

THE NATURE OF MODERN THAI POETRY
CONSIDERED WITH REFERENCE TO THE WORKS OF
ANGKHĀN KALAYĀNAPHONG, NAOWARAT PHONGPHAIBŪN AND SUCHIT WONGTHĒT

Thesis submitted for the Ph.D. degree
of the University of London
by
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ABSTRACT

This study is an attempt to explore the nature of modern Thai poetry through the works of some well-recognized poets of today, namely Angkhān Kalayānaphong, Naowarat Phongphaibūn and Suchit Wongthēt. The exploration into the nature of modern Thai poetry serves ultimately to reveal the nature of the art of Thai poetry. The analysis of the works of these poets reflects the significance of 'convention' in the creation of 'modernity'.

The study is divided into six chapters:

Chapter I : 'Convention' and 'modernity' in modern Thai poetry: a study of Angkhān Kalayānaphong's Lam Nam Phū Kradu'ng

Chapter II : The nature of Angkhān's modernity

Chapter III : The nature and significance of verse forms in Thai poetry: a study of Naowarat Phongphaibūn

Chapter IV : The influence of 'oral tradition' in modern Thai poetry

Chapter V : The creation of symbols in modern Thai poetry

Chapter VI : On the formation of Thai poetical convention and Thai concepts of poets and poetry

Through the structure of the study emerges the fact that the exploration of 'modernity' is inevitably the exploration of various aspects of 'convention'. Therefore, the discussion in Chapter VI forms a valid conclusion of the study.

It is essential to observe that a firm belief in the relationship between the nature of language and poetry in

that language is an underlying 'theory' of the approach of the study. This 'theory' is re-confirmed through the examination of various texts on Thai versification.

The study is intended as a 'tribute' to a rather unexplored domain of modern Thai poetry or, at least, as an invitation and inspiration for future exploration to come.

CONTENTS

	PAGE
ABSTRACT	2
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	5
A NOTE ON TRANSLATION AND TRANSCRIPTION	7
CHAPTER I: 'Convention' and 'modernity' in modern Thai poetry: a study of Angkhān Kalayānaphong's <u>Lam Nam Phū Krađu'ng</u>	8
CHAPTER II: The nature of Angkhān's modernity	70
CHAPTER III: The nature and significance of verse forms in Thai poetry: a study of Naowarat Phongphaibūn	117
CHAPTER IV: The influence of 'oral tradition' in modern Thai poetry	159
CHAPTER V: The creation of symbols in modern Thai poetry	213
CHAPTER VI: On the formation of Thai poetical convention and Thai concepts of poets and poetry	246
EPILOGUE	297
BIBLIOGRAPHY	299

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A Note on Translation and Transcription

It is important to emphasize here that the translation of all the poetical texts in the study should be considered only as a convenient instrument for academic discussion. It is not in any way an attempt to produce or re-create any kind of anthology of modern Thai poetry. Though great care and attention has been employed in the translation so as not to destroy or distort the original meanings, the limitation of time makes it impossible to aim at the original poetic beauty. Nevertheless, if the translation helps to clarify the discussion in the study, its function is considered sufficiently fulfilled.

The transcription of Thai texts is based on the General System of the Royal Institute of Thailand, with some modification.

CHAPTER 1

CONVENTION AND MODERNITY IN MODERN THAI POETRY:
A STUDY OF ANGKHĀN KALAYĀNAPHONG'S LAM NAM PHŪ KRADU'NG

CHAPTER 1

Convention and Modernity in Modern Thai Poetry:
A Study of Angkhān Kalayānaphong's Lam Nam Phū Krađu'ng

ปณิธานของกวี

ฉันเอาฟ้าหม่ให้	หายหนาว
ก็กินกินแสงดาว	ต่างข้าว
น้ำค้างพร่างกลางหาว	หาคิม
ไหลหลังกวีไว้เช้า	ชั่วฟ้าดินสมัย
พลีใจเป็นป่าช้า	อาถรรพณ์
ขวัญลิวไปเมืองฝัน	พากฟ้า
เสาะทิพย์ที่สวรรค์	มาโลก
โลมแผ่นทรายเส้นหญ้า	เพื่อหล้าเกษมศานต์
นิพนธ์กวีไว้เพื่อกู	วิญญาณ
กลางคลื่นกระแสนกาล	เชียวกล้า
ชีวีนี้มีน่าน	เปลื้องเปล้า
ใจเปล่งแววทิพย์ท่า	ชั่วฟ้าดินสลาย
จิตกาธารกรุ่นไหม้	โหมไป ก็คือ
กาพย์ร่ำหอมแรงใจ	ไปแล้ว
จตุที่ภพไหน	ภพนั้น
ขวัญท่วมทิพย์รุ่งแก้ว	รวงน้ำมณีสมัย
ลายลือไหววิเวกให้	หลุดร่อน
ฝนท่าแก้วจากสวรรค์	คัมภีร์
ใจปลิวลิวไปฝัน	โลกอื่น
หอมภพนี้สะท้อน	ภพหน้ามาหอม

ข้ายอมสละทอดทิ้ง	ชีวิต
หวังสิ่งสินนอมิต	ใหม่แพรว
วิชากรวิชากรวิจุงักก็ลิทธี	สูงสูด
ขลังทั้งบุหงาป่าแก้ว	ร่วงฟ้ามาทอม ¹

The Poet's Testament

I wrap the sky around myself
to keep away the cold
and eat starlight late at night
to take the place of rice.
Dewdrops scatter below the sky
for me to find and drink,
and out my poems flow
to greet the morn, to last the age.
My heart, sacrificed to its grave,
gains unworldly powers;
the spirit flies to lands of dreams
the far side of the sky.
It seeks divinity in Heaven
and brings it back to earth
to soothe the sand and grass,
bringing happiness, bringing peace.
My purpose in composing poems
is to salvage the soul.

Translated by Allen Ginsburg²

¹Angkhān Kalayānaphong, Kawīniphon (Bangkok, 1964), p. 5.

²Sathirakoses-Nagapradipa Foundation, Three Thai Poets (Bangkok, 1978), p. 12.

The above Thai poem translated by a famous American poet, Allen Ginsberg, is written by one of the best known and highly recognized Thai contemporary poets, Angkhān Kalayānaphong. The translation, though not strictly accurate to the original Thai version, should be able to tell western readers quite a lot about this Thai poet. Those who are accustomed to the conventions and tradition of Thai poetry will certainly find this poem rather striking. It is not very common for a Thai poet to assert his 'testament' so explicitly and personally.

In the old days, it was understood that most Thai poets worked under the patronage of the king and the nobility or they were kings or nobles themselves. Thus, it is natural that their 'testament' was quite different from Angkhān's testament as a poet. Through the long history of Thai poetry we have works written in praise of the king like Lilit Yuan Phāi, Lilit Talēng Phāi or to entertain the king by the story and the pleasing sounds of poetry like Lilit Phra Lō or to gain religious merits by composing religious works like Traiphum Phraruang, Mahāchāt Khamluang, Phramālai Khamluang, but the poets hardly asserted anything personally as the purpose of composing poetry.

Here, Angkhān not only chooses to be very personal but also very spiritual as he declares that his purpose of writing poetry is to 'salvage the soul'. This fact perhaps helps to emphasize the comment of one Thai critic, M.L. Bunlu'a Thepayasuwan that Angkhān could be considered 'one of the poets who mark the turning-point of Thai

poetry.¹

Angkhān Kalayānaphong was born in Nakornsriṭhammarāt in the South of Thailand in 1926. He went to study painting and sculpture at Silpakorn University in 1946, and his poetry was first published in the University's magazines. Later on he gained much recognition when his poems appeared in the Social Science Review. The translation of the poem above by Allen Ginsberg made him known internationally and the English version of his poems also appeared in Tenggara, Malaysia, Solidarity, the Philippines and Quadrant, Australia.²

Angkhān's first book Kawiniphon was published in 1964 by the Social Science Association of Thailand Press. In 1972 he was awarded the best poet of the decade by the Sathirakoses-Nagapradipa Foundation.³

Together with two other Thai poets, Naowarat Phongphaibūn and Witayakorn Chiengkūn, Angkhān was invited to read his poems at the 'Asean Poetry '78', the first Asean poets' meeting held in Jakarta by the Arts Council of Jakarta in July 1978.

In fact, Angkhān's recognition as a great poet has been a gradual thing. His originality in combining the conventions with his own powerful and unique style of

¹M.L. Bunlu'a Thepayasuwan, 'Hualieo Khōng Wannakhadī Thai' (The Turning-Point of Thai Literature), Wannakhadī (Bangkok, 1971), pp. 125-6.

²See Three Thai Poets (Bangkok, 1978), p. 4.

³This is a foundation named after two famous Thai authors and scholars Sathirakoses and Nagapradipra, which has as its main objective to support Thai literary works and traditional arts.

language use was not immediately accepted by the more academic and conservative authority in Thai literature. For example, he was accused of neglecting the exact poetical forms as well as 'poetic' diction. This might be quite true in a sense because he cares more for the beauty of sounds in his poetry than the regular restricted number of the syllables in each line or stanza and he dares to use many 'improper' or 'impolite' words in his poetry as well.

On the other hand, nobody can really deny the power of his language use which deeply moves all his readers. One criterion the committee of the Sathirakoses-Nagapradipra Foundation used in order to award Angkhān the best poet of the decade is that he is the poet who could reflect the thoughts, opinions, feelings and dreams of the new generation.

M.L. Bunlu'a Thepayasuwan explained her decision to award Angkhān as follows:

'The beauty of Thai poetry depends so much on the careful and delicate use of words as well as the deep and refined sensibility of the poet who can create the "marvellous" and the "wonderful" out of the "ordinary". This can be seen in works like Lilit Phra Lō, Inao, and Nirāt Narin. The careful choice of words used to describe nature in general such as the trees, the sky or the mountains and forests or to describe the common feelings experienced by almost everybody is the ingenious art of Thai poets from the Ayuthaya to the middle of Ratanakosin period.

.....

Until this last 15 years since I started reading Angkhān's poetry, I was delighted to realize that we

had a Thai poet who could express the thoughts and feelings of modern society in the language of a poet as well as with the sensibility of a poet. Thai poetry has reached an important turning-point. We now have a poet who can move us, modern readers, with language that made us experience the pains, bitterness, as well as tenderness, and who can make us feel joy and delight. Angkhān is truly a poet of our time not just a versifier who only uses mental intelligence but a great poet who combines the feelings and the ideas and understanding of the Thai way of life with the marvellous heritage of Thai poetic art.' (trans. S.C.)¹

As Angkhān is also an artist, his work reflects his talent in painting and creating images from words as well as from his brushes. This is commented on and praised by one member of the committee of the Foundation, Prakhin Chumsāi Na Ayuthaya, who is a poet in her own right.

'Angkhān not only composes poetry in his own style but he is also genuinely an artist-poet in the fullest sense of both words. He is able to move us deeply by creating with his pen as well as his brush the most breathtaking and beautiful images that never occur before in any other poet's mind or imagination.'² (trans. S.C.)

A similar opinion is given by another member of the committee, Thapanī Nākhōnthap, who is a critic as well as a poet herself.

¹ Angkhān Kalayānaphong, Bangkokkæo Kamsauan or Nirāt Nakorn Srithammarāt (Bangkok, 1978), p. 253.

² Ibid. p. 254.

'But when he is moved by the beauty of nature he will use the most beautiful words with melodious sounds and with deep and wide meanings. We can say that his poetry has the beauty of sense and sound as well as of shadow and shade.'¹ (trans. S.C.)

If Angkhān's well established recognition as a modern poet saves me the effort to justify my choice, it still remains for me to explain why I choose to study Lam Nam Phū Kradū'ng. The main reason lies in the fact that Lam Nam Phū Kradū'ng is written in the tradition of Nirāt though the poet does not use the word 'Nirāt' as the title of his work. Besides, this work is Angkhān's first long poetical work published after his first book which is only a collection of his short poems and poetic prose.

The importance of the Nirāt genre in Thai poetry is well recognized among Thai literary scholars. Nirāt is not only one of the oldest genres in Thai poetry but also one of the most popular genres to which a lot of major Thai literary works belong.

Dr Manas Chitakasem, in his article 'The Emergence and Development of the Nirāt Genre in Thai Poetry' traced the origin of this genre and came to the conclusion that 'The term Nirāt as a poetical genre was recognized as long ago as the 16th century when Khlong Nirāt Haripunchai is believed to have been composed.'

Some other well known earlier works of Nirāt type are not distinguished by the title 'Nirāt' such as Khlong

¹ Ibid. p. 256.

Thawāthotsamāt meaning 'Twelve Months' or Khlong Kamsuan Srīprāt, meaning 'the Wailing of Srīprāt'.¹

By using the title 'Lam Nam Phū Krađu'ng' for his 'Nirāt' poetry, Angkhān is, therefore, just following an earlier 'tradition' and 'convention' of composing a Nirāt poem. However, Angkhān's choice to use the word 'Lam Nam'

ลำนำ is significant. According to the Thai-English Dictionary by George Bradley McFarland the word ลำนำ means 'the theme of a song' or metrical composition.²

Similarly, the New Model Thai-English Dictionary compiled by Sō Sethaputra, defines the word ลำนำ as a song.³ Besides, in Dictionarium Linguae Thai, a Thai dictionary by a French priest D.J.B. Pallegoix in the 19th century, we can find the definition of ลำนำ as 'different measures of verses'.⁴

The word ลำนำ is used in Chindāmanī, the most important text-book on Thai language and versification written in the 17th century, to mean a verse or a poem.

พระอาจารย์เจ้ากล่าวไว้ว่ากาพย์ มีนิยมคังลำนำ โศกณันท์
มิได้กำหนดครุหลุ⁵

¹Manas Chitakasem, 'The Emergence and Development of the Nirāt Genre in Thai Poetry', Journal of the Siam Society vol. 60 Part 2 (July, 1972), pp. 135-68.

²George Bradley McFarland, Thai-English Dictionary (Stanford University Press, California, 1944), p. 741.

³Sō Sethaputra, New Model Thai-English Dictionary, 2 vols. 2nd ed. (Thai Watana Panich Press, Bangkok, 1972), 2, 822.

⁴D.J.B. Pallegoix, Dictionarium Linguae Thai (Paris, 1854), p. 380.

⁵Chindāmanī (Bangkok, 1969), p. 47.

We can also find the word ลำนำ used in ประชุมลำนำ Prachum Lam Nam an important text-book of the Ratanakosin period on Thai versification. In this book the word

ลำนำ is prominently used to mean 'poetry'. Thus, by his choice of the word ลำนำ, Angkhān reflects his attitude towards his work and shows how he is aware of the old tradition of Thai poetry which has always recognized the relationship between the text of a poem and its realisation in sound.

In other words, Thai poets are aware of the close relationship between music and poetry. Most Thai poetry can be recited as well as sung like songs with melodies. Thus, there exists in Thai tradition a special way of reading poetry called อ่านทำนองเสนาะ which may be translated as 'melodious reading'. This means that the readers must pay special attention to the rising and falling intonation in the poem or prolong some ending syllables for the emphasis of sounds and meanings.

The purpose of this study is to illustrate the importance of 'convention' in Thai poetry and how the poet manipulates the 'convention' to create 'modernity' in his work. As I have chosen to study Angkhān's Lam Nam Phū Krađu'ng which is composed in the Nirāt genre, we shall now begin by examining some conventions of Nirāt.

It might be helpful if we try first to clarify the characteristics of Nirāt poems. Dr Manas Chitakasem described the meaning of the word 'Nirāt' both as a Sanskrit lexical form and a type of poetry in Thai as follows:

'As a lexical form, it has been generally accepted that the term Nirāt is of Sanskrit origin. It comes from "nira" meaning "without" and "āsa" meaning "passion or desire". However, it is used in Thai poetry to mean "separation, to be separated from, or to be without something which is dearly desired". In a Nirāt poem a poet may express, with strong feelings and emotion, that he must "nirāt" his loved one or "nirāt" something which often veils many feelings and desires and includes a yearning to experience the pleasure of affectionate union or reunion.'¹

Prince Bidyalankarana, a famous poet and scholar also commented that 'The Nirāt poems use the subject of sadness on love separation as the core.'²

As a Nirāt poem is usually composed during a journey, either a real or an imaginary one, the poet can naturally make use of 'time' and 'nature' as main elements for expressing his sufferings or his love-longing. Thus we can say that according to a Nirāt convention, the main theme of love-longing is conveyed through the themes of time and nature. These three characteristic themes will serve as a starting-point in our exploration into the 'convention' and 'modernity' in modern Thai poetry.

First we can begin by considering how Angkhān manipulates the theme of love-longing in his work 'Lam Nam Phū Krađu'ng'. According to the convention, a Nirāt poem is essentially a complaint of the poet's sufferings caused by the separation from his loved one. Angkhān follows this

¹Manas Chitakasem, op. cit.

²Prince Bidyalankarana, Phasom Phasān: Miscellaneous Essays by N.M.S. 2 vols. (Bangkok, 1960), 2, 7-9.

convention but his suffering is somehow different. His main lamentation is not so much caused by his inevitable separation from his loved one but by his loneliness and his complete lack of a loved one. He expresses a deep resentment towards women because he believes that they value riches more than pure love. Yet he finds a consolation in creating his ideal beloved one in his dream; an idol of purity and beauty.

Within the essential theme of love-longing in a Nirāt poem, it is normal for the poet to include the praising of his beloved which helps to reflect and deepen his sufferings. No doubt, Angkhān, fully aware of the significance of this theme, follows the convention.

In many major Thai poetical works, it is not uncommon to find the praising of the poet's beloved which follows the Indian convention. This means that a Thai poet tends to praise the beauty of his beloved by using a set of conventional comparisons to describe the 'ideal' beauty.

For example, her neck is compared to a swan's neck, her waist a lion's waist, her fingers like those of a Kinarī, a creature of half bird, half maiden in mythology. In praising his beloved, Angkhān follows the convention by using a similar traditional set of comparisons to describe an ideal beauty. However, his appraisal is also a mixture of convention and his own creativity. He does not seem to be content only with describing the physical features of his beloved but he mentions and praises her intellectual power in speech.

p. 71

ดั้นนางก็อย่างคมดาบกรค	รศ้อยคำล้ำแก้ววิศรี
วาจาสามารถฆ่าจันทกรวี	ให้ตายลงที่แทบเท้านาง ¹

Like the blade of piercing sword, is your tongue,
Uttering words far more precious than poetry.
Simply by your speech, the poet can be mortified,
And at your feet he will humbly kneel down to die.

Apart from praising her intellect as well as her beauty, the poet expresses his desire to share his intellectual and spiritual life with her. He will discuss philosophy and art with her and make her share his appreciation of them. By all this they will create an ultimate union with each other, an ever-lasting love which is above and beyond time.

p. 72

จะเหมือนเพื่อนใจฝึกศึกษา	เรียนคินและฟ้าวันหน้า
สองจะรักกันจนมรณา	ลือชาปรากฏจนหมคกาล
กุศลทรภูคบุราณว่า	แม้ม้วยคินสิ้นฟ้ามหาสถาน
ขลังพลังรักจริงสิ่งวิญญาน	อมตะนานเห็นอกกาลเวลา

Real friends of heart are you and I
Together we study the Earth and the Sky!
Always in love we are till we die,
And forever renowned is our love divine!

¹ Angkhān Kalayānaphong, Lam Nam Phū Kradu'ng (Bangkok, 1969), p. 71.

As says old master Sunthōn Phū
Till the end of the Earth and the Sky
Immortal is the power of true love
And remain it will beyond time above!

This 'idealistic' element in the poet's desire is something 'new' in Thai poetry. According to the convention, the emphasis is almost entirely put upon the physical beauty of the poet's loved one and normally little or nothing is mentioned about her intellectual or spiritual qualities. At most, the poet might praise her refined manners and her modesty.

On the other hand, this 'idealistic' element here is not surprising since the poet makes it explicit that his loved one is an 'ideal' lady in his dream and not in reality.

Nevertheless, his 'idealistic' desire and praise for his ideal lady is a great contrast to his bitter attack against women in reality. From his own unhappy experience with women, the poet expresses a very strong resentment against women's nature. He laments that his loneliness and complete lack of a loved one is only due to his lack of wealth.

p. 16

อนิจจาข้าขาดรากฐานเงินทอง	จึงขาดน้องรักใคร่หลงใหล
ไร้เจ้าของทุกห้องหุ่ญหุ่ญ	เปล่าเปลี่ยวเสียใจไม่มีคิ

Alas, I lack forever any riches
Thus never can I find Love's sweetness!
Empty are all the chambers of my heart
Lonely, tormented and falling apart!

He also blames women for their frivolity by using the convention of comparing the impermanence of their love to the impermanence of the dewdrops.

p. 94

น้ำใจนางอย่างน้ำค้างพราย	ช่างละม้ายหยาดรุ่งเพชรใส
ที่แรกเห็นแวววัับจับใจ	แต่ครู่เหลวไหลแตกกระจาย

Glittering dewdrops are women's hearts
Like brilliant diamonds they all seem,
So firstly met they can impress
But, alas, so soon reveal their emptiness!

p. 65

น้ำใจหญิงจริงอย่างน้ำค้าง	มีท้นแสงแตกสิ้นเหลวไหล
ดูทั้งแววมณีน่าอาลัย	แต่กลับปลับไม่ซังยั่งยืน

Like dewdrops are women's love!
After short dawn swiftly disappearing,
Radiant like diamonds glittering,
But, alas, how cruelly deceiving!

p. 62

ว่าจากเจ้ารวจากน้ำค้าง	รุ่งสางระเหยสิ้นสุกเหลวไหล
มิใช่แก้วมณีมีค่าอะไร	ชาติหน้าฟ้าไหนหาได้เอย

Parting from you is but parting from the dews,
All is gone just after dawn!
A precious diamond is not your heart,
So easily found anywhere, anytime!

The poet even allows himself to repeat many times throughout his work that women are in fact the greatest or the most dangerous and destructive power against men. They are, for the poet, like the graves of men or they are Death themselves.

p. 64

สมเพชเวทนาชีวิตนี้	เป็นซากผีเสียก่อนอวสาน
สาวราวปีศาจร้ายนรกานต์	หลอกลวงผลาญชีวินอันตราย
เจ็บปวดกรรไกรร้าวเฝ้าโศก	โลกหน้าฟ้าไหนก็ไม่หาย
นารีนี้อือป้าชาย	เกิดมาคายทุกชาติอนาถเอย

Alas, my poor and miserable life!
Turning to corpse even before I die.
Ah, women are like monsters from hell,
Who can deceive, harm and destroy your life!
Forever lingering is my forlorn pain,
Endless will it be in this world and beyond.
No doubt, women are the graveyards of men,
Who are born only to meet Death in the end.

p. 95

โชนแรงเส่นหาอาลัย	กลับย้อนไหลไหม้ใจร้อนกล้า
หญิงยิ่งกว่าอาวุธศร	ประหารชีวาอวสานไป

Why should this current of love
Flow back to burn my own heart?
Far worse than any weapon are women
Uncaring quite, destroying lives of men!

p. 64

นารีนี้นั้นชัณม์จักรวาล	พิฆาตฆ่าใจให้ซากคั่น
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Truly women are Death,
That cruelly kills and destroys the heart!

This bitter 'denunciation' or attack against women is a very dramatic contrast to his 'idealistic' praise which is in itself a part of the convention of the poem of Nirāt type. Therefore, here, we can see how the poet creates his own 'modernity' out of the 'convention' he is very much aware of. He extends the praise of his loved one from her purely physical beauty to her intellectual and spiritual beauty. At the same time, he adds in the bitter attack caused by his own disappointment from women. This seems to make a clear distinction between his 'ideal' world and his 'real' world and reminds the readers of the well-balanced reality in the poet's mind. Thus the poet succeeds in establishing himself as an 'idealistic' poet without losing the ability to perceive and realize the nature of reality.

To manipulate the convention of using the theme of love-longing in Nirāt, the poet not only laments the lack of love for himself alone but also laments the lack of love in all humanity of the present time. Throughout the work, the poet expresses his deep love for nature and praises the divine generosity of nature towards mankind. On the other hand, he clearly abhors the fact of humans' cruelty towards nature and towards each other. For him, the lack of love in the human heart is the cause of sufferings and destruction of the world. Because of their ignorance, human beings are blind to the beauty of nature and fail to live in harmony with nature.

The poet also resents the modern technology that encourages human beings to believe that they can be the

master of nature and the world. He believes that although science and technology are the source of human progress they can also be the cause of destruction for all humanity.

p. 41

โอ้โลกนี้แห้งแล้งน้ำใจ	จะเกิดไฟไหม้ล้างแหล่งหล้า
ถึงสิ้นกินฟัวร่น้ำตา	ถาอาคมคับประลัยกัลป์
แม้วิทยาศาสตร์วิเศษมากมาย	แต่คราวย้ายก็ชั่วข้ามหันต์
อาจเผาไหม้หลายชาติโคตรพันธุ์	มนุษย์สัตว์นั้นอันตราย

Alas inhuman and dry is now our world!
Thus will the infernal fire sweep over Earth and Sky
All our tears can hardly help to cool
Nor calm nor subdue the burning fire!

Marvellous though science seems to be
Equally dangerous it can also be
Even to destroy all human race
Thus all creatures can disappear with no trace!

p. 41

โลกจะพลอยโศกลิ้นลิ่งสุข	ทุกคืนวันหวั่นไหวใจสะท้าน
เพราะเหตุคลังบัววิชาการ	เหลิงกิเลสมรงานสารเลว
ในสมองผยองหยิ่งยโสโน้น	ซ่อนสามัญสัศวป่าแสนเหลว
แรงอย่างลึกลับเล่ห์หลุมเหว	เปลวไฟนรกมนุษย์ตกต่ำตาย
หมดโอกาสรู้จักตัวเองได้	ความหมายชีวิตแหลกสลายหาย
ทั้งพิภพก็พลอยวอดวาย	นิบหายไปมนุษย์ธรรมระยำเอ๋ย

Then the world would be without happiness.
Night and day the Heart would suffer,
Just because of wicked cleverness,
Indulging in sins and impure labour!

Behind the arrogance of the brains,
Lies the wicked nature of wild animals,
Full of mysteriously evil influences,
Burning like the infernal flames!

Unable to know one's self,
The meanings of life are empty and gone.
Thus ruined is the whole world,
Where virtues and morals see no dawn!

From the discussion so far we can see how the poet makes use of the 'convention' to express his own ideas and philosophy. The theme of love-longing which is essential and characteristic of the Nirāt genre is carefully and subtly manipulated to the full. The poet's love-longing is not caused by the inevitable separation from his loved one but from his deprivation of any loved one at all. Therefore, the poet laments his lack of love and at the same time he looks beyond himself and laments the lack of love in the human heart which, for him, causes all the sufferings in our modern world.

His lamentation, in fact, reflects his deep love and appreciation of nature which is one of the significant themes in all his works. According to the Nirāt convention, it is quite common to find that the main theme of love-longing is closely related to the theme of nature and time. In other words, Thai poets in Nirāt poems always use nature and time to express their sufferings caused by separation and love-longing. Needless to say, Angkhān is too much aware of this 'convention' to neglect it in his work.

Thus it is worthwhile discussing the themes of nature and time in Lam Nam Phū Krađu'ng in some depth and detail here since they are obviously essential to the appreciation of the work and help us to see how the poet manipulates 'convention' to create 'modernity' in his work.

The theme of nature has always been a very essential element in Thai poetry, especially in a Nirāt poem where the poet uses nature as an element for his lamentation. The poet describes nature in relation to his own feelings and sufferings at the moment. Khlōng Thawāthotsamāt, a fore-runner of the Nirāt type, is an obvious example of how the poet expresses his love-longing through the description of nature. He describes the change of seasons and plants which all remind him of his beloved. The rain, the sun, the heat, the wind and the clouds, all help to reflect his pains and sufferings caused by his desire and love-longing.¹

Prince Thammāthibēt, one of the most outstanding poets of the Ayuthaya period, also makes use of the theme of time and nature in his well-known Nirāt poem, Nirāt Phrabāt. It is quite common for a Thai poet to describe nature in relation to his beloved one by using the technique of pun and transference of meanings.² The names of trees, flowers, fruit, birds and fish usually serve to express the poet's admiration for his beloved, the remembrance of joys and happiness he shares with her and at the same time his desire and sufferings caused by separation.

¹Manas Chitakasem, op. cit., p. 144.

²Ibid. pp. 157-67.

This 'convention' is, in fact, not limited to a Nirāt poem alone but can be found in other types of poetry such as in a narrative poem or even in an epic. However, since the theme of love-longing is prominent in a Nirāt poem, this 'convention' is even more definitely emphasized and manipulated.

The theme of nature is very prominent in Lam Nam Phū Krađu'ng and the poet even declares in his work that it is only his deep love and appreciation of nature that inspires him to compose this work.

p. 163

จบเสรีจสรวนนิราศพูน	ภูกระดัง
เพราะรักธรรมชาติถึง	แก่นแล้ว
ทุกภพชาติใจพึง	เป็นหนึ่ง เสมอมา
รู้ค่าดินฟ้าแก้ว	ลึกซึ้งสุดสมัย

Thus ends my Nirāt Phū Krađu'ng,
Composed from the deepest love for nature.
No matter how many existences to come,
The same love may I feel forever!
Humbly would I always recognize
The real value of the Earth and the Sky!

Thus it is not surprising to find that in this Nirāt the description of nature is more emphasized than that of the journey or the places. In fact, we can say that the importance of the journey seems to be secondary whereas the poet's admiration of nature and his philosophical contemplation of it appear more prominent.

This, however, does not mean that the poet ignores the convention in a Nirāt poem to use nature as an element for lamentation. By using the technique of pun and transference of meanings, the poet expresses his sufferings and love-longing through the description of nature.

p. 43

หอมช่อแก่นึกแก้วแววตา	ชาติหน้าปรารณนางแก้ว
สายหยกสุกสายจนบ้ายแล้ว	ยังไร้วามณีที่สุกรัก
จำปีลีวันคืนเคื่อนปี	จำแต่เทวี่ที่สูงศักดิ์
เควร้างออกอ้างว้างหนักนัก	จักเป็นเช่นหินผาจาบัลย์
โรกจะหงอยเหงาเศร้าสร้อย	คอยชาติไหนจะได้คั้งฝัน
มะลิวันถึงวันสิ้นไกววัล	ฉันคงเปล่าเปลี่ยวอยู่เดียวกาย

From the example above, flowers and tree names are taken and punned with attributes and feelings of the beloved. This can be illustrated from the first line of the quotation as follows:

hōm chōk^hāo nu'k kāo wāotā chātnā prāthanā nāngkāo

Kāo is the name of a flower and it is used to pun with Kāo wāotā, meaning 'beloved', and with Nāngkāo, meaning 'an ideal lady'. The line can be translated as

'The scent of kāo flower reminds me of you, my beloved, precious to me as my eyes, even in my next life I long for you, my ideal lady.'

We can find passages of a similar nature and technique in many other poetical works. For example from Lilit Phra Lō:

p. 62

นางแย้มเหมือนแม่แย้ม	ยินดี ร่อนา
ต้องกุมมือเทพี	พี่ต้อง
ซ่องนางคลีเกศี	นุชคลี ลงดา
รักจุเรียมรักน้อง	ร่วมรักเรียม
เลียบมือนางนี้ทั้ง	เลียบนาง เรียมนา
ชมมานนางหวังต่าง	มาน้อง
ชมพุดไบบาง	นุชคลี ลงดา
งามปานนี้ไม่ปล้อง	แปลกปล้องคอศรี ¹

Similarly, from the works of Prince Thammāthibēt we can find passages of the same nature.

p. 29

ชมทองพวงนางแย้ม	บานสดมแย้มเกสร
คิดความยามบังอร	แย้มโอรุยมพรมพรายงาม
จำปาหนาแน่นเนื่อง	คลีกลีบเหลือง เรืองอร่าม
คิดคำนึงถึงนงราม	ฉิวเหลืองกว่าจำปาทอง
ประยงค์ทรงพวงห้อย	ระย้าห้อยพวงกรอง
เหมือนอุษะนวลลของ	เจ้าชวนไวให้เรียมชม ²

If the poet in the past normally used the theme of nature only as an element for lamentation, Angkhān seems to be more philosophical and serious for he uses nature as

¹Lilit Phra Lō (Bangkok, 1965), p. 62.

²Dhanit Yūphō, Phraprawat phraniphon čhofā Thammāthibēt (Bangkok, 1973), p. 29.

a main subject for contemplation. Since the poet suffers from his loneliness and lack of love, he turns towards nature as a consolation. He declares explicitly that he has no more faith in women nor human nature and thus prefers to devote himself to nature and the art of poetry.

p. 142

ชีวิตเราเศร้าสร้อยเหงาหงอย	ค่อยเติบโตขึ้นเสมอต้นไม้
มากแต่มนุษย์ทำอันตราย	ขาดไร้ความกรุณาปราณี
จึงเลิกพิศواسชาติมนุษย์	อันสุดใจคำอำมหิตนี้
ถ้าโลกแล้งจิตกรรมบทวี	เป็นซากผีดีกว่าหายใจ
ชาตินี้ถือกรวีเป็นที่หนึ่ง	ซึ่งจำเป็นจริงอย่างยิ่งใหญ่
ทั้งสี่ห้องของหทัย	เปี่ยมไปด้วยกุศุมรสบทวี
เรากับเงาเพื่อนผู้ยากไร้	จึงไถ่หลบหน้ามาป่านี
ทั้งกายพยักลอนโคลงอันแสนดี	มาช่วยชื่นชมพนมพนาลัย

Alas, my sad and lonely life,
How it grows like wild trees,
Surrounded by merciless hearts
Being harmed, wounded and destroyed!

Thus I can no longer feel any love
For all this cruel humanity!
If the world ran out of art or poetry
I would rather become a corpse!

In this existence, poetry is my vocation,
So absolutely and truly!
All the four chambers of my heart
Are filled with its divine nectar!

With Shadow, my forlorn friend,
I have escaped to these woods,
Where the kind and divine Poetry
Is revealing to me the wonders of Nature!

Because of his deep love and appreciation for nature, his attitude towards nature is rather different from other Thai poets. Angkhān looks at nature very closely and equal value to every element in nature. For him, the stones or earth are as precious as any precious stone. Every natural object is related to every other and all are interdependent. A tiny drop of dew helps to create the ocean and without iron and tin, gold would not have any value. The poet appreciates even the most insignificant thing in nature, therefore the smallest and simplest flowers or even the most unpleasant and ugliest insects are worthy of his admiration.

p. 14

หลายหลายผงธุลีดินทราย	สร้างปฐพีไว้ให้พนี้
ประเสริฐเลิศล้ำกว่าแก้วมณี	มากมีค่าบริสุทธิ์ยุติธรรม
เหยียบย่ำทำไมคอกหญ้าขึ้น	สรวงศรัทธาบูชาเหล่าเจ้าเลิศล้ำ
สรรเสริญเป็นยอแด่ทองคำ	ตะกั่วค่าและเหล็กน้อยใจ
รู้แก้วมณีจะมีค่าอะไร	มีส่วนสร้างมหาสมุทรใหญ่
ถึงสรพสัตว์แมลงสาบหนอนร่าน	ถ้าหากว่าไ้กรวดทรายดิน
ถึงสรพสัตว์แมลงสาบหนอนร่าน	วิจัยวิจารณ์รู้ยาพิษหมิ่น
ทุกทุกสิ่งสูงค่าทั้งสิ้น	หมกมลทินแม้แต่อาจณ

Thousands of grains of dust and sand
Creating the Earth for us to live
Are, no doubt, more virtuous and precious
Than any gems or diamonds!

p. 101

ช้านอยมีครูอยู่ทั่วฟ้า
เล่าเรื่องราวที่มหัศจรรย์
ภูผาสอนให้ว่าเหววิเวก
เรียนรสนาวจากน้ำค้างย่อย
สายน้ำเซาะหินรินรินว่า
พระกามเทพปลุกจนตื่นฟื้น
แม้แต่ดอกหญ้าป่ากระจิрик
พยายามเรียนไปทั่วไวกัด

เคื่อนการาแจ่มจ้าสรวงสวรรค์
เกิดโลกต่างต่างนั้นดูเพชรพลอย
โลก
ปุยมเมษฝึกใจลอยไปละห้อย
ปุยม
มิ่งขวัญสรว้อยเต้าราวกลางคืน
มิ่ง
ชวนเจ้าข้าแด่ผืนสะอึกสะอื้น
ชวน
สอนพิษปืนเกษรเสาวคันธ
สอน
เสมอมิตรบอกวิชาอาถรรพ์
เสมอ
ถึงวรรณศิลป์พิพจน์ทั้งชีวิต
ถึงวรรณศิลป์พิพจน์ทั้งชีวิต

My divine teachers are all over the Sky,
The Moon and bright Stars in heaven
Kindly tell me the wondrous mystery of Night
And various universes, glittering like diamonds!

The Mountains teach me the taste of loneliness,
And the Clouds train my forlorn heart to wander.
The falling Dew teaches me how the heart can freeze
When love and hope fade away like Night.

The flowing stream, weeping to the pebbles,
Invites me to cry silently for my broken dreams!
For Cupid wakes me up to Love
Only to show me all its sweet sufferings!

Even the smallest wild flowers are like friends
Who help to enlighten and sharpen my mind.
Thus will I devote my life to all Nature Teachers
Trying to realize the divinity of poetry!

The poet's idea of the Nature Teacher is further
expressed in a beautiful description of the woods and the
grass covered with dew. For the poet, the beauty of
nature is a 'spiritual gift' from heaven to feed our mind
and to open our inner eyes to the 'truth' of life.

p. 122

ป่าหยาขวางทางพร่างน้ำค้าง
แ่งงามปรัชญาฟ้าโปรยทิ้ง
เห็นแจ้งคฤธรรมทุกแห่งหน
แ่งงามปรัชญาฟ้าโปรยทิ้ง
เห็นแจ้งคฤธรรมทุกแห่งหน

อย่างประคัมพลอยแพรวเพริศพร้ง
ประทานสิ่งวิเศษยิ่งแก่ปัญญา
ไม่ต้องพลิกค้นไขไม้หา
นฤมิตสองแก้วตามีแวว

The woods and grass, sprinkled with dew
Are glittering brilliantly like gems and pearls.
Are they not spiritual gifts for our mind
Graciously granted from the Sky?

So evident is the profound wisdom in nature
Without seeking nor searching wherever!
Sages are the Sea, the Earth and the Sky
Who open our inner eyes!

Besides, the poet praises the generosity and kindness
of nature towards human beings who generally do not realize
the kindness of nature but try to destroy nature without
any feeling for it. The poet believes that if human beings
could learn from nature how to give without asking anything
in return and how to live in harmony with each other, the
world would be a possible paradise for all and everybody
could enjoy peace and happiness on earth.

p. 82	ต้นไม้บนแม้งกิ่งคำ	รับกรรมเวรไว้ทั้งปวงสิ้น	
	อิฉาวิชาใครในฟ้าดิน	เป็นมลทินโทษที่เคยทำ	
	มิงกะโหมบโลกแสงกำไร	ถ้ามีใจก็ใหญ่หลวงลึกดำ	
	ถือสันโทษเป็นหลักประจำ	รักแต่ศานติธรรมทุกเวลา	เจ้าร่ำรสหอมพร้อมบริสุทธิ
	มิใช่โกงฉลากฉากร้าย	ก็คุณมากมายเพื่อวันหน้า	ห่างพ้นมลทินโทษสิ่งใด
	เหมือนหม่อมขุนย้งกเงินตรา	ค้าขายวิญญานกันนั้นเลย	
	มิงไม้ไม้คิคำบุหงาหอม	พร้อมสละเป็นทานไปเฉยเฉย	
	แม้ฆ่าป่าบุชชาเงินสังเวย	เคยว่าร้ายให้ลึกคำดา	
	พฤษชาช่างกล้าหาญชาญชัย	เสมอใจใหญ่กล้าหน้านับถือ	
	งามเขียวชอุ่มอุ้มทิพย์บันลือ	คือบุคคลิกภาพอันเกรียงไกร	
	เจ้าร่ำรสหอมพร้อมบริสุทธิ	ประจักษ์เกียรติยศอันยิ่งใหญ่	
	ห่างพ้นมลทินโทษสิ่งใด	ชีวิตสละให้แก่แผ่นดิน	

Trees never complain, merely accept.
Nor do they ever become jealous of anyone.
Such wicked impurity cannot touch them.
How great must their hearts be
To abide always to solitude,
And to cherish peace!
They do not know how to cheat
Nor to accumulate wealth for fear of future hardship.
So unlike human beings who, so covetous,
Can sell even their hearts and souls!

Trees give their fragrant flowers,
So graciously and gratuitously!
Even though they are cruelly slaughtered
Just for empty money,
Never do they utter a word of protest!

How courageous and admirable they are!
Are they not the Greatness themselves,
Holding brilliant Immortality?
Their lives are the lives of giving,
Of divine purity and honours,
A complete sacrifice to Earth!

Because of the poet's special respect and reverence for nature, mingled with his deep love and understanding, he personifies nature to a very high degree and thus renders liveliness and loveliness to nature as well as tenderness and emotions.

p. 99

รู้เคยรู้เคยสูรเคยมาฆ่าข้า
 ราชวีรศิลป์แพรวดีทุกขระทม
 วิเวกพลแพรวดีทุกขระทม

ฟ้าหมองเหมือนร่องไห้ชื่นชม
หม้ให้ไ้ถ่ล้นทราลย์

Gently and slowly comes the Dusk,
While gloomy skies seem to weep.
Night unfolds her sorrowful silk
To cover and lull the Earth to sleep!

p. 118

ลมบนสวนสนบนลานน้ำ	ทำเพลงวังเวงเสียงเศร้าสร้อย
จนเมฆหลงไหลไหววยงย่อย	เป็นฝอยฝนหลังคั้งน้ำตา

The breeze in the pine woods whispers softly,
Sadly composing sweet and forlorn melody,
Till the clouds, so enchanted and moved,
Cannot help shedding tears in gentle showers!¹

p. 100

สนป่าว่าเพลงวังเวงหวาน	ดอกไม้บานแย้มว่าเรริงรื่น
คอกหญ้าเหียนป่าทั้งศิขริน	ว่าประทีนส่วนตัวยั่วแมลง

The forest-pines compose sweet and sad melody,
While the flowers blossom cheerfully.
Wild flowers all over the mountains
Are wooing the bees with their fragrance!

p. 117

เช้าวันนี้สุมาลีสีแสนสวย	อวยทานขอแน้มคั้งแย้มยิ้ม
หยาดน้ำค้างอย่างยังหลับพร้อม	อยู่ริมกลีบบุหงานิทราลัย

¹A good example of Angkhān's technique of the personification of natural elements as human.

Lovely are the colours of these morning flowers!
Their buds are blossoming as if smiling,
And peacefully dewdrops are still sleeping
On their sweet and tender petals!

p. 136

คืนนี้ศศิธรจะอ่อนเมฆ	วิเวกเว้งเวหาใจหายหาย
ทางช้างเผือกมองสกาพรพราย	ราวสายทิพย์เนตรรัตติกาล

Oh, how the Moon charmingly implores the clouds
But how forlorn is the clear lonely Sky! tonight!
The Milky Way, so brilliant and bright,
Is glittering like the magic eyes of Night!

From all these descriptions of nature we can see that nature is represented not only as goodness and kindness towards human beings or as a great teacher to the poet but also as very humane, gentle, tender and melancholic. By using a lot of personification the poet succeeds in drawing his readers nearer to nature and to feel and understand nature better.

Since the poet is also an artist, he tends to 'paint' his description of nature and creates a beautiful image with details and colours.

p. 96

เพื่อกุณาสุคชอบฟ้ากว้าง	สลบสลายชะโงกโครกเหวหิน
เงื่อมเมฆวิเวกทุกศิริน	อมนิลนวลน้ำเงินงามเงา

Far beyond the wide horizons are the mountain lines,
With the cliffs and valleys intertwined.
Forlorn and lonely are the clouds uphigh,
And on each mountain shines the blue, pale grey divine!

p. 116

แสงเงินทองส่องเมฆวิเวกใจ	รุ่งอุทัยใสแสงแกล้งชิง
พะแพ้วแววทองคำพร่ำรำพึง	มิถึงประกายฟ้าพิพาลัย

Lonely is my heart while the rays of dawn adorn
the clouds.
Bright deep crimson is the rainbow of the rising sun,
Glittering like gold, causing a deep reflection:
Will we ever reach that divine heaven once?

p. 121

นากแก้วนากขวัญชั้นรุกขชาติ	คาบคากอกเหลืองแกล้งนวลขาว
ขอไม้อ่อนช้อนสลัปริงพราว	ราวภูมิประเทศพิพาลัย

Flowering indeed are these wild green screens,
Full of buds and blossoms, yellow, red, white and cream,
With young and tender leaves lavishly adorning,
Thus render divine and beautiful the whole surrounding!

p. 98

ปูตะไคร้ทองผ่องอมสีส้ม	กิ่งพรมิพิเศษปูอยู่ชอกหิน
ล้วนถนิมพิมพารณศิขริน	ลคาคินโสภานานาพันธุ์

This soft golden moss, gleaming in orange beams,
Is like a magic carpet on the rocks' recesses.
Precious ornaments of the mountain are they all
With wonderful wild flowers of every kind!

