Maya told a tale.

22. The Evil Courtesan

In Jainagar the king died, leaving two sons behind him. The ministers of the land installed the elder son, Amriyakumār, as king, and he ruled with four wise ministers, Indra, Ratna, Prabāra, and Bejra. The younger prince was named Viriyakumār. Another king, Dumarāja of Pradumanagar, had four royal courtesans, a kṣatriya girl named Suddhi, and a brahman girl named Peñca, then Mitra a vaisya, and Candra a sudra, who attended the king each night in turn. Once Candra was absent when her turn came, and when the king sent the executioner after her, she fled to the forest with her attendants. One day King Amrikṣpurāja passed by and saw her under a banyan tree. Over his ministers' objections, he made her his first queen. And that evil sudra girl Candra decided to get rid of the ministers and of prince Viriyakumār by planting a seed of mistrust, and she told the king that the five were plotting against him. Without deliberation he had his brother imprisoned, whereupon the ministers freed him and went off to the forest with all their families and followers. When another, still a third king, Rudarāja of Rudanagar, learned of this, he promptly attacked the weakened King Amrikṣpurāja who was killed in battle. Then the ministers and Prince Viriyakumār attacked the city of Rudanagar, caught King Rudarāja, and returned to their own land where Viriyakumār became king. (End of story 22)

Thus with this illustration, Khamot Maya advised Kalpapralaya not to risk danger for the sake of a woman. But the pisaca king replied that he would fight the people of Trinagar, and if he should lose, then such was his karma. Then Khamot Dan Phluang told a different tale, about how once a king married a yakkhini and died.

23. Demoness Marries King

The king of Sukhanagar was Sukhamahārāja and his queen named Paridevi. His first minister was Sihasena. That king once met a yakṣa (demon) in the form of a young girl sitting by a forest road, and finding her lovelier than his own queen, ordered his men to bring her. But the ministers opposed him, lest she be a yakkhini (demoness) in disguise out in search of human prey. When the king objected that yakṣas sought food at night, not at midday, they told him a tale.

24. King Marries Bandit's Daughter

King Vipassanarārāja of Arśanagar went out hunting and found a bandits' cave. When he approached it all the bandits fled, leaving behind only the chief's daughter, who in due course became queen of Arśanagar. She soon communicated with her father the bandit and conspired with him to send the king false warning of an enemy, which caused him to suspect his own men. Lured out into the forest, the king was killed by the bandit chief, who came to rule in his place. (End of story 24)

But King Sukharāja would not heed his ministers and brought the yakkhini back as his queen. And before long she was killing and eating girls in the harem nightly, and then the king himself, and many people in the land. (End of story 23)

So Dan Phluang warned the pisaca king not to enter the battle without considering the shame of losing and the small profit of winning. But Kalpapralaya replied that there would be shame in not fighting since he had given his word that he would. Then the minister told another tale.

25. The Necklace of Bones

Once Prince Rasakumār, the son of King Varuṇarāja of Sankhanagar, gave one thousand tamluṅgs of gold to a certain courtesan named Setakumāri. When he went to pass the night with her once she asked this prince if he would die for love of her, if she died. He said he would, and then they slept together. After that Nandasena, the son of a rich man, brought an equal amount of gold to the courtesan who asked the

same question and received the same reply. In time the courtesan Setakumāri did indeed die. When the prince came to see her and learned of her death he went to the place where her body was being kept for cremation, and remembering his promise he threw himself into the flames with her when she was burned. Their bones were kept in the cemetery. When the rich man's son learned of Setakumāri's death, he hurried off to the cemetery where he decided that since it was too late to die in the flames with her, it would be enough if he cared for her remains. So weeping he gathered the bones, tied them around his neck, and took them to the forest. There he told a rishi what had occurred, whereupon the rishi offered to restore the bones to life. But both the courtesan and the prince appeared, and they announced that they would return to the city and live together. The insulted son of the rich man pointed out that he had been the one who saved her by bringing her bones to the rishi, but she replied that her true lover was the one who kept his promise, and in shame before the rishi and the devarakṣas Nandasena went off wailing and crying. (End of story 25) .

