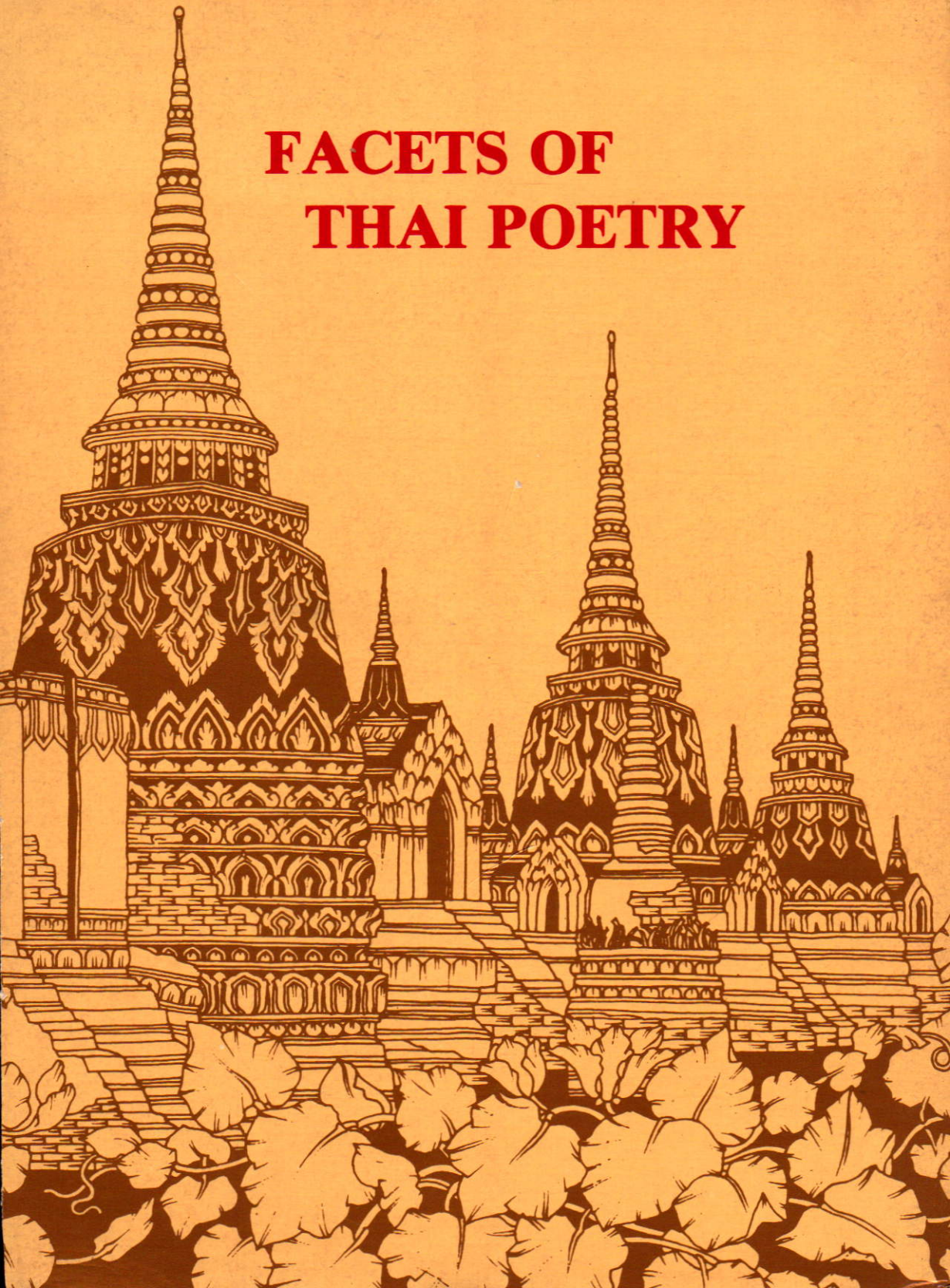
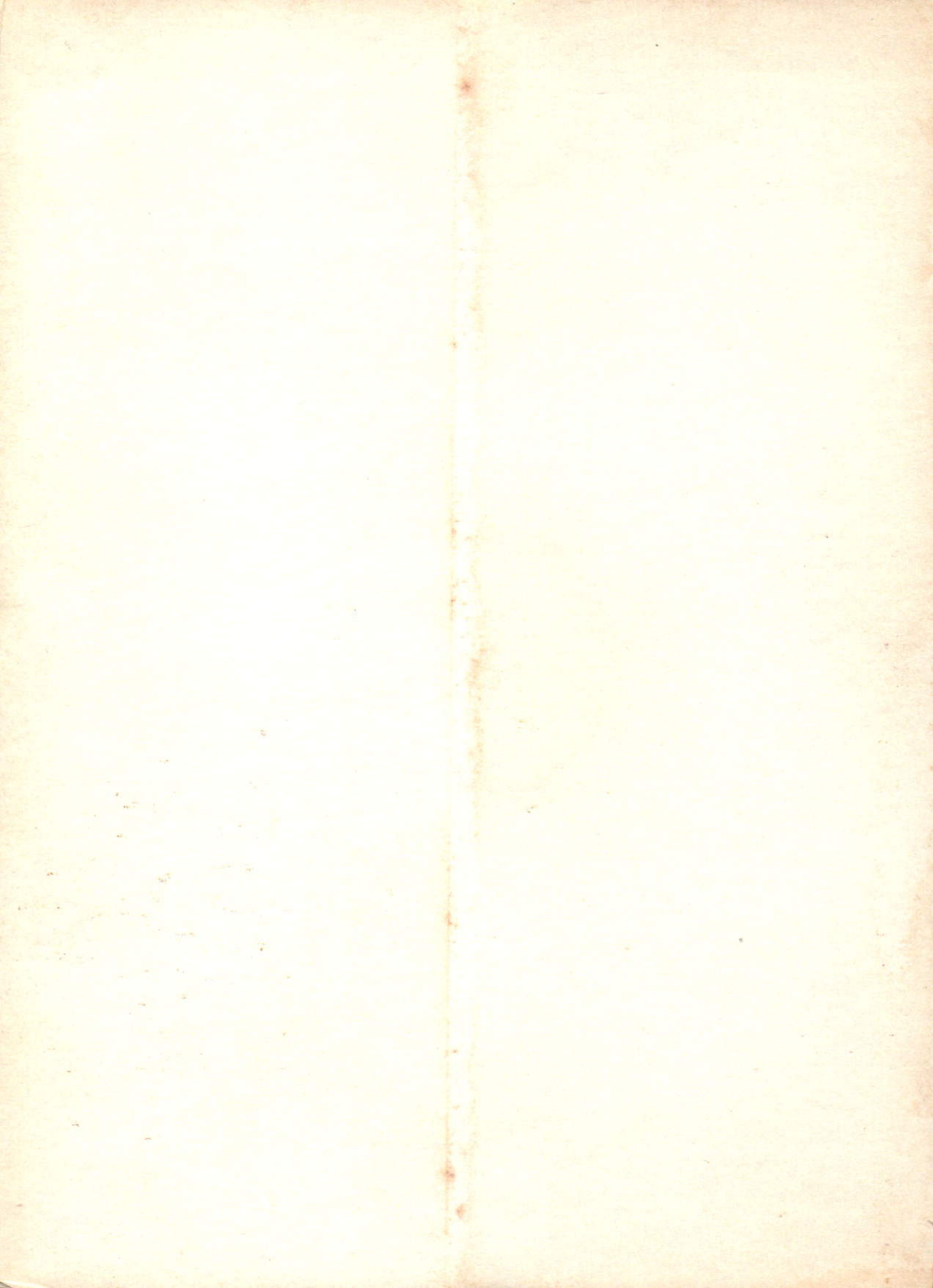
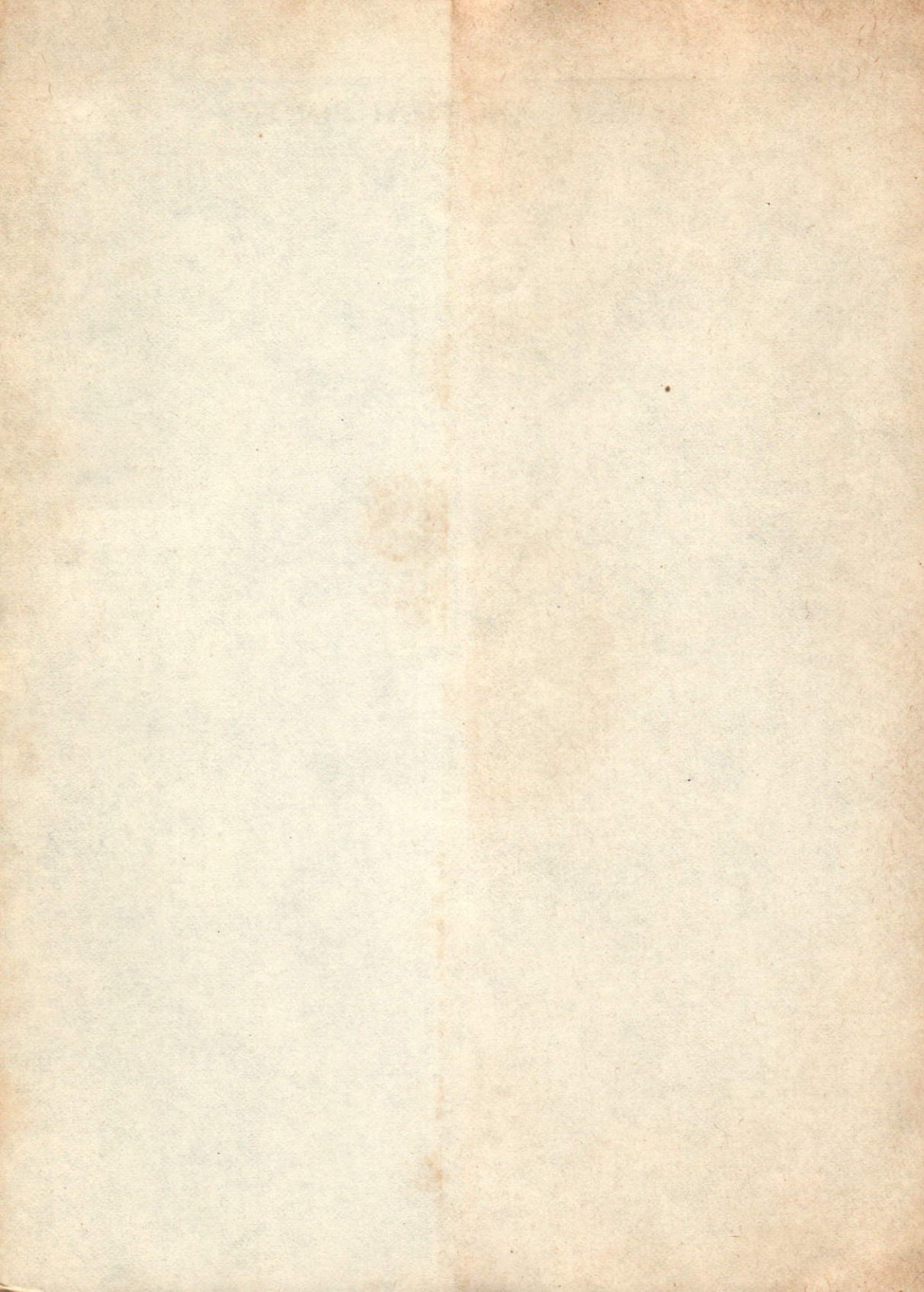


FACETS OF THAI POETRY





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Mom Chao Chand Chirayu Rajani

FACETS OF THAI POETRY

Collection of Kloangs
Introducing the Thai Kloang

Published by

The National Identity Board
Office of the Prime Minister
Bangkok, Thailand

1984

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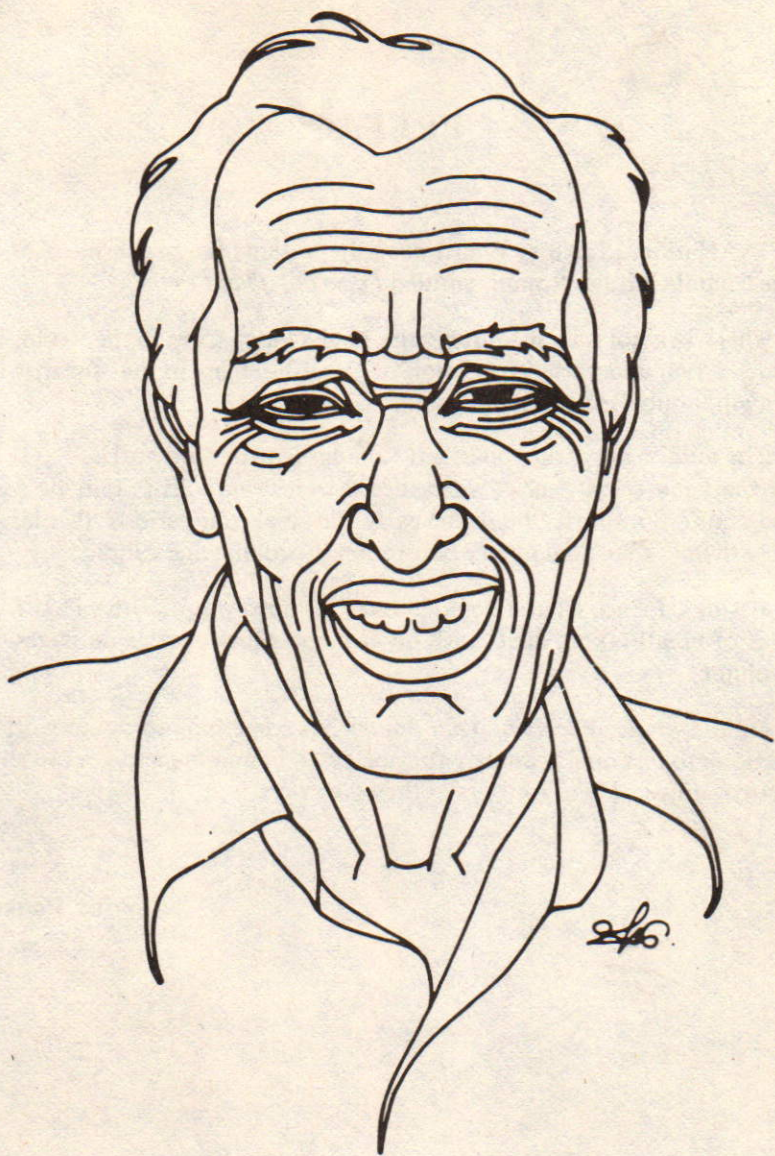
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No teeth, no dentures, Hah! no more ventures into dry dreams.

PREFACE

The National Identity Board proudly presents the masterpiece of H.S.H. Prince Chand Chirayu Rajani, entitled *Facets of Thai Poetry*.

This work not only introduces the Thai Kloang form to the world, but also provides a rich and varied collection of English poems in that form, written in the way that only Prince Chand could.

The author may truly be called “the last of the Romantics.” He handles with remarkable celerity such love themes as were dear to Sri Praj in the Ayutthaya period and to Sunthorn Phu in the early Rattanakosin period. It is largely due to these themes that Thai poetry becomes self-probing and candid.

Besides, Prince Chand demonstrates his absorption of the Thai Kloang in a series of breathtaking duets with other poets which appear on pages 78-96 in this volume.

On the whole, *Facets of Thai Poetry* has something to say to world poets. It is a book to test one’s capacity for poetry and humour, and goes to show that these two subjects are as timeless as they ever were.

Temsiri Punyasingh

INTRODUCTION

Is it possible to make the poetry of one language available to readers of another? If so, how?

By translations, of course. And yet much is lost.

All translations, I'd like to add

Can only be bad.

Prince Chand observes. What a poem says is sometimes lost. What it means is usually lost. How it means--sound, spirit, atmosphere--is almost invariably lost, especially when the languages of original and translation are as far apart, linguistically and culturally, as Thai and English.

Introducing the Thai Kloang is a modest title: this book could be called *Introducing Thai Poetry*. It aims to transmit, above all, qualities of sound and spirit. For this purpose Prince Chand uses translations and several other means as well.

He offers us two books in one. The first: a collection of poems--his own, translations of Thai classics, adaptations of a range of foreign poets from Sappho to Mother Goose--all using English to illustrate the special forms and genius of Thai verse. The second: a poetics--discussing in prose what Thai verse does, and how, and why.

The book's intended audience? Poets of other countries, who can use it to enrich their own art. Translators, who often mangle the work of Thai poets because they don't understand it. Anyone who wants to find out about Thai poetry. Oddly, there are almost no sources for the person who doesn't read Thai comparable to the many books on, for instance, Thai sculpture. There are few translations--Prince Prem Purachatra, M.R. Seni Pramroj, Dr. Montri Umavijani, and Michael Wright have provided appetizers, so one waits impatiently for the meal--and even less commentary. Yet Thai poetry is a long-continued,

rich, funny, various literature. It is better than English poetry, Prince Chand argues: not necessarily that there are more good Thai poets, but that the verse is a more versatile and sonorous medium. To appreciate his thesis, one needs both parts of this book.

The Poems

What are they like?

Seemingly spontaneous, playing with words, full of unexpected sound.

Of the several traditional genres of Thai poetry, Prince Chand most often uses the *kloang*, usually in its couplet version--

All that said and done

*The Kloang is great fun,
and easy too...*

or in the quatrain version called *kloang si suparb*--

*...Even when I translate
The feelings and tone
Left is the barest bone
But this is a cost*

*my own
are lost,
of thought
that must be paid...*

The *kloang* is Prince Chand's favorite genre because the sound possibilities it offers are so subtle and varied. The collection of verse in this book, in a sense all one linked poem, is written almost entirely in variations of the *kloang*. "Kloang can be used for all sorts of things, from eulogies of gods and kings to stories in Billingsgate slang," Prince Chand says. In his adaptations from foreign poets *kloang* take on the yearning of Sappho--

Why am I sad? Why?