The significance of colours in his description of nature is even more emphasized when the poet praises the beauty of the rainbow's colours. He states clearly that for him every colour is like a gift from heaven with a special quality of exquisite immortality. Besides, this appreciation of colours brings him joy and contentment that help to enrich his soul and life.

p. 140

ทุกสีจากฟ้าประทาน	ปานสิ่งทิพย์อมตะเหนือสมัย
แก้วแหวนเงินทองจวบพิไร	ไม่มีค่ามาเปรียบเทียมทัน
ข้า่น้อยชื่นชมสมบัติแก้ว	แม่นแล้วรักรุงราวไอศวรรย์
มั่งคั่งกว่าใครทั้งไกรวัล	ในมือนั้นกำทิพย์สุริยา
ปีติปรงเป็นยาฆ่าสิ่งโศก	ฤทธิโรคร้ายทั้งหลายไต่หล้า
สันโศกสงบสุขทุกเวลา	เป็นมหาเศรษฐีที่แท้จริง

Every colour is a divine gift from the Sky,
So precious like sacred immortality!
The riches and wealth of the Three Worlds
Is undoubtedly uncomparable!
Humbly I adore this divine gift,
And loving the rainbow like the kingly treasures,
I feel richer than the rest of the world
For I hold this divine gift in my hand!
Surely joys can be used to cure
All the bitterness and pains in life.
Only with contentment and serene happiness,
Can you truly become a real millionaire!

Here we can see again that 'colours' as elements in nature lead the poet to a philosophical contemplation like all the other beauty he finds in nature. This serves to

emphasize the significance of the theme of nature in Lam Nam Phū Krađu'ng. In this modern Nirāt, nature is not just an element for lamentation as in the past but it is by itself a main subject for the poet's contemplation. The description of nature builds up the significance of the whole work as it reveals the sensibility of the poet as well as his ideal and philosophy of life.

The importance of the actual journey in this Nirāt seems to be secondary to the importance of the poet's contemplation on nature. Thus through the theme of nature the readers can follow the journey of the poet's mind and perceive the significance and the beauty of the work.

We can consider that Angkhān follows the 'tradition' and 'convention' in Thai poetry by cherishing the theme of nature. He also tries to deepen and extend its significance by his artistic and philosophical attitude. Writing for his readers of the modern time, Angkhān takes the responsibility of cultivating the readers' minds by endearing nature to them in the hope that they can learn to love nature and live in harmony with nature. He perceives and describes the 'spiritual' beauty of nature as well as its 'physical' beauty. For the poet the ultimate purpose of perceiving the beauty in nature is to elevate the mind and spirit of his readers.

Another significant theme connected with the main theme of love-longing in a Nirāt poem is the theme of time. Like nature, time or the passing of time in Thai Nirāt poems serves as an important element for the poet's lamentation. This is manifested even in an early poem of the Nirāt type

in the Ayuthaya period like Thawāthotsamāt. The poet uses the passing of time, the change of seasons and human activities as a means to express his love-longing and sufferings caused by the separation from his loved-one.

The beauty and significance of Thawāthotsamāt is well recognized among Thai scholars and its influence can be seen in some later Nirāt poems such as Nirāt Phrabāt by Prince Thammāthibēt, one of the most distinguished poets of the Ayuthaya period and Nirāt Duan by Nai Mī, a student of the great poet Sunthōn Phū of the early Ratanakosin period. In all these works, the poets manipulate the theme of time in order to convey their desires and sufferings according to the 'convention' of the Nirāt genre.¹

In Lam Nam Phū Krađu'ng, the poet manipulates the 'convention' in a different manner. He realizes the importance of the theme of time as an element for lamentation. However, his lamentation is somehow quite different. He laments the passing of time not because it reminds him of his loved one but because it reminds him of his own mortality, the brevity of life and the limited time to enjoy the beauty and wonders of nature.

From the beginning of the work, the poet's first contemplation is the contemplation on time. He questions what time is and why all human beings are subject to it. He believes that we are all the slaves of time but if we try hard enough we can free ourselves from the limit of time.

¹For detail of the treatment of time in these Nirāt poems see Manas Chitakasem, op. cit., p. 145.

p. 35

อนิจจากาละคืออะไร	ทำไมยิ่งใหญ่ในแหล่งหล้า
นอกโลกไซ้ไว้วันเวลา	มนุษย์ล้วนซ้เข้าเวลาแล้ว

Alas, what is it we call Time?
Why should it ever be, in our World, so powerful?
Of course, it is timeless outside our World.
Oh, what slaves of cruel time all we humans are!

p. 36

ไต่ห้ล้าเวลาล้วนเป็นนาย	ใช้มนุษย์เป็นทาสระทมขมขื่น
เร่งปลุกสติปัญญาตื่นพื้น	ฝันสู้สู้อิสระละเวลา
ร้กงานทำปานเจ้าวันคืน	คืนฝันอิสระฐานใจขลังกล้า
กลั่นอุคมคค้อมตะมา	เป็นอาวุธฟ้าอันเกรียงไกร
ชนะประหารเวลานาที่	ไม่มีอิทธิฤทธิ์พิฆะสงใหญ่
ให้สำคัญแท้แค่ดวงใจ	ปีติแจ่มใสสมาเสมอจริง
เลิกข้องอะไรหมกในภพ	ลบโลกโกรทหลงสิ้นทุกสิ่ง
ลืมนาฬิกาพิษปลงปลิดทิ้ง	กระแสนเวลาวิ่งตามฤาหัน

Absolute master on earth Time is,
Manipulating humans like poor slaves.
Let's wake up our conscience and wisdom,
Determined to fight for our freedom!

To our work be devoted night and day.
To get strength, meditate and pray.
Select the best of our immortal ideals
As our powerful weapons and shields!

To really conquer the power of Time,
To humble and ruin this great harm,
A constantly joyful heart need we,
To attain a real liberty!

No attachment to anything in life,
No greed, anger nor illusions,
We can forget and abandon the cruel Clock,
Thus the current of Time can touch us not!

Throughout the work, the poet laments the brevity of human life and how every minute of life is too precious to be wasted in ignorance and greed. For him, life without an ultimate ideal does not have any value and to waste time is like committing suicide.

p. 15

ฟ้าประทานชีวิตรามาให้	ประจักษ์ไฉศวรจรยั้งฟ้า
ทุกทุกนาทีคือชีวา	พรวาเวลาคือฆ่าตัวตาย

A gift from the Sky life is,
As precious as any kingly treasure.
Truly every minute is life,
Wasting time is thus committing suicide!

p. 150

ชีวิตนี้สั้นหวานไต้หวัน	ไม่ทันจกฐ์แจ้งคืนฟ้า
พระมฤตยูก็จุมมา	ไม่ทันจกฐ์แจ้งคืนฟ้า เอย
	พาไปนิพราโลกหน้าเอย

Oh, how vulnerable and short life is!
Before we get to understand the Earth and Sky
Death hastily comes to greet us,
Taking us away to sleep in a different World!

p. 52

เมื่อกทรายละม้ายนาฬิกาแก้ว	แม่นแล้วชีวิตสั้นเหลือหลาย
มีทั้งผู้เฒ่าเช่นคนทราย	หักหายก็หายวับกับตา

A grain of sand is like a divine clock.
No doubt life is extremely short,
Not even half as old as the earth or sand,
Gone are we all far from the human eyes!

p. 118

รินรินเกล็ดทรายไต้สายธาร	ราวนาฬิกาฟ้าเคื่องหล้าถวิล
มีก้นาที่ชีวิตสั้น	เร่งกินทิพย์เป็นแรงวิญญาน

Slowly flowing is the sand under the streams,
Kindly reminding the Earth like a clock divine.
Only a few minutes long does life seem,
So come and taste immortality to survive!

p. 149

แต่มนุษย์กระจิกวิคตระนง	หลงว่าคำฟ้าไม่สูญหาย
แต่อายุสั้นกว่าเมื่อกทราย	ชีวิตละม้ายน้ำหยกเดียว

How vain are these small human beings
To think like the sky they will forever stay?
But life is shorter than a grain of sand,
So insignificant like a drop of water!

The poet believes that because most people do not
realize how short life is they waste their lives destroy-
ing each other as well as nature. He also resents the fact

that during our short life we do not have enough time to understand life, nature nor ourselves.

It is worth noticing that the poet repeatedly compares life to a tiny dewdrop or a drop of water, and thus establishes an underlying lexical pattern in the work which will be discussed later on.

On one hand, the poet perceives time as a destroyer of life and laments the cruelty of time that kills and destroys everything, even the small innocent flowers.

p. 108 แม้แต่ดอกไม้ไร้เคียงสา
 ให้สลายจมนปรุพี เวลาที่ฆ่าเสียจนป่นนี้
 ให้สลายจมนปรุพี ไม่มีแวเมตตากรณา

Without mercy can time destroy,
Even the most innocent flowers.
Letting them perish and sink in the earth,
Showing no compassion, care nor love!

Because of this cruelty the poet cannot help feeling threatened by time and expresses his desire to be 'above' time, to rebel against this cruelty and to be able to reach 'immortality' through his works.

p. 109 ข้าเลิกหลงจรรงรักภักดี คอเวลานาที่ทั่วฟ้า
 ขอบุญวิเศษศิษย์บุญญา อยู่เหนือเวลาอันอาชรรม์
 ไม่นับถือชื่อตรงกาลจักร เพื่อหลักชัยประเสริฐเลิศนั้น
 คืองานอุดมคติพิพจน์ ปิคมิ่งขวัญนิรันดร์เทอญ

No longer can I be devoted to Time
Nor to any measure of Time on earth.
Rather I would revolt and change
To that cruel Time, be above!

No more faith nor respect to Time
My ultimate goal of life
Is my divine and immortal works
That will forever be my greatest delights!

On the other hand, the poet's awareness of the
destructive nature of time does not prevent him from
perceiving time as the creator of the beauty in nature.
While admiring the marvellous beauty of nature such as
the mountains, the caves, the forests, the poet is always
aware of the creative power of time that shapes and moulds
everything in nature.

p. 49

อ่านาจอหัดพิพยแห่งเวลา
มนุษย์ขี้ฉฉฉฉฉฉฉฉฉฉ

นฤมิตหลางามเลิศลึกซึ้ง
พึงรักป่าหนาอย่าฆ่าไฟ

Who can create such marvellous beauty on Earth,
But those magic hands of Time?
Oh, jealous human beings, have no anger,
Pray love and never destroy the woods and wild!

p. 54

เวลาช้ากว่าร้อยโกฏิปี
ทุกเมื่อกรวดทรายกินเก็บงำ

ล้างธุลีทรายขาวนวลสะอาคล้ำ
ลำน่ำปรัญญาคำควรเมื่อง .

Surely more than thousands and millions of years
Have gently polished this pure and glittering sand
And in every pebble and grain of sand hide
The invaluable poetry and philosophy of mind!

p. 52

แต่ละก้อนแกกอนปู่ทวดนัก	พิศวงหลงรักทุกซอกหิน
เวลากว่าล้านปีวันวัน	เงาให้ไว้ถวิลว่างวาย

Older than the great grandfather are these rocks,
And every single corner of them I truly love!
Oh how many million of years of labour,
Can create such unforgettable splendour?

p. 92

นี้สวนแก้วอุทยานไคร	นฤมิตไว้แข่งชั้นฟ้า
นี้แหละหัตถ์ทิพย์แห่งเวลา	กว่าร้อยโกฏิปีที่กระทำ

Whose divine gardens are these,
Created to challenge those of heaven?
Oh, yes they are gracious works
Of the heavenly hands of Indefinite Time!

The poet realizes that all the beauty in nature is a result of a very long and delicate process of evolution through time. Therefore, he appreciates nature with deep respect and love.

It is obvious that in his work, the poet reveals to his readers the dual nature of time as a creator and destroyer of life and beauty. This deep awareness serves

to explain the poet's longings for 'immortality'. As he values the beauty and wisdom of nature, he values the power of time that creates it. Therefore, it is natural that he will long to be a part of this eternal power and refuse to be destroyed by time.

His desire for 'immortality' through his work is explicitly stated throughout as we can notice the intensive use of words like ทัพย์ , อมตะ meaning immortal, imperishable as well as กัลปาวสาน , นิรันดร meaning forever or ever-lasting.

The poet's desire for his work to last forever is in fact not a modern or new idea in Thai poetry. Thai poets in the past also made the same wish that their work could remain until the end of time. For example, in Lilit Yuan Phāi, the poet expressed his pride for his work by comparing it to a beautiful garland adorning the world till the end of time.

สารสยามภาคพร้อง	กลกานท นั้
คือคู่มาลาสวรรค	ชชชอย
เบญญาพิศาลแสงคง	เคอมกรยติ พระฤา
คือคูใหม่แสงร้อย	กึ่งกลาง
เป็นสร้อยโสภิศพัน	อุปรมา
โสมสรวงศิริธีรางค	เวียไว้
จงคงคู่กัลปา	ยืนโยค
หายแผ่นคินฟ้าไหม้	อย่าหาย ¹

¹Lilit Yuan Phāi (Bangkok, 1969), p. 16.

A similar feeling is expressed by Prince Thammāthibēt in his famous Nirāt Thān Thong Daeng when he made a wish that his work should be read and admired by those who could appreciate it and thus remain forever.

เจ้าฟ้าธรรมธิเบศร์	ไชยเชษฐสุริยวงศ์เพียร
แต่งไว้ให้สถิตเสถียร	จำเนียรกาลนานสืบไป
เจ้าฟ้าธรรมธิเบศร์เจ้า	ทรงเขียน
ไชยเชษฐสุริยวงศ์เพียร	เลศหล้า
แต่งไว้ให้สถิตเสถียร	ในโลกย์
จำเนียรกาลนานชั่ว	อ่านอ่องสรรเสริญ ¹

For Angkhān, his work is truly the ultimate goal of his life. He believes that his dignity, honour and value depends on his works as a poet. Poetry is his vocation and through his poetical achievements he wishes to free himself from time and mortality.

p. 161

ฝากขวัญชีวิตไว้	วรรณศิลป์
ถึงเปื่อยซากจมนิน	ไปม้วย
ปรโลกเลื่องลือยิน	เกียรติยศ
ขลังใหม่เหนื่อสมัยค้วย	ค่าน้ำใจหอม

To poetry will I devote my whole life!
Though my body is ruined or decays
Eternally will my spirit stay
Even in other worlds will my name be honoured
Thus can my spirit remain radiant forever!

¹Dhanit Yūphō, op. cit., p. 143.

The love and pride he feels for his works is clearly expressed at the end of his work when he compares his poetry to the most beautiful and purest diamond which helps to beautify the world. He also expresses a wish for his work to remain forever.

p. 163

จิตรกรกรวีหนึ่งเยี่ยม	ใจหาญ
นามรุ่งคั่งอังคาร	คู่ฟ้า
เกียรติยศอยู่ในงาน	รักยิ่ง
ฝากมิ่งขวัญไว้หล้า	เน้นฟ้าอมงขลัง
คั่งเพชรน้ำหนึ่งรุ่ง	วิสุทธิศรี
หวังเพื่อใจปฐวี	ชื่นไว้
จงอยู่คู่เคียงปี	กลับกับปี
คับแค้นคินฟ้าไหม้	จึงให้สลายหาย

Noble and courageous is the painter-poet
Whose brilliant and immortal name is Angkhān
His honour is in the works he dearly loves
Which will remain till the end of Sky and Earth!

Like a great and pure diamond is his work
Composed to console and comfort the heart of Earth
Forever and ever may it remain with time
Till the Earth and Sky are burnt down!

The poet's desire for immortality here is very interesting since it appears at first sight to be rather unusual in a Buddhistic context. However, the poet manages to clarify the meaning of 'immortality' he longs for through his work.

At the beginning of the work, the poet invites his readers to follow the 'ideal' path of Buddha and to live according to his principles so that the world would be a beautiful and peaceful paradise for all. By being able to purify and enlighten our spirits and souls we can attain the ultimate truth and be 'above' time which means no danger nor death can harm us.

p. 14

เห็นแจ่มความหมายชีวิต	ลิขิตสัจจะสิ่งมีงวณนี้
ใจใหญ่เหนือเวลานาที	ไม่มีการตายอันตรายเอย

Having seen the beauty and meaning of life,
I have tried to keep it forever in my divine poetry.
Raised above time is thus my heart
And no longer can Death harm me!

p. 15

ตื่นพ้นเงอะเสอะแสงมรคา	ร่ายบาทาพระโพธิสัตว์ใหญ่
พลีทั้งสี่ห้องของหฤทัย	ร่ายบทให้ทานปีติสุขทุกคืนวัน
ปฏิบัติหัตถะปรัชญาใหม่	ให้ทาเพื่อโลกไสวสุทธิตุจสวรรค์
เมตตาอย่าฆ่ากันและกัน	เพื่อโลกไสวสุทธิตุจสวรรค์
ภูมิใจไปเสมอคราววาว	เอาเลือกนั้นปลูกนุหงาสุมาลัย
อมตะเหนือเวลากาลไกล	ราวแววเกียรติยศยิ่งใหญ่
	ให้ขลังกล้าหาญวิจารณ์ญาณ

Now awake, let us find the divine path
Of our holy and great Buddha.
With our whole heart, let us sacrifice

And truly give for joy, day and night!

Come, let us change beliefs and ways of life
To create a heavenly world well-purified.
Pray, never kill, have mercy on others,
Instead convert the blood to use in growing flowers!

Raise our heart as high as the bright stars
Let it be shining with brilliant noblesse
With bravery and sound wisdom,
An immortal heart, forever timeless!

On the other hand, the poet also believes that through his vocation as an artist he could create 'immortality' in his work which will help not only himself but all the others to understand the meaning and value of life. It is obvious that the poet highly values the spiritual power of poetry over human minds. Therefore he equally esteems the magic of dreams and imagination. For him, imagination is timeless and through imagination the 'immortality' in any artistic works is possible. This means that an artist or a poet creates his work through his imagination and in turn, as long as his works can be perceived through imagination they will always remain.

Because of this belief in the spiritual value of poetry the poet places high value on the power of imagination. For him, through that power, we can attain the ultimate truth to understand the meaning of life. Therefore, the spiritual value of poetry is almost comparable to being a Bodhisattva who helps others to attain enlightenment. We can find many passages where he praises the magic of imagination and dreams.

p. 113

จะพบแววทิพย์แห่งชีวิต	นฤมิตอมตะงานแก่นสาร
ช่วยกู้โลกจากไฟนรกานต์	อันหมกไหม้วิญญาณสามัญ
ชีวิตนี้จึงจะมีความหมาย	รู้ใช้ค่าหล้าเสมอค่าสวรรค์
ถ้าเพิ่มพิริยขอเนกอนันต์	จะเทียมทันพระโพธิสัตว์เอย

Then the radiant divinity of life will you find
To help create your immortal work,
And save the world from the infernal fire,
That consumes all common souls and lives!
Thus will life gain a real meaning
When you can appreciate the Earth like the Sky!
Even almost equal to Bodhisattva can you be
Just by your perseverance divine!

p. 112

ความฝันเป็นสิ่งที่เหนือสมย์	นำใจไปสู่ภพพิศวง
ระบายสีทิพย์เพริศพร้งยิ่งยง	สมประสงค์ทุกสิ่งมีมีมณตร์

Above all time are dreams
That bring our hearts to wonderful realms,
And paint everything in celestial hues.
Thus, magically all our desires come true!

p. 112

แววฝันนั้นปรุ่งควยธาตุทิพย์	หมกแล้วฟ้าทรงหยิบประทานใหม่
เต็ม แววฝันนั้นปรุ่งควยธาตุทิพย์	หมกแล้วฟ้าทรงหยิบประทานใหม่
เต็มไว้ให้เปี่ยมล้นหลุดภัย	เบิกใช้คล้ายเงินในธนาคาร
จะศก เจริญระโนความจริงทุกสิ่งสิ้น	ถวิลคุณค่าปรัชญามหาศาล
จะศกณลิกทิพย์งามตระการ	ท่านเรียกแก้วสารพัดนึกนา

Dreams are composed of magic elements,
Always renewed by Heaven above,
Forever to fill up our hearts,
Like money in the bank to be withdrawn.
They polish and burnish all precious facts
To reveal the invaluable truth.
Crystallized gradually they can become
A radiant magic crystal for all desires!

From the discussion so far, we have observed the connection and cohesion among three major themes in a Nirāt poem: the themes of love-longing, nature and time. This close connection and cohesion serve ultimately to build up the significance of the work. In Lam Nam Phū Krađu'ng, the poet carefully builds up the unity and significance of his work through a key image of water as well as some major lexical patterns.

If we consider the theme of time, we will notice that time is closely related to the image of water. The poet often refers to time as กระแสกาล or กระแสเวลา meaning 'the current of time'. Consequently, the verbs used to describe the action of time are mostly those connected with water like ไหล = to flow, ละลาย = to melt, ล้าง = to wash, to clean.

These can be seen in various passages in the text, for example:

- p. 12 มักมากอยากไ้ไม่รู้จบ เวลาลบละลายสลายทุกสิ่ง
- p. 13 แรงแห่งกาลจักรอันเชี่ยวกล้า ไหลพาภูษาบุตรอนล้น
- ปนเป็นกรวศทรายคินวินวิน กลิ้งกระแสน้ำร่ำว่าพัน

- p. 35 ใจไว้เหนือเวลานาที เขียนคืนนาฬิกาอยู่เปื่อยเหลว
 ถ้าใจไม่นิ่งกลิ้งร้อนเร็ว ลงเหววังวนกระแสน้ำ
- p. 36 เล็กของอะไรหมกในภพ ลบโลกโกรทลงสิ้นทุกสิ่ง
 ลึมน้ำพิกาพิษปลงปลิกทิ้ง กระแสเวลาวิ่งตามฤกษ์
- p. 54 เวลาช้ากว่ารอยโกฏีปี ล้างธุลีทรายขาวนวลสะอาดล้ำ
 ทุกเมื่อกรวดทรายคืนเก็บงำ ลำนน้ำปรัชญาคำควรเมื่อง .
- p. 89 รอเวลามาลบละลาย พิษร้ายไข้เจ็บของหัวใจ

Similarly, the poet often compares life to a drop of water when he tries to express how life is actually so short, transient and fragile.¹ Besides, he compares life to a boat of love wandering through the sea of fate, tears and sufferings. These two images connected with water and the sea help to reflect the poet's melancholy and painful awareness of the nature of life. Even poetry which is the poet's only consolation in life is also compared to the waves which move and reflect the beauty and life of the sea.

- p. 141
- | | |
|-------------------------|------------------------|
| คลื่นคือกุสุมรสบทวิ | ที่สาครสะท้อนออกแสนหน |
| ดวงใจลอยไหลไปอัปจน | จมก้นทะเลแสนหาอาดูร |
| ชีวาเพียงเกศราความรัก | จักแตกดับฮับปางร้างสูญ |
| ทั้งเวรกรรมซ้ำซากทวีคูณ | ปูนจะปันสิ้นทั้งวิญญาน |

¹See quotations and translation pp. 44-5.

The waves are sweet and divine poetry
Endlessly moving and enchanting my heart
Drifting in the sea of love and sufferings
Is, alas, my drowning heart!

Life, like a boat of love,
Is destined to be wrecked and gone!
Aggravated by all my deeds so unworthy
My poor life and soul perish completely!

The image of poetry as the waves in the sea is worth noticing as it reveals the poet's attitude towards the nature of poetry as well as its values. To the sea, the waves are natural and spontaneous and they actually form part of the sea as a totality. Thus, to the poet's mind poetry is a part of his life and it is a natural and spontaneous expression of life. Because of this belief, the poet seems to be able to perceive all the 'poetry' in nature. He considers the movement of nature as well as the music of nature as divine poetry created by the Nature-Poet. This can be seen throughout the work where he describes the natural beauty of the scenery.

p. 152

	ว่าลำนํ้ากวีวังเวงสวรรค์
ทุกดาววาววับระยิบระยับ	ร่าพันไว้ในสายธารา
	ว่าลำนํ้ากวีวังเวงสวรรค์
ย้อยแววกาพย์กลอนอ่อนหวานนั้น	ร่าพันไว้ในสายธารา

Every single glittering star
Is composing forlorn poetry in Heaven,
And flowing in the melody of the streams
Are the sweet drops of poetry's radiance!

p. 89

พันธุ์ไม้น้ำประดับธารสวรรค์	พิศมิตกนกกระจิตรกรรมแท้
ทุกใบไหวเป็นกาพย์กลอนแล้	แน้นักหนาภูผาเป็นกวี
ข้าข้าสาหร่ายป่าวาเริงว่า	ระบำไต้รุ่งน้ำสุริยศรี
ชูคอกระจิกเหนือวารี	รูปวรรณคดีนี้ใครรรจนา

So marvellous like a beautiful painting
Are the water plants adorning divine streams!
Every movement of the leaves is truly poetry,
And no doubt the mountain is the poet!
Who, then, has composed this poetic painting
Of the wild water-weeds gently dancing
Under the bright rainbow water of the sun,
Offering the charm and beauty of their tiny flowers
Above the clear crystal water?

p. 149

ชักชวนกระแสธาราป่าเปลี่ยว	อย่าไหลเฉี่ยวรอคอยความฝัน
จะมาสอนน้ำเขาเขินนั้น	ให้รำพันกุสุมรสบทวี

I would try to pledge those wild streams
To slow down and wait for dreams,
And to the whispering water I would advise
How to sing and recite poetry divine!

Moreover, the waves represent the continuity of the sea as they give life and beauty to the sea. Therefore, the poet values his poetry as the continuity of his life through which he could attain his divine 'immortality'.

It is worth noticing that even when the poet describes nature he often refers to the movement in nature such as the trees, the leaves, the flowers or the fields as the

movement of water or the waves. It is not difficult to find descriptions like 'the waves of grass', 'the sea of clouds and mountains' or 'the sea of wind and valleys'. The starry night is also described as 'the ocean of gems and diamonds'.

p. 98

เนินเนินลิลลิว^๑ทิว^๒ขอบฟ้า
เวียง^๓เขาลำเนาไม้^๔เหมือนลำน้ำ

เสมอว่า^๑ชะเล^๒หลวง^๓ท้วง^๔ลึก^๕ล้ำ
ละลอกคลื่น^๑หว้า^๒หวี^๓แวว^๔ตา

p. 98

เวียง^๑ว่าง^๒ละลอก^๓คลื่น^๔เนิน^๕เนิน^๖ป่า

ชะ^๑อัน^๒แวว^๓ตาคัวย^๔ชะ^๕เล^๖ขุน^๗เขา

p. 80

เบื้อง^๑หน้า^๒ว่า^๓เล^๔ห^๕ชะ^๖เล^๗หลวง
เนิน^๑เนิน^๒สลับ^๓ซับซ้อน^๔มากมาย

แห่ง^๑ปวง^๒หุบ^๓เขาลำ^๔เนา^๕ไม้
ข้าง^๑คล้าย^๒ละลอก^๓คลื่น^๔ระ^๕ริน^๖ตา

p. 135

ชะ^๑เล^๒ยมนาม^๓หา^๔สมุทร

มี^๑สัน^๒สุก^๓กระ^๔แส^๕คลื่น^๖ซัด^๗ฝั่ง

p. 58

เพลิน^๑เนิน^๒เนิน^๓สลับ^๔ซับซ้อน

ชะ^๑เล^๒ญา^๓อัน^๔ชะ^๕อัน^๖ใจ^๗สะ^๘ท้าน

p. 106

งาม^๑อย่าง^๒ภาษา^๓ฟ้า^๔เตือน^๕หล้า
แถม^๑เจียร^๒ระ^๓ใน^๔คาว^๕ทุก^๖ทุก^๗ควง

รู้^๑จัก^๒ค่า^๓กิน^๔แคน^๕แทน^๖หวง
ท้วง^๑หวาร^๒วาม^๓หา^๔สมุทร^๕เพชร^๖พลอย

p. 127

ชะ^๑เล^๒เม^๓ขวิ^๔เว^๕ก^๖สุด^๗เว^๘ียง^๙ว่าง
ทุก^๑ชะ^๒โง^๓ก^๔โร^๕ก^๖ฉา^๗ฟ้า^๘ฟิง

เท^๑ือก^๒เขา^๓พร^๔่าง^๕ทอง^๖ค่าง^๗าม^๘ซิง^๙
แค้น^๑ซึ่ง^๒สัพ^๓พิ^๔ย^๕ลิล^๖ล^๗ไป

p. 149

ขอรองชะเลเทือกเขาเว้งว่าง	ช่วยสร้างคลื่นคนตรีเสียงใส
ทำนองนกเครือวัลย์ไทย	ไพเราะล่าน้ำลายมหัศจรรย์

Thus we can see that the image of water serves at different subtle levels to integrate all the major themes of the poem and to create a total significance of the work. This obviously illustrates the close connection between the major themes of love-longing, nature and time in a Nirāt poem, for these themes are all connected with or related to the same image as well as the same lexical patterns.

One aspect of Lam Nam Phū Krađu'ng which belongs to the modern tradition in general is the use of quotation and allusion in the work. Angkhān does not try to conceal his admiration for all the Thai poets of the past who greatly influence him especially Sunthōn Phū who is recognized as the most famous Nirāt poet of the Rathanakosin Period.

The poet even mentions the name of Sunthōn Phū in his work and refers to him as an 'old master'.

p. 72

คุจสุนทรภู์ครุฑรณว่า	แม้นวัยกินสิ้นฟ้ามหาสถาน
ขลังพลังรักจริงสิ่งวิญญาน	อมตะนานเหนือกาลเวลา

As says old master Sunthōn Phū
Till the end of the Earth and the Sky
Immortal is the power of true love
And remain it will beyond time above!

It is well recognized that Sunthōn Phū's love poems are among the best in the heritage of Thai poetry. Therefore, by alluding to Sunthōn Phū in his passages of love-longing and lamentation, Angkhān is able to evoke in the reader's mind the passionate and deep feeling of love, very characteristic of Sunthōn Phū's style.

In the passage of his love-promise, Angkhān shows how he is influenced by Sunthōn Phū. Though his expression and images are different, the basic ideas are the same as a typical love-promise in most of Sunthōn Phū's works. The poet declares his strong desire to be with his loved one in every life and in any form of being in order to prove to her the eternity of his true love. He even emphasizes his true love by declaring that he is willing to follow his loved one to hell and to die with her in every life.

p. 72

ถึงธรณีนี้แตกแหลกเหลว	เปลวไฟประลัยไหม้ล้างฟ้า
กับดวงดาวสุริยันจันทรา	เส่นหาจอยู่คู่กาล
สลายก็ฟ้าหล้าอย่าสลาย	แล้งหายซากพิศวาสหวน
สองสุครีพซึ่งครึ่งวิญญาน	อมตะนานมั่นสมัครรักกัน
สองสุครีพซึ่งครึ่งวิญญาน	ขออยู่คู่มวยไม่แปรผัน
ตายไหนตายนั้นควยกันพลัน	ตราบนันกรรมเราเบาบางแล
ถึงคำเช่นเงือกงูเห่า	จะตามค้อยมุ่งสมัครรักแท้
อุปสรรคอะไรไม่พ่ายแพ้	แน่วแน่พิศวาสทุกชาติไป

Let the Earth tremble down and decay
Or the infernal flame wipe the Sky away
And extinguish the Sun, Moon and Stars
Yet forever let our love stay!

No matter how many Earths and Skies are destroyed
Let not our true love run dry
Truly with heart and soul we love
Thus immortalized is our love divine!

To the hell of ever-lasting fire I will follow you
To live and to die with you forever
Gladly and always will I die with you
Till the day when our karmas are over!

Were you humbly born a mermaid, snake, crab or shell
Never will my true love be deterred
All the obstacles I will surely overcome
To resolutely love you in all existences to come!

We can see that Angkhān's use of the image of the fire that causes the destruction of the world, the sun, the moon and the stars is in fact a 'conventional' image of the end of the world in Thai poetry. On the other hand, the idea of following his loved one to hell and dying with her in every life or the idea of being born in the shapes of low creatures or animals like snakes or crabs can be considered less conventional, and help to reflect the intensity of feelings of the poet.

Thus, by alluding to the name of Sunthōn Phū and echoing his style and ideas, with some subtle modification of his own, Angkhān succeeds in creating his unique style and expression. This can be seen furthermore in Angkhān's use of Sunthōn Phū's famous quotations in order to create an irony in his own work. The quotations are from Phra Aphaimanī พระอภัยมณี when Phra Aphaimanī declares his eternal love and devotion to Nāng Lawēng. นางละเวง.

These lines are among the most popular and the best remembered of Thai love poetry. They have also become a well-known lyric of a modern song, cherished and appreciated still by all the Thais of today.

ถึงม้วยดินสิ้นฟ้ามหาสมุทร	ไม่สิ้นสุดความรักสมัครสมาน
แม่เกิดในไค้หล้าสุธาธาร	ขอพบพานพิศวาสไม้อคลาคลา
แม่เนื้อเย็นเป็นทรวงมหรณพ	พี่ขอพบศรีสวัสดิ์เป็นมัจฉา
แม่เป็นบัวควีพี่เป็นภูมรา	เซยผกาโกสุมประทุมทอง
เจ้าเป็นถ้ำอำไพขอให้พี่	เป็นราชสีห์สมสู่เป็นคู่สอง
จะติดคามทรมาสงวนนวลละออง	เป็นคู่ครองพิศวาสทุกชาติไป ¹

The prominent feelings expressed here are those of deep love and devotion as well as the strong desire and resolution to prove the eternity of true love that lasts beyond this life. Angkhān, fully aware of the prominent feelings in these lines, deliberately uses these quotations to create an irony in his bitter lamentation of the avarice of women.

p. 104

ถึงม้วยดินสิ้นฟ้ามหาสมุทร	ไม่สิ้นสุดความรักสมัครสมาน
ชาติหน้าเป็นเศรษฐีเที่ยวขทาน	ซื้อรักหวานชื่นฝันชีวา
แม่เนื้อเย็นเป็นทรวงมหรณพ	พี่ขอพบศรีสวัสดิ์เป็นมัจฉา
หญิงยิ่งกว่าพระเจ้าแผ่นดิน	ควยเงินตราสารพันเพชรทอง
แม่เป็นถ้ำอำไพใคร่เป็นหงส์	จะไค้ลงสิงสู่เป็นคู่สอง
ของอเจ้าวิญญูณนวลละออง	ซื้อกายครองพิศวาสทุกชาติเอย

¹Sunthōn Phū, Phra Aphaimanī (Bangkok, 1962), p. 639.

Till the end of the Earth, Sky and Ocean
Never can end my true love for you!
Next life, a beggar-millionaire I would be
To buy and satisfy myself with love's ecstasy!

Were you a great ocean, my love
Meet you as a fish I certainly would!
Oh, how women are worse than any goddess,
Craving to be worshipped with all riches!

Were you a wonderful cave, my love
To abide with you I would be a swan!
And in every life to possess you
How I would gladly hire and buy you!

The poet's resentment towards women's nature is strongly emphasized by the contrast between the quotations from Sunthōn Phū's work and the poet's own lines. The poet combines here the lines from Phra Aphaimanī expressing true love and devotion with his own lines which obviously express his bitter contempt for women's avarice. This sharp contrast serves to emphasize the intensity of the poet's feelings. Therefore we can see that the poet uses the quotations as a background to create a powerful expression of his own feelings and a deep irony in his work.

It is worth noticing that the use of quotations and allusions serves ultimately to deepen and intensify the meanings and significance of the work in a subtle and economical manner. This technique is, in fact, very characteristic of modern literature which can naturally take advantage of the riches of the older literature by means of quotation and allusion. By manipulating this stylistic device, modern poets can use the connoted meanings in quotations and allu-

sions to intensify their own works or to create an irony or even a satire to serve their various purposes.

If we consider the text more closely, we will find that the poet does not limit himself to quotations and allusions from written literary text alone. He also makes use of a nursery rhyme like a song to the moon, a child's request to the moon to give him and his loved ones all kinds of presents.

p. 19

จันทร์เจ้าขาขอข้าวขอแกง	แหวนทองแดงทองคำเครื่องเครื่อง
แถมทรัพย์สินเงินทองของเนื่อง	ให้ฟุ้งเฟื่องเชียวชาญการกิน
ขอรับจับจองวนาป่ากว้าง	สวนยางใหญ่เหมาเอาไว้สิ้น
งกจะทำการงานไต่กิน	เพื่อแลกแหวนเพชรนิลจินดา
ขอรถเก๋งใหญ่ใหม่หรูหรู	พร้อมคู่เย็นที่วีแอร์ฟ้า
วิมานสี่ชมพู่มะลิ	พี่น้องข้าขอจะรับประทาน

Oh my dear Moon, please give me food
With big copper rings and also gold ones
Together with plenty of money
So that I can make eating my ecstasy!

May I acquire the huge wild forests,
Besides, a big rubber plantation all to myself!
Any kind of impure work may I enjoy
Just to exchange for riches and wealth!

May I have great new luxurious cars
With televisions, refrigerators and air-conditioners
Also a glamorous mansion to satisfy my passion,
And the same may I ask for my relations!

Here, Angkhān quotes the first line from the well-known song to the moon but he manages to change an innocent

request of a child into a sarcastic attack on the greed and corruption of human beings.

Similarly, the poet sometimes uses the quotation from a proverb.

p. 111

บุรานว่ามีเงินนับเป็นน้อง มีทองนับเป็นพี่ลูกแท้
 หลิงฉวนบูชาเงินนักแล จริงแน่กว่าแน่ทุกใจนาง

How true is the old saying
That silver and gold bring brothers and sisters!
In every woman's heart, without exception,
Money is really her heart's devotion!

The proverb indicates the value human beings attach to money or riches. If you have silver or gold you will naturally have a lot of brothers and sisters as they all love your riches or your money. The poet, thus, uses this proverb to support and emphasize his bitter resentment against women who, in his opinion, by nature, adore wealth more than anything else.

Besides, the poet makes use of some old sayings in his metaphors and similes. For example, when he laments that his love is not appreciated he compares the girl throwing away his heart to the monkey throwing away a diamond without realizing the value of it.

p. 136 แม่เพียงผมเส้นหนึ่งซึ่งตกอยู่ เราสู้สุดตัวเก็บทะนุถนอม
 แคใจเราหนึ่งซึ่งงามพร้อม เจ้ายอมขวางอย่างถึงทั้งผืน

Even one of your fallen hairs
I do cherish and value.
But, alas my pure and perfect heart
You can simply cast away
Blindly like a monkey throws a diamond away!

The saying 'a monkey throwing a diamond away' usually refers to the ignorance of a person who destroys valuable things without even realizing it. By using this saying as a simile, the poet reveals effectively his high self-esteem and his bitterness against women at the same time. He considers his heart as precious as a diamond but if it is rejected it is only because of the ignorance on the girl's part.

Thus, it is worth noticing that the use of quotations and allusions is not limited only to written literary texts but includes all other forms of oral literature such as nursery rhymes, songs, proverbs and sayings.

The study of Lam Nam Phū Krađu'ng serves ultimately to illustrate how a modern poet can create 'modernity' in his work by manipulating the convention. The poet is aware of various conventions of a Nirāt poem and manipulates them to the full.

On one hand, it is obvious that the 'conventions' of a Nirāt poem still appear quite prominent as a 'structure' of the work. On the other hand, Lam Nam Phū Krađu'ng can hardly be considered a 'conventional' Nirāt poem in any sense of the word. Though the poet describes the journey to Phū Krađu'ng, it is the journey into the poet's mind that is more essential for the readers to understand and follow.

The beauty of nature described in the work serves to reveal the philosophy of life of the poet and thus nature proves to be one of the main themes of the work and not just an element for lamentation as in a conventional Nirāt poem. Through nature the poet reveals and explores the 'spiritual' value of poetry and beauty, while contemplating the nature of time both as a creator and destroyer of life and beauty. Therefore, the themes of nature and time are connected and quite differently manipulated by the poet to create a 'new' type of a Nirāt poem.

The theme of love-longing, usually and conventionally the 'core' of a Nirāt poem, is also manipulated and extended in this work. The lamentation of the poet is caused by a lack of love both for himself and for humanity as a whole.

The lack of a loved one turns the poet to a deep devotion for poetry and nature and he claims it to be the 'ultimate goal' of his life. He laments also the lack of love in the human heart that causes much suffering in the modern world. Therefore the lamentation of love in this 'modern' Nirāt transcends conventionally personal feelings and embraces a more philosophical aspect quite unique and unknown in Thai poetical tradition.

The 'spiritual' aspect of all the three main themes harmoniously integrated in the text reflects how the poet manipulates the conventions and the form of a Nirāt poem ultimately to convey his own contemplation of life or, in other words, the spiritual journey into his mind.

By choosing the well-loved and well-known form of a Nirāt poem as a 'structure' of his work, the poet can render

his rather unconventional ideas more 'acceptable' or less 'alien' to the readers who would expect and accept more 'personal' sentiments in this type of poetry.

As a result, Lam Nam Phū Krađu'ng can either be considered a 'new' type of a Nirāt poem as the 'form' or the 'structure' of the work indicates or it can be more precisely considered as a new type of a 'lyrical' and 'philosophical' poem as revealed through its content.

As the word 'Lam Nam' suggests the meaning of 'music' or 'melody', the title of the work can be translated as 'the music of Phū Krađu'ng' or 'the melody of Phū Krađu'ng'. A deeply 'philosophical' contemplation of the poet is partly a revelation from the 'melody' or the 'music' of the place. This 'revelation' concerns mainly the concept of beauty and truth, not usually discussed in Thai poetical work or, at least, not explicitly. The theme of beauty and truth will appear as one of the prominent themes in all the poet's works and becomes a characteristic of Angkhān's 'poetical' philosophy.

Above all, this work is a clear example to manifest the importance and significance of 'convention' as a fundamental element in the creation of 'modernity'.

CHAPTER II

THE NATURE OF ANGKHĀN'S MODERNITY

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The Nature of Angkhān's Modernity

From the discussion in the first chapter we have seen how Angkhān as a 'modern' poet manipulates the 'convention' in order to create 'modernity' in his work. Now we are going to look in some depth into the nature of his modernity both in his poetical devices and his imagination and ideas.

To start with I shall refer to some comments on Angkhān's works by Thai critics, especially those who are members of the committee that awarded him the prize of 'the best Thai poet of the decade'. As we have already seen most of the appraisal of his work, we shall now concentrate more on the 'attacks' on his work.

One very outstanding and common attack from most of the members of the committee is that Angkhān seems to use a large quantity of 'repetitive' words in his poetry.¹

This attack, in fact, reflects a rather typical attitude towards Thai poetry. For a typical Thai standard, poetry is an art of arranging 'words' for the melody of the sounds as well as the beautiful meanings. This attitude is clearly expressed in many poetical works, as in Lilit Yuan Phāi where the poet compares his work to a garland of flowers with its beauty and fragrance to decorate the head.

เปนสร้อยไฉฉัพพ	อุปมา
โสมสรวงศรีวิราช	เวียงไฉ ²

¹ Angkhān Kalayānaphong, Bangkokkao Kamsuan or Nirāt Nakorn Srīthammarat (Bangkok, 1978) pp. 243-61.

² Lilit Yuan Phāi (Bangkok, 1969), p. 16.

In Lilit Phra Lō the poet gives a similar comparison by saying that his poetry is like enchanting music or a precious ornament for the ears as well as a consolation to the heart.

ไพเราะเรียบบรรยาย	เพราะยิ่ง เพราะนา
สมบัติเสียงดี	ล่อเล้าโลมใจ ¹

เป็นศรีแก่ปากผู้	ผจงฉันท
คือคู่มาลาสร	เรียบร้อย
เป็นถนิมประดับกรรณ	ทุกเมื่อ
กลกระแจะทองน้อย	หนึ่งได้แรงใจ ²

Thus it is understandable that Thai poets always pay a lot of attention to arranging words in order to get the effect of both sense and sound. This means that words used by poets should be 'poetic' with melodious sounds and with clear and definite meanings. The poets will normally avoid using repetitive words or the same words but try to use a wider variation of words with similar meanings.

This is evident in Chindāmanī, an early Thai textbook intended as a book to teach the Thai language as well as Thai versification. There is a whole section of vocabulary called อักษรศัพท์ (Aksōnrasap) to use in composing poetry.

¹Lilit Phra Lō (Bangkok, 1965), p. 1.

²Ibid. p. 149.

This section consists of lists of poetic words as well as synonyms and homonyms generally used in poetical works. Most of these words are not originally Thai but derived or borrowed from Pali, Sanskrit or Khmer. We can find lists of synonyms like those use to refer to a king, a beautiful lady or even a bird or a snake. These synonyms are used for the reason of rhymes as well as for the variation of meaning.

This obviously indicates the importance Thai poets give to the use of words and the ability to find and select 'different' or 'various' words for one particular meaning in poetry. The author of the textbook Čhindāmanī also made it clear that the ability to select and use different words in poetry is essential to great poets. At the end of the section the author concludes the importance of the section as follow:

'All these words are compiled by scholars in order to be used in all poetry. If a person does not know or learn these words he will not be able to read or write poetry correctly. Therefore all poets and scholars should learn this as required.'¹(trans. S.C.)

Thus it is natural that Thai critics will not expect a good poet to use many 'repetitive' words in poetry, nor will one who does so be accepted as a good poet, since it can be considered as a lack of ability on the poet's part and therefore a lack of beauty and excellence in the art of poetry. However, this attitude cannot diminish the brilliance of Angkhān's works. Despite this obvious 'flaw', the

¹ Čhindāmanī, p. 9.

committee admitted that Angkhān's poetry was definitely powerful and original in its beauty.

If we try to find the reason for this, we might find that this so-called 'flaw' in Angkhān's poetry is perhaps an element in his success. By this I mean that the coherence and unity of his work is in fact created through his careful patterning of words used in his poetry.

By using certain prominent words repeatedly the poet can manipulate their meanings and create special meanings for them so that they can express and convey his unique ideas. This 'arrangement' of words is not only intended as an arrangement of melodious sounds to please the ears but also as a composition of meanings which contribute to the unity and coherence of the work.

The unity between the arrangement of the words and their specific meanings created by the poet is undoubtedly the 'essence' of the art of poetry. From this point of view, Angkhān's 'flaw' of using certain words repeatedly in his poetry is a deliberate device to create a coherent significance in his work.

We have seen in Chapter I how the lexical patterns in the work serve at different levels to create a unity between the main themes and the major symbols of the work. By selecting certain sets of words, the poet can create certain sets of association which help to clarify the meanings of his selected words. These 'lexical patterns' serve, in turn, to lead to the understanding of the work.

