

AESTHETICS OF KHLONG IN THAI POETRY: CONVENTION AND CREATIVITY¹

Weerawat Intaraporn²

Abstract

This paper aims to illustrate the beauty of khlong (Thai poetry) creatively written and transmitted from the past to the present through a study of the preservation and creation of aesthetics in relation to euphony, and diction, as well as the imitation of words used by previous poets with new meaning in Thai poetry. From the study, it is found that Thai poets of each era have both followed and adapted the traditional style of composition. In terms of euphony, poets from the past to the present put an emphasis on tones at the end of each line, play on different tone levels, and use internal rhymes as seen in both alliteration and assonance. As for diction, puns, either homophones or homonyms and repeated words are employed. Regarding word formation, even though it is obviously seen that poets

have imitated the same words employed by poets of previous generations, they have also adapted and developed them to suit the individuality of each poet for the unique aesthetics of both diction and concept. It can be said that the creation of melodious and witty khlong is congruent with the nature of the Thai language since khlong is Thai in its origin and this in itself enhances the effectiveness of Thai poets in making use of the dominant characteristics of the Thai language in the composition of their poetic works from the past to the present.

Introduction

Among all types of Thai verse, *khlong* has long been given significance by poets throughout the history of Thai literature. It is presumed that *khlong* originated at almost the same time as *rai*, another classical type of Thai verse. (Watchari Ramayanun, 1995: 78). The evidence can be found in a work of Thai literature written in the central part of the country, *Lilit Ongkan Chang Nam*, composed around the beginning of the Ayudhaya period in the reign of King Ramathipbodi I. A lot of Thai literature experts such as Chit Phummisak, Phraya Uppakit Sinlapasan, Prakhong Nimmanhaeminda and Cholada Ruengruglikit concur that *khlong* is a pattern of verse shared by Thai people and the tribe of 'Tai,' as testified by the fact that *khlong* or verses whose patterns resemble that of *khlong* have been found in the literary works of Thai people and of many groups of the 'Tai' tribe. The fact that the original pattern of *khlong* was shared between Thai people and the tribe of 'Tai,' has enabled poets to create their *khlong*, as seen in a lot of masterpieces of Thai literature, by making use of the nature of the Thai language. Even though the popularity of composing a long story in *khlong* nowadays seems to be in

¹ This research paper is part of a doctoral dissertation on 'Aesthetics of *khlong* in Thai poetry: Literary Creation from the Nature of Thai Language,' Department of Thai, Faculty of Arts, Chulalongkorn University, 2005. The researcher would like to express his gratitude to his dissertation advisor, Associate Professor Cholada Ruengruglikit, Ph.D. for her useful advice, without which this research would not have been possible.

² Ph.D. Candidate in Thai, Department of Thai, Faculty of Arts, Chulalongkorn University, Thailand.

decline, a lot of modern Thai poets still see its value and choose to compose their poems in *khlong*.

It can be clearly seen from all the verses in *khlong* which have been composed by poets from the past up to now that poets of each era not only adopt the concept of creating in accordance with the aesthetics of the poets of previous generations but also adapt previous forms for literary novelty and to express their individuality. Since *khlong* is significant in terms of both literary conventions and the style which has been used in composing Thai literature by poets of all eras, it is appropriate that the study of the literary conventions and creativity of *khlong*, created by the use of the Thai language, should be researched.

This study aims to trace literary conventions and creative aesthetics of the Thai *khlong* from the past to the present day in order to illustrate the beauty of *khlong*.

In the study, the researcher would like to prove that in composing *khlong*, poets of each era have not only been endowed with the process of creativity from poets of previous generations in terms of euphony, diction, and the imitation of words used by previous poets with new meaning but developed these to suit their own purposes as well.

From various masterpieces of Thai verse in *khlong* form that have been collected, written from the beginning of the Ayudhaya period to the present day, Rattanakosin era, the researcher has found the following:

Convention and Creative Aesthetics of *Khlong* in Regard to Euphony

In composing Thai literature, euphony is considered the most important element. As noted by Prince Narathipphongraphan, literature is the art performed by diction, especially in verse, and the words must be mellifluous when read aloud. (Prince Narathipphongraphan. 1975: 108) Therefore, euphony is important in writing *khlong*, specifically in the early period of the composition of *khlong*. Due to the fact that *khlong* was originally written to be recited, to appreciate it was duly based on the sounds, as seen in an example of Thai literature of the early Ayudhaya period, *Lilit Phra Lo*, 'สรวลเสียงขับอ่านอ้าง ไฉปาม ฟัง เสนาะไฉปุม เปรียบได้' - A recital of *khlong* is so full of elation and impressively melodious that no sound on earth can compare. (Wannakam Samai Ayudhaya Vol.I, 1997: 387) This paper will illustrate the conventions and creative aesthetics of euphony in two respects: playing on different tone levels and internal rhymes.