In the same way, the minister told Kalpapralaya, would the pisaca chief gain only shame from his love of the princess Prabhābālā, just like the rich man's son. As Kalpapralaya paid no attention, Khamot Duang Phrai asked to tell his story.

26. Falsely Accused Prince

Prince Suriyakumār, the young brother of King Paramarāja of Puranagar was so brave and wise and powerful that his fame spread to every land. Meanwhile Queen Suddhidevi of Utamanagar escaped from that city when the king discovered her adulterous relations with a certain minister. While hunting in the forest King Paramarāja came across Suddhidevi and stopped his royal elephant. He heard how she had fled from her king under accusation of adultery. Impressed by her beauty, Paramarāja brought her to be his queen. One day she told Paramarāja that she missed her father, whom her former king had imprisoned.

But Prince Suriyakumār advised caution in satisfying the queen's request, since they had no way of knowing whether the accusation of adultery against her was true or not. And he sent a man to find out the facts, who returned to confirm the accusation. Suddhidevi decided to rid herself of the prince by accusing him to the king of teasing and pinching her, and she bribed the concubines to confirm her tale. Paramarāja believed the story, and said he would punish his brother. Prince Suriyakumār left the capital for Sihaparvata Mountain, fifteen days' journey away, followed by three-fourths of the people in the city, and there he became a sage, protected by his many followers. And word of these happenings spread back to King Utamarāja who seized his chance and approached the weakened Puranagar, demanding the guilty Suddhidevi. The two kings agreed to do battle after seven days' preparation, and Paramarāja was slain on his elephant. Suddhidevi was killed, but the inhabitants of the city were left unharmed. First the victor thought he would keep control of the city lest Suriyakumār return to take revenge for his brother's death, but then he proceeded to Sihaparvata and offered himself as a vassal to Suriyakumār, and installed him on the throne of Puranagar. (End of story 26)

After this tale Kalpapralaya still insisted that it was impossible for him to reverse his royal decision, for it was unretractable like an elephant tusk. So the four ministers agreed to continue the fight, each asking to be in the front forces. They gathered their armies and went to attack a vassal city of Trinagar. And learning of the threat the two great guardian spirits of Trinagar, Phra Sṃa Muang and Phra Song Muang, took command of the defending forces. But the pisaca ministers were unable to advance beyond the sacred sand scattered about, so the devarakṣas fought them there on every side. The four ministers were separated and then captured, together with the pisaca magicians, and even Kalpapralaya was unable to pass beyond the sacred sand with the main army. The pisaca forces broke and scattered and Phra Song Muang sent devarakṣas out to capture them and their king too, which they accomplished. Phra Sṃa Muang rewarded Phra Song Muang for his deeds and had a pavilion set up in that vassal city which was located to the north of Trinagar.

One morning after eating, King Kalpapralaya was brought out before Phra Sṭa Mṯang, but he did not dare raise his head to the great guardian spirit of Trinagar. When he was told to look up, he did so, bowing low to Phra Sṭa Mṯang, who then had some of his followers ask the pisaca chief how he dared to insult them with his attack. Kalpapralaya replied with the story of his marriage to Prabhābāla, but the great spirit called the match unnatural and bad. Then Kalpapralaya admitted his guilt and a punishment was determined—that he take an oath never to create trouble again, and that all his followers be detained. But Kalpapralaya said that freeing him without his followers was like freeing a bird after breaking its wings. He asked for his four ministers and his army, and offered to serve Phra Sṭa Mṯang as a vassal. When this was conveyed to Phra Sṭa Mṯang by Phra Song Mṯang, Kalpapralaya was taken to the capital city of Trinagar, where the great spirit made himself visible to King Kṛṣṇurāja, beautifully attired and bejewelled, with his wives about him. Kṛṣṇurāja was frightened by that wondrous sight, but the great spirit called him closer. When the king had crawled near, Phra Sṭa Mṯang related to him all the events that had occurred and asked his advice about how to treat the pisaca chief. The king asked that he be punished for his one sin, and suggested a treaty which would tie Kalpapralaya to the devarakṣas as a vassal. Hearing this, Phra Sṭa Mṯang was pleased and gave the king a jewel, and the king spent the night there in the spirits' sala instead of returning to his palace, calling out Prabhābāla and presenting her to Phra Sṭa Mṯang. The latter told Kṛṣṇurāja quickly to construct a great hall (śāla) with twenty-nine rooms and fifty structures each with ten rooms, for a great feast for the devarakṣas who would all make themselves visible to the people. The fifty halls were constructed on all four sides of the city outside the walls, and the great hall was built right in the middle of the city, and all were provided with offerings, with little clay elephants, horses, boats, weapons, and men. In the morning all the devarakṣas gathered and by order of Phra Sṭa Mṯang made themselves visible to Kṛṣṇurāja and to all his people with a great clamour. Kalpapralaya was brought, and the king presented the offerings to the devarakṣas, whereupon they set to feasting on them. Then the king presented them with clothing, elephants, horses, and weapons. Kalpapralaya was officially

