

Some Aspects of Thai Literature

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Professor Charles Anderson's survey of two hundred years of American literature culminates in an examination of the essence of that literature, what makes it American, and, therefore, different from other literatures. His admirable approach and exposition have very much encouraged my own reading of Thai literature.

If by "essence" we mean a principle of individuation, as Professor Anderson himself does, certainly Thai literature can boast an essence. But some of our more recent critics have already made us ashamed of such an essence, that is, one composed of kings' and noblemen's leisures, wars, polygamy, eroticism, etc. By their methods, derived chiefly from psychology and sociology, these young critics believe that they have laid classic Thai literature to rest. For the whole of Thai literature, they would like to substitute a modicum of fairly recent writings done "for life's sake." Indeed, there is a crisis in the study of Thai literature. The majority of Thai teachers are at a loss. Without the tools of literary criticism, they cannot combat the assailants. In time, this has developed into professional jealousy and factionalism of the worst kind.

If we look back to the beginning of Thai literary criticism in the past thirty years or so three figures stand out: Prince Bidhyalongkorn, Phya Anuman Rajathon (also known as Sathien Koses), and Phya Uppakit Silapasarn. They are the ones who have used various methods such as history and culture, philosophy, philology, aesthetics, and practical criticism to explicate Thai literature. They did not think of it as solely concerned with kings' leisures, polygamy, or eroticism; they found it to be a creative process continuing from the Sukhothai period down to the present time. To them, Thai literature had an essence. This essence was also discovered in the architecture of temples, the wall paintings, the images of the Buddha, and the good hearts of the people. It is with the dear memory of their achievements in the now fallow field of Thai literary criticism that I would like to talk about some aspects of Thai literature.

Before I begin, I think it is appropriate to give you a summary of what I am going to say. I will treat only two dominant literary genres, poetry and the novel, omitting drama which, in Thai literature, is largely a combination of poetry and dance. As for poetry, I will give a brief description of the four main types of poetry and hint at their metrical forms. Special attention will be given to rhyme in Thai poetry. After that, I will take up imagery as a focal point from which to survey the evolution of Thai poetry, especially the formation of the two dominant poetic styles.

For the novel, I will begin with Prince Arkad Dumkirng, who has been called the father of the Thai novel. The form of autobiography he used in his two novels, the *Circus of Life* and *East or West* will be briefly discussed. A sense of alienation in his works makes him a modern novelist. Then, I will move on to the social criticism in the epistolary novel of Sri Burapa entitled *Songkram Chivit* or *The War of Life*, and to the continuity of this writer's career, often overlooked by critics. In Dokmai Sod's works, we have some evidence of the use of structure and something approaching the Jamesian relevance. However, Dokmai Sod's moral optimism is a flaw which finally deprives her of objectivity. In another novel, *Ying Kon Chua* or *The Prostitute*, K.

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Surangkanang makes a strong debut for a realist's career. But she afterward makes an escape into romance. R. Chandhapimpa presents a psychological tragedy in the novel entitled *Bon Loom Sop Vasitthi* or *On the Grave of Vasitthi* in which, for the first time, love is used as a psychological force. With the last representative novelist, Malai Chupinit, in *Tung Maharaj* or *The Field of the Great*, we have a very moving epic of the conquest of wilderness.

I begin with Thai poetry. What is this poetry like? What kind of structure does it have? What sort of imagery does it employ? These are the questions we must try to answer if we want to show this poetry to have quite a few things to delight and teach poets in other languages. Naturally, Thai poetry contains most of the possibilities of working with the Thai language. This language is extremely tonal; its words are monosyllabic and isolated. There are as many as five tones in the language: the level tone (a), the low tone (a), the first high tone (á), the second high tone (ǎ) and the third high tone (a%). In conjunction with these there are four main types of poetry: *klong*, *chant*, *garp* and *glön*. Each type produces a definite rhythm. In the *glön*, one hears the musical flow of word-clusters:

ถึงม้วยดินสิ้นฟ้ามหาสมุทร	ไม่สิ้นสุดความรักสมครสมาน
(Tung muay din sin fah mahasamut	mai sin sud kwam rak smak sman)

The *garp* in comparison to the *glön* has a more distinct syllabication:

พระเสด็จโดยแดนชล	ทรงเรือค่นงามเจิดฉาย
(Pra sadet doy daen chon	song ruer ton ngam chird chai)