*Still thinking of my
lost maidenhead?*

I remember that night,

*I wished that it might
have been doubled...*

*...The moon has hidden
The Pleiades in flight
It is deep of night
Passes on--alone,*

*her light,
have gone,
and time
alone I lie...*

A quatrain *kloang* rerhymes a limerick of Edward Lear--

<i>There was an old man of</i>	<i>the coast</i>
<i>Who sat on a post.</i>	<i>When cold,</i>
<i>"Some hot buttered toast,"</i>	<i>he called,</i>
<i>Relinquished his hold</i>	<i>and ate his toast.</i>

A triplet *kloang*--its form modified by Prince Chand--presents the vision of the Tang-dynasty poet Wang Wei in a poem called "Deer Habitation"--

*On mountain empty,
With voices only,
Forest shadowy,
green moss shining.*

In *kloang* Thai poets seem to have what Villon found in *ballades* and Byron in *ottava rimas*; a medium so flexible that it enables them to express serious thought, lyrical feeling, and satiric high jinx.

As well as exemplifying the form of Thai verse, the collection in this book provides vistas into its matter and spirit. The reader needs to look both at the translations from court and folk poets and at Prince Chand's own poems--decidedly Thai, despite their use of English language. These Thai poets suggest their own answers to the question: what can poetry be about?

Something comic, for a start. Prince Chand resists the damp solemnity which sometimes surrounds recent poetry in English. He would have us encounter poems which are witty, bawdy, frolicsome, struck off in a minute to serve as a riposte. He translates a traditional fragment: in the seventeenth century, a high lady and a boatswain are feuding with impromptu *kloang* during a repartee game--

Charlee (boatswain) to the "Queen":

<i>...From heel to head up</i>	<i>and down</i>
<i>Nor short nor tall found</i>	<i>my d'light;</i>
<i>Thy waist, ah, so round,</i>	<i>so p'tite;</i>
<i>One thing's not quite right--</i>	<i>thy tits too small...</i>

The "Queen" replies:

<i>Charlee, thou boatload</i>	<i>of slime,</i>
<i>Thee--thy mother's crime</i>	<i>to birth,</i>
<i>Thy sire selleth grime,</i>	<i>charcoal,</i>
<i>And thou--thy sole worth:</i>	<i>to bail a boat...</i>

Under the feckless, satiric strain in this poetry often lies a pervasive Buddhist irony: a sense of the emptiness of our passions and illusions. From Prince Chand's own poem "Septuagenarian"--

<i>...I thought false teeth were</i>	<i>funny</i>
<i>When life was sunny</i>	<i>and sweet</i>
<i>But now that honey</i>	<i>has soured,</i>
<i>Can't chew my own meat</i>	<i>with my own teeth...</i>

Like Chaucer or Burns or Frost, the Thai poets in this book often tell a story. A nun and a lay brother take a walk. A lover takes leave of his lady. "I prefer poems of actions to poets' reactions," Prince Chand says. Most of his own poems relate happenings, real or fantastic.

The Thai verse given us here seems approachable, almost intimate, because it is direct. In "Hospitalization" Prince Chand writes--

<i>...Nor God nor Devil</i>	<i>wanted me,</i>
<i>No woman haunted me</i>	<i>nor ghost,</i>
<i>No spirit taunted me</i>	<i>nor pain,</i>
<i>I am mine own host,</i>	<i>my own refuge...</i>

At a Bangkok university I asked a student whether she and her friends could write in traditional Thai forms. "We all write them," she said, "whenever something exciting or sad happens, I get out my journal..." Has anyone used English poetry--in any form--so freely since the seventeenth century? I was not able to appreciate what my student had said until I read Prince Chand's book. He wants us to be aware of a casual, lively poetry which one can write and enjoy as well as anthologize.

The Poetics

Prince Chand thinks that poets elsewhere can learn valuable lessons from Thai practice. What is he saying about the art of verse?

He believes that meter is normal, not an imposition. "Poetry...is speech, and speech...must have both stress and quantity." He has no use for "free verse" or mystifiers who say that the musical phrase or the poet's breath can determine the length of the line.

Any adequate understanding of meter must take into account stress (the degree of emphasis given to a syllable), quantity (the duration of a syllable's

sound), pauses, pitch (relative position on the musical scale), and probably syllable count as well. It may be true that some of these factors are more important in certain languages than in others. Clearly pitch is more important in Thai--a language where it may determine word meaning--than in English. But all five factors influence the rhythm of any poetry. Hence Prince Chand would dispute conventional wisdom which often labels English poetry as "accentual," Latin and Sanskrit poetry as "quantitative," Thai poetry--in the accounts of some foreign commentators, anyway--as "syllabic."

English prosody in particular has suffered, he thinks, from over-simplification. From the time that Chaucer's firmly stressed, end-rhymed verse became more popular than the more clearly quantitative, alliterated verse of *Piers Plowman*, English poets began to listen to their lines too much in terms of stress alone. By the mid-nineteenth century, this simplistic prosody led to an unhappy schism. "Serious" poetry was frequently written in plodding, often end-rhymed and heavily iambic verse, while more novel meters were often relegated to "light" versifiers such as W.S. Gilbert and Edward Lear. Hence Prince Chand's affection for the limerick--in some respects like the *kloang*--which pops up regularly in this book. But these "light" verses were also corrupted by too much reliance on stress alone and by over-use of end rhyme: they were tinkly. So in this century many poets have been disillusioned with the use of meter altogether. Prince Chand believes that they are depriving their work of beauty and power.

Thai practices, he suggests, can demonstrate ways out of the English-verse impasse. Thai poets have always been aware of multiple determinants and variations of meter. They have inherited two sets of forms: more quantitative ones from the multi-syllabic languages of India--such as *chan*--and ones which emphasize syllable count and stress from their own largely mono-syllabic language tradition--such as *kloang* and *glon*. Pauses have always been clearly recognized: witness the split-line spacing of the *kloang* on the page. And the tonal nature of Thai, embodied in set patterns of tone use in *kloang* and other forms, means that Thai poets are especially aware of pitch. Prince Chand believes that an English poet could deepen his sensitivity to the constituents of rhythm--thus gaining subtler meters and greater variation within them--by studying Thai usage.

About rhyme, too, he thinks that Thai practices can be suggestive. He is an enthusiast of rhyme. Like meter, rhyme has fallen into disrepute with many twentieth century poets writing in English. But this bias is a reaction against the

earlier predilection for a single type: rhyme which was perfect (the vowel and later consonant sounds exactly identical), falling on identically stressed syllables only, and at the ends of lines. Such rhyme can clang and cloy the ear. It often tends to rigidify a certain part of a poem as if it were enclosed in a box--

*Know then thyself, presume not God to scan,
The proper study of mankind is man...*

Used at length and rhyme becomes monotonous, Prince Chand says--"a rat race."

Thai use of rhyme is diverse and subtle. Most Thai forms involve compulsory rhymes. But these often occur within the line rather than at the end, and sometimes the position in which they fall can vary. In *glon 8*, a form which Prince Chand discusses in his chapter on Thai rhyme, the last word of an initial line is rhymed on either the third *or* the fifth syllable of the next. He translates a *glon* passage in which Sunthorn Phu, the famous nineteenth-century poet, laments the death of King Rama II--

*The King died, tasteless became the land--
He died, and scentless my own fate...*

For the connotations of *scentless* the reader must turn to Prince Chand's commentary. The rhyme here is inconspicuous, since it occurs within the line and is not stressed, yet it is integral to the music of the *glon*.

Prince Chand claims that he was too lazy to translate the passage just quoted with the richness of word sounds it should have. In fact it contains several of the optional rhyme-related usages with which Thai poets constantly augment their compulsory rhymes. There are identical rhymes (died...died,-less...-less), alliteration (-less...land...-less), assonance (taste...came...fate), and consonance (died...land...died, taste...scent...fate). The result is a complexity of sound which we hear whether or not we identify the ways in which it is achieved. Like Thai meters, Thai uses of rhyme and similar repetitions could enrich the work of a foreign poet who is able to learn from them.

Thai poets have a special sensitivity--which Prince Chand discusses only in passing--to the ways in which rhyme and pitch as well may heighten the stress on a given syllable. This awareness brings into question some simplistic western prosodies which suggest that accented syllables within words and the emphases of speech are the only determinants of stress that matter.

The attempt which this book makes to communicate the values of Thai rhythm and rhyme to poets elsewhere goes against a received idea: that the sound-practices of poetry in one language have little validity for poetry in another because languages differ. Yet scholars acknowledge that Milton's sound was strongly affected by the classics, and that Eliot drew on the conversational line of Laforgue. The forms of Thai verse should be worth investigating. They have stood time's tests: the *kloang si suparb* as now used had become fully developed in the century after Chaucer's death. And they reach their audiences: I saw six hundred students in Bangkok gathered for a public poets' recital. Prince Chand thinks that the elements which have led to the success of these forms can be analysed and passed on. He believes that the understanding gained should not be monopolized by the Thai.

This book is an introduction. Turning the last page, I wanted to know more.

More, for instance, about the-excerpts from Thai poems and about Thai poetry in general. Readers are likely to find themselves turning from the verse collection to the prose chapters and back again, wanting to learn something of the authorship and times and ambiance of a Buddhist epigram or a risqué verse tale.

I also wanted to know more about sound in Thai poetry. Prince Chand's ingenious methods of introducing the prosody--providing his own "Thai" poems in English and adapting foreign poets into Thai forms--are helpful, probably more helpful than any translation or prose comment alone could be. Yet I began to hear the verse forms given here clearly when listening to Thai friends reading Thai poems aloud. Probably what the non-Thai reader needs most is a feeling for pitch: how the tones of Thai work in the verse. Prince Chand largely bypasses this subject, and M.R. Seni Pramroj's lucid paragraphs in the introduction to his *Interpretative Translations of Thai Poets* are only a brief primer.

Yet to ask this book to turn itself into a history or an encyclopedia of Thai poetry would be to violate its spirit. The book carries on a dialectic between Thai and English poetics--a feat which could only be accomplished by a bi-lingual writer who has lived with the poetry of each language. It is not an omnibus, but a series of poems and essays by a practitioner.

And the author is someone passionately concerned with poetry--a rare and generous taste, not to be smothered in pedants robes.

In a discussion about rhyme, one of his favorite topics, I asked Prince Chand who were the best rhymers in English. "Chaucer and Shakespeare," he said, "Byron and Burns and Belloc." Perhaps one could suggest an alternative choice, but who else would have such a list on the tip of the tongue? On the same topic Prince Chand writes in this book: "...I would even go further and put down in black and white that poetry that is not rhymed is not poetry..." One feels that he is rather looking forward to a dispute. "...Some Thais can probably rhyme in their sleep and snore at the same time." "...I personally have noticed that when dogs bark, and cows moo, they do it in rhyme."

With such an instructor, who would choose to disagree?

Robert Cumming

*J.F. Kennedy Visiting Professor
Thammasat University, Bangkok.*

**COLLECTION OF
KLOANGS**



Handwritten signature or mark.

I. INTRODUCING THE KLOANG FORMS

Examples of Couplets, Triplets and Quatrain Kloangs

Kloang 2:

One two three four five

Six seven eight nine ten

*My fingers I strive
to count them all.*

*And then eleven
on to Hundreds,*

Kloang 3:

*Thousands and Millions,
But up to Zillions*

*It is just too bad
I cannot count Ad*

*Billions and Trillions,
I cannot count.*

*And makes me feel sad
Infinitum.*

Kloang 4:

*One two three four five
Eight nine ten eleven
Hundreds, Thousands, then
Billions, Trillions, Ad*

*six seven
Egad!
Millions,
Infinitum.*

Examples in English of Quatrain Kloangs with single, double and triple rhymes:

*One moon doth orbit
Then science gave birth
And what is the worth
More 'n' more Lunatiks*

*the earth
Sputniks!
of that ?
will orbit earth.*

<i>Christmas comes in De-</i>	<i>ember</i>
<i>After November</i>	<i>is past</i>
<i>Just can't remember</i>	<i>what day</i>
<i>I've thought till at last</i>	<i>I lost my mind,</i>
<i>And write this in hos-</i>	<i>pital</i>
<i>Just what was it all</i>	<i>about ?</i>
<i>Can't say, lost it all</i>	<i>somewhere</i>
<i>What was in went out</i>	<i>what's out went in.</i>

1. BUDDHIST TERMS

(Couplet Kloangs)

<i>Jati, Jara, Pa-</i>	<i>yati, Marana—</i>
<i>Birth, Old Age, Illness</i>	<i>four words meaning</i>
<i>What I want to do</i>	<i>And Death, a stillness</i>
<i>Called Thai Kloang, a terse</i>	<i>that awaits us all.</i>
<i>For people who are</i>	<i>Is introduce you</i>
<i>The Couplet uses four-</i>	<i>to two verse forms</i>
<i>(But you count by stress—</i>	<i>And disciplined verse,</i>
<i>Pungent and racy,</i>	<i>easy to use</i>
<i>As for the Quatrain,</i>	<i>Under a rhyming star</i>
<i>Rhymes that flow, fly high,</i>	<i>heavenly born.</i>
	<i>teen syllables, no more,</i>
	<i>with just one rhyme</i>
	<i>Seven : no more nor less)</i>
	<i>to create poems</i>
	<i>New Age, spacy,</i>
	<i>up to the skies.</i>
	<i>A form, I maintain,</i>
	<i>sophisticated—</i>
	<i>Laugh and even cry</i>
	<i>at your pleasure.</i>

(Quatrains)

<i>The criterion for</i>	<i>a poet</i>
<i>Is not the Couplet,</i>	<i>too short</i>
<i>A format to get</i>	<i>bearings.</i>
<i>Poets should resort</i>	<i>to the Quatrain,</i>
<i>Thirty words, two sets</i>	<i>of rhymes,</i>
<i>From exotic climes,</i>	<i>sunny,</i>
<i>With tinkling chimes</i>	<i>that charm,</i>
<i>Serious or funny,</i>	<i>at the poet's whim.</i>

(Couplets)

<i>See how he handles</i>	<i>The light of candles,</i>
	<i>not of fireflies.</i>
<i>Does his flame scorch,</i>	<i>And turn into torch</i>
	<i>that lights the stars ?</i>
<i>Or does his verse crawl</i>	<i>Under the Wailing Wall</i>
	<i>of fallen arches ?</i>
<i>I really don't know</i>	<i>It's for him to show</i>
	<i>his own facets.</i>
<i>All that said and done,</i>	<i>The Kloang is great fun,</i>
	<i>and easy too.</i>
<i>Don't just believe me,</i>	<i>Try them out and see—</i>
	<i>and be a poet.</i>
<i>Why, even schoolgirls</i>	<i>With their poetic curls</i>
	<i>can write Thai Kloangs.</i>
<i>From their earliest stage,</i>	<i>In their first teenage,</i>
	<i>they learn their job—</i>

(Triplet Kloangs)

<i>With their lines tumbling,</i>	<i>Their words stumbling,</i>
<i> Their rhymes rumbling,</i>	<i> rumbling along;</i>
<i>Their sense mumbling,</i>	<i>Their sounds grumbling,</i>
<i> Their minds bumbling,</i>	<i> bumbling along;</i>
<i>Their hands fumbling,</i>	<i>Their pens jumbling</i>
<i> On paper crumbling—</i>	<i> their Kloang Giggles!</i>

(Quatrain)

<i>Devoured by old age,</i>	<i>this frame</i>
<i>Of man! then there came</i>	<i>sickness,</i>
<i>A phenomenon same</i>	<i>for all.</i>
<i>Quick, check your progress—</i>	<i>To Heaven or Hell ?</i>

2. POSTCARD VIEWS

Snow on Fuji Mount!

Niagara Falls!

Pyramids, The Sphinx,

I mean The Great Walls,

The Acropolis,

Wonders of the world!

And look at these views—

From Fuji that sprawls

Spreading and sprays,

I can't even count

Postcards! Postcards!

Wild nature that calls

to say Hello!

The Manx and the Minx,

No, no, I'm wrong,

St. Peter's and St. Paul's

St. James, St. Jones,

What and where that is

I cannot say.

Legs folded, I sat curled

up in my chair

Multi coloured hues

like moving snow

O'er Niagara Falls,

a mass of foam

Sweeping and sways—

Postcards! Postcards!

Postcards! Postcards! and Postcards!

To poets and bards

"With kindest regards"

From "Yours sincerely,

and me,

are sent

with lots of love."

So I fell asleep,

Or perhaps hell I saw,

I found it boring

A world without end,

And got a good peep

at high heaven,

The visions were more

phantasiatic.

So I started snoring

in my own world,

The elements blend

with midnight shades

3. IMMORTALS

Translations from Pali (Ye Dhamma Formula)

Upatissa's request

Appaṃ vā bahuṃ vā bhāsassu
atthameva me bhāsahi
attheneva me attho
kiṃ kaheṣi byanjaṇaṃ bahuṃ

<i>Tell me what your Lord</i>	<i>teaches</i>
<i>Tell me what he preaches</i>	<i>shortly</i>
<i>Tell me that which reaches</i>	<i>one's heart</i>
<i>Mere verbosity</i>	<i>is waste of time.</i>

.Assaji's reply (Ye Dhamma)

Ye Dhammā hetupabhavā
tesaṃ hetuṃ tathāgato
tesaṃcayo nirodho ca
evaṃ vādi mahāsamano

<i>Whatsoever arise,</i>	<i>their causes</i>
<i>He tells of their sources</i>	<i>also.</i>
<i>How they cease He endorses</i>	<i>their end,</i>
<i>The Great Samano</i>	<i>Such is His Dhamm' !</i>

Translations from Old French

RONDEAUX BY FRANCOIS VILLON

Rondeau

MORT, j'appelle de ta rigueur,
 Qui m'a ma maistresse ravie,
 Et n'es pas encore assouvie,
 Se tu ne me tiens en langueur.
 Onc puis n'eus force ne vigueur;
 Mais que te nuysoit elle en vie,

Mort ?

Deux estions, et n'avions qu'ung cuer:
 S'il est mort, force est que devie,
 Voire, ou que je vive sans vie,
 Comme les images, par cuer,
 Mort !