pardoned, but two of his ministers and half of his soldiers and magicians were retained. The king made offerings to Kalpapralaya as well, and blessings and offerings were exchanged by all.

Some time after that, King Bālarāja, the father of Prabhābāla, came to learn that Kṛṣṇurāja had married his daughter, and since his permission had not been obtained beforehand, he consulted his ministers as to whether he should attack Trinagar and retrieve his daughter.³³ The ministers Riddhivijaya counselled against a fight, since Kṛṣṇurāja had apparently treated the princess with honor. But Bālarāja said that the union without his approval constituted an insult. Then the minister related how King Mālairāja once fought in vain for his peacocks.

27. Two Royal Peacocks

King Mālairāja of Mālainagar raised a pair of peacocks who flew daily to feed in the Himavanta forest, returning to sleep in front of the window where royal guests were received (sinhapāñcara). But once the peacocks lost their way and came to the land of King Adhikasaṃgrāma, who happily kept them himself. The first king sent out a proclamation promising to kill the person who was keeping his peacocks. It so happened that a merchant of Mālainagar saw the peacocks while travelling through Adhikanagar and informed his king when he returned home. Immediately raising an army, King Mālairāja went to battle with Adhikasaṃgrāma, but despite great loss of life he had to return home unsuccessful. Later the peacocks themselves flew back to Mālainagar. (End of story 27)

The minister Riddhivijaya concluded his little tale with a warning to King Bālarāja not to act in haste. Then the minister Arunvijaya told another tale.

28. The Bird's Advice

King Morindrarāja of Morindranagar kept a *satava* bird who knew human speech, and he used it to send messages to his ministers. Once

33) Bālarāja has learned only this much, and knows nothing yet of how Kṛṣṇurāja rescued Prabhābāla from the pisacas; it is on this misunderstanding that the plot continues to turn.

that bird advised the king to attack a rich land called Pracantapradeśa, which he had flown over in his travels. The thoughtless king set off with a fleet of 500 ships which were wrecked in a storm because he had not considered the season, and they all died. (End of story 28)

Next the minister Utara vijaya told his story.

29. Do Not Trust a Bird

Long ago King Kelairāja ruled in Carunarājadhāni and he had a *khaek tao* bird (a kind of parrot) who knew human speech. The bird fed in the Himavanta forest during the day and returned every evening. When the king asked one day, the bird told him about the wonderful Himavanta forest, and about a magic tree there whose fruit restored youth. The bird offered to carry the king to that tree, but on the way a tiger grabbed the king and ate him. Such is the result of trusting an animal. (End of story 29)

In his turn, a fourth minister, Mahutrasena, told about the hunter and the snake.

30. Hunter, Elephant, and Snake

There was once a hunter named Gajaludaka who saw a big elephant and prepared his bow to shoot at it. Without taking care, he hid by a termite mound near which a snake had its hole, and downed the elephant with an arrow. But it had rained that day and when the odor of the hunter entered the snake's hole,³⁴ the snake became angry, came out and bit the hunter who collapsed and died. But he fell on top of the snake and killed it too. (End of story 30)

Having heard the four tales King Bālarāja told his ministers that he was nonetheless obliged to avenge (in battle) the affront to his honor. And his armies proceeded to Trinagar after suitable preparations. But they too were stopped at the place where the rishi's sand was scattered, unable to walk and afflicted with pains in the head and stomach, and many men died. The protecting spirits of that place also terrified the

34) Apparently the scent of the hunter was carried by the rainwater into the snake's hole.

king's soldiers, elephants, and horses with deafening cries, so that they began fighting and killing each other.