This means that the readers learn to understand the 'meaning' or the 'significance' of the work through the

poet's patterning of his language use. Seen in this light, Angkhān's 'flaw' of using certain words repeatedly is just one of his stylistic devices to achieve his goal of conveying his own ideas and visions.

However, this does not necessarily mean that this patterning of language use is something modern and exclusively true for Angkhān as a modern poet. If it is agreed that poetry is the art of language use, then it is natural that we should find 'patterns' and 'arrangement' in all poetical works. If Angkhān's device of repetition of words appears rather more obvious than that in the works of the poets in the past, it should hardly be considered as a 'flaw' in his work.

By close reading of any poetical work, the reader can definitely perceive and find some patterning of language use. One very obvious patterning in Thai poetry is the 'verse forms', consisting of a set of rather restricted types each of which has its own rules of versification. The main verse forms in Thai poetry are ร่าย Rāi, โคลง Khlōng, ฉันท์ Chan, กาพย์ Kāp and กลอน Klōn. Each of these forms has its own characteristics and serves different purposes in different genres of Thai poetry.

Most Thai poetry from the past until the present abides by the rules of versification in a rather strict manner. It has always been a 'virtue' for the poets to be able to compose poetry in its 'correct' or 'exact' verse forms.

However, since Angkhān's attitude towards poetry is rather different from that of other Thai poets, his view on 'verse forms' is somewhat different. He considers poetry

as a natural and spontaneous expression of life, like the waves in the sea or the movements of nature.¹ So it is quite understandable that he cannot pretend to agree with any strict rules of versification. This does not mean that he actually ignores these rules or tries to create his own rules and forms in his poetry.

On the contrary, he studies the whole heritage of Thai versification and tries to make the best use of it. He studies the rules not to follow them blindly but to understand the essence and the reason behind them. Therefore, from his work we can see that his ultimate aim is to create 'real' poetry which is alive and has some freedom to grow naturally. This should justify the liberty he takes within the accepted rules of versification.²

If we look at his verse forms, we will agree that Angkhān only takes liberties within the rules. As he has a real understanding for the rules of versification he is not always restricted by the superficial structure of the forms.

In Lam Nam Phū Krađu'ng he uses a combination of various verse forms. He uses the traditional form of Rāi in his incantation and begins his Nirāt in the form of Klōn by paying respect to the Buddha and the Three Gems in Buddhism. This is in fact a very conventional beginning of most Thai poetical works. However, Angkhān, with his deep

¹See Chapter I, p. 57.

²Peter Bee, 'A Living and Breathing Poet'. The Social Science Review vol. 1 (June-August, 1968), p. 73.

love and appreciation of nature and poetry, also pays respect to the Moon and the Sun as well as the goddess of the arts พระศรีสวดี Sarassawadī. The account of his Nirāt is all composed in the form of Klōn which can be considered as a Nirāt form of the Ratanakosin Period made well-recognized by Sunthōn Phū. Angkhān ends his Nirāt in a rather serious and elegant form of Khlōng.

When considering the forms he uses we can say that he is 'conventional' in his choice of verse forms as he closely follows most of the poets of the past. On one hand, Angkhān abides by the rules of versification as most of the time he follows the exact rhyme-scheme and the number of syllables in each line and each stanza. On the other hand, he allows himself some freedom in the number of syllables as he uses a variation of seven to nine syllables in each line of his Klōn rather than being restricted to only eight syllables.

In Lam Nam Phū Krađu'ng we can find a few stanzas of Klōn with regular lines of seven syllables with a 'correct' rhyme-scheme such as:

p. 84

ฟ้าสร้างสุริยาเรืองแรง	ฉายแสงประกายไฟไล่ห่า
แต่มีลมให้ต้นไม้มา	เพื่อทุกชีวาได้ร่มเงา

```

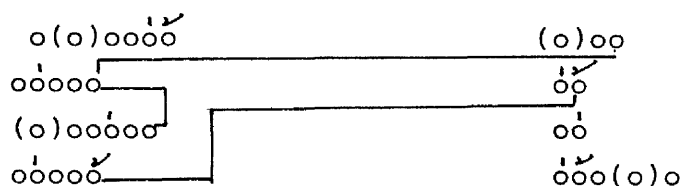
      oooooooooo  _____  oooooooooo
      |               |
ooooooooo  _____  oooooooooo

```

Similarly with Khlōng which is a comparatively more restricted form, Angkhān sometimes allows himself the liberty of adding in some extra syllables in a stanza. For example in Bang Bot Chāk Suankāo we can find a stanza of Khlōng like:

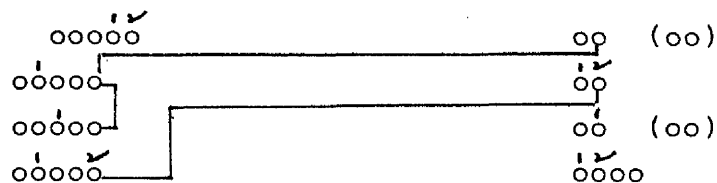
p. 34

พรายตะวันคืบคืบเงื้อม	ชะโงกเขา
แสงปลั่งเมฆแฉะเงา	หมุ่ไม้
บุหร้งร้องพร่ำพร้องเออ	ใจคู่
ป็นคู่ร้างแกล้งไถ่	เกาะร้างกลางทะเล



[(o) = the extra syllables added in]

The normal or correct form should be:



It is obvious that the 'extra' syllables Angkhān adds in his stanza are mostly 'unstressed' syllables which are usually combined to the stressed syllables when being read or recited. Therefore, when reading or reciting these lines we will notice that these 'extra' syllables will not disturb the normal rhythmic stresses of the line.

This again shows how Angkhān only takes liberties within the rules of versification. Then it is hardly valid to complain that his verse forms are 'loose' or that he tries to neglect the rules altogether.

We shall now try to look into Angkhān's technique in building up his 'lexical patterns' by means of 'repetition' and his use of imagery which is highly praised in its original beauty.

One of the most prominent words that Angkhān uses in his work is ^๓ทิพย์ (thip). According to the Thai-English Dictionary by George Bradley McFarland, the word ^๓ทิพย์ (thip) is of Sanskrit origin and is used as an adjective to mean 'superhuman, supernatural, spiritual, divine, heavenly, celestial'.¹

We can see that by the nature of the word it is a rather typical and proper word for poetry both in its origin and its meaning as a high proportion of Thai 'poetic' words are not Thai in their origins and Thai poetry consists, to a large extent, of romances. Therefore, the word ^๓ทิพย์ is quite commonly used in Thai poetry especially in the earlier poetical works.

However, in modern Thai poetry, this word is less common since the subject-matters of modern poets of today are quite different from those of the past. Thus, Angkhān's use of this word is rather unusual and worth examining.

In Lam Nam Phū Krađu'ng, Angkhān uses this word right

¹McFarland, Thai-English Dictionary, p. 415.

from the second line of his poetry - at the beginning of his incantation.

p. 1 โอมลิตฺติศรีศุภฤกษ์ เบอตกปะอักขระทิพย์ บำเรอสิบทิศไหว

From the first time the poet uses this word in his work, it is collocated with the word อักขระ (akkhara) meaning letters or words. Since this word is normally associated with literature and poetry, its collocation with ทิพย์ serves to reflect the poet's significant attitude towards poetry. For Angkhān, poetry is spiritual, divine and heavenly.

He uses ทิพย์ in his incantation for the second time by collocating it with the words รส (rot) and อารมณ์ (ā-rom).

p. 1 ร่ำรมณีย์เกียรติยศ งคงามแง่วรรณศิลป์ ถวิลถึงรสทิพารมณ์

The word รส (rot), according to the same dictionary, means 'sap, juice, flavour, taste, essence, sweetness, the best part or extract of a thing'.¹ The word อารมณ์ (ā-rom) means 'mental environment, state, mood or attitude; concentration, fixedness of mind, centralization of thought, ideas or purposes; the state of feeling at any one time'.²

When combining the meaning of these two words together one will find that in this collocation the word ทิพย์ is connected with the realm of feelings and the intensity of sensation. To some extent, this can be considered as an

¹Ibid. p. 690.

²Ibid. p. 994.

extension of the first collocation between the word ทิพย์^๑ and the word อักขระ (akkhara) meaning 'words' or 'poetry' for poetry naturally involves feelings and sensations. So, here we have a cohesion between the two collocations which is significant.

The word ทิพย์^๑ appears for the third time in the incantation in collocation with two words แก่นสาร (kaen-sān) and ขลัง (khlāng).

p. 1 ถึงแก่นสารทิพย์ขลัง ปลั่งรังสุริโยภาส ประสาทแสงแก่แหล่งหล้า

According to the dictionary, the word แก่นสาร (kaen-sān) means permanency, fixedness, durability, important, vital,¹ whereas the word ขลัง (khlāng) means strong, zealous, enthusiastic, having miraculous power.²

This third collocation helps to extend and clarify a deeper meaning of the word ทิพย์^๑ as used by the poet in his work. The meaning of the word ทิพย์^๑ as 'spiritual' is further emphasized here by the collocation with these two words which are themselves normally associated with something spiritual or religious.

Thus, from the incantation the poet establishes significant meanings of the word ทิพย์^๑ through his three main collocations. These collocations serve to create three different but coherent associations of meanings which may be divided into three groups: poetry, feelings or sensations

¹Ibid. p. 129

²Ibid. p. 144.

and philosophy or spirituality.

We shall use this 'rough' category as our guide in studying the collocations of the word ทิพย์ in Lam Nam Phū Kradu'ng in order to see how, through this 'key word', the poet succeeds in building up the significance of his work.

We shall note down all the collocations of the word ทิพย์ in the work and arrange them into three main groups. Those 'less significant' collocations which do not belong to any of these three groups will be separately arranged into another group.

Even though the work is not very long, compared with Thai poetical works in this Nirāt tradition, we have a very intensive use of the word ทิพย์ as shown in the large number of collocations found as follows:

The collocation of ทิพย์ in three main groups:

Poetry

- | | | |
|------|---------------------------|------------------------------|
| น.1 | อักษรทิพย์ | |
| น.10 | แม่ถือพิณทิพย์ทำคนตรี | |
| น.10 | เป็นจ้าวแห่งอักษรศาสตร์ | ฉลาดเลิศล้ำโลกและสวรรค์ |
| | ทรงถือทิพย์ปทุมทองคำอัน | กึ่งสัญญาลักษณ์แห่งสุนทรีย์ |
| น.14 | จากฤททิพย์อักษรระดมตะ | |
| น.10 | ถึงวารสิ้นหล้าอย่าสูญสิ้น | วรรณศิลป์อมตะอย่าร้าง |
| | บันลือทิพย์ไหวในใจกลาง | โลกกว้างขวางนั้นนิรันดร์เทอญ |
| น.13 | นฤมิตอมตะผลงาน | ปานอาหารทิพย์แค่แคณิน |
| น.14 | ภาษาภูษาป้าชาลาลัย | ปฐกทิพย์ไว้สู่กระแสดาว |

- น.58 ภพหน้าน่าเกิดเป็นกวี มีพรทิพย์สุนทรีย์ร้อยกรอง
 น.70 พังเสียงเพียงทิพย์คนศรี
 น.74 เณรจากแก้วจิตรกรรมทิพย์ทั้ง เป็นมิ่งขวัญโลกหลายกับปัลลภ
 น.101 พยายามเรียนไปทั้งไกววัล ถึงวรรณศิลป์ทิพย์ทั้งชีวี
 น.109 คืองานอุคมคติทิพย์อัน ปิติมิ่งขวัญนิรันดร์เทอญ
 น.109 ผันถึงกาพย์กลอนโคลงฉันทอัน กุจทิพย์ไอศวรรย์ในกำมือ
 น.145 เหมือนภาษาทิพย์ของศิขริน ถวิลรักสุริยาอาลัย
 น.150 แด่กวีคือทิพย์ฟ้าประทาน

Feelings

- น.1 ถวิลถึงรสทิพารมณ์
 น.4 ขอพระหฤทัยทิพย์หลัง
 น.5 กังวลคลายผันทิพย์ประทับใจ
 น.7 ประคับลายกนกทิพย์สะเทือนใจ
 น.15 กุสุมรสทิพย์ทั้งปฐพี
 น.51 กายวิเวกจมเมฆอันโปรยปราย ใต้อายรุ่งริ้วทิพย์มหิมา
 น.52 มีธารวาวโยทิพย์สะเทือนใจ
 น.57 เมฆอบว่ากุสุมรสสุคันธ์ อามมิ่งขวัญต่างทิพย์ธารา
 น.71 สุคันธรสทิพย์ธาราร่าง
 น.74 ชื่นชีวีอามทิพย์แสงฉาย
 น.98 ตะวันแก่งต่างแค้นสืทิพย์
 น.102 สุครักหวงหวงทิพย์สุมนทา

- น.102 กับปัลลภหนึ่งจึงเสาวรสทิพย์
 น.102 หวังหวานรสทิพย์สุมนา
 น.112 ระบายสีทิพย์เพริศพรึงยั้งยง สมประสงค์ทุกสิ่งมีมีมณคร
 น.127 แคมซึ่งสีทิพย์ลิบลิบไป
 น.139 มีปีติทิพย์สะเทือนใจ
 น.145 บางวันสายันห์คังผืนทิพย์
 น.155 ฟ้าแคมสีทิพย์ทุกโชคหิน
 น.162 เก่งกาจจิตรกรรมสี แสงทิพย์

Philosophy

- น.1 ถึงแก่นสารทิพย์ขลัง
 น.2 หวานทิพย์ถึงทุกสทิปัญญา
 น.2 รินรสพระธรรมทิพย์เป็นทาน
 น.11 บารมีทิพย์แห่งหฤทัย
 น.12 ในงานงามแ่งทิพย์สุนทรีย์
 น.14 เจียรระโนแก้วแวททิพย์เนตร ให้สูงวิเศษมั่งขลังกล้า
 น.35 แสงแรงนฤมิตสิ่งสุนทรีย์ มีวิญญาณเกินทิพย์สสมัย
 น.45 รอแวทคาปัญญามาเห็น ชอนรันคตทิพย์ไว้นั้น
 แก้วแหวนเงินทองล้วนมลทิน ถวิลสินทรัพย์ทิพย์พิพาลย์
 น.60 สุริย์ฉายพรายทิพย์ลิบลอยลง ตรงโลกนี้ณนาที่ทอง
 น.60 คังสมบัติทิพย์หยิบเอาได้ ไซ้ส่งเวทย์ใจไปรู้สิ้น
 น.72 จะเล่าเจ้าถึงทิพย์ปรัชญา แ่งวิชาสุนทรีย์หลายเรื่อง
 น.82 งามเขียวชอุ่มอุ้มทิพย์บันลือ คือบุคคลิกภาพอันเกรียงไกร
 น.83 ไร่แวทคาเห็นแ่งทิพย์นี้
 น.91 แสงสร้างชาตทิพย์ก้านัล
 น.93 เพราะประมาทชาตทิพย์สังเว
 น.93 จะเล่าเจ้าถึงทิพย์สุนทรีย์

- น.104 ถูกติพิพม์แห่งแสงจันทร์ฉาย โลกได้รับมิ่งมนตรีพิพม์สิ้น
 น.112 แว่วผ่นนั้นปรุ้งควายชาคุพิพม์
 น.113 จะตกลึกพิพม์งามตระการ ทานเรียกแก้วสารพคณีกนา
 น.113 จะพบแว่วพิพม์แห่งชีวิต
 น.116 ถือว่าสมบัติพิพม์ทำทาน
 น.118 เร่งกินพิพม์เป็นแรงวิญญาณ
 น.139 ทุกสมีปรีชาพิพม์พาลย์ ให้อภัยอามพิพม์สุทรีย
 น.140 ปานสิ่งพิพม์อมตะเหนือสมย์
 น.140 ในมือนั้นกำพิพม์สุรียา
 น.147 ถ้าวาวคารุงรุ่งสุทรีย จักแจ้งวิธีพิพม์วิมานทอง
 น.161 หวังทางสู่ศิวโมกข์ เมืองพิพม์
 น.162 ใจไปไปกลับคือ โลกพิพม์

The collocation of พิพม์ in general use

- น.5 เที่ยมราชรถฟ้าพิพม์พาลย์
 น.6 คุเหว่าพิพม์รอบสระนิมพลี
 น.13 สู่สถานถิ่นพิพม์ลิบลิบไป
 น.44 ทรมาณถึงโลกหน้าพิพม์พาลย์
 น.45 อุทยานสถานพิพม์นี้ฟ้าท่า
 น.49 สลับส้างเนินถิ่นพิพม์สถาน
 น.49 อำนจหัดพิพม์แห่งเวลา
 น.49 แม่นแล้วลุ่มพิพม์เสียงใส
 น.52 ถามอุทยานสถานพิพม์นี้
 น.58 ปานพิพม์สถานวิมานแมน
 น.60 กิ่งสมบัติพิพม์หยิบเอาได้
 น.61 จบชั้นพิพม์สถานวิมานแมน
 น.63 เณกจากแก้วแว่วอุทยานพิพม์
 น.71 ผมละมุนละไมแม่ไหมพิพม์
 น.71 ทรวงอกส้างสองบัวพิพม์
 น.74 หอมวิมานพิพม์เทพเจ้าใน

- น.92 นี่แหละหัตถ์ทิพย์แห่งเวลา
น.109 จึงคั่นถึงนางไม้ทิพย์
น.117 สถานทิพย์พลันมีที่แคณดิน
น.121 รวาวภูมิประเทศทิพาลย์
น.140 คำนั่นปานสถานทิพย์ทุกสิ่ง
น.141 หวงแหวนรักถิ่นทิพย์ที่นี้
น.145 ชิ่งในไอศุรย์ทิพย์ธรณี
น.151 กระสันเงาทิพย์รัตน์อัศจรรย์
น.152 สายสุหร่ายพูนทิพาลย์
น.155 เสมอแผ่นแทนทิพย์รัตนา

From the collocations quoted above we can see that the collocations under the group of philosophy or spirituality appear to be the largest in number. Though it may not be intentional on the poet's part, it clearly reflects the poet's 'personal' attitude towards the word. The poet seems to associate the word ทิพย์ with a spiritual or philosophical context while not neglecting other more 'worldly' associations of the word.

A comparatively intensive use of the collocation in this 'philosophical' context also reveals a 'thematic' significance of the word ทิพย์ in this Nirāt. As a Nirāt poem is by nature a lamentation on human or worldly love, any spiritual or philosophical elements may seem to be incongruous. Yet it is not impossible to find some passages in Sunthōn Phū's Nirāt poems when he contemplated life and human nature with some philosophical profundity. Nevertheless when considering these collocations of the word ทิพย์ in Lam Nam Phū Krađu'ng, we can perceive significant 'seriousness' in the way the poet associates this word.

It is obvious that the poet uses the word วิพย rather intensively in his philosophical contemplations. Besides, he collocates this word with a set of words normally used in a very Buddhistic context like สติปัญญา - sati-panyā - knowledge, prudence, intelligence.¹

บารมี bā-ra-mī - the transcendent virtues²

พระธรรม phra-tham - the law or Truth of Buddha³

วิญญาณ win-yān - consciousness, spirit⁴

ทาน tham-thān - to give alms.⁵

This is quite understandable since the poet is Buddhist and the word itself can easily be associated with Buddhism. However, the way the poet creates his collocations and associations in this Buddhistic context is significant and worth examining.

By the nature of the word, วิพย is normally used as an adjective modifying nouns, but in Lam Nam Phū Krađu'ng we can find the word used both as an adjective and a noun. By using the word as a noun, the poet cannot, in fact, change the meaning of the word but he certainly gives a more intense meaning and significance to the word. Usually a noun represents an independent word that refers to a thing or a person or an idea whereas an adjective is dependent on a noun substantive and cannot normally stand on its own. Thus by using the word วิพย as a noun the poet can create a sense of independent totality to the word and therefore intensify the usual meaning.

¹Ibid. p. 808.

⁴Ibid. p. 773.

²Ibid. p. 482.

⁵Ibid. p. 411.

³Ibid. p. 431.

Moreover, this reveals how the poet manipulates the word in order to create a 'special' meaning significant to his work. It is worth noticing that among the collocations quoted the word ทิพย์ appears most as a noun in the group of 'spirituality' or 'philosophy'.

- น.2 หว่านทิพย์ถึงทุกสติปัญญา
น.35 มีวิญญาณกินทิพย์สสมัย
น.72 จะเล่าเจ้าถึงทิพย์ปรัชญา
น.82 งามเขียวชอุ่มทิพย์บันลือ
น.93 จะเล่าเจ้าถึงทิพย์สุนทรีย์
น.118 เร่กินทิพย์เป็นแรงวิญญาณ
น.138 ให้หทัยอาบทิพย์สุนทรีย์
น.140 ในมือนั้นกำทิพย์สุริยา
น.161 โอมรวงทิพย์เสมอรุ่ง รุ่งฟ้าเฉกฉาย

This further emphasizes the significance of a rather unusual theme of philosophy in this Nirāt. At the same time, the set of words in Buddhistic context collocated with the word ทิพย์ serves to clarify a deeper meaning of the word.

The usual meaning of ทิพย์ as 'spiritual' or 'divine' is extended to mean 'philosophical' as well as 'aesthetical' by the collocation of the word ทิพย์ with the words ปรัชญา (pratchayā) 'philosophy' and สุนทรีย์ (suntharī) 'aesthetics'.

- น.72 จะเล่าเจ้าถึงทิพย์ปรัชญา
น.73 จะเล่าเจ้าถึงทิพย์สุนทรีย์
น.139 ให้หทัยอาบทิพย์สุนทรีย์

The underlying meaning of 'philosophy' and 'aesthetics'

in the word ทิพย์ in this Nirāt poem is also revealed through its use as a noun collocated with อักขระอมตะ meaning 'immortal letters'.

p. 14 จากทิพย์อักขระอมตะ กลางกาลจะอันไหลไปสิ้น

Amidst the stream of eternally flowing Time
I inscribe the divinity of immortal letters!

The poet believes that his vocation is to write poetry or to inscribe ทิพย์ to last forever. Therefore, in the poet's mind, the poetry he writes is ทิพย์ or spiritual philosophy and aesthetics. This idea is made explicit when the poet declares that poetry is ทิพย์ given by heaven.

p. 150 แต่กวีคือทิพย์ฟ้าประทาน

This attitude or belief serves to reveal the seriousness of the poet's devotion to his poetry. He also values his vocation highly as he refers to poetry as ทิพย์ไศวรย์ or 'divine kingdom'.

p. 109 จนถึงกาพย์กลอนโคลงฉันท์อัน กุจทิพย์ไศวรย์ในกำมือ

I dream of various verse-forms
Like a divine kingdom in my hand!

From these collocations we can see how a significant relationship between the word ทิพย์ and poetry is estab-

lished. Therefore, when considering the collocations in the group of 'feelings or sensations' it is not surprising to find that the poet collocates the word ทิพย์ with a set of words, meaning 'fragrance of flowers' like ฤๅมรสทิพย์ สุกนธรสทิพย์ ทิพย์สุมนา.

All these can be considered as rather 'conventionally poetic' phrases found in many Thai poetical works. As a typical Thai attitude towards poetry is that poetry is composed to please our senses and to entertain our minds, it is natural that Thai poets will normally praise the 'divinity' or 'heavenliness' of all pleasant sensations. Thus, a collocation between the word ทิพย์ with words connected with or associated with pleasures or sensations is quite common or almost 'conventional' in Thai poetry.

Conventional though it may seem, the collocation between the word ทิพย์ and a set of words meaning 'fragrance of flowers' is significant in the text. As we have seen, the word ทิพย์ is equated with 'poetry'. This is further emphasized towards the end of the work when the poet declares that his heart consists of hundreds of beautiful fragrances of flowers giving pleasure to the whole world.

p. 163

ใจเรารวมกว่าร้อย	รสสุคนธ์
อบร่ำเวลาปน	คอกไม้
หอมไปทุกแห่งหน	ในโลก
เทอค่าชีวาไว้	จ่ายหนี้สินสวรรค์

More than hundreds of floral fragrances is my heart,
Profoundly perfumed with time and flowers.

Giving sweet scent to the whole world.

Thus honouring life, I pay tribute to the Earth and Sky!

From this poem we can see that not only the poet himself is associated with the word ทิพย์ but also his heart, a source of all his feelings which are the soul of his poetry, is associated with this key word. Thus, we can see how the poet manipulates an apparently 'conventional' image of flowers with subtlety so as to give a significant symbolic value to this image. This success lies mainly in his technique of repetition and collocation of the word ทิพย์ in the text. Moreover, it is obvious that this technique creates a coherent pattern which helps to reveal the underlying significance of this Nirāt poem.

On the other hand, the poet collocates the word ทิพย์ with words expressing deep and strong feelings like ปิติ (pīti) delight, joy, ประทับใจ (prathap čhai) to be impressed, สะเทือนใจ (sathu'an čhai) to be deeply moved or touched.

- น.5 กิ่งลวกลายผันทิพย์ประทับใจ
- น.7 ประทับลายกนกทิพย์สะเทือนใจ
- น.52 มีธรรวาโยทิพย์สะเทือนใจ
- น.139 มีปิตติทิพย์สะเทือนใจ

These collocations are far from being merely 'conventional' if not to say 'original'. The same is true for the collocation ผันทิพย์ (fanthip) 'divine dreams' which occurs a few times in the text.

- น.5 กิ่งลวกลายผันทิพย์ประทับใจ
- น.145 บางวันสำยผกั้งผันทิพย์

These collocations, both conventional and original, with sets of words normally associated with poetry help to build up a lexical pattern that leads the reader to accept the equation between the word ทิพย์ and 'poetry' as well as 'a poet' as perfectly valid.

This valid equation is essential to the understanding of the work since it is also connected to other lexical patterns and symbols the poet uses in his Nirāt poem. In order to see more clearly the 'patterning' of the work through the word ทิพย์ we will continue to examine some other significant lexical patterns and symbols related to this key word.

By equating the key word ทิพย์ to 'poetry' the poet creates a significant cohesion between the collocations in the group of 'poetry' and those of 'philosophy' or 'spirituality'. This is evident when considering a set of words appearing in both groups of these collocations like อมตะ (amata) - immortal อุคมคติ (udomkhati) - ideal and ปิติ (pīti) - delight, joy.

This cohesion extends beyond the level of lexical items to the level of images and symbols in the text. The poet, at the end of his work, proudly compares it to a most beautiful and pure diamond that will remain forever.

p. 163

กึ่งเพชรน้ำหนึ่งรู้ง	วิสุทธิศรี
หวังเพื่อใจปรุวิ	ชื่นไว้
จงอยู่คู่เคียงปี	กลับกับบิ
กับแผ่นดินฟ้าไหม	จึงให้สลายหาย ¹

¹See the translation in Chapter I, p. 51.

Thus, the image of diamond is consequently associated with the word ^๑ ทิพย์ already equated to the word 'poetry'. When examining the images used in the collocations of the word ^๑ ทิพย์ under the group of 'philosophy' we can find the images of แก้ว (kæo) 'crystal' and รุ้ง (rung) 'rainbow' as well as a frequent use of the word เจียรไน (čhia-ranai) meaning to cut, to burnish diamonds or precious stones.¹

It is quite obvious that 'diamond', 'crystal' and 'rainbow' can be naturally associated since they all have some qualities in common. First, they are recognized for their beauty. Secondly, a diamond and a crystal share a similar beauty of clarity and brilliance whereas the radiance of a diamond is that of a rainbow's colours.

The frequent use of the verb เจียรไน or 'to cut diamonds' reflects a cohesive pattern in the text. Although by nature of its meaning, the verb is associated with diamonds, the poet still creates a deeper and more significant meaning to this verb in the way he uses it in different contexts in the text.

He uses the verb in its original meaning in many of his descriptive lines. For example, he compares the beauty of the Milky Way at night to the beauty of brilliantly cut diamonds.

p. 100

ฝันอารมณ์ชื่นชมฟ้ากว้าง ทางช้างเผือกพรายละอองส่องไส
เสมอเมฆเพชรพลอยเจียรไน ใครหนอคิดคนฤมิตจักรวาล

¹Ibid. p. 260.

Forcing my heart to admire the wide dark sky
With the brilliant and beautiful Milky Way
Glittering like marvellously cut diamonds
I wonder who ever created our universe?

The poet also extends the meaning of this verb by using it in a metaphorical sense. For example, he describes that the beauty of the cliffs and rocks is the result of the 'cutting' - เจียรระไน of heaven.

p. 153 งามเงาปริมาตรก้อนหินผา ฟ้าเจียรระไนไว้งามลึกซึ้ง

Beautiful are the shades and shadows of those rocks
For they, no doubt, are exquisitely cut by heaven!

Similarly, when praising the wonder of nature he often uses this verb with personified Time as a subject, and thus extends the meaning of the verb เจียรระไน from 'cut and burnish' to 'create and beautify gradually'.

This meaning is explicitly expressed in the passage where he describes the beauty of the rocks and mountains and the purity of white sand created by the gradual polishing of Time.

p. 75 งามชะง่อนก้อนหินเงาวิจิตร นฤมิตมอแก้วแวววาวผืนซึ้ง
 ฐูลีทรายขาวสะอาดกว่าฟุ้ง คิดถึงเวลาที่เจียรระไน

Marvellous are the rocks and mountains,
Creating radiant hills of dreamy beauty.
How pure and bright is the silver sand!
And how long must Time take to polish these diamonds!

Moreover, the verb is used in a philosophical context in the passage of the poet's contemplation. For example, when the poet declares that for him, nature is his great teacher and even the rainbow is like his great university that helps to sharpen his mind to reach enlightenment.

p. 13 ใต้สายรุ้งฟ้ามหึมา เสนอว่ามหาวิทยาลัยใหญ่
 จักป้อนวิชาเจียระไนใจ ให้แจ่มใสวิสุทธิซึ่งโพธิญาณ

Under the arch of the grand rainbow,
A great university for me,
I gather philosophy to polish my mind
And render it an enlightened serenity!

This meaning of the verb เจียระไน as 'sharpen or enlighten the mind' is further emphasized when the poet associates it with the word ทิพย์ in the passage where the poet praises the virtue of imagination and dreams.

pp. 112-3 แววนั้นประจักษ์ด้วยธาตุทิพย์ หมกแล้วฟ้าทรงหยิบประทานใหม่
 เติมไว้ให้เปี่ยมล้นฤทัย เบิกใช้คล้ายเงินในธนาคาร
 เจียระไนความจริงทุกสิ่งสิ้น ถวิลคุณค่าปรัชญามหาศาล
 จะตกผลึกทิพย์งามตระการ ทานเรียกแก้วสารพัดนึกนา¹

The poet's use of the verb เจียระไน in this text serves to illustrate how the meaning of a word in poetry can be manipulated through the 'patterning' of language use -

¹See the translation in Chapter I, p. 55.

through collocation, equation and association of meanings and imagery.

This means that the poet can create 'special' meanings for the words he uses through this 'patterning' and thus the meanings of words can be deepened, extended or specified through their use or their patterning in the text. This 'patterning' serves to reveal the significance of the work as well as to create a coherence and unity in the work.

When we consider all the rest of the collocations of the word ^๖วิญญู we can see a large number of collocations between the word ^๖วิญญู and the word สถาน (sathān) meaning 'a place'. This is quite understandable since this poem is a Nirāt poem where the poet describes and records the beauty of nature and the places he passes through on his journey. With his deep love of nature he naturally feels that the landscape and places he sees are indeed 'divine'.

This collocation can also be considered very 'conventional' to some extent because it is commonly used in Thai poetry especially in the description of palaces and great cities. Thai poets in the past tended always to describe the beauty of palaces or temples in great detail, and also to compare this beauty to the beauty of 'heavenly' palaces and cities where all the different angels and gods are supposed to reside.

Nevertheless it is worth noticing that Angkhān uses this rather 'conventional' collocation in a different context. He uses it to describe the wonders of nature, the beauty created by time and nature and not to describe any elaborated beauty of palaces or temples created by men. This reveals his

respect for nature as a great creator who creates all 'divine' beauty on earth.

This again serves to illustrate how the poet can manipulate certain 'conventional' collocations in a subtle manner so as to create certain special meanings that help to reveal the underlying significance of the work.

From the discussion on the lexical patterns and their significance in the text, we shall now move on to consider some imagery in the work. There is no denying that Angkhān's success as a great poet lies in his ability to create imagery original in its beauty. This ability is highly praised by Prakhin Chumsai Na Ayuthaya who is herself a poet. She claimed that Angkhan has created the most beautiful and breath-taking imagery that has never occurred before in any other poet's mind.¹

When considering closely the images in Lam Nam Phū Kradu'ng we will have to accept that her appraisal is not at all exaggerated. Indeed it is not difficult to find many beautiful and original images in this modern Nirāt side by side with many rather 'conventional' ones.

Generally speaking, traditional Thai poetry has a rather strong convention at different levels. For example, a convention can govern the types of versification used in different genres as well as the types of imagery used in different contexts. Thus, there exists a set of conventional images commonly used according to the type and tradition in which the poetry is written.

¹See Chapter I, p. 14.

As we have already seen, Angkhān is aware of the 'convention' in Thai poetry but at the same time he can make use of it in order to create 'originality' and 'modernity' in his work. Since we have already studied Lam Nam Phū Kradu'ng in some detail we will use this Nirāt as a starting point for our discussion of Angkhān's use of imagery.

In the Nirāt tradition as a lamentation of love or as a record of a journey, the imagery used to convey the feelings of the poet is mainly based on nature. Usually the description of nature is the reflection of the poet's feelings at the moment and thus it can be considered as a 'means' for the poet to express himself but not as a real subject matter in itself. Therefore, the imagery of nature in a Nirāt poem is mostly conventional. For example, the poet will describe trees, flowers or animals by using their names to create puns or word-plays so as to get a 'melodious' effect of the sounds. This stylistic device is in fact not limited to the Nirāt genre but is also used in other types of poetry in descriptive passages where the poet would like to exercise his 'mastery' over the language.

As a result in most Thai poetical works we tend to have detailed but comparatively unrealistic description of nature, which is in fact an expected and accepted convention that most Thai poets agree to keep and follow.

Nevertheless, Angkhān as a modern poet has tried in his work to create 'more arresting' imagery in order to 'bring the mind or imagination into play - to let the imagery get into the mind's eye rather than the ear.'¹

¹Peter Bee, op. cit., p. 73.

It is obvious that Angkhān pays a lot of attention to the use of imagery in his work. In order to enliven his description of nature he uses a lot of personification and he also brightens his imagery by using colour words. This ability to create vivid imagery of nature might be common enough in the tradition of Thai poetry. However, because of the poet's different attitude towards nature, his description of nature is somehow quite 'unconventional'.

The poet looks at nature in detail and from various points of view. He does not try to avoid mentioning something 'less pleasant' in nature but he treats everything in nature with real respect. Thus the description of nature in his work includes the description of worms, mud, dust and dirt seldom mentioned in descriptive passages of Thai poetical works.

However, the poet draws the readers' attention to the inter-dependence of all the elements in nature including human beings. He tries to show how nature is important for human beings both physically and spiritually. He respects nature as his great teacher and declares that he learns the meaning and value of life through nature. He makes it explicit that his Nirāt is composed out of his deep love of nature and with all his disappointment in human beings he can find consolation in the kindness and wisdom of nature.

By using a lot of personification in his description of nature, the poet succeeds in bringing life to nature and thus can justify his own philosophy of nature-god which is not at all common in the context of Thai poetry.

However, this philosophy does not really contradict his

deep Buddhistic belief for we can see that he even uses a lot of 'Buddhistic' terms when praising the wisdom and kindness of nature. For example, he claims that nature has no greed or anger and only gives without expecting anything in return.

Besides, the kindness of nature towards human beings is unlimited and it is like pure compassion towards all creatures. This quality of love and generosity is so much emphasized by the poet who feels a deep resentment towards all human wickedness and selfishness. This even leads him to suspect and condemn the progress of science and modern technology for he believes that without the enlightenment of the mind, science can only destroy humanity in the end.

This reflects his deep concern as a modern poet to send a message to his modern readers. The poet does not look at nature purely for its beauty but he contemplates the relationship between nature and humanity and tries to persuade his readers to follow the ideas and philosophy which he believes will be good for the modern world. This concern shows the seriousness in his ideas and respect for nature. Nature is not just a 'poetic' theme for him in the work but a serious subject matter for his readers to contemplate as well.

The first aspect we can start with is the wide imagination of the poet when describing nature. For the poet, his description of nature extends beyond this world to the universe. When he describes the beauty of the white sand he claims that the beauty is created by the divine Time that polishes the sand. Furthermore, he wonders where can that

divine Time be at the moment. Maybe, she is in another universe busy polishing other stars so that they can look back and admire our earth.

p. 75

งามชะง่อนก้อนหินแฉ่งวิจิตร	นฤมิตมอแก้วแววผันซึ้ง
ขลุ่ยทรายขาวสะอาดคร่าฟุ้ง	คิดถึงเวลาที่เจียระไน
วาระนี้กาลจักรนารักนั้น	โคจรผันแปรไปภพไหน
จะเจียระไนแววคาคาราใด	ให้แจ่มใสจ้องมองดูคืน

Marvellous are the rocks and mountains,
Creating radiant hills of dreamy beauty.
How pure and bright is the silver sand!
And how long must Time take to polish these diamonds!

Now where can that divine Time be?
Is she perhaps wandering into another universe,
Or is she busy polishing any bright stars,
So that clearly they can see and admire the Earth?

This comparatively wide scope of imagination creates an unconventional image of Time wandering in the universe and polishing beautiful stars to admire our earth. This wide imagination is in fact very characteristic of Angkhān as we can see from most of his descriptive passages.

For example, when admiring the stars at night he questions the freedom of the stars and describes the stars and the moon as the prisoners of the sky and the Milky Way.

p. 108

ใครกักขังปวงดวงคารา	เวหาคือคุกทุกข้างไหม
อิสระเสรีมีจริงเมื่อไร	เวลาไซ้ไหมลงโทษทัณฑ์
พูนทางช้างเผือกมองใสสกา	กักขังดาวในทรวงสรรพสวรรค์
อนาถนัคนักโทษชื่อแจ่มจันทร์	มีมหันตทุกข์จำคุกราตรี

Who confines all those stars?
The sky is a prison, can she be happy?
Does freedom really exist, then?
Is it not Time that punishes all?

Far beyond is the bright Milky Way
Who confines all the stars in heaven.
Pitiable indeed is the prisoner Moon
Whose great misery is to be imprisoned by Night!

Even when the poet laments for his own lonely suffer-
ings he wishes to ask the wind to blow them away out of this
world where nobody cares for him.

p. 51

รื้อรอยฝันอันแสนเศร้าสร้อย	ฝากลมลอยล่านำวิสุทธิศรี
พัดไปทิ้งนอกฟ้าปรุพี	โลกนี้มีใครสนใจเอ๋ย

Sad and forlorn shadows of dreams I revive,
Entrusting them to flow with the pure melody of the wind,
So that they can be blown away from this world
Where nobody at all ever cares for them!

The idea of the poet trying to get rid of his sufferings
by sending them 'out of this world' helps to reveal the wide
imagination of the poet whose concept of the world extends

beyond our earth to cover other worlds or even the universe. Therefore, it is not surprising to find that the poet claims Time as his slave and the sky as his mansion and chambers.

p. 58

ใช้เวลาเสมอว่าข้าหาส นภากาศคือคฤหาสน์หอห้อง
บรรพพรรณแก้วเพริศแพร้วเรืองรอง มีมีสองผู้คือภูกระดึง

Time is the slave I can exploit!
The sky is my mansion and chambers.
My bed, so heavenly and preciously glittering,
Is the incomparable and unique Phū Krađu'ng!

Similarly while admiring the mountain and the sky the poet expresses his fear of 'tripping over the stars'.

p. 58

เหลียวลิลลิวรอบขอบฟ้า เวหาอยู่ใต้ข้าหรือไฉน
บุษเมฆรอบเท้าก้าวไป หวันไหวจะสะกุกกวงคว

Looking around to the far edge of horizon,
I wonder whether the sky is beneath me.
Surrounding my feet are the soft clouds,
Making me afraid of tripping over the stars!

On one hand, we can consider these images as a kind of hyperbole, not uncommon in any poetical work. On the other hand, these images are powerful enough to reveal the intensity of the poet's feelings when he is moved by nature. The feeling of the poet as being the master of Time is obviously uncommon especially in the 'convention' of Thai poetry.

Generally speaking, Thai poets hardly entertain the idea of contemplating time as a serious philosophical topic. Time in Thai poetry is mostly just an element of description or in a context of separation as in a Nirāt poem, an element of lamentation of love. However, with the influence of Buddhism, the passing of time which normally brings changes to life is described as another manifestation of 'impermanence' อนิจจัง (anitchang) which Thai poets as Buddhists tend to accept as an ultimate truth rather than to question it. Only to that extent can we say that time in Thai poetry has any 'philosophical' association at all.

Therefore, Angkhān's explicit attitude towards time as a tyrannical power over humanity and his strong desire to rebel against it is quite personal and unique. This leads to an 'unconventional' image of Time as a slave to the poet - an image that reflects the poet's strong desire to free himself from the power of Time.

The intensity of the poet's feelings is usually combined with his wide imagination in order to create most of his beautiful and unusual images. As discussed before, the poet not only perceives the beauty of nature but also values it as a spiritual power which will benefit human souls. Therefore while admiring the beauty of nature the poet expresses his desire to capture the divine elements in nature to keep as the wealth of his soul. At the same time, he hopes to beautify the world with the wonder of nature like rainbows as well as with his divine poetry that can plead with the flowers to blossom and give fragrance to all the Three Worlds.

p. 149

กลั่นแสงจันทร์เจ้ากลางคืนคึก	เป็นผลึกแก้วเจียรไนใส
แมกเมฆซ่อนเร้นไกลแสนไกล	ไว้เป็นทรัพย์สินของวิญญาน
จับสายรุ้งฟ้ามาปักขัง	หวังไว้อยมแหล่งหล้ามหาสถาน
เขียนบทวิอันวอนสุดันธมลย์	แย้มบานหวานหอมจบทพิไคร

I will distill the moonlight late at night
To get its pure and clear crystals
Then to hide them in the far away clouds
To keep as the wealth of my soul!

I will catch the rainbows and confine them
Hoping to use them to dye the whole world!
I will compose poetry to plead the flowers
To blossom and give fragrance to the Three Worlds!

These images can serve as good examples of how the poet creates the images that get into the mind's eye rather than the ear. This means that the beauty of these 'unconventional' images depends so much on the imagination of the readers to re-create the vision of the poet in their own minds. The readers have to imagine how clear and bright the moonlight is during the middle of the night so that the poet can distill it into a pure and clear crystal. Similarly, the readers will have to imagine the beautiful colours and radiance of rainbows that the poet hopes to dye the world with. The image of the world dyed with rainbows conveys the beauty of the world and implies peace and happiness in the world where human beings live together in harmony or with their dreams coming true. Besides, the readers will have to imagine how beautiful and magical the poet's poetry is so that it can have the power to invite the flowers to blossom

and give fragrance.

The readers' imagination is essential in perceiving the full significance and beauty of these images. Only by using their imagination can the readers follow the poet's mind and re-create vivid and meaningful images in their own minds. Seen in this light, Angkhān's use of these 'unconventional' images is a challenge for the readers to a deeper and more subtle appreciation of poetry.

In fact, this stylistic device of the poet reveals his deep awareness of the value of imagination as expressed both explicitly and implicitly in his work. For example, the poet describes how he wishes to let his heart float like a crystal boat, and let his 'self' drown in the clouds.

p. 51

ลอยใจไปเสมอสำเภาแก้ว	เหนือแนวเนินละลอกคลื่นป่าไม้
กายวิเวกจมเมฆอันไปรยปราย	ไต้สายรุ้งรวิพิภย์หิมา

I let my heart float like a crystal boat,
Above the mountains and the waves of forest trees.
My lonely self is drowning in the flowing clouds,
Under the arching bands of the great rainbow divine.

The idea of the poet to let his heart 'float' like a boat and his self drown in the clouds actually alludes to the wandering state of self and mind in the world of imagination. The image of a 'great rainbow divine' emphasizes this implication of a land of imagination where dreams and desires reign as supreme powers.

These images suggest not only the smooth dreamlike

movement of a 'crystal boat' and 'the flowing clouds' but also the brilliance of crystal and the glittering colours of rainbows. These combinations create an unusual but inspiring image of a spirit of imagination in the world of the poet.

His appreciation of imagination, however, does not prevent him from describing nature in very scientific and realistic terms. For example, he explains how the rivers originate from the trees in the forest.

p. 84

พฤษภาช่วยหาละของน้ำ ทำลำธารบนยอดเขา
กำเนิคน้ำใหญ่ในยอดเขา ออกเอาใจไปทุกชีวา

Trees help to gather the misty vapours of the air,
To create on the mountains all the brooks,
That join to become rivers, great and small,
To please the heart of every single life!

This rather 'scientific' and realistic explanation, nevertheless, remains quite 'poetic' in its expression because of the personification of the trees. Besides, the verb *เขาออกเอาใจ* meaning to please, to pamper¹ that the poet uses with the trees is unusual but serves to reveal the kind generosity of nature deeply appreciated by the poet himself.

We can find many more similar examples where the poet succeeds in explaining some 'scientific' facts within the

¹McFarland, Thai-English Dictionary, p. 1012.

beauty of 'poetic' expression. For example, the poet explains that the sea is like a mother who gives life to all creatures in the world, and from the sea come the clouds, fog and rain providing water for all lives on earth.

ทะเลนั้นเปรียบแม่นมั่น	ชนนี้
สรรพสิ่งเลี้ยงชีวิ	โลกไว้
เช่นท่าเมฆหมอกมี	ฝนหลัง
สัตว์จึงยังน้ำใช้	ชั่วหล้าลบสลาย ¹

Like mother indeed is the sea,
Supporting lives that sustain the world,
Creating the clouds, fog and falling rain,
So that all can forever have water to maintain!