Playing on Different Tone Levels

The fact that *khlong* has a requirement that determines the specific place of tones, which is the dominant feature of the Thai language, in its composition apart from such general rules for poetic composition in Thai as the number of words, hemistich and rhymes makes its prosodic pattern distinct from other types of Thai poetry. However, tones are not used for the sake of a prosodic pattern, but they can help create euphonious articulation due to their musical qualities. Poets of each era have preserved the use of tones in creating euphony in two ways:

a) Requirement of Tones at the End of Each Hemistich or Each Full Line

In composing all types of *khlong*, even though there is no specific rule to specify the exact tone at the end of a stanza, poets select only mid and rising tones to make *khlong* melodious. This characteristic can be found in both *Khlongsidun* and *Khlongsisuphap* written since the early period of *khlong* composition up until now. A good example can be seen in a *Khlongsisuphap* written at the beginning of the Ayudhaya period, *Lilit Phra Lo*, whose stanza ends with a rising tone as seen in 'sông' below.

fần hễn phrá phũn thái	phaeng thong
sông nập non naem sông	tráp thái
sông sĩ sòt kon tràkong	kòt rât lae na
chuan chák pai lái lái	sù bản mueang <u>sông</u>

(Wannakam Samai Ayudhaya
Vol.I, 1997: 405)

Apart from the end of each stanza, the rising tone can be found at the end of a hemistich or full line, which rhymes with the next line, called external rhyme in each stanza. That is, the last word of line one rhyme with the last word of the first hemistich of line two and the last word of the first hemistich of line three.

The employment of the rising tone at the end of the stanza and at the end of a hemistich or full line, which is also an external rhyme, can be found in *khlong* of all eras. Some poets have used the rising tone in the aforementioned places at a frequent rate in their works; for instance, Supreme Patriarch Prince Paramanuchit-chinorot, in his masterpiece, *Lilit Taleng Phai*, prefers to end each stanza and hemistich and line with the rising tone. He uses this pattern continuously in many stanzas. The following is a good example

to show how he uses rising tones at the end of the stanza and at the rhyming places between the hemistiches of line 1 and line 3.

hàtsadi ronnarêt âng	àwas <u>ân</u> nína
núp anakhóttakan	hòn phóng
khàttiya yút ban <u>hân</u>	khót khù kan hae
khong tàe phũea phí nóng	tráp fá din kà <u>sãi</u>

(Supreme Patriarch Prince Paramanuchit-chinorot, 1987: 85)

The use of the rising tone at the end of a stanza and the position of external rhymes has been practised by modern poets as well. It can be seen in Naowarat Phongphaibun's work where the rising tone is frequently employed. A good illustration is his *Khlongsisuphap*, titled *Chak Ma Chom Mueang*:

thewan thân yù fâ	yù <u>fân</u>
rue chàk loi long saw <u>ân</u>	sèk sông
mue manút ní làe ban-	dan ùbát
ngũea yát là yòt lán	lòlò mue <u>sũang</u>

(Naowarat Phongphaibun, 1977: 45)

The researcher thinks that using the rising tone at the end of the stanza helps impart a melodious effect to the *khlong* since a rising tone is a tone which changes the level of the tone from the central rather low pitch to the lower level and then the level will change from the high pitch to the central rather high or high pitch. (Phathani Chotikkasathian, 2001: 264). Therefore, the employment of the rising tone at the end of a stanza results in a lengthy sound which is suitable for the close. When *khlong* is recited, it is melodious. Also, the use of the rising tone at the end of hemistiches which is the required position for external rhymes also makes *khlong* mellifluous due to the contrastive sounds of higher and lower tone levels. It is not surprising that the

employment of the rising tone is part of the literary heritage up until now.

b) Playing on Different Tone Levels

Playing on different tone levels refers to the technique of putting close together two words which are composed of the same initial consonants, vowels and consonances but of different tone levels. This results in higher and lower pitches which lend a musical quality to *khlong*. The use of different tone levels can be created by the repetition of consonants and vowels and the contrastive pitches between higher and lower tone levels. Moreover, tone levels can distinguish the meaning of one word from another. Thus, playing on different tone levels is simultaneously playing on the meaning of the words as well.

Playing on different tone levels can be found in every type of *khlong* ever written since the beginning of the Ayudhaya period. However, in modern *khlong*, for the most part, playing on different tone levels is limited to two adjacent tone levels. It has been found that playing on three different tone levels was practised at the beginning of the Ayudhaya period; Cholada Ruengruglikit has mentioned one hemistich in *Yaun Phai Khlong Dan* which play on three different tone levels. (Cholada Ruengruglikit, 2001: 512). However, this practice is not as popular as playing on two different tone levels.

In the reign of King Naraimaharat, Phrasimahosot made use of the play on three different tone levels in his *Khlong Akson Sam Mu*. He composed it in the form of โคลงกลบท --*Khlongkonlabot* which requires that three words with the same spelling but different tone levels be put next to one another in each hemistich.

bua bueng tum tùm tûm klang tom
súng sòng thông than lom lôm lóm
malaeng máo mào mao chòm chom sập
ru rû rí rim kôm phát mái sai ro

(Wannakam Samai Ayudhaya
Vol.II, 1985 : 647)

Khlong Akson Sam Mu is considered the only entire work which was written in the form of *Khlongkonlabot*. Later, this requirement became the rule in composing กลอนกลบท --*Klonkonlabot*. Evidence can be found in *Konlabot Siriwbunkit*. Written near the end of the Ayudhaya period, this *Klonkonlabot* was named '*Konlabot tripadap*'.