(Garp Chabang)

<i>Death, why have you stolen</i>	<i>away my woman ?</i>
<i>I protest your harshness.</i>	
<i>You hold me in distress,</i>	<i>my life worthless,</i>
<i>yet you are not satisfied.</i>	
<i>No strength in me abide,</i>	<i>but ere she died,</i>
<i>how did she harm you, Death ?</i>	
<i>Two bodies we with breath,</i>	<i>one heart beateth,</i>
<i>if dead, I nonetheless</i>	
<i>Live on, with life lifeless,</i>	<i>as do images,</i>
<i>but dead at heart, O Death !</i>	

Epitaphe et Rondeau

Cy gist et dort en ce sollier
 Qu'amours occist de son raillon
 Ung pouvre petit escollier
 Qui fut nommé Francoys Villon.
 Oncques de terre n'eut sillon;
 Il donna tout, chascun le scet:
 Tables, tresteaulx, pain, corbeillon.
 Gallans, dictes en ce verset:

(Couplet Kloangs)

Here lies, in this garret,

A poor scholar, one

Of land did he own;

His table, trestle-bed,

(Gallants,) told here in verse:

*And sleeps he who met
 with love's arrow—*

*Named François Villon:
 not even a furrow*

*He gave, 'tis well known,
 his all away—*

His basket, his bread—

Rondeau

REPOS eternal, donne à cil,
 Sire, et clarté perpetuelle,
 Qui vaillant plat ni escuelle
 N'eut oncques, n'ung brain de percil.
 Il fut rez, chef, barbe et sourcil,
 Comme ung navet qu'on ret ou pelle.

Repos eternal donne à cil.

Rigueur le transmit en exil,
 Et luy frappa au cul la pelle,
 Non obstant qu'il dit: 'J'en appelle!
 Qui n'est pas terme trop subtil.

Repos eternal donne à cil.

Give rest eternal

No plate, dish, nor green

Cropped head, beard, brows as

Give him eternal rest,

Sent int' exile when

"I appeal against it!"

Give him eternal rest.

*And light perpetual
 to him who had*

*Sprig of parsley e'en
 to call his own;*

*A turnip that has
 been scraped or peeled.*

*Who, at the behest
 of circumstances,*

*His arse was beaten
 although he said.*

Not subtle term a bit—

<i>Just one more before</i>	<i>Sappho.</i>
<i>Languages I don't know</i>	<i>are Greek,</i>
<i>Pali, Chinese, so</i>	<i>another</i>
<i>With-tongue-in-my-cheek</i>	<i>translation;</i>

(Couplets)

<i>A Quatrain by Wang</i>	<i>Wei, Poet of the Tang</i>
	<i>Dynasty, is</i>
<i>Translated as Triplet,</i>	<i>Of thirteen words set</i>
	<i>with double rhymes.</i>
<i>This form is not Thai,</i>	<i>I adapted it by</i>
	<i>changing one rhyme.</i>
<i>A form I dislike,</i>	<i>Like riding a Trike</i>
	<i>(or three wheeled bike)</i>
<i>With one wheel in front,</i>	<i>Two behind, I don't</i>
	<i>know which rhymes what.</i>
<i>Wang Wei used twenty .</i>	<i>two Chinese words. He</i>
	<i>rhymed Chinese- wise</i>
<i>Like a wise Chinese.</i>	<i>So he wrote with ease,</i>
	<i>and with more words</i>
<i>Without rhymes double,</i>	<i>He had no trouble—</i>
	<i>immortal poem.</i>
<i>Translated many times,</i>	<i>With and without rhymes,</i>
	<i>over the ages.</i>

Translation from the Chinese

Quatrain by Wang Wei
Tang Poet, c. 700 - c. 760

Deer Habitation

*On mountain empty,
With voices only,
Forest shadowy,
green moss shining.*

*All translations, I'd like
Can only be bad.
As a fact, is sad
Cannot be exact*

*to add
This fact,
but they
of the poet said.*

*Even when I translate
The feelings and tone
Left is the barest bone
But this is a cost*

*my own
are lost
of thought
that must be paid.*

*So poets, why waste
Writing your own rhyme's
Your thoughts may be a dime
Add dozens together—*

*your time ?
better;
a dozen—
you'll get a poem.*

*Try a Kloang 2, 3
The Quatrain is your
It could be your tour
As for the Couplet*

*or 4
best bet
de force;
it has its use,*

*If you want to write
Rhymes not too thickly
Lines moving slickly
Demonstrated on*

*quickly
spread on
as I've
my two flat tyres.*

*Yes, a waste of time,
Translators are no
Time past, Time present,
Leave translating to*

*Consideration prime
is that amongst
Poets. Why should po-
ets waste their time ?
Time future, best spent
to last all time.
Academics who
cannot create.*

*This piece seems to wend,
Bring it to an end
with a Thai tale.*

4. THE CRAB THAT GRABBED WITH BOTH HANDS

A Traditional Ta Thain-Yai She Story

Proem

Just finished a poem,

When I cannot think

Proem in Couplets,

Three variations,

The tale I shall tell

It concerns a Nun

As far as I know,

I personally

*And this is the Proem
of a new one.*

*I simply take a drink
and write some poems.*

Story in Quartets,

Triplets Envoi,

*Three demonstrations
of three Kloang forms.*

Is traditional,

both strange and true.

*And a Thain, or one
who is virtuous*

*And it would seem so
from the story.*

*Heard it orally
from my old nurse.*

*A Thain and a Nun
By the sandy shore
Their way went before
They laughed and they talked*

*It happened the Thain's
Was short, and as night
He couldn't see aright
'Cept he brought his nose*

*Then the Nun, when nature
Said, "Go on ahead, sir,
"A minute and water
"No rain--seems to me--*

*of yore
they walked;
their feet,
and said some prayers.*

*eyesight
was close
his hand
so close to it.*

*called her,
I'll be
this sand,
for many days."*

*The Thain did as he
Down she squatted as bold
A crab felt the cold,
Grabbed her you know what*

*was told:
as that.
cold douche,
with its sharp claws.*

*“Ouch! Ow! Help!” the Nun
“I’m going to die
“Wasser matter ? Why,
Asked the Thain with a blink*

*did cry,
I think.”
wassup ?”
‘cos he couldn’t see.*

*Down he went on knees
His nose to the claws
One claw, just like jaws,
The Crab grabbed the Thain’s nose*

*and paws;
came close:
held tight,
with th’ other claw.*

*“It hurts, oooh!” she cried
Which annoyed the Thain
“What are you complain-
“With me, why, you mutt—*

*in pain,
somewhat:
ing about ?
both hurts and smells.”*

Envoi

*The story is ended,
No one, unintended
As we were walking,
’Bout deer stalking
He took me sailing,
My usual failing,
Then we went rowing,
With strokes aflowing,
When without thinking,
Into filth stinking
As we were crabbing,
All the time babbling,
Six verses, ample
Sweet as a damsel,
With rhymes feminine,
In a tight blue jean--*

*Hope I have offended
except for Moe.
He started talking
and catching crabs.
All unavailing,
I caught no crab.
What style ashowing,
I caught a crab,
Or even blinking,
I shoved my hands.
With both hands grabbing,
the Crab Grabbed ME.
For an example,
fashionable
Lovely as a queen
this Triplet Kloang!*

II. ADAPTATIONS OF SAPPHO

(based on Paul Roche's translations in *The Love Songs of Sappho*)

1. PROEM

<i>If I must translate,</i>	<i>Something that I hate,</i>
<i>The Buddh' and Sappho,</i>	<i>I would start with</i>
<i>He was the greatest</i>	<i>Poets of long ago,</i>
<i>I've tried translating</i>	<i>and Shakespeare.</i>
<i>And Greek I don't know</i>	<i>Bard of the latest</i>
<i>Are not Translations</i>	<i>or modern age.</i>
<i>"The Love Songs of Sappho"</i>	<i>Sonnets--frustrating</i>
<i>Most fragmentary,</i>	<i>the experience!</i>
<i>When grouped together</i>	<i>To translate Sappho</i>
<i>One complete poem is</i>	<i>so what follows</i>
<i>And two or three more</i>	<i>But Adaptations</i>
<i>I might explain here,</i>	<i>which are made from</i>
<i>Sing outside the room</i>	<i>by Paul Roche; below</i>
<i>When the new day dawns,</i>	<i>are some pieces</i>
<i>A custom so sweet,</i>	<i>And they have to be</i>
	<i>"reconstructed."</i>
	<i>They give a better</i>
	<i>continuity.</i>
	<i>Sappho's masterpiece</i>
	<i>"To Aphrodite."</i>
	<i>Longer pieces, of four</i>
	<i>Sapphic quatrains.</i>
	<i>In Epithalamia</i>
	<i>the girls gather,</i>
	<i>Of the bride and groom</i>
	<i>consummating.</i>
	<i>Their carols and yawns</i>
	<i>come to an end.</i>
	<i>Sappho's songs discreet,</i>
	<i>tickling the ages.</i>

2. CALL TO APHRODITE

O, Aphrodite, one

O, Daughter of Zeus,

Let not my heart be

*Come to me now as
You heard me cry (sore
From afar; I implore
Father's house depart,*

*Your golden chariot,
By beautiful swans,
From heaven down on
Dark earth; and bringing*

Then, with a rare smile

"What may your trouble be,

"Whom do you wish me to

"You will be seeing

"She who spurns your gift,

"She who does not love,

Come to me now, again,

Free me from this craving,

I long to have done,

*Who, on dappled throne,
is immortal;*

Weaver of ruses,

I address thee:

Broken, my lady,

routed by sorrows.

before;

my heart)

from your

and harnessing

which, drawn

winging

to this

you suddenly.

On your features, while

You asked, "What, now ?

*That makes you call to me,
heart beseeching ?*

Make over to love you ?

Tell me, Sappho.

Her, who is fleeing,

chase after you;

Soon will her heart shift,

and be giving;

Soon will she approve,

like it or no--"

Free me from this pain

so merciless;

From this heart-raving--

Do for me what

O, my own, my one

ally indeed.

3. EPITHALAMIA

Bridesmaids' Carol

<i>We maidens outside</i>	<i>the room</i>
<i>Sing for you, bridegroom</i>	<i>and bride.</i>
<i>A lapful of bloom-</i>	<i>ing buds,</i>
<i>Of violets, outside</i>	<i>this bower of bliss.</i>

<i>Get yourself up when</i>	<i>'tis morn</i>
<i>May Hermes lead you on</i>	<i>your way.</i>
<i>For us when it's dawn</i>	<i>we shall</i>
<i>Go and sleep all day</i>	<i>after this night.</i>

The Bride and Groom

<i>Are you stout ? Slender ?</i>	<i>Likened to tender</i>
	<i>sapling, sweet groom.</i>
<i>So beautifully</i>	<i>Fashioned, there's honey</i>
	<i>in your eyes, Bride!</i>
<i>Aphrodite, no doubt,</i>	<i>Has singled you out--</i>
	<i>fair, love-strewn face...</i>
<i>Lucky Bridegroom,</i>	<i>Never 'nother bloom</i>
	<i>was there like this.</i>
<i>Now that it's over,</i>	<i>Union with your lover--</i>
	<i>Well done, Bridegroom!</i>
<i>Now go to sleep</i>	<i>On the breast, down-deep,</i>
	<i>of your sweetheart.</i>
<i>The black trance of night</i>	<i>Then blankt out their sight--</i>
	<i>they were exhausted.</i>
<i>Why am I sad? Why?</i>	<i>Still thinking of my</i>
	<i>lost maidenhead?</i>
<i>I remember that night,</i>	<i>I wished that it might</i>
	<i>have been doubled.</i>
<i>Let us go now, dear</i>	<i>girls, for day is near--</i>
	<i>our carols done.</i>

4. FRAGMENTS

My Gongyla

<i>Come back to me, here,</i>	<i>tonight.</i>
<i>Round my ears your delight-</i>	<i>ful lyre</i>
<i>Hovers, round my sight</i>	<i>beauty</i>
<i>That I so desire—</i>	<i>my Gongyla.</i>

<i>Even your garment</i>	<i>plunders</i>
<i>My eyes; your wonders</i>	<i>endless</i>
<i>'Chantment. O under-</i>	<i>standing</i>
<i>Cyprus-born goddess,</i>	<i>I beseech you:</i>

<i>Never let her lose</i>	<i>her grace;</i>
<i>Bring back now her face</i>	<i>to me--</i>
<i>Of women ev'ry race</i>	<i>the one</i>
<i>I so long to see--</i>	<i>my Gongyla.</i>

Evening Star

<i>Hesp'rus, you bring home</i>	<i>to sleep,</i>
<i>Home the herds of sheep</i>	<i>and goat;</i>
<i>Dispersing day's creep-</i>	<i>ing light,</i>
<i>Home the mother's dot-</i>	<i>ing darling one.</i>

If You Love Me

<i>A younger partner,</i>	<i>instead,</i>
<i>Select for your bed</i>	<i>and board.</i>
<i>For an elder maid</i>	<i>to live</i>
<i>With a younger lord</i>	<i>I could not bear.</i>

<i>The Moon has hidden</i>	<i>her light</i>
<i>The Pleiades in flight</i>	<i>have gone</i>
<i>It is deep of night</i>	<i>and Time</i>
<i>Passes on—Alone,</i>	<i>alone I lie.</i>

<i>If my breasts could still</i>	<i>Give suck and my womb will</i>
	<i> bear me a child,</i>
<i>I would to the room</i>	<i>Of a new bridegroom</i>
	<i> and lie with him.</i>
<i>But now wrinkles line</i>	<i>This old flesh of mine</i>
	<i> and Love does not</i>
<i>Chase me any more,</i>	<i>Give me as before,</i>
	<i> his beautiful pain.</i>

Call To Cypris

<i>From Crete, O Goddess</i>	<i>of Love,</i>
<i>Come here, to your grove,</i>	<i>your shrine;</i>
<i>Fragrant, curling above</i>	<i>altars,</i>
<i>Incense smoke divine.</i>	
	<i>Cool the apple boughs;</i>
<i>Cool the waters, their ways.</i>	<i>tracing;</i>
<i>Cool the rose leaves, lazing</i>	<i>slumber;</i>
<i>Cool the meadows, grazing</i>	<i>horses;</i>
<i>Cool the near-summer</i>	<i>with fresh spring breezes.</i>
<i>Come, O Cypris, fill up</i>	<i>With nectar this cup</i>
	<i> of gold, stirring,</i>
<i>Mingling gracefully,</i>	<i>Our festivity</i>
	<i> with this feasting.</i>

(Quatrain and Limerick)

<i>The Golden Muses</i>	<i>gave me</i>
<i>True success. To be</i>	<i>my lot</i>
<i>Is immortality.</i>	<i>I know</i>
<i>Once dead I shall not</i>	<i>be forgotten.</i>

And Hermes Said

*Great Glory yet will come on
 You, Sappho, where shines Phaeton—
 'Mongst the gods and men
 Ev'rywhere, even
 In the halls of Acheron.*

5. LETTER TO ANACTORIA

Married to a Soldier in Lydia

<i>Corps of Cavalry,</i>	<i>Marching infantry</i>
<i>A flotilla in line,</i>	<i>in a column,</i>
<i>For some...but for me</i>	<i>Such sights are the finest</i>
<i>To prove this is easy.</i>	<i>in the world--</i>
<i>Set sail from her spouse,</i>	<i>I prefer to see</i>
<i>She was led astray</i>	<i>my loveliest one.</i>
<i>A woman once bent</i>	<i>Helen, whose beauty</i>
<i>Now Anactoria,</i>	<i>is immortal,</i>
<i>Her lovable style,</i>	<i>Her child, parents, house,</i>
<i>These I'd rather see</i>	<i>away to Troy.</i>
<i>The past can never last;</i>	<i>By a love far away,</i>
<i>Once shared together</i>	<i>went willingly.</i>
	<i>On her heart's content</i>
	<i>is blind with love.</i>
	<i>Far, far from us here,</i>
	<i>is in my mind.</i>
	<i>Her vivid face, her smile,</i>
	<i>the way she walks--</i>
	<i>Than Lydian cavalry</i>
	<i>in glittering mail.</i>
	<i>Yet 'tis best that that past</i>
	<i>be not forgot.</i>
	<i>That past is better</i>
	<i>when borne in mind.</i>

III. QUATRAIN KLOANGS

1. HOSPITALIZATION

Born : nineteen hundred and ten
That was the year when Kings died
The stars in heaven did laugh
On earth people cried when I was born.

(King Edward VII of England died in 1910, as did King Chulalongkorn)

Birth : and then came Death -- nearly
Haemorrhage : clearly cancer
Or T.B.—weary and worn,
On a thread, by chance a man's life suspends.

They call it Childhood T.B.
Had it for fifty years past,
Dormant within me till now
Virulent at last debt long delayed.

Nor God nor Devil wanted me
No woman haunted me nor ghost
No spirit taunted me nor pain
I am mine own host my own refuge.

I sit with my eyes half close
My mind on my nose and I
Mark time in this pose for aeons
Hoping to come by some result like :-

No more for me Birth and Death
No more for me Breath and Strife
No more for me Yeth and No
No more for me Life "the task is done."