Moreover, the poet gives an image of the pure air holding the seas and world for indefinite years.

อากาศใสวิสุทธิซึ่ง	เสมอทิพย์
อุ้มแหล่งทะเลลิบ	ทั่วหล้า
อุ้มโลกอยู่หลายสิบ	กัลป์กับปี
ดับแผ่นดินสิ้นฟ้า	เนิ่นช้าฤาหาย ²

How clear and divine is this pure air,
Holding the seas of all the world,
Holding the world for indefinite years,
And thus remains till the end of the Earth and Sky!

¹Angkhān Kalayānaphong, Bāng bot Čhāk suankaeo (Bangkok, 1972), p. 18.

²Ibid., p. 17.

This image is most unusual judged from the 'convention' of Thai poetry. Though the poem appears to be very scientific and realistic in its subject matter, the main verb ^๑อุ้ม - to hold, to carry¹ expresses the feeling of love and care since in Thai this verb is used to describe the way a mother holds her baby or her child. This again emphasizes the attitude of the poet towards nature - how he feels that nature is kind and generous to human beings as a mother is kind and generous to her children.

Even when the poet admires the freshness of the air, he claims that the air acts as a protector as well as a refuge and resource for all creatures.

เปรมใจในเสน่ห์แก้ว	นภาอากาศ
อันแจ่มใสวิสุทธิ์สะอาด	ยิ่งไฉ่ยิ่งใส
ปกป้องทั่วโลกธาตุ	ลิมทิศ
ที่พึ่งสรรพสัตว์ได้	ชีนชีวี ²

Joyful and enchanting is the charm of the air!
So wondrously fresh and pure beyond compare,
Protecting all the world and nature and lives,
A refuge and resource for all creatures to survive!

The awareness of the poet of the virtue of nature is explicitly expressed when he uses natural phenomena as an allegory of Buddhistic philosophy. For example, the poet compares tolerance to clear water which is not bothered by dirty mud, and to the light that will not be angry with

¹McFarland, Thai-English Dictionary, p. 1009.

²Angkhān Kalayānaphong, Bāng, bot čhāk suankaeo, p. 17.

darkness. น้ำใสวิสุทธิยั้งนั้น

น้ำใสวิสุทธิยั้งนั้น	ขันติธรรม
ฤาโกรธคนทำระยำ	คำช้า
ปัญญาไม่ครอบงำ	พิษใจ
แสงสว่างโกรธมืดดำ	กล่าวร้ายให้โดน ¹

This pure crystal water is tolerance
That never with dirty mud be angry!
Wisdom will never force ignorance,
Nor will the Light ever blame Obscurity!

Similarly the peaceful co-existence of the sky and the clouds, the universe and the stars is used to symbolise a spiritual freedom which is an ultimate goal of Buddhism. This freedom means an ability to remain at peace within oneself and to be with others without being attached nor hostile and harmful to each other.

พากฟ้านั้นไม่เปื้อน	เปราะเมฆ
เมฆไม่เปราะความวิเวก	แห่งฟ้า
ปวงดาวไปรกเอก-	ภพเพ่ง งามนา
ฟ้าใช้ถูกเคียนจ้ำ	ป่าช้าดาวโดน ²

Never can the Sky be dirtied by the Clouds,
Nor can the Clouds get impure by the Sky's solitude!
The beautiful Universe is never untidy because of the Stars,
And the Sky is never a prison for the bright Moon,
Nor the grave for the glittering Stars!

¹Ibid., p. 29.

²Ibid., p. 30.

The poet also contemplates the natural power of the heat of the sun and the movement of the waves as the manifestation of Buddhistic philosophy. For example, the natural quality of the heat of the sun is no longer perceptible in its shadow in the water. This allegory refers to the state of peace and enlightenment where all the fire of suffering ends in serenity.

อันสุริยา ยิ่งกว่า ร้อน	อัคนี
เงาอยู่ในวารี	ไปร้อน
อำมหิตแห่งธรรมมี	ทุกที่
ถึงแก่นจริง จักสะท้อน	ทิพย์ให้วิมุตติเสมอ ¹

More than the heat of the fire is the Sun,
Yet his shadow in the water is hardly warm!
Everywhere can we find the Truth of Dhama!
Through that essence can enlightenment be achieved!

The underlying emphasis of Buddhism on self-reliance for each individual's enlightenment and spiritual freedom is also conveyed through the image of the waves in the sea. The poet wonders and questions where the sea gets her strength from and the answer given is that everything gains strength from its own self. This explains a Buddhistic belief that one can only achieve one's spiritual freedom through one's own effort.

¹Ibid., p. 31.

ทะเลเอ๋ยครวญคลื่นฟ้อน	ฟองไฉน
ไม่เห็นเหนื่อยหน่ายหรือไร	กล่าวแก่
พลังดังหลังจากไค	ใหญ่ยิ่ง
ทุกสิ่งเพราะธาตุแท้	ที่เข้มตัวเอง ¹

Oh sea, how your waves weep and lament!
Can you never tired or exhausted be?
Where is the source of your great strength?
Oh, just from its own self, everything gains strength!

Even when the poet sees the sand he perceives it as an illustration of the law of impermanence since he realizes that the sand is from the rocks of the mountains, destroyed and transformed by the passing of time.

กาลก่อนทรายนี้ไซ้	ภูษา
สูงลิ่วสลายลงมา	ปนม้วย
นั่นแหละอย่างปรัชญา	ไตรลักษณ์
รู้ย่อมถ่อมเป็นค้าย	เคนเพียงปฐวี ²

This sand is from great mountains long ago,
Falling down, transforming into small grains,
This is the Law of the three characteristics of existence.
To be modest like earth is to attain real grace.

The poet seems to emphasize always the virtue of modesty and contentment and it is very characteristic of Angkhān to praise the simplicity of humble elements in nature like the sand and the earth. As here he praises the nobility of the

¹Ibid., p. 31.

²Ibid., p. 27.

earth that, in fact, has the great power to cover the world but never boasts about it.

ธุลีดินนี้สิ่งน้อย	กระจิริด
แต่คงสันโดษชนิก	ถ่อมกล้า
ฤาเคยเบ่งอิทธิฤทธิ์	ทำใหญ่
ทั้งที่อาจกลบหน้า	หัวฟาดมั่งขลัง ¹

So tiny seem the grains of earth,
Yet how content and noble they are!
Never do they boast about their power,
Though they can cover the whole world of ours!

Because of his deep love and respect for nature the poet even reflects in his work his belief in the magic power of nature to protect the soul. For example, we can find a beautiful image of beautiful clouds weaving soft cotton of the sky. The poet wishes to weave it into a rainbow cloth in order to protect himself.

p. 74

เมฆก็ม้วนนวนไลยฝ้ายฟ้า	นาทอผ้ารวงรังทั้งเจ็ดสี
ไว้ห่มแรงฉวีลจินตกรวี	ที่เห็นบนานาวจะเศร้าโศกตาย

The clouds are weaving soft cotton of the sky,
How I wish to weave that into a rainbow cloth!
To cover and cherish a poor poet,
So cold and sad he could die!

A similar idea is expressed when the poet laments that

¹Ibid., p. 28.

he wishes to weave silk out of the gold hue of the moon in order to warm his soul as he travels in the next life.

p. 104

เอายวงทองของเสี้ยวเดือนนาย	กัจจายร้อยกรองทองคำไหม
ไว้หมอบอุ่นวิญญาณไป	ทางไกลโลกหน้าโศกาคูร

I wish to take the gold hue of moon crescent,
As gold thread to weave a wonderful piece of silk,
To wrap and warm always my soul,
For still far in the sad next life I have to go!

These two similar lamentations of the poet not only give unusually beautiful descriptions of the clouds and the moonlight but also reflect the mind of the poet who believes in the power of nature. The warmth and comfort he expects to get are from the elements in nature and therefore they can benefit his spirit or his soul.

This belief in the magic power and spiritual effect of nature on human souls is uniquely conveyed through an image of thunder composing poetry with the help of the wind and the rain.

ฟ้าร้องเร็วเร่งร้อง	เป็นโคลง
อันเปรี๊ยะปราชญ์จรโลง	แหล่งหล้า
มารุกเร่งพัดโหมง	ยามทิพย์
ฝนช่วยเขียนกาพย์ฟ้า	เฟื่องฟุ้งหฤหรรษ์ ¹

¹ Ibid., p. 13.

Swiftly the roll of the Thunder composes poetry,
So brilliant and beautiful to adorn the world,
Swiftly the Wind moves the divine Time,
And joyfully the Rain helps to write divine rhymes!

This image reveals a very significant attitude of the poet towards poetry. The idea of thunder composing poetry conveys a very spontaneous power of poetry in the poet's mind. The movement of the thunder sound is fast and powerful like the flash of inspiration or deep emotion that moves the heart of the poet to compose his works.

The swift movement of the wind and the lively action of the rain serve to reveal the joy and delight in the act of composing poetry both for the poet himself and for his readers. The whole image of the thunder, the wind and the rain, in fact, suggests the power of creativity since the rain usually means the beginning of life or the source of life.

It is worth noticing that the poet uses the word รวด¹ Reng meaning to hurry, to urge on,¹ twice in his poem together with the word เร็ว² Reo meaning 'fast'.² This reflects the spontaneous nature of poetry and the power to move the readers which, according to the poet's belief, are the more significant qualities of poetry.

Thus, in this unique and beautiful image the poet can convey the spontaneity, the creativity and the power of poetry as well as the joy and delight that poetry can offer to the human heart and soul.

¹McFarland, Thai-English Dictionary, p. 718.

²Ibid., p. 718.

In this chapter we have examined in more detail the 'nature' of Angkhān's modernity. We have observed how the poet manages to create 'patterns' in his work through stylistic devices such as collocation, equation and association of meanings and imagery. These 'patterns' are re-emphasized and integrated into the text through the technique of repetition.

Through these carefully designed 'patterns', the significance of the work is manifested and the coherence and unity of the text is achieved. All these elaborate stylistic devices reflect the ultimate idea of poetry as the art of language use. This idea, though obviously not uncommon, is especially emphasized in Thai poetry.

The poet respects and follows the rules of versification yet he does not allow the restriction of the rules to destroy the 'spontaneity' and the natural beauty of his poetry.

The liberty he takes within the rules reflects his real understanding of them. Thus he creates a harmony between the 'convention' and his own 'originality'. Being a 'modern' poet with his ideas and philosophy different from the poets in the past, Angkhān, however, finds expression for his ideas in the 'forms' of the past and employs his wide imagination in creating beautiful and most unusual imagery in his work.

Therefore, ultimately speaking, the nature of Angkhān's modernity is the careful manipulation or the extension of the 'convention' harmoniously integrated with the poet's 'originality' through the well-designed stylistic devices.

CHAPTER III

THE NATURE AND SIGNIFICANCE
OF VERSE FORMS IN THAI POETRY:
A STUDY OF NAOWARAT PHONGPHAIBŪN

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The Nature and Significance of Verse Forms in Thai Poetry:

A Study of Naowarat Phongphaibūn

The term for 'verse forms' in Thai is ฉันทลักษณ์ (chandalakshana) which is of Sanskrit origin. The term is a combination of two words: ฉันทะ (chanda) meaning 'approval, consent, satisfaction'¹ and ลักษณะ (lākshana) meaning 'a mark, a sign, a symbol, a token, a quality, characteristic properties'.² Therefore, literally speaking we may translate the meaning of ฉันทลักษณ์ as 'a symbol or a sign of approval or satisfaction'.

This literal meaning enables a prominent contemporary Thai poet to express his ideas on 'verse forms' as follows:

'I think that a verse form is a form or quality that pleases and satisfies. It is not necessary for verse to be in the form of Klōn, Khlōng or Kāp.'³
(trans. S.C.)

This personal view of the poet sounds very 'liberal' and we might expect him to write poetry without any 'restricted forms' at all. However, it may come as a surprise to many to realize that this 'liberal' comment was actually from Naowarat Phongphaibūn in the early period of his career as a poet.

¹McFarland, Thai-English Dictionary, p. 268.

²Ibid., p. 736.

³Naowarat Phongphaibūn, Kham Yāt (Bangkok, 1969) in the introduction by Sathira Chanthimathōn.

From the beginning of his career until now Naowarat has always been regarded as a serious poet who follows the 'tradition' and continues to develop it in his works. If anything at all can be said about his poetry, it is not possible to criticise the liberty he takes in his verse forms.

Like Angkhān, Naowarat is highly influenced by the great masters of the past and his works illustrate the harmony between the 'tradition' or 'convention' and his own 'invention' or 'originality'.

Naowarat Phongphaibūn was born on 26th March 1940 in the district of Phnom-thuan in Kārñchanaburī province where he received his primary and secondary education. He came to Bangkok for his higher education and during the years 1959-1965 he studied law at Thammasat University for his first degree.

After his graduation he entered the monkhood for ten months and thus began his deep interest in Buddhism which is an important influence in his works.

Though Naowarat started writing poetry in his school days, his work only came to the attention of the public while he was at Thammasat University. He joined the 'literary Club' (ชมรมวรรณศิลป์) of the University and created a fairly large amount of poetry within the university's circle.

His first book of short poems was published in 1969 with the title คำหยาด 'Kham Yāt'. This first book reflects his deep concern about the verse forms and the melodious effect of poetry with the evident influence of Sunthōn Phū.

Despite his personal ideas about the verse forms, we can see from his book how strictly the poet abides by the 'poetical rules'.

With his first book, Naowarat established himself as a serious modern poet who studied thoroughly the art of Thai poetry in order to follow and make use of it in his own works.

His second book is อาทิตยถึงจันทร์ (Āthit thu'ng chan), a narrative poem on the event of the political uprising by the students in October 1973. His third book is

เพียงความเคลื่อนไหว (Phiang khwām khlu'ang wai) which reflects his progress concerning the verse forms and the content. We can find in this book quite a large number of poems with 'philosophical' themes as well as the subtle use of symbols to convey his ideas in the form of allegory. He also made use of folk songs and folk legends for the 'form' and 'content' of his work. Despite this variety of themes, his poetry firmly reflects his mastery of language use and his talent for combining the 'convention' with his own ideas and philosophy in order to create a unique 'modernity' in his own work.

His unique 'modernity' based on his deep awareness of the 'convention' is clearly illustrated to the full in his fourth book ชักม้ามเมือง (Chak Mā Chom Mu'ang) - a long poem describing the beauty of the Temple of the Emerald Buddha and the works of art inside the temple, especially the mural paintings of the story from Ramakian.

The poet intended to write his poem as a 'religious

sacrifice' to the Lord Buddha for the วิสาขบูชา Wisākha Būchā festival.¹ This long complete work will serve later on as a main text for our study of the nature and significance of 'verse forms' in Thai poetry.

The most recent work of the poet is a collection of short poems under the title of เพลงขลุ่ยเหินหูกข้าว (Phlēng khлуй nu'a thung khāo) published in 1980, after he was awarded the prize of 'South East Asia Writer' in 1978.

The book is a reflection of the deep influence of Thai folk songs and music in the poet's work. Besides, we can find an amount of 'free verse' as narrative poetry as well as a rather intensive use of symbolism and allusion to some folk legends and to major literary works.

In fact, we can say that Naowarat Phongphaibūn is one of only a few contemporary poets who is recognized as a 'real poet' both by the older and more academically minded generation and the younger and more liberal generation of today.

The long poem Chak Mā Chom Mu'ang is an evident illustration of his mastery over the verse forms and poetical rules. Thus we shall use this text as a starting point in the study of the nature and significance of verse forms in Thai poetry.

This text is characterized by the 'richesse' of its verse forms despite the fact that it is almost all written in the form of 'Khlong' except for the beginning in Rāi form and a few stanzas of 'Klōn' composed by rearranging

¹The festival of offerings in commemoration of the Birth, Enlightenment and Death of the Buddha.

the lines from Khlōng.

Therefore, by the term 'richesse' of forms here, I refer to the subtle variations within a single type or form of Thai poetry. These subtle variations reflect the natural richesse of the Thai language that allows poets a wide exploration into its possibilities by which they can manifest the creativity of their minds.

The variations within one single form serve to reveal and reinforce the attitude of Thai poets towards poetry. In the Thai tradition, poetry is ultimately the art of language use and the exploration into the possibilities of language.

As a result, excellence in Thai poetry is judged by excellence in the art of composing the most pleasing sounds to the ear. Thai poetry can hardly be recognized or accepted without rhymes. The primary function is to produce a series of melodious sounds and secondly to develop the richesse of meaning and imagery in association with the already established patterns of sounds.

The detailed subtlety and difference in each variation is the evidence of the efforts of Thai poets to explore and manipulate the possibilities of language in order to create the best effect from their language use. The refinement of the language in poetry has always been the primary concern on the poets' part and the source of joys and appreciation on the readers' part. This fact has remained unchanged throughout the long history of Thai poetry despite all other changes in the matter of themes and ideas.

From this point of view also I may justify my choice

of the text Chak Mā Chom Mu'ang by Naowarat Phongphaibūn. In this text we can see how the poet makes use of one traditional form with all its variations in order to express and convey various themes and ideas in his work.

This reflects the real capacity of 'verse forms' that can be used quite regardless of the 'ideas' or the 'content'.

We can say that the unity of forms in this text - that is the form of 'Khlōng' - is able to embrace the varieties of themes and ideas without losing the subtlety and refinement of the language use.

The nature of this poetical work is mainly descriptive since it is the description of the mural paintings of the story of Ramakian in the Temple of the Emerald Buddha. However, the poet manages to insert other themes and ideas such as folk legends, a Buddhistic allegory or interpretation of the story of Ramakian as well as his own ideas about literature and poetry.

As far as the 'verse forms' and rules are concerned the poet is sure that he has followed them strictly as he expresses at the end of his work.

ครรรลองโคลงเคร่งไ้	ฉันทลักษณ์
ที่เอกที่โทพิทักษ์	สุภาษิต
สัมผัสรับส่งศักดิ์	ลีลาโวหาร
ละบาทละบาทล้วน	ระเบียบแบบแผน ¹

Strictly abiding by the poetical rules,
Is the poetry of mine,
With exact and sacred rhymes!

¹Naowarat Phongphaibūn, Chak Mā Chom Mu'ang (Bangkok, 1977), p. 190.

Each line, each stanza devotedly follows
The convention of the past!

However, it is worth noticing here that the poet specifies that he follows the rules of the 'old tradition of the past'. By this the poet refers to more flexible or less rigid rules of the past when the effect of sounds was more important than the number of syllables used. In other words, poets as well as readers in the past read poetry more with their ears and not only with their eyes. Therefore, in Chak Mā Chom Mu'ang we can find a number of poems which have more syllables than the 'standardized forms'.

The Khlōng form is believed to be one of the oldest verse forms in Thai poetry. Some Thai scholars believed that it was derived from a Chinese verse form with the Thai 'invention' of a rhyme-scheme. Prince Damrongrājānu-phāb mentioned that the origin of Khlōng was from the Thais of the North. Dhanit Yūphō supported this idea by referring to the evidence that in Chindāmanī various Khlōng forms were referred to as Khlōng Laos (Laos was used in the old days to refer to the Thais in the North). Besides, he remarked that there were quite a few Northern dialect words commonly employed in the composition of Khlōng.¹

On one hand, this form is rather difficult to compose as it is comparatively more restricted than other forms because of its restriction of 'tones'. On the other hand, the evident success of the form throughout the history of

¹Dhanit Yūphō, Kānsu'psaoraoru'ang Kāp Klōn Khlōng Chan 2nd ed. (Bangkok, 1974), pp. 37-9.

Thai poetry proves its virtue as a 'suitable' form that corresponds to the inner qualities of the language itself. As Thai is a tonal language, the rule of tones even helps to create a poetically satisfying result that encourages the poets to strive with the restricted rules of the form.

The Khlōng form is used in long and short poetical works both by itself and in combination with some other forms. The combination of 'Khlōng' with 'Rāi' is called 'Lilit' ลิลิต which is a major type of Thai poetry. A number of outstanding poetical works in Thai are composed in this type, for example: Lilit Phra Lō, Lilit Yuan Phāi, and Lilit Talōng Phāi.

The combination of 'Kāp' with 'Khlōng' when composed in pairs, that is one stanza of each form with the same content, has its special name of 'Kāp Hō Khlōng' กาพย์ห่อโคลง meaning Kāp embracing Khlōng. The most famous poet who composed in this type is Prince Thammāthibet in his well-known Nirāt such as Nirāt Thān Sōk and Nirāt Thān Thong Daeng.

The popularity of the 'Khlōng' form in composing long poetical works is evident from the early Ayuthaya period when we can find great and outstanding works written all in Khlōng such as Nirāt Hariphunchai, Thawāthotsamāt and Kamsuan Srī Prāt.

Even in the early Ratanakosin period the 'Khlōng' form still held a very prominent position in the tradition of Thai poetry. Many important and influential works were composed in the Khlōng form, for example, Nirāt Narin, Nirāt Supan and Khlōng Lōkanit.

The importance of this form survives to the present day, though it is not common to see a long poetical work written in this form. Thus, the poet's decision to compose his long poem in this form reflects his awareness of the significance of the Khlōng form in Thai poetry as well as the continuity of traditional verse forms in general.

Chak Mā Chom Mu'ang is an obvious illustration of the modern continuity of the tradition and convention of Thai poetry. The poet not only employs the 'traditional' form but also exploits and explores its variations. Moreover, he manifests his deep understanding of Thai verse forms by illustrating a close relationship between the 'Khlōng' form and the 'Klōn' form.

Both forms are undoubtedly recognized as the most important and widely used forms in Thai poetry. This is evident even in a fixed collocation in Thai referring to 'poetry' in general as 'Khlōng Klōn' โคลงกลอน.

In fact, the poet manifests this relationship by playing with the fixed collocation 'Khlōng Klōn'. He uses the same words to compose three stanzas in Khlōng form under the title of 'Khlōng Klōn'. Then he rearranges the same words in Klōn form in three stanzas again but he labels it 'Klōn Khlōng' - a reversed variant of Khlōng Klōn.

p. 8

โคลงกลอน (Khlōng Klōn)

ดวงคอกไม้มีง้าว	โกนุท
มาศเยี่ยมสะอาคพิสุทธิ์	น้ำขิง
คำหลวงโรจน์รุ่งฤจ	ดาวฤกษ์ เป็กรว
ดวงประคับริวงฝั่ง	รำน้ำค่างวี

duang dōk mai ming kǎo	kō mut
māt iem sa-āt phi sut	cham su'ng
kham luang rōt rung dut	dāo rōet bōek rā
duang pra dap ruang phu'ng	ram nam kham kawī

p. 9 ควงคอกไม้มิ่งแก้วโกมุทมาศ (Klōn Khlōng)
 เข็มสะอาคพิสุทธิน้ำซึ่งคำหลวง มาศ
 โจรนรูงจุจกาวฤกษ์เบิกราควง วง
 ประคับริวงฝั่งรำน้ำคำกวี
 โจรนรูงจุจกาวฤกษ์เบิกราควง
 ประคับริวงฝั่งรำน้ำคำกวี

duang dōk mai ming kǎo kō mut māt
 iem sa-āt phi sut cham su'ng kham luang
 rōt rung dut dāo rōet bōek rā duang
 pra dap ruang phu'ng ram nam kham kawī

This example illustrates the poet's mastery of language use and his deep understanding of Thai verse forms. From the example we can see that ultimately speaking the significance of 'form' lies in the significance of 'arrangement' of words. With the same number and sequence of well-selected words the poet can 'arrange' them in different forms.

This, however, does not mean that each different form has no quality or character of its own. Rather the fact that it is possible to 'arrange' a certain number of selected words into different forms manifests a deep relationship between these two forms.

Traditionally and comparatively speaking, the 'Khlōng' form is regarded as a 'higher' or more 'prestigious' form

than the 'Klōn' form which is closer to the 'oral' literature of the common people. As a verse form, Klōn is considered more 'natural' since it is nearer to the 'spoken' language. The poet's demonstration of the significant relationship between the 'Khlōng' form and the 'Klōn' form seems to explain why 'Khlōng', though a rather elaborate verse form, remains so prominent throughout the history of Thai poetry. Perhaps, ultimately speaking, the virtue of the 'Khlōng' form also lies in its closeness to the spoken language.

This fact reinforces the primary idea of our study that the success of a verse form depends on its harmonious accordance with the nature of the language. The idea is explicitly expressed by Phrayā Uppakit Sinlapasān in his lecture on 'Thai language and its poetry'.

'The verse forms which are suitable for our Thai language are Khlōng, Rāi, Kāp and various kinds of Klōn, including songs like Chōi Song, Khōrāt Song as already mentioned. These forms are genuinely part of the Thai heritage so they are perfectly suited to the Thai language, unlike the verse form of Chan which we borrowed from Pali and Sanskrit. I find it totally unsuitable for our language.'¹ (trans. S.C.)

As a highly reputable scholar of the Thai language and a poet in his own right, his personal view on the relationship between the Thai language and its poetry here certainly deserves serious consideration.

¹Phrayā Uppakit Sinlapasān, Chumnum niphon O.N.K. (Bangkok, 1973), p. 223.

It is obvious that by virtue of being a poet who was also a grammarian Phrayā Uppakit Sinlapasān could offer an insight into the relationship between language and literature not normally dealt with among Thai poets.

It is worth noticing here that Phrayā Uppakit Sinlapasān included various types of folk 'songs' in the category of 'verse forms', giving equal importance to 'songs' as to Khlōng, Rāi, Kāp and Klōn. This is quite understandable since the verse in Thai songs is very closely related to the form of 'Klōn'.

To put it more strongly, Prince Bidyalankarana in his article 'The Pastime of Rhyme-Making and Singing in Rural Siam' described the term เพลง (phlēng) not as 'song' but as a form of amusement and the 'phlēng' in all its varieties is described as a form of 'Klōn'.

'I will now describe the form of amusement known as เล่นเพลง (len blen), or merely เพลง (blen) in Siamese. The เพลง (blen) in all its varieties is a form of กลอน (Klōn) which I will describe in the last part of this paper'.¹

Although Naowarat is not a grammarian we can see that he actually expresses a very similar insight indirectly in the manner in which he composes his poetry. Considering his works as a whole, we will certainly notice the obvious influence of เพลง 'songs', especially folk songs in most of his poetry, and in particular in his 'Klōn'. As Naowarat

¹Prince Bidyalankarana, 'The Pastime of Rhyme-Making and Singing in Rural Siam', Journal of the Siam Society vol. 20, Part 2 (1926), pp. 101-127.

is very much influenced by Sunthōn Phū, his predominant form in the early period of his career is 'Klōn' as can be seen in his first book: Kham Yāt - a collection of his short poems.

Naowarat also employs many 'verses' from various types of folk songs in his poetry by embracing them into his Klōn. This is evident in many of his poems for example in the book of his collected poems เพลงขลุ่ยเหนือทุ่งข้าว
'Phlēng khlui nu'a thung khāo' (Flute songs above the rice fields).

We can consider this as a reflection of the poet's own recognition of the close similarity between the verse of folk songs and the verse form of Klōn. Thus he can successfully create a harmonious combination of verses from songs and his own Klōn.

However, since we are, at the moment, considering the text 'Chak Mā Chom Mu'ang' we should try to observe first how the poet expresses his 'insight' into the relationship between language and literature in this text.

Firstly, the choice of his verse forms as 'Khlōng' reflects his awareness of its significance. Secondly, his effort to manifest its relationship to the Klōn form re-emphasizes his deep understanding of the underlying significance of 'forms' in Thai poetry.

Besides, this understanding is reflected through the poet's intensive use of กลอน Konlabot - different restricted forms with elaborate stylistic devices - throughout the text.

This characteristic of the text is of course not

uncommon in all the major works of Thai poetry in the past. On one hand, it is esteemed as an 'excellence' or 'mastery' of language use on the poet's part to create the beauty of 'sense and sound' in his work. On the other hand, it reflects the nature of the language that allows an intensive manipulation and exploration into all its possibilities.

In the text of Chak Mā Chom Mu'ang Naowarat employs a great deal of Konlabot both explicitly and implicitly. Explicitly, the poet composes a series of ten different types of Konlabot each of which is given its specific name.

All these ten types of Konlabot are from Čharu'k Tamrā Khlōng Konlabot, จารึกตำราโคลงกลบท , an inscription from the treatise of Khlōng Konlabot from Wat Phō, the temple considered as the first university in the country created as a result of an idea of King Rama III. The group of these variations of Konlabot inserted in the text has as its content the description of the musical performance with traditional Thai instruments. The imitation of the sounds and melodies of the music under the more restricted rules of Konlabot seems to create a successful 'musical interlude' in the text.

On the other hand, the deliberate theme of 'music' in the series of these Konlabot helps to reveal the poet's attitude towards this stylistic device. He looks at all these 'more restricted forms' as an invitation to compose 'music' in verse form.

This attitude is re-emphasized in another piece of Konlabot in the text where the poet also uses 'Konlabot' to describe the melody and music from Thai musical instruments.

The poet uses as the title for the group of Konlabot
 คีคสี่ตีเป่า - a fixed collocation meaning 'to play in an
 orchestra of stringed or wind instruments'.¹

The verse form employed in this group of poems is
 known as โคลงกระทุ้ง (Khlōng Krathū) with the theme or the
 heading of the title คีคสี่ตีเป่า.

p. 10

คีคสี่ตีเป่า

คีค	สายจะเข้ครั้น	คณิงหา
คีค	กระจับปี่ผวา	ประหวัดโพ้น
คีค	จองหน่องวโรจนา	แนวอนันต์
คีค	อศีสอนาถโน้น	ขณะนี้องขยาย
สี่	สามสายส่ายสะท้าน	สะเทือนเสียว
สี่	เสียดใจจำเวียง	ระลึกภู
สี่	อุชีก้างเอียง	อกคีม
สี่	สะอากสะอิกสู	สากเปื้อนเปราะระสี
คี	โหนดทับทึง	ตะโพนมอญ
คี	ตะลุงตรึงรอน	รบเร้า
คี	กลองแขกครุสอน	สระระหมา
คี	ฉิ่งตีฉาบเข้า	เช่นร้ายไครราน
เป่า	ปราวไปรยนิ้วขลุ่ย	คำหอม
เป่า	ปี่ประจวบจอน	จีแจ้ว
เป่า	ปี่สาจจอมพลอม	เปลื้องเปล้า
เป่า	ปากประกาศแล้ว	เร่งแจ้งจริงเห็น

¹McFarland, Thai-English Dictionary, p. 331.

We can see that each Khlōng has a special 'form' beginning with the same single word from the title. This form of Khlōng Krathū can be considered a form of Konlabot not uncommon in Thai poetry.

It is understandable that by imposing more restrictions on the forms the poet has to create a certain amount of the intensity of 'poeticalness' through the pattern of sounds, rhythms, and rhymes. This 'intensity' naturally impairs the 'eloquence' of the poem and thus it is believed that it is not possible to compose a long poetical work with these restricted forms of Konlabot.

The only evidence of such an attempt is the work of Luang Srīprichā in the late Ayuthaya period who composed Konlabot Siriwbunkiti by taking the story from a Jataka tale. Yet the work remains unfinished.

Nevertheless, the 'musical interlude' created by the poet in the text Chak Mā Chom Mu'ang serves to reveal another dimension of the poet's attitude towards Konlabot. Restricted by more elaborate rules as it is, Konlabot may not be 'eloquent' but it can be highly 'expressive'.

By 'expressive' here I refer to the capacity of Konlabot to convey sentiments and feelings without necessarily telling any story.

As far as Konlabot is concerned, we can say that even the name of each type will already tell us something about the pattern of that poem.

The ten different types of Konlabot in Chak Mā Chom Mu'ang are those rather well-known ones, all with different and interesting names as follows:

อักษรสลับ	- Alternating letters
กัณฐ์เก็บบัว	- Kinnara picking lotus
วัวพันหลัก	- Cows circling a stake
ช้างประสานงา	- Elephants joining tusks
นาครวิพันธุ	- A snake's composition
ครอบจักรวาล	- The mountain covered
กานต้อดอก	- Stems joining on to flowers
โตเลินหาง	- Lions swishing tails
สารถีขัณฑ์	- Charioteers driving
บุษบารักรอย	- Flowers in designs

To illustrate the point that the names of Konlabot explain something about their particular movements and appearances, we shall now look at some examples in the text.

กลบทช้างประสานงา - Elephants joining tusks.

p. 136	ระทิกถึถะถึงทุม	ทำนอง
	<u>พันเนื่อง</u> คละคล่องจง	<u>แจกชั้น</u>
	<u>จะเข้</u> รับครวลง	<u>เวียงไค</u>
	<u>ระลอก</u> ทยอกถ้องกัน	กรีกน้ำคะนองสาย
	OOOOO	<u>OO</u>
	<u>OOOOO</u>	<u>OO</u>
	<u>OOOOO</u>	<u>OO</u>
	<u>OOOOO</u>	OOOO

(The normal rhyme-scheme is not indicated here, only the 'extra' sound patterns particular to this 'type' of Konlabot).

We can see that there are three pairs of words in the poem that share the same sounds.

ทำนอง/ทันเนื่อง	<u>Tham</u> <u>Nong</u> / <u>Than</u> <u>Nuang</u>
แจกขัน/จะเข้	<u>Čhaek</u> <u>Khan</u> / <u>Čha</u> <u>Khe</u>
เรียงไล่/ระลอก	<u>Riang</u> <u>Lai</u> / <u>Ra</u> <u>Lōk</u>

These pairs are placed in juxtaposition at the end of each line to link with the beginning of the next line. Since the word in each pair consists of two syllables, it is comparable to the two tusks of an elephant and by virtue of its juxtaposition with one another, the name 'Elephants joining tusks' seems to be justified.

กลบทกรอบจักรวาล

The mountain covered

p. 137

ค <u>ล</u> อ <u>ล</u> ี <u>ย</u> ง <u>เ</u> ียง <u>อ</u> ก <u>ค</u> เ <u>ด</u> า	อ <u>ล</u> อ
ก <u>ั</u> น <u>ก</u> ั <u>ด</u> ก <u>ั</u> ด <u>ค</u> ค <u>ว</u> อ	ล <u>อ</u> ก <u>ั</u> น
ร <u>ะ</u> อ <u>เ</u> ก <u>เ</u> ก <u>เ</u> ก <u>ค</u> ค <u>ล</u> ะ <u>อ</u> อ	ล <u>ะ</u> เ <u>อ</u> ย <u>ค</u> ร <u>ะ</u> อ
โ <u>อ</u> ย <u>ส</u> ะ <u>ล</u> ิ <u>ก</u> ส <u>ะ</u> อ <u>ัน</u> อ <u>ัน</u>	โ <u>อ</u> ก <u>อ</u> อ <u>ก</u> ร <u>ะ</u> อ <u>ก</u> โ <u>อ</u> ย
<u>o</u> <u>o</u> <u>o</u> <u>o</u> <u>o</u>	<u>o</u> <u>o</u>
<u>o</u> <u>o</u> <u>o</u> <u>o</u> <u>o</u>	<u>o</u> <u>o</u>
<u>o</u> <u>o</u> <u>o</u> <u>o</u> <u>o</u>	<u>o</u> <u>o</u>
<u>o</u> <u>o</u> <u>o</u> <u>o</u> <u>o</u>	<u>o</u> <u>o</u> <u>o</u> <u>o</u>

Here we have a pair of the same word of the first syllable and the last syllable in each line. Thus we can see throughout the poem a connection or a link within the same line.

Literally speaking, the word จักรวาล means 'a mountain range', a circular mountainous boundary, or, according to Thai mythology, a 'fabulous belt of mountains bounding the outermost regions of the seven seas and dividing the

visible world from the regions of darkness.¹

Thus, it is obvious that the appearance of the poem with the beginning and the end of the line rhyming in pairs reflects the image of a mountain range as well as a circular mountainous boundary.

กลบทโตเล่หาง Lions Swishing Tails

p. 138

ฉิวเฉื่อยเรื้อย <u>ฉิ่งฉิ่ง</u>	ฉิ่งฉับ
หรีดหรีดกระ <u>ฉับฉับ</u>	เรื้อยซ่า
กรากประกบ <u>กรับจับ</u>	จังหวะ
วัับวัับ <u>แซ่ซ่า</u>	ฉาบไว้เชิงไท

00000	00
00000	00
00000	00
00000	0000

Here we have the two syllables at the end of the first part of each line rhyming with each other in pairs. Thus, this special characteristic corresponds to the image of a lion swishing his tail.

From the examples of Konlabot above we can see that the name of each type of Konlabot already implies some characteristics corresponding to the name. These characteristics can indicate some particular structure of the poem which can consequently affect the sound pattern and the rhythm of the poem.

¹McFarland, Thai-English Dictionary, p. 237.

On one hand, we can say that Konlabot is not really a distinguished element in Thai poetry since it just involves more elaborate and systematic rules of 'word-play' in a poem. Sometimes the poet might insert one 'Konlabot' in his long poem without giving the name and thus it can pass unnoticed by most readers.

On the other hand, Konlabot seems to reveal so much of the essence of Thai poetry. Not only does it reveal the nature of the Thai language that lends itself to various types of 'word-play' and 'puns' but also it reveals the attitude of Thai poets and Thai readers towards poetry as an attempt at excellence of language use. The elaboration and restrictions of the verse forms are regarded as a challenge for the poet to manifest his 'mastery' over language use, the success of which is normally highly esteemed.

In Chak Mā Chom Mu'ang, the poet employs Konlabot in a very explicit manner by composing all ten different types each with its proper name. This 'explicitness' or 'deliberateness' on the poet's part is not a common phenomenon in Thai poetical works. In the past when the Konlabot appeared in any part of the work the poet hardly mentioned or specified its name.

The only occasion for any explicit use of Konlabot is in a text book for versification or language teaching as in Chindāmanī where examples of different types of Konlabot are given and illustrated with their proper names without any attempt to explain them.

Seen in this light, we can also consider this series of Konlabot as a reflection of one of the underlying themes in the text: the theme of poetry-writing. This theme, in fact, is already apparent in the poet's manifestation of the close relationship between two important verse forms in Thai poetry: Khlōng and Klōn.

This is clearly emphasized if we look at the 'content' of this pair of poems โคลงกลอน (Khlōng Klōn) and กลอนโคลง (Klōn Khlōng). This pair of poems can be considered as the poet's 'resolution' as well as his personal 'philosophy of poetry'.

p. 9

กลอนโคลง

พิเศษสารเศกสร้างรังสรรค์สาร
ประจจาร์ฉันทภาคพริ้งพรายฉาย
เนกเพชรพรรณเพราเนกเลิศแลฉาย
ระยับสายสะอึงสองสร้อยกรອງทรวง

ดวงคอกไม้มีง้าวโกมุทมาศ
เอี่ยมสะอาดพิสุทธิ์น้ำขิงคำหลวง
โรจน์รุ่งจุจกาวฤกษ์เบิกราควง
ประทับรวงผึ้งรำน้าคำกวี

ชีวิตนิคหนึ่งน้อยนี้หนักนัก
ปราชญ์ประจักษ์หลักแน่วนหน่ายหนี
ทุกข์สุขศกก็สรรพทั่วชั่วแลติ
ไซ้ก็ถือนทนเฝ้าจวนเลศนัย

ใช้พินิจเห็นเป็นแบบบท
ประจักษ์จนเป็นร้อยเรื่องไข
หลากข้อแบบยลคึกจิตฤาใจ
จักสอใส่สร้อยสว่างไว้ทางกรี

In resumé we may state his views:

'For the poet, poetry is an exquisitely refined and elaborate creation, comparable to the creation of a piece of jewelry. Poetry has the beauty of flowers, the purity of gold, the brilliance of the stars and the taste of honey. Since this life is short and tiring, all the sages will not cling to it but try to escape from being born again. However, life is still the source of poetry to be re-arranged and contemplated so as to create joys and enlightenment in the form of poetry'.

The underlying theme of poetry-writing is in fact subtly designed throughout the text. Even the structure of the work with its 'richesse' of verse forms is a part of the manifestation of this theme.

Apart from the 'richesse' of verse forms, the poet also illustrates a close relationship between two important forms: Khlōng and Klōn, in his 'resolution' as a poet. The poet expresses his ideas of poetry as well as its value for the human mind and spirit.

He even states explicitly that the source of literature and poetry is human life.

p. 19

ชีพคนคือคนแบบ	ฉบับไซ
ก่อให้เกิดวรรณกรรมไพ-	เราะแล้ว
สายธารที่หลังไหล	ทันหลาก
สายแห่งวรรณศิลป์แก้ว	ส่องแก้วกมลนาย

Human life indeed is the source
That creates the beauty of literature!
The overflowing stream of life
Is the stream of literature divine
Purifying the heart and the mind!

The explicit statement about the source of literature and poetry here is, in fact, very unusual in Thai poetry. Traditionally speaking, Thai poets rarely concerned themselves with the 'theory' of literature or with its values but concentrated more on its practical purposes such as to entertain the king and the court or to gain religious merits through the composition of religious poetical works.

Here, the poet makes it clear that he regards human life as the source of literature, like a flowing stream that gives life to literature itself. This also includes the idea that literature has its spiritual value for the heart and mind.

Apart from the 'source' of literature and poetry, the poet subtly reveals the 'art of poetry' through his work. The various stylistic devices employed in the text can be considered as a part of the poet's illustration of the 'art of poetry'. Thus it is not surprising that we can find an intensive illustration of 'poetical devices' in the text; different types of Konlabot, word-plays and puns as well as

quotation and allusion and especially with the poet's personal footnotes on his poems.

The poet's own footnotes explain either the types of his verse forms or the sources of his quotations. This characteristic in the text reflects the 'seriousness' of the poet in his profession as a poet.

To manifest this 'seriousness' explicitly in the form of footnotes by the poet himself is certainly not typical of Thai poets. Yet it would be wrong to say that this is completely unknown in Thai tradition.

King Rama VI and Prince Bidyalankarana did manifest their 'seriousness' in a similar manner by adding an introduction, an appendix or some footnotes to their poetical works. We can find an introduction as well as a rather long appendix in the work of King Rama VI, for example Sakuntala - a poetical drama translated from Sanskrit. Similarly, in the works of Prince Bidyalankarana we can find the poet's footnotes explaining the meaning of some difficult words he uses. Such works are, for example, Kanok Nakhōn and Sām Kru'ng.

These two poets were of course very serious scholars in languages and literature. Thus, it is natural to see their 'academic concern' for their poetical text, reflecting their desire to clarify the text and to offer some help to the readers.

Nevertheless, this characteristic of the text Chak Mā Chom Mu'ang cannot at all be considered as typical of the poet. We do not find anything similar in his other poetical works. This evidence, therefore, re-emphasizes the under-

lying theme of poetry-writing in this work.

The theme is further expounded indirectly through the poet's use of allegory and symbols in the text. As the story consists basically of various episodes from Ramakian, the poet can simply describe them according to the paintings in the temple. However, he seems to add in a lot of Buddhistic interpretation of Ramakian and thus turns his poetry into something deeper than just a descriptive poem.

For example, the poet describes Sidā as a symbol of pure perfection, growing in the earth and discovered in the heart of a lotus. This is comparable to those who are pure enough to look into their own selves and find enlightenment on their own.

p. 23

สีกาคือสิ่งสร้าง	สมบูรณ์
เติบโตบริสุทธิ์	พิสุทธิ์แล้ว
ชนกพองปากฝังมูล	กินหมก
จวบสิบหกปีแล้ว	คลาดไคลรำลึก
มีบัวบานเบิกห่ม	ห่อองค์
ผูกเฉพาะผู้เพียรจริง	จึงแล้ว
พบพระพิสุทธิทรง	เสาวภาคย์ นี้อ
คือจิตในจิตแก้ว	เกิดได้โดยตน

Sidā is a creation of perfection
Grown out of pure and clean earth
Where hidden by her father for sixteen years
She has flawlessly grown into a beauty!

A lotus-blossom covers her precious self
Appearing only to those with real devotion
To attain one's own enlightenment
One has to look into one's own heart!

Another episode that the poet uses as an allegory to explain Buddhistic philosophy is the episode where Hanumān found the heart-box of Thotsakhan and destroyed it. The poet explains that the heart-box is a symbol of ultimate ignorance that creates all the sufferings in life. Therefore once we find it we should try to destroy it completely to put an end to our sufferings.

p. 144

อวิชชาคั่นเหตุเบื่อง	บึงสุค
คือกลองใจในฤๅ	กลักกัน
พบแล้วเพ่งเพิกนุค	ถอนราก
ใจแห่งคั่นหาหัน	หันเหี้ยนเหี้ยนหน

Ignorance, the ultimate cause of suffering,
Is like the heart-box well-locked.
Once found, it should be uprooted
To completely destroy the heart's desires!

After Hanumān destroyed the heart-box of Thotsakan , he put an end to the war and the sufferings of war and enabled Rama to conquer. Thus, the virtue and justice of Rama prevailed over the evil and injustice of Thotsakan..

Apart from adding a certain amount of Buddhistic interpretation to the episodes in Ramakian, the poet also makes use of Buddhistic philosophy in his work. When describing the sufferings and love longing of Rama in the Nirāt tradition, the poet employs a Buddhistic consolation.

p. 73

พอรักพลัดรักต้อง	เป็นทุกข์
สขสิ่งไม่รักรุก	ทุกข์ควย
ปรารภนาสิ่งใดถู-	ฉวยพลาค
เป็นทุกข์ทราบเท่าม้วย	มอกเปลื้องปรารภนา

To depart from your loved ones is suffering
To join with those unloved is also suffering,
To desire something in vain is a deep pain
Only with a heart freed from desire,
Can the end of suffering be attained!

Traditionally speaking, the poet in a Nirāt poem tends to employ the rule of karma as a consolation by alluding to some bad deeds in the past that cause the present sufferings. Here, the poet offers instead the ultimate truth according to Buddhism - love and desires cause endless sufferings, the end of desires is the end of sufferings.