The *chant* is similar to English verse. Its strict syllable count and stress pattern make its rhythm jerky at regular intervals:

อรุณแอร่มระเร่รุจี	ประคจุมโนภิรมย์รดี
ณ แกรรัก	
(á arun aram raruer rujēē	pra dut ma no pirom ratēē
na raek rak)	

The *klong*, with its strong demand for staccato words, most clearly displays the monosyllabic nature of the language. It is also the only form to make use of two tones, namely, the low tone and the first high tone, in fixed positions:

โฉมควรวจักฝักฟ้า	ฤาติน ดีฤา
เกรงเทพไท้ธรณิน	ลอบกล้า
ฝักลมเลื่อนโฉมบิน	บนเล่า นะแม่
ลมจักชายชักช้า	ชอกเนื้อเรียบสงวน
(Chom kuarn jak fāk fah	rue din dee rue
kreng tep tai toranin	lob klum
fāk lom luean chom bin	bon lau na mae
lom jak chai chak chum	chok nuae riem sanguaen)

The terms *klong*, *chant*, *garp* and *glön* have each been used as the generic name for poetry in different periods or in different places. There is also another term which is used generically: *gant*. This serves to underline the one thing all have in common, that is, rhyme. The importance of rhyme in Thai poetry cannot be exaggerated. In English poetry, the use of rhyme has been argued since the 16th century; but in Thai poetry it has been taken for granted until recently.

Prince Bidhyalongkorn has pointed out that rhyme was originally an element of the *glön* which made its way into the other types of poetry. This view is supported by the evidence of so much rhyming in our greatest *glön* poet, Sunton Phu, even in the *garp* and *klong* he wrote.

How has rhyme come about? The answer to this question must be sought in the nature of the Thai language. Perhaps being tonal and monosyllabic, it is hard to communicate in an unambiguous way in the language. Thus there is a tendency to juxtapose a word or words to clarify the meaning of the word one is using. Normally, if there are four words in a phrase, the two words between the first and last words are rhymed, for example, ข้าวขาดหมากแพง (*kao yak mak paeng*) which means famine. Similarly, rhyme in Thai poetry may have the symbolic function of linking things together and, therefore, giving a structure to the poems. It no doubt has its charms; but, by the evidence of its linguistic as well as aesthetic necessity, it reveals itself in a way hitherto unnoticed in Western poetry. By his frequent use of rhyme, Sunton Phu is the most remarkable poet of common speech who relies on the native power of the language to communicate through sounds. Rhyme is the intimate vehicle of his love poetry as well as the medium of his poetic thinking.

Next, we look at the imagery used in Thai poetry. It goes without saying that Thai poetry is very rich in imagery. But so far no systematic account of imagery in Thai poetry has yet been made. Thai critics are often so overpowered by it that they can only cite beautiful poetic descriptions. Otherwise, they talk about imagination in a loose, contradictory sense. Imagination is taken to be either an ability to conjure up things which have no material existence, or a knowledge of faraway but real things. Between these two there seems to be no cogent connection. Only the seminal writings of Sathien Koses discuss the different types of imagination, such as productive imagination, interpretative imagination, and creative imagination. However, Sathien Koses is more interested in creative imagination as the mark of “pure” literature, which has nothing to teach, than in the image-forming faculty as such.

The most illuminating instance of the adventure into imagery is perhaps Prince Bidhyalongkorn’s reading of Sunton Phu’s “Nirat Phukhao Tong.” The case in point is the following description:

สิ้นแผ่นดินสิ้นรสสุคนธา	วาสนาเราก็สิ้นเหมือนกลิ่นสุคนธ์
(Sin phaen din sin ros sukonta	wasna rao kö sin muen klin sukon)

which means:

After that reign, no more perfume.

My good fortune fades away just like the perfume.

Here, an autobiographical element is obvious. We know that Sunton Phu was King Rama II’s favorite poet who accompanied the king on his frequent, long trips to help him with his poetic compositions. On several occasions, Sunton Phu may have angered the aspiring poet who was to become King Rama III by an offhand criticism of the latter’s poetry. Realizing his own precarious situation after Rama II’s death, Sunton Phu entered the priesthood to avoid the menace of the new king.