2. HYMN TO MR AND MRS ZEUS

<p><i>Prince Zeus, put away your Put it here under Some fool may blunder And cause havoc where</i></p> <p><i>Some fool, yea, be he Or Air Force Marshal, E'en five--starred Gen'ral-- As I say, may press</i></p> <p><i>And cause such an ex- Blow earth and ocean You have no notion, How fools can blunder--</i></p> <p><i>Now, I address me Lady Hera who The breed of the two The weaker the sex</i></p> <p><i>Marriage is something 'Tis not in my range I meet a sweet ang- I would take thee wife</i></p> <p><i>You see, we could break Of chastity now Depends just on how, And with whom, and when--</i></p>	<p><i>thunder, my chair. int' it we don't want one.</i></p> <p><i>Adm'ral, or Yes some fool, the wrong button, plosion asunder. dear prince, put that toy away.</i></p> <p><i>to you, protects lotuses bonnier the bloom. strange of life el like thee lae wert thou virgin.</i></p> <p><i>our vow and then. and where, we're all human.</i></p>
---	--

3. BIRDS AND BARDS

*To-whit to-who! Hey
Sweet sounds like honey
Trochee, iambs, spondee,
With'em they create Spring,*

*Winter---all with sounds
Like those two pef-birds
A cock I called Nertz
And Owly who slept*

*Then he went out on
Flying miles and miles
Eating between whiles
At break of each day*

*Cock adoodle doo!
To wake up his flock
Regular as a clock
Owly gave a yawn*

*What sounds, Ah, so sweet!
Enamoured of the owl's
So poetical! O how
Learn to croon like it?*

*Meanwhile the owl thought
Far inferior to
Cock adoodle doo!
To change his owl's howls:*

*At length the cock crowed
"Good morning to you
"Why, tootloo too to
Croaked Owly so foully*

*Cock adoodle! Ho
Sounds sweet as honey
No sense---sounds only
I wish I could wring*

*Nonny Nino
bards sing
dactyls,
Summer, Autumn,
not words
I kept
for short
from dawn till dusk;
the tiles
away
then back
to go to bed.*

*crowed cock
at dawn
he crowed:
To-whit to-who!
that foul fowl hae
To-whit!
could I
So he practised.*

*To-who!
the fowl's
he sought
He too practised.*

*To-who!
Owly!"
you Nertz!"
I ate 'um both.*

*Nonny
birds sing
like bards
their ruddy necks.*

4. EERIE LIGHTS ON A BANGKOK BYPASS

<p>Once upon an ev- With stars aglistening I sat listening Blind ghosts--ghosts who are</p> <p>Upstairs, one ghost loves "It's simply great fun," I think it's quite un- That where this ghost plays</p> <p>One likes to play with One moans and one groans One likes to throw stones One tells me proudly</p> <p>One likes to rattle Then he cries in pain-- Some like again and again Their favourite game</p> <p>Some ghosts like to play They listen for footfall And then they boot all They're all blind and some</p> <p>I waited, long, but no Not e'en the one lame I switched off the flame Into bed I dived</p> <p>It seems that the ghosts-- Went out for to find They went one behind The weather was damp, most</p> <p>At last, a tele- They found: all took hold One ghost was so bold "Lamp post: can smell piss</p>	<p>ening afar for ghosts good friends of mine.</p> <p>to run he says. canny there are no stairs.</p> <p>his bones loudly at me "My name is Jones."</p> <p>his chain he's lame. to play of blind ghost's buff.</p> <p>football to come they hear they hack my shins.</p> <p>ghost came arrived. of stars icy, ice chest.</p> <p>all blind, lamp post 'nother unfortunate.</p> <p>graph pole "What's this ?" to say left by some dog."</p>
---	--

*And then, back that same
He took careful aim
He missed that self same
Instead he pissed*

*And lo! my good friends
Lamp posts! eyes with flame
I think it's a shame
Should give eerie light*

*dog came
and missed
'graph pole
on the ghosts' legs.*

*became
abright
blind ghosts
themselves can't see.*

5. SEPTUAGENARIAN

*Whenever a body
It then becomes worn
By disease 'tis torn
Death is the last page*

*I thought false teeth
When life was sunny
But now that honey
Can't chew my own meat*

*Not funny are teeth
The rains seem to pour,
The winters than before,
The girls get bolder,*

*I thought that Death was
Something perilous
But now delirious
I think Death, Jung and Freud*

*The day will come when
Nobody will cry
There's no reason why
Flesh and blood that be*

*This poem is not 'con-
Death's not obsessional
Buddhism's just sessional
Trouble seems to be*

*E'en my own In Mem-
In accord with Siam's
Can't think what I am
Life is transition*

*Into the world naked
Naked when the game
What use, then, is fame
What use, too, is mon-*

*is born
with age
to shreds
of this saga.
were funny
and sweet
has soured
with my own teeth.*

*any more
colder
and even
the older I get.*

*serious
to avoid
with age
are all funny.*

*I die
for me
one should
will be have been*

*essional'
with me
that's all
I cannot write*

*oriam
tradition
to say
from birth to death.*

*I came
is done
to me?
ey 'cept sour grapes.*

6. ENVOI

*These Kloangs are out of
Not hocus pocus
Pinker than crocus!
You hear that? Cat call!*

*They're not Nonsense Verse
Yet the two are much
Like Dutch, double Dutch
Like Ugly Dutchess*

*"Out of Focus Verse"
Lewis Carroll and Lear
Nonsensers may jeer
Like Peter and Paul*

*Verses want to flow
Don't know to say "when"
Count one up to ten
O'er the eight-- double*

*I thought I was kill-
Instead it was prime
To write all this rhyme
I thought it was cake*

*Stop now while stopping
Stop now while in mood
Stop now, be not crude
Stop their talking shop!*

*focus
at all.
"Crikey"
Where're my false teeth?*

*as such
muchness.
by Lear
by Lewis Carroll.*

*sounds queer
and all
but saints
they say "What ho!"*

*from pen
's trouble.
that's two
usual quota.*

*ing time
mistake
and rot
darn near killed me.*

*is good
to stop
with cats
Stop my chatter !!??.*

IV. TRANSLATIONS OF CLASSIC KLOANGS

1. KAMSUAN SRI PRAJ

Said by the poet about to leave on a journey:

<i>Shall I leave thee with</i>	<i>the sky?</i>
<i>Indr' would swoop thee high</i>	<i>above.</i>
<i>Leave with the earth? Why,</i>	<i>Nay, Nay!</i>
<i>Earth's Lord, O, my love,</i>	<i>would thee seduce.</i>
<i>Leave with the waters?</i>	<i>Enow!</i>
<i>Naga would I vow</i>	<i>thee take.</i>
<i>'Tis fit, I allow,</i>	<i>to leave</i>
<i>Thee with thee--thy stake</i>	<i>thine own conscience.</i>

NOTES

There are three periods or centuries of early Thai poetry. Ayutthaya was founded in 1350 A.D. Almost no poetry remains from the first century (circa 1350-1450.) The next century, covering the long reigns of King Trailokanatha and his younger son Ramathibodhi II, was the first or Early Ayutthaya Period. About half a dozen substantial pieces remain from this period but most of them were not written at Ayutthaya. The century that followed was another blank due to the long Burmese war.

The last or fourth century of Ayutthaya, from the reign of King Narai to the fall of the capital in 1767, is the Later Ayutthaya Period. The Early Bangkok Period covers Thon Buri and the first three reigns of Bangkok. This century can be divided into halves, Thon Buri and the reign of King Yodfa (1767-1809); and the reigns of King Lertla and his son Phra Nang Klao. The latter period was the golden age of Bangkok and produced several great poets. A few verses have been translated from Nirat Narindr and Loganit Kloangs (next two pages.)

2. NIRAT NARINDR

Said by the poet while on a journey:

<i>Bang Khun Thian, a district</i>	<i>by name</i>
<i>Thian, a candle whose flame</i>	<i>gives light</i>
<i>By candlelight she came</i>	<i>for whom</i>
<i>At this time of night</i>	<i>was she seeking?</i>

<i>Khok Kham, the Tama-</i>	<i>rind Mound</i>
<i>Young tamarinds around</i>	<i>the Well</i>
<i>of Bliss--heaven bound</i>	<i>my thoughts</i>
<i>On thy mound they dwell,</i>	<i>thy well of bliss.</i>

<i>To Khok Tao, a canal</i>	<i>I came</i>
<i>No tortoise of the name</i>	<i>I found</i>
<i>My thoughts are for shame</i>	<i>unspok't</i>
<i>Wishing to thy mound</i>	<i>I could return.</i>

Of the Early Ayutthaya pieces, Kamsuan (mistakenly called Kamsuan Sri Praj of which two verses have been translated above) and Thawathotsamat were written at Ayutthaya; Yuan Phai at Phitsanulok; Nirat Hariphunchai at Chiang Mai; and Thao Hung or Juang, an epic written in the Lao language, probably at Luang Phra Bang.

The reign of King Narai in the Later Ayutthaya Period was a time of spontaneous kloangs. The names of several poets have come down to our day, including two legendary characters—Sri Praj and Sri Thanonchai. Sri Praj was probably historical. His father was a poet and scholar, and he became a page of the king at an early age. Growing up in the palace, he fooled about with court ladies and, instead of being executed as he should have been under the Palace Laws, he was exiled to Nakon Si Thammarat in the south. There he again fooled about with the ladies and was executed. Before being executed he was supposed to have written his last verse with his toe in the sands where he was decapitated. When the King heard of the poet's death, he ordered the execution of the local chieft's death by the same sword. The verse is translated below.

3. LOGANIT KLOANGS

<i>A swan had feathers</i>	<i>of gold</i>
<i>Which her owner sold</i>	<i>for food</i>
<i>And then greed got hold</i>	<i>of him</i>
<i>He defeathered nude</i>	<i>that golden swan.</i>

<i>When new feathers grew</i>	<i>again</i>
<i>The swan's golden strain</i>	<i>was gone</i>
<i>The moral, it is plain</i>	<i>to see,</i>
<i>Defeather not swans,</i>	<i>nor dames denude.</i>

<i>Broke? bear it, and e'en</i>	<i>salt eat</i>
<i>Carve not flesh nor meat</i>	<i>from friends</i>
<i>Maintain, I repeat,</i>	<i>your pride</i>
<i>A starving tiger fends</i>	<i>for its own meal.</i>

<i>A buck attacked a</i>	<i>skinny</i>
<i>Tiger without any</i>	<i>terror</i>
<i>Didn't think that hid be</i>	<i>sharp claws</i>
<i>Too late, by its error,</i>	<i>it knew Tiger.</i>

<i>After a bull or buff-</i>	<i>alo's died</i>
<i>Horns and skins abide</i>	<i>on earth</i>
<i>But man has no hide</i>	<i>to leave</i>
<i>His name's his sole worth</i>	<i>for good or ill.</i>

4. SPONTANEOUS KLOANGS

The Gate Keeper asks and Sri Praj replies:

<i>"How come did you get</i>	<i>this ring?"</i>
<i>"To me has the king</i>	<i>given it."</i>
<i>"What, then, was the thing</i>	<i>you did?"</i>
<i>"Doggerel my merit</i>	<i>I wrote for him."</i>

Sri Praj:

<i>True my every vow</i>	<i>to thee</i>
<i>As a jewel would be,</i>	<i>set high</i>
<i>Come, love, share with me</i>	<i>life's bliss</i>
<i>Come, believe me, try</i>	<i>me just this once.</i>

(translated by Geoff de Graff)

* * *

Palace Lady (to Sri Praj)

<i>Au clair de la lune,</i>	<i>mooneth hare</i>
<i>Low station, unaware</i>	<i>of self</i>
<i>Peacock cocketh eye where</i>	<i>clouds ride</i>
<i>Low station, poor elf,</i>	<i>poor pedigree.</i>

Sri Praj replies:

<i>Au clair de la lune,</i>	<i>mooneth here</i>
<i>High, high doth he dare</i>	<i>to gaze</i>
<i>Creatures are aware</i>	<i>'tis spring</i>
<i>Blame me not my daze</i>	<i>we both belong.</i>

* * *

Charlee, a boatswain to 'the Queen' :

<i>From heel to head up</i>	<i>and down</i>
<i>Nor short nor tall found</i>	<i>my d'light</i>
<i>Thy waist, ah, so round,</i>	<i>so p'tite</i>
<i>One thing's not quite right</i>	<i>thy tits too small.</i>

The Queen replies:

<i>Charlee, thou boatload</i>	<i>of slime</i>
<i>Thee--thy mother's crime</i>	<i>to birth</i>
<i>Thy sire selleth grime</i>	<i>charcoal</i>
<i>And thou--thy sole worth:</i>	<i>to bale a boat.</i>

Charlee replies:

<i>Of noble birth indeed,</i>	<i>Charlee</i>
<i>My mother's Mathri</i>	<i>Princess</i>
<i>My father's Phra Sri</i>	<i>Vessan-dorn na.</i>
<i>Grandfather's no less</i>	<i>than King Sanchai.</i>

* · * · *

Sri Thanonchai:

<i>I hapt on horses</i>	<i>in fun</i>
<i>Such a sight was one</i>	<i>I loved</i>
<i>Seeing what was done</i>	<i>frenziedly</i>
<i>Hurrying home I shoved</i>	<i>my dear, dear wife.</i>

Sri Praj's last verse (before being executed)

<i>Mother Earth! Be my</i>	<i>Witness</i>
<i>I--by Archarn noneless</i>	<i>begot</i>
<i>If I have sinned-- Yes,</i>	<i>Slay me</i>
<i>If sinned I have not</i>	<i>Venge me, O Sword!</i>

(Archarn - *arcariya*, great scholar, intellectual, mystic etc).

V. RUNAWAY RHYMES

*Friends! O ye philo-
Romans! ye scoffers,
Countrymen! coughers,
Come, lend me your ears,*

*The Kloang is nothing
Metaphysical,
Quasi-quizzical
You put your hat on, or*

*sophers,
ye seers,
sneezers,
(but wash them first.)*

*mystical,
or more
than that
you take it off.*

1 You take your hat off

*(Some people say 'doff')
then put it on.*

2 That's all 'bout a hat

*The Kloang is like that--
on off-off on.*

3 So why I can't think

*I waste time and ink
writing this trash.*

4 Goodbye, O my muse,

*From now I refuse
to write such rot.*

5 Goodbye, my books, too

*When you don't write you
don't read either.*

6 I'll just meditate

*Or else vegetate
with a blank mind,*

7 And thus become wise

*Not in people's eyes
but in my own.*

8 So long have I been

*A fool that I e'en
don't know how long;*

9 I suppose since birth

*When I first stept earth
and dogs did bark.*

10 I use to think--Lo!

*What I do not know
is not knowledge.*

- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>11 <i>The older I get</i></p> <p>12 <i>First I might mention</i></p> <p>13 <i>Between meditation</i></p> <p>14 <i>I mention this point</i></p> <p>15 <i>So let us have more</i></p> <p>16 <i>There is no equation</i></p> <p>17 <i>Neither gestation,</i></p> <p>18 <i>Not mutilation,</i></p> <p>19 <i>Neither stagnation,</i></p> <p>20 <i>Nor fluctuation,</i></p> <p>21 <i>Anticipation,</i></p> <p>22 <i>Preoccupation,</i></p> <p>23 <i>Not admiration,</i></p> <p>24 <i>Not transmutation,</i></p> <p>25 <i>Not transmigration</i></p> <p>26 <i>Neither elation</i></p> <p>27 <i>Neither inflation</i></p> <p>28 <i>Neither frustration,</i></p> | <p><i>The more I regret</i>
 <i>so little I know.</i></p> <p><i>There is no connection,</i>
 <i>'s far as I know,</i>
 <i>And contemplation</i>
 <i>of life and death.</i></p> <p><i>Without dwelling on't</i>
 <i>'cos I like long words;</i>
 <i>Samples by the score</i>
 <i>of rhymes yards long.</i></p> <p><i>With meditation</i>
 <i>and the following:-</i></p> <p><i>Predestination</i>
 <i>of birth as such;</i></p> <p><i>Nor termination</i>
 <i>of death as such;</i></p> <p><i>Continuation</i>
 <i>of life as such;</i></p> <p><i>Acceleration</i>
 <i>of life's rhythm;</i></p> <p><i>Accumulation</i>
 <i>of wealth in life;</i></p> <p><i>Amelioration</i>
 <i>of life in wealth;</i></p> <p><i>Glorification</i>
 <i>of the body;</i></p> <p><i>Transubstantiation</i>
 <i>of the physique;</i></p> <p><i>Nor consolation</i>
 <i>that of the soul;</i></p> <p><i>Nor animation</i>
 <i>that of the mind;</i></p> <p><i>Nor elevation</i>
 <i>of the spirit;</i></p> <p><i>Hallucination</i>
 <i>of the psyche.</i></p> |
|--|--|

- 29 *BUT—there is relation* *Between deflation
of the ego*
- 30 *And concentration,* *Intense attention
to the senses.*
- 31 *After that, negation,* *Abomination
of life's matter.*
- 32 *(Thus taught Lord Buddha:* *Maha Satipa/tthana Sutta)*
 The Greater Discourse on the Bases of Mindfulness
- 33 *Disaffectation,* *Repudiation
of life itself.*
- 34 *(Thus taught Lord Buddha:* *Anapana Sa/ti Bhavana)*
 Development of Mindfulness through Breathing
- 35 *Elimination,* *Obliteration
of death itself.*
- 36 *(Thus taught Lord Buddha:* *Nibbanam Pa/ranam Sukham)*
 Most Blissful is Nibbana.
- 37 *Through Meditation,* *Annihilation
of birth itself.*
- 38 *Thus taught Lord Buddha* *To people who are
worthy and wise.*

Buddhist Terms

- 39 *Jati: This means Birth* *Start of life on earth
with the first breath.*
- 40 *Jara: means Old Age* *This is the next stage
that follows Birth.*
- 41 *Payati: Illness* *Will surely kill us
and end our life.*
- 42 *Marana: means Death* *The end of life's breath
that started with Birth.*
- 43 *Such is life's progress* *A natural process
from Birth to Death.*
- 44 *This subject is banal* *What a scandal
to write such rhymes.*
- 45 *Buddhist terms like these* *Are obvious as cheese
is to a mouse.*

- | | |
|------------------------------|--|
| 46 Yet Time will not wait | Just look at the date
Life flows so fast. |
| 47 Hickory Dickory Dock | Just look at the clock
see how Time flies. |
| 48 Look! Ye who have breath! | Birth, Decay and Death
wait for no man. |
| 49 Do not hesitate | Start and meditate
while you have strength. |
| 50 Buddhism's prodigious, | But not religious
in its essence. |
| 51 You don't have to be | A Buddhist, you see,
to meditate. |
| 52 So start while you can, | Short is Life's span,
so full of Dukkha! |
| 53 Satipatthana | (Ekayanamagga
"one man's main way") |
| 54 You walk with your load | Alone, along your road
no man can help |
| 55 The Buddh' is at most | Only a signpost
pointing the way) |
| 56 And Anapana | Sati Bhavana
start alike. |

Satipatthana and *Anapana* are names of meditations

- | | |
|----------------------------|--|
| 57 The mind on the nose | (Eyes open or close)
long breath, short breath. |
| 58 Clear comprehension | Means close attention
to the postures |
| 59 Stand, Sit, Lying, Walk | (You don't have to talk,
or e'en kneel down |
| 60 As though praying aloud | Or haranguing a crowd
of devatas. |
| 61 To a free thinker | Devas are pinker
than pink pach'derms. |

(*Devas* and *devatas* are gods and deities; *pachederms* are elephants).