In fact, this rather 'philosophical' attitude does not sound quite 'consoling' but 'revealing'. The poet is simply giving a general statement of 'truth' according to Buddhism in a detached manner.

Besides, the poet points out to the readers that all the detailed story of Ramakian and its beauty is just like the peel of a fruit. We have to be able to gently strip off the peel in order to appreciate the 'flesh' and the 'essence' of it.

p. 146

สำภาพเสกพจน์สร้าง	สืบสรรค์
ผูกเรื่องผูกรวรรณ	วิจิตรไว้
กลเปลือกบิคนื้ออัน	เอมโชน
ลอกเปลือกปลงเนื้อได้	คั้นน้ำหวาน

Myriads of images and words I combine,
To create a story well-beautified.
'Tis like a peel covering sweet flesh.
To enjoy the ambrosia inside
The peel needs to be gently removed.

In other words, the poet is trying here to remind the readers of the importance of interpretation or the effort to perceive and appreciate beyond the appearance of things. To understand and appreciate poetry we need some effort to go deeper and beyond the surface.

The real essence of poetry can be covered by various elements that can be appreciated by themselves, yet it is always worthwhile trying to discover the 'reality' underneath. To enjoy the 'ambrosia' of the fruit, we cannot stop just at the 'peel' of it.

It is obvious here that the poet is concerned about the importance of poetry-writing as well as of poetry-reading. He regards these two activities as equally sophisticated and demanding. If the poet has to labour with his talents to create a refined piece of poetical work, it is just as important for the readers to put in some effort in order to appreciate it fully.

The poet's remark here also reveals the significance of interpretation. In the realm of poetry and literature so

much depends on the interpretation. The 'richesse' of a poetical work lies in the wide possibilities of its interpretation. To understand and enjoy poetry is far from a simple process. It requires an effort to perceive the deeper structure and meanings rather than what appears at the surface.

The importance of the subtlety of perception is emphasized in the text both by the poet's illustration of the subtle variations of 'verse forms' and his remark on the significance of interpretation.

The main themes of poetry-writing and poetry-reading together with the Buddhistic theme in the text are harmoniously intertwined. The structure of the work with all its 'richesse' of verse forms and poetical devices indicates the underlying theme of poetry-writing and reading. The use of Buddhistic allegory in the interpretation of the story of Ramakian serves both to reveal and to preach the subtlety and the depth of Buddhism and, at the same time, to illustrate the significance of interpretation in poetry-reading.

The poet, of course, declares his intention: he composed this work as a 'religious' worship-offering for the Wisākhabūchā festival. Thus, the 'religious' theme of the philosophy of Buddhism is conveyed through the episodes from Ramakian and fulfils the poet's 'religious' intention.

On the other hand, the poet expresses his personal 'resolution' as a poet - to compose poetry for his spiritual enlightenment. His ideas about poetry are, similar to those of Angkhān, highly spiritual. The 'seriousness' and

'academic concern' on his part as a poet reveal his real devotion to poetry.

He creates 'beauty' to cover the 'essence' of poetry yet he does not fail to make his readers realize that the 'essence' and 'reality' of it lie deeper than what appears at the surface.

In fact, the poet seems to make a parallel between poetry and religion. To understand either poetry or religion we need the power of mind to perceive the essence and the imagination and insight to interpret the meanings. This parallelism validates the 'spiritual' value of poetry claimed by the poet.

The harmony between the themes and the poetical devices employed by the poet contributes to the unity of the work. The poet's subtlety in creating this unity reveals and emphasizes the fact held by the poet that poetry is a carefully designed creation, like a precious piece of jewelry.

Apart from the 'spiritual' value of poetry, the poet also esteems poetry as the pride and honour of the nation as a whole. He likens poetry to the 'diamonds' of language, contributing to the dignity of the linguistic independence of the country.

p. 7

เพชรพาทีประทับพร้อม	ภาษา
ประทุกเพียบพรรณนา	นี้โน้น
อวดไทยโอ้ไทยมา	ทุกเมื่อ
เอกราชอักษรไพ่น	ผลึกผู้อำรุง

Like adorning diamonds to our language
Is the poetry that describes and beautifies!
Remaining the pride of Thai forever,
To cherish the independence of our letters!

The concept of poetry as the glory and pride of the nation is not uncommon in the Thai tradition and the poet here continues or follows the tradition with his own 'emphasis' on the 'independence' of the Thai language. Therefore, it seems that the poet perceives a deeper significance in poetry as an adornment to the prestige of the national language which is the reflection of the independence of the country.

The poet's purpose in composing the work as a 'religious' offering is explicitly stated in the text. He would like to pay respect to the Lord Buddha and the Emerald Buddha in the temple to ask for help to protect the people and the country.

He also wishes to preserve this work as an evidence of the glory and beauty of the temple so that even in the future when things change, this glory will remain in his work.

p. 189

การุณรักหล่อเลี้ยง	รักษา
สอกลใส่ศัลปะนนานา	เขนกล้ำ
นานไปดิแปลงปรา-	กฏเปลี่ยน
จารึกเรื่องไว้คำ	คิดครั้งเคยยล

With love and perseverance to preserve
I combine here all various arts
Lest things should change with time
They will remain the same in my rhymes!

This desire leads naturally to the wish of 'immortality' for his work as the poet states it at the end.

p. 191

คำโคลงห้าร้อยบท	บาทจตุร
เนาวรัตน์พงษ์ไพบุลย์	แบบสร้าง
ฉีกทบทบกพร่องพูน	เพิ่มตัด คอเทอญ
สืบสัจธรรมอย่าร้าง	อย่ารู้สวน

Five hundred verses are here completed,
By the poet whose name is Naowarat Phongphaibūn.
Should there be any mistake or imperfection,
Please freely give your correction,
So that the work will remain,
To eternally preserve the ultimate truth!

This, in fact, is a 'convention' well-cherished in Thai poetry - to mention the name of the poet and to wish for the 'immortality' of the work. In this case, the poet follows the convention very strictly for he even allows his poetry to be altered by future generations. This reflects the 'generosity' and the 'modesty' of the poet and it is a characteristic of Thai poetical tradition.

The poetical tradition of 'generosity' and 'modesty' can be seen in the works of great poets in the past like Prince Thammāthibēt in his Nirāt Thān Sōk where he states generously that if a scholar finds any mistake in his work he will be pleased to have the text corrected or improved.

นักปราชญ์หมู่เมธา	มีปัญญาอันฉับไว
พินิจพิศทุกที	วานช่วยแซมแต้มเขียนลง
กลกลอนบวรเกลี้ยง	ค่าแรง ก็ดี
นักปราชญ์ลาความแปลง	เปลี่ยนให้
กลอนเกินเงินค่าแคลง	ซัดข้อ
วานเพิ่มเติมลงไว้	อยู่นั้นหญิงชาย ¹

Similarly, in his Nirāt Thān Thōng Daeng, the poet requests his readers to help to correct his work.

จบเสร็จจนนงไม้	ในแหล่งไหล่นักศดาน
หญิงชายพึงสำราญ	ที่ฝึกอ่านวานแต้มเขียน
จบเสร็จจนนงไม้	โคลงการ
ชมแหล่งไพรพนักศดาน	เถื่อนกว้าง
หญิงชายชื่นชมบาน	ใจโลภย์
ใครอ่านวานเค็มบ้าง	ช่วยแต้มเขียนลง ²

Another significant theme apparent in the text is the theme of narration. Despite the intensive use of Konlabot and elaborate poetical devices the poet manages to tell a story in the form of folk legends.

The term 'to tell a story' here is used in a rather literal sense since the poet contrasts the 'telling' of the story in the folk legends in the text with the 'describing' and 'interpreting' of the episodes from Ramakian.

¹Dhanit Yūphō, Phraprawat phraniphon Čhaofā Thammāthibēt (Bangkok, 1973), p. 102.

²Ibid., p. 143.

It is quite obvious that the poet employs the technique of 'narration' to tell the legends of การะเกด (Kārakēt) and เจ้าขุนทอง (Čhao Khunthōng), the well-known folk heroes. These techniques of narration are reflected through the use of different diction, the dialogue and the explicit and direct description of the scenes and the feelings of the characters in the story.

These techniques are employed in the 'narratives' in the text to create a contrast with the 'description' of the beauty and art of the temple as well as the episodes from Ramakian. Even though these episodes can be treated as narratives we can perceive the difference in the way the poet treats them.

The episodes from Ramakian are in fact 'described' rather than 'narrated' in the text. In other words, we can say that the poet presents the episodes to the readers as they are - still life mural paintings in the temple. Yet he manages to create the 'depth' for his description by adding Buddhistic interpretations.

As far as the 'description' is concerned the poet follows the Thai tradition of describing in detail and in a rather elaborate manner. Thus we will find that the poet describes each part of the temple separately, admiring and comparing its beauty with the divine residence in heaven.

Moreover, Thai poets usually praise the marvel of the beauty of the temples as being a result of divine hands. It is quite common to find that the poet wonders whether the beauty seen is not created by gods since it is too beautiful to be from just human effort.

Yet in Chak Mā Chom Mu'ang the poet seems to diverge completely from that convention. It is true that he follows the poets in the past in describing a host of details with elaboration.

For example, the staircase of the temple is described vividly with the details of designs and colours - a rather traditional and conventional device in most Thai poetry.

p. 43

ลีลาศลอยบาทเปื่อง	บันได
นาคแผ่พังพานไสว	สว่างแก้ว
ห้าหัวระเหิดไฟ-	จิตรเพริศ
ระหว่างเสาจรัสพร้าว	พลุ่งเพียงเพดาน
ตระหง่านละคันแฉ่ง	ตะลึงงาม
อุบะบุษบกทาม	ทาบพลีว
ซอซอจะงอยตาม	เค็มรอบ
มุ่มยอทอดทองวีว	ร้องเรื่องเรื่องอุไร
ไขประทีปแก้วผ่อง	พรายแสง
วางระยะกำแพง	พราวแว่น
สวยสีสอคมแซมแฉ่ง	เหลือองเค้น
เชียวงามกะขบแน่น	หนึ่งน้ามณีฉาย

Following the 'convention', however, does not prevent the poet from expressing his own unconventional ideas. Instead of praising the beauty as being a result of the divine hands of gods the poet insists that human hands are enough to create all the marvels and beauty in the world. For the poet, gods do not belong to our world and thus are

not responsible for the beauty created by human hands.

p. 45

เทว'น'ท่านอยู่ฟ้า	อยู่'ณ'
ฤ'จัก'ลอยลงสร'รค์	เสก'สร้าง
มือ'มนุษย์'นี้'แหละ'บัน-	กาล'ชุ'บ'ติ
เห'ง'ือ'หยา'ค'ละ'หยา'ค'ล'้าง	หล'อ'ล'อ'มือ'ส'ร'ว'ง
ก'ว'ง'จิต'อุ'ทิศ'ให้	เห'็น'ก'ว'ง' จิต'แ'ย
จิต'เสก'สร'ร'ค'ส'ร'ร'พ'ว'ง	ป'ระ'ณี'ค'นี้'
ส'ิง'ส'ร'ร'พ'ป'ระ'ณี'ค'ท'ว'ง	เค'ติม'จิต'
ป'ร'ุ'ง'จิต'ส'ร'ร'ค'จิต'ชี'	ช'ว'ย'เน'น'น'ำ'ใจ
ละ'ม'น'ละ'ไม'ละ'เม'ีย'ค'พ'ร'้อม	พิ'ส'การ'
เสก'กระ'ท'อม'เสก'ว'ัง'ห'ว'าน	วิ'จิ'ตร'ไ'ค'
เสก'คน'เสก'ผ'ล'ง'าน	ง'าม'เค'น' ค'้อย'ฤ'า
เสก'ทุ'ก'ข์'เสก'สุข'ไ'ช'ร'	เสก'ส'ร'ว'ย'เสก'ท'ร'ว'น

In heaven and dreams are gods and angels
How could they care to descend and create?
Only human hands can really create
And by their labour challenge the divine!

It is the heart that reveals the truth
It is the heart that creates all refinement
That softens and fills the soul
To lead the heart to enlightenment.

Exquisitely refined and gentle is the heart
That creates a cottage or a great palace
That creates human beings and their work
That creates sufferings and joys, chains and pains!

The poet emphasizes the 'human value' of human beings
and insists that human beings alone can create all the

beauty with their efforts. The activity of 'creating' has in itself a spiritual value to refine minds and souls. Ultimately speaking, the world consists of human beings and their own creations, both high and low, big and small, as well as pleasant and unpleasant.

This emphasis on human values and efforts corresponds with the poet's 'theory of literature' that the source of literature is human life. Besides, it is related to the narratives of the legends of folk heroes inserted in the text since the legends are also concerned with common people. Thus, we can obviously see the pattern of unity in the text and how the poet subtly builds up this unity.

In the narratives, the poet gives a vivid description of the way of life of the common people such as villagers and farmers, their work, their festivals as well as their problems. The poet describes the ceremony of the rain-making dance ¹ แห่ นางแม่ Hăe Nang Măo¹, when there is a problem of drought in the countryside.

In the description of their ceremony the poet refers to the problems and the hopes of the farmers who are very much dependent on nature. Without rain they will have to suffer and therefore they ask for rain for their survival.

A similar aspect of the farmers' lives is conveyed in an effective and vivid manner in the narrative of Chao Khunthōng. In the narrative the poet explains and paints the humble life of a farmer's family, their simple joys, their love for their own land and their hard struggle for

¹See Sathirakoses-Nagapradipa, Lathithamniam lae praphēnī khōng Thai (Bangkok, 1965), p. 239.

survival amid all the hardship caused by both nature and the wickedness of human beings.

Ultimately speaking, we can consider the theme of 'narration' as an extension of the theme of poetry-writing. In fact, it is quite valid to regard 'narration' as an aspect of the techniques of poetry-writing. Seen in this light, the poet's effort to distinguish the difference between 'narration' and 'description' is a subtle device to expound and complete the underlying theme of poetry-writing in the text.

Even though it is rare, in the Thai poetical tradition, for poets to deal with the theme of 'poetry-writing' and its techniques, Naowarat seems to be able to handle and expound this theme perfectly well. His success, to a great extent, is due to his mastery of language use and his thorough understanding of the 'convention' both in forms and techniques of Thai poetry.

The use of various types of verse forms which is one of the poet's significant characteristics serves to reveal his belief that ultimately verse forms are not 'restrictions' but 'possibilities' of expression.

If verse forms are considered more as the possibilities of expression, it is natural that the poet can always invent a 'new' verse form by exploring the possibilities of language use. The success or failure of each 'new' verse form, however, depends on its harmony with the nature of language. The verse forms that correspond to the nature of its language are undoubtedly more successful as we have observed through the discussion on the importance of the forms of

Khlong and Klōn in Thai poetry earlier on. We have discovered that by virtue of their close relationship with the spoken language, these two forms have held a prominent popularity throughout the history of Thai literature.

The characteristics of the language are generally reflected in its verse forms. In other words, verse forms are 'forms' of special language use where its dominant characteristics are highlighted. Therefore, the poets who understand the nature of language can successfully exploit it to create any 'original' verse form with the ultimate effect of the most pleasing sound and sense, essential to all types of poetry.

The richness of verse forms in Thai reflects the richness of the language that lends itself to wide 'arrangement' and 'combination' of possibilities. By virtue of the nature of the language and its richness of verse forms, Thai poets can cherish the tradition of 'variation' and 'combination' in poetry. By 'variation' I refer to the technique of Konlabot which creates some elaborate restrictions on a verse form to achieve a wider variety.

Moreover, to serve different purposes and to enrich as well as embellish long poetical works, Thai poets tend to appreciate the possibility of 'combining' various verse forms to create different types of poetry.

For example, the combination of Kāp and Khlong composed in pairs is named 'Kāp Hō Khlong' กาพย์ห่อโคลง (Kāp embracing Khlong). The combination of Rāi and Khlong is called Lilit ลิลิต whereas the combination of various kinds of Chan in long poetical works is known as Kham Chan คำนันท.

In fact, there exist no specific rules of how to combine different types or kinds of verse forms. The existing combinations are the results of the invention of the poets in the past and they have become, more or less, conventions cherished by later generations.

Therefore, it is still a matter of choice and the possibility exists for the poet to invent new combinations so as to create new 'types' of poetry.

These wide possibilities obviously reflect the attitude of Thai poets towards poetry as a refined and elaborate creation. The refinement and elaboration are not limited to the diction or imagery alone but include the 'arrangement' or 'forms'. The varieties of verse forms or the variations of a single form together with the 'combination' of various forms are ultimately evidence of the efforts made by poets to refine and embellish their works to the utmost possibility.

The fact that these characteristics and qualities of Thai poetry still survive in the works of a contemporary poet like Naowarat is worth discussing. Firstly this fact reveals that verse forms in Thai, apparently elaborate and restricted, are far from pretentious. On the contrary, these verse forms help to bring out the 'poetical' qualities of the language and thus encourage the poet to attain the ultimate goal of creating poetry as the 'excellence of language use'.

Secondly, the continuity of the convention among present-day poets proves its lasting virtues. Undoubtedly, Thai poets today are differently inspired and motivated. They

have different ideas and messages to convey to the readers. Yet, no matter how 'original' their ideas are, it is still possible for them to find expression in the cherished 'convention' of the past.

The manner in which modern poets express themselves through the 'convention' is either to follow or to manipulate it in different ways. Seen in this light, convention is an invaluable basis from which grow and blossom 'invention' and 'modernity'.

Generally speaking, verse forms are included as a part of convention in Thai poetry. Poets normally have to learn these 'forms' and rules as well as poetic diction.

The understanding of all these rules allows poets to employ their talents in making the best use of the rules. Most serious poets learn to appreciate the significance of the rules and consequently gain insight into the relationship between language and literature.

This insight guides the poets to the 'individual' style or expression in their own works. Therefore, despite following the same 'formulae', Thai poets do not compose all in the same style or manner. Each poet can express his 'individuality' in a subtle manner for each poet can always reflect his own diction and emphasize different aspects of the same 'formulae'.

CHAPTER IV

THE INFLUENCE OF 'ORAL TRADITION'
IN MODERN THAI POETRY

CHAPTER IV

The Influence of 'Oral Tradition' in Modern Thai Poetry

The term 'oral tradition' here is used to refer to the whole heritage of Thai oral literature which embraces oral poetry such as nursery rhymes, lullabies, folk songs, as well as proverbs and sayings. Moreover, the 'oral tradition' refers to the essential and unalienable relationship between songs or music and poetical composition in Thai.

The word 'song' used here is a general translation of the word เพลง phlēng in Thai which in fact has rather wide and varied meanings in Thai poetic tradition.

As far as Thai poetry is concerned, the term เพลง phlēng is widely used in connection with different types of poetry, both oral and written. For example, a metrical composition of a letter, usually a love letter, is called

เพลงยาว (phlēng yāo). A short lyrical poem composed for singing or reciting is called เพลงสักราว (phlēng sakrawā) or เพลงคอกสัตว์ (phlēng dōk sōi). Many types of folk songs sung by the farmers during their special festivals or certain seasons are known as 'phlēng' with a differing specific name added such as เพลงปราง (phlēng prap kai), เพลงฉ่อย (phlēng chōi), เพลงโคราช (phlēng khōrāt). These folk songs can be considered more or less as Thai 'oral' poetry.

These varieties of เพลง (phlēng) reflect the fact that Thai oral poetry is as rich as, if not even richer than, 'written' poetry. However, it would be a great mistake to believe that there exists a definite barrier between oral and written poetry in Thai.

The important verse form of Klōn is a very common form of all folk songs or เพลง 'phlēng', mentioned above. On the other hand, there exist many long and important poetical works composed for singing, reciting or chanting. These works are normally written for special purposes, for example: to tell a story about a hero, as Sēphā Ru'ang Khun Chāng Khun Phāen, to be chanted for religious purposes as Kāp Mahāchāt or Mahāchāt Klōnthēt, or to be sung during a boat journey or procession, as Kāp Hē Ru'a.

Thus it is obvious that in Thai tradition 'oral' and 'written' poetry are closely related and can naturally influence each other. It is quite understandable that this tradition can still be traced even in the works of modern and contemporary poets.

Certainly, the influence of the 'oral' tradition on the poetical works in the past was not precisely the same as it is today. Yet this particular tradition is still alive in modern Thai poetry.

In the previous chapters we have discussed in passing the influence of oral literature such as nursery rhymes, folk songs and legends on the works of Angkhān Kalayānaphong and Naowarat Phongphaibūn. In this chapter we will look at this aspect of modern Thai poetry in more detail.

To create coherence in our study, we shall start by examining the works of Naowarat Phongphaibūn. As discussed in Chapter III, the poet's works reflect his deep awareness of the relationship between 'poetry' and 'songs' or music. The influence of songs is apparent not only in the text

Chak Mā Chom Mu'ang but also in other works.

Like most Thai poets, Naowarat is careful to create beauty of 'sound' or melody in his works. This includes the fact that sometimes he even makes use of some kinds of the 'verse form' of songs. For example, in his first book Kham Yāt, a collection of short poems, he either uses the technique of quotation from some well-known songs or imitates a verse form of folk songs for his poetry. มาจะแชนผผพิมพ์ให้พริมเพรา

In his poem แม่ศรี Māe Srī, the poet starts with the quotation of the song and then continues to use it as the main theme of the poem. เด็กเนลาโนมณะนี้พี่จะชม

แม่ศรี
แม่ศรีเอ๋ย แม่ศรีสวยสะ ยกมือไหว้พระ นะแม่ศรีสม
ขวัญเจ้าคือ ทั้งคอเจ้ากลม ชักผ้าขึ้นชม ชมแม่ศรีเอ๋ย

เชิญเจ้ามาล้อมวงทรงแม่ศรี
แม่อย่ามีหม่นหมองเลยน้องเอ๋ย
พี่จะพี่จะร้องรับขวัญอัญเชิญเซย
ให้ให้ให้เหมือนเคยแต่ครั้งเจ้ายังเยาว์

ขอแนลัมแยมณลิมะลิซ้อน
พี่จะซ่อนเซยไว้มิให้เนา
มาจะแชนผผพิมพ์ให้พริมเพรา
เด็กเนลาโนมณะนี้พี่จะชม

กระหวัคเกล้ารับพัศตร์แล้วปักปิ่น
อบประทีนจันทน์จรวมนมถวาย
คิ้วรูปเคียวเรียวขับรับศาคม
คอเจ้ากลมเกล่ออ่อนประอรเอียง

โอ้แม่ศรีสวายสะเจ้าประแป้ง
ห่มสีแคงควายไหมสไบเฉียง
นุ่งผ้ายกเชิงทองคอยมองเมียง
ค่าเจ้าเพียงเทพีแม่ศรีไทย

เจ้าโฉมเอยโฉมนายสายสวาท
เชิญแม่ยาคกรเอยมาช้าโฉน
เพลงเขาร้องเชิญร่ายว่าไร
โอ้ว่าใครหนอลืมเลือนเพื่อนเพลงทรง¹

The quotation is from a well-known song 'Māe Srī' used as an invitation song for the spirit-inviting game of Māe Srī, played during the traditional Thai New Year in April. In this 'game' one player, usually a young girl, is supposed to be possessed by the spirit of 'Māe Srī' and then performs an elegant dance while the others sing for her.²

The poem describes the beauty and elegance of the girl performing a Māe Srī dance. The poet embraces the convention of beauty appraisal and love poem in the text. This short poem is a harmonious combination of both 'oral' and 'written' tradition, for the quotation of the song serves effectively to create a background atmosphere for the text.

¹Naowarat Phongphaibūn, Kham Yāt (Bangkok, 1969), p. 169.

²See Khana Anusāsanāchāṅgthapbok, Chumnum Māe Srī (Bangkok, 1960), pp. 251-64.

A similar poetical device is employed in the poem

นาพญา Nā Phayā.

นาพญา

ตาเอยตาหวาน	ไม่อย่ากลับบ้านแล้วเอย
น้ำเอยน้ำคำ	ใครเชือกก็เข้าใจเอย
รักสาวนาพญา	จะปลูกเรือนรอน้องเอย
มีรักร่วมหอ	จะปลูกเรือนคร่อมตอแล้วเอย
เมืองกาญจน์แค่นี้	เชิญน้องไปสืบญเอย

คอกแควว่งที่ละคอกบอกเพลงพี่
สลบค่อนครั้งละทีที่เอียนเอย
คำต่อคำแต่ละครั้งช่างเปรียบเปรย
ศาลสกลเอยจะกระอักสาลักตาย

บ้าน วังรัก รักแรกอย่าแปลกรัก
พี่ไม่หักเสนาหาประกาศหาย
ถึงแปลกถิ่นพี่ก็ถือไว้ชื่อชาย
คั่นนารายไหนจะคั่นคั่นนารัก

ย่าน รวงยอม ยอมยับอยู่กับเหยา
แม้รักเรามีรุ่มยอมพร้อมสมัคร
ทั้ง วังรัก รวงยอม อยู่พร้อมพรัก
ยอมลั่นศกก็ลั่นชื่อเหมือนลือแล้ว

ลือว่ารักแรกหวังที่ วังรัก
รวงยอม ชักชวนยอมถนอมแก้ว
หนองพันแปด เป็นลั่นสอกลลอคแนว
ครั้นรักแนว นาพญา ก็หย่ากัน

ยกตำนานบ้านนามาขัดข้อง
ไอ้สว่น้อง นาพญา อย่าชู้ขวัญ
ไม่สู้จริงไม่เสียใจให้พาคพัน
จะลองรันลบตำนาน รักบ้านนา

แม่ลั่นคมใบข้าวคาวกลางคำ
ไม่เชื่อคำคอกแคเคญแม่ฆ่า
ยืมที่อื่นไม่ชื่นใจจึงไ้มา
มาหลับตาตายตรงกลางวงรำ¹

The beginning of the poem is actually a dialogue between a boy and a girl. It is a courting song improvised by both sides as a form of festive entertainment especially in the countryside.

The poet makes use of this courting song as the topic of his poem and combines this with his own poem in the voice of the boy requesting sympathy from the girl and assuring her of his true love.

It is worth noticing that the technique of punning with place names is employed here as in a conventional Nirāt poem. To illustrate this point we will look at a line from the poem in the form of transcription to see the technique of punning the poet employs.

¹Ibid., p. 174.

บ้าน วังรัก รักแรก อย่าแปลกรัก

Bān Wangrak rak rāek yā plāek rak

The poet is playing with the word 'rak' here because the name of the place is 'Wangrak' and the word 'rak' in Thai can mean love or the name of a flower or tree. As the name of a place, the word 'Wangrak' can mean the place where 'rak' trees are in abundance.

However, the word 'rak rāek' the poet uses here means 'first love'. Therefore, the poet associates the meaning of 'rak' in a different context from the original place name so as to convey the feeling of the boy in the song. This technique of punning with place names is quite conventional in Thai poetry of the Nirāt type because the poet can describe his journey and his love-longing at the same time.

In the tradition of Thai folk songs which are mostly improvised rather than formally composed, the ability of the singers to create puns in the songs is essential. As a form of contest and entertainment, these puns reflect the 'literary talents' of the ordinary people. This particular heritage from the 'oral' poetry is accordingly elaborated and has become a special technique of 'written' poetry of the Nirāt type.

The possibility of this technique, however, results from the nature of the Thai language which is rich in monosyllabic words with meanings varying according to context. The poet can easily make use of this quality of

the language to create literary effects in poetry.

The technique of quotation from a folk song is sometimes less obvious as the poet will 'integrate' the quotation into his own text rather than use it as an introduction to his poem.

In the poem หวานคมเคี้ยว (Wān Khom Khieo) the poet describes a romantic scene in the rice fields during the harvest time when young lovers enjoy working together and singing their love songs.

หวานคมเคี้ยว

เอนระนาบอาบนํ้าคางกลางแดดหนาว
ทอดรวงยาวยอกระย้ารอนํ้าไฉ
ละลารอบขอบฟ้าคราพลัวใบ
เพียงพรมใหญ่ไหวระยาบทาบทาเปลวทอง

เปรียบเพลงเรือเมื่อสงฆ์หมอกจางสี
ระเรื่อยรีเลียบลัดคักชายหนอง
สาวเจ้าพาย้ายเยื้องช้าเลื่องมอง
หนุ่มก็พร้อมเพลงเกี้ยวเกี้ยวแกกกัน

ไอ้ข้อพิพาทรวงทองชะน่องเอ๋ย
พี่ดวงเคี้ยวเกี้ยวเกยไม่เคยหวั่น
หวาดแต่ใจเจ้าไม่จริงมึงแจ่มจันทร์
จะเกี้ยวคางเสียดกลางคันเท่านั้นเอ๋ย

สาวสะเห็นเอ็นแอ่ยเอยโอรุ ไอ
คอกโสนริมนาฟ้ายาเอย
จะลคเลี้ยวเกี้ยวไจ้องไม่เคย
ที่ไหนเลยจะเชียวเท่าคนเจ้าฐา

เพลงรักแว่วแผ่วหวานกังวานหวิว
หึ่งหึ่งทิวทิวใกล้ไกลเกินดู
นกร่ายฟ้ามาริเียงเคียงริมคู
สาวหนุ่มคุดลอแข่งร่วมแรงงาน

เขาเริงรีน ลงแขก แลกแรงเรียว
ค่าง จับหน้า คว่าเคี้ยวเกี้ยวผสาน
ล้วนขางามอร่ามกอดคอดนํ้านาน
เขาขานบอกอุทยาน หวานคมเคี้ยว

The poem begins with a 'pastoral' scene of the rice fields during harvest time, the happy atmosphere of abundance and the joyful expectation of young lovers about working together. The poet describes how the lovers express themselves in their 'songs' while working. At this point, the 'songs' are inserted in the text in a harmonious and natural way. The integration of the songs into the text serves to enliven the poem and increase the intensity of feelings in the text which is primarily of a descriptive nature.

The combination as well as the integration of folk

¹Ibid., p. 165.

songs into 'written' poetry can be regarded as the effort of the poet to 'extend' and 'simplify', to a certain extent, the 'written' tradition of poetry.

This attempt extends beyond the manipulation of the verse forms of the folk songs but includes the 'realistic' use of dialect in the text. For example, when the poet writes about the ceremony of สู่ขวัญ (Sū Khwān), a spirit-welcoming ceremony in the North-East of Thailand, he employs a few words of North-Eastern dialect in his text.

อย่าเพลินชมป่าเขาลำเนาเถื่อน
ให้มาเยือนเฮาหนาอย่าไปไต่
อยู่แค้นคินคงป่าฟากฟ้าไกล
ไผอาศัยความเกาเว้าเพิ่นตรอม¹

The use of the North-Eastern dialect here serves to create the 'authentic' and 'realistic' atmosphere in the text. In fact, when considering the 'dialect' words employed here we can notice that the poet does not use them too 'intensively'. He seems to select some rather common and well-known words so as to enable his readers to understand without much difficulty.

The underlined words are those from the North-Eastern dialect with only slight differences from the 'standard' dialect of the capital and the central part of Thailand.

¹Ibid., p. 143.

For example, the difference is only in the consonant used

เรือน Hu'an is เรือน Ru'an in standard dialect
(meaning 'a house')

เรา Hao is เรา Rao in standard dialect
(meaning 'we')

Otherwise, most of the words used are generally known, for instance,

ไผ - Phai meaning 'who' or ไฉ - Sai meaning 'where'.

Thus, the use of the dialect in the text is not an obstacle to the readers but only a harmonious and subtle device to create a more 'realistic' atmosphere.

The poet also makes use of the verse forms of simple folk songs in his work. He manages to illustrate how the use of 'simple' diction can create no less poetic expression than the more elaborate diction of Pali and Sanskrit loan-words.

In his poem 'Loi Krathong'¹ the poet describes the festival with various verse forms including a series of poems composed in a simple verse form of a song almost like a nursery rhyme with pairs of rhyming words.

ลอยกระทง

จันทร์เอยจันทร์เจ้า	แสงเ้ายวนเย็น
เที่ยงคืนเดือนเพ็ญ	เก็นหาพรพรหม
ไม้ทรงเกสร	ทองกรโกมล
เก็บรายไวน	อำพลในไพร

¹Loi Krathong is an annual festival to pay respect to the goddess of water during the full moon of the Thai traditional twelfth month by floating decorative baskets made in the shape of lotus flowers lit with candles.

ขวัญเอยขวัญอ่อน	พังกลอนกล่อมขวัญ
ฮักแพงแสงจันทร์	แสงจับแสงใจ
ไปแด่ไหลเรือ	อย่าเมื่อเมื่นไกล
ผ้าผ่อนท่อนสไบ	จัดใส่ในแพ

ลอยทวนลงธาร	บุญบาตรึกษา
กับข้าวกับปลา	อย่าห่างอย่าแห
แสงไต้ปลายเสา	กวักเว้าวอนแล
จะลอยลงกระแสน	แม่กุศลผลทาน

บุญเอยบุญคุณ	บุญข้าวขวัญถิ่น
บุญข้าวประดับดิน	บุญบุญไผ่ถาวร
ไค้ข้าวไค้ปลา	ไค้หาอาหาร
เอื้องการเอื้องงาน	สำราญสัมฤทธิ์

เคื่อนสว่างคืนไสว	น้ำใส่ฟ้าสวຍ
น้ำขึ้นน้ำรวย	อวยชัยไพจิตร
โคมบัวบานแบ่ง	ตกแต่งเนรมิต
ประดับประดา	ศีกกระทงลงลอย ¹

On the other hand, we can regard this verse form as a type of Klōn Sī - not commonly used in written poetry - but more common in the oral tradition. The simplicity of form is in harmony with the simplicity of the diction which consists mainly of monosyllabic words, both Thai and foreign words.

¹Ibid., p. 91.

The simplicity of the form and the diction echoes the 'style' of the well-known inscription of King Ramkamhæng of the Sukhōthai period, considered by many scholars as the first evidence of Thai 'written' literature.

The technique of rhyming words in pairs is actually quite characteristic of the spoken language in Thai. The poet's deliberate use of this technique gives a strong impression of a song sung with the smooth and simple rhythm of the spoken language.

Nevertheless, the simplicity of the text does not fail to create 'poetical effects'. The readers can still perceive the vivid images of the festival and its joyful brilliance of the beauty of the moon, the night and the candle light.

The poet manages to illustrate the poetical effects of the simple words, how they can create vivid images in a very intense and economical manner.

For example, the poet describes the whole atmosphere, the scenery and the beauty of the night in two lines of eight words.

เดือนสว่างกินไสว น้ำใสฟ้าสวย

The literal translation would be:

The moon is bright.

The land is abundant.

The water is clear.

The sky is beautiful.

From the grammatical point of view the text in Thai consists of sentences each of which is of the same structure of a noun and a verb. The simplicity of the structure is in

accordance with the choice of the words employed.

In fact, we can say that the words chosen are not particularly 'poetic' as they are quite common and general words employed in normal language use. Nonetheless, these 'common' words composed in this context are actually very rich in their 'poetic' values.

The 'verbs' the poet employs here are in fact related in their meanings and besides share the same sounds that create two rhyming pairs of words.

สว่าง	ไสว	ใส	สวย
<u>Swāng</u>	<u>Swai</u>	<u>Sai</u>	<u>Suai</u>

The word สว่าง 'swāng' means 'bright, clear, glowing, luminous, shining'¹ whereas the word ไสว 'swai' means 'much, abundant, ample, copious, plentiful'.² Usually these two words are employed together as a fixed collocation meaning 'very bright and clear'.

The poet's use of the word สว่าง 'swāng' to describe the moon as bright and clear is common enough. But the use of the word ไสว 'swai' to describe the land as plentiful is not quite common. The sentence กินไสว by itself sounds rather odd but in this context being collocated with the sentence เกือบสว่าง the meaning of this unusual sentence is very clear.

The collocation with the sentence เกือบสว่าง serves to give a connoted meaning to the sentence กินไสว . Here the

¹McFarland, Thai-English Dictionary, p. 830.

²Ibid., p. 895.

land is not only plentiful or abundant but it is also bright and clear, shining with the joys of the celebration of the festival on the moonlit night.

The meaning of the 'brilliance' and 'brightness of the whole scene is reinforced by the description of the water and the sky. The water is clear and the sky is beautiful. From these apparently simple descriptions, the reader can perceive the beauty and joys of the celebration to the full. This is partly due to the carefully chosen words that are harmoniously connected both in their 'senses' and 'sounds'. Their connected meanings serve to intensify and highlight each other to create the harmonious vividness of the imagery.

This example illustrates how the poet can create beauty out of the simplicity of language use. This shows how the combination of apparently simple words can have 'poetical' effect in poetry by virtue of collocation and how apparently 'common' words can be combined to create 'uncommon' phrases with unusually rich meanings in poetical context.

These poetical devices employed by the poet reflect how the poet can successfully combine the essence of simplicity of the 'oral' poetry with the elaboration of imagery of the 'written' poetry.

From the discussion so far we can obviously see how the poet manages to manipulate the 'oral' tradition in his work and thus, to some extent, succeeds in modelling a 'new' formula of 'modern' poetry shared by quite a few of his contemporaries.

Besides, we can observe how the poet subtly manipulates the names of songs in his text by using them as the titles of

his poems. Various short poems of this nature can be found in his book Phiang Khwām Khlu'an Wai.

For example, the poet employs the musical term (Hōm Rōng) meaning 'an orchestral overture', combined with the name of a very well-known Thai classical song

คลื่นกระทบฝั่ง (Khlu'n Krātop Fang) meaning 'the waves reaching the shore', for his poem. In this particular poem the poet makes use of the underlying meaning of the name of the song as well as its theme by presenting the poem in a specially re-arranged verse form in order to get the effect of the image of the moving waves from the 'typographical' setting.

โหมโรงคลื่นกระทบฝั่ง

แซ่ซู่พิ้งคึกครื้น

ครวญคะนอง

คือคลื่นฟุ้งฟายฟอง

ฝั่งซำ

มโหรีที่กระทีกฉดอง

เฉลิมโลก

รวัหลังละถ้งน้ำ

เนตรฟ้ามาเฉลิมฯ

แซ่ทัพสังคีตขรื่อง

คละกลองจองผจงเจิม

บ่าเทิงเมคิมเกิม

เผด็จจับ ณ บั๊กกล

... ร่ายชอกลอสายลม

ระงมชมชเลวน

เอื้อยเอื้อยเอื้อยนำชล

ชลัมพูพะพรายแพรว

ลมสศและแกกไส

ก็ไล้ลิ้งเงาเงา
ก็ไล้ริ้วเป็นทิวแถว
ประกายน้ำท่วงแวว

แล้ววาทเส้นเล่นลายเรือง

กระชั้นกระชั้นรับ

ระเนนับมาหมุนเนื่อง

ทะยอยย้าอยู่เนื่องเนื่อง

คะนองเสียงระส่ำสาย

กระเพื่อมลงเหลือมล้ำ

กระซิกซ้ากระหน้าทราย

โลครีแล้วคลีคลาย

พอกชายหาควมหยากขบ

ทรหวนชันป่วนปั่น

คะกรันครันสนั่นกลบ

มีคฟ้าและหล้าลบ

ถลัมขวัญลุ่มบรลงา

จบเพลงจบภพจ้า
ไพจิตร
ไพเราะเร่เนรมิตร
มิ่งไว้
พระเอยพระทรงฤทธิ์
ศุภวิศุทธิ์
ขอพระองค์ทรงให้
พระหัตถ์ใช้อีกหน¹

The poem consists of two types of verse forms: Khlōng and Kāp Yānī. The poet uses Khlōng as an introduction and the ending and the actual content is composed in the form of Kāp Yānī. The content is prominently a descriptive imagery of the movements and the sounds of the waves rushing to the shore. The poet's mastery of language use is fully demonstrated here when he manages to create a lively description of the scene - the detail of the movement of the rushing waves, the sounds and the glittering of the waves caused by the wind and the sun and the description of the melodious music performed by Thai classical instruments.

The movement and the rhythms of the poem are re-emphasized through the re-arrangement of the verse form. The arrangement of the lines in a special way gives the effect of the movement of the waves just by the appearance of the

¹Naowarat Phongphaibūn, Phiang Khwām Khlu'an Wai (Bangkok, 1980), pp. 94-96.

poem. The overlapping of the lines imitates the image of the waves running after one another, following the wind and rushing to the soft sand shore where exquisite designs are created through the movement of the waves.

This poem illustrates how the poet can manipulate the 'essence' of this song to the full. Starting from making use of the name of the song, the poet manages to re-arrange the 'appearance' of the verse form employed so that it corresponds to the 'image' suggested by the name of the song. However, the 'name' of the song becomes the 'theme' of the poem describing the beauty and the movement of the waves rushing to the shore.

In fact, the 'graphic art' employed to create the vividness of his description in the poem can be traced back to the invention of the poets in the past. In the inscription of different verse forms in Wat Phrachēttuphon there exists a series of Konlabot composed in different 'encoded' forms. The readers have to understand the 'code' so as to be able to read and understand the poem. Usually the poet will give enough 'key words' together with suggestive names of the poem and thus enable the readers to 'decode' his poems.

Here are some examples of Konlabot from จารึกตำราโคลงกลบท Charu'k Tamrā Khlōng Konlabot some of which truly give the impression of 'graphic art' just from their forms or appearances. For example, the one with the name กลโคลงดาวล้อมเดือน meaning 'the stars surrounding the moon' has an elaborate design corresponding to its name.¹

¹See Prince Damrongrājānuphāb (ed.), Prachum Chāru'k Wat Phrachēttuphon (Bangkok, 1963), pp. 598-610.

However, it is worth bearing in mind that these elaborate and encoded forms are more of a 'game' for 'prestige' among the 'learned' poets themselves rather than for the readers. Thus ultimately speaking, they are more or less a kind of exclusive word game among the literary scholars who delighted in demonstrating their mastery of language use as well as challenging each other on literary talents.

Seen in this light, Naowarat's poem here is not exactly of the same nature as the Konlabot of the poets in the past. His purpose is more to re-inforce the underlying meanings of his poem and to create a kind of 'typographical' effect from his deliberate re-arrangement of the lines of his poem.

His re-arrangement serves to intensify the significance of his work, for the rather 'unusual' arrangement of the form will naturally attract the reader's attention and thus the form itself becomes a part of the whole meaning of the poem.

This also illustrates how the poet can successfully create a unity between the 'form' and the 'content' to get a harmony as well as the intensity of feelings for his work.

The re-arrangement of the poet is not at all a 'code' or a mystery for readers to solve. On the contrary, it is

a subtle aid to guide readers through the work and to help them appreciate the full significance intended by the poet.

Therefore, we can say that this particular technique here is neither 'conventional' nor 'original'. It is a subtle combination of both and at the same time a unique invention of the mind of a poet who understands the 'essence' of poetry as an artistic creation of harmony.

Besides, the poet makes use of some well-known nursery rhymes such as the song to the moon เพลงพระจันทร์ (in his first book Kham Yāt) or เพลงเปลญวน - a lullaby or a hammock song (in Phiang Khwām Khlū'an Wai). We will examine closely one example of these to see how the poet combines the essence of a comparatively light-hearted song in a serious poem.

เพลงเปลญวน

" จะซื้อเปลญวน
ที่สายหย่อนหย่อน
จะเข้านอนนอน
ไกวเข้าไกวเย็น "
อย่าร้องไห้ไปเลยเจ้า
กลัวใครเขาจะมาเห็น
น้ำตาเจ้าจะเป็น
รอยเปื้อนบนปรางทอง
หนาวอะไรกับลมหนาว
กูสีกาวยังพราวผ่อง
โลกนี้มีละออง
ละออสันอำพันแพรว

และเปลือยกตาเราตกลงเบื้องต่ำ
เสนาะคำขับหวานมาไหวแว่ว
จากความฝัน ขอบฟ้า พายคาวแปรว
จะเจือยแจ้ว จากความหลัง ไกลลิบลิบ

และดอกไม้เหมือนจะพร้อมให้หอมดอก
ลมก็พัดพร้อมจะบอก บทเพลงขับ
เบิกระบำใบหญ้าระย้าระยิบ
หยอกล้อกับยอดไม้ไม่หยุดยั้ง

และหินผาพรายประกายเพชรพลอยเคลื่อนไหว
รจจะเลื่อนเหลี่ยมบริบริหว้าง
ทุกสายธารสุนทรีย์ร่อพล้าง
มือที่รังสายนวล เฝ้าให้นอน

มือที่ลบโลกแต่ง แห้งและเปื้อน
เนรมิตมิให้เหมือนเมื่อวันก่อน
คือมือพรหมมิใช่พรานเทียวรอนรอน
มือมารครมิใช่มารฉลาญให้กินหนั

เปลญวนเอ๋ยเอื้อระเหยกล่อมน้องนอนเปล
โอดะเห่เอละช้า น้องอย่าคั่น
เคี้ยวยักษ์ใหญ่มันจะตื้นชันมายิน
มันจะกินโลกเกลี้ยงเพียงชั่วคืน

เปลญวนโยนหย่อนระย้าใจว่าแหว
ไม่รู้เหหาใคร ตกใจตื่น
ยักษ์คำรามร้องลั่นอยู่ครั้นครั้น
เป็นเพลงปี่พราหมณ์ ถลุ่มญวน¹

¹Naowarat Phongphaibūn, Phiang Khwām Khlu'an Wai, pp. 58-60.

A Hammock Song

"I will buy a hammock
With loose strings.
Put my love in
To lull her to sleep
Morning and night!"

Do not cry, my lovely darling
Soon someone will come and see!
Your tears my dearest
Will stain your cheeks so fair!

Do not get cold from the winter wind
Look - how the stars are still shining
How the world is so bright
Full of the magic of night!

Then my eyelids fall across my eyes
I hear the sweet and wavering sounds
As from dreams, from the heaven of shining stars
From the distant past... so far away!

Where the flowers offer their fragrance willingly
And the wind is so pleased to sing melody
For the green grass to dance joyfully
While caressing the trees incessantly!