Another aspect that poets take into consideration when they play on different tone levels is the meaning of the words. This is the reason that why playing two different tone levels is more prevalent than playing three different tone levels. It is not easy to put together more than two words which have the same spelling but different tone levels and give a profound meaning which corresponds with the concept of the poem. Even in Phrasimahosot's *Khlong Akson Sam Mu*, there are some words which are not clear in their meaning. It is found that the content in some hemistiches is not clear but the poet has to compose them in accordance with the requirements of the adjacent different tone levels. This can be seen in a line of this *khlong* 'ปืนป่าย
ทลายทลงเผา เผาเผา' --pin pài thàlai thàluang
phảo phào phào. (Wannakam Samai Ayudhaya Vol.II, 1985: 645). This line describes the battle scene in which an enemy burns down a barrack. The poet plays on words with different tone levels: 'phảo' (เผา) 'phào' (เผ่า) 'phào' (เผ้า). The word 'phảo' means to burn and the word 'phào' which usually means kinship or clan refers to a contingent of soldiers in

the barrack. However, the word ‘phão’, which generally means hair, does not yield a clear meaning since it is by no means congruent with the context of this line. Thus, there were few poets at the beginning of the Rattanakosin period who practised the play on three different tone levels. A good example can be found in Chaophraya Phra Khlang (Hon)’s *Lilit Pet Mongkut*, which was written in imitation of Phrasimahosot’s *Khlong Akson Sam Mu*; however, the poet used this technique in one stanza only. Another literary figure who was influenced by Phrasimahosot’s *Khlong Akson Sam Mu* is Sunthon Phu. In his *Khlongnirat Suphan*, Sunthon Phu made use of different tones for the sake of onomatopoeia. However, Sunthon Phu did not follow the requirements of Phrasimahosot’s *Khlong Akson Sam Mu* strictly as we can see that Sunthon Phu made use of three or four different tone levels. An example of the employment of three different tone levels can be seen in ‘พญาลอ ล้อล้อลลลล’ --phaya lo lô lô khlo. (Chiwit Lae Ngan Khong Sunthon Phu, 1987: 314) and of four different tone levels in ‘จ้องหนอง หนองบ้องบ้อง’ --khóng nòng nòng nòng nòng. (Chiwit Lae Ngan Khong Sunthon Phu, 1987: 314). It is noteworthy that Sunthon Phu also included the high and rising tone marks which were not used by Phrasimahosot. It is surmised that the tone marks which were used in writing in Phrasimahosot’s period were only the low and falling tone marks.

The play on different tone levels can be found in some *khlong* which were composed after the beginning of the Rattanakosin era, for instance, in the reign of King Rama V. Nevertheless, its popularity declined and what can be found later is only the play on two different tone levels. As for modern *khlong*, it is obvious

that poets hardly play on different tones. However, there are some poets who have studied the works of the poets of previous generations and preserved the tradition of playing on different tone levels like Angkhan Kanlayanaphong, Naowarat Phongphaibun and Phaiwarin Khao-ngam. The reason for the decrease in popularity might be that modern poets put an emphasis on the concept or message of *khlong* and playing on different tone levels may make the meaning of *khlong* unclear or dilute the gist of *khlong* that poets would like to convey.

Playing on Internal Rhymes

Internal rhyme is another type of euphony which enhances the musical quality of *khlong*. It can involve the repetition of vowel or consonant sounds. Internal rhyme is not required like external rhyme which is the repetition of vowel sounds. However, poets like to use internal rhyme to make their *khlong* more mellifluous. There are two types of internal rhyme that poets use. First, poets may put words which have the same vowel or consonant sounds close together, which is called ‘*sămphàt chít*’ (สัมผัสชิด) - neighbouring rhymes as can be seen in ‘สองขอย่อยยศให้’ (sòng khǒ yo yót thái). The word ‘khǒ’ (ขอ) is placed close to the word ‘yo’ (ขอ), which shares the same vowel sound. Moreover, the word ‘yo’ also shares the same consonant sound with the word following, ‘yót’ (ยศ). The other one is called ‘*sămphàt khân*’ (สัมผัสคัน) - separated rhymes because poets insert one, or more than one word to separate words which share the same vowel or consonant sounds. An illustration of separate rhymes can be seen in ‘จินดีเหลือ ที่อ้าง’ (yin dī lǐea thī âng). The word ‘dī’ (ดี) rhymes with ‘thī’ (ที่) and they are

separated by the word 'lŭea' (เหลือ). However, it is not common practice to put a lot of words in between because it makes the sounds of repeated vowels or consonants seem far apart and thereby an indistinct internal rhyme results.

The researcher has found that in composing *khlong*, poets have followed the tradition of using internal rhyme of both consonants and vowels to enhance the melodious quality of *khlong* as follows:

Alliteration is the repetition of the initial consonant but different vowels and succeeding consonants in each stanza. Alliteration is dominant in the Thai language as can be seen in the employment of doublet in words such as 'rŭatreo' (รวดเร็ว), 'thonthan' (ทนทาน), 'yŏkyōng' (ขย่ง), 'chomchoei' (ชมเชย) etc. Alliteration has been used in *khlong* by poets for a long time. This can be seen from the fact that every *khlong* written at the beginning of the Ayudhaya period used alliteration until it became a traditional belief that alliteration was the dominant key to make *khlong* melodious.

There are various forms of alliteration such as placing words which share the same consonant sounds close together or words which share only the same initial consonant sounds throughout the whole stanza, alliteration of the words between the first and last hemistiches of each line (One line consists of two hemistiches; thus, it is a play on the consonant sounds of different hemistichs), alliteration of the words in the last hemistich, which consists of only two words.

A good example can be seen in one of the *khlong* in *Yuan Phai Khlong Dan*, where it

is replete with different kinds of alliteration, such as alliteration of two consecutive words, alliteration of the words of different hemistiches and alliteration in the last hemistich of each line:

thúk hŏ thúk hàeng mán	mù lŭang
lót khŭean lŏt khŭa khanăn	chông cháng
tháng pāk tháng puang phon	hăen hăe
pāk khwāk pen khwăeng khwăng	thŭa thang

(Wannakam Samai Ayudhaya
Vol.I, 1997: 332)

Alliteration has been continuously employed in *khlong*, even in modern *khlong*. Some poets have practised it until it has become their noticeable style as Cholada Ruengruglikit suggests in claiming that Sunthon Phu liked to compose *Khlongsisuphap* which plays on alliteration across the hemistich of each line for the entire 4-line stanza, so much so that we can say that it is his unique style. (Cholada Ruengruglikit. 2004: 964-989). Additionally, Supreme Patriarch Prince Paramanuchitchinorot is another poet who liked to use alliteration across the hemistich.