Upon first reading, says Prince Bidhyalongkorn, the poet uses the word “แผ่นดิน” (*phaen din*) in a double sense: it could mean either the reign or the land. Both meanings combine to make this an excellent line. Sunton Phu wants to suggest his nostalgia for the happy reign of King Rama II, when the land was fragrant and fertile by the grace of the king. The king died, and that

particular taste went from the earth with him, leaving no more flowers for the bee. (Suntorn Phu's name mean, incidentally, "a bee.")

But as Prince Bidhyalongkorn had discovered, when this line is put back into its original context, much of the rich meaning is lost. The "perfume" described was the real perfume used by king Rama II, which Suntorn Phu of course smelt. And he missed it after the king passed away. In fact, the preceding line reads:

เคยหมอบใกล้ได้กลิ่นสุกนธร์ตรลบ ละอองอบรสรื่นชื่นนาสา
 (Kuey mob klai dai klin sukun talob la ong ob ros ruen chuan nasa)
 Being on my knees close by, I smelt the strong perfume
 Fully and refreshingly in my nostrils.....

According to Prince Bidhyalongkorn, the evidence of the literal meaning mars the associations the line of Suntorn Phu might have if lifted out of its context.

Regardless of what one may think of his reading of Suntorn Phu, Prince Bidhyalongkorn has rendered a service in showing how systematic examination of imagery in Thai poetry should be made. If Prince Bidhyalongkorn thinks that an imaginative line of Suntorn Phu is marred by its contact with the real, he probably only looks at Thai poetry in its latest refinement, not in its historical evolution.

At the very outset, imagery in Thai poetry depended solely on description. King Ramkhamhaeng's words in the inscription about the state of Sukhothai gives a basic image: "In the water there are fish; in the fields there is rice." Other extant works of the Sukhothai period and the early and middle Ayudhya periods are likewise remarkable in their verbal force and brute perception, or in something Coleridge has termed the "primary imagination." The following passage in the "Hymn of the Oath by Water" or ลิลิตโองการแช่งน้ำ written in the early Ayudhya period, depicts the creation of the world:

กล่าวถึงน้ำฟ้าฟาดพองหา
 ดับเดโชน้ำหล้า
 ปลาดีนดาวเดือนแอน
 ลมกล้าป่วนไปมา
 To speak of the water frothing in mid-heavens,
 Putting out the fire and soaking the earth;
 The fish leapt frantically skyward, and the moon rocked
 From the gust of wind blowing to and fro.

A style similar to this was used by King Lithai, the fifth king of Sukhothai, in his descriptions of the three worlds in ไตรภูมิพระร่วง, *Traibhumi Phra Ruang* or *The Three Worlds of Phra Ruang*. Its verbal force had inspired numerous frescoes and poetical works, and has made the book the main source of imagination for Thai literature.

The early use of imagery reveals the force that words often have when they are used as verbs. Later, in the late Ayudhya period and the early Bangkok period, something happened to imagery in Thai poetry. The poets then shied away from descriptive passages. Their descriptions were only pretexts to make known their obsessive feelings. The things they saw only provided them with words, and words were the axes of emotions. A comparison between Si Praj's and Narin Tibēs's poems on a similar theme will illustrate this point clearly. While Si Praj shows

evidence of perception by the frequent use of verbs, Narin Tibès is quick to leave the thing seen and make an interior journey into himself. It could well be that by the time of Narin Tibès, literary conventions had already accumulated so that poets saw things through these glasses either darkly or brightly. Similarly, in "*Nirat Phra Baht*" or "Journey to the Buddha's Foot Print," Suntorn Phu looking on some court women playing on a swing above a stream, imagined himself seeing Sita* hang herself as in the theatre!

In a striking parallel to this, T.S. Eliot has also discussed the change that took place in English poetry from the time of John Donne and other metaphysical poets to the time of Tennyson and Browning as the difference between the "intellectual poet" and the "reflective poet." In the light of Eliot's discussion, Si Praj may be seen as the intellectual poet who "possessed a mechanism of sensibility which could devour any kind of experience," whereas Narin Tibès, like Milton and Dryden, could be included among the poets who "revolted against the ratiocinative, the descriptive," who "thought and felt by fits unbalanced," and who "reflected." Indeed, we could not find a better term by which to describe the kind of poet Suntorn Phu was than the "reflective poet."