And the rocks appear like myriads of diamonds
Waiting for the radiance of sunset
And every beautiful brook awaits the power
From the hands that rock the cradle!

The hands that sooth and console the earth
To re-create the golden past!
These hands know not the art of destroying
For these are mother's hands, loving and caring!

Oh, sweet hammock, I lull my love to sleep
Softly and smoothly, do not move, my love
For you might wake up the Giant!
He can eat up the world within a night!

Oh, how the loose and lonely hammock swings!
So frightened, the baby is awake crying
The Giant is screaming - so loud like thunder
It is the melody of the guns destroying Vietnam!*

*The word 'hammock' in Thai is เปลญวน Plē Yuan'. Since 'yuan' is also a word used to refer to Vietnam as a country the poet can manipulate this association of the word 'yuan' in the poem and convert or transform the hammock song as a well known lullaby into a serious poem with the theme of the Vietnam war.

The poet begins his poem with the quotation of the song 'hammock song' and then continues with two stanzas of Klōn Hok, a form similar to the form of the original song employed as an opening stanza. The rest of the poem is composed in the form of Klōn Pāet, the best-known of all the forms of Klōn.

The first two stanzas are composed in the voice of a mother trying to lull her child to sleep and to stop crying. The next three stanzas of the poem are in the voice of the child describing the feelings of sweet drowsiness and the dreamlike vision of the marvel of nature: blossoming flowers, the melody of the wind and the glittering dance of the grass as well as the brilliance of the rocks under the sun.

The last three stanzas are in the voice of the poet contemplating the virtue of motherly love. To the poet, the hands of a mother are those of love and have the power of creation that can change the world for the better. The

poet contrasts this creative power of love to the destructive power of hatred by evoking the image of a giant and war at the end of the poem.

This unexpected ending reinforces the underlying theme of the anti-war attitude in the poem. The apparent influence of the song serves as a firm background for the 'foregrounded' element at the end.

Because of the title of the poem and the quotation as the opening stanza, the poet manages to create a completely different atmosphere and raise a different expectation from the text. Therefore, the contrastive ending becomes even more effective as the 'message' from the poet.

This example illustrates how the 'connoted' meaning of the title and the quotation employed can serve to sharpen or highlight the 'contrast' in the text. Here the poet turns an apparently light-hearted song into a serious poem on the question of war and its destructive nature.

The technique of using an unexpected ending to create a sharp contrast to the whole poem is an obvious example of the aspect of 'modernity' in the work. Needless to say, the theme of the anti-war attitude is also far from 'conventional' in Thai poetry.

Therefore, this poem illustrates how the poet can make use of 'convention' in his text. Ultimately speaking, a song or a hammock song quoted by the poet in this poem can be regarded as another level of convention though less obvious than verse forms, rhyme schemes or poetic diction.

In other words, this song can be seen as 'natural'

poetry that forms a 'model' or essential background for the poet to create his own work. The essence of the natural 'poeticalness' in folk songs or nursery rhymes is in fact an underlying or 'natural' convention - an unalienable or integral 'soul' of Thai poetry.

As discussed earlier in our study, the 'poetic convention' can be a result of the 'invention' of the poets in the past who set up a large number of 'excellent' poetical devices to be cherished by the following generations.

Thus the nature of the language or the 'poetic' qualities of the language can be regarded as the 'natural' or 'primary' convention for the art of poetry in general. This explains the close and significant relationship between songs and poetry in Thai. As Thai is a tonal language it easily lends itself to poetry and songs which both employ and explore the 'musical' nature of the language.

Looking back to the works in the past will confirm our 'theory'. In the long history of Thai poetry there exists a large number of works composed under the category of

เพลงกล่อมเด็ก 'lullabies' or 'cradle songs'. It was a tradition to compose lullabies for royal children as well as for white elephants regarded as majestic possessions. In addition, there exists a special type of poetry composed for the procession of the royal barges in the verse form of กาพย์ kâp called กาพย์เห่เรือ Kâp Hē Ru'a.

Similarly we can find major works composed for dance-drama like Inao and Ramakian which are regarded as great and important poetical works in their own right. In these texts

the 'musical' elements are quite explicit as we can find even the indication of the name of the melody for each important section of the work. Therefore, these poetical works can be both 'read' and 'performed' in an equally effective manner.

As a result of the close relationship between poetical texts and music, there exists a large number of บพมโพรี (Bot Mahōrī) 'orchestral songs' with the verse from the text of well-known poetical works like Inao, Kākī and Ramakian.¹

Even to the present day many modern songs or popular songs still make use of the well-loved poetical text like the works of Prince Thammāthibēt or Sunthōn Phū for their composition of the songs. Some contemporary Thai poets who are also musicians themselves compose songs or verses for a Thai classical orchestra. One of these poets whose works we are going to examine is สุจิตต์ วงษ์เทศ Suchit Wongthēt.

Like Naowarat and Angkhān, Suchit is a contemporary poet who makes use of the 'convention' of the past to create his own 'modernity'. His works are comparatively much more influenced by the 'oral' tradition of folk literature than the works of Naowarat or Angkhān. The main verse form he employs is Klōn, composed in the style of 'oral' poetry both in the subject matter and the diction he chooses.

We can probably say that he is one of the prominent poets of the present day who attempts to 're-create' and 're-vitalize' the poetry of the oral tradition in the written

¹See Prince Damrongrājānuphāb, 'Tamnān Mahōrī' in Prachum Bot Mahōrī Kau Mai (Bangkok, 1920), pp. 1-25.

form. The success and the recognition of his works is due to his choice of diction which is very simple yet highly effective. Like Angkhān, he dares to use a lot of 'improper' or 'unpoetic' words in his text. Yet he manages to illustrate how 'unpoetic' words can create 'poetic' expression and beauty in a certain context.

The poetic expression he creates results from the 'harmony' between his subject matter and his diction as well as the 'contrast' created through the manipulation of the convention.

The elements of songs and music in his works are quite obvious yet different from those in Naowarat's works. Due to his interest in archaeology and Thai classical music, his poetry is highly influenced by his personal interest. He employs a large number of 'archaic' yet 'idiomatic' expressions in his text. The first person pronoun he chooses for himself is กู Kū - a pronoun of the Sukhōthai period which, in the present-day context, is normally used as a very familiar pronoun among men to define their group solidarity. It is also used to express the 'superiority' of the speaker as well as 'anger' and 'aggressiveness' in a certain context.

On the other hand, this pronoun is generally used among the ordinary people in the countryside without any implication of superiority or aggressiveness. Therefore, by the choice of this pronoun, the poet creates an 'ambivalence' of the diction which corresponds to the subject matter and the atmosphere of the text which is mostly about the rural people

with whom the poet identifies himself.

This is quite understandable from the family background of the poet, who was born in the countryside in the district of Khōk Pīp of Prāchinburī province on the 20th April 1945. He started his career as a poet when he was studying at Silapakorn University in Bangkok. After his graduation he worked for สยามรัฐ 'Siam Rat' - a well-known newspaper and established himself as a journalist-poet.

Between 1973 and 1976 he worked with his friends as a journalist for the new liberal newspaper ประชาชาติ Prāchāchāt, which was closed down as a result of the coup d'état in October 1976. He established himself as a publisher and started a monthly magazine called ศิลปวัฒนธรรม Silapawattanatham, 'Art and Culture' in 1979. Throughout his career we can see that his talent is versatile as he is as much a journalist as a poet.

One of the earlier works of the poet, first published in 1969, is กูเป็นนิสิตนักศึกษา Kū pen nisit naksu'ksā - I am a student! - a collection of poems by Suchit Wongthēt and Khanchai Bunpān, his poet-friend from the same university. This book of poems was an important success and marked a significant turning-point in modern Thai poetry.

Examining his works in the book we can certainly notice the 'prominent' characteristics of the poet's style in the 'boldness' and 'simplicity' of language use. These characteristics of the work include the use of simple but poetic and archaic diction which creates a special effect in the work

as a 'harmonious contrast' between the past and the present. By this I mean the poet manages to employ the 'archaic' expression to convey the 'modern' sentiment and ideas of his own generation. This use can be regarded as an aspect of modernity.

In his famous poem 'Kū pen Nisit Naksu'ksā' (I am a student!) an example of this 'harmonious contrast' is beautifully illustrated. The poem is a satire on the social values attached to the status of students. The poet who was himself a student at that time expressed his personal resentment towards the so-called privileged academic life of the 'intellectuals' of the country.

The diction employed is a mixture of 'archaic' and 'idiomatic' expression with the deliberate 'boldness' of using 'impolite' and 'improper' words. However, the result is a very effective poem with a clear and distinguished message for present-day readers.

It is worth noticing that the poet deliberately repeats the 'thematic' sentence of the poem throughout the text - Kū pen nisit naksu'ksā - I am a student! in order to emphasize the satire on this 'status'.

From the poem it is obvious that the poet is a sharp satirist. This characteristic element is apparent in most of his work and can be considered one of the modern aspects shared by young poets of the present.

กูเป็นนิสิตนักศึกษา

I AM A STUDENT!

กูเป็นนิสิตนักศึกษา
วาสนาส่งส่งสโมสร
ย่ำค่ำนี้จะย่ำไปงานบอลล์
เสพเสน่ห์เกสรสุมาลี

I am a student!
Favoured with high fortune and high society
When dusk falls I'll go to a ball
To enjoy the sweet charms of flowers and beauties.

กูเป็นนิสิตนักศึกษา
พริ้งสง่างามผดุงจากเพียงราชสีห์
มันสมองของสยามธานี
ค่ำนี้กูจะนบให้หน้าใจ

I am a student!
Smart and courageous like a lion,
The brains of Siam great capital
Oh, how I will indulge myself tonight!

กูเป็นนิสิตนักศึกษา
เจ้าข้ารู้จักกูหรือไหม
หัวเข็มขัด กลัดกระดุม ปุ่มเน็คไท
หลีกไปหลีกไปอย่ากีดทาง

I am a student!
Oh, you slaves, don't you know me?
Look at my buckle, buttons and tie-pin,
Step aside, let me pass by!

กูเป็นนิสิตนักศึกษา
มหาวิทยาลัยอันกว้างขวาง
ศึกษาสรรพธรรมเวิ่นว้าง
เมืองกว้างขวางหลายสหายก็

I am a student!
In this enormous university,
I study diligently all kinds of tastes.
Oh, how great and comfortable it is!

กูเป็นนิสิตนักศึกษา
เดินเหินดูสง่ามีราศี
ย่ำค่ำกูจะย่ำทั้งราตรี
กรุงศรีอยุธยาอาราธนา

I am a student!
Magnificent, I walk with dignity.
Tonight I'll tread the whole night
Through 'marathon' Ayuthaya!

เฮ้ย กูเป็นนิสิตนักศึกษา
มีสติปัญญาเยี่ยมสิงขร
ให้พระอินทร์เอาพระขรรค์มาปั่นรอน
อเมริกันมาสอนกูเชี่ยวชาญ

Hey, I am a student!
Higher than mountains is my intelligence.
I challenge Indra to fight with me,
For I am well-trained by America!

กูเป็นนิสิตนักศึกษา
หรูหราแหลมหลักอักษรฐาน
พรุ่งนี้ก็ต้องไปร่วมงาน
สังสรรค์ในระดับปริญญา

I am a student!
Splendid, sharp and pre-eminent
Tomorrow I will have to attend a party
For intellectuals who all have degrees!

ได้โปรดฟังกูเถิดสักนิค
กูเป็นนิสิตนักศึกษา
เจียบไว้ย ฟังกู ปรึกษา
กูอยู่มหาวิทยาลัย ...

Oh, please listen a bit to me,
I am a student!
Quiet! - listen - this is philosophy
I am at university!

... กูอยู่มหาวิทยาลัย
รู้ไหม เห็นไหม คิ'ไหม
อีกไม่นานเรากำลังจะตายไป
กอบโกยใส่ตัวเองเสียก่อนเฮย¹

.... I am at university.
Do you know, can you see, isn't it great?
So soon we shall all die,
Let's accumulate wealth for ourselves!

¹Suchit Wongthēt and Khanchai Bunpān, Kū Pen Nisit Naksu'ksā
(Bangkok, 1977), pp. 85-6.

It is quite obvious that the mixture of 'archaic' and 'idiomatic' expression is not translated in the English version. (Because its nature seems to defy translation!) However, it is worthwhile trying to illustrate this point using the text in Thai so as to clarify this characteristic of the poet.

The poet chooses to express the thematic sentence in an archaic yet idiomatic style, using the first person pronoun Kū to convey the sense of 'superiority' and 'aggressiveness'. This sentiment is further emphasized through the similes modifying the pronoun 'Kū' - 'I'. The 'I' in the poem is compared to a lion, his intelligence is higher than mountains and he is a 'superior' master considering others as his slaves.

The similes employed are, in fact, quite conventional or even clichés. The idea of comparing an 'ideal' beauty for men to the majestic pride of a lion is quite 'conventional' in Thai poetry. Nevertheless, the conventional simile is a contrast with the thematic sentence. The phrase

พริ้งสง่างามผดุงกเพียงราชสีห์ is actually quite conventionally 'poetic', echoing many lines praising beauty found in Thai poetical works. The juxtaposition of this simile with the phrase

กูเป็นนิสิตนักศึกษา creates a sharp contrast because this phrase belongs more to a colloquial expression and is hardly 'poetic'.

The contrast between the 'poetic' and 'unpoetic' expression is prominent throughout the poem and thus creates a subtle sense of 'satire' and 'challenge' in the

text.

In addition, the deliberate use of 'archaic' expressions in the text serves to intensify this contrast. In the fourth stanza, the poet manipulates the technique of contrast of expression to create an effective satire.

The 'I' in the poem describes the university and his 'activities' as a student. The description of the university is กว้างขวาง kwāng - khwāng, meaning wide or spacious. It is a rather 'modern' adjective used in normal written language without any 'poetic' flavour. The poet then describes the atmosphere of the university with a very 'archaic' and 'picturesque' expression เมืองกว้างช้างหลาย, Mu'ang kwāng chāng lāi, an echo from the famous inscription of King Ramkhamhāeng of the Sukhōthai period.

Literally speaking, เมืองกว้าง mu'ang kwāng means 'a spacious city' and ช้างหลาย chāng lāi means 'plenty of elephants'. The combination of these two phrases suggests an image of a prosperous city with riches in abundance. The poet collocates these with an idiomatic phrase สบายดี sabāi dī meaning 'very comfortable'. The whole line

เมืองกว้างช้างหลายสบายดี therefore serves to describe the atmosphere of the university and, at the same time, creates a contrast of expression within the stanza.

The description of the activities in the university is ศึกษาสรรพวิชา Su'ksā saparot mi wen wāng which, stylistically speaking, is quite 'poetic'. However, the poet manages to create a satirical effect through the use of the unusual verb ศึกษาสรรพ Su'ksa saparot, 'study all

kinds of tastes'.

This is rather unexpected as an expression since within the context it is more common to have the names of the subjects to follow the verb 'study'. But to study 'all kinds of tastes' implies a subtle satire that, in reality, the students are just enjoying themselves and indulging themselves in pleasure rather than studying. This implication is already stated in the first two stanzas where the 'I' or the student describes that he is going to a ball to enjoy the charms of the flowers and to 'indulge' himself. This 'unexpected' expression, therefore, serves to emphasize the 'satire' by corresponding to the images and ideas of the preceding stanzas.

The poet manipulates the technique of contrast of expression to the extent of bringing in various colloquial expressions both polite and impolite. In the sixth and eighth stanzas, the poet employs the words ^๒โฮ้ย hoei and ^๒ว้าย wōi, which are 'vulgar' exclamations made in order to call for attention.

In contrast to this 'vulgarity', however, the poet employs a polite request form in the eighth stanza when the 'I' in the poem is desperately asking to be listened to ^๒ได้โปรดเดี๋ย 'please'. This expression is a 'modern' request in the spoken language quite uncommon in poetry. The effect of this technique is the 'realistic' expression of the 'spoken' language conveying the feelings of the 'I' in the poem.

The use of the 'modern' expression does not prevent the poet from employing 'conventional' images and diction in the text. For example, the 'I' boasts of his intelligence that it is higher than the mountains by expressing it in a 'conventionally poetic' manner - มีสติปัญญาเยี่ยมสิ่งขร
The expression เยี่ยมสิ่งขร is quite recognizable as an echo from Ramakian. The stanza proceeds with an allusion to Indra as the 'I' announces a challenge to Indra to come and fight him with a sword. This allusion brings in an element of a 'romance' in Thai tradition, because in most Thai romances Indra is quite prominent as a supernatural power to help the heroes in time of difficulty or crisis.

Here, the poet plays with the convention because instead of the hero asking for help from Indra he is challenging Indra to come and fight with him for he is so proud of his intelligence and power. The reason for his pride is that he is well-trained by America - อเมวิกามา-
สอนญ์เยี่ยมวิชาญ.

Apart from the idea of the poet, the diction itself is a sharp contrast to the allusion to Indra. The mentioning of 'America' is an intentional attack on the influence of 'Americanization' in modern Thai society. The immediate juxtaposition of this line to the allusion to Indra can be regarded as an 'explicit' satire on the poet's part. The 'I' in the poem is obviously challenging the old tradition by using a 'new' idea and belief. If Indra represents the old world of supernatural power, America has now replaced it and for the new generation, the latter is far superior to the

former.

The contrast and mixture of expression reflect the significant theme of satire on the status of students and their mentality. It is an attack as well as a protest on the changing values of modern society.

The poem ends with three rhetorical questions, all of which belong to the 'spoken' language quite uncommon in poetry. The conclusion of the poem is also a satire in a form of advice - since we are all going to die soon why should we not just think of ourselves and accumulate wealth for ourselves.

The ending questions can be regarded as another underlying theme of this short poem. The poet not only creates a sharp satire but also raises a critical question on the whole problem. The reader is made aware of the satire and the questions at the end serve indirectly to invite the questioning on the reader's part. The poet raises the question and draws attention to it by means of satire. He does not try to find a solution but encourages the reader to question the existing values attached to the status of students.

This short poem is an outstanding example of the influence of the 'oral tradition' in modern Thai poetry. It is an illustration of the poet's characteristic patterning of language use in order to create a sharp satire. It reveals how the poet can make use of various traditions by combining them together to get a contrast of expression and an effective satire as a result.

Compared with Naowarat who employs songs as 'introduction' to his poems or as 'models' and 'thematic elements', Suchit seems to exploit songs in his work in a different manner. He uses songs more to protest or attack something serious in an apparently unserious way.

This is a subtle and successful technique on the poet's part since ultimately speaking the structure of Thai folk songs often involves altercation and disputation. There is an element of provocation which is necessary in the continuity of the songs. This is normally personal argument but Suchit uses the technique for his political and social comments.

Thus the poet's effort to manipulate this element in folk songs is a reflection of his understanding of the 'essence' of songs and how it can be effectively conveyed in a written form of poetry.

To 're-create' these songs of the oral tradition in a form of written poetry, the poet makes use of various verse forms of songs in his work and uses the title of 'songs' for his poems. Some of the titles of the poems in his book are เพลงคลอกลอด กล่อมบางกอก แหล่พระรถ ไปตามเพลง
เห่ลูกทุ่ง กล่อมเขาวังที่เพชรบุรี ล่านำเพลงเรือตามยุคสมัย These underlined words in Thai have the meaning of 'songs' or 'lullabies'.

Almost all of these titles are highly suggestive of the elements of songs and thus reflect how the poet considers his poetry as another type of song. This is comparable to the use of the word 'Lam Nam' meaning 'melody' in Angkhān's

poetry and the intensive use of the imagery of musical instruments in Naowarat's works.

As discussed earlier, Suchit tends to use a satirical tone and style in his poetry and he makes use of this element in the oral tradition of folk songs.

For example, in his poem เพลงคลองหลอด Phlēng Khlōng Lōt - the song of the Pipe Canal - the poet employs the verse form of a boat song to create a poem of attack on the traffic problem in Bangkok. The poet describes how the canal is quite polluted yet, compared with the traffic jams in the streets, he is still happy to travel by the canal in his small boat.

เพลงคลองหลอด

เกือนสิบเอ็ด ^๑ ค ^๒ น้ำ ^๓ นอง	เกือนสิบสอง ^๑ น้ำ ^๓ ทรง
กู ^๑ จะ ^๒ เข็น ^๓ เรือ ^๔ ลง	คลอง ^๑ มอญ
รุ่ง ^๑ เช้า ^๒ กะ ^๓ กรร ^๔ เช้า	เมื่อ ^๑ อ ^๒ ม ^๓ ข้าว ^๔ อ ^๕ ม ^๖ ปลา
กะ ^๑ เตง ^๒ ลง ^๓ นาวา	ลำ ^๑ าง ^๒ ม ^๓ งอน
แสง ^๑ ทอง ^๒ ส่อง ^๓ ทาง	พาย ^๑ พลาง ^๒ ก็ ^๓ เห ^๔ เพลง
กระ ^๑ ห่ม ^๒ คลื่น ^๓ ควิน ^๔ เครง	ช่วย ^๑ กล่อม ^๒ กลอน
จุ ^๑ จี ^๒ แม่ ^๓ ดำ ^๔ เจียก	แม่ ^๑ เปี้ยก ^๒ น้ำ ^๓ คิ ^๔ ค ^๕ ต ^๖ ลิ่ง
บุ ^๑ ษ ^๒ บา ^๓ แม่ ^๔ เอา ^๕ ทั้ง	วิ ^๑ ม ^๒ สา ^๓ คร
ออก ^๑ แม่ ^๒ น้ำ ^๓ เจ้า ^๔ พระ ^๕ ยา	ข้าง ^๑ อาราม ^๒ ปราง ^๓ ค ^๔ อรุณ
ทะ ^๑ วัน ^๒ ออก ^๓ แค ^๔ ก ^๕ อุ ^๖ น	ลม ^๑ อ ^๒ น ^๓ อ ^๔ น
มี ^๑ ส ^๒ ยา ^๓ หลง ^๔ เห ^๕ ยื่อ	ว่า ^๑ ย ^๒ ตาม ^๓ เรือ ^๔ มา ^๕ เรือ ^๖ ย ^๗ เรือ ^๘ ย
จับ ^๑ ระ ^๒ บ ^๓ ำ ^๔ ร ^๕ ำ ^๖ เป ^๗ ลือ ^๘ ย	แล ^๑ อ ^๒ ว ^๓ ย ^๔ พร
ไ ^๑ อ ^๒ แม่ ^๓ น้ำ ^๔ ยาม ^๕ เช้า	เห ^๑ มี ^๒ อน ^๓ แ ^๔ ง ^๕ า ^๖ เส ^๗ ียง ^๘ กง ^๙ ว ^{๑๐} ม
คลื่น ^๑ กระ ^๒ ทบ ^๓ ฝั่ง ^๔ ตาม	ว ^๑ รร ^๒ ค ^๓ ต ^๔ อน

แลเห็นสะพานพุทธ	อุตุคุดอวาน
สปีคี่สปีคน	จรรยา
เรือล่องเข้าคลองหลอด	อยากจะจอกปากคลองตลาด
แต่ปากคลองไม่สะอาด	เป็นสันคอน
น้ำฟุ้งเรือ (ชะ ชะ ชะช้า)	เลื้อยฟุ้งป่า
คลองไม้คั้นเมื่อนาวา	มาสัญจร
ร่วมขนุนขนานชนันท์	ขึ้นท้าววิเศษพิช
มองเห็นวิเศษประสิทธิ์	แล้วสังหรณ์
แม่พ่อเอาคอนกรีต	มาปักปิดคลองตลอด
ถูกต้องพายเรือลอด	คงตายก่อน
จรรยาจลาจล	แน่นถนนทุกทุกสาย
แต่กูมาเรือพาย	ถึงที่ก่อน
คอกโสนบานเช้า	คอกคักเค้าบานเย็น
คอกทองอย่าทำเป็นเล่น	กับพระนคร เอย ¹

The attack and the protest made by the poet is effectively but subtly conveyed. The poet follows the convention of praising the beauty of nature - the rising sun, the gentle morning breeze, the fish following the boat and the sound of the water harmonizing with the shades and shadows of the morning mist.

The diction employed is the combination of fixed collocations and echoes from other songs together with the word-play which is characteristic of the improvised songs in Thai oral tradition.

To illustrate how the poet employs the stylistic device of 'word play' in his poem we will look at some examples from the text. As the theme of the poem is about the traffic

¹Ibid., p. 19.

in Bangkok, the poet expresses his resentment towards the problem through the collocation of the word 'traffic'.

The poet first describes the traffic on the bridge as he sees it as follows:

แลเห็นสะพานพุทธ	อุตุอุกอลวน
สัปคีสัปคน	จรวจร
Lǎe hen saphān phut	utalut onlawon
Sapadī sīpadon	Āhara chōn

Oh, look at the bridge of King Rama I
What a disordered tumult!
Oh, how vulgar and indecent
Is the traffic there!

The word 'traffic' here is collocated with and modified by a group of words all conveying the meaning of confusion, disorder and tumult อุตุอุกอลวน. Moreover the poet uses a very unusual group of adjectives to modify the word 'traffic' สัปคีสัปคน meaning obscene, vulgar and indecent. These words are actually very idiomatic expressions hardly used in written language and undoubtedly very 'unpoetic'.

The fact that the poet deliberately employs such 'unusual' and almost 'improper' diction reflects two main points in his poetical technique. First he is a poet who exploits the 'oral tradition' in his poetry and therefore he chooses to use a colloquial expression instead of a written one. Secondly, this rather 'impolite' expression reflects the tradition of folk songs which are normally improvised by the country people. As the improvisation is

also a form of entertainment and competition between two sides, it is quite natural to find less polite expression which they use to provoke and challenge each other as well as to entertain the audience. The 'boldness' of the diction makes this 'unpoetic' expression very effective and fulfils the poet's purpose of conveying his strong resentment towards the traffic in Bangkok.

The poet makes use of the technique of pun and word-play in order to emphasize his ideas. For example, to emphasize how he perceives the traffic as chaotic he collocates the word 'traffic' with 'chaos' in his description.

จรรจรรจลจล
แต่กู่มาเรือพาย

แน่นถนนทุกทุกสาย
ถึงทีก่อน

Ācharachōn Āchalachon nǎe thanon thuk thuk sǎi
Tǎe kū mā ru'a phāi thu'ng thī kōn

Oh, traffic and chaos!
Crowded is every single road
But I, travelling by rowing boat
Am the first to arrive!

In Thai, the collocation of the words 'traffic' and 'chaos' has a deeper dimension of a pun and a word-play as both of them share the same consonants and sounds which can be seen from the transcription as follows:

จรรจรร จลจล
Āchara - Āchōn Āchala - Āchon

These two words are very similar, except for the slight difference of spelling of 'r' sound and 'l' sound. The juxtaposition of these two words creates a pun and a word-play as well as a vivid image of the situation of the traffic. By virtue of the juxtaposition, the words 'traffic' and 'chaos' are indirectly equated.

Thus it reflects the poet's idea about the traffic and how he resents the problem. Besides, this indirect equation conveys the tone of 'protest' and 'attack' on the poet's part in a rather 'humouristic' manner.

This element of 'humouristic' attack and protest is in fact very characteristic of the 'oral tradition' both in folk songs and folk tales. From this point of view, we can see how the poet makes use of the oral convention in order to create his own poem of attack and protest in a very effective way.

The poet's intention to exploit the 'oral tradition' of folk songs can be seen throughout from the title of his poem as 'the Song of the Pipe Canal' and the rather unusual verse form which is more common in oral poetry. All these elements serve as evidence of his effort to re-create the oral poetry in the form of written poetry with all its sophistication and refinement of language use.

The poet manages to illustrate how the 'boldness' of diction can be considered as another aspect of refinement for it can create 'poeticalness' in the text no less than the conventional elaboration of diction cherished in the 'written' tradition of poetry.

The poet's effort to make use of the conventions of

folk songs for his own work reaches the extent of composing verses of songs for Thai classical orchestra. The poet composes the verses for songs and specifies the name of the melody. Most of the songs he composes, however, consist of the elements of protest and attack which are characteristic of the poet's style. The poet uses his songs as a protest against many serious social problems, for example, the problem of changing values, the problem of inflation and the poverty of the underprivileged.

In all these songs the poet employs a rather colloquial diction commonly used in the oral tradition. Nevertheless we can appreciate the effective simplicity of language use that conveys the vividness of the feelings in the text.

In ข้าวยากหมากแพง¹ Khāo Yāk Māk Phāeng - song of protest against poverty and inflation - the poet manages to combine colloquial diction and its 'humouristic' elements with the clarity and vividness of description. The poet describes in the voice of a poor farmer how he is deprived of all the good food because of his poverty despite the fact that he is the main 'producer' of food as a farmer who grows rice for the country.

It is worth noticing that even the title of the song is from a well-known fixed collocation or cliché in Thai

ข้าวยากหมากแพง normally used to refer to 'famine'. Literally speaking, this phrase means 'rice is rare and fruit is expensive'. (Khāo = rice, Yāk = rare, Māk = fruit, Phāeng =

¹Suchit Wongthēt, Chao Khunthōng Pai Plon (Bangkok, 1981), pp. 68-9.

expensive). Therefore, the use of this phrase as the title emphasizes the theme of the song.

The poet starts the song or the poem with a refrain in very simple diction.

กินข้าวเคย กินข้าวกับน้ำปลา
ผักบุ้งปลาร้า (ซ้ำ) ก็ยังดี

Eating rice, eating rice with fish sauce
With vegetable and fish steeped in brine
Even that is good enough!

The following verses are mainly the description of the food and the resentment of the poor who cannot afford the high prices of it. The poet ends his song in an effective manner of satire with the technique of word-play.

ลูกเคยเกลือมีงกี้ใจ
กินไก่ไม่ได้ก็กินเกลือ

Dear children, be glad to have salt
If you can't afford chicken, eat salt!

In Thai, the word-play is in the last line between the word ไก่ 'Kai' meaning chicken and the word เกลือ 'Klu'a' meaning salt. It is obvious that these two key words 'Kai' and 'Klu'a' share the same initial sound of 'k'. However, the meanings of these two words are quite contrastive. 'Kai' refers to so-called 'expensive' food and 'klu'a' refers to the most common or 'cheap' food that can hardly be considered as food on its own. Salt can only give flavour to food and normally is used for cooking, but since there is nothing to cook with it, it has to be eaten as food by itself.

This 'word-play' in the last line creates an effective

image of the poverty which corresponds to the title of the song ขาวยากจนจนแพง 'famine'. From the 'content' of the song it is obvious that the poet aims at creating a 'protest' on a serious subject in an unserious manner. The element of 'humouristic' protest is actually very characteristic of the folk songs sung and improvised by the people who create them.

Examples from the works of Suchit Wongthēt serve to illustrate the influence of 'oral tradition' in modern Thai poetry. Different poets make different use of the 'oral tradition' as can be seen from the different 'styles' of Naowarat Phongphaibūn and Suchit Wongthēt.

Chapter Three illustrates how, ultimately speaking, verse forms in Thai are well-cherished conventions which, up to present, are still prominent. The reason behind this lies in the virtue of these verse forms that helps to bring out the well-balanced and organized beauty of language use both in its senses and sounds.

The more successful verse forms are those closely connected and in harmony with the nature of the language. Therefore, it is hardly surprising that in a tonal language like Thai, music and songs play a very influential part in the art of poetry.

This underlying significance is manifested throughout the long history of Thai poetry. In the past, poetry composed for dance-drama and for reciting stories to entertain the court was not uncommon. Therefore, a close relationship between poetry and songs was quite evident. This fact is recognized by modern poets of today who study the convention and gain the insight into its essence that helps

to create 'modernity' in their own works. The 'musical' elements in modern Thai poetry are reflected through the influence of the 'oral' tradition in the text, for example, the use of folk songs in various forms with the 'spoken' diction and the simplicity of language use.

The poets of today make different use of the oral poetry and nursery rhymes. Different poets select different aspects of oral tradition to serve their purposes. Naowarat Phongphaibūn makes use of the quotation of love songs to create 'pastoral' scenes in his love poems and manifests the beauty of the simplicity of language use and verse forms, characteristic of oral tradition.

On the other hand, Suchit Wongthēt as a satirist-poet uses songs as a form of satire, protest and attack in a very effective style. The 'simplicity' of verse forms and diction is intensified by the 'boldness' of language use which is in harmony with the archaic yet idiomatic expression in the text.

These elements from the oral tradition integrated in modern poetry reflect a significant 'continuity' in the art of Thai poetry. This 'continuity' might not be too evident from the appearance of the forms and the diction of modern poetry. However, in the last analysis the deep continuity from the past is obviously traceable.

The 'continuity' reflects the virtue of the convention which corresponds to the nature of the language and thus enables the poets to explore the possibilities of language through various poetical devices.

The oral tradition in poetry can be regarded, to a large extent, as part of the nature of the language as it is closer to the 'spoken' language than any type of 'written' poetry. The deep influence of oral tradition in modern Thai poetry illustrates how the oral tradition is ultimately a 'primary' level of convention in Thai poetry.

Verse forms and poetic diction in the written tradition are, on the other hand, 'elaborate conventions', a complementary level to the primary one. These two related levels of conventions are fully manipulated by modern poets in order to create 'modernity' in their works.

The study so far illustrates how the nature of 'modernity' embraces, in fact, the qualities of the 'convention', consisting of the harmonious combination of the nature of the language and the invention of the poets, in the past as well as the present.

In the last analysis, 'modernity' in Thai poetry combines both 'oral' and 'written' traditions together. The mixture of these two traditions can be regarded as an extension of the 'written' tradition as well. The process of extension by combining and making use of different aspects of different traditions is undoubtedly a means of enriching the heritage of Thai poetry.

The possibility of exploring and exploiting the nature of language in order to create beauty and harmony has been extended through the judgement and invention of modern poets of today. Their effort to combine the oral tradition in their works to re-create oral poetry in the

written form can be considered a means to simplify and popularize the art of poetry in a constructive manner.

It is a way of acknowledging and recognizing the natural and genuine literary talents of the majority of the people and an attempt to make the best use of these talents to enrich the art of poetry. It is also a way of 'preserving' these talents in a written form so that the nation will not risk losing this literary treasure.

The 'simplified' written tradition of poetry will encourage a larger audience to appreciate the art of poetry and thus widen the possibility of poetic creation. Ultimately speaking, the 'simplified' written poetry does not decrease the 'refinement' of the art of poetry but rather increases another aspect of 'refinement' through the virtue of simplicity.

The simplicity of verse forms and diction further emphasizes the fact that the beauty of poetry is primarily a result of the harmony of arrangement with aesthetic subtlety. It is the poet who creates 'poeticalness' in poetry through his mastery of language use and imagination. It is the poet who manipulates and arranges the meanings and imagery of words so that their arrangement becomes 'poetic expression'.

Seen in this light, the influence of 'oral' tradition in modern poetry serves to reveal the nature of the art of poetry and its genuine power of 'creation'. Furthermore, it reflects the 'continuity' of convention which is, in fact, the essence and soul of Thai poetry.

CHAPTER V

THE CREATION OF SYMBOLS IN MODERN THAI POETRY

Chapter V

The Creation of Symbols in Modern Thai Poetry

In 1952, at the beginning of his career as a poet, Angkhān wrote a short but significantly 'symbolic' poem in the form of Khlōng as follows:

โลก	
โลกนี้มีอยู่ควย	มณี เคียนา
ทรายและสิ่งอื่นมี	ส่วนสร้าง
ปวงธาตุต่ำกลางดี	กุดยภาพ
ภาคจักรพาลมีร้าง	เพราะน้ำแรงไหน
ภพนี้มีไขห้ล่า	หงส์ทอง เคียนเลย
กากก็เจ้าของครอง	ชีพควย
เมาสมมุติจองทอง	หีนชาติ
น้ำมิตรแล้งโลกม้วย	หมกสิ้นสุขศานต์ ¹

The World

The World exists not just for a jewel.
Sand and other elements also count.
High or low, they all help keep balance.
To which force then does the World hold?

The World is not merely for a gold swan.
The crow lives and owns it also.
If ignorance and arrogance blossom
How can we find friendship or peace?

¹Angkhān Kalayānaphong, Kawīniphon (Bangkok, 1970), p. 8.

This poem is a very well-known one from Angkhān and its significance as a 'modern' poem lies deeper than its apparently 'symbolic' values. In fact, it is outstanding as a 'modern' poem because of the 'message' expressed. The imagery employed is, ultimately speaking, far from 'original'. The images of a jewel like a gem or a diamond, a gold swan and a crow are not unfamiliar in the tradition of Thai poetry.

However, the originality of the poet lies in his 'arrangement' of these so-called 'conventional' images. The juxtaposition of these images creates an easily distinguished 'contrast' between the 'conventional' connotations of the imagery and the 'original' ideas expressed by the poet.

The title of the poem 'The World' is actually quite uncommon in Thai tradition as Thai poets hardly entertained any 'philosophical' themes in their works. By giving an unusual title to his poem the poet already suggests an unusual message intended for his readers. The word โลก (Lōk) in Thai has wider meanings than just 'the world' for it includes the meaning of 'mankind' or 'the inhabitants of the world'.¹

Therefore, the title of the poem can be more precisely understood from the underlying meaning which suggests that the 'world' conveyed by the poet is not merely the 'concrete' world of elements but also the 'abstract' world of mankind.

The poet describes the 'concrete' world by using two contrasting images - a jewel and sand with other 'insignif-

¹McFarland, Thai-English Dictionary, p. 757.

-icant' elements on earth. He explains how the world does not consist only of 'precious' gems and diamonds but also of sand and other 'unprecious' elements. In fact, the balance that sustains the world comes from those so-called 'insignificant' elements.

The meaning of the first stanza describing the 'concrete' world is expounded in the second stanza describing the 'abstract' world of mankind. The imagery in the second stanza is also of a contrastive nature - the image of a gold swan representing 'beauty, pride and prestige' or the superior, and the image of a crow representing 'ugliness, humiliation and vulgarity' or the inferior. For the poet, the 'abstract' world consists of various qualities of mankind.

The world does not belong only to the 'superior' but equally to the 'inferior' as well. The poet even emphasizes that the distinction between the two is actually an 'illusion' for the notion of superiority and inferiority ultimately comes from human ignorance. Without this understanding, the world cannot be in peace for ignorance will create discrimination and separation among mankind.

The parallel created by the poet is between the image of a jewel and a gold swan as well as between the image of sand and a crow. Through this parallelism of imagery, the poet succeeds in establishing the 'symbolic' values of these images. At the same time, this parallelism serves to emphasize the philosophical theme of the poem. The 'concrete' world is harmoniously linked with the 'abstract' world. Thus, the 'philosophy' is 'symbolically' derived from this harmonious link or parallel.

Therefore, within the context of this short poem, a

process of 'creation' of symbols is vividly illustrated. This process demonstrates the point that a 'symbol' in poetry is ultimately a significantly repeated image that gains its symbolic values through its use in a certain poetical context.

According to Thai poetical tradition, the imagery used in this poem is not uncommon. The image of a gold swan in contrast with a crow is quite conventional. For example, in Inao a similar imagery is employed when Inao writes a letter to Busabā expressing his concern about the ugliness and unsuitability of Jarakā, Busabā's fiancé. He compares Jarakā to a 'crow' - so low and ugly by nature and Busabā is like a precious gold swan that is, in every way, far superior.

เมื่อมีเหมือนหลอกหยอกเหมือนดู
ไม่ควรคู่เคียงพักร่วมศรัสมาน
กังกากาจชาติข้าสารณ
มาประมาณหมายหงส์พงศ์พระยา ¹

Similarly in Khun Chāng-Khun Phāēn, Khun Phāēn when returning from the war blamed Wanthōng, his wife, who was forced and deceived to marry Khun Chāng, as a crow disguised in the shape of a swan.

¹King Rama II, Inao (Bangkok, 1938), p. 400.

กาลวงว่าหงส์ให้ปลงใจ
คัวยมิไค้ตุนอนแต่ก่อนมา
คึกว่าหงส์เราจึงหลงคัวยลายย้อม
ช่างแปลงปลอมท่วงที่คีนักหนา
คงรักถิ่นมูจลินท์ไม่คลาคลา
ครันลับตาฝูงหงส์ก็ลงโคลน ¹

Other numerous examples of the same nature can be found in various Thai poetical works. The repeated use of these two images established their symbolic values in the tradition of Thai poetry. A swan becomes a typical symbol of 'superiority' or noble birth and rank whereas a crow becomes a typical symbol of 'inferiority' or low birth and rank. This includes, no doubt, the connoted meaning of each symbol - a swan represents 'beauty, grace and virtue' and a crow represents 'ugliness, disgrace and vice'.

The same is true with the use of the images of a jewel and sand. The use of 'a jewel' as a symbol of beauty and preciousness is common enough in Thai poetry. On the other hand, the use of 'sand' as a symbol of insignificance and commonness is not quite conventional. It is more common for Thai poets to contrast the image of a jewel or a gem with a stone or a pebble. However, the image of sand here serves to intensify the meaning of insignificance because a grain of sand is even smaller than a stone and consequently even less valuable. Therefore, the contrast of meanings between these two images is even sharper.

¹Sēphā Ru'ang Khun Chāng Khun Phāēn (Bangkok, 1966), p. 312.

It is worth noticing that the poet deliberately makes use of all these conventional and well-established images with their symbolic values to express his ideas. The poet certainly recognizes the significance of the conventional use of symbols in Thai poetry. Thus, by manipulating that 'convention' he manages to emphasize even more effectively his original ideas.

Instead of praising the value of superiority, beauty and grace of a swan or the preciousness of a jewel, the poet chooses to emphasize the opposite qualities as equally important. He, above all, emphasizes the harmony of both as the ultimate goal for the happiness of the 'world' or mankind. The title of this short poem 'The World' is also a significant guide to the main theme of the poem. In other words, this short poem is an announcement of the poet's 'philosophy of life' and how he perceives the world.

The 'abstractness' of the subject-matter seems to justify the use of symbols in any poetical text. Therefore, since Angkhān's main concern is about beauty and the spiritual value of poetry he tends to employ quite a few symbols in his work.

Another well-recognised poem by Angkhān considered as highly 'symbolic' is a poem called *จับทะเล* - 'Scoop up the Sea' which has been translated into English by S. Sivaraksa and H. Woodward.

วักทะเล

วักทะเลเทใส่จาน
เอื้อมเก็บบางดวงดาว
ปูหอยเรียงระบำ
กึ่งกึ่งกึ่งกึ่งบิน
คางคกขึ้นวอทอง
อึ่งอ่างไปควยกัน
ไล่เคียนเที่ยวเกี้ยวสาว
ทุกจุลินทรีย์อมบัว
เทพไท่เปื้อน่ายวิมาน
ชมอาจรมว่ามี
ป่าสุ่มทุมพุ่มไม้
ชีเลื่อยละเมอท่า
ใครวิเศษเสวยฟ้า
กาลสมัยมอมมีนเมา

รับประทานกับข้าวขาว
ไว้คลุกเคล้าชาวเกลือกิน
เค้นรำทำเพลงวังเวงสิ้น
ไปกินตะวันและจันทร์
ลอยล่องท่องเที่ยวสวรรค์
เทวดานั้นหนีเข้ากะลา
ชาวอัสนอนชันฟ้า
เชิดหน้าไค้คิบไค้คี่
ทะยานลงคินมาคินชี
รสวิเศษสุดที่จะกล่าวคำ
พูดไค้ปรัชญาลึกล้ำ
คำนวณน้ำหนักแห่งเงา
ใครอยู่หล้าเลวโง่เขลา
โลกเอาเถิกประเสริฐเอย¹

Scoop Up the Sea

Scoop up the sea, pour it in a bowl,
and dine on it and rice,
reach out, gather some stars,
and mix them with salt to eat,

Look at crabs and oysters dancing with joy
and playing nostalgic songs,
or chameleons and galley worms flying
to eat the sun and moon!

A toad climbs on a golden palanquin
and floats around Heaven on a special tour.
He goes together with a bull frog,
and the angels there escape, into the shell of a coconut.

¹Angkhān Kalayānaphong, Kawīniphon, p. 55.

Earthworms woo maids,
the Apsaras who sleep in Heaven,
and every amoeba
sticks up his nose because of his very high status.

The gods are bored with celestial abodes
so leap down to eat the dung on earth.
This waste matter they praise,
for its taste is most splendid and can't be described.

Groves of trees and forests
can talk deep philosophy.
Sawdust in its sleep
can calculate the weight of shadows.

Anyone who doesn't go up to Heaven
and remains below on earth is stupid,
for the heavy would be light,
and the world is very, very drunk.

1967

(translated by S. Sivaraksa and H. Woodward)¹

On one hand, the imagery in this poem can be considered as 'hyperbole' not uncommon in the Thai tradition. On the other hand, the imagery used is highly unusual in Thai poetical context because the poet does not try to avoid mentioning the less pleasant images of animals like toads, chameleons and worms as well as their highly 'unusual' behaviour.

The use of more 'conventional' images like gods, angels and Apsaras in heaven creates a sharp contrast in the text. This contrast is re-emphasized by the description of the most unusual behaviour of the 'divine' like escaping into

¹ Sathirakoses-Nagapradipa Foundation, Three Thai Poets, pp. 14-6.

the shell of a coconut, leaping down to eat dung on earth or the Apsaras being wooed by the earthworms!

The reverse roles of the animals and the divines described in the text reveals the theme of deliberate satire. The description of the reverse situation is a clear illustration of the poet's manipulation of the 'convention'.

Ultimately speaking, these images acquire their 'symbolic' values through their use in the conventional Thai poetical context. The introduction of unusual images of animals seldom referred to or described in poetry with their reverse behaviour is an obvious contrast to the convention. As a result, the poet manages to create an effective sense of sharp satire.

Examined in more detail, the first stanza gives a beautiful image reflecting the wide imagination of the poet. As an introduction, this stanza suggests the 'entering' into the world of poetry or the world of imagination. Therefore, the reader is more or less prepared for something out of the ordinary. The description in the following stanzas does not fail the expectation for all is far from 'ordinary'.