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 62 <i>Brahma and Lares,</i> | <i>Indr' and Penates</i> |
| | <i>are all devas;</i> |
| 63 <i>As well as Mara,</i> | <i>Avalokesvara,</i> |
| | <i>and Satan too;</i> |
| 64 <i>Also Jehovah,</i> | <i>And God, and Allah,</i> |
| | <i>and your shadow.</i> |
| 65 <i>I nearly forgot!</i> | <i>There's still a lot</i> |
| | <i>of devatas--</i> |
| 66 <i>Marx and Stalin,</i> | <i>Hitler and dear Win-</i> |
| | <i>ston Churchill,</i> |
| 67 <i>When alive all devas</i> | <i>When dead all they are</i> |
| | <i>are just shadows.</i> |
| 68 <i>The list is endless:</i> | <i>When dead all friendless</i> |
| | <i>e'en 'mongst themselves!</i> |
| 69 <i>But this digression</i> | <i>Is an obsession</i> |
| | <i>non-Buddhistic.</i> |
| 70 <i>Let us go on, then,</i> | <i>Until the time when</i> |
| | <i>my breath runs out.)</i> |
| 71 <i>Close the six Sense-doors,</i> | <i>For they are the cause</i> |
| | <i>of all Dukkha.</i> |
| 72 <i>Separate are five</i> | <i>Faculties, alive</i> |
| | <i>to five sense-fields.</i> |
| 73 <i>Eyes are for seeing:</i> | <i>Sights come int' being--</i> |
| | <i>with eyes see not.</i> |
| 74 <i>Ears are for hearing.</i> | <i>Sounds harsh, endearing--</i> |
| | <i>with ears hear not.</i> |
| 75 <i>Nostrils for smelling:</i> | <i>Scents strong, compelling--</i> |
| | <i>with nose smell not.</i> |
| 76 <i>Tongue and sense of touch:</i> | <i>Tastes and feels so much--</i> |
| | <i>taste not, nor feel.</i> |
| 77 <i>The sixth sense is Mind:</i> | <i>This door is combined</i> |
| | <i>with th' other five.</i> |
| 78 <i>Close this door behind</i> | <i>This sense-door of mind</i> |
| | <i>with mindfulness.</i> |

(Mind : *mano*. Mindfulness : *sati*)

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 79 <i>Breath becomes refined,</i> | <i>One pointedness of mind</i> |
| | <i>then approaches;</i> |
| 80 <i>So step by step</i> | <i>You become adept</i> |
| | <i>towards wisdom.</i> |
| 81 <i>Both Meditations</i> | <i>Are applications</i> |
| | <i>with four Bases</i> |

Contemplation of the Body, Feelings, Mind and Mind-Objects

- | | |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 82 <i>Kaya-, Vedana-,</i> | <i>Citta- and Dhamma/</i> |
| | <i>nupass'na, that,</i> |
| 83 <i>Rupa, Vedana,</i> | <i>Sanna, Sankara</i> |
| | <i>and Vinnana</i> |
| 84 <i>Are all Anicca,</i> | <i>Dukkha, Anatta-</i> |
| | <i>to "see" which means</i> |
| 85 <i>Nibbana!. This earth</i> | <i>Will not see your birth</i> |
| | <i>ever again.</i> |
| 86 <i>Thus ends your Karma:</i> | <i>The Wheel of Samsara</i> |
| | <i>broken to bits.</i> |

Vattasamsara : The Wheel of Rebirth

- | | |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 87 <i>So taught Lord Buddha</i> | <i>To people who are</i> |
| | <i>healthy in mind.</i> |
| 88 <i>Buddhism without wails</i> | <i>Petty fogging details</i> |
| | <i>eliminated.</i> |
| 89 <i>Too difficult by far</i> | <i>Is Buddha's Dhamma</i> |
| | <i>for me - Yes, me</i> |
| 90 <i>Such words so strange</i> | <i>Are beyond my range</i> |
| | <i>to understand.</i> |
| 91 <i>Too bad, is it not ?</i> | <i>The noddle I've got</i> |
| | <i>lacks some spare parts.</i> |
| 92 <i>But showing my ign'rance</i> | <i>Does not mean by chance</i> |
| | <i>my name's Saint Chand.</i> |
| 93 <i>Between Death and Birth:</i> | <i>What the hell on earth</i> |
| | <i>(or heaven) is that ?</i> |

- 94 *I know nothing about* (With or e'en without
dictionary)
95 *The Twelve Nidanas,* Namely Paticca/
Samuppada.

The Chain of Dependent Origination

- 96 *What a waste of time* To put into rhyme
things I know not.
97 *About time this verse ends,* Wan with ague it wends
its weary way
98 *To near a hundred rhymes,* Or, counting in dimes,
a whole Weasel.
99 *A good place to stop,* A good time before Pop
Goes the Dollar.

Buddhism is nothing mystical,
Metaphysical, matter
Quasi-quizzical, in fact
I've written chatter and nothing else.

VI. THE BUFFALO GOD

A Fantasy of My Village

1.

*I read the other day,
Aged hundred and ten,
On both sides of her head,
Like a goat's or deer,
So I went to see*

"In this village, Nit

"Grew horns and a tail.

"What! You mean that Nit,

"Of course, the same Nit.

"I don't see any horn

"As for her tail I

"May have it hidden

"Won't find it any more.

*A woman of Hopei,
Chinese province,
Which was her age when
she grew some horns
One yellow, one red,
but I'm not sure,
The paper's not clear
on this one point.
My friend, Archarn. She
said, "That's nothing!
(Not short for Nitwit,
but a Thai name)
If you like I'll tell
you about it."
That village halfwit,
who massages me?"
I'll tell you about it
if you'd let me."
On her head or on
her anywhere.
Haven't searched her high
and low for it.
In some forbidden
depths of despair."
All this was before
the time you came*

"To live in this village.
 "That small plot of land?
 "Nobody goes there,
 "Is held. You can see
 "I only see trees,
 "Snakes! It may sound odd,
 I said, "Snakes have eggs,
 "You don't understand
 "Who are ignorant,
 "The gods as gods be!
 "So gods go in disguise
 "After the harvest,
 "In that vacant space
 Talking bally rot,
 A village teacher.
 And as for her tale,
 Near your own cottage
 haven't you noticed
 It is sacred, and
 is left vacant.
 'Cept once a year, where
 a festival
 It's a sanctuary
 where the gods dwell."
 Where the birds and bees,
 and perhaps snakes--"
 That might be a god
 taking a stroll."
 But they have no legs
 to take a stroll."
 Mythology, and,
 like villagers
 You simply just can't
 expect to see
 Except once yearly,
 festival-time.
 And materialise
 just that one time
 When they manifest
 in their true forms
 Next door to your place,
 as I told you."
 Crazy ideas she's got,
 but she's only
 Didn't want to preach her,
 so I kept quiet.
 That I shall retell
 in my own words.

2.

My village is one
 Postally called Don
 Of three--Don Kaeo, Don
 Kwan and Don Mee,
 III, Don II, Don I,
 for convenience.

*The three Dons are near,
 My place's the middle Don,
 In that village, too,
 In front of my place
 That stretches on and on,
 And after the rain
 Between my place and
 Runs from south to north.
 To the fields at dawn
 Fifty yards away
 To pass a small mound,
 A shady oasis
 Place of the Chao, or ghost
 Gods or ancestors,
 When villagers die
 Their remains bodily
 Such is the belief,*

*You can walk from here
 to there and back.
 'Tween Don Mee-Don Kwan,
 where Archarn lives.
 Lives Nit, whose story you
 will be hearing.
 Is a large space
 of paddy land,
 Like a great green lawn
 of verdant growth;
 The colours change again
 to autumn tints.
 This paddy-rice land,
 an unpaved road
 The people go forth,
 with buffaloes,
 Where they work from morn
 till nearly dusk.
 From my house, and they
 quicken their pace
 Green all the year round
 with great big trees,
 'Midst terrain that is
 baked, broken, brown.
 (Choose what you like most
 and call it that),
 Dead fools and jesters,
 or simply Phi.
 From their homes they hie
 to this haven;
 To the cremat'ry
 are carted and burnt.
 Which I give in brief,
 that Archarn told.*

3.

Once every year
Both men and women,
From the three villages
The monks come first,
To their Wats not far
Merit-making done,
(At this festival
Drinks, more drinks, drinking
The men and women,
Then they blow on trum-
Drinking and singing,
The gods then descend
And pick a relative
And enter the body
In drinking, and dance
This goes on all night
The gods to their cots,
Some sleep on the floor,

The people come here,
this sanctuary,
And even children,
the old and young
To render homages
to their deities.
To eat, quench their thirst,
and then return
Away, for their siesta
after the meal.
Then begins the fun--
first, food and drinks
It is traditional
that all get drunk,)
Till ev'ry one's stinking,
both old and young,
Even the children
(except babies.)
pets, beat a long drum,
Boom-bah, Boom-bah;
Dancing and prancing
(except babies.)
(or ascend, depend-
ing where they lived,)
That they use to live
with, as Medium,
To join, with oddly
grotesque gestures,
Like zombies that prance
on red hot bricks.
Until the first light
when all go home.
And if they are sots,
fall off their beds;
Some groan, some snore,
till the next year.

4.

Old age becomes sick
When it's hot, they sweat;
The gov'ment's bad,
With prices rising,
I came to the village
Luck'ly there was Nit,
She's fat and forty,
Quite intelligent,
With her strong hands
Everything I've got,
My fingers, my toes,
But strange, Nit would not,
Some say she is dumb,
Nobody's ever heard
But all, all love her,
That she'd take to graze,
One ev'ning Ai Turr

With aches rheumatic,
full of complaints.
When it rains, they're wet;
and when it's cold!--
Th' economy sad,
the food awful,
High costs of living,
so cold, so cold.
When in my old age,
with all my aches.
"The Village Halfwit"
as she is called.
All smiles, sporty,
and I find her
Very efficient
as a masseuse.
She massages my glands,
my varicose,
And some I have not,
which sooootes me;
She'd massage my nose
if I'd let her.
Or perhaps could not
utter one word.
Some say deaf, and some
that she abstains.
Her talk, not one word
since she was born.
'Specially Ai Turr,
the buffalo
When she'd let it laze
in the cool mud.
Returned home with her,
and in the night

Simply just passed out,

Nobody knew why,

With meat buffalo

*Seemingly without
any reason.*

*All Nit did was cry;
and soon Ai Turr,*

*Fifty baht a kilo,
was forgotten.*

5.

The seasons rolled on.

After that the annual

First, merit-making,

Party in full swing,

Archarn glanced at Nit,

Crawling, said, "Moo-Moo,

Archarn looked at Nit

On both sides of Nit's head,

The answer was gruff,

"I was called Ai Turr.

"I am a god now,

Archarn asked, "You Turr?"

"All right, Saint or Sir,

"Tell me how you died."

*After the rains had gone
came harvest time.*

*Deities' festival
was celebrated.*

*Then heavy drinking
from noonday on.*

*Everybody drinking,
everybody drunk.*

*(I suppose both lit)
Nit on all fours*

*I want to tell you
just who I am."*

*Closer, couldn't believe it,
but there were horns*

*One yellow, one red,
asked, "Who are you?"*

*Nit's voice was rough,
"I will tell you.*

*Now my name is--Sir
Buff Fallow, Bart.*

*And Saint Buff is how
you address me."*

*"No, not Turr, but Sir
or Saint Buff, Bart."*

*Or whatsoever
you want to be.*

*"Oh, Archarn," it cried,
"it's me, Nit, and*

"Look, now I can speak,
 Archarn looked in surprise,
 "Oh, Nit, I'm so glad.
 "Not Turr, but Saint Buff,
 "Look at my behind,
 Archarn looked behind,
 "You ask how I died?
 "I was in great pain.
 "I got home that night,
 "Didn't mean it, I know,
 "Oh, I'm so sorry.
 "But, Archarn, I'm not dead.
 Someone started to cough.
 Dawn. Party ending,
 "Seen Nit, anyone?
 Someone replied, "There,
 "Without a single stitch
 Archarn brought Nit back,

(The voice a small squeak)
 "Don't you know me?"
 Couldn't believe her eyes--
 the horns were gone!
 But why look so sad?
 I thought you were Turr."
 Told you often enuff.
 If you will please
 And there you will find
 my tail, wagging."
 And there she did find
 Turr's swishing tail.
 She massaged my hide
(pointing to self.)
 She massaged my brain.
 and pressed too hard.
 Slept, never again saw light.
 That's how I died.
 As it happens, so
 I became St. Buff!"
 Made every one worry,
 the way you died."
 Just look at my head--
 no horns! I'm Nit."
 Nit (or Buff) walked off
 and disappeared.
 Weary way wending,
 Archarn then asked,
 Don't know where she's gone
 since late last night."
 Behind that bush's where
 she is crouching
 On her, in that ditch,
 in that cool mud."
 Left her in her shack
 to sleep it off.

6.

<i>I said, "I'm sorry,</i>	<i>I'm afraid your story</i>
<i>"Of course not!" Archarn</i>	<i>er...weren't you drunk?"</i>
<i>"Just imagination,</i>	<i>Said, and swore her yarn</i>
<i>"What! Still don't believe me?</i>	<i>was gospel truth.</i>
<i>"Never been known to speak,</i>	<i>Hallucination,</i>
<i>"But now, I'll show you,</i>	<i>is all it is."</i>
<i>"Proof so logical,</i>	<i>Why, I'll let you see--</i>
<i>She called, "Nit, come here."</i>	<i>absolute proof!</i>
<i>"Now, say something, dear,</i>	<i>Not even one squeak,</i>
<i>Two words Nit uttered,</i>	<i>since Nit was born.</i>
	<i>She talks one or two</i>
	<i>words quite clearly.</i>
	<i>Mytho-logical,</i>
	<i>can't be denied."</i>
	<i>Nit came and sat near,</i>
	<i>her face all smiles.</i>
	<i>This gen'man wants to hear</i>
	<i>you say your talk."</i>
	<i>Two words she muttered,</i>
	<i>Two words-- "Moooo Moo!"</i>

VII. ARCHARN AND THE SEVEN DWARFS

Sounds singing Hi Ho!

Hi Ho Tra-la! and

Next to a small mound,

This is the haven

From the villages, Don

Home from work we go,

Sounds of loud singing,

The stars hid their light,

Would lose their bearing,

Ran into a wall

So decided instead

Next morning at dawn

There was nothing there,

Soon, I will go soon,

Home from work we go

Tra-la Hi Ho!

Hi Ho! o'er the land

near where I live

*Big trees with surround-
ing paddy fields.*

Of the Chao, of men

and women dead

Kaeo, Don Mee, Don Kwan,

where Archarn lives.

Tra-la-la Hi Ho!

Hi Ho! Hi Ho!

*Mixed with sounds whirling
from overhead.*

*Pitch black was the night,
even fireflies*

*Yet I went tearing
into that blank.*

*Which wasn't there at all
and hurt my pride;*

*I'd go back to bed
and sulk it off.*

*I put my hat on
and went to see.*

*So I returned where
my coffee waited.*

*When it's afternoon
and ask Archarn.*

*She will know, no doubt,
Everything, she knows,
She lives in fantasy,
Her ideas crazy,
A village teacher.*

*As I was saunt'ring
And stopped before me.
Whom I use to know
But remembered his face,
He said his name's Pit,
I got in his car,
Nobody was about,
The window to peep,
Invited us within
To make the tale short,
On the previous night;
Archarn did not know.
The young man then said,*

*What it is all about—
she always does;
Everything that goes
on in the place.
Or mythology
as she would say;
But I don't worry,
she is only
I could walk, reach her
house in minutes.*

*In the cool ev'ning
a car drove up
Inside I could see
a smart young man
In Bangkok long ago;
forgot his name
Though couldn't fix the place
where I'd met him.
Or Pist, or Pisit,
perhaps all three.
Archarn lived not far,
we soon arrived.
So I gave a shout;
Pisit went to
Found she was asleep.
She quickly woke,
Her house, and I in-
troduced Pisit.*

*I made my report
of what I'd heard
As there was no light
I saw nothing.
She said she would go
and have a look.
"I seem to have read
something like this.*

<i>"I'd like to go too,</i>	<i>That is, provided you</i>
<i>So we all came back,</i>	<i>do not object."</i>
<i>Straight to the Mound,</i>	<i>Dropped me at my shack,</i>
	<i>and they drove off</i>
	<i>Which was just around</i>
	<i>the next corner.</i>
<i>Again, dark was the night,</i>	<i>The stars were in flight</i>
	<i>and it was cold.</i>
<i>So I went to bed,</i>	<i>Blankets o'er my head</i>
	<i>to my toe nails,</i>
<i>And I slept warm.</i>	<i>Suddenly the storm</i>
	<i>unexpectedly.</i>
<i>Thunder, lightning, rain,</i>	<i>Shook my window pane</i>
	<i>like teeth rattling.</i>
<i>The heck with it all.</i>	<i>It can blow down the wall</i>
	<i>for all I care.</i>
<i>But when the rain stopped,</i>	<i>Out of bed I hopped</i>
	<i>to have a look.</i>
<i>I went to the porch,</i>	<i>Switched on my torch,</i>
	<i>there was nothing.</i>
<i>No water anywhere,</i>	<i>Sweet and clear the air,</i>
	<i>the trees asleep.</i>
<i>It is as I feared,</i>	<i>Last night I was cock-eared,</i>
	<i>tonight cock-eyed.</i>
<i>Then sounds singing Hi Ho!</i>	<i>Home from work we go!</i>
	<i>the heck again.</i>
<i>This is indeed weird,</i>	<i>Cock-eyed and cock-eared</i>
	<i>but that's not all.</i>
<i>It is to be supposed</i>	<i>That I am cock-nosed</i>
	<i>at the same time.</i>
<i>Asjun! Strange, very</i>	<i>Extraordinary</i>
	<i>that sudden storm!</i>

*Pisit drove up with
And they told their yarn,
To have been well varn-
A lot of moonbeams,*

*Archarn
which seems
ished with
to say the least.*

(The Young Man relates)

<i>We went to the Mound,</i>	<i>Took a stroll around</i>
<i>The grass tall, unkempt,</i>	<i>and it got dark.</i>
<i>So we lost our way,</i>	<i>The paths hidden, emp-</i>
<i>Luck'ly there was a hall</i>	<i>ty of all signs.</i>
<i>People partaking</i>	<i>Thought we had to stay</i>
<i>We went there. That night!</i>	<i>until morning.</i>
<i>Then the midget men</i>	<i>Or Sala, without wall</i>
<i>Int' the hall they came,</i>	<i>that is used by</i>
<i>Their leader was Doc</i>	<i>In merit making</i>
<i>Here's Dopey—"How do?"</i>	<i>at festivals.</i>
<i>And here's Grumpy—"Bah!"</i>	<i>It was cold all right</i>
<i>We are all miners</i>	<i>I can tell you.</i>
<i>Been working that seam</i>	<i>Came. There were seven</i>
<i>It's a planet far</i>	<i>of them in all.</i>
<i>We are on our way</i>	<i>Each carried a flame</i>
<i>Rao sret ngarn Hi Ho!</i>	<i>to light his way.</i>
<i>That alien rubbish</i>	<i>(Two feet in his sock)</i>
<i>"Home from work we go!</i>	<i>he introduced—</i>
	<i>Here's Sneezzy—"Achoo!"</i>
	<i>Wake up Sleepy!</i>
	<i>Here's Happy—"Ha Hah!"</i>
	<i>The last's Whitey.</i>
	<i>'Cept two—moonshiners</i>
	<i>are Dope and Grump.</i>
	<i>Off the rainbow beam</i>
	<i>near Zaloongah.</i>
	<i>From our own star</i>
	<i>called Auloongah.</i>
	<i>From Z back to A</i>
	<i>Hi Ho Ha Ha!</i>
	<i>Rao grub ban we go!</i>
	<i>(I will translate</i>
	<i>Into Am-English</i>
	<i>so it makes sense.</i>
	<i>Tra la la Hi Ho</i>
	<i>Hi Ho Ha Ha!")</i>

