

## Research Article

# THE FUNCTIONS OF TALES AND THE VALUE IN RESPECT OF TEACHING GHARĀVĀSA-DHAMMA DOCTRINES IN NITHAN SIKHAO, COLLECTION OF LIFE-DEVELOPMENT TALES BY ART-ONG JUMSAI NA AYUDHYA

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## Abstract

The objective of this research is to study the functions of tales and the value in respect of teaching Gharāvāsa-dhamma doctrines in Nithan Sikhao, Collection of Life-Development Tales 1-4 by Art-ong Jumsai Na Ayudhya. The research was conducted with the documentary research method. The data analysis was done with the open coding technique, and the research results were presented in the style of analytical description. As regards the research results, it was found that Nithan Sikhao, Collection of Life-Development Tales by Art-ong Jumsai Na Ayudhya is young people's literature with functions in accordance with William Bascom's functionalism. The function of maintaining the behavioral traditions of people in society is of the greatest proportion. It is followed by the functions of reflecting society, teaching and entertaining sequentially. Furthermore, as regards the value in respect of teaching the Gharāvāsa-dhamma doctrines, it was found that the teaching on Cāga was of the greatest proportion. It is followed by the teaching of Sacca, Dama, and Khanti sequentially. These are the dhammic doctrines for laypeople, the dhammic doctrines of conduct for the ordinary people in society. Therefore, these tales allow child and juvenile readers to receive some ideas and morals and ethics to be guidelines for living, which is a method of implantation to make children and youth grow up to become people with good quality of life through writings in the tale genre.

**Keywords:** Function of Tales, Value of Teaching Gharāvāsa-dhamma, Nithan Sikhao

## Introduction

*Nithan Sikhao, Collection of Life-Development Tales 1-4* are works by Art-ong Jumsai Na Ayudhya, and there has been a tale-telling contest in the project "Nithan Sikhao and Stories of Goodness" held by Chulalongkorn University Book Center and FreeMind Publishing. In 2017, this contest was open to contestants aged 6-12 from across the nation to participate by sending an audio clip of one's voice telling a tale from *Nithan Sikhao, Collection of Life-Development Tales 1-3*, and there were a large number of those who were interested in entering the contest. One of the prize winners was Master Siriphong Liangbunchai from Bangkok

Christian College. On talking about the value of *Nithan Sikhao*, the winner of the contest for those who were 6-8 said, “*I think Dr. Art-ong’s tales are different from other tales, that is, he offered knowledge, ideas, particularly about people. For instance, the story I told in the contest, “The Man Who Was in Search for a Name”, offers the idea that it does not matter what your name is; the value of a person lies not in what his name is, but in goodness*” (Thaipost, 2017, p. 1). This word shows that *Nithan Sikhao, Collection of Life-Development Tales* has value in respect of wisdom and teaches young people to be good, which is one function of tales, as Sirak (2016, p. 8) says, tales have the functions of folkloristic information. The first one is the function towards people in terms of fulfilling the psychological need of people in society when they have conflicts in their minds, by functioning as the “outlet” for pressure. The second one is the function towards groups of people, communities, or localities, by being the designator of the identity of the group and the third one is the function of being a social mechanism in inculcating the social order and passing on the mores and culture. This is true, especially regarding the third function, the function of being a social mechanism in inculcating the social order and passing on the mores and culture, such as gratitude, the power of faith and ethical teaching. Moreover, Na Thalang (2009, pp. 361-363) has written a book on the folkloristic theory, in which, on talking about William Bascom’s functionalism, she says that we should pay attention to the social context of folklore, and the folkloristic information pertains to diverse aspects, tradition, art and culture, wisdom and tale. William Bascom classifies the functions in the overall picture of folklore into four functions. The first one is being instrumental in explaining the origin of and reasons for ritual performance. The second one is educating in societies employing the oral tradition. The third function is maintaining the traditional behavioral standards of society, and the fourth function is entertaining and being the outlet for a person’s frustration.

From the functionalism above, the researcher saw that tale is literature arising from humans’ wisdom, and it is the instrument humans use in teaching morals and ethics. It offers ideas and guidelines for living. It is also one of the cultures of humans in each people. Therefore, tale is a kind of folkloristic information. Thus, the researcher applied William Bascom’s functionalism in analyzing *Nithan Sikhao, Collection of Life-Development Tales* by Art-ong Jumsai Na Ayudhya to show the functions of tales towards society and humankind.