Nevertheless, the un-ordinary images are not altogether 'incomprehensible' because the poet manages to establish an extended analogy between the conventional images and the 'original' ones. The conventional image of 'a toad on a golden palanquin' serves indirectly to explain the significance of other unusual images in the text like worms flying to eat the sun and the moon, the crabs and oysters dancing and playing songs, the earthworms wooing maids, or

the amoeba boasting about his high status.

In Thai, the phrase ^๙คางคกขึ้นรถ or 'a toad on a palanquin' is a well-known saying used to refer to a person of low birth or rank who is so full of undue dignity and self-importance. A toad symbolizes a low and ugly creature and a palanquin symbolizes prestige and high status since it was used as a vehicle for the royalty in the old days.

The saying conveys a sense of contempt for the exaggerated self-importance. The underlying meaning of contempt is carried throughout in the description of the highly unusual behaviour of all the animals. Their descriptions reflect the images of 'low' creatures behaving with pride and self-importance, aiming at 'unattainable' objects like the sun and the moon.

The sense of contempt for exaggerated self-importance is subtly established in the text through the use of the conventional image of 'a toad on a golden palanquin'. Therefore, despite the apparently incomprehensible or highly 'symbolic' images, the theme of satire is obvious in the text.

The variation of the images showing a similar 'theme' or significance also serves to create a harmony and unity in the poem, and, at the same time, emphasizes and clarifies the poet's 'message' for the readers.

This poem clearly illustrates how the 'creation' of symbols depends, in fact, very much on the conventional imagery, in poetical tradition.

Angkhān employs 'conventional' images as a significant

background to his invention of 'symbols'. Through the technique of harmony and contrast, the poet succeeds in establishing unusual images as clearly understandable symbols for his work.

Another example of a similar nature is the poem called จินตนาการ 'Imagination'. The poet creates a series of beautiful and highly unusual images describing nature in a symbolic manner. One well-known stanza from this poem consists of a series of 'symbolic' images describing the universe.

จินตนาการ

ทะ	เลทลากทวมเว้ง	หนทาว
ลุ่ม	ลิวจุมทาวหนาว	แหล่งหล้า
ปุม	หินเปื่อยเขาราว	ปุยุ่น
ปู	ไคเมฆข้ามฟ้า	เที่ยว फैนกินสวรรค์ ¹

Imagination

The sea overflows and floods the sky
The stars are drowned and the world is cold
Oh, how the rocks turn soft like cotton wool
And the crabs climb the clouds
Crossing the sky, enjoying the taste of heaven!

This poem is a good example of the significance of a title in a poem. Generally speaking, the theme of a poem is reflected in the title and plays an important role in the interpretation of the text.

¹Angkhān Kalayānaphong, Kawīniphon, p. 62.

The title of the poem 'Imagination' serves to clarify the apparently 'hyperbolic' imagery in the poet's description. In the world of imagination the rule of realism cannot interfere and therefore the impossibility of the images is justified.

The poet uses a crab as the only symbolic creature that survives and enjoys the best of the seemingly 'disastrous' situation. While the universe is in trouble the only creature that survives is far from the strongest or the most powerful. A crab is in fact just a small creature, awkward rather than graceful and insignificant rather than outstanding. Nevertheless, the poet's description of the crab's action is quite contradictory to its characteristic qualities, climbing the clouds across the sky to enjoy Heaven.

In Thai poetical tradition, an animal like a crab is not normally mentioned or described and, even less, employed as a 'symbol' in the text. The poet's description here is therefore, significant and 'original' in Thai tradition.

On the other hand, it can be argued that the choice of the word ปู or 'Crab' is a part of the 'form' of the poem. The form of this poem is actually a form of โคลงกระทุ้ Khlōng Krathū with a set of the first syllable of each line กะ ปู ปู ปู . This particular syllabic set was used in a rather well-known poem, believed to be composed by Srī Prāt, one of the most brilliant poets of the Ayuthaya period.

Angkhān employs a few of Srī Prāt's famous Khlōng
Krathū in his first book of poems Kawīniphon in which we

find the poem 'Imagination'. This reveals his deep interest in and understanding of the heritage of Thai poetry as well as his attempt to make use of it.

However, it is obvious that even though the word is a part of the form chosen by the poet, the meaning of จักร as a crab is entirely intentional on the poet's part. The word จักร in Thai can also be a verb meaning to spread out, to lay or stretch out. The fact that the poet chooses to use this word as a noun and not a verb is therefore important. The deliberate unusualness of the image of crabs climbing the clouds, crossing the sky to enjoy Heaven suggests the symbolic value of the image of a crab in the text. The specific meaning of this image is, however, less obvious. The poet leaves the interpretation of this image to the power of 'imagination' of his readers as suggested in the title.

The use of unusual images in poetry, however, does not always create 'symbols' in the text. Generally speaking, Thai poets concentrate more on creating and selecting beautiful imagery for the sake of embellishment and conveying the intensity and refinement of feelings in poetical context.

Various conventional images may acquire symbolic values as a result of long tradition. The literary tradition is, no doubt, a reflection of the culture and values of the people. In other words, the cultural values of the people indirectly influence the creation of imagery and symbols in literature.

This holds true for Thai poetry from the distant past to the immediate present. Examples of conventional imagery

with its 'symbolic' values are quite numerous in Thai. Imagery and symbols drawn from nature are not uncommon since nature has always been an essential influence in Thai poetry.

Thai poets perceive in nature balance and harmony among natural elements, and make use of this in their creation of imagery and symbols. For instance, the beauty of a beloved lady is compared to the beauty of the moon while the power and strength of a man is compared to the sun. Or, a beautiful woman is like a flower and a man is like a bee. Similarly, a woman can be an ocean while a man is a fish.

From these few examples, it is obvious that the poets make use of certain natural qualities as the basis for their expression in the form of imagery. Cultural values, to a certain point, also influence their 'creation'. To a Thai mind and according to a Thai tradition, the moon represents radiant beauty, charm, serenity as well as kindness and tenderness, all of which are highly esteemed as ideal feminine qualities. Similarly, the sun represents a great power, strength and glory which are desirable masculine qualities.

The concept of the sun symbolising a powerful man and the moon symbolising a beautiful woman has certainly become so well-established that it can hardly be considered otherwise than just poetic convention. Yet it is still alive and cherished even in the works of modern poets today.

In Lam Nam Phū Krađu'ng, Angkhān, despite his 'originality' of ideas and expression, does not refuse the use of the conventional imagery in the beauty-appraisal of his loved one.

p. 70

นอบน้อมเทวีที่สูงศักดิ์
พร้อมมารยาทสติปัญญา

งามพักตร์พร้งยิ่งบุหลันชั้นฟ้า
การศึกษารสนิยมอันดี

To thee, my prestigious goddess, I pay homage
More beautiful than the moon is your face
So perfect are your manners and intelligence
With sound education and refined taste!

Furthermore, in his love promise, the poet uses the typical images of the sun and the moon as the symbol of eternal togetherness or companionship.

p. 73

ถ้าองค์เป็นเช่นแจ่มจันทร์เจ้า
เจ้าจะจติเป็นสิ่งใดใด

พี่ราวสุริยาแสงรุ่งใส
ขอใค้อยู่ข้างทุกอย่านา

Were you the bright and beautiful moon
I would be the brilliant and shining sun
No matter in which form you were born
I would always be by your side!

These examples demonstrate how the 'poetic convention' is alive and cherished in Thai poetry. The 'convention' can be harmoniously combined with the 'modernity' or serves as a background for the creation of modernity.

As seen in the previous study of Angkhān's Lam Nam Phū Kradu'ng, nature or philosophy from nature is the main theme of the work. Therefore, the poet not only uses nature as the source for his creation of imagery but also extends his imagery to the depth of symbols. This is made possible through the 'patterning' of the text where the poet can manipulate the significance of the imagery and build up

certain 'special' and 'unique' meanings to the images in the text.¹

The poet's creation of symbols is through giving the emphasis to the abstract qualities of the imagery. Thus the imagery tends to be more suggestive and calls for a deep interpretation. As a result, the symbolic values of imagery are formed and established within a certain poetical context.

On the other hand, Angkhān's deliberate use of highly unusual imagery conveys his awareness of the significant power and vividness of poetical beauty. The unusualness will serve to emphasize the 'symbolic' values of the imagery.

Angkhān's extensive use of nature, both pleasant and unpleasant elements and aspects of nature, adds a new dimension to the significance of nature in Thai poetry. His deeply philosophical attitude to nature makes him perceive nature more at its 'symbolic' level.

Therefore, the poet's insight into the philosophical aspect of nature is an indirect extension of the symbolic values of nature in the tradition of Thai poetry. The 'convention' of using nature mainly as an element of description or embellishment in poetry is altered, extended and deepened.

The use of animals as symbols in the text is a rather well-established convention. Only certain animals are normally employed as 'symbols' in Thai poetry and their

¹See Chapters I & II on the image of the sea in connection with nature and the word ' นกยูง '.

significance is usually quite 'conventional'. The readers can usually understand the 'symbols' almost without any effort just by virtue of knowing the language and its literature.

Seen in this light, Thai poetry in the past was hardly 'symbolic' though full of 'symbols', quite naturally 'conventional' ones. Modern poets like Angkhān, Naowarat and Suchit are aware of the use of 'conventional' symbols in Thai poetry and manifest this in their works in their own 'modern' context and expression.

This, however, does not mean that modern poets dare not create 'new' symbols to serve their different purposes. Since the ideas the poet would like to express are sometimes very unconventional, it is not always possible or desirable to cling to the imagery and symbols of the past alone. With the same basic ideas on nature and animals, the poet can succeed in creating 'new' symbols to express his 'new' ideas. The 'original' images and symbols of animals are worth noticing in the works of modern poets.

For example, Naowarat Phongphaibūn introduces a 'new' image of a snail in one of his most famous poems:

หนทางแห่งหอยทาก 'The Passage of a Snail'.¹

¹Naowarat Phongphaibūn, Phiang Khwām Khlu'an Wai (Bangkok, 1980), pp. 55-7.

หนทางแห่งหอยทาก

The Passage of a Snail

ในทุ่งรกรกนั้นมีทาง
เปลี่ยวอ้างว้างไร้คนเดิน
หากน้อยจึงทาเงิน
เป็นเงางามระวามไว้

In the wild green field
Is a deserted pathway
Where a small snail paints
A shining silver track

รอว่าสักวันหนึ่ง
ซึ่งตะวันอันอำไพ
จะเกรี้ยวกราดและฟาดไฟ
ประลัยหญ้าลงย่อยยับ

Waiting for the day
When the brilliant sun
Will angrily burn
The wild grass on the path:

เมื่อนั้นแหละเงิงงาม
รวิวามจะตามจับ
เพชรณกายจะฉายวิบ
จับเงินยวงแห่งขวงทาง

Then the beautiful silver
Will glitter with the sun
Like diamond shining bright
To light the silver path

และทากน้อยจะถมเนื้อ
เพื่อภาวะแห่งผู้สร้าง
ระเหิดหายละลายต่าง
อย่างเคยเคยทุกคราวครั้ง

And the small snail
Will sacrifice his life
Like all the creators
As usual and always!

ทางนั้นจึงปรากฏ
ทอดไปจรดที่ใจหวัง
คราวใดที่หนัวยัง
ก็บังใจที่ไขว่คว้า

So that the passage will appear
Leading to the land of heart's desire
As long as the wild grass remains
The struggling heart is veiled

การเกิดต้องเจ็บปวด
ต้องร้าวรวดและทรมาน
ในสายฝนมีสายฟ้า
ในผาหินมีถ้ำทอง

In birth there are inevitable sufferings
Deep pains and torments
In the rain there is lightning
In deep rocks there are gold caves!

มาเถิดมาทุกซ้าก
มานั้นมากกับเพื่อนพ้อง
อย่าหวังเลยวังรอง
จะเรื่องไรในชีพนี

Now come, share the sufferings
And persevere with our friends
Do not care or hope for glory
In this life of ours!

ก้าวแรกที่เราย่าง
จะสร้างทางในทุกที่
ป่าเถื่อนในปฐพี
ยังมีไว้รอให้เดิน

The first pace we make
Will always create a new passage
The wild all over the land
Is still waiting for our steps!

Although the use of the image of a snail is not at all usual in the tradition of Thai poetry, the meaning of this image is quite clear. From the context of the poem, the reader can realize that the small snail is a symbol of a creator, a pioneer who sacrifices for others as well as a perseverant idealist. The idea of sacrificing oneself for the good of others is obviously a 'new' theme in Thai poetry. Therefore it is understandable that the poet will try to create a 'new' image for this new concept and idea.

The poet creates an allegory to clarify the theme of

the poem by using a snail as a symbol in the first part of his text. The allegory of how the snail sacrifices his life as a tribute to the 'passage to the land of heart's desire' serves as an 'introduction' to the message from the poet. Ultimately speaking, this poem can be regarded as an invitation or persuasion for idealistic self-sacrifice. The tone in the ending stanza of the poem reflects a high spirit of youth full of optimistic hopes and ideas.

To be more precise, it is possible to say that the image of 'wild grass' also serves as a 'symbol' in the text. This image is the first that appears in the poem and is closely linked with the image of the snail.

The poet describes how the snail paints a silver track in the 'wild grass' which is later on burnt by the brilliant blaze of the sun. This destruction creates a 'passage to the land of heart's desire' and thus is a necessity for the creation. This idea is re-emphasized by the fifth stanza where the poet explicitly states that in fact the 'wild grass' is an obstacle for the birth of this ideal passage.

As long as the wild grass remains,
The struggling heart is veiled.

From the description in the text, the 'symbolic' value of the image of the 'wild grass' is clearly explained. Thus this apparently unusual 'symbol' is explicitly clarified by the content of the poem itself.

This poem with its 'unconventional' symbols illustrates how the poet can choose to purely employ 'new' or 'unconventional' symbols in the text to express new ideas and concepts.

The 'novelty' of the symbols serves to re-inforce the novelty of the ideas conveyed in the poem. Nevertheless, this novelty has no weakness of 'incomprehensibility' for the poet takes great care to create the context that makes the symbols clearly understandable.

Another example of a similar nature is the poem called: กระรอกขาว 'White Squirrel' by Naowarat, which is a rather 'philosophical' poem with a white squirrel as a main symbol.

กระรอกขาว

จากยอดไม้สู่ยอดไม้ไถลลื่น
สูงลิ่วหวีวับหรือวกค้ำ
คือเส้นทางหนทางที่เจ้าทำ
คือความจริงที่ประจำเจ้าจบเจน
ใครกันจับเจ้ามาใส่กรง
ทางตรงที่เจ้าเคยผกผัน
เส้นทางถูกกำหนดกฎเกณฑ์
กลายเป็นเส้นรอบวงรอบกรงนั้น
ทางไถลกลับกลายเป็นวงกลม
ทางยาวอันอุดมก็กลับสั้น
เจ้าต้องวิ่งวนเวียนอยู่ทั้งวัน
แข็งขันขยันวิ่งเป็นวงกลม
วิ่งหาไคหรือกระรอกน้อย
สำรวจร่องรอยหรือหลุมหล่ม
หรือเจ้าคือนักแสวงแรงนิยม
ชื่นชมการวิ่งวนเป็นหนทาง

มันมีไ้ทางยาวบนยอดไม้
วงกลมมันมีไ้ทางไกลกว้าง
เส้นรอบวงก็มีไ้ทางสายกลาง
เจ้ากำลังหลงสร้างสิ่งใด
หาพบหรือยังกระรอกเอ๋ย
หนทางที่เจ้าเคยสร้างขึ้นได้
ทางยาวที่เจ้าสูญเสียไป
ใครกันจับเจ้าใส่ไว้ในกรง¹

White Squirrel

From tree-top to tree-top, far away
As high as high then swooping down
That's your way, the path you take;
That's your truth, your own way.

Who put you in a cage?
Your long free path
That only you decided
Has become a circle round the inside of that cage,
Your voyages a circle
Shortened, limited.
And there you run all day
Racing, racing round and round.
What are you after, little squirrel?
Exploring the nooks and crannies of your cage?
A runner showing off, delighting in the track?

It is not your free tree-top way;
That circle is no voyage;
Round and round it is not the middle way.

¹Ibid., pp. 22-3.

What are you trying to make of it?
Have you found it yet, squirrel?
The ways you once made,
The long paths you have lost,
Who put you in a cage, squirrel?¹

The use of a squirrel as a symbol in the text is not common in Thai poetry. In other words, a squirrel has no 'conventionally symbolic' value, unlike a gold swan or a crow. Therefore, like the image of a snail, a squirrel is quite 'original' as a main symbol in Thai poetry.

In the title of the poem the poet specifies the colour of the squirrel as white which is normally a symbol of purity and innocence. Therefore, even though there is no mentioning of the colour of the squirrel in the actual text, the reader can visualize the squirrel in his mind as a small white squirrel.

The poem is partly a philosophical contemplation on the poet's part and partly a self-questioning in the form of questions addressed to the white squirrel. The underlying philosophical theme of the poem is revealed through certain key words like 'way, path, truth'. We can say that the underlying philosophy here is Buddhist philosophy. This is obvious from the use of Buddhistic terms in the text like 'circle' and 'the middle way'.

The image of a squirrel racing round and round inside a cage as if looking for something in vain is obviously the symbol of human beings trying to find some truth or some meaning of life but are caught in the 'racing cage'.

The 'thematic' question repeated in the poem is 'who

¹Sathirakokses-Nagapradipa Foundation, Three Thai Poets, p. 48.

put you in a cage?'. The question is raised first in the middle of the text and then, to re-emphasize its significance, at the end of the poem. It can be regarded at a deeper and philosophical level as an indirect self-questioning on the poet's part.

The poet compares the situation of the squirrel racing around inside the cage to the normal situation of human beings who are restricted by rules of society as well as their own ignorance and illusion about life. The squirrel does not realise that it has lost its freedom by being kept in a cage and is allowed to run only around inside its cage. Similarly, human beings do not usually realize that they have lost their freedom, physically and spiritually, because of the restrictions of society and their own ignorance.

The poet also asks what the squirrel is looking for inside its cage. He compares the 'long free path' of a free squirrel to the 'circle' which is just a 'shortened and limited' way inside the cage. Thus, the poet creates a sharp contrast between the 'freedom' and the 'limitation' of the ways or paths of the squirrel. The 'way' in the poem here clearly symbolizes the path or way of life in the human world. This is made explicit when the poet states that:

That circle is no voyage;
Round and round it is not the middle way.

The term 'the middle way' or 'the middle path' is obviously a Buddhistic term. According to Buddhist philosophy the 'ideal' way of life is 'the middle way' or

ทางสายกลาง (Thāng Sāi Klāng), avoiding any extreme.

This term serves subtly to establish a clear allegory between the path or way of the squirrel and the path or way of human life. The emphasis on the virtue of 'freedom' corresponds to the idea of spiritual freedom in Buddhism.

Through various subtle devices, the poet succeeds in creating an allegoric poem on Buddhism. The use of the image of a white squirrel as a symbol of ignorant human beings in the text is not conventional but is highly successful. The allegory is made clear and therefore the reader can understand the 'real' meaning of the text.

This poem illustrates how the success of the invention of a 'new' symbol is a sophisticated combination of the stylistic devices and the influence of 'poetic convention'. Since Thai readers are not unfamiliar with the description of animals in poetry, especially beautiful and pleasant animals, the image of a white squirrel in this poem is readily acceptable. As this image has no 'conventionally symbolic' values attached to it, the poet can freely employ it to convey a unique significance in the specific context of his poem. The 'symbolic' value of a 'new' image is therefore created through the patterning of the text and serves to convey special meanings intended by the poet.

The creation of a symbol through the technique of 'allegory' can also be seen in the use of the names of the heroes and main characters in the well-known works of the past as 'symbols' in modern poetry.

Poetic symbols of this type are, for example, Chao Kārakēt, Chao Khun Thōng, folk heroes from 'oral literature'

such as folk tales and songs. Besides, modern poets sometimes make use of the names of well-known characters in poetry like Khun Phāen, Mā Srī Mōk and Wanthōng. These names have become a special kind of 'symbols' in modern poetry, reflecting the continuation of Thai poetical heritage from the past to the present.

Modern poets who employ this type of symbols in their works are Naowarat Phongphaibūn and Suchit Wongthēt whose works are highly influenced by 'oral' literature. Both poets share the use of the names of Čhao Kārakēt and Čhao Khun Thōng as the symbols of young and idealistic heroes who sacrifice themselves to protect ordinary people.

The names of Čhao Kārakēt and Čhao Khun Thōng appear in well-known lullabies sung for generations though the original significance of the text is no longer remembered precisely. To examine in more detail the creation of these two 'symbols', it is worth looking into the original text.

The name Čhao Kārakēt comes from the lullaby called 'Čhao Kārakēt', telling the story of the patriotic Kārakēt who fought the foreigners to protect his dignity.

	บ่ ^๑ ร ^๑ อง ^๑ เจ ^๑	ข ^๑ ี ^๑ มา ^๑ เท ^๑ ศ ^๑ ว ^๑ า ^๑ จะ ^๑ ไป ^๑ ท ^๑ าย ^๑ วัง
เจ ^๑ ้า ^๑ กา ^๑ ระ ^๑ เก ^๑ ด ^๑ เอ ^๑ ย		ข ^๑ ี ^๑ มา ^๑ เท ^๑ ศ ^๑ ว ^๑ า ^๑ จะ ^๑ ไป ^๑ ท ^๑ าย ^๑ วัง
ช ^๑ ัก ^๑ กร ^๑ ิ ^๑ ช ^๑ อ ^๑ อ ^๑ ก ^๑ แ ^๑ ว ^๑ ัง		ว ^๑ า ^๑ จะ ^๑ แ ^๑ ท ^๑ ง ^๑ ฝ ^๑ ร ^๑ ัง
เม ^๑ ีย ^๑ ท ^๑ าม ^๑ ไม ^๑ ่ ^๑ ฟ ^๑ ัง		เจ ^๑ ้า ^๑ กา ^๑ ระ ^๑ เก ^๑ ด ^๑ เอ ^๑ ย ^๑

¹Phrayā Anumān Rājadhon (ed.), Chan Yaowaphot (Bangkok, 1935), p. 14.

Lullaby of Čhao Kāarakēt

Oh, Čhao Kāarakēt
Leaping on horseback, heading for the palace
Drawing out your dagger
Wanting to kill a Farang¹
Ignoring your wife's warning
Oh, Čhao Kāarakēt!

In Chak Mā Chom Mu'ang, Naowarat composes a narrative of Čhao Kāarakēt from this old lullaby. The poet tells the story of a hero in the reign of King Nāraī of the Ayuthaya period who fought with a European soldier in order to protect his dignity and got killed in the end. Therefore, his name remains as a 'legend' of Thai patriotism.

The connoted meaning or significance of the name is manipulated in modern poetry. Modern poets select the name to use as a 'symbol' of patriotic feelings of Thai youth and their will to protect the dignity of the country even through their complete self-sacrifice. With this underlying significance, the name has become a 'new' symbol in Thai modern poetry and serves a new purpose and idea than just a well-known hero in an old lullaby.

This can be seen in the poem called 'Kāarakēt' by Suchit Wongthēt who composes it as 'verse' for a Thai classical orchestra. He composes a 'refrain' of his text by manipulating the original text of the lullaby 'Čhao Kāarakēt'.

¹ A Thai word meaning a foreigner, especially Europeans or other white peoples.

การะเกด

เจ้าการะเกดเอ๋ย

รักชาติรักประเทศ อยู่วัดท้ายวัง
ชักชวนออกมาเป่า ว่าไม่เอาอย่างฝรั่ง
ใครห้ามก็ไม่ฟัง เจ้าการะเกดเอ๋ย¹

Oh, Čhao Kārakēt
How patriotic you are!
Living in a temple near the palace
You proudly play Thai flute!
Determined you are
To defy any foreign influence
You listen not to any warning
Oh, Čhao Kārakēt!

The theme of the poem is a patriotic invitation to appreciate Thai music as a precious heritage of the nation. Therefore, the connoted meaning of the name 'Kārakēt' as a symbol of patriotism is fully manipulated here. The poet imitates the verse form of the lullaby and composes his text accordingly with a similar number of syllables in each line and even a similar choice of diction.

As important and well-known as the name of Čhao Kārakēt is the name of Čhao Khun Thōng which also comes from an old lullaby called วัดโบสถ์ 'Wat Bōt'.

¹Suchit Wongthēt, Čhao Khunthōng Pai Plon (Bangkok, 1981), p. 61.

วัดโบสถ์

วัดเอ๋ยวัดโบสถ์	มีต้นโตนคอยู่เจ็ดต้น
เจ้าขุนทองไปปล้น	ปานฉะนี้ไม่เห็นมา
คคข้าวออกใส่ห่อ	จะถือเรือออกไปหา
เขาก็ว่าลือมา	ว่าเจ้าขุนทองตายแล้ว
ศพเจ้ายังทิ้งไว้	ไม่มีใครจะวิแวว
เหลือแต่กระดูกแก้ว	เมียรักจะไปปลง
ขุนศรีจะถือฉัตร	ยกกระบัตร์จะถือธง
จะถือท้ายเรือหงษ์	ไปปลงศพโอบมน้ำ ¹

Wat Bōt

Oh, Wat Bōt
With seven palm trees
Chao Khun Thōng is out for robbery
Till now he is not yet back!
Dipping the rice out to put in a wrap
I'm going to pole a boat in search of you
Then I heard the rumour
That you are already dead!
Your body is out there
Nobody really cares
Only the precious bones are left
For your dear wife to bury
Khun Srī will hold an umbrella
Yok-krabat will hold a flag
Steering a barge for your funeral!

In Chak Mā Chom Mu'ang, Naowarat composes a narrative based on this lullaby, telling the story of a hero who died

¹From the Appendix of Naowarat Phongphaibūn, Chak Mā Chom Mu'ang (Bangkok, 1977).

in the fight for justice. Suchit uses the name Čhao Khun Thōng as the symbol of heroes who fight for justice, especially the students who died for democracy in the political uprising in October 1973. Suchit composes a series of poems with the name of Čhao Khun Thōng as the main symbol in his book of collected poems 'Čhao Khun Thōng Pai Plon'. The title of the book with the name of Čhao Khun Thōng re-emphasizes the significance of the name as a symbol in the work.

Apart from these two examples, modern poets like Naowarat and Suchit use the names of well-known characters in poetry such as Khun Phāēn, Mā Srī Mōk, and Wanthōng as 'symbols' in their text. As Khun Chāng Khun Phāēn is one of the best-loved and best known poetical works in Thai, its influence on Thai minds is understandable. Besides, it is one of a few stories in Thai poetry which portray mainly the life of ordinary people with whom the readers of the present day can still identify themselves. Thus, the allusion to this work is an effective poetical device even in the context of modern Thai poetry.

On the other hand, Khun Chāng Khun Phāēn can be considered as a part of 'oral' literature as it was originally composed for Sēphā, a type of verse for singing with accompanying music, and indeed has a long oral history. Therefore, the influence of 'oral' literature is also evident in the creation of symbols in modern poetry.

This is, of course, hardly surprising as the creation of symbols belongs to the general aspect of modernity which is the result of the combination and manipulation of 'convention'

and the 'originality' of the poets.

As far as 'symbols' and 'images' are concerned, convention plays a very important role because the significance of any symbols or images depends very much on their connoted meanings which are usually the results of long tradition. Any 'new' invention normally or inevitably has its root in the old convention of the past.

CHAPTER VI

ON THE FORMATION OF THAI POETICAL CONVENTION
AND THAI CONCEPTS OF POETS AND POETRY

CHAPTER VI

On the Formation of Thai Poetical Convention and Thai Concepts of Poets and Poetry

Part I: The Formation of Thai Poetical Convention

It is clear from the study so far how important and essential the convention is in Thai poetry. Thus, it will be appropriate and useful to discuss now the formation of Thai poetical convention, that is to say the manner in which Thai poetical convention was created and the various possible influences that existed in its formation.

We shall start by examining various Thai texts on versification. The first one to be considered is Āchindāmanī composed in the reign of King Nāraī of the Ayuthaya period (1656-1688). It is believed to be the first text to teach Thai language and versification and thus a 'model' for later works of the same nature.

The exact date of the composition of Āchindāmanī is not known but the name of the author is mentioned as Phra Hōrāthibōdī, the most learned court-poet of King Nāraī. Prince Damrongrājānuphāb explained that according to the Luang Prasert chronicle, King Nāraī gave an order to Phra Hōrāthibōdī to write the chronicle in 1680 (B.E. 2223) and therefore the prince believed that it was possible that King Nāraī also ordered the same poet to compose the text of Āchindāmanī. The reason for this concern about the text-book to teach Thai language and versification could arise from the fact that the French missionaries had arrived in Ayuthaya and started to build schools to teach Thai children.

Therefore, King Nāraī was concerned that if he did not start educating his own people, the Thais would be at a disadvantage.¹

In the text of Chindāmanī the author claimed that actually he was composing the book by following the works of the sages of the past. The work he referred to as a resource for his text is Khampī Wuttōthai or Vuttodaya composed in Pali.

According to the article by Major G.E. Fryer, the Vuttodaya (Exposition of Metre) is the second metrical treatise written in Ceylon during the twelfth century by the Pali grammarian Moggallāna, under his priestly title of Sangharakkhita Thera. It is the only work on Pali prosody extant, and is founded on the Vrittaratnakara (Ocean of Metres), a Sanskrit work on post-vedic metres by Kedāra Bhatta. It contains 136 stanzas or portions of stanzas, divided into six chapters which treat of the following subjects:

- Chapter I - The technical terms, and symbols in prosody.
- Chapter II - Metres regulated by time.
- Chapter III - Metres with quarter verses similar.
- Chapter IV - Metres with half lines similar.
- Chapter V - Metres with quarter verses dissimilar.
- Chapter VI - The six problems.²

(The problems are the problems of arranging variation of metres or practical problems of arranging various types of metres without breaking the rules of versification.)

¹Chindāmanī, pp. 149-50.

²Major G.E. Fryer, 'The Pali text of the Vuttodaya, or 'Exposition of Metre', by Sangharakkhita Thera, Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, No. IV, 1877, p. 369.

Another important text referred to in Āchindāmanī is Kāp Sārawilāsinī normally mentioned together with Kāp Khanta in Thai poetical history. According to the article on metres of poetry by Dhanit Yūphō, these two texts were composed in Ceylon around the same time as Vuttodaya and thus share some similar characters. He believes that it was through the Mon civilization that the Thais received these poetic influences which came with the Ceylonese Buddhist monks around the 18th or 19th century of the Buddhist Era (12th century A.D.). Therefore these texts could have arrived during the end of the Sukhōthai period or the beginning of the Ayuthaya period.¹

We can consider Vuttodaya as a Pali influence in the formation of Thai poetical convention and the significance of Vuttodaya is understandable since Pali was the 'sacred' language through which the Thais absorbed Buddhism. The Sanskrit influence, on the other hand, is less explicitly stated in Thai poetical history.

It is possible to believe that the Sanskrit influence arrived with the Thais through contact with the Khmers who were already writing poetry in Sanskrit during the 12th century. Although there is no evidence of any Sanskrit text of versification composed or translated in Khmer, we can trace an evidently Sanskrit influence from the Sanskrit names of various verse forms existing from the earliest period of Khmer poetry. Even later on when the Khmers no longer composed their poetry in Sanskrit, the names of various

¹Dhanit Yūphō, Kānsu'psao raoru'ang Kāp Klōn Khlōng, Chan, 2nd ed. (Bangkok, 1974), p. 8.

verse forms remained Sanskrit. This can apply also to the names of Thai verse forms of Chan, derived from Sanskrit, though the Thais never composed their poetry in Sanskrit.

It is worth mentioning that Khmer words are considered as a part of 'poetic' diction alongside Pali and Sanskrit words according to Thai poetic tradition. This is explicitly expressed in Čhindāmanī. In various Thai poetical works of the Ayuthaya period like Mahāchāt Khamluang and Samuthrakhōt Khamchan Khmer words are employed almost to a similar degree to Pali and Sanskrit words.

These observations may serve to support the idea that the Thais received the Sanskrit poetic influence through their contact with the Khmers, possibly quite concurrently with the Pali influence like Vuttodaya through their contact with the Mons.

Since Thai education in the past took place in the temples with the study of Pali and Sanskrit as the main languages, it is not impossible that Thai monks and scholars could learn and profit from these texts from the very early period of Ayuthaya. As a result, Thai poetry already flourished before the existence of a Thai text on versification like Čhindāmanī.

The evidence to support this idea can be found in the examples of poetry quoted in the text. To explain how to compose various types of poetry and to show the examples of each form, the author often quoted examples from the well-known poetical works like Lilit Phra Lō, Samuthrakhōt Khamchan, considered as contemporary works with Čhindāmanī, or earlier poetical works like Mahāchāt Khamluang.

The 'excellence' of the poetical works from which the

examples are quoted is, in fact, well-recognized. Therefore, it is possible to conclude that Čhindāmanī, as a text on Thai versification, is partly an evidence, rather than a cause, of the flourishing of literature at that period.

The fact that the first Thai text on versification was composed rather late and more in the manner of being translated and compiled from other resources is worth noting. It reveals that Thai poets in the past, or before the time of King Nāraī, probably did not have any 'established' rules of versification. Therefore the poet either composed by following the examples of older poetry and the advice of the learned poets of their time or adapted some 'rules' and forms from Pali and Sanskrit texts for those who could understand these two languages.

On the other hand, Čhindāmanī can be considered as the text on Thai language as well. This aspect is more strongly emphasized in the later version of Čhindāmanī composed in the reign of King Bṛromakōt in 1732 (B.E. 2295). All the versions of Čhindāmanī however, share a very distinct character of a text that teaches language for the ultimate purpose of reading and writing poetry.

This aspect of the text is firmly and explicitly established in the first version of Čhindāmanī of the King Nāraī period. Since the text is the most important one as the first text book in the language, it is worth examining it in more detail to find out the underlying 'essence' and 'significance' which basically form Thai poetical rules for generations after.

The work starts with the homage to goddess Sarassawadī -

the goddess of arts and literature. It is worth noticing that this 'homage' itself is composed in the form of Rāi - further evidence to show how poetry in various forms already flourished at that time.

Immediately after this homage, the author gives a glossary of 'poetic' words and synonyms for the use of composing poetry. The purpose of this glossary as a tool for poetic creation is clearly stated at the end of the glossary.

'All these words have been compiled by the learned poets in order to be used in all kinds of poetry.'¹ (trans. S.C.)

The importance of this glossary of 'poetic' words can be seen through its priority in the text because even the worship of Buddha and Three Gems in Buddhism, which usually appears at the beginning of a text, only comes after this glossary of 'poetic' words in Chindāmanī.

In the worship to the Lord Buddha, the author also explains that he composed the text according to Khampī Wuttōthai. Then again, the author gives the examples of words with various spelling or, in other words, the rules of spelling, without any explanation. These lists of words are, however, composed in various verse forms, and they consist of words of Pali and Sanskrit derivation used in poetry as well as simple Thai words. These lists together with the glossary of poetic words given at the beginning of the text reflect the fundamental concern of

¹Chindāmanī, p. 9.

the 'appropriate' use of diction in Thai poetry, and how the 'poetic' diction should be 'different' if not very 'distinct' from ordinary language use. This concept has 'governed' and 'formed' a part of the most influential poetical convention from the past until the present day.

The following section after the rules of spelling, is almost entirely about the rules of pronunciation and the nature of different sounds in the language as well as the wide possibility of various tones which create different meanings in Thai. The thoroughness and detailed explanation in this section are very noticable and this aspect is evidently shared by all the other versions of the text of Chindāmanī.

As a text to teach a language, the emphasis on the rule of pronunciation is natural and appropriate enough. Nevertheless, the underlying essence of the ultimate purpose of teaching the language for writing and reading poetry is evident. At the end of this long section the author explains the 'virtue' of 'correct' pronunciation that its result is like ambrosia sprinkling and delighting the heart.

ทั้งนี้คำปราชแก่ง	เกลือบท
วังกล่าวเกลากลอกพจน	เรียบร้อย
เพียงทิพยสุธารศ	สรงโสจร ใจนา
ทั้งเว้เสนาะเพราะถ้อย	ถ้วนทุกคำ ¹

¹Chindāmanī, p. 29.

All this is the wisdom of the learned:
The precision of fine words well-pronounced
Is like ambrosia sprinkling and delighting the heart
How melodiously rings each word, each sound!

The ending of this section obviously illustrates how the author values the melody of the sounds in the language. The basic concern that the 'precise' and 'correct' pronunciation should be valued and appreciated by the poets and the students of the language alike reveals the essentially poetic virtue of the Thai language with its 'richesse' of sounds and tones.

This emphasis on the precision of sounds as an important element of poetic beauty is clearly expressed in the work of Prince Thammāthibēt who declares that the ignorance of the reader who cannot read properly will destroy the beauty of poetry.

อักษรเรียบร้อยถ้อย	คำเพราะ
ผู้รู้อ่านสารเสนาะ	เรื่อยหรี
ไม่รู้อ่านไม่เหมาะ	ตรงเทิ่ง ไปนา
ทำให้โคลงทั้งนี้	ชั่วช้าเสียไป
อักษรสรรคส์ว่างข้าง	ชุกจาว
โคลงก็เพราะเสนาะสาร	แคงไว้
ผู้รู้อ่านกลอนการ	พาขึ้น ใจนา
ผู้ไม่รู้อ่านให้	ชักของเสียโคลง ¹

A similar idea is re-stated in the poetical work Sām Krung by Prince Bidyalankarana describing the Paradise of

¹Dhanit Yūphō, Phraprawat phraniphon Chaofā Thammāthibēt (Bangkok, 1973), p. 144.

Poets as a divine place of glittering beauty and melodious music.

สรวงสวรรค์ชั้นกวีรุจีรัตน์ ผ่องประภัสร์พลอยทวพราวเวหา
พริ้งไพเราะเสนาะกรรณวันฉกนา สมสมญาแห่งสวรรค์ชั้นกวี¹

Oh, the glorious Paradise of Poets
Illustriously glittering like jewels in the sky!
How its melodious music sweetly consoles the ear
Graciously it deserves its name so divine!

These examples illustrate how the 'melodious' sounds play a very important role in creating the ideal beauty or perfection in Thai poetry. They also reveal how Thai poetry, according to a Thai concept, is to be or should be enjoyed through the ear as well as the mind - a concept that still holds true even in the works of modern poets today.

After the long section of pronunciation the author starts the main part of versification. The author gives many examples of various types of verse forms especially Khlōng which was considered to have flourished at that period. The author also includes a variety of Konlabot or 'encoded' poems without any explanation of how to read or 'decode' them.

This aspect reflects the author's belief or assumption that the readers of his text should be learned enough to understand the rules of versification through the various examples given without much explanation or the readers should be able to get some advice from their learned masters

¹Prince Bidyalankarana, Sām Krung (Bangkok, 1952), p. 27.

or teachers.

Nevertheless, there actually exists some general advice on how to compose poetry. One interesting aspect in this advice is the emphasis on the poet's knowledge of various foreign languages like Sanskrit, Pali, Khmer, Laos, Burmese, Mon and Singhalese. The main purpose of this knowledge is to be able to use the vocabulary of 'foreign' languages in the poetic creation.

This emphasis reflects once more the poetic value Thai poets attach to the exquisiteness of diction. According to Thai tradition, the exquisiteness of diction includes the use of 'elaborate' and 'uncommon' words borrowed or derived from foreign languages like Pali, Sanskrit or Khmer which are not altogether unfamiliar among the learned Thai poets. The effort to create the exquisiteness of diction through the use of 'foreign' words has become a 'convention', well-cherished in Thai poetic tradition.

It is true that Pali and Sanskrit loan-words are not uncommon in Thai but Thai poetic diction is still quite distinct from the non-poetic. In Thai poetic diction there exists a large variety of 'poetic' synonyms which are not normally used in ordinary language. For example, a word for a beautiful lady or the poet's loved one is extremely abundant in its varieties.

The poet can refer to a beautiful lady as นางสาว
นงคราญ นงเยาว์ เขวาลักษณ์ เขาวมาลย์ - all of which are
of Pali and Sanskrit origin, meaning a young girl or a
beautiful girl. Though these words may have some slightly
different meanings in the original language, Thai poets

make a rather 'flexible' use of them to refer to the same meaning.

Apart from borrowing 'foreign' words some poets created their own special terms in referring to their loved ones. These are quite uniquely created according to each poet's style and his own time. For example, in

Thawāthotsamāt the poet refers to his loved one as กวักเคี้ยว

รัตนาเรศ สุคาพินท แก้วกรรณเพญ นงโพร เนลิมภักย์ อรอนงค์

เจ้าเจียรจันทร วัลลภภักย์ แก้วการเท กวงศรีจุฬาลักษณ์. On the

other hand, in the works of Prince Thammāthibēt a loved

one is referred to as เจ้าคาทรุ เจ้าเอวบาง เจ้าโนมฉาย

สายสุกสวาท น้านวลจันทร สายสุคใจ .

These examples show how Thai poets created their 'poetic' diction either through the use of 'foreign' words or through their own creative combination and selection of words to convey their own specific meanings. These rather elaborate creations of the poets in the past therefore resulted in a clear distinction between 'poetic' and 'non-poetic' diction. The process of this creation had become an established 'convention' in Thai poetical heritage.

However, it would be an exaggeration to claim that there has been no change in Thai poetic diction since the time of Ayuthaya. Because the language itself changes with the passing of time, poetic diction is inevitably affected. Nevertheless, the accepted convention of 'poetic' diction still survives in modern poetry. For example,

Angkhān still refers to his loved one as น้องแก้ว แก้วตา

แก้ววาทา - the poetic terms employed by Thai poets since the Ayuthaya period.

This means that the diction of poetry in Thai has always been 'poetic' and 'distinct' from ordinary language and to a certain extent, 'poetic' diction is employed in poetry regardless of time and changes in the current language use.

On the other hand, a modern poet like Suchit Wongthēt has created a 'new' type of 'poetic' diction by employing colloquial expressions and slang terms together with archaic expressions. As a whole, however, the 'convention' of creating a distinction between 'poetic' and 'non-poetic' diction still remains essential in the 'written' poetry in Thai.

The author of Chindāmanī ends the text with the appraisal of the value of the work as a beautiful and precious gem, worthy of the state.

ลิขิตวิจิตรคัวย	ศุภอรณ
ก่งมณีจินคารัตน	เลอศแล้ว
อันมีศิริสวัสดิ	โสภาคย์
ใครรู้คือไ้แก้ว	ค่าแท้ควรเมืองฯ ¹

This appraisal reveals the underlying significance of the name of the book 'Chindāmanī'. According to a dictionary, the word 'Chindāmanī' means 'thought-gem', 'wish-gem' - a jewel supposed to have the power to supply all desires.² The name of the book reflects the value the author attached to the art of poetry and the virtue of 'literary' knowledge.

¹Chindāmanī, p. 78.

²McFarland, Thai-English Dictionary, p. 251.

Through the various versions of Čhindāmanī, the essential emphasis emerging from the text is on the pronunciation which ultimately governs the 'melody' of the language and on the diction which is the most essential to the 'poeticalness' of Thai poetry.

Even in the Čhindāmanī of King Bōromakōt (1732-1758) where there are no examples of verse forms, the text consists entirely of the rules of pronunciation and detailed explanation of how one can justify any pronunciation as 'correct'. The author explains that when one encounters any problem of this nature the criteria by which to decide are quite various. One criterion that the author keeps referring to is the criterion of 'rhyming'.

He claims that in earlier Thai, the rules of pronunciation were quite flexible, for example, one word could be pronounced in certain distinct ways. Therefore, the author suggests that if it is in poetry, the 'rhyming' criterion will be the most important, as the reader can decide to pronounce the word in such a way that it creates a 'rhyme' with the other word in the same line or the preceding or following line according to the rhyme-scheme.

This explanation reflects the fact that the most important 'essence' of Thai poetry lies in the 'rhyme'. The significance of rhymes can even over-rule the pronunciation of the words and even the spelling of 'poetic' words.

This aspect is clearly illustrated in the work of Sunthōn Phū who employed the form of Klōn as his main verse form. He was the poet who not only established this form in the tradition of written poetry, but also perfected it.

His influence has been so prominent that his 'style' of Klōn has become the 'model' for the following generations of poets.

One outstanding characteristic of his 'style' is the 'richesse' of rhymes within the same line or between the lines. In order to achieve the goal of rhyming, the poet allowed himself to 'adapt' the spelling of some words in order to create 'rhymes' while keeping their 'original' meanings. For example, the word ชีวิต chīwit, meaning 'life' can appear in poetry in various forms like ชีว , Chīwā Chīwin Chīwī Chīwan or even ชีวัง Chīwang.

This variation of forms of spelling is recognised by the readers of poetry and it seems naturally acceptable since the virtue of rhymes is mutually valued by the poets and their readers. Nevertheless, it is worth noticing that this 'flexibility' is more accepted in the verse form of Klōn. This is quite understandable as Klōn is by nature a very common form of oral poetry, normally less restricted and nearer to the spoken language.

The essential emphasis on 'diction' and the 'melody' of sounds in poetry clearly illustrated in the text of Chindāmanī is further emphasized, though indirectly, in another important text on Thai versification: Konlabot Siriwibunkiti .

As a text on versification, this text is quite different from Chindāmanī, for it deals exclusively with the verse form of Klōn and its 'variations'. The text was composed by Luang Srīprīchā in the reign of King Boromakōt (1732-

1758). It is an exquisite piece of poetical work in its own right, though it remains unfinished. Its uniqueness lies in its 'richesse' of the variations of Klōn employed as it consists of eighty-four different 'variations' or 'Konlabot' of Klōn with different names specified by the poet.

As far as the structure of the work is concerned, there is no 'explicit' indication in the text as being intended as a text on versification. Even the name of the work is simply taken from the name of the Jataka tale which is the subject matter of the book.