*We're on our way back,
 Then that thing that flies
 So they dropped us near
 They will be back tonight,
 (Who, we asked, are they?
 "They" are B.E.M. 's-
 That go through the air,
 You'll see when they come,
 Suddenly a whirling
 And landed on the ground.
 There was a whirring sound,
 They had gone too far—*

*Each with his own sack
 full of goongah;
 Through galactic skies
 started to yip.
 This mound, to wait here
 till they return.
 Continue our flight
 to Auloongah.
 Why did they come this way?
 And what brought them?)
 Bug-eyed Monsters--"Them's"
 Flying Saucers
 Get from here to there
 in just a flash.
 We get in--and Wumb!
 we're home again!
 Saucer came circling
 from overhead,
 We all left the Mound,
 the dwarfs got in,
 We looked up and found
 the sky empty.
 We got in our car
 and returned home.*

*I asked, "Before that
 Do you know anything
 That storm? with lightning,
 And rain, but without*

*singing,
 about
 thunder
 any water?"*

(Archarn relates)

*Oh, you mean that storm?
 We were in that small
 So we cuddled close*

*Why, that was to warm
 us in the night.
 Sala, without wall,
 and it was cold.
 And, well, one of those
 things just happened.*

*We communicated,
 (Pre-marriage? I thought!)
 This morning--today,
 To the Nai Amphur,
 Last night was practice
 Psychedelic delights,
 You should try it sometime,
 Then the seven dwarfs,
 We were then bedding
 Suddenly they saw us.
 Who gave a loud laugh,
 They all crowded round.
 They shouted and they cheered
 Ride him, cowboy, c'mon!
 Ride that rocking horse
 Oh, well saved, goalie!
 Now, change position,
 "No," I said, "no more.*

*So we consummated
 our pre-marriage.
 But one thing I ought
 to tell you first.
 We went straightaway
 into the town
 Signed the register
 as man and wife.
 Of connubial bliss,
 it was lovely.
 Grand for these cold nights
 to keep you warm.
 You will find your rhyme
 flowing smoothly.
 Good for seven laughs,
 materialised.
 Together, pre-wedding
 celebrating.
 It was that sour-puss
 that's called Grumpy,
 Loud for a little dwarf,
 that is to say.
 What they saw they found
 to their liking.
 (Whitey through his beard)
 Hooray! Hooray!
 The way they carried on--
 just like children!
 To Banbury Cross—
 Shoot, cowboy, shoot!
 Ye gods unholy,
 kill that umpire!
 Try riding pillion,
 faster, faster!
 Not 'nother encore
 that is enough—*

<i>"Nobody has'm,</i>	<i>Organised orgasm</i>
	<i>eight times running.</i>
<i>"Once for each of you,</i>	<i>And if you have two</i>
	<i>you'll get hiccups!"</i>
<i>"Aw, c'mon, Archarn, please!</i>	<i>We love your strip tease!</i>
	<i>Do it once more!"</i>
<i>"Don't get me harried!</i>	<i>We shall be married</i>
	<i>tomorrow night!"</i>
<i>"Hey, hear that, you guys?</i>	<i>Let's give her a surprise--</i>
	<i>a wedding gift."</i>
<i>They dipt int' the sacks</i>	<i>They carried on their backs</i>
	<i>and each produced</i>
<i>A piece of plastic,</i>	<i>Size of a gold brick,</i>
	<i>as clear as ice.</i>
<i>Colours never before seen,</i>	<i>Red, yellow, blue, green,</i>
	<i>pink and even</i>
<i>Bright purple, a cryst-</i>	<i>alised amethyst.</i>
	<i>Just heavenly!</i>
<i>I weighed one in my hand.</i>	<i>It was heavy, and</i>
	<i>was not plastic.</i>
<i>"What's this?" I asked Doc,</i>	<i>"What is this strange rock</i>
	<i>you've given me?"</i>
<i>"That's not rock. That's ore.</i>	<i>Mined it the day before</i>
	<i>from that rich seam</i>
<i>"That's near Zaloongah.</i>	<i>We call it Goongah,</i>
	<i>you call it Gold.</i>
<i>"Your wedding present—</i>	<i>Seven different</i>
	<i>coloured goongold!"</i>
<i>As we waited we talked,</i>	<i>Some went out and walked</i>
	<i>just to keep warm.</i>
<i>Then they had to go</i>	<i>And the rest you know,</i>
	<i>Pisit's told you.</i>
<i>I said, "Your story</i>	<i>is tall</i>
<i>Isn't it? but you tell</i>	<i>it well.</i>
<i>It's a strange tale</i>	<i>isn't it?</i>
<i>Isn't it er... what shall</i>	<i>I say—curious?"</i>

"What! You don't believe me?

She went out, came back

And took out, one by one

"You can have a piece,"

"Who gave you this lump?"

"You're so disbelieving,

Then they said Good Day,

I wanted to shout, Shout!

Alien dwarfs indeed!

Have I read too much

Grimm's fairy stories?

Arthur Clarke, Heinlein,

Or Robert Sheckley's?

Yet—there on my table

Gold that's called Goongah!

Large as a man's fist!

*Why, I'll let you see
Absolute Proof!"*

*With a small sack
that seemed heavy;*

*Seven lumps, all un-
canny colours.*

*She said, "here, keep this
lovely purple."*

*"I 'spect it was Grump,"
she said and laughed.*

*And we're so forgiving—
it serves you right!"*

*Drove off on their way
to their new life.*

*What is all this about?
Am I crazy?*

*Unlimited speed!
Saucers—flying!*

*Of stuff with that touch
of fantasy?*

*Or Ray Bradbury's?
Modesty Blaise?*

*Asimov, three scien-
tist-fictioneers?*

*Even Walt Disney's?
Am I Crazy?*

*Is that strange metal
that Archarn left.*

*Mined off Zaloongah
from a rainbow!*

*Mauve as amethyst!
AM I CRAZY ?*

VIII. IDYLLS AND FANTASIES OF MY VILLAGE

1. NORTHERN VILLAGE IDYLL

<i>Now, in my old age</i>	<i>I live in a village</i>
<i>Where I have quiet, peace,</i>	<i>in Northern Siam,</i>
<i>Sing Ierd-ord, Ord-ierd,</i>	<i>And the bamboo trees</i>
<i>Who give early warning</i>	<i>onomatoply</i>
<i>In front runs a road,</i>	<i>Mixed with sounds of weird</i>
<i>It's only a track</i>	<i>birds under bush,</i>
<i>The surface is bumpy,</i>	<i>Every morning</i>
<i>In the same village,</i>	<i>that day has dawned.</i>
<i>Once lived in harmony,</i>	<i>Bullocks with their load</i>
<i>He worked in the fields,</i>	<i>prodding along.</i>
<i>While she is a warm-</i>	<i>Really, at the back</i>
<i>About ten miles away.</i>	<i>of the main road.</i>
<i>A little Hando Pup,</i>	<i>Jumpy and humpy</i>
	<i>in certain parts.</i>
	<i>In a small cottage</i>
	<i>a man and wife</i>
	<i>They are young, happy,</i>
	<i>loved one another.</i>
	<i>Where the good soil yields</i>
	<i>an abundance;</i>
	<i>hearted school marm</i>
	<i>who teaches in town</i>
	<i>She goes every day</i>
	<i>on her motor bike,</i>
	<i>Imported from Jup-</i>
	<i>an and handy.</i>

*A young man lives also
 In a small office
 She gave him a ride
 One hand on her waist,
 Going over bumps
 When the road's smooth again,
 With a smile on her face,
 Like this all the way
 "Thank you for the ride,"
 "A pleasure indeed,
 "Delighted. When it's dark
 I see them on their way
 Others also see
 This got to the ears
 He said to his spouse
 "I shall indeed grieve
 "And permission I grant,
 "Tables, chairs and clothes,*

*In the village, who'd go
 to work in town
 (Don't know what his job is
 but never mind.)
 Once, with legs astride
 on the pillion,
 Th' other on her breast
 for firmer grip!
 (The motor bike jumps)
 he held tighter;
 He caressed the pain
 where he'd squeezed her.
 She slowed down her pace,
 sometimes faster!
 Into town where they
 separated.
 He said. She replied,
 "Don't mention it.
 If you like my steed
 I'll take you home."
 I'll wait in the park
 and off we go!"
 Like this every day
 and say nothing.
 But they are not like me
 and they gossip.
 Of hubby, who hears--
 and understands.
 "You can leave this house,
 if you want to;
 If you really leave,
 but never mind.
 Anything you want
 you take with you.
 Blankets, I suppose,
 and knives, forks, spoons,*

“Cooking utensils,

“Kind of you, my dear,”

“That I really like,

*Paper and pencils,
anything you like.”*

*She said, “but I fear
there is nothing*

*’Cept this Hando bike--
A Souvenir!”*

2. HALLUCINATION IN A FISHBOWL

<i>All right, then, I will</i>	<i>Write another idyll</i>
<i>But the weather's hot</i>	<i>of my village.</i>
<i>To do a story.</i>	<i>And I have not got</i>
<i>I want a topic</i>	<i>the energy</i>
<i>Something aquatic</i>	<i>I am very sorry</i>
<i>Ever seen a fish fight?</i>	<i>my rhyme's sticky.</i>
<i>Who attend often,</i>	<i>That is exotic</i>
<i>Some arrive flying,</i>	<i>to keep me cool;</i>
<i>Seems they like mayhem,</i>	<i>Out of the attic</i>
<i>The fishes are small,</i>	<i>of my mind's eye.</i>
<i>In all colours they come,</i>	<i>No? Wonderful sight</i>
<i>Put in the same bowl,</i>	<i>fit for the gods</i>
<i>Then they start fighting,</i>	<i>Straight from heaven</i>
<i>And also perhaps,</i>	<i>they come in droves;</i>
<i>Because I cannot see,</i>	<i>Some sky diving</i>
<i>So they must be kept</i>	<i>and some hitch hike.</i>
	<i>Won't talk about them,</i>
	<i>these devatas.</i>
	<i>A few inches, that's all,</i>
	<i>but pugnacious.</i>
	<i>Some blue, some black, some</i>
	<i>with pink noses.</i>
	<i>They glare and they scowl</i>
	<i>at one another;</i>
	<i>I think by biting,</i>
	<i>butting and bumps,</i>
	<i>With flips, or even flaps,</i>
	<i>but I don't know</i>
	<i>They move too quickly</i>
	<i>for my tired eyes.</i>
	<i>Separated, except</i>
	<i>for the fish-fight.</i>

*A young man named Dev-
(Or Dev) lives not far
In his house there are
As far as I can see*

*One is called Blue Fin,
Pink Nose, twin brothers
And they hate one another's
Each is 'You Bassa'*

*To keep them apart
Has a mirror for shav-
One side is concave,
Convex, so Mr. Smith*

*The first side expands,
I think it's called (hope
Th' other gives the dope
Like focussing your sight*

*Dev put this mirror
Pink Nose and Blue Fin
Each thought what he'd seen
Bassa! My God, what*

*To come into my
Blue Fin gave a growl,
With threatening scowl,
That Bassa has dared*

*He swam close to have
What he saw simply took
His breath! (he just shook
"What is this thing? Hey!*

*He scampered away
Underneath a squid,
His life he never did
(Dev changed the name Fin*

*vata
from me.
two fishes,
they're both champions.*

*th' other's
they are,
guts 'n' gills;
to his brother.*

*young Dev
ing with.
th' other's
told me at school.*

*telescope
I'm right!)
contracted,
on distant stars.*

*between
so that
was that
absolute cheek*

*fishbowl!
and glared
he thought
to challenge me!*

*a look,
away
all over)
must be a whale!"*

*and hid
which in
before!
into Blue Funk.)*

<i>Meanwhile Pink Nose made</i>	<i>a pass</i>
<i>At the looking glass--</i>	<i>My God!</i>
<i>What absolute ass.</i>	<i>I'll make</i>
<i>Mincemeat of the sod!</i>	<i>You Bassa babe!</i>
<i>Charged straight at the</i>	<i>stinker</i>
<i>(Not a great thinker</i>	<i>I'm afraid)</i>
<i>Pink nose turned pinker,</i>	<i>in fact</i>
<i>The whole of his head</i>	<i>turned pink, pink, pink.</i>

Envoi

A poem didactic
Is the wrong tactic
for an idyll.
The aim is to show
Something we all know
already, that
Hallucination
Is a frustration
that must be curbed.
See things as things are
Is what the Buddha
has always taught.

3. PROEM FOR TWO CATS.

<i>There is this white space</i>	<i>Staring me in the face</i>
<i>Shall I draw or write</i>	<i>what shall I do?</i>
<i>Shall I just doodle</i>	<i>On this paper white</i>
<i>A cat! Siamese Cat!</i>	<i>with my tired tool?</i>
<i>A subject that's Thai,</i>	<i>Or sketch a poodle,</i>
<i>Into a poem—</i>	<i>perhaps a cat?</i>
<i>Into gear, only</i>	<i>Why, that's exactly what</i>
<i>Anything about cats</i>	<i>I'm looking for—</i>
<i>In a wild rat-race</i>	<i>Easy to come by,</i>
	<i>easy to put</i>
	<i>And here is my proem</i>
	<i>already crashing</i>
	<i>Unfortunately</i>
	<i>I do not know</i>
	<i>'Cept that they chase rats</i>
	<i>and rats chase me</i>
	<i>All over the place--</i>
	<i>from here to here.</i>
<i>Life can be boring,</i>	<i>Sleeping and snoring</i>
<i>I will go and see</i>	<i>in a village;</i>
<i>The village nearby</i>	<i>Archarn, the lady</i>
<i>Or hundred and eight</i>	<i>who teaches in</i>
<i>No teeth, no dentures,</i>	<i>Where I have come to die</i>
<i>So here are two yarns</i>	<i>when I'm ninety</i>
<i>One a Siamese-twins cat,</i>	<i>When it'll be too late</i>
<i>Cat that caterwauls,</i>	<i>to grind my teeth.</i>
	<i>Hah! no more ventures</i>
	<i>into dry dreams.</i>
	<i>Told me by Archarn</i>
	<i>about two cats.</i>
	<i>The other's a cat-hat,</i>
	<i>a catholic</i>
	<i>Scat-singing cat-calls</i>
	<i>when it sings hymns.</i>

IX. SIAMESE CATS AND SIAMESE TWINS

*Have you ever heard
Or so Archarn said
As Mount Olympus
Zeus' warlord is Mars,
Once ev'ry so often
These are called U.F.O.'s
Except for Archarn
She lives in a village
I'm in Don Kaeo; she is
In Chiang Mai province,
I should add that she
She calls her fav'rite
It's a Siamese cat
Walking in the open,
As large as a barn,
Up her Millikin,*

*This story? Absurd?
Why, no, it's true!
But I am afraid
her tales' as tall
Where the Greek god Zeus
has his abode.
Who likes to start wars
both hot and cold.
He would send out seven
flying saucers.
And nobody knows
anything 'bout them,
Of course, and this yarn
she told to me.
Near my own cottage
in Northern Siam.
In Don Kwan, and Don Mee's
also quite near;
Where I have been since
the last decade.
Teaches mythology--
and dotes on cats!
Millikens, a nit-
less sort of name.
And I shall tell what
happened to it.
A U.F.O. from heaven
once landed near her.
It picked up Archarn
who in turn picked
And took them both in
that flying thing.*

The trip was long, long,

It landed on a planet.

Said the alien in charge,

"I'll be back for you.

"As comfortable

The place she landed on,

Or e'en Gannymede,

I know for a fact

A small satellite

The II is added to

All birds have four legs,

Squirrels eat birds' eggs,

Stuck in the same skins

"Hallucination!

She thought, closed her eyes,

Giant, or rather twins,

Shocked, she simply gaped,

But no! by her side

Life, to put it mildly,

*Then something went wrong
with the machine.*

*"I did not plan it
like this at all,"*

*"Have to take this barge
and get it fixed.*

*Meanwhile what you do
is make yourself*

*As you are able
till I return."*

*She thought was Triton,
perhaps Titan,*

*But there is no need
to guess its name.*

*Its location, exact
nomenclature:*

*Of Pluto; if I'm right
it's ASiem II.*

*The name because there you
have things double.*

*Even when they're eggs
before they're hatched.*

*And they have eight legs,
with two bodies*

*À la Siamese twins
on ASiem II.*

*Has no relation
to reality!"*

*Opened them in surprise
and saw a bearded*

*Wearing their own skins
approaching her.*

*"God! I'm being raped
twice at once!"*

*Was another bride
being raped too!*

*Was terrible, wildly
savagely with sex.*

When she had Lister,
 But Sis preferred John,
 The two did not have
 Sometimes John and Lis
 There was no system
 Life became a shamble,
 Puts both in a vex
 If she wanted to smoke,
 They had to do both
 Then a funny thing
 Herself with baby,
 Archarn knew no more.
 "It's so embarrassing;
 I asked, "Had trouble?
 She said, her words slow,
 "Not Biology.
 "The ways of the gods
 "But they're for the best.
 I thought she was fibbing

Whom she liked, Sister
 had sex also;
 Which made her turn on
 and had sex too.
 Much to talk about, save
 problems of sex.
 Visited her and Sis,
 and both insisted
 Of queueing on A Siem--
 last come first served.
 With legs ascrumble--
 a scrum collapsed.
 When the other had sex
 with the wrong guy.
 Sis might want to joke
 with some boy friends.
 Even though they might loathe
 it at the time.
 Happened. Sis had a bing,
 and bang-she found
 Boy, girl, or maybe
 one of each kind.
 She returned before
 the baby came.
 When one's zizzling, zazzling
 goes the other."
 Why, with sex double,
 should've been great fun."
 "I will have you know
 my subject is
 It's Mythology,
 is what I teach.
 May appear at odds
 and ends with ours,
 Those the gods have blest
 have no complaints."
 And said, ad libbing,
 "Interesting!