In the modern period, the poets who have followed the tradition of using alliteration across the hemistich are Naowarat Phongphaibun and Phaiwarin Khao-ngam. Both of them preserve the traditional belief in using internal rhymes to enhance the melodious quality of *khlong* as can be seen in their practice of alliteration in their *khlong*.

Rhymes are another distinctive feature in the Thai language. In spoken language, we can find that Thais tend to use words which have rhymes. In composing *khlong*, poets use rhymes to create beauty in their *khlong*. Rhymes were also found in *khlong*

written at the beginning of the Ayudhaya period, though they were not as popular as alliteration. However, there was no requirement as regards the exact position of rhymes.

The researcher has found that rhymes which were applied with every single line in an entire 4-line *khlong* can be seen in some *khlong* of this period as testified by the rhymes used in the first hemistiches of the 4-line stanza in *Yuan Phai Khlong Dan*:

① ② ③ ④ ⑤	⑥ ⑦
hăng făng lăng dềng siap	kho khang
① ② ③ ④ ⑤	⑥ ⑦
lio lăen phlan năk chăk	ngôi lăm
① ② ③ ④ ⑤	⑥ ⑦ ⑧ ⑨
phi sông nông kang hăng	chan chòp kon hae
① ② ③ ④ ⑤	⑥ ⑦
tin triáp khô kho ngám	ngông ngam

(Wannakam Samai Ayudhaya
Vol.I, 1997: 345)

The practice of using rhymes in a systematic way was developed in the mid and late Ayudhaya period, when *Khlongsisuphap* became popular. The most prevailing style of rhyme use in these two generations was like that in *Yuan Phai Khlong Dan*, that is, rhymes were used in the first hemistich of each four lines but there was a more restricted rule about the exact position of rhyming than that at the beginning of the Ayudhaya period.

Phrasimahosot's *Kaphorkhlong* best illustrates the use of rhymes in the second and third words in the first hemistich of each line, in nearly every stanza:

① ② ③ ④ ⑤	⑥ ⑦
yǐng chăi lăi sàm sǒng	none
① ② ③ ④ ⑤	⑥ ⑦
fūng bảo sảo suănsẻ	yũa yím

① ② ③ ④ ⑤	⑥ ⑦
du ngan phàn loke	sủan răt
① ② ③ ④ ⑤	⑥ ⑦ ⑧ ⑨
tàeng ngăc phrăe phrai phrím	phrûep phrôm phru ma

(Wannakam Samai Ayudhaya
Vol.II, 1985: 669)

Like alliteration, rhymes may be found in words which are either put close together or separated by a word or words. However, it is found that poets tended to use rhymes of neighbouring words because this yields a continuous rhyming effect. The positions where rhymes occurred were varied. They can be found in the middle of the first hemistich, at the end of the first hemistich and at the beginning of the last hemistich of the same line, at the end of a line and two additional words, which are allowed to be added at the end of lines one and three, according to the rules of determining the number of words, and in the middle of the last hemistich of line four of *Khlong-sisuphap*.

Poets of the Rattanakosin era have been endowed with the traditional use of rhymes. The purpose of rhyme employment is for the sake of melody as can be seen in *Lilit Taleng Phai*. Sunthon Phu is considered a poet who was so consistent with definite positions of rhyming. Poets of later generations considered the rhyming positions used by Sunthon Phu a rhyming system. In his *Khlongnirat Suphan*, he rhymed the second word with the third word in the first hemistich regularly, so it turned out to be his unique style. Moreover, Sunthon Phu also rhymes the last word with additional words in line three, as well as rhyming the words in the last hemistich of line four.

Later, some poems which show the tradition of rhyming, especially rhyming of the words in the middle of the first hemistich and of the last hemistich of the last line in *Khlongsisuphap* can be found in Prince Narathippraphanphong's *Rubiyat* and Prince Phitthayalongkorn-No Mo So's *Sam Krung*. Even though the rhyming systems in these two works were not as obvious as those found in Sunthon Phu, rhymes were used regularly in almost the entire *khlong*, mostly in the middle of the first hemistich of the 4 lines.

Rhymes can be seen in modern *khlong* as well. Lots of poets, such as Angkhan Kanlayanaphong, Naowarat Phongphaibun and Phaiwarin Khao-ngam use rhymes in their poems in the same way as poets did in the Ayudhaya period and at the beginning of the Rattanakosin era.

Modern poets not only preserve the tradition of using rhymes but have also adapted it. This seems to be considered novel and creative but in fact it is based on the concept of playing on rhymes which has been passed on from one generation to another. Phaiwarin Khao-ngam's *Ming Khwan Klon*, a two-stanza *khlong* which was composed in the form of *Khlongsisuphap* compiled in a book of *khlong* titled *Chao Nok Kawi*, can serve as a good example to illustrate this process. The poet makes use of rhymes not only between the words in the first hemistich of every line but also across the hemistiches too. This technique is considered unique since it had never been used by any poets before.

① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
kon klon kòn kan klai nai adit

① ② ③ ④ ⑤
khwān klòm lòm bòt sū

⑥ ⑦ ⑧ ⑨
sū buēang pàtchuban

(Phaiwarin Khao-ngam, 1998: 34)

All in all, internal rhymes can be regarded as a technique to help create a melodious quality in *khlong*. From the data gathered by the researcher, it can be found that rhymes are no less important than alliteration. Poets have developed the style of using rhymes, starting with the rare use in early Ayudhaya *khlong*, the systematic rhyme order as seen in the first hemistich of middle Ayudhaya *khlong*, the obvious rhyme system created by Rattanakosin poets, and the experiments of modern poets in putting rhymes in various orders and more places in *khlong* than was practised in ancient *khlong*.

Conventions and Creative Aesthetics of *Khlong* in Regard to Diction

Another important aspect of the creative aesthetics of *khlong* is diction. The use of diction can be classified into two main types: puns and repeated words.

Puns

Puns refer to either homonyms or homophones. Due to the fact that words in the Thai language are monosyllables which do not change their form in terms of grammatical rules like other languages and that some words are spelled and pronounced the same but give different meanings, the context and the position of the word are required to gain the right

① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
khwān klon won bòt faō klao chai

① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦
klao lòk sòk sùk chanāi khraí rú

meaning of the word. Poets make use of this feature in playing with the sound and meaning of *khlong*. It can be seen that puns have been prevalent in *khlong* of all eras from Ayudhaya to the present day

It can be said that the use of puns, especially homonyms, characterizes the traditional style of writing *Nirat*. Using homonyms, poets can express more of their feelings and message, especially melancholy when apart from their beloved. Therefore, we find that in composing *Nirat* since the Ayudhaya period, poets have used puns as their technique, as testified by the fact that puns can be found in every Ayudhaya *Nirat*. Some good examples are *Kamsuan Khlong Dan*, *Lilit Phra Lo*, *Kaphorkhlong Nirat Than Sok*, and *Kaphorkhlong Nirat Than Thongdaeng*.

In composing *Nirat* in the Rattanakosin era, poets preserved the traditional use of puns by Ayudhaya poets as can be seen in an excerpt from *Khlongnirat Narin*:

nang nuan chàp mâek mái	nang nuan
nuannút nâep riam khuan	khû khláo
benchawan chàp wan phuan	phan òp mái mâe
lae wâ wan kon káo	kòt òm eowan

(Kap He Rua, Kap He Rua Chiwit,
Nirat Narin, 1967: 147)

It can be seen that homonyms used in the above excerpt give different meanings. They can be a kind of bird, a plant or the poet's beloved. To clarify, the word 'nuan' (นวล) in 'nangnuan' (นางนวล) can be both a sea gull or a kind of tree and in 'nuannút' (นวลนู้ต) refers to a beloved maiden. Another type of pun, homophones, is also used as seen in the word 'wan' (วรรณ) in 'benchawan' (เบญจวรรณ) a kind of bird. Then the poet describes how this bird flies to perch on 'wan' (วัลย์) a creeper, and then

he links this image to his beloved by using the word 'eowan' (เอววัลย์) in the sense of a woman. The style of using puns as found in this *khlong* can also be seen in *Lilit Phra Lo*, at the beginning of Ayudhaya literature.

In modern poetry, puns can be found not only in *Nirat*, but also in *khlong* with different subject matter such as commentary on human life and society. Naowarat Phongphaibun's *Chak Ma Chom Mueang* is a good example. In this long poem, the poet plays on the word 'sàt' which yields many different meanings.

สัตว์เจอสัตย์สัตว์แจ้ง	สัตว์จาง
สัตว์สอสัตย์สัตว์สา	สัตว์ร้าย
สัตว์ทรงสัตย์ศรัทธา	ธรรมสัตย์
สัตย์สู่สัตว์อสัตย์ฟาย	ห้องสร้างสุขธรรม

(Naowarat Phongphaibun, 1977: 39)

sàt choe sàt sàt chàeng	sàt cha
sàt sòp àsàt sàt sǎ	sàt rái
sàt song sàt sàttha	thammasàt
sàt sù sàt àsàt phái	phòng sâng sàtchàtham

The poet enhances the meaning of the poem by using puns effectively. His collection of words which share the same sound but have different meanings can be seen in the word 'sàt' with its different spellings – สัตว์, สัตย์, อสัตย์, สัจจา, สัจธรรม, ศรัทธา. The idea that the poet wants to convey is that faithfulness 'sàt' (สัตย์), which is considered a virtue, can help mankind 'sàt' (สัตว์), regarded as another type of animal in the context, have a profound understanding of truth 'sàtchàtham' (สัจธรรม). If man is still trapped in the loop of evil 'àsàt' (อสัตย์), he is no different from other kinds of animals 'sàt' (สัตว์). Thus, man should have faith in

truth ‘sàttha’ (ศรัทธา) and he will be able to defeat evil and understand truth.

It can be said that the use of puns, both homonyms and homophones, is popular among poets of all eras, and thus it has become like a literary treasure which has been passed down from one generation to another.

Repeated Words

Repeated words here refer to the employment of the same word more than once. Using repeated words, poets not only play on the sound of the repeated word but also emphasize the meaning of the word. Repeated words can be found in every type of *khlong* from the early Ayudhaya period to the modern poetry of the present day.