Furthermore, Dr. Art-ong Jumsai Na Ayudhya has said, “*In classroom learning, if we teach academic matters directly, the students may not pay attention, but if we convey them in the form of tale, they will listen attentively. Thus, tale is a means through which to pass on morals and ethics and virtuous things to children. I would like to tell every parent that we are the teachers at home; we must teach by using tales to convey virtuous things to our children*” (Khaosod, 2017, p. 1). This reflects that the tales in *Nithan Sikhao* are those with the function of teaching morals and ethics to youth so that they will be laypeople with morality. The dharmic doctrines that those who are ordinary people or laypeople must have are the four doctrines of *Gharāvāsa-dhamma*, which refers to the attributes of those who are successful in living the secular life, which are four virtues as follows. The first one is *Sacca*, which is truth, such as honesty towards one another. The second one is *Dama*, which is practicing and self-development, such as forbearance, emotional control, self-restraint, and good self-adjustment to work and the environment, 3) *Khanti*, endurance and 4) *Cāga*,

altruism, liberality, sharing, kindness (Payutto, 2013, p. 54). The dhammic doctrines for laypeople being dhammic doctrines of conduct for the ordinary people in society, the child and juvenile readers receive some knowledge, ideas and morals and ethics that are guidelines for living. This is the author's method of teaching children and youth through writings in the tale genre.

Due to the importance and background above, the researcher was interested in studying the functions of tales and the value in respect of teaching the *Gharāvāsa-dhamma* doctrines in *Nithan Sikhao, Collection of Life-Development Tales* by Art-ong Jumsai Na Ayudhya. The purpose was to point out the functions of tales according to the folkloristic theory that are evident in modern tales as well as to show the value of tales in respect of teaching the *Gharāvāsa-dhamma* doctrines to children and youth that is event there in.

### Research objectives

1. To study the functions of tales in *Nithan Sikhao, Collection of Life-Development Tales* by Art-ong Jumsai Na Ayudhya
2. To study the value in respect of teaching the *Gharāvāsa-dhamma* doctrines in *Nithan Sikhao, Collection of Life-Development Tales* by Art-ong Jumsai Na Ayudhya

### Research Methodology

The researcher conducted the research employing the documentary research method. The data analysis was done with the open coding technique, and the research results were presented in the style of analytical description. The research steps are as follows:

1. Preparation
  - 1.1 Study relevant documents and researches for basic knowledge and study guidelines
  - 1.2 Study relevant documents and researches that offer knowledge about studying the functions of tales and their value in respect of teaching the *Gharāvāsa-dhamma* doctrines
2. Data Collection
 

Collect data from 100 *Nithan Sikhao* tales in *Nithan Sikhao, Collection of Life-Development Tales 1-4* by Art-ong Jumsai Na Ayudhya, which are 4 books, and study the plots according to functionalism and the value in respect of teaching the *Gharāvāsa-dhamma* doctrines.
3. Data analysis
  - 3.1 Analyze the functions of tales in *Nithan Sikhao, Collection of Life-Development Tales 1-4* by Art-ong Jumsai Na Ayudhya, which are 4 books.
  - 3.2 Analyze the value in respect of teaching the *Gharāvāsa-dhamma* doctrines in *Nithan Sikhao, Collection of Life-Development Tales 1-4* by Art-ong Jumsai Na Ayudhya, which are 4 books.
4. Statistics used and data presentation
  - 4.1 The statistics used in the research are percentages.
  - 4.2 The research results are presented with the analytical description method.

## Research Results

1. From the results of the analysis of the texts of 100 tales in *Nithan Sikha*, *Collection of Life-Development Tales 1-4* by Art-ong Jumsai Na Ayudhya, 4 functions were found, namely, the functions of reflecting society, teaching, maintaining the behavioral traditions of society and entertaining. The percentage of the tales that exhibit the functions of tales according to William Bascom's functionalism, which are 38 tales in all, can be calculated with a result of 38% as in Table 1.