The news of the attack was sent to the capital, and news of the treatment dealt out to the invader. The fighting continued but Bālarāja's magicians were far less powerful than the spirit magicians, so Bālarāja called a council to decide whether to abandon the campaign, promising this time to attend to their advice. The next morning the ministers advised against a retreat which would bring dishonor on the army, and suggested that a letter be sent to Trinagar asking for Prabhābāla's return. When the letter was received in the capital, Prabhābāla confirmed that it bore her father's name, but she sent her monkey out to make certain who it was. The monkey found Bālarāja and related to him all that happened since the flood carried him off in the boat with the princess, and then he returned to Trinagar. Having heard the complete story of how Kṛṣṇurāja saved his daughter from the pisacas, King Bālarāja rewarded his ministers for their sage advice. And with Phra Sṃ Mṃang's approval Kṛṣṇurāja ventured forth with his full retinue to welcome Bālarāja to his land, accompanied by Phra Song Mṃang and many devarakṣas, to whom he made offerings at every meal time. And approaching his camp, Kṛṣṇurāja sent Prabhābāla ahead to meet her father first. When King Bālarāja told how his men were suffering and dying from strange ailments, the princess explained that her powerful husband had used his pisaca and devarakṣa allies against them, not knowing who he really was, and she offered to have the spirits make themselves visible to her father. But already the sick soldiers were healed, because of her presence. Then Kṛṣṇurāja came and conducted his father-in-law back to Trinagar, where all the spirits who had formerly been Bālarāja's soldiers showed themselves to him, and great offerings were made to the Phra Sṃ Mṃang, who told Bālarāja to bless his daughter and her husband. With great rejoicings King Bālarāja finally returned to Cakravartinagara, after advising Kṛṣṇurāja never to trust his ministers, or show his emotions, or overpraise good service, and to fight his enemies with forethought and preparation.

The rishi of Trinagar left for the Himavanta forest, reminding the king to cherish the ten rules of dharma for a king (*daśavidharājadharma*) and the three syllables “a”, “ya”, and “ma”, signifying glory, the avoidance of bad actions, and the performance of good things. He told the king that if he cherished these three syllables as much as he cherished his wife, he could count on them without fail. And he told a story illustrating the power of truth.

31. The Power of Truth

A poor couple once lived in Pracantapradeśa on the border of Kṛṅgarāṭha with their son. Their names were Suddhapuruṣa, Kalamba, and Sacapuruṣa, and they lived honestly. Once the father went out in the forest to cut wood to sell. The wood broke and fell on a serpent which bit and killed the father. Missing her husband, Kalamba sent her boy out to look for his father, and when he found him lying dead he gave a prayer asking that his virtuous father be restored to life so he might protect his wife and son. Immediately the father became alive again, and the two of them returned home together.

“Thus can Your Majesty see the strength of an honest man’s words”, the rishi concluded, and he departed from Trinagar.

And the king continued to rule by the rishi’s teachings, honoring the *devarakṣas* every day without fail, so that the rains fell according to the season, and rice and fish were plentiful in Trinagar and in all the vassal states.

LIST OF THAI TANTRAI MANUSCRIPTS

A group of twenty Thai manuscripts dating from the nineteenth century, now in the National Library of Thailand, comprises a nearly complete version of the Thai Tantrai tales, as compared with the printed version. These twenty manuscripts cover the three books of the Bull named Nanduka, the Birds, and the Pisacas, with some overlapping sections, and also with occasional blank spots in the narrative (as compared with the printed text), which prove that other manuscripts must have been available for consultation in the preparation of the printed text.