The use of repeated words not only shows that poets of a later generation preserve the tradition of composing *khlong* from the previous generation but also reflects the creativity and taste of poets in each era as can be seen from their attempts to put repeated words in different positions in *khlong*. The technique of placing repeated words in *khlong* varies. Repeated words may not be assigned any specific place in *khlong*, or they may occur in the same line, either being placed close together or separated by some words, across the hemistich in the same line, at the beginning of the hemistich or line, between lines by repeating the words at the end of the previous line, at the beginning of the next line, and at the beginning of each stanza. Repeated words can be either one word, one group of words, one hemistich, or one line but what is found most commonly is the use of one repeated words and one group of word rather than a repeated hemistich or line.

In *Lilit Phra Lo*, epanalepsis, repeated words which are separated by some words, is used in both *Khlongsisuphap* and *Khlongsongsuphap*. Especially in *Khlongsongsuphap*, poets separate repeated words with a word as exemplified below:

sǎo sanǎm chon kàen thái
hâi chệp hâi sàep hâi luêat nám ta lǎi lae na

(Wannakam Samai Ayudhaya
Vol.I, 1997: 488)

In this *Khlongsongsuphap*, the poet repeats the word ‘hâi’ (ไห้) three times separately. This is to emphasize the gestures and feelings of sadness of the character. The use of repeated words which are separated by some words can be seen in the work of poets of later generations as well. In King Rama V’s *Lilit Nitthra Chakhrít*, the poet not only uses repeated words which are separated by some words in the same hemistich, but also across the hemistich.

phlôt bo chang chûet thòi
thân phlôt khǎo phlôt phlôi phlôt tô (โศก) tò (ต่อ)
sanǎng

(King Rama V, 1995: 10)

In this *khlong*, the poet repeats the word ‘phlôt’ (พลอด) to emphasize the fact that the character keeps repeating the same action without realizing it. Cholada Ruengruglikít makes an interesting note on the use of repeated words separated by some words in this *khlong* when she points out that the positions of the repeated words in the poem are in exactly the same places in *Lilit Phra Lo*, that is in the last hemistich. Also, the poet uses repeated words in the first hemistich of *Khlongsongsuphap*, which is considered a development in the use of repeated words.

sǎo ngam sǎo chûang cháí
sǎo kháp sǎo ram hâi chât phróm phrieng man

(Cholada Ruengruglikit. 2005: 89)

Besides being used in *Khlongsongsuphap*, repeated words are found in every type of *khlong* of the Ayudhaya period, too. The researcher has found that the technique of using repeated words separated by some words prevails in each hemistich as seen in *Yuan Phai Khlong Dan*. It can be found that the repeated words were assigned specific places in every first hemistich similar to the characteristics of composing *Khlongkonlabot* as shown below:

phrá khun phrá khrop fâ din khăm
phrá kait phrá krai phăn phăn fá
phrá rít phăng phrá ram ron rập sài hae
phrá kò phrá kûea lâ làk sawăn

(Wannakam Samai Ayudhaya
 Vol.I, 1997: 341)

The use of epanalepsis can be seen in several of Rattanakosin *khlong*. The words may be repeated twice as seen in 'yók sūeng năm ao năm sàe sian' (*Khlongnirat Phraya Trang*) or three times as seen in 'rák chài rák ram rák sùt rú' (*Khlongnirat Narin*).

In modern *khlong*, the use of epanalepsis is still practised by poets as can be seen in the following excerpt from Naowarat Phongphaibun's *Athit Thueng Chan*:

ta hòt hên hòt sathón thùk ta (p. 18)
 pratu nám chòt nám khanong lăi (p.25)
 nâng sòp non sòp yuen sòp dăi (p.27)

Another type of repeated word is the repetition of 'kham tho' (คำโท), a word which has a falling tone mark, in the fourth line of *Khlongsisuphap*. This yields not only melodious but meaningful effects in the *khlong*. The fifth word of the first

hemistich is repeated in the second word of the last hemistich. This position is the required place for 'kham tho'; thus the researcher will call this kind of repeated word 'repeated 'kham tho' in the fourth line'. This kind of repeated word was used since the early Ayudhaya period as can be seen in *Lilit Phra Lo*, in which the poet employed this technique in a lot of stanzas until it became a distinctive feature of this work as shown below:

lûk rāk kâeo mae oéi prani mae ra
 phrá bát bongkòt sĩ sài kláo
 rue ba pîn phumi thát mae yai phô
 khô chùp bua bát chào sàng chào chom chai

(Wannakam Samai Ayudhaya
 Vol.I, 1997: 419)

My son, please have mercy on me, your mother.

Let me bear you upon my head.

Why don't you allow me to do as I wish?

Let me kiss your feet as a sign of farewell before you depart.

Later, repeated 'kham tho' in the last line of *Khlongsisuphap* became popular in composing *Khlongnirat* such as *Khlongnirat Chaofa Aphai* and *Khlongnirat Phraphutthabat* near the end of the Ayudhaya period and *Khlongnirat Phraya Trang*, *Khlongnirat Phraprathom*, and *Khlongnirat Narin* in the early Rattanakosin period. In modern *khlong*, the researcher has found that poets also preserve the tradition of repeating 'kham tho' in the fourth line of *Khlongsisuphap* as can be seen in the works of Naowarat Phongphaibun and Phaiwarin Khao-ngam.

The repetition in 'kham tho' in the last line of *Khlongsisuphap* makes it more melodious. Also, the last line is considered most important in terms of meaning because it sums up the concept of the *khlong*. Thus, the use of repeated words

helps make the message of the *khlong* obvious.