**Table 1** shows the results of the analysis of the averages of the tales that exhibit the functions of tales.

Functions of Tales	Number	Percentage
1. Reflecting society	8	20
2. Teaching	6	15
3. Maintaining the behavioral traditions of society	19	47.5
4. Entertaining	7	17.5
Total	40	100

### 1.1 Function of reflecting society

From the analysis of the functions of tales according show the function of reflecting society in 8 tales, namely, "The Golden Faucet", "The Two Birds", "The Hunter and the Ascetic", "The Used-Up Chalk", "One Half for Each", "Filling the Water Jar with Water", "The Four Friends in Their Old Age" and "Papa's Treasure". For example:

In "The Golden Faucet", the author tells the story by opening it with a setting that is a depiction of a village that has been arid for a long time and action has been taken to solve the problem, that is, having some explorers and mechanics come to perform an excavation and build a water pipeline from the capital to the village, as in the text:

A certain village had been arid and short of water for a long time. Then a team of explorers together with some excavation mechanics and water pipeline mechanics from the capital traveled to the village to help. The explorers explored until they discovered an underground water source of excellent quality not so far away from the village, so the excavation mechanics performed the excavation, and the source having been found, the water pipeline mechanics built a water pipeline from the underground water source straight to the village. Thus, in every household, water from the faucets was available.

When the day of the ceremony of turning on the faucet arrived, the state administrator traveled there to perform the ceremony. When it was time to turn on the faucet, the state administrator walked to the golden faucet, then turned the handle as far as it could go, but not a single drop of water came out of it...

"How can water flow out of it when a water pipeline from the water source hasn't been built yet?"

Having heard that, the state administrator turned around to say to the retinue, "A faucet that is not connected to the water source, even if it is a golden faucet of high value, cannot bring pleasant cool

water to quell the heat. Likewise, if one does something while forgetting to link it to one's heart, even if one says it is an act for the sake of others, it will produce no outcome that it should."

(*Nithan Sikhao, Collection of Life-Development Tales 1*, 2016, pp. 31-32)

The text above shows that in the tale "The Golden Faucet", the author reflects the rural society with the problem of water shortage and reflects a society that fails to deal with the root causes in solving problems, attaching importance to useless matters. This is seen in the fact the village head attaches importance to the making of the golden faucet, but he does not deal with the root cause in solving the problem through connection to the water source, so the water does not flow. This is like what the state administrator says, "If one does something while forgetting to link it to one's heart, even if one says it is an act for the sake of others, it produces no outcome that it should."

## 1.2 Function of teaching

From the analysis of the functions of tales according show the function of teaching in 6 tales, namely, "The Ease-Loving Fox", "Sisa the Happiness-Seeker", "The Rich Man and the Barber", "Chawi the Good Person", "Who Took Our Food?" and "The Commoner Woman". For example:

In "The Ease-Loving Fox", the author relates that a hungry fox has traveled and found an old elephant on the brink of death, and when the elephant has died, the fox goes to bite and eat its belly because that is the part with the softest flesh. After the fox has eaten the organs inside the belly until he was full and fallen asleep unwittingly inside the elephant's belly until the time passes to evening, thus, the carcass of the elephant dries and shrinks until the fox gets stuck inside the belly without being able to get out. However, fortunately, it rains, so the dry carcass turns soft and macerated. Hence, the fox survives and is capable of coming out of the elephant's belly, so he cries out, as in the text:

"Oh, you almost died therein. From now on you have to be more careful," he told himself, and even considered this an important lesson of his life.

(*Nithan Sikhao, Collection of Life-Development Tales 2*, 2016, p. 199)

Besides, the author states a notion at the end of the story:

...All of you,...

Do not be incautious about life.

Nothing lasts forever.

Even we ourselves, having been born, must come to the time of death someday;

Let alone the other things that pass into our lives.

Today we have that thing; tomorrow we may lose it.

Today that thing may be the best thing for us,

But tomorrow it may turn into the worst thing in our life.

(*Nithan Sikhao, Collection of Life-Development Tales 2*, 2016, p. 200)

The text above shows that the content of the tale “The Ease-Loving Fox” pertains to teaching the readers to live carefully, not being incautious, or too ease-loving like the fox who, having has eaten until he was full, lies down where he thinks will be his food source for many more days without moving to lie down in an appropriate or safe place. Therefore, he nearly dies. Moreover, the author offers a didactic notion, “Do not be incautious about life... Today that thing may be the best thing for us, but tomorrow it may turn into the worst thing in our life.”