All twenty of the manuscripts in the National Library collection are made of heavy *khōi* paper prepared from the bark of the *khōi* tree (*streblus asper*), and folded accordion-fashion, in the traditional Thai way. Most of the manuscripts are blackened with a charcoal paste and then written upon both sides with a white steatite (soapstone) pencil, or with yellow or white ink. Three of the twenty manuscripts were left in their natural color and inscribed with black or brown ink, an alternate way of using the heavy *khōi* paper. The handwritings in the manuscripts range from elegant and neat, to scrawly and nearly illegible. The steatite, like chalk, is given to rubbing off, leaving the writing most difficult to decipher. The blackened manuscript, which is the more common type, is called *samut thai dam*. The charcoal paste from it, even after a century, leaves the user with smudged fingers. The unblackened type of manuscript is called *samut thai khāo*. A more general Thai name for these manuscripts is *samut khōi* from the name of the paper. The manuscripts in the collection are not illustrated.

Judging from general appearances, orthography, and spelling, and the four manuscripts which bear dates, all twenty of the National Library manuscripts belong to the nineteenth century. A careful examination of them indicates how the Tantrai tales were copied and recopied, and altered in the process. The manuscripts tend to begin or end most irregularly, in the middle of a story or even of a sentence. Indications in the middle of a text such as "end volume 4, volume 5 commences" show where the copyist has copied the words at the end of an earlier volume as though it were an integral part of the text. The fact that no two manuscripts with overlapping sections of text correspond precisely to each other suggests the freedom taken by the copyist in the wording or phrasing of his text.

As these National Library manuscripts have not yet been assigned permanent catalogue numbers, they are listed here by identifying letters, A through T. "Fold" refers to one opening of the folding book, with two "pages" each containing four or more lines of script.

Nanduka Pakaranam Manuscripts

A. 44 folds. Brown ink on plain (unblackened) paper. $14 \frac{3}{8}$ by $4 \frac{7}{8}$ ". 6 lines per page. No title. Identified by old label as original property of the Royal Library. Date corresponding to 1824 A.D. This manuscript represents a shorter, possibly earlier, version of the Nanduka tales, with 19 tales, and expressions that suggest a Lao hand. The last 17 folds of the manuscript contain an extraneous Buddhist history, following the tales without interruption or explanation, and in the same hand.

B. 38 folds. White steatite on black paper. $14 \frac{7}{8}$ by $4 \frac{3}{4}$ ". 4 lines per page. No title. Bought in 1923. Text begins with the beginning and ends in the middle of the ninth tale.

C. 34 folds. Yellow ink on black paper. $14 \frac{1}{4}$ by $4 \frac{3}{4}$ ". 5 lines per page. No title. Donated by Khunying Wat Pariyatthammathādā in 1927. Text begins at beginning and ends after the start of the ninth story.

D. 26 folds. Yellow ink on black paper. $13 \frac{3}{8}$ by $4 \frac{1}{2}$ ". 4 lines per page. No cover or title. Given by Sangwān, son of Phrayā Aphaironrit in 1908. Text begins near the start of the work (one fold appears to be lacking) and ends in the middle of the 8th tale.

E. 28 folds. White steatite on black paper. $13 \frac{1}{2}$ by $4 \frac{3}{8}$ ". 4 lines per page. Title inside cover, volume 7. Bought in 1907. First ten folds of ms. blank. Text begins in tenth story, ends with first line of fifteenth story.

F. 30 folds. White steatite on black paper. $13 \frac{3}{4}$ by $4 \frac{5}{8}$ ". 4 lines per page. Faded notes inside cover. Bought in 1907. Text begins with eleventh story, ends with fourteenth story. Ms. in two separate fragments.

G. 15 folds. White steatite on black paper. $13 \frac{3}{4}$ by $4 \frac{1}{2}$ ". 6 lines per page. Identified inside cover as volume 4. Given by Khunying Wat in 1927. Text begins in sixteenth story and ends in middle of seventeenth story. Condition of ms. is poor and writing is faded.

H. 28 folds. Yellow ink on black paper. $13 \frac{3}{4}$ by $4 \frac{3}{8}$ ". 4 lines per page. Faded title in yellow ink covered by label. Bought in 1907. Text begins with 39th story and ends in the 48th story.