Our concept of the difference between the intellectual poet Si Praj and the reflective poet Narin Tibès can best be illustrated by a pair of poems by them on a similar theme. In each case the speaker is on the brink of a departure from his lady love. In vain, he looks for a safe place in all the three worlds to consign her. First, Si Praj's poems in M.C. Chand Chirayu Rajani's translation:

Shall I leave thee with	the sky?
Indr' wouldst swoop thee	high above.
Leav'st thee with the Earth?	Why - Nay, Nay
Earth's lord, O my love	Wouldst thee seduce.
Leav'st thee with th' water?	Enow!
Naga wouldst, I vow	thee take.
'Tis fit, I allow	to leave
Thee with thee, thy stake	thine own conscience.

Then, Narin Tibès as translated by M.R. Seni Pramoj:

Turned I to nether world's	custody,
Can I secured by	in trust?
Turned I to zephyr	instead
Its caress would crush	thy chastity.
Turned I to Indr's lof-	ty kind,
Indr might have design	thee against.
Thrice turned, none I find	as safe.
I'll entrust thee hence	in thy own loving heart.

Despite their mutual worry, the two poets show a subtle difference of viewpoint and feeling. The dangers threatening Si Praj's love are more imminent and more real because she has a bodily presence. Si Praj is, therefore, extremely unwilling to leave her. On the other hand, Narin Tibès' love is rather for a quality than for a person. Only incidentally is he meditating on such things as inconstancy in women. We have a sense that after Narin Tibès has left his lady love, he will never again trust her. Like Othello, he is a jealous husband in his Platonic quest for ideal love.

*the heroine of *The Ramayana*.

It is difficult to say precisely just when one type of imagery in Thai poetry ceased and another began. But already in *Phra Law*, a work of the early Ayudhya period, there had been a few poems in the late Ayudhya style, the so-called Nirat or valedictory style in which the poet associatively described birds and trees according to what their names suggested, not as he saw them. In this respect, Prince Thammatibēs, a poet of the late Ayudhya period, may be seen to occupy a unique place in the evolution of imagery.

Prince Thammatibēs had, pre-eminently, both the descriptive and associative styles at his disposal. In his *Journey to Tarn Tongdaeng*, he wrote as a naturalist, closely observing the animals and plants along the way. He had no time for himself and for his plight in the world of feeling. Everything engaged his senses:

เครื่องสูงเพราเพชรพราย	ชมชุมสายซ้ายขวาเคียง
ธงชัยธงฉานเรียง	ปีกลองชนะตะเต็งควม

The royal objects all gleam up:
See the tiers at left and right;
The flags follow, victorious and bright,
The pipes and drums, ti-ti, tum-tum.

Throughout this book he released a marvellous energy of perception. Gradually, in his famous *Boat Songs* or กายพย์เห่เรือ *Garp Hae Ruea* Prince Thammatibēs drifted into the other style with his introduction of the love theme:

เรื่อยเรื่อยมาเรียงเรียง	นกบินเฉียงไปทั้งหมด
ตัวเดียวมาพลัดคู่	เหมือนพ็อยู่ผู้เดียวดาย

Slowly and silently
The flock of birds' flown by;
One bird is alone
Like me without my love.

At its height, all the things he saw, birds and fish and trees, symmetrically converged on his love. It is this style that had a great influence on King Rama II, Suntorn Phu, Narin Tibēs, and Prince Poramanuchit, to name a few. Thus, truly, Prince Thammatibēs was at the threshold of the formulation of poetic diction in Thai literature.

After our examination of Thai poetry, we now look at novel-writing in Thailand. At the outset, there was Prince Arkad Dumkirng. In his *Circus of Life* and *East or West*, the character and narrator Viscot was created to present incidents more or less taken from the author's own life. This technique immediately gave rise to a serious controversy over the identification of certain characters and details. The public had never experienced anything like these works before. It was very much baffled and carried away by the new form of writing, the novel. The novel form required a mixture of realism and romance which, if not totally absent, was not conspicuous in the Thai poetic traditions. Elements of realism and romance were of course to be found in Thai poetry, but there they were not "mixed": there had not been a conscious use of one as the base for the other. In this respect, Prince Arkad was conscious of himself as a novelist. He had read Dickens' *David Copperfield*, among other things, and he wanted, in Dickens' manner, to write about his own early childhood and boyhood experience in Thailand as well as the incidents of his youthful life abroad in *The Circus of Life*. He, then, created many characters who were based on himself and on people he had known. These were Visoot, Pradit, Maria Gray, etc. Strikingly enough, he