### 1.3 Function of maintaining the behavioral traditions of society

From the analysis of the functions of tales according show the function of maintaining the behavioral traditions of society in 19 stories, namely, “Treasure for the Next Life”, “The Two-Headed Crow”, “The Price on a Human’s Head”, “The Lion and the Woodpecker”, “The Foolish Pupil”, “Fa”, “The Power of Goodness”, “Chaine”, “The Sought-After Grave”, “The Crack in the Wall”, “Thank You for Hurting Me”, “The Woods at Home”, “The Three Fish”, “Fresh Vegetables from the Southern State”, “The Swift Fox”, “The Army and the Buried Treasure”, “The Bow and the Arrow Choosing a Mate”, “The Two Loaves of Bread of a Poor Woman” and “The Commoner Woman”. For example:

In “The Two Loaves of Bread of a Poor Woman”, the author relates that there is an elderly woman who is poor but has esteem and faith in merit-making to a great extent. As she hears the news of a holy man’s traveling to the town where she lives, she wants to travel to pay homage and make an offering to him, and due to her poverty, she earnestly bakes some bread to be offered to him, but on the way, she meets a dog lying with no vigor. With the commiseration that has arisen in her, she gives one loaf of baked bread to the dog and continues on her way. Then she finds a piglet lying motionless breathing softly, so she decides to give it the last loaf and proceeds until she arrives at the pavilion where the holy man is sitting in meditation. The elderly woman can only prostrate herself in homage to him and she has no offerings for him like the other people do. The holy man asks the old woman:

“Ah, it’s you... You’ve arrived after the journey. Are you weary?”

Everyone there turns to look at the elderly woman with surprise because since they started sitting in attendance for the presence of the holy man, he has still remained merely in meditation, not having opened his mouth to speak to anyone yet. Even the elderly woman herself is excited and surprised...

“Oh, I’ve received both of your loaves of bread. They’re very delicious. Thank you very much for seeing importance in the two lives more than in your own benefit, even though they were but the lives of a dog by the roadside and a piglet.”

Having finished speaking, the holy man gives some benedictions to the elderly woman:

“From now on, may your life be one of comfort, not of hardship as before, and always meet with only physical and mental contentment until it ends.”

Then the holy man suddenly vanishes.

After that, the life of the elderly woman really gets better according to every benediction the holy man has given her.

From the text above, the elderly woman receives the benedictions from the holy man despite the fact that she has no offerings for him like the other people do. This is because the two occurrences she has met with on her way are the saint's tests. Furthermore, the text also shows that having a heart that is kind towards people who suffer is something humans should do. The text also demonstrates merit-making through sacrifice with kindness for animals. The author also states at the end of the story:

...All of you,...  
 Make merit with a pure, clean heart,  
 Not in the hope of rewards.  
 That is not called "merit-making" but "investment".  
 Merit-making and investment are different matters,  
 And with these different intentions, the outcomes are also different.  
 One more thing, by making merit with a pure, clean heart,  
 The product thereof will be sent not only to us.  
 Instead, the power of merit will also spread to the people that we revere And always remember.

(Nithan Sikhao, *Collection of Life-Development Tales 4*, 2017, pp. 134-135)

The above text shows that the content of the tale about the elderly woman receiving benedictions from the holy man pertains to maintaining the behavioral traditions of society. The reason is the tale shows the behavior of people in a society in which people revere Buddhism, have kind hearts and help those who are in trouble without expecting anything in return and see importance in other lives in society more than in their own benefits. Therefore, the givers receive physical and mental contentment like the elderly woman in the story. Also, if people in Thai society maintain the behavioral traditions by conducting themselves according to the teachings of the Lord Buddha, have kind hearts, the society will be in peace; the people in the society will have only physical and mental contentment.

#### 1.4 Function of entertaining

From the analysis of the functions of tales according exhibit the function of entertaining in 7 stories, namely, "Imitating the Teacher" "The Ease-Loving Fox", "Sisa the Happiness-Seeker", "The Rich Man and the Barber", "Chawi the Good Person", "Who Took Our Food?" and "The Commoner Woman". For example:

In the tale "Imitating the Teacher", the author relates that there is a renowned teacher named Master Koo, who has opened a school of arts and sciences. He has many pupils. One day his pupil asks him, "Master, how can one be a good person?" Master Koo answers, "If you want to be a good person, imitate your teacher. Whatever you see him do, do it. Then, you will be a good member of society". After that the master trains the pupils in practicing sitting meditation. Thus, the pupils do everything that Master Koo does. As they have closed their eyes, they all fear that they will miss something. Therefore, they surreptitiously open their eyes and see that he uses his hand to brush away the fly that has come to rest on the tip of his

nose, so they do the same thing, using their hands to brush the tips of their noses, so Master Koo chides them, as in the text:

“Why did you move? I told you to sit still.”

Thus, the pupils also spoke in a chiding tone in return, “Why did you move? I told you to sit still”.