I. 30 folds. White steatite on black paper. $13 \frac{7}{8}$ by $4 \frac{1}{2}$ ". 4 lines per page. No title or old label. Text begins with 39th story, ends in the 48th story.

Paksi Pakaranam Manuscripts

I. 29 folds. Yellow ink on black paper. $13 \frac{3}{8}$ by $4 \frac{3}{8}$ ". 4 lines per page. No title. Bought in 1907. Heading inside cover with date, corresponding to November 11, 1870. Narrative begins on second side ms. with 13th tale and concludes on first side in the 23rd tale. Last five folds written in heavy white chalk, difficult to decipher.

K. 39 folds. White steatite on black paper. 14 by $14 \frac{7}{8}$ ". 5 lines per page. No title. Bought in 1907. Commences with list of stories. Begins with 13th story, continues to end of work. Dated at end, corresponding to July 13, 1868.

L. 31 folds. White steatite on black paper. $13 \frac{3}{4}$ by $4 \frac{1}{2}$ ". 4 lines per page. Title on cover in yellow ink, volume 2. Given by Phra Mulathanarak. Text faded often illegible. Begins with 12th tale, continues to end of work.

M. 30 folds. Identical in size and format to ms. L, but in very poor condition. No discernable title. Volume 1. Same donor.

N. 15 folds. Yellow ink on black paper. $13 \frac{3}{4}$ by $4 \frac{1}{2}$ ". 4 lines per page. A single story, extraneous to the Paksi tales, but identified by its title as a story of "Kingkantrai paksi pakaranam".

Pisaca Pakaranam Manuscripts

O. 39 folds. Black ink on plain (unblackened) paper. $14 \frac{1}{2}$ by $4 \frac{1}{2}$ ". 4 lines per page. No title or date on cover. The copyist commences with this introduction: "Homage to the Three Gems. I shall

relate the tales from ancient times known as Pisaca pakarānam in such a way as to condense them and improve them, making the meaning clear and evident by additions and insertions made by myself, Phraphimontham, with faithful heart..." Text ends with the twelfth tale.

P. 28 folds. White steatite on black paper. 12 7/8 by 4 3/8". 4 lines per page. Title in yellow on cover, volume 2. Bought in 1909. Text commence just before the 14th story and ends in the middle of the 21st story.

Q. 8 folds. White steatite on black paper. 14 by 4 1/2". 4 lines per page. No cover, title or label. This fragment begins near the end of the 21st tale, ends in the middle of the 23rd.

R. 39 folds. Black on plain paper. 14 by 5". 5 lines per page. No title. Bought in 1907 (?). Text begins in 21st tale and continues to end of the work. Extraneous text added at beginning and end in a fine hand with modern spelling.

S. 30 folds. Yellow ink on black paper. 13 1/2 by 4 3/8". 4 lines per page. Title on cover, volume 4. Transferred from Ministry of Education in 1937. Text begins in middle of 27th tale, continues to end of work.

T. 42 folds. Yellow ink on black paper. 13 1/4 by 4 1/2". 4 lines per page. Faded, illegible title on cover. 4 lines per page. Ms. torn into two separate parts. Given by Khunying Wat in 1927. Text begins at the 26th tale, continues to the end of the work. Copyist gives his name, the fee he received (six salung) and two dates, probably corresponding to 1865.

Berlin Nanduka Manuscript

A manuscript of the Nanduka tales, of 79 folds and dated to 1784 A.D., is preserved in the Staatliche Museen, Berlin, and is listed by Klaus Wenk in his *Thai-Handschriften*, volume 9 of *Verzeichnis der orientalischen Handschriften in Deutschland* (Wiesbaden, F. Steiner, 1963).

Printed Texts :

(First printings by the Royal Press, ca. 1870. No copies known.)

Nonthuk pakaranam. Bangkok, Royal Press, 1876. pp. 218.

Prachum pakaranam. [Collected pakaranam works, including the three Tantrai works.] Printed in 6 cremation volumes between 1922-1927.

Nithān Irān rāṭchatham (Prachum pakaranam). [Reprint of the above.] Bangkok, Khrusaphā Press, 1961. 2 vols.

[Another reprint] Bangkok, Khlang Witthayā Press, 1961. pp. 783.