Another common technique of repeated words is anaphora, repeated words at the beginning of a line. This is mostly found in early Ayudhaya *khlong* such as *Yuan Phai Khlong Dan*, *Kamsaun Khlong Dan*, and *Lilit Phra Lo*. The use of anaphora can be found either in some lines or in every line of the four line stanza. This technique has been preserved in composing all types of *khlong*, especially *Nirat* and didactic *khlong*. The use of repeated words at the beginning of a line assists not only in creating a melodious effect, and emphasizing the concept of the *khlong* like other types of repeated words, but also in classifying and organizing the ideas, resulting in clear presentation of the message. Thus, it is mostly found in didactic *khlong* as in *Khlong Lokkanit*:

wén wíchan wâng wén sadàp fang
wén thí thăm an yang pài rú
wén lão likhít sang- kèt wâng wén na
wén dang klào wâ phũ prát dái rue mi

(Prachum Khlong Lokkanit, 1996: 118)

The word 'wén' (เว้น) which means refrain is used at the beginning of four lines to emphasize that restraint from criticizing, asking and writing is not in the nature of the sage. It can be seen that the repetitive 'wén' helps classify and organize the ideas of the *khlong* and accentuates the lessons that the poet would like to teach.

From the aforementioned discussion on homophones and repeated words, the researcher has found that they are the most distinctive literary technique in composing all types of *khlong* in Thai literature. They create aesthetics in both sound and meaning. Even though this technique is also used in other kinds of poems, it

becomes more varied when it is applied to *khlong*; moreover, the position where it is employed also yields different literary effect. Thus, it is clear why poets of all eras have followed the technique of employing repeated words to create homophones and puns in different places in *khlong* because it gives beauty to *khlong* in regard to sound and meaning.

Conventions and Creative Aesthetics of *Khlong* in Regard to the Imitation of Words Used by Previous Poets with New Meaning

As mentioned earlier, poets use puns and repeated words to create effects in melody and meaning at the level of words, especially *Khlongnirat* whose pattern encourages a play on words and sounds which suitably convey the feelings of poets towards their beloved. This resulted in the popularity of homophones and homonyms in composing *Nirat* in the earlier period and in becoming accepted as a model for poets of later generations to follow. However, there will not be any advance in composing *khlong* if poets only imitate the style of poets of previous generations; thus, poets have to look for novel ways of writing to guarantee that their poems do not lack aesthetics in terms of 'the concept of the *khlong*'.

To prevent such repetition, poets avoid using a fixed form of employing puns in *khlong* by conveying new dimensions of meaning which are different. Poets try to assert their individuality in *khlong* to create a 'new concept' as can be illustrated by *Khlongnirat* in *Sam Krung*. The poet tries to create an extraordinary meaning from using puns and asserts his uniqueness by the use of puns. It can be seen that even though the technique of using homophones and homonyms of the birds and plants as

seen in *Khlongnirat* of the earlier period is still used, the poet uses the technique in a new idiomatic expression:

salàtdai salàt dūai hēt dang rue
hēn chà nām tam mue mæn láeo
salàt dai chà uēn khue salàt hāt
thūk rue àt khlāt khláo mǎi rú tu dao

(Prince Phitthayalongkorn, 1973:35)

*Seeing the Salatdai tree makes me wonder
why we have to 'flick away our hand'.*

*I guess it might be because our hand has
been pricked by a thorn,*

*Since Salatdai means 'flicking away one's
hand'.*

*I do not know whether my guess is correct,
but that is what I reckon.*

The idiomatic expression, 'sàlātdai' (สลัดไค) and 'sàlāt dai' (สลัด ไค) in the above *khlong* was used in *Khlongnirat* of the earlier period, *Lilit Taleng Phai*. The pun 'sàlātdai' refers to a tree which is associated with the poet's beloved as shown below:

salātdai dai salāt nóng nǎeng non phrai rue
phró phuēa ma ran ron sòek sǎi
salā salā samōn samōe chue mǎi na
núek rākam nam mǎi mǎn mǎn suang riam

(Supreme Patriarch Prince Paramanuchit-
chinorot, 1987: 25)

*Seeing the Salatdai tree makes me wonder
why I have to leave you, my beloved, and lie
alone in this wood,*

This is because I have to go to war,

*Upon seeing the tree called Sala whose
name means 'abandon', I can't help thinking
of my desertion of you,*

*And when I behold the tree called Rakam its
name reminds me of the agony in my mind.*

In *Lilit Taleng Phai*, the poet made use of a homophone in 'sàlātdai' (สลัดไค) which is a kind of tree by switching the order of

the word to 'dai salāt' (ไคสลัด). The word 'sàlāt' here means 'leaving' or 'flicking away' and the word 'dai' (ไค) whose spelling is different from 'ไค' but shares the same sound denotes a question. This results in a change of meaning from a kind of tree to a form of question. Rearranging the order of words makes use of the distinctive nature of the Thai language, that is, the meaning of the message is changed in correspondence with the order of the words. The use of a question in this *khlong* emphasizes the sadness of the character in the poem. In *Sam Krung*, the poet also uses the same word 'sàlātdai' but he separates it into two word units. The verb 'sàlāt' shows movement and the word 'dai' is a borrowed word from Khmer, meaning 'hand'. Therefore, though the same word is used, the poet in *Sam Krung* does not talk about his beloved as the poet of *Lilit Taleng Phai* does. It can be seen that the poet imitates the expression used in ancient *khlong* but adapts it to suit his own needs—creating humour in the *khlong*.