Master Koo was very angry, so he got up and walked to slap one of his pupils in the face while bawling at him, “Here, an example of someone who’s insolent to me!”

Seeing this, the pupils ran at once to slap Master Koo while bawling at him very loudly, “Here, an example of someone who’s insolent to me!”

Master Koo, who had been slapped in the face many times, hastily made his way out of the circle of his pupils, then ran out of the classroom. After the pupils saw this, they ran after him immediately. As he saw that a crowd of his pupils was running after him, he was even more frightened, so he jumped away into the pond nearby, hoping that they would stop following him. However, they all ran after him, and seeing what he did, they also jumped into the water after him because they thought that was the means to be a good person.

What a hilarious thing, for at the end, both Master Koo and all the pupils got soaked and got sick together.

(*Nithan Sikhao, Collection of Life-Development Tales 1*, 2016, pp. 26-27)

The text above shows the comicalness of Master Koo’s pupils who want to be good people, so they conduct themselves according to Master Koo without using their common sense to think carefully, which results in a comical incident. This clearly shows the function of tales in terms of entertainment.

From the analysis of the functions of tales, it can be summarized that *Nithan Sikhao, Collection of Life-Development Tales 1-4* exhibit 4 functions of tales, namely, 1) reflecting society, that is, reflecting the problems of water shortage, poverty and conflict, 2) teaching, that is, teaching being a good person, not being incautious in living, gratitude, earnest studying and the certainty of perseverance’s leading to success, 3) maintaining the behavioral traditions of society, namely, conducting oneself in keeping with the teachings of the Lord Buddha, behaving in conformity with the society’s order and obeying the teachings of one’s parents and teachers, and 4) entertaining, namely, entertaining through behavior without prudence, the use of common sense and careful thinking, which can result in humorous occurrences.

2. From the results of the analysis of the texts of 100 tales, it was found that the tales had the value in respect of teaching the 4 *Gharāvāsa*-dhamma doctrines. The percentage of the tales with the value in respect of teaching each of the dhammic doctrines, which are 59 tales in all, can be calculated with a result of 59% of all the tales as in Table 2.

**Table 2** Shows the results of the analysis of the averages of the tales that teach the Gharāvāsa-dhamma doctrines

The 4 Gharāvāsa-dhamma Doctrines	Number	Percentage
1. Sacca	11	18.64
2. Dama	17	28.81
3. Khanti	9	15.25
4. Cāga	22	37.29
<b>Total</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>100</b>

**2.1 Sacca** is truth, honesty and sincerity. It was found in 11 tales in all, namely, “The Fire Peafowl”, “One with Art in His Heart”, “One Half for Each”, “A Friend’s Kindness”, “The Two Merchants and the Golden Tray”, “The Carcass of a Single Mouse”, “Karnkanli”, “The Stingy Rich Man and the Delicious Taki”, “Don’s Dream”, “Have You Seen My Camel?” and “The Flute-Playing Man”. For example:

In “Don’s Dream”, the author relates that Don and Chon are friends. Don is a good, honest person, but Chon is a tricky and selfish person. One night Don dreams that a large amount of treasure falls down from the roof of the bedroom in his house, and he tells Chon about the dream. Chon is in the mood for fun, so he mocks Don by saying he had a good dream, too, dreaming that he found much treasure underground, even though he absolutely did not have that dream. Then one day, Don digs the soil to do gardening and finds an iron chest filled with many valuable things, so he promptly goes to tell Chon about it, for he believes that the treasure chest certainly belongs to Chon because Chon dreamt of it. With honesty towards his friend, Don presses Chon to open the chest himself, as in the text:

At first Don was very glad, but the next minute he came up with a thought due to an honest heart that the iron chest filled with these precious things was unlikely to be his.

“For in my dream, a lot of treasure poured down from the roof of the bedroom, but this treasure is in the ground, which is like in Chon’s dream, so this treasure chest certainly belongs to Chon, not me”. Having thought so, he quickly went to Chon’s house to see him and told him everything that happened.

“Go, Chon. Go get the treasure chest you dreamt of the other day.”