<i>"Strange story indeed!</i>	<i>And what is the creed</i>
<i>"What! You don't believe me?"</i>	<i>of those, your gods?"</i>
<i>She called, "Milliken!</i>	<i>Why, I'll let you see</i>
<i>Adventures of that cat!</i>	<i>absolute proof!"</i>
<i>On landing, Milly</i>	<i>Come, bring your children</i>
<i>A Tom cat, a brother,</i>	<i>and say Hello!"</i>
<i>When sexing, Milly</i>	<i>So strange on that</i>
<i>That Thomasino,</i>	<i>strange planet!</i>
<i>And when his turn came,</i>	<i>Found she had a dilly</i>
<i>At last the U.F.O.</i>	<i>twin attached--</i>
<i>Singles, as before,</i>	<i>And what a bother</i>
<i>'Cept Milly was in pod!</i>	<i>to both they were!</i>
<i>And when Millikens</i>	<i>Found that that silly</i>
<i>Siamese Cats! Siamese Twins!</i>	<i>brother of hers,</i>
	<i>Became a cat homo--</i>
	<i>most disgusting!</i>
	<i>She was, to her shame,</i>
	<i>a lesbian cat!</i>
	<i>Came back again, and so</i>
	<i>brought them both home--</i>
	<i>So they had no more</i>
	<i>trouble with twins.</i>
	<i>Don't know what cat-sod</i>
	<i>put her that way.</i>
	<i>Produced her kittens,</i>
	<i>a pair of them--</i>
	<i>Eight legs each, two chins--</i>
	<i>What Siamese Talk!</i>

Siamese Double Talk

*Siamese Talk, told by
Of Siamese Cats, garn-
Siamese Twins -- the yarn
This modern Siamese Myth,

The laugh was loud, its
Long, sounding down the co-
Of timeless Pluto
That Siamese mirror*

*Archarn,
ished with
is ended--
now called Thailand.

echo
rridor
to Asiem,
of Double Talk.*

X. DISASTER IN HEAVEN AND HELL

A Surreal Story in Couplet Kloangs.

<i>Just one more, I think,</i>	<i>A story on the brink</i>
<i>It was told to me</i>	<i>of heaven and hell.</i>
<i>But I can't see how,</i>	<i>By Archarn, and she</i>
<i>You see, the story's tall,</i>	<i>swore it was true.</i>
<i>Who had a brother,</i>	<i>At that time or now,</i>
<i>Let us not delay,</i>	<i>she could have known.</i>
<i>Once upon a time</i>	<i>It's about the fall</i>
<i>It won't end sillily</i>	<i>of Rod Biford,</i>
<i>Sir Rod'rick Biford</i>	<i>This was none other</i>
<i>He enjoyed his life,</i>	<i>than Steve Biford.</i>
<i>He enjoyed his beers,</i>	<i>Linger on the way</i>
<i>But a fool was Rod,</i>	<i>and get thirsty.</i>
<i>So he died and went</i>	<i>(The story's in rhyme</i>
<i>As for Steven</i>	<i>but don't worry,</i>
	<i>That they lived happily</i>
	<i>ever after.)</i>
	<i>Was a great milord,</i>
	<i>that is, playboy.</i>
	<i>He enjoyed his wife</i>
	<i>(and others' too.)</i>
	<i>His cheery Cheers-dears</i>
	<i>like you and I.</i>
	<i>Didn't believe in God</i>
	<i>like you or me.</i>
	<i>Straight into torment</i>
	<i>in deepest hell.</i>
	<i>He went to heaven</i>
	<i>as I'll now tell.</i>

*Steve was religious,
 Drinking and dining,
 Smoking and joking,
 I started this rhyme
 In those days olden,
 Five feet four in height,
 Thirty six round the breast,
 Thirty six, all round
 As I was saying
 The gods were many
 Or have even more,
 Steve chose a god
 Todd was a good god
 Steve use to pray,
 On his knees, he'd say
 "With curry and flowers
 Very pleased was Todd.
 And promised Steven
 Also would be granted*

*Sober and serious,
 gave up things like
 Womanising, wining,
 gambling and games,
 Poking and cloaking
 in his glad rags.
 "Once upon a time,"
 which meant long ago,
 The girls were golden
 with real blond hair,
 Smiles pearly white,
 with wasp-like waist,
 (Figure Steve loved best
 was thirty six),
 That most nubile mound
 of blissful bliss.
 Before straying—
 In those old days,
 You could choose any
 little god you liked,
 A dozen or score
 for your worship.
 Who was called St. Todd,
 short for Toddy.
 For Steve Biford,
 they suited them fine.
 And set up each day
 his offering;
 "O, my God Todd, may
 this bowl of rice
 Reach thee, in thy bowers,
 for a good meal."
 He gave a great nod
 of loud thunder
 To take him to heaven
 and have him by;
 Any wish Steve wanted
 after he died.*

In the end when breath

Who said to Steven

“Take a good look around,

“Tell me about it

“I give my folks health

Heaven’s not like earth,

Reaches infinity,

No land or ocean

Horizontally,

I’ve never been there,

Steve went and asked God,

“I use for money,

Good God Todd was shocked,

“No, no, not Money!

“So what you do here,

“But take good care that

Steve was satisfied,

“Ants or mosquitoes

“My hymns de la lune.

Left Steve, and death

found him with Todd,

“Welcome unto heaven,

my kingdom, come,

And when you have found

something you like,

Quietly, don’t shout it

for others to hear.

But material wealth

is all they want.”

I would say its girth

(or pretension)

Far too far to see,

smell, hear, taste, touch.

Exists, just emotion

turned upside down,

Or vertically

or half and half.

So let’s return where

I left the story.

“O, my Lórd, my Todd,

please tell me what

Buy milk and honey

when I’m thirsty.”

As though he’d been socked

right on the jaw.

Most unheavenly,

that filthy lucre.

When you want a beer,

is write a cheque,

Your cheque stays flat

and does not bounce.”

Said, “Where I reside

there are no fleas,

To bite my darn nose

when I’m singing

Puts me out of tune

like scat singing.

<i>"that caterwauling!</i>	<i>Calling that singing!</i>
<i>Todd couldn't take any more.</i>	<i>Why, bless my soul!"</i>
	<i>He found Steve a bore</i>
	<i>left him unblest.</i>
<i>For clothes Steve wore shrouds;</i>	<i>He sat on white clouds</i>
	<i>singing his hymns.</i>
<i>Also he had wings,</i>	<i>A halo and things</i>
	<i>stuck on him.</i>
<i>These soon got Steve's goat,</i>	<i>He never learnt to float</i>
	<i>or fly with them</i>
<i>Like fairies and devils</i>	<i>Of far lower levels</i>
	<i>than the ninth grade.</i>
<i>So Steve went to God,</i>	<i>Said, "O, my Lord Todd,</i>
	<i>please take these off.</i>
<i>"Can't stand them any more,</i>	<i>They give me a sore</i>
	<i>on my backside."</i>
<i>God Todd said, "No, no,</i>	<i>I cannot do so,</i>
	<i>you'd be naked.</i>
<i>"Without wings in this place,</i>	<i>You'd be a disgrace</i>
	<i>to my eminence.</i>
<i>"But what I can do</i>	<i>Is change your haloo</i>
	<i>to something else.</i>
<i>"What would you like instead</i>	<i>To have on your head?</i>
	<i>Something furry?"</i>
<i>"I couldn't care what!</i>	<i>Turn it to a cat</i>
	<i>for all I care!"</i>
<i>Steve soon found that</i>	<i>On his head was a cat,</i>
	<i>soft and furry.</i>
<i>And do you know what?</i>	<i>When Steve sang his hat</i>
	<i>sang "Mieao, mieao, mieao!"</i>
<i>So Steve went again</i>	<i>To Todd to complain,</i>
	<i>"I want this off."</i>
<i>"Sorry, I can't change that.</i>	<i>You asked for a cat</i>
	<i>and you got one.</i>
<i>"That's the wish you wanted,</i>	<i>A wish once granted</i>
	<i>cannot be changed."</i>
<i>Annoyed, Steve said, "Then</i>	<i>I don't want heaven.</i>
	<i>I prefer hell."</i>

<p><i>Lord Todd said, "Now, now,</i> <i>"You are talking about.</i> <i>"That we have here in</i> <i>"And massage parlours,</i> <i>"Liquor of the best brands</i> <i>"Angels on the make,</i> <i>"Why, in my ' City</i> <i>"I don't care," said Steve,</i> <i>"Don't have to wear wings,</i> <i>"I don't have to tell</i> <i>"Roderick is there.</i> <i>God was vexed and said,</i> <i>And at once the scene</i> <i>Bottles ranged in rows,</i> <i>Whiskies and brandies,</i> <i>Steve stared in surprise</i> <i>Must be doing well!</i> <i>But God won't have it,</i> <i>"They are there to torment,</i></p>	<p><i>Don't create a row,</i> <i>you don't know what</i> <i>Hell is Hell; without</i> <i>facilities</i> <i>Heaven; heroin</i> <i>sold openly</i> <i>Night Clubs, Discos, Bars,</i> <i>rows of bottles,</i> <i>From far and near lands,</i> <i>just like Bangkok;</i> <i>And I only take</i> <i>small percentage.</i> <i>Of Angels,' sex is free--</i> <i>not taxed at all!"</i> <i>"All I want is leave</i> <i>and go where I</i> <i>Or a hat that sings</i> <i>Mieao! out of tune."</i> <i>You again that hell</i> <i>is simply Hell."</i> <i>I want to go where</i> <i>my brother is."</i> <i>"I'll show you instead!"</i> <i>He snapped fingers,</i> <i>Changed on the screen</i> <i>to that of hell.</i> <i>Like a bar that shows</i> <i>its merchandise;</i> <i>Cocktails and shandies</i> <i>ready to mix.</i> <i>At this merchandise</i> <i>and thought that Rod</i> <i>And hell is not Hell!</i> <i>God told a lie!</i> <i>"Those bottles have no slit</i> <i>and can't be poured.</i> <i>Make drunkards repent</i> <i>and say their prayers."</i></p>
--	---

*The scene changed again,
 On it was a wight,
 Thirty six in the arts,
 No sight in heaven
 Sexy, rhythmical,
 Tentacles sensuous,
 Flesh smooth and firm,
 Nor like a reptile,
 With magnificent
 In highest heaven.
 Then she moved her arms,
 Or a hula dancer
 Configuration,
 Of bubbly tinting,
 She then turned her head,
 Steve got up to leave,
 "I told you hell's Hell,
 "And I like to invent
 "That thing is for show,
 So Rod and Stevie
 To a bedroom, plain
 with just one couch.
 Five feet four in height,
 with wasp-like waist,
 Thirty six nether parts,
 wearing moonbeams.
 Ever did glisten
 with such glitter;
 Movements mythical
 like Medusa's,
 Like an octopus
 (huge jellyfish;)
 But not like a worm
 wriggling spineless,
 Say a crocodile,
 but mammalian,
 Mamilla, prurient,
 fit for the gods
 As for poor Steven
 he simply blinked.
 Undulating palms
 blessed by a breeze,
 Vibrating, by chance her
 position changed
 Heaving inflation,
 luminesced twins
 Amorous, hinting
 of a hungry void.
 Limpid eyes looked straight
 at Steve. And winked.
 Todd called, "Steve, Steve,
 don't be a fool!
 Where the wicked dwell
 in agony;
 New ways of torment,
 so can't you see?
 Like bottles in a row--
 She's got no hole!"
 Lived unhappily
 for ever. Amen.*

XI. KLOANGS AND LIMERICKS

1. THE KLOANG AND THE LIMERICK

(Couplet Kloangs, Limericks and Quatrains)

<i>Verses can get sick--</i>	<i>The Kloang and Lim'rick,</i>
<i>Once bedded together</i>	<i>strange bed fellows,</i>
<i>Yet they are by stress</i>	<i>In the hot weather,</i>
<i>End rhymes, it would seem,</i>	<i>and both got ill.</i>
<i>Would make them the same--</i>	<i>Alike, and I guess,</i>
<i>Same number, more or less,</i>	<i>by just changing</i>
<i>The first line's sim'lar,</i>	<i>To the Thai rhyme scheme</i>
	<i>of middle rhymes</i>
	<i>A nice little game</i>
	<i>that poets can play:</i>
	<i>Of words, same stress,</i>
	<i>two sets of rhymes.</i>
	<i>But the others are</i>
	<i>rhymed diff'rently.</i>

Hickery Dickery Dock
The mouse ran up the clock
The clock struck one
The mouse ran down
Hickery Dickery Dock.

<i>Hickery Dicke-</i>	<i>ry Dock</i>
<i>The mouse up the clock</i>	<i>did run</i>
<i>It ran down in shock</i>	<i>Hickery!</i>
<i>When the clock struck one</i>	<i>Dickery Dock!</i>

*Dickery Dock Hickery
The mouse went out to sea
It sailed in a boat
With a nanny goat
Hickery Hock Dickery.*

<i>Dickery Dock Hic-</i>	<i>kery</i>
<i>The mouse went to sea</i>	<i>with goat</i>
<i>A wave struck nanny,</i>	<i>and she</i>
<i>Was sick in the boat</i>	<i>Sickery goat!</i>

* * *

“I went to school in a bus” is not poetry--text book.

*I went to school in a bus
Never have I seen such fuss
Dear old ladies faint
Gentlemen say “’T ain’t!”
When on boarded a hippopotamus.*

<i>I went to school in</i>	<i>a bus</i>
<i>Then an octopus</i>	<i>got on.</i>
<i>Never seen such fuss</i>	<i>before</i>
<i>He got all trod on!</i>	<i>Poor octopus!</i>
<i>I got off that om-</i>	<i>nibus</i>
<i>I mounted Pegasus</i>	<i>for school</i>
<i>I found Parnassus</i>	<i>was closed</i>
<i>I forgot--what a fool!</i>	<i>It was Sunday!</i>
<i>So again remounting</i>	<i>Pegasus</i>
<i>I left Parnassus</i>	<i>behind.</i>
<i>I got on a bus</i>	<i>for home</i>
<i>And what do I find?</i>	<i>Same octopus!</i>

Triple Limerick

*I went to school in a bus,
 Mother went on Pegasus.
 An octopus got on
 And was trodden on
 By the people of Parnassus.
 Mother went home on Pegasus
 When school closed on Parnassus.
 A textbook tells me
 It is not poetry
 To say I went to school in a bus.
 But my school is on Parnassus
 And I do go there in a bus.
 It would be a lie
 If I said that I
 Went to school on Pegasus.*

* * *

*Not used for epic,
 While the Kloang can soar
 Sweet nothings in the ear,
 "Let us have sex. Let's
 "There are, I suppose,
 "Whether fluently,
 "And toes doesn't matter.*

*The lame Limerick
 just walks the earth,
 To heaven, and roar
 or just whispers
 "O, my love, my dear,"
 said the Quatrain,
 Produce some Couplets
 to give to poets.
 Poets who compose
 with jingling rhymes,
 Or competently,
 counting fingers
 Let their rhymes chatter,
 make the gods smile."*

*The Lim'rick asked the Kloang, "Why
Blame me? If poets are shy
And don't use the Lim'rick
Doesn't mean I am sick
Or even that I cannot fly.*

*"They prefer Chaucerian Couplets,
Or Shakespearean Sonnets,
Spenserian Stanzas,
Ottava Rimas,
But not Queery Leary Lim'lets.*

*"Not Chaucer, Spenser, Shakespeare
Are my ancestors; but Edward Lear.
He was not Miltonic,
Nor Milord Byronic,
But true blue, hoary Victoria.*

*"Perhaps not for the Epic,
But can be used for Lyric,
Ballads, Pastorals,
Metaphysicals,
Odes, Idylls and Didactic.*

*"Science has turned a new page;
We are now in the Space Age,
To the Moon and Mars,
To far distant stars,
I can fly, and roar and rage.*

*"But poets won't let me fly
(Enough to make you cry,
Make your nose runny)
They think I'm just funny,
That's all," said the Lim, with a sigh.*

*The Kloang said, "Good Luck, my friend,
 "To you! May you wend your ways
 "To worlds without end and there
 "Shine forth radiant rays like God's--or mine."*

*The Kloangs and the Limericks
 Can metamorphose and mix,
 Just by line changing,
 Rhymes rearranging,
 You perhaps have a poem that clicks.*

*Third and fourth short lines with 'em
 Interchange rhythm: Couplet--
 First, second, fifth, im- pose on
 The Quatrain and get your vice versa.*

(Couplets and Limerettes)

*The Couplet has a tail
 You can see without fail--
 it's versa vice.*

*For the Limerette
 Change the rhymes of a Couplet;
 It is, to define,
 Just one short and one long line
 Of the two forms; useful
 Connecting device, and Museful.*

*With a tail or not,
 Mixed, and a form you've got
 is Anglo-Thai.*

2. PARODIES AND BURLESQUE

*There was an old lady of Leeds
Who spent all her time on good deeds;
She worked for the poor
Till her fingers were sore,
This pious old lady of Leeds.*

Nursery Rhyme.

<i>There was an old lady</i>	<i>of Leeds,</i>
<i>All her time on good deeds</i>	<i>she spent;</i>
<i>For the poor, their needs,</i>	<i>she worked</i>
<i>Till her fingers went,</i>	<i>were sore on her.</i>

* * *

*There was a young man of Oporta,
Who got shorter and shorter.
The reason he said
Was the hod on his head,
Which was filled with the heaviest mortar.*

Lewis Carroll.

<i>A young man of O-</i>	<i>porta</i>
<i>Got shorter and shorter.</i>	<i>He said,</i>
<i>"This heavy mortar</i>	<i>I've put</i>
<i>In a hod on my head</i>	<i>makes me grow down.</i>

* * *

*There was an old man of the Cape
Who made himself garments of crepe.
When asked, "Do they tear."
He replied, "Here and there;
But they're perfectly splendid for shape."*

Robert Louis Stevenson.

*There was an old man of the Cape
Some garments of crepe he made
That were splendid for shape. When asked,
"Do they tear?" He said, "Yes, here and there."*

* * *

*There once was a boy in Quebec,
Who was buried in snow to his neck.
When asked, "Are you friz?"
He replied, "Yes, I is,
But we don't all this cold in Quebec."*

Rudyard Kipling.