An imitation of puns from *khlong* of previous periods can also be found in modern poetry. For instance, in one *Khlongnirat*, the poet imitates the use of the word 'sǎiyùt' (สายหยุด) in *Lilit Taleng Phai*. He plays with the meanings of this word at the level of morphology. As a compound noun, 'sǎiyùt' is the name of a flower but if it is separated into two units 'sǎi' and 'yùt' we will get new meanings as the word 'sǎi' means 'late morning' and the word 'yùt' is a verb which means 'stop'. The poet uses it to describe the never-ending love that the Crown Prince (Phra Maha Upparacha) has for his beloved. The play on the form and structure of words is used in various concepts apart from love by a lot of poets

in modern poetry. For instance, Angkhan Kanlayanaphong uses it to convey the meaning of life philosophical. Komthuan Khanthanu uses it in a political sense, portraying the people's demonstration for democracy in October, 1973. Thus, it can be seen that even though poets imitate the words used in ancient *khlong*, they adapt them to suit the concept of the *khlong* and at the same time assert their individuality by using them in their own unique way.

Conclusion

It can be seen that in composing *khlong*, poets of every era make use of the distinctive nature of the Thai language to create aesthetics of *khlong* in such different aspects as euphony as seen in the play on different tone levels and internal rhymes, in diction as illustrated in the use of puns and repeated words and in semantics by adapting the same words or expressions employed by poets of previous generations. In adopting and creating new styles of writing, poets not only preserve the tradition of composing *khlong* but also develop it to suit their purposes and assert their individuality.

However, the way to create and appreciate *khlong* at present has changed in accordance with the development of the literary world. *Khlong*, which once used to be written for the sake of melody, is now written for other ends such as criticism of society or commentary on contemporary problems. It can be seen that poets put more emphasis on the ideas. However, this does not mean that modern poets have deserted the conventions of *khlong* composition as we can see that some modern poets still study and follow the beautiful and valuable traditional style of writing *khlong* which makes use of the distinctive nature of the Thai language

because it yields literary aesthetics. Therefore, it is not surprising to see the idea of aesthetics in *khlong* has been passed on from one generation to another and become part of the literary conventions in modern Thai poetry.

References

- Angkhan Kanlayanaphong. 2003. *Panithan Kawi*. 8th edition. Bangkok: Siam.
- Chit Phummisak. 1981. *Ongkan Chaeng Nam Lae Kho Khit Mai Nai Prawattisat Thai Lum Nam Chao Phraya*. Bangkok: Duangkamon.
- Chiwit Lae Ngan Khong Sunthon Phu. 1987. 13th Edition. Bangkok: Khurusapha.
- Cholada Ruengruglikit. 2001. *Wannakhadi Samai Ayudhaya Ton Ton: Laksana Ruam Lae Itthiphon*. Bangkok: Faculty of Arts, Chulalongkorn University.
- Cholada Ruengruglikit. 2003. *Wannalalit Ruam Botkwam Wichai Wannakhadi Lae Khampraphan Thai*. Bangkok: Faculty of Arts, Chulalongkorn University.
- Cholada Ruengruglikit. 2004. *Khlong Patterns of Sunthon Phu and Their Origin. Journal of the Royal Institute of Thailand*. 29.4: 964-989.
- Cholada Ruengruglikit. 2005. *Wannawichai Ruam Botkwam Wichai Wannakhadi Ayudhaya Lae Rattanakosin Bang Rueang*. Bangkok: Faculty of Arts, Chulalongkorn University.

- Kap He Ruea, Kap He Ruea Chiwit, Nirat Narin.* 1967. Bangkok: (n.p.)
- Komthaun Khanthanu. *Nattakam Bon LanKhwang.* (n.y.) 8th edition. Bangkok: Mingmit
- Narathippraphanphong, Prince. 1973. *Rubaiyat.* Bangkok: Bannakhan.
- Narathipphongraphan, Prince. 1975. *Kho Khit Kiao Kap Phasa Lae Wannakhadi.* Bangkok: Thai Studies Institution, Thammasat University.
- Naowarat Phongphaibun. 1974. *Athit Thueng Chan.* Bangkok: Phikkhanet.
- Naowarat Phongphaibun. 1977. *Chak Ma Chom Mueang.* Bangkok: Karawek.
- Paramanuchitchinorot, Supreme Patriarch Prince. 1987. *Lilit Taleng Phai.* 2nd edition. Bangkok: Ongkankha Khong Khurusapha.
- Prakhong Nimmanhaeminda. 1987. *The Thao Ba Chueang Epic: An Analytical Study.* Ph.D. Dissertation. Graduate School, Chulalongkorn University.
- Prachum Khlong Lokkanit.* 1996. 30th edition. Bangkok: Ratbandittayasapha.
- Phathani Chotikkasathian. 2001. *Siang Nai Phasa Thai.* In *Eakasan Kan Son Chut Wicha Phasa Thai Sam.* Nonthaburi: Sukhothaiithammathirat University.
- Phitthayalongkorn, Prince. 1973. *Sam Krung.* Bangkok: Bamrungsarn.
- Phaiwarin Khao-ngam. 1998. *Chao Nok Kawi.* Bangkok: Phraeo Publishing.
- Rama V, King. 1995. *Lilit Nitthra Chakhrut.* Bangkok: Bannakit Trading.
- Uppakit Sinlapasan, Phraya. 1992. *Lak Phasa Thai.* Bangkok: Thai Watthana Phanit.
- Wannakam Phraya Trang.* 1972. Bangkok: Bannakhan.
- Wannakam Samai Ayudhaya Vol.I.* 1997. 2nd edition. Bangkok: Krom Sinlapakon.
- Wannakam Samai Ayudhaya Vol.II.* 1985. Bangkok: Krom Sinlapakon.
- Watchari Ramayanun. 1995. *Wiwatthanakan Roi Krong Thai.* Bangkok: Chulalongkorn University Press.