(Nithan Sikhao, Collection of Life-Development Tales 3, 2016, p. 94)

Nonetheless, as Chon opens the chest, what is inside turns out to be many poisonous animals instead, so he closes the iron chest and puts it away in order to use it to take revenge on Don. That night, Chon takes the iron chest filled with poisonous animals up to the rooftop of his house, then he removes one tile in order to pour the poisonous animals onto Don’s body while he is sleeping. Don wakes up with a start and instantly lights the lamp and finds out that many precious ornaments have fallen down from the roof like in his dream. He is very glad. As for Chon, he feels regret and goes insane because he has not been able to let go of regret. As for Don, even though he has a life of wealth, he is still determined to do good and upholds honesty as the virtue of his heart as before, as in the text:

As for Chon who was surreptitiously, silently observing what was happening while he was on the roof, he also saw that what he poured down from the chest was not the disgusting reptiles he saw at first but much treasure. Thus, he even beat himself with regret and went insane because he could not let go of regret, in contrast to Don, who was much richer and had a life of much greater comfort. Nevertheless, Don was still determined to do good and upheld honesty as the virtue of his heart as before without ever changing.

(Nithan Sikhao, *Collection of Life-Development Tales 3*, 2016, pp. 94, 96)

The above text shows that this tale teaches about morality in the matters of honesty and sincerity as seen from the fact that Don is honest and sincere to his friend, which is in line with the 4 Gharāvāsa-dhamma doctrines for the doctrine of Sacca. The author also shows the consequence of honesty, that is, the ones who practice it steadfastly will certainly receive good things in their lives.

**2.2 Dama** is practice, self-adjustment and self-development for progress. It was found in 17 tales in all, namely, “The Three Answers”, “The Emaciated Crow and the Plump Quail”, “The Used-Up Chalk”, “The Foolish Pupil”, “The Empty Hand from the Coffin”, “Message on Scrap Paper”, “The Day to Meet God”, “Nontha’s Dream”, “The Fifth Spear”, “The Big Fish in the Snare of Love”, “The Elephant’s Weight”, “The Rich Man and the Barber”, “Chawi the Good Person”, “The Incurable Disease”, “It Is Me Who Is the Most Beautiful” and “The King and His Close Friend”. For example:

In “Nontha’s Dream”, the author relates that the rich man Nontho has two sons, Nontha and Nonthi. Nontha is the child of the wife; Nonthi is the child of the mistress. The mistress hinders the rich man Nontho from getting any chance to be close to Nontha and his wife, so Nontha dreams of sitting on his father’s lap once. The mistress contrives a scheme to have Nontha accumulate merit through practicing meditation in the forest in the hope that one day his father will love him. Consequently, Nontha asks his mother’s permission to go into the forest to practice meditation, as in the text:

Perhaps it was due to Nontha’s adamant resolution, or the fact that everyone prayed and asked for benedictions for him, eventually, he traveled to the center of the deep forest safely without meeting a single wild beast. He found a river, so he made up his mind to sit down and practice meditation by the side of that river.

Nontha trained himself with utmost earnestness. During the first month, he ate the fruit he managed to find nearby for sustenance. During the second month he only ate the leaves and grass that had fallen around him. During the third month he only drank the water from the river that flew past in front of him, and from the fourth month forward, Nontha did not eat anything anymore because he had discovered the way to draw the prana energy to nurture the body instead of food.

Five years had passed. The woodsman who had met Nontha got lost into the deep forest in the spot by the river where Nontha was sitting in perseverance, and the woodsman was very surprised that the boy he had met had now grown up into a handsome young man and was still resolute about practicing meditation until then. Thus, the woodsman went to converse with Nontha and became even more amazed, for now Nontha was no longer the resolute boy he had met but a pious preadolescent abounding in merit, very venerable.

(Nithan Sikhao, *Collection of Life-Development Tales 2*, 2016, pp. 138-139)

The above text shows that Nontha is a person who is earnest in training and adjusting himself in order to survive in the forest by himself, with genuine determination to practice meditation until he becomes a venerable pious person. This is in line with the 4 Gharāvāsa-dhamma doctrines for the doctrine of Dama, which is practice and self-adjustment. Thus, he is eventually free from suffering and finds real peaceful contentment.

**2.3 Khanti** is tolerance, industriousness and perseverance. It was found in 9 tales in all, “The Super Endurance Incantation”, “The Empty Hand from the Coffin”, “Chaine”, “That Is Illusion”, “The Ever-Gloomy Turtle”, “The Man in Quest of His Name”, “Papa’s Treasure”, “A Field in the Dry Season” and “The Seed from Grandpa”. For example:

In “That Is Illusion”, the author relates that Mana is a son of a poor farmer. He is a resolute, diligent young man who studies earnestly with a resolution to pass the examination to become a government official so that his life and those of his family will be eventually free from poverty.