The only characteristic of the work that might be considered as 'giving instruction' is the explanation from the poet of how to read some 'complicated' types of Konlabot. However, for the most part of the text, the poet only specifies the name of each type without giving any explanation, a similar 'style' as appeared in Čhindāmanī.

In fact, the poet mentioned the name of the book Čhindāmanī at the beginning of his text when giving the details of the resource of his work. This, at least, reflects the poet's recognition of the importance of Čhindāmanī in the world of poetic creation, though he did not announce any intention to create a text of a similar nature. The 'explicit' intention of the poet is to become 'a renowned master of Klōn', and, as conventionally stated in Thai poetry, to attain 'enlightenment' and Nirvana in the end.

Considering it as a piece of poetical work alone, it is

certainly a unique illustration of the poet's exquisite mastery in the form of Klōn. The poet managed to employ various highly-restricted 'forms' of Klōn to tell the story smoothly and effectively.

The complicated restrictions imposed on the 'form' do not prevent the 'telling' of the story but even help to highlight and intensify some parts where feelings and emotions are concerned. In fact, the poet managed to illustrate how the 'form' is an integral part of the 'content' and the 'message' in poetry. Besides, this unique piece of poetical work reveals how a verse form is actually an exploration into the possibilities of language.

This point will become clear when we examine more closely the various 'variations' composed in the work. The poet obviously made use of many aspects and characteristics of the language to create restrictions or rules on the form of Klōn.

For example, as Thai is a 'tonal' language the poet imposed the restriction of employing only certain 'tone marks' in each line or specifying a certain 'tonal' consonant at the beginning of the line.

These restrictions render a rather elaborate control over the pattern of tones which affects the 'melody' of sounds in a poem. Since the 'melody' of sounds is highly esteemed in the tradition of Thai poetry, we can see how the poet made use of these elaborate restrictions to intensify the desired 'virtue' of 'poeticalness'.

On the other hand, the poet recognised the influence of Pali and Sanskrit in Thai poetic tradition. For example,

the poet composed a 'variation' of Klōn with a restriction of employing Pali words in combination with Thai words. Besides, the poet employed a restriction of short and long syllables (ฦๅ Lahu and ฦๅ Karu) as well as the Pali and Sanskrit concept of 'poetic metre' in his text. These two restrictions are in fact characteristic of the verse form of Chan which is a Thai derivation of a verse form of Pali and Sanskrit origins.

To apply these 'elaborate' restrictions on a comparatively 'simple' form of Klōn reveals the poet's deep understanding of the nature of Thai language and how to make use of the 'foreign' influences to bring out or to create the most intensified 'poeticalness' of the language.

This also re-emphasizes the conventional 'ideal' of Thai poetry as 'excellence of language use' and proves that even in the apparently 'simple' form of Klōn the poet can explore and manipulate the possibilities of language to create 'poeticalness' in poetry.

As a text on versification, this work reveals many interesting aspects in the history of Thai poetry. Compared with the first Chindāmanī which concentrates more on the verse form of Khlōng, this text reflects the increased interest in and recognition of the form of Klōn. As Klōn has always been the most prominent form of Thai oral poetry, the poet's effort to 'elaborate' it in written poetry by creating many 'variations' of the form obviously reveals how the form of Klōn finally established itself in the written tradition in the late Ayuthaya period.

This 'trend' was to develop and flourish up to the

early Ratanakosin period when Sunthōn Phū perfected his style in Klōn and established it as the 'ideal' in the art of Klōn writing. Moreover, this form is still one of the 'liveliest' verse forms among modern Thai poets.

The recognition of the form of Klōn in the 'written' tradition is further emphasized and illustrated in Prachum Lamnam - an important text on versification composed by Luang Thammāphimon in 1927. The work was commissioned by Prince Damrongrājānuphāb, the president of the National Library (Wachirayān Library) at that time, as the author mentioned at the beginning of his work. The author claimed that the work was compiled and composed from the old texts of the masters in the past.

The work starts by the explanation of the 'history' of Thai versification with reference to old texts like Khampī Wuttōthai and Kāp Sārawilāsinī as well as Čhindāmanī. Though the author employs material and examples from Čhindāmanī, he gives more detailed explanation on various aspects such as how to read or 'decode' some types of 'encoded' poetry or giving explanation on old punctuation marks employed in poetry and prose writing in the old days.

Therefore, as a text on versification, Prachum Lamnam appears more detailed and complete than most old texts in the past including Čhindāmanī.

One outstanding characteristic of this work, apart from its thoroughness in verse forms and explanation, is the full recognition of the significance of Klōn both in written and oral poetry. The author includes in his text the study of

the verse forms of simple nursery rhymes, lullabies and various types of folk songs, all of which are quite obviously neglected in earlier texts on Thai versification.

The emphasis on the form of Klōn is clearly illustrated in the detailed explanation on Klōn. The author categorizes Klōn into four different types:

- | | |
|-----------------|---------------------|
| 1. เสาวรณี | appraisal of beauty |
| 2. นารีปราโมทย์ | consolation |
| 3. พิโรชาพ้ง | reprimand |
| 4. สลบงคพิไสย | lamentation |

Although this category is perhaps far from being an 'original' idea of the author, it is 'explicitly' stated or explained here for the first time. Similarly, the 'rules' of rhyming within the same line are thoroughly explained and illustrated by examples.

The author gives further explanation on the rules of rhymes between lines, a long explanation of how to select the rhyming words as the qualities of tones are involved and play an important role in creating the 'melody' of the verses composed. The advice and explanation of how to read Klōn is clearly given by emphasizing the fact that the reader has to know the 'rhyme-scheme' of Klōn and how to pronounce and prolong the sounds of words as well as to know where to pause according to the accepted rules.

The illustration of various 'types' of Klōn are given including the less well known types which are not normally employed in written poetical works. Furthermore, the author gives an explanation of how various types of Klōn are employed to serve different purposes according to the

'convention' of each type of poetry.

Considering the text in more detail, we will notice that an equal emphasis is given to oral poetry as well as to written poetry. Varieties of oral poetry such as lullabies and songs sung in a game or love songs improvised as an entertainment during a festival in the countryside are taken into consideration as various types of verse forms to be acknowledged by the poets who consult the text.

In fact, the recognition of the significance of oral poetry is evident in the title of the book Prachum Lamnam which might be literally translated as 'The compilation of songs'. It is worth noticing that the word 'lamnam' is intensively employed in the book. As this word in Thai means 'the theme of a song or metrical composition', its intensive use in the text and as the title of the work reveals the author's attitude towards poetry. Poetry is regarded not only as 'metrical composition' but also closely linked with songs - the expression of intensified feelings. This attitude explains the details in the text of the verse forms of oral poetry and songs which are mainly in various types of Klōn.

Therefore, this text on versification is further evidence of the established importance of the form of Klōn in Thai poetry and the recognition of the close relationship between oral and written poetry in Thai.

The recognition of the importance of oral poetry can be regarded as an attempt to extend the 'realm of verse forms' in Thai poetry. The concern over this matter was stated by Prince Damrongrājānuphāb in the introduction of a collection

of texts on versification - Chumnum Tamrā Klōn published in 1914. The prince claimed that Thai poets seemed to limit themselves to composing in the forms of Khlōng and Klōn without trying to employ various other forms abundant in Thai literary tradition. He suggested that Thai poets should study carefully the various existing texts on versification so as to expand their scope of verse forms and to enrich Thai poetry.¹

As Prince Damrongrājānuphāb was indirectly the influence for the book Prachum Lamnam, it is not impossible to assume that the book is intended as an inspiration for Thai poets to study and explore more into the 'richesse' of Thai poetry both in oral and written traditions.

A later work illustrating a similar recognition of oral poetry is the text on versification by Phrayā Uppakit Silapasān called 'Chantalak' นันทลักษณ์ composed in 1941.

The text is an important part of the most celebrated work of the author as a Thai grammarian - Lak Phāsā Thai.

It is a very complete text on Thai versification with explanation of its origin and history. As a grammarian, the author illustrates an evident awareness of the relationship between language and poetry.

The author makes an explicit distinction between prose and poetry and explains their different 'virtues'. The author claims the 'virtues' of poetry as 'superior' to prose because poetry can be recited and sung with the accompaniment

¹Chumnum Tamrā Klōn (Bangkok, 1976), p. ค

of music and thus is far more 'impressive' than prose.¹

This reflection reveals the author's deep awareness of the close relationship between songs and poetry in Thai.

Therefore, it is not surprising that the author considers various types of songs or *phlēng*, sung on different occasions but usually not 'composed' in written poetical works, as a separate type of verse form. With a rather detailed explanation, the author illustrates the verse 'forms' and 'rules' of various types of songs in Thai tradition.

To a certain extent, this explanation can be regarded as a study of the 'convention' of oral poetry, reflecting how oral poetry can, in fact, be compared with the elaborate written poetry. For example, the use of pun and 'Konlabot' which is supposed to be an elaborate technique for written poetry is apparently abundant in various types of oral poetry as well.

This observation does not contradict the traditionally accepted idea of the refinement of language use and expression in written Thai poetry. Rather it serves to re-emphasize the fundamental idea that poetical devices serve ultimately to bring out the 'poeticalness' in the nature of the language itself. Thus, the mutual characteristics between elaborate written poetry and 'spontaneous' oral poetry could be regarded as the 'natural poeticalness' of the language.

As a linguist as well as grammarian, the author gives an explanation and criticism on the 'suitability' of verse forms depending on their accordance and harmony with the

¹Phrayā Uppakit Sinlapasān, Lak Phāsā Thai (Bangkok, 1971), p. 351.

nature of language itself. For example, in the section dealing with Chan, a verse form derived from Pali and Sanskrit, the author mentions that he will only explain the types of Chan which are 'suitable' and widely composed in Thai. Besides, he explains that the difficulties of composing Chan lies in the different nature of Thai language from Pali and Sanskrit. As a result, Thai poets are normally obliged to employ Pali and Sanskrit words instead of Thai words in their composition of Chan. Regarding these difficulties as the 'disadvantages' of this form, the author obviously shows his reservation towards the form of Chan.¹

At the same time, the author indirectly demonstrates his preference and approval for the form of Klōn through the detailed study of various aspects of Klōn and the explicit recognition of oral poetry like phlēng as another 'type' of verse form. Comparable to the study of various types of Klōn in Prachum Lamnam, this text includes the explanation of the technique of rhyming in Klōn as well as a clear explication of various types of Konlabot.

These characteristics of the two texts on versification can be considered as constituting progress compared with the text of Chindāmanī where explicit explanations about poetical rules and techniques are not normally stated but only illustrated through examples.

Owing to the reputed authority of Phrayā Uppakit Sinlapasān as a linguist and grammarian, the work of Lak Phāsā Thai of which the text 'Chantalak' is a part, has

¹See Phrayā Uppakit Sinlapasān, Chumnum Nipphon O.N.K. (Bangkok, 1973), pp. 223-4.

gained an important status as one of the most influential text books on Thai language and grammar.

One interesting aspect to observe here is the 'continuity' of the same concept as appeared in Čhindāmanī that the study of language and grammar also embraces the knowledge of versification as the manifestation of the mastery of language use. Nevertheless; it is clear that the work of Phrayā Uppakit Sinlapasān is intended for a wider audience and aims at students of the language rather than the poets-to-be as is the case for Čhindāmanī.

Despite all the differences between these two texts, they both reveal a fundamental awareness of the relationship between language and literature among Thai literary scholars.

To complete one's knowledge of a language one has to know its rules of versification. This idea is explicitly stated by Phrayā Uppakit Sinlapasān when explaining the importance of the knowledge of versification.

'In Thai literature, there exist various kinds of poetry all of which are different. Therefore, it is absolutely essential that a student of Thai language should learn the rules of versification because these rules govern the rules of writing and reading as well. Thus, without the knowledge of versification one cannot claim to have a perfect knowledge of Thai language.'¹

(trans. S.C.)

This statement clearly reflects the value attached to poetry in Thai tradition. It reveals how the art of poetry is considered almost as a part of the nature and quality of the language which cannot be ignored by any literary scholars.

¹Phrayā Uppakit Sinlapasān, Lak phāsā Thai, p. 351.

It reflects also the ideal Thai concept of poetry as excellence of language use.

Considered as a whole, this text is not only evidence of the 'continuity' but also of the 'progress' of Thai versification. With the passing of time, Thai poets have explored the possibilities of the language, invented and established various types of verse forms for their poetical creation. The 'completeness' and 'richesse' of the later texts on versification like Prachum Lamnam and 'Chantalak' reveals the recognition of the significance of oral poetry, cherished and flourishing side by side with written poetry.

The explicit recognition of oral poetry in the written tradition can be regarded as a subtle advancement towards the beginning of 'modern' poetry as we have seen how oral poetry influences modern Thai poets in various ways.

As we have observed through various Thai texts on versification, the refinement of diction and the 'melody' of sounds are among the most essential qualities of poetry. We have also observed that Thai versification is influenced by Pali and Sanskrit poetics as Thai poets and scholars in the past studied these two languages as an essential part of their knowledge.

There exist two translated texts on Pali and Sanskrit poetics in Thai: Subōdhalankara translated from Pali by Group Captain Yaem Prapatthong and Alangkārasāt translated from Sanskrit by P.S. Sārtrī.

First we will examine briefly the text of Subōdhalankara written in Pali and believed to be an important text book for Thai monks to study thoroughly and

seriously. The text was first translated into Thai as early as 1812 and the present text under discussion is a result of the second attempt to translate this text into Thai in 1964. As Pali was the language for the monastery where all the education of Thai scholars in the past took place, this text could be very likely one of the most influential resources for the study of versification before the existence of Čhindāmanī in Thai.

According to the article of Major G.E. Fryer in the Journal of the Asiatic Society No. II, 1875, Subōdhalankara is composed by the same author of Vuttodaya in Ceylon around the 12th century.

The text is a metrical treatise of 370 verses, divided into five chapters which treat of the following subjects namely:-

1. Faults in Composition.
2. Their Avoidance.
3. Merits, or Verbal Ornaments.
4. Rhetorical Figures, or Ornaments of the Sense.
5. Flavour.¹

To see how this text can possibly influence and govern the 'ideal' of Thai poetry we can start from examining the title of the work Subōdhalankara. The title is a combination of two words of Sanskrit origin: subodha meaning 'right intelligence, good information or knowledge'² and alamkāra meaning 'the act of decorating, ornament, decoration, (in

¹Major G.E. Fryer, On the Ceylon Grammarian Sangharakkhita Thera and His Treatise on Rhetoric, Journal of the Asiatic Society, No. II 1875, pp. 91-125.

²Sir Monier-Monier Williams, A Sanskrit-English Dictionary (The Clarendon Press, Oxford 1899), p. 1229.

rhetoric) an ornament of the sense or the sound'.¹ Therefore, the name of the work can be translated as 'the knowledge of the act of decorating or the act of ornament of the sense and the sound'.

From this meaning emerges the underlying concept of poetry as a creation of 'decorated' or 'ornamented' beauty. This concept is expressed quite clearly in the text when the author explains the significance of 'embellishment' in any poetic creation.

'Even a flawless and beautiful face like a lotus or a perfect beauty still needs ornaments, how then can poetry be without any?'²
(trans. S.C.)

A similar idea of 'poetic beauty' as refined embellishment is further emphasized in the classification of poetry in the text. Poetry is classified into two kinds.

1. A short poem completed within four lines called อนิพนธ์ 'uncomposed' poetry.
2. A long poem consisting of many stanzas or of various types of verse forms called นิพนธ์ 'composed' poetry.

This classification, without devaluing the poetic value of a short poem, indirectly implies an 'ideal' poetical work with the esteemed 'richesse' of forms and a certain length as an illustration of the talent of the poet. To a certain extent, this can be an underlying influence in the concept of 'variation and combination' in Thai poetical tradition.³

¹Ibid., p. 94.

²Sangharakkhita, Subōdhalankara (Bangkok, 1964), p. 12.

³See the discussion in Chapter III.

There exists also an explanation of the qualities of a poet which is worth observing since it can be linked with the 'ideal' of a poet in a Thai concept.

According to Subōdhalankara, the qualities of a poet are:

1. Knowledge of vocabulary
2. " " poetics
3. " " semantics
4. " " rhetoric and versification
5. Perseverance and practice.¹

From these qualities, it is obvious that a poet has to be a scholar in language and the art of versification. It is worth noticing that the knowledge of vocabulary is a primary demand. This can correspond to a similar idea prominently expressed in Čhindāmanī. These qualities obviously emphasize the idea of poetry as 'excellence of language use' for a poet is expected to be highly informed in all aspects of language rather than to have 'ideas' or 'inspiration'.

The emphasis on the virtue of perseverance and practice reveals the idea that poetry-writing is a skill as well as a talent. The art of poetry is regarded as a highly skilled art, combining the effort and practice with the brilliance of mind of a poet.

Another important translation of Sanskrit rhetoric is Alangkārasāt which was translated into Thai in 1942. The name of the book is a combination of 'alamkārá' meaning the act of decorating, ornament² and 'sastra' meaning a rule,

¹Subōdhalankara, p. 134.

²Sir Monier-Monier Williams, A Sanskrit-English Dictionary, p. 1229.

teaching, instruction.¹ Thus it is obvious that both the texts in Pali and Sanskrit have a similar name with the same underlying idea of rhetoric as 'the act of decorating or ornamenting'.

This can perhaps explain the 'conventional' imagery of poetry as a precious stone or a beautiful piece of jewelry appearing in various Thai poetical works. Since the art of poetry is considered as the art of decorating and ornamenting, it follows that poetry should be esteemed as a refined piece of precious ornament.

This idea is explicitly stated in the text when the author describes the 'virtue' of poetry. Perfect poetry is compared to a pearl necklace strung together by the virtue of beauty and deserves to be an ornament even for the goddess of letters.²

The relationship between language and literature is also acknowledged in the text. The author states that languages are the body of poetry.³ This corresponds to a similar idea expressed in Āchindāmanī which aims ultimately to teach the language for the purpose of writing and reading poetry.

On the other hand, poetry is recognized for its 'spiritual' value for the author praises flawless poetry as a glory which is like a passage to Heaven.⁴ Besides, 'pure poetry' or poetry that comes from the heart of a poet is like immortal nectar or divine ambrosia appreciated even by gods.⁵

Obviously enough, the comparison of poetry to 'immortal

¹Ibid., p. 1069.

²P.S. Sārtrī (trans.), Alangkārasāt (Bangkok, 1961), p. 13.

³Ibid., p. 6.

⁴Ibid., p. 7.

⁵Ibid., p. 10.

nectar' or 'divine ambrosia' is not uncommon in Thai tradition as we can find it in various Thai poetical works or even in Čhindāmanī itself.

As a whole, the texts of Alangkārasāt and Subōdhalankara share various similar ideas and both give instruction through examples demonstrating different types of 'stylistic devices' that can serve to embellish a composition of poetry.

The details of these examples reveal some possible influence on the art of Thai poetry. Nevertheless, it is not really possible to find any exact evidence to confirm that Thai poets in the past learnt their art directly from these two texts.

It is essential to realize that ultimately speaking, the art of poetry is governed by the nature of the language itself as well as by the invention of the poets. The translation of these two important texts into Thai reflects a continuing awareness of their important inspiration and influence in Thai poetical heritage.

From the discussion of various texts on Thai versification so far, we might be able to see the 'formation' of Thai poetical convention. On one hand, the 'formation' of the convention under discussion here is mainly of the 'written' tradition. Nevertheless, in the later texts on versification the influence and the recognition of the oral tradition are also evident.

The first text on Thai versification Čhindāmanī reveals an evident influence of Khampī Wutthōthai or Vuttodaya from Pali. Though this text is far from complete it is the most

influential 'model' for all the later texts on Thai versification.

The prominent verse forms in Chindāmanī are Khlōng and Chan which were at that time widely composed especially among the poets of the court. Emerging from various texts of Chindāmanī, composed in different periods, are the 'ideals' of Thai poetical beauty and refinement. The 'melody' of the sounds in poetry is distinctly emphasized and valued as well as the clarity of diction which consists mostly of 'foreign' words such as loan-words from Pali, Sanskrit and Khmer considered conventionally more 'poetic' than Thai words.

These texts also reflect the awareness of the relationship between language and poetry for it is emphasized that one should know the language well in order to compose or to read poetry properly. This concept continues to influence later texts on Thai versification as can be seen in the texts of Prachum Lamnam and 'Chantalak' composed in the Ratanakosin period.

The concept of poetry as excellence of language use and the exploration into the possibilities of language is explicitly illustrated in the work Konlabot Siritwibunkiti (1732-1758), consisting of eighty-four types or variations of Klōn. This text is evidence of the established importance and recognition of the form of Klōn in Thai 'written' poetry.

As various types of Klōn are the common forms of all the 'oral' poetry and songs in the Thai tradition, it is possible to assume that this form originally belonged only to 'oral' poetry. Its recognition and significance as a

form in 'written' poetry came only during the late Ayuthaya period.

From the late Ayuthaya period till the present day, Klōn has been one of the most widely composed forms in the written poetry apart from being sung and improvised as a form of entertainment in Thai 'oral' tradition. The previous discussion on verse forms illustrates how, in fact, the forms of Klōn and Khlōng, equally important and widely employed in Thai poetical works, are closely related.¹

This fact re-emphasizes the idea that the enduring success of any verse form depends on its harmony with the nature of the language since it is obvious that the form of Klōn is comparatively closer to the spoken language.

This explains why the forms of Khlōng and Klōn are about the only two forms most vigorously composed among modern poets. As for the verse form of Chan, derived from Pali and Sanskrit, it is evident that it has become even more 'uncommon' and more 'prestigious' in modern poetry and consequently far less employed and appreciated.

On one hand, we may regard this as an understandable change in the 'mode' of poetic expression according to the change of time. On the other hand, we can consider the 'decline' of the Chan form as an attempt of modern poets to seek and to maintain the more 'natural' forms in their poetic creation. From its origin, the form of Chan can be regarded as rather 'alien' to the nature of Thai language and thus is comparatively less 'natural' as a verse form.

¹See Chapter III on the nature and significance of Thai verse forms.

Compared with the form of Khlōng which is equally 'old' in the history of Thai poetry, the Chan form today is far less 'current' or 'contemporary'. Modern poets and readers alike seem to feel quite 'at ease' still with the form of Khlōng whereas the form of Chan appears much more 'distant'.

This does not mean, however, that the Chan form has become 'obsolete' in modern poetry but it is less employed as a form for poetical works and is, without stating the fact overtly, reserved as a 'prestigious' form for special and 'serious' purposes like the adoration of Buddha or the praise of the King.

The 'formation' of Thai poetical convention is a combination of the 'foreign' influences like the influence of Pali and Sanskrit and the 'poetic' nature of the Thai language. There is no denying that Thai poets and scholars in the past found their models and inspiration from the texts in Pali and Sanskrit but it is the nature of the Thai language that ultimately governs, selects and adapts these foreign influences. An obvious example is the Thai adaptation of the forms of Chan from Pali and Sanskrit by adding 'rhymes', a characteristically Thai poetic quality, to the form.

Besides, the convention consists of selective 'inventions' of the poets in the past who explored into the possibilities of the language and indirectly established their results as 'conventions' for the following generation. This can be seen in the 'richesse' of the variations of Thai verse forms known as Konlabot as well as in the technique of word-

play and pun, well-cherished in Thai poetry from the past till the present.

The observation of the works from modern poets in our study reveals the continuity of a similar process. Modern poets, being aware of the virtues of various conventions, make use of them in their own 'inventions' which will become, to a certain extent, 'modern conventions' for other modern poets at the present and perhaps, in the future.

Thus, the 'formation' of poetical convention is ultimately a continuing process which embraces the past, the present as well as the future.

Part II: Thai Concepts of Poets and Poetry

To complete the previous discussion we will now extend our study to observe some underlying rules and concepts of poets and poetry in Thai tradition. This will serve to reveal any possible change in this concept reflecting through the works of modern poets under the study.

Although the art of Thai poetry is almost as old as the nation itself, there exist no special texts on Thai poetics. That is to say serious theoretical and 'philosophical' discussion removed from the details of practice does not exist. There are, of course, some later works on Pali and Sanskrit poetics in the form of translation. Besides, there exist some modern works on literary criticism but these are mostly in the form of translation or compilation of western theories of literature and literary criticism and thus cannot be considered as 'proper' Thai poetics.

At the same time, throughout the history of Thai poetry, the poets' concern about their art and its values is more than apparent. Thai poets in the Ayuthaya period demonstrated a 'convention' of expressing a high esteem for their own work and wishing it to remain forever. Nevertheless, within their seemingly 'self-praise', Thai poets also established a 'convention' of generosity and modesty by allowing their work to be judged and altered by the learned readers. Ultimately speaking, this modesty and generosity reflect a deep concern as well as a desire for the 'perfection' of the works created.

Before looking into the concept of poetic 'perfection' in Thai tradition we shall first examine the Thai concept of a poet. The word 'poet' in Thai is กวี kawī which is in fact of a Sanskrit origin 'kavī'. According to the Thai encyclopedia, the word 'poet' means 'the master of poetic composition'.¹ In the doctrine of Buddhism there exists a classification of poets according to their art of composing as well as their inspiration. Poets are classified into four types:

1. จินตกวี the poet of imagination or fiction - a poet who composes through his imagination
2. สุตกวี the poet of tradition - a poet who composes from what he has learnt and heard of
3. อรรถกวี the poet of real life - a poet who composes from reality
4. ปฏิภาณกวี the improviser or extemporaneous poet - a poet who composes through improvisation or extemporarily.²

The last type of poet as an improviser reflects a significant recognition of 'oral' poetry. A poet who composes in an 'impromptu' manner is equally esteemed as any other poets. This recognition reveals how 'oral' poetry forms an unalienable part in the rich and enduring tradition of Eastern poetry to which Thai poetry belongs.

In Āchindāmanī there is no explicit definition of a

¹The Royal Institute, Sārānukrom Thai vol. 2 (Bangkok, 1958), p. 745.

²McFarland, Thai-English Dictionary, p. 64.

poet but a poet is normally referred to as นักปราชญ์ - a learned man or a philosopher which obviously reflects the attitude towards a poet.

A similar idea is expressed in the works of Prince Thammāthibēt when he ends his works by entrusting them to the judgement and appreciation of the learned นักปราชญ์เมธา.¹ Nevertheless, the word poet 'kawī' is employed in an earlier text like Thawāthotsamāt when the poet ends his work with 'self-praise' and, at the same time, a modest generosity to allow other poets to better the text if they find it unclear or imperfect.

จบเสร็จเจลาการพญ์เกลี้ยง	กลอนกานท์
คือมณีนมาไลย	เรียบร้อย
เป็นเฉลิมกวีสาร	เสาวนิศ
รัตนมณีนมาลัยสร้อย	เชกสร้อยสรวมกรรณ
บทใดบ่ต้องแท้	โดยอรรถ กิติ
เชิญกวีวานสรรค์	เชกสร้อง
จงเป็นมโหศรสวัสดิ์	ศิเรก
บทสิ่งใดขัดข้อง	อ่านซ้ำยาไน ²

From these examples we might be able to say that the concept of a poet as a learned man or a philosopher is well-established in Thai poetry from the beginning. The value attached to the status of a poet is normally well-expressed but hardly exaggerated in Thai tradition. Thai poets created a 'convention' of expressing the appreciation for

¹See Dhanit Yūphō, Phraprawat phraniphon Čhao fā Thammāthibēt, p. 102.

²Chanthit Krasāesin (ed.), Khlong Thawāthotsamāt (Bangkok, 1961), p. 196.

their works and the wish for their immortality. This 'convention' can be seen throughout from the early poetical works like Lilit Yuan Phāi, Thawāthotsamāt, and Lilit Phra Lō. Nevertheless, most poets emphasized the value and beauty of the work and not the genius of the poets themselves.

This 'convention' still survives in the works of modern poets like Angkhān and Naowarat. Angkhān compares his work Lam Nam Phū Krađu'ng to a pure and beautiful diamond and expresses the wish that his work should remain till the end of time.¹ In Chak Mā Chom Mu'ang, Naowarat compares his work to a beautiful and refined jewel but allows it to be altered by the readers so that it can remain to tell the 'truth' forever.²

Although these two modern poets seem to follow the 'convention' they extend it further to a deeper dimension of their own. Angkhān claims that being a poet is his only desire for this life and the next ones, and that he, as a poet, holds a divine heaven in his hand while his heart and soul belong to an 'immortal' world of poetry.³ As a philosophical poet, Angkhān even composes 'The Poet's Testament' expressing his ideas and ideals of being a poet. He explicitly declares that his purpose of composing poetry is to 'salvage the soul' and expresses a wish for the eternal sacredness of the art of poetry.⁴

¹See the text and the translation in Chapter I, p. 51.

²See the text and the translation in Chapter III, p. 149.

³Angkhān Kalayānaphong, Lam Nam Phū Krađu'ng, p. 162.

⁴See the poem 'The Poet's Testament' in Chapter I, p. 10.

Angkhān's explicit esteem and concern for the art of poetry and the duty of a poet explains the emphasis on the 'spiritual' values of poetry which can be considered as a 'novelty' in Thai tradition. There is no denying that there exists a large amount of 'religious' and 'didactic' poetry in Thai. Nevertheless, Angkhān's emphasis on the 'spiritual' value of poetry is quite different for it is more direct and yet more universal than just a Buddhistic concept.

For Angkhān, his poetry serves ultimately to elevate the soul, of himself and his readers, and to bring truth and beauty to mankind. His awareness of the passing of time and the futility of human life can be considered an influence from Buddhism but his explicit and direct concern with the elevation and ecstasy of human spirit through the realization of beauty is quite unique in Thai tradition.

The poet's appreciation of art and its values is also apparent in his works for he repeatedly states that the beauty of art and nature is the most essential cure for the 'spiritual illness' of the modern world today.¹ Thus indirectly, Angkhān seems to perceive the duty of a poet as an attempt to help to better the world. This concept is actually quite unknown in Thai tradition though it is not uncommon to find 'morals' in various Thai poetical works in the past. To declare and emphasize directly a spiritual duty or a resolution of a poet is a 'novelty' marking a turning-point in the history of Thai poetry.

¹See the discussion in Chapters I & II.

Comparing with Naowarat in his Chak Mā Chom Mu'ang, we will notice a similar idea expressed rather differently. The main themes of this poetical work are the themes of the art of poetry-writing as well as Buddhist philosophy. The harmonious integration of these two themes serves to reveal the poet's attitude towards poetry. The parallel the poet makes between poetry and Buddhist philosophy illustrates how Naowarat shares the same view with Angkhān on the 'spiritual' value of poetry. As a Buddhist, Naowarat explicitly expresses his philosophy in Buddhistic terms. Therefore, he often employs the word สัจธรรม or 'truth' in his text together with other Buddhistic words like ทุกข์ - suffering, สมนทิ - illusion, สมบูรณ์ - wholeness, จิต - mind.

Besides, Naowarat ends his work with a wish that his work should remain to tell 'the truth' forever. Thus, it is not an exaggeration to say that both Angkhān and Naowarat reveal a 'new' idea of a poet as a creator as well as a preserver of beauty and truth. On one hand, they follow Thai tradition of creating 'beauty' in their works. On the other hand, they extend their concern to the revelation of truth and the enrichment of human mind and spirit. Therefore, it can be considered that Thai poets of today actually fulfil the 'traditional' concept of a poet as a philosopher or a thinker.

If the concept in the past emphasized mainly the mastery of language use and the learnedness of the poet, modern poets today carry the concept of a 'philosopher'

much further. A poet is not only a learned person with the talent and mastery of language use but also a serious thinker who involves himself in the spiritual growth of mankind. A poet is far from a mere entertainer of his readers as he is supposed to be gifted with insight to serve and change the world for the better.

This concept of a poet's duty is also evident in the work of Suchit Wongthēt. Rather than being 'philosophical', Suchit deliberately employs the technique of 'satire' for his purposes. He tries to draw the attention of his readers to various 'serious' social problems. For example, he portrays the problem of poverty among the farmers and the false pride and illusion among the so-called intellectuals. At the same time, he demonstrates his concern in the problems of the environment such as pollution and traffic in the city.

As a journalist, Suchit composes a poem called 'Nak Nangsu'a Phim' นักหนังสือพิมพ์ - Journalists.¹ In this short poem, the poet reminds all the journalists of their immense power to destroy any institution or individual by their writing. The abuse of power by the journalists can only be controlled by their own conscience. Therefore, the poet through his poem, tries to request, without preaching, the moral sense of responsibility for the good of society.

To accomplish his 'serious' intention as a poet, Suchit employs the technique of 'satire', created through a mixture of diction - poetic, archaic and slang. He makes use of the oral tradition like folk songs and oral poetry in his work in order to achieve the simplicity of poetic beauty quite

¹Suchit Wongthēt, Chao Khunthōng Pai Plon (Bangkok, 1982), p. 52.

unique to his own 'style'.

Seen in this light, modern poets like Angkhān, Naowarat and Suchit actually continue and re-vitalize the 'traditional' concept of a poet as a philosopher or a thinker. They illustrate their mastery of language use and a profound understanding of the art of Thai poetry. At the same time, they are concerned with the 'spiritual' values of poetry and how poetry can serve to elevate and enrich human mind and spirit.

As philosophers and thinkers, modern poets today employ their poetry to invite their readers to join them in their 'spiritual' pursuit to ultimately change the world and humanity for the better.

To follow the discussion, we will now examine the Thai concept of poetry reflected through various texts. In Āchindāmanī there is no term used to refer to 'poetry' in general. Poetry is referred to as กาพย์โคลงพากย์ฉันท์ กาพย์กลอน โคลงกาพย์กลอน, all of which are various combinations of different names of verse forms. So we can see that in fact there is no single word to refer to 'poetry'. However, we can notice that the word กาพย์ Kāp is quite prominent. This might be explained by looking into the original meaning of the word from Sanskrit काव्य Kāvya which in Sanskrit means 'words of poets'.¹ Since the word Kāvī or poet was accepted into Thai, the word Kāvya meaning 'poetry' was naturally included in Thai vocabulary.

The significant use of the word กาพย์ kāp as a general meaning of poetry in Āchindāmanī reflects how the definition

¹Phrayā Uppakit Sinlapasān, Lak Phāsā Thai, p. 352.

of poetry as 'words of a poet' or 'a composition of a poet' was accepted in Thai poetic tradition from the Ayuthaya period.

There exists, however, an old Thai word กำน Kān used to refer to a general meaning of poetry like the word กาบ Kāp. In Lilit Yuan Phāi, believed to be composed around the 15th century, we can find the word Kān used in the meaning of poetry. Similarly, the word Kān can be found in Thawāthotsamāt and Lilit Phra Lō.

Though Čhindāmanī was composed as a contemporary text with these two poetical works, the poet did not consider the use of Kān as a general word to refer to poetry. This can be one reason why this word is generally less known and recognized.

The word กำน Kān is believed to derive from กำน Kānta of Sanskrit origin meaning love, a beloved, pleasing, agreeable. Therefore, Kān as poetry can mean 'words that render love' or 'words that are pleasing'.¹ The word is not used in any texts on Thai versification until the Ratanakosin period when Luang Thammāphimon employed it in his work Prachum Lamnam. He employed it as a special name for a type of verse form as well as a general term to refer to poetry.

Phrayā Uppakit Sinlapasān in his text on versification 'Chantalak' advocated the use of the word Kān to refer to poetry in general. He explained that this word was an old Thai word used to refer to rhyming composition, and it was normally modified by various words referring to verse forms,

¹The Royal Institute, Sārānukrom Thai vol. 2, p. 1096.

for example, Khlōng can be referred to as KhlōngKān or Klōn as Klōnkān or Konlabot as KonlaKān.¹

However, the effort to re-vitalize the use of the word Kān as a general word for poetry was not really a success. Prince Bidayalankarna tried to invent a new word for poetry as กวีวัจนะ Kawīvatčhana, meaning 'words of a poet'. The prince was against the use of the Sanskrit word Kāvya which actually has the same meaning, as a word for 'poetry' on the grounds that it is already used in Thai as a name for a specific verse form of Kāp.²

In a Thai Dictionary of the Royal Institute, there exists a word กวีนิพนธ์ Kawīniphon meaning 'composition of a poet'.³ This word is now used as an equivalent of 'poetry' mostly in the academic field or in the study of literature. The combination of the word Kawīniphon - Kawī - a poet and Niphon - to compose reflects the continuation of the concept arising from the word Kāvya and is similar to the invention of Prince Bidayalankarana 'Kawīvatčhana'.

Nevertheless, we can say that in general Thai people still refer to 'poetry' as Khlōngklōn or KāpKlōn in the spoken language. Thus, it is obvious that the influence from the past still survives today. To a Thai mind, poetry is recognized through its various 'forms'. As a result, a combination of the names of well-known verse forms like KhlōngKlōn or KāpKlōn can satisfyingly be used to refer to 'poetry' in general.

¹Phrayā Uppakit Sinlapasān, Lak Phāsā Thai, p. 350.

²Prince Bidayalankarana, Sām Krung (Bangkok, 1952), pp. 282-3.

³The Royal Institute, A Thai Dictionary of the Royal Institute (Bangkok, 1962), p. 99.

The significance of 'forms' as a distinction between prose and poetry is, in fact, quite understandable in Thai. By nature of the language it is possible to find rhyming sounds even in normal prose. Therefore, even though 'rhyme' is the most essential element of poetry in Thai, it cannot, on its own, serve to distinguish poetry from prose.

The restricted structure of 'forms' and various 'rhyme-schemes' are thus essential in distinguishing poetry from prose. This perhaps serves to explain why in a Thai concept the names of verse forms can be used to refer to 'poetry' in general. Moreover, the significance of 'forms' in Thai poetry explains their continuity and vitality even in the modern poetry of today.

Despite the fact that there exists no real Thai word as an equivalent of 'poetry', there are some definite poetic qualities that Thai poets and literary scholars, both in the past and the present, seem to agree upon. As revealed through the study of various texts on Thai versification, the 'poeticalness' of Thai poetry depends on the refinement of diction and the 'melody' of sounds created through the 'richesse' of rhymes as well as the harmony of tones and word-play. The emphasis on the 'correct' reading and recitation of poetry reflects the underlying concept that the beauty of poetry can be fully realized only through its recitation when the readers can perceive the beauty both through their ears and their eyes. Besides, this concept explains the close relationship between 'songs' and 'poetry' in Thai poetic tradition.

In A Treatise on Versification by King Rama VI, the

king tries to define the 'virtue' of poetry and the first point mentioned is that the pleasure of reading poetry is like the pleasure of listening to beautiful music. The king claims that the poet who composes himself would experience joy like a musician who enjoys playing music. The king explains that though prose has some similar virtues, poetry is more 'entertaining' as poetry has the 'rhythm' and 'melody' of sounds, not usually found in prose.¹

Almost an identical idea is expressed in the work of Phrayā Uppakit Sinlapasān when he tries to distinguish the 'virtues' of prose and poetry. He claims that prose is suitable mainly for expressing or illustrating the 'ideas' of the author. But it is poetry that could create a more enduring effect in the heart of the readers, for poetry, with its rhymes and rhythms could be sung with the accompaniment of musical instruments. He refers to lullabies which have been remembered and sung for generations in the form of 'oral poetry' without being composed in any 'written form'.²

In Sām Krung by Prince Bidayalankarana the 'paradise of poets' is described with the prominent emphasis on the magical beauty of the music surrounding and giving enchantment to the paradise.³ The beautiful description reflects the poet's awareness of the 'musical' quality in poetry. This awareness among Thai poets and literary scholars in

¹King Rama VI, A Treatise on Versification (Bangkok, 1927), pp. 1-2.

²Phrayā Uppakit Sinlapasān, Lak Phāsā Thai, p. 351.

³See the text and translation, p. 255.

the Ratanakosin period can actually be traced back to the same idea expressed in various texts of Čhindāmanī in the Ayuthaya period.

These ideas of the 'virtues' of poetry reflect the 'conventional' qualities of Thai poetry with the emphasis on the beauty of sounds. It has been said that poetry is supposed primarily to convey feelings or to move the readers rather than to convey any 'ideas'. Among the other 'virtues' of poetry King Rama VI placed the virtue of learning the 'ideas' of the poet as the last point. On the other hand, Phrayā Uppakit Sinlapasān seems to attribute the function of conveying 'ideas' to prose alone.

This concept clarifies the extreme concern of Thai poets on the art of composing poetry from a stylistic point of view. Poetry is esteemed as an illustration of excellence of language use and therefore an utmost attempt is made to refine and embellish the beauty of sense and sound to achieve the most 'poetic' effect.

Since it is the convention that 'what is said' is less important than 'how to say it', most Thai poets from the past have cherished and followed a fondness of exploring the possibilities of language through the invention of various stylistic devices including different types of Konlabot. In almost all Thai major poetical works, the abundance of Konlabot in the text is quite apparent. As a whole, it serves to illustrate the mastery of the poet and his effort to intensify the 'feelings' in his work. As the poets are less required to express the 'novelty' of ideas, all the effort is concentrated more on the novelty of imagery that

can appeal to the feelings and the aesthetic senses. Thus, the refinement of diction and the embellishment in poetry is most valued.

It would be an exaggeration to say that Thai poets could not express any 'ideas' through their poetry but it is important to state that the 'ideal' beauty of Thai poetry depends more on its refinement and intensity of feelings. Any philosophy or ideas gained through poetry is normally a result of the readers' own contemplation.

From the study of the works of modern poets we have observed that they have, to a certain extent, established a 'modern' concept of a poet's duty as a creator and preserver of beauty and truth. Therefore it follows that their concept of poetry involves both beauty and truth.

The previous study of the works of modern poets reveals the influence of 'convention', still highly esteemed and cherished, with the combination of the individual invention of each poet to serve their own 'style' and 'purposes'.

For example, the awareness of the deep relationship between 'songs' and 'poetry' is well-illustrated in the works of Angkhān, Naowarat and Suchit. Angkhān makes an intensive use of the word 'Lam Nam' meaning 'melody' or 'songs' to refer to poetry whereas Naowarat and Suchit are influenced by the 'style' of folk songs and oral poetry.

Nevertheless, the works of Angkhān reveal how the poet tries to invite his readers to perceive the beauty of poetry through their eyes and their minds as well as through their ears. To achieve this, the poet strives to create a large amount of exquisite and unconventional imagery in the

text.

At the same time, the poet does not neglect the use of conventional imagery as a background. Therefore, the readers are indirectly guided to perceive the 'unusualness' of the exquisite imagery and consequently to contemplate the 'significance' or the 'message' intended by the poet.

Thus, to a certain extent, Angkhān has extended the use of imagery from being an 'embellishment' in the text to being an 'expression' of the poet's main ideas. The use of imagery has become more essentially a means for conveying ideas and philosophy and not just an end or a practice of convention in itself.

The serious devotion of Angkhān as a poet obviously influences his concept of poetry. Fully aware of the conventional concept of poetry as excellence of language use, Angkhān follows the convention and manipulates it. To him, poetry has to manifest both beauty and truth, for its value is not just artistic but also spiritual. Reading poetry is not merely for pleasure but for a certain kind of enlightenment.

Naowarat and Suchit clearly share Angkhān's attitude towards the duty of a poet, yet they employ different techniques to achieve their own purposes. Their attempt to employ the tradition of folk songs and oral poetry in their works reflects an attempt to simplify and extend the written poetry so as to create a new form of poetic beauty embracing both the qualities of oral and written tradition.

Thus, as a whole, the traditional concept of poetry still plays an important role in modern Thai poetry today.

The 'ideal' of poetry as an illustration of excellence of language use still governs poetic creation. Despite their different ideas and messages to convey to their readers, modern poets have to recognize the importance of convention both in verse forms and diction. They can either follow the convention or manipulate it or, as quite often is the case, both.

The success of modern poets under our study illustrates the importance of a balance between 'convention' and 'inventions'. Although modern poetry is no longer exclusively for pleasure or entertainment or even for preaching alone, it is still essential for the poets to create a harmony between the 'ideas' and the art of conveying them. The noblest and most profound ideas from the poet will hardly be effective if they are not conveyed 'poetically', for it is, as it has always been, the heart of the readers that the poet has first to seize.

EPILOGUE

POUR FAIRE LE PORTRAIT D'UN OISEAU

- Jacques Prévert

Peindre d'abord une cage
avec une porte ouverte
peindre ensuite
quelque chose de joli
quelque chose de simple
quelque chose de beau
quelque chose d'utile
pour l'oiseau
placer ensuite la toile contre un arbre
dans un jardin
dans un bois
ou dans une forêt
se cacher derrière l'arbre
sans rien dire
sans bouger ...
Parfois l'oiseau arrive vite
mais il peut aussi bien mettre de longues années
avant de se décider
Ne pas se décourager
attendre
attendre s'il le faut pendant des années
la vitesse ou la lenteur de l'arrivée de l'oiseau
n'ayant aucun rapport
avec la réussite du tableau
Quand l'oiseau arrive
s'il arrive
observer le plus profond silence
attendre que l'oiseau entre dans la cage
et quand il est entré
fermer doucement la porte avec le pinceau
puis
effacer un à un tous les barreaux
en ayant soin de ne toucher aucune des plumes de l'oiseau

Faire ensuite le portrait de l'arbre
en choisissant la plus belle de ses branches
pour l'oiseau
peindre aussi le vert feuillage et la fraîcheur du vent
la poussière du soleil
et le bruit des bêtes de l'herbe dans la chaleur de l'été
et puis attendre que l'oiseau se décide à chanter
Si l'oiseau ne chante pas
c'est mauvais signe
signe que le tableau est mauvais
mais s'il chante c'est bon signe
signe que vous pouvez signer
Alors vous arrachez tout doucement
une des plumes de l'oiseau
et vous écrivez votre nom dans un coin du tableau.¹

¹ Jacques Prévert, Paroles (Paris, 1964), pp. 151-2.

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