dedicated his book to a certain Maria Vanzini whose photo was also printed. This was too much for Thai readers, and they immediately identified this Maria Vanzini with Maria Gray in the novel. Furthermore, Visoot, who had originally been conceived as Dickens' David Copperfield had been, was finally understood to be Prince Arkad himself. There followed discussions and explications in the reviews then about the author's life and temperament; the details of the novel were tested for veracity and validity. This in the end got Prince Arkad upset and, almost, we might say, made him lose his hold on the novel form. The second novel, *East or West*, was consequently very much bogged down by the repetitious and apologetic tone. From then on, he had unnecessarily to insist on the fictitiousness of his stories.

In *The Circus of Life*, Visoot's account of his life is, significantly, a description of Thailand at the turn of the century. The country had just then awakened to foreign Western values and had no time yet to choose the best and most profitable from among them. A large number of students went abroad, since a local education was not held in esteem. They went as it were to purgatory, some even reached heaven, only to return to hell at home. The backward conditions of life, the dust, the lack of sanitation and medication, the general apathy of the people all impressed them unfavorably upon their ended voyages. But these bad things were not only figments of the imagination. In fact, there was much inequality and injustice in society. Worst of all, these were perpetuated in the smallest social unit, the family. Some children were not given the loving care needful for their growth. As a result, they developed into wicked citizens or bitter cynics. This could be ascribed not only to the irresponsibility of parents, but also to the notorious practice of polygamy in Thailand. Visoot's family, even though aristocratic and well-to-do, was among the Thai families which were particularly blighted, and Visoot himself was a creature of sin.

In every work of Prince Arkad, alienation is felt. In *East or West*, Visoot says in his capacity as a cynic that "a promise is never a promise unless it is broken." In the Author's Note to a volume of short stories entitled *The End of the Dreams*, Prince Arkad explains how we build our hopes on other people's promises and thus are bound to see these castles-in-the-air collapse. The best short story in this collection, "High Society," describes society as a machine which processes people's lives by requiring of them both good birth and wealth. The bourgeois can only be in high society like a ship in the storms, whereas the poor aristocrat will find himself paddling in mud there, so to speak. Love is a weakness. "It is only true," says the hero of the story, "that if one loves a girl, one always has to marry another."

Sri Burapa has written social criticism in such a way that his works after *Songkram Chivit* or *The War of Life* are devoid of the indirections of art such as plot and character. But his career had a stronger continuity than has been thought by his critics. It shows the taking shape of some ideas which were latent in his early works. One of these ideas is the romantic revenge of unfaithful women, in the manner of Maria Corelli's *Vandetta*. In Sri Burapa's early works, every wrong can be traced back to a woman. The author, therefore, made exhaustive studies of bad women. But it was inevitable that he would sooner or later have to go beyond woman to the root of all evils, from which even feminine wickednesses had sprung, and that was society itself. The discovery was gradual and painstaking and what it did to him as a novelist was to turn his romance stories into social criticism.

Dokmai Sod is often praised as the novelist's novelist. She excels in plot structure and characterization. Her plots are never episodic but have the immediacy and crispness of drama. She is the only Thai novelist who might stand up to Henry James in our literature. The things

she has to struggle with are quite different from those faced by Sri Burapa before her, and K. Surangkanang after her. Dokmai Sod is a devout Buddhist with a belief in the eventual triumph of goodness over evil, who attempts to write the novel of manners. The dilemma she faces is peculiar to that type of the novel, and similar to that of Jane Austen's novels. But Jane Austen has made a great effort to keep her characters from turning into personifications. The titles of her novels, such as *Pride and Prejudice* and *Sense and Sensibility*, are the remnants of the victory won by art over morality. On the contrary, Dokmai Sod is never able to set herself free from moral concern. As a result, she idealizes her characters and more or less supports each chapter of her novel by a quotation from the Buddhist Scriptures. Usually, whenever she places her protagonist in conflict with an external force or with himself, her emphatic response to his fate is very strong. Since goodness must prevail in the end, it is just a question of how long the protagonist has to suffer. In a fairly late work, นีละ โลก *Nee Laeh Lok* or *Such is the World*, Dokmai Sod no longer has enough energy behind her optimism and has to let things go. The heroine Salaya dies in a memorable scene which foreshadows the death of her creator. Dokmai Sod died of a heart attack in 1963.