“Mana was a son of a poor farmer, but he was a noble-minded young man with great perseverance. Every day he woke up before dawn to light the lamp and learn books. As the sun rose, he took the hoe and the spade and followed his parents to work in their rice field. In the afternoon he returned home to learn the books until midnight before going to bed. Before dawn, he woke up to learn the books again. So the routine went every day. The reason Mana was this diligent was poverty. Hence, he intently aimed to pass the examination for becoming a government official that would take place next year so that his life and those of his family would eventually be in a good condition, free from poverty.

...With the same perseverance, and success was waiting for him right in front of him.”

(Nithan Sikhao, Collection of Life-Development Tales 2, 2016, pp. 91-95)

The text above shows that Mana is a person with the endurance and diligence to read industriously, and he also has to help his parents with the work in the rice field, which is in line with the 4 Gharāvāsa-dhamma doctrines for the doctrine of Khanti, and as a consequence of diligence, endurance and persistence, one will eventually succeed.

**2.4 Cāga** is altruism, kindness and service for the common good. It was found in 22 tales in all, namely, “The Big Bear with a Heart for Help”, “Treasure for the Next Life”, “The Back of the Wall”, “The Best Three Things”, “The Little Bird with a Broken Wing and the Big Tree Close to Becoming a Carcass”, “The Empty Hand from the Coffin”, “Chaine”, “The Vulture Repays”, “The Day to Meet God”, “A Friend’s Kindness”, “The Carcass of a Single Mouse”, “The Fox Family and the Lioness”, “The Three Fish”, “Afan, the Boy without the Right Leg”, “The Rich Man’s Legacies”, “The Master with Streaming Gems”, “Chawi the Good Person”, “The Blind Man’s Guiding Lamp”, “The Army and the Buried Treasure”, “The Beautiful Fruit”, “The Two Loaves of Bread of a Poor Woman” and “The Commoner Woman”. For example:

In “The Two Loaves of Bread of a Poor Woman”, the author relates that there is an elderly woman who intends to bring the two loaves of bread that she has just finished baking to offer to the holy man whom she regards with esteem and faith. However, on her way, she meets a dog that is lying with no vigor by the wayside. With the commiseration that has arisen in her, the elderly woman gives one loaf of bread to the dog and continues on her way. Then she finds a piglet lying motionless breathing softly by the wayside. Feeling sorry for

it, she gives it the last loaf to eat, so the elderly woman has no bread to offer to the holy man as she has intended to. Nevertheless, the holy man, who is sitting in meditation in the pavilion, says to the elderly woman,

“Ah, it’s you... You’ve arrived after the journey. Are you weary?”

Everyone there turns to look at the elderly woman with surprise because since they started sitting in attendance for the presence of the holy man, he has remained merely in meditation, not having opened his mouth to speak to anyone at all. Even the elderly woman herself is excited and surprised.

“Huh?... Yes, sir. I’ve arrived for a while. Now I’m no longer weary...” Amid all the spectators there, the elderly woman has difficulty speaking for a while, then decides to tell the holy man candidly, “But... but today I’ve got nothing to offer you at all, for on my way I’ve given all the offering to the two hungry animals.”

“Oh, I’ve received both of your loaves of bread. They’re very delicious. Thank you very much for seeing importance in the two lives more than in your own benefit, even though they were but the lives of a dog by the roadside and a piglet.”

...Having finished speaking, the holy man gives some benedictions to the elderly woman,

“From now on, may your life be one of comfort, not of hardship as before, and always meet with only physical and mental contentment until it ends.”

After that, the life of the elderly woman really gets better according to every benediction the holy man has given her.

(*Nithan Sikhao, Collection of Life-Development Tales 4, 2017, pp. 132-134*)

The text above shows that the elderly woman is altruistic, kind, and more concerned about the benefits of others than about her own, which is in line with the 4 *Gharāvāsa*-dhamma doctrines for the doctrine of *Cāga*. Moreover, the author points out how being altruistic, kind, and concerned about the common good will endow your life with physical and mental contentment like it does to the life of the elderly woman in the story.

From the analysis of the value in respect of teaching the *Gharāvāsa*-dhamma doctrines, it can be summarized that 4 *Gharāvāsa*-dhamma doctrines are implied in *Nithan Sikhao, Collection of Life-Development Tales 1-4*, namely, 1) *Sacca*, namely, speaking the truth, honesty and sincerity, 2) *Dama*, practicing, adjusting oneself and developing oneself for progress until one is eventually free from suffering and gets to find true peace, 3) *Khanti*, namely, diligence, endurance and persistence, which will eventually lead to success, 4) *Cāga*, namely, being altruistic, kind, and concerned about the common good, which will endow one’s life with physical and mental contentment and promote peace in society.