In 1937, K. Surangkanang published her first realistic novel หญิงคนชั่ว *Ying Kon Chua* or *The Prostitute*. She says in her preface to the book:

I would like to write about servants in the big mansion who are suffering rather than about the happy events in the life of the proprietor or heir of that mansion. The latter events would appear like dreams, or fairy tales, sometimes amusing, but not real life, not containing the truth of life in its entirety.

Already in this novel K. Surangkanang aimed at social realism as something above the social criticism of Sri Burapa. The book is an attack on the people who, while holding their own children dear, could with cold blood consent to the exploitation of the children of others. It has reality and substance. In it we see K. Surangkanang momentarily setting foot on the path of Flaubert and Maupassant. But, later, we hear this remark from one of her characters: "My classmates used to despise Thai novels because there is nothing in them except intrigues between stepmothers and stepdaughters. Now this is exactly what is happening to me." Though a realist's excuse, it has not saved her from becoming the immensely popular writer of fairy tales, variations on the Cinderella theme. The courage which she had given to her heroine in *The Prostitute* was finally lacking in K. Surangkanang herself. Hers is the case of a fine realist lost.

R. Chandhapimpa tries harder than any other novelist to achieve a psychological tragedy. *Bon Loom Sop Vasitthi* or *Vasitthi* is a study of two woman of the extremely opposite character, Chitree and Kanda, the one capricious and aggressive, the other passive and self-sacrificing. Both women are shown to journey to the grave of Vasitthi--Chitree by self-appointed destiny and Kanda by other-appointed destiny. The novel centers on "the fortunes of a few families" like Greek tragedies, and like modern tragedies such as *Wuthering Heights* and *Mourning Becomes Electra*. But the family background is only incidental, not essential, to the drama. Still, unlike the common run of Thai romances which simply have their protagonists pitted against some unmotivated jealousies, hatreds, and machinations, R. Chandhapimpa's novel has at least striven for truly psychological effects. In it, love is used as a psychological force entering into combinations with chance, destiny, and character. It is a pity that her psychological effects are made through endless commentaries. Also there is an obvious disparity: while physical love is the *raison d'être* of the

novel (and in this R. Chandhapimpa is very Freudian), legal marriage exerts an equally strong influence. Vichai's treatment of Kanda is not fully redeemable because he is already a married man when he takes her, whereas Padet regains Chitree's love in the end because he has not legally been married to a certain Elizabeth Berne of whom he constantly makes her jealous. Modern Thai tragedy, though a rarity, will have to start with *On the Grave of Vasitthi* as well as with Dokmai Sod's *Such is the World*.

With Malai Chupinit, who used several pennames in his fifty novels and over three thousand short stories, we are moved in a different way from what we have been by by the other novelists. It is a quality of love for the land which uplifts his masterpiece, *ทุ่งมหาราช Tung Maharaj* or *The Field of the Great*. The book tells us about a hero who is simultaneously attracted to a woman and to life in Klong Suan Mak, a small village up north. With the chance given to him, he nearly takes the woman. But when the woman says that she will hate him for doing so, he realizes his higher destiny of love and leadership in the village. He departs and comes back to marry her and work for the community.

"Tung maharaj" is not the name of a place or a person. It means an act--the act of love vis-à-vis the land. The hero is captivated by the land at a glance. There is truth in Robert Frost's "The land was ours before we were the land's." But in the long history of Thailand, a man at any given moment can belong to the land as much as the dead and the still unborn. In essence, it takes both the man and the land to make "tung maharaj" or "the field of the great."

The novel is the story of the conquest of wilderness. But the wilderness has a special meaning. Pointing out to his wife trees growing in an ancient city, the hero says: "Cut down these trees, and the ruins will go too. There will be nothing left of these pagodas. The walls will tumble down . . . you know . . . we will not touch these sacred things, let them stand there forever." In a profound sense, the conquest of wilderness means its preservation.

Malai Chupinit himself comes very near to the stream of consciousness method by the drift of his reminiscences. It is unfortunate that his readings of the world's masterpieces stopped with Maupassant and Hardy. If he had known James, Conrad, Joyce and Faulkner, his novels would have been more considerable. His case cries out for more technical innovations in the Thai novel. With him, we end our brief survey of the Thai novel.