## Conclusion and Discussion

1. From the results of the analysis of the functions of tales that are evident in *Nithan Sikhao, Collection of Life-Development Tales* by Art-ong Jumsai Na Ayudhya, it was found that the function of maintaining the behavioral traditions of society is of the greatest proportion. It is followed by the functions of reflecting society, teaching and entertaining sequentially. This may be due to the fact that in the present society, there are rapid changes and many events, and the only thing that will enable the people in the society to live in peace is people’s having conscience regarding maintaining the behavioral traditions of society, not behaving wrongly or in a manner that is conventionally

improper. Thus, the primary aim of *Nithan Sikhao* is to show the function of maintaining the behavioral traditions of society, which corresponds with the research by Fongmool (2014) that is a study of the functions of Shan folk tales using William Bascom's functionalism. From this study, it was found that the Shan folk tales of Mae Ai District, Chiang Mai Province have 4 major functions, namely, 1) the function of reflecting society, 2) the function of teaching, 3) the function of maintaining the behavioral traditions of society and 4) the function of entertaining. All these 4 functions are the basics of the functions of tales and the nature of humans who want to uphold goodness and create the norms for coexisting in society.

2. From the results of the analysis of the value in respect of teaching the Gharāvāsa-dhamma doctrines that is evident in *Nithan Sikhao, Collection of Life-Development Tales* by Art-ong Jumsai Na Ayudhya, it was found that the teaching on the Gharāvāsa-dhamma doctrine Cāga is of the greatest proportion. Perhaps this is because the author wanted to implant the matters of altruism, kindness, and service for the common good the most. This may be due to the fact that the present society is one of business, hurried transport and economic problems. Therefore, most people are selfish, seldom kind to others, so the society is not a pleasant place to live in. Thus, the author gave the most importance to the doctrine of Cāga. The next doctrine in the order of importance is Sacca. Perhaps this is because the author saw that honesty and sincerity towards others are the basics that will prevent people in society from injuring one another. If everyone is honest, sincere to one another, the problems of corruption and defraudation should disappear completely from society. The doctrine that is taught in the next greatest proportion is Dama, which is a matter in which people in society must make efforts. They must try to practice, adjust and improve themselves in order to make progress. As a society changes, the people in the society must constantly learn to adjust and improve themselves so that they can live in it in a way that is in keeping with the changed situation, and the last one of the doctrines that were found is Khanti. Perhaps the reason it is present is endurance, diligence and perseverance will enable one to fight problems. In the researcher's opinion, all the 4 Gharāvāsa-dhamma doctrines are equally important to humans' living in society. However, maybe the author saw that altruism, kindness, and service for the common good would make society pleasant to live in and peaceful, so he focused on teaching this Gharāvāsa-dhamma doctrine more than the others. Teaching the Gharāvāsa-dhamma doctrines or moral principles in tales is most appropriate because tales can be a medium for implantation and teaching that will enable young people to grow up into mature persons and be good citizens of society. This is in agreement with Ruamsuk et al. (2015), who say that tale is a medium that is appropriate and capable of conveying virtues most concretely. Therefore, tales are appropriate in implanting dhammic doctrines in young people and teaching these doctrines to them.

Therefore, it can be summarized that *Nithan Sikhao, Collection of Life-Development Tales* is young people's literature that exhibits the functions of tales according to William Bascom's functionalism like folk tales that are folkloristic information do. This literary work also offers the value in respect of teaching the Gharāvāsa-dhamma doctrines to young people or implanting the doctrines in them so that they can apply these doctrines in living, the doctrines of honesty, self-adjustment, endurance and altruism, which are the basic characteristics that every human should have so as to be able to live in society in peace in a complex social context like that of the present day.

## Recommendations

1. A study on the titles and writing techniques of the tales in *Nithan Sikhao, Collection of Life-Development Tales* by Art-ong Jumsai Na Ayudhya should be conducted so that it will be possible to be aware of the particularities in respect of the author's compositional art.
2. A comparative study of the ideas in and value of the "Inspired by Love Collection" and the "Collection of Life-Development Tales" of *Nithan Sikhao* by Art-ong Jumsai Na Ayudhya should be conducted so that it will be possible to be aware of the common characteristics and differences of both collections of literary works.

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