*There once was a boy in Quebec,
Snow up to his neck; "You friz?"
He was asked. "Yes, heck!" he said,
"But we don't call this cold in Quebec."*

* * *

*There was a young belle of old Natchez
Whose garments were always in patchez.
When comment arose
On the state of her clothes,
She drawled, "When Ah itchez, Ah scratchez."*

Ogden Nash.

*There was a belle of old Natchez,
Her garments in patchez, drawled, "When
Ah itchez, Ah scratchez." So ends
This rhyme that Ogden Nashez dashez off.*

* * *

*I wish that my room had a floor;
I don't care so much for a door;
But this walking around
Without touching the ground
Is getting to be quite a bore.*

Gelett Burgess.

<i>I wish my room had</i>	<i>a floor;</i>
<i>I don't care for a door</i>	<i>so much.</i>
<i>It is quite a bore</i>	<i>walking</i>
<i>Around without touch-</i>	<i>ing any ground.</i>

* * *

*The Reverend Henry Ward Beecher
Called a hen a most elegant creature.
The hen, pleased with that,
Laid an egg in his hat--
And thus did the hen reward Beecher.*

Oliver Wendell Holmes.

<i>(1) The Reverend Henry Ward Said, "Elegant creature, Pleased with the preacher, Clucked, and an egg then</i>	<i>Beecher this hen." the hen laid in his hat.</i>
---	--

<i>(2) The Reverend Henry Ward Said, "Elegant creature!" An egg in the preacher's And thus did the hen</i>	<i>Beecher The hen hat laid, reward Beecher.</i>
--	--

Double Limerick

*There was an old man who thought
That ev'ry morning he ought
To shave himself clean.
Hardly had a bean
But went and a violin bought.*

*Brought it back and thought he ought
To have borrowed it, not bought't.
He started to fiddle
Hi Diddle Diddle
And Moo! Moo! Moo! sang the cows, we thought.*

3. LEAR AND THE DOUBLE LIMERICK

<i>More examples of Verse, which in one sense Step int' an incense- Where the moon leans through</i>	<i>Nonsense means to filled vale the morning's mist.</i>
<i>Where the sun and stars and There supersonics Double Limericks Illuminating Lear's</i>	<i>moon mix, appear; flash by, sublime Nonsense.</i>

*There was an old person of Ware
Who rode on the back of a bear;
When they said, "Does it trot?"
He said, "Certainly not
It's a Moppsikon Floppsikon bear."*

Edward Lear.

Kloang

<i>I have always wanted That old person Lear On what's bear, what's beer, And what's apple sauce.</i>	<i>to hear discourse what's queer I never was clear.</i>
---	--

*There was an old person of Wick
Who said, "Tick-a-tick, Tick-a-tick
Chickabee, Chickabaw,"
And he said nothing more,
This laconic old person of Wick.*

Edward Lear.

Double Limerick

*Two old persons of Wick and Ware
 Went to a Beauty Contest Fair.
 Asked the person of Wick,
 "Are you feeling sick?"
 "Yes. What are they doing up there?"
 "We have come to the wrong Fair.
 They are not selling pigs up there.
 Let us be going
 Back to our sowing,
 You to Wick and myself to Ware."*

* * *

*There was an old man with a beard
 Who said, "It is just as I feared.
 Two owls and a hen,
 Four larks and a wren,
 Have all built their nests in my beard."*

Edward Lear.

Kloang

<i>There was an old man with</i>	<i>a beard</i>
<i>Who said, "It is weird.</i>	<i>A hen,</i>
<i>Two owls, as I feared,</i>	<i>four larks</i>
<i>In my beard, with a wren,</i>	<i>have built their nests.</i>

*There was an old man with a beard
 Who sat on a horse when he reared;
 But they said, "Never mind!
 You will fall off behind,
 You propitious old man with a beard.*

Edward Lear.

Double Limerick

*There was an old man with a beard
 Who said, "It is just as I feared,
 Two owls and a hen,
 Four larks and a wren,
 Built their nests, laid their eggs, reared
 Their chicks, and, just as I feared,
 I sat on a horse and he reared.
 I fell on my behind
 And what do I find?
 ALL the eggs broke in my beard.*

* * *

*There was a young lady in blue
 Who said, "Is it you? Is it you?"
 When they said, "Yes, it is,"
 She replied only "Whizz!"
 That ungracious young lady in blue.*

Edward Lear.

*There was a Young Lady in White,
 Who looked out at the depths of the Night;
 But the birds of the air,
 Filled her heart with despair,
 And oppressed that Young Lady in White.*

Edward Lear.

*There was a young lady in pink
 Who was cleaning up her sink.
 A rat scampered by,
 She asked, "Mar Tammai?"
 That discreet young lady in pink.*

Double Limerick

*There were three young ladies, I think
In blue, in white and in pink.*

*“Is it you? Is it you?”
Asked the lady in blue,
As she was cleaning up her sink.*

*“Yes, it is!” the ladies in white and pink
Replied, and, letting their voices sink,
Added, “She’s not all there!
Let us not despair--”
And then away they flew, I think.*

* * *

Three Limericks

*There was an old man in a tree,
Who was horribly bored by a bee.
When they said, “Does it buzz?”
He replied, “Yes, it does!
It’s a regular brute of a bee.”*

Edward Lear.

*There was an old man of St. Bees,
Who was stung in the arm by a Wasp.
When asked, “Does it hurt?”
He replied, “No, it doesn’t;
I’m so glad it wasn’t a Hornet.”*

W.S. Gilbert.

*There was an old man gave a gasp,
When stung by a Bee and a Wasp.
The swellings were bad,
He said, “I’m so glad
It wasn’t a Hornet and an Asp.”*

Kloang

<i>There was an old man in</i>	<i>a tree</i>
<i>Who was bored by a Bee</i>	<i>and Wasp.</i>
<i>"I'm so glad," said he,</i>	<i>"it wasn't</i>
<i>A Hornet and Asp,</i>	<i>Gilbert and Lear."</i>

Double Limerick

*There was an old man in a tree
 Who was stung, first, by a bee,
 Then it was a wasp,
 A hornet and asp;
 And people crowded round to see.
 The swellings were as bad as they could be;
 So he dipped himself in the sea.
 Didn't know how to swim;
 A swordfish stung him,
 And now he's back in his old tree.*

Limericks and Kloangs

*There was an old man of the coast,
 Who placidly sat on a post;
 But when it was cold
 He relinquished his hold
 And called for some hot buttered toast.*

Edward Lear.

<i>There was an old man of</i>	<i>the coast,</i>
<i>Who sat on a post.</i>	<i>When cold,</i>
<i>"Some hot buttered toast!"</i>	<i>he called,</i>
<i>Relinquished his hold</i>	<i>and ate his toast.</i>

*There was an old man who supposed
That the street door was partially closed;
But some very large rats
Ate his coats and hats,
While that futile old gentleman dozed.*

Edward Lear.

<i>There was an old man who That the street door was closed. While the old man dozed, Ate the coats and hats</i>	<i>supposed Some rats, came in, of that gen'man.</i>
--	--

4. ABOUT POETS AND PAINTERS

(Limericks and Quatrains)

*There's an Irishman, Arthur O'Shaughnessy--
On the chess board of poets a pawn is he:*

*Though a bishop or king
Would be rather the thing
To the fancy of Arthur O'Shaughnessy.*

*There was a poor chap called Rossetti;
As a painter many kicks met he--*

*With more as a man--
But sometimes he ran,
And that saved the rear of Rossetti.*

Dante Gabriel Rossetti.

<i>These two poets you</i>	<i>can see,</i>
<i>Arthur O'Shaughnessy,</i>	<i>Dante</i>
<i>Gabriel Rossetti,</i>	<i>won't fit</i>
<i>My Kloang. I'm anti</i>	<i>social myself.</i>

* * *

*There was a young poet of Trinity
Who, though he could trill like a linnnet, he*

*Could never complete
Any poem with feet
Saying, "Idiots,*

*Can't you see
that what I'm writing*

*happens
to be
Free
Verse?*

Anonymous.

*A young poet of
Who could trill like a
Swore, "Idiots, can't
"Free Kloang?" (Gratuitous*

*Trinity
linnet he
you see
rhymes curtesy*

M.C.C.)

* * *

*There was a young bard of Japan
Whose limericks never scan
When they said it was so,
He replied: "Yes, I know,
But I make a rule of trying
to get as many words into the
last line as I possibly can.*

Anonymous.

*There was a bard of
Whose verse never scan.
"I know, my good man,"
"But I make a rule--So!*

*Japan
"I know,
he says
of always trying*

*to get just as many words into the
last line as I possibly can."*

* * *

*There was a young poet of Thisis,
Who took twilight walks with the Muses.
But these nymphs of the air
Are not quite what they were,
And the practice has lead to abuses.*

*You have written a sonnet, said Chloe,
On my bosom so rounded and snowy.*

*You have sent me some verse on
Each part of my person.*

That's lovely. Now do something, bo-y!

Anonymous.

*A young poet of
Walked with the Muses,
Soon found better uses
Bosom so snowy.*

*A limerick on
On th' other a sonnet.
What would you like on it?
On your front or behind?*

*Thusis
and he
for Chloe's
He quickly wrote*

*one tit;
Now, mind,
I mean,
Chloe said, "Yoo Hoo!"*

* * *

*There was a poor poet of Siam
Who though poorer than Uncle Sam
Thought it was funny
To give away money
"To show what a silly ass I am."*

*Said a poor poet of
"An ass, an ass, I am--
"I, like Unky Sam,
He thought it funny,*

*Siam
money
give away!"
then starved to death.*

* * *

*There was a painter named Van Cogh,
Who had his portrait hung in Bangkok,
Or was it Picasso?
I really don't know
The expression was so hangdog.*

*A painter by name
His portrait in Bangkok
It looked so hangdog
It was Picasso!*

*Van Cogh
did show
I thought
Ah! Well, well, well.*

* * *

*There was a songster of PataPong
 (A Bangkok street where people throng)
 If discos discourage you,
 She will massage you
 With her gift of the gods for a song.*

*Come, come, my dear Muse, Surely there is no excuse
 For rhymes bad as these! Try again, Musey, if you please*

*There was a Northern belle of Chiang Mai
 Who was bedded by a Southern Thai.
 An artist he was,
 Dipped his brush in apple sauce
 And painted a rose on her butterfly.*

*Said the Chiang Mai belle, "Indeed
 What I sorely need are some
 Good books I can read while I
 Wait for you to come, you flutterby."*

*"Poets and painters I welcome
 And," added the Northern belle, "some
 Good books I can read
 Are what I sorely need
 Till they all to the wall come."*

*I bought her a book of travel
 Though she preferred something naval.*

*"Your thing goes beep-beep .
 And I fall asleep,"
 She said, "with it on my navel."*

* * *

*Thai names are tricky,
Sick verses on Siam,
Adding one on Thailand*

*Difficult for rhyming slickly.
Bangkok and Chiang Mai; I am
(But not any on an island.)*

*All the races in Thailand—
Hill tribes who live on high land,
Siamese on low land,
Sea gipsies on no land—
They all say this is My Land.*

*All the races in
Say this is My Land—
Hill tribes on high land,
Who are no-landers—*

*Thai races outside
In Vietnam, Laos and
Are all of good stand-
And they say they are*

*Thailand
low landers,
sea folks
Are they all Thai?*

*Thailand,
China
ing Thai,
all sorts of Thai.*

A Fantasy in Limerettes and Limericks

PROEM

*Sick indeed this verse,
 Seems to be getting worse and worse;
 Sick becomes sicker,
 Limerick limericker---*
*Sights in Bangkok are
 The Grand Palace, Thieves' Bazaar,
 The Marble Temple, or Wat
 Benchamabopit, and that
 Will do to end this rhyme,
 A few Limericks on Time
 Travel, a sequence
 Of verses, with or without sense
 Doesn't really matter;
 Let the rhymes fly high, clatter
 Over the whole page,
 A fantasy of this Space Age,
 A tale of timeless scope,
 A story of Eve Appledope.*

*Fifty Limericks and more
 For the Proem (in Limerettes)
 One hundred in all,
 Mixed rhythms of the Glon
 Slick becomes slicker,
 Stronger and stronger,
 To far distant stars,
 Nothing erotic,
 Not Star Wars or Treks,*

*For the Poem; over two score
 And Envoi (in Kloang Couplets:)
 Verses very marginal;
 And the Kloang, rhymes rattling on and on,
 Limerick limericker;
 Eve's travels longer and longer
 With galactic loves and wars;
 But a poem exotic;
 But a story of Ah! Star Sex!*

XII. THE TRAVELS OF EVE APPLEDOPE

*Once in the Garden of Eden,
Eve was tempted by a heathen
Snake. "Here, try this
Psychediac. Smoothest piece
Of translucence you've ever eaten!*

*"You will see things as things seem
On a far futuristic beam.
There! Wasn't that nice?
Now, chase it down with ice
And off you go on your own steam."*

*Eve saw dinosaurs, giant tortoises;
In the seas were dolphins, porpoises;
Winged pterodactyls
Flying over hills,
Long necks cackling throat-sore noises.*

*She saw some twins as yet unborn,
Who were still without any horn.
They heard her or something,
"Look out! Father's coming,"
Said one to his brother unicorn.*

*Through ages prehistoric,
Through pages allegoric,
Through times pliocene,
Through climes Mytelene,
Eve moved, primordial and doric.*

*In the time of Sappho on Lesbos Isle,
She went there and stayed a while;
Then to Africa
Where she dined on grandma,
Roasted in traditional style.*

*After that farther and farther east,
Millions and millions of years at least.
Of time she lost track,
I'd better go back,
Thought Eve, and get my Maker appeast.*

*But she didn't know how to backtrack,
So she couldn't find her way back.
Sunset to sunrise,
In anti-clockwise
Orbit she went, her ways wicky wack.*

*In this way I found her one day,
Walking down a Bangkok highway.
Her dress very brief,
She wore a fig leaf
And told me she wanted to pray.*

*I took her to the Marble Temple.
"Is this where God lives? I tremble
In His presence!" "No,"
I told her. "Let's go
In where the monks assemble."*

*The monks of Wat Benchamabopit
Chanted in Pali and not Sanskrit.
Eve asked, "Are you praying?"
They replied by saying,
"How the hell should we know, dammit!"*

(Wat Benchamabopit in Bangkok is also called The Marble Temple.)

*When the monks saw Eve they stopped short
 Their chanting in Pali and thought,
 'Tis beyond belief
 That a dress so brief
 Should cover more sins than it ought.*

*Eve sat down and drew up her knees
 To her chin. Then she said, "Please
 Go on and don't mind me."
 Some could, some couldn't see,
 And some chanted in Cantonese.*

*There was an old monk in the jungle,
 Who said Bangkok bumbuggabigbungle.
 Sanskrit or Pali
 Wasn't clear to me,
 It sounded like fumfuggerfiggyfungle.*

*Eve then went to a planet called Schlodd,
 And was asked a question most odd.
 "What are you doing here
 On this, my new Sphere
 That I haven't even created?" asked God.*

*"O, God, thank God, sure glad am
 I to see you again. That gaddam
 Snake got me lit,
 Put me int' orbit,
 Now please get me back to Adam."*

*God thought of the best way to suit her
 Request. This problem's a snooter.
 Far too difficult,
 I'd better consult
 That satanical Computer.*

"Not a hope," the Computer said,
 "You'd better go straight ahead,
 Create this, your new Sphere
 And get her to live here."
 So God created Schlodd for her instead.

"Hey! What's all this?" shouted Eve,
 "I'd like to ask, by your leave,
 How do I reproduce?
 And what do I use
 Instead of Adam's?"
 In a peeve
 God asked the Computer again.
 "Well, what I'd like to explain,"
 Laughed the Computer,
 "This planet's neuter!
 Ho! Ho! Ho!"
 God said Amen.

Eve asked God, "What is this Creation
 Of yours? What kind of situation
 Have you put me in?
 I can't even sin
 Except by disturbance."

"Don't you worry your little head,
 I'll give you something else instead.
 How about birds and bees?
 Or fishes in the seas?
 They should be nice to take to bed."

"What do you mean---Birds and Bees!
 Why, I'd get stung above my knees.
 You'll be telling me nex'
 That I don't need sex
 And storks will bring me babies!

*“Birds, Hah! Bees, Bah! if you please!
And now fishes in the seas!
Why, those darned fishes,
They swim in swishes
And I’ll get tickled till I sneeze.”*

*“No problem, my dear, none at all.
I’ll see that you can walk, crawl
Or swim. And even fly
High, high over the sky—
But you must take care not to fall.”*

*“With all those things stuck on me
What a lovely Sex Symbol I’ll be!
With legs, arms and wings,
A tail or two and things—
I’ll be a B.E.M. —that I can see.”*

*“No, not a Monster, or Bug-eyed.
Your arms and legs you can hide
By folding them when
Flying; walking, you then
Fold your wings instead.
And from outside
No one can tell the difference
Between you now; in essence
You can walk, fly or swim
With just one hidden limb
Or two...”
God pondered in silence:*

*Difficulties will arise
Unless she can change her size.
She must range from small
As a pin, to tall
As the clouds in summer skies.*

*I want to create a better earth
Than the old one that I gave birth—
With nubile young ladies
(And they can have babies,
Giggled God in His merry mirth)*

*At first Eve was rather annoyed.
There was no way to avoid
Having sex with bees,
Or, say, chimpanzees;
But the babies were humanoid.*

*And strange to relate, no men
Of the species were human.
They were birds or bees,
Fishes, chimpanzees—
It was a world of women;*

*Of Sex Symbols who do not change
Appearance; a species strange
Indeed; a race, in truth,
Of perpetual youth
That God was able to arrange.*

*But bees also bred with bees,
And chimps had sex with chimpanzees.
The babies were normal,
The process formal
Of the air, on land and in th' seas.*

*God was far-sighted and He said,
Such women who with humans wed,
The use of that limb
That lets them fly, swim,
They shall lose;
and must walk like men instead.*

*And they shall lose also those
Powers to metamorphose;
From tall as the skies
To small as the size
Of a pin for pinning up clothes.*

*In the far future will take place
The first example of this case.
She cannot live here
But must leave the sphere,
Or she'll contaminate the race.*

*In due course I'll tell the story
(If I have the energy
That is) a tale in rhyme,
Out of space and time
When gods appear occasionally.*

*But to continue with God
And what He accomplished on Schlodd.
After that I'll leave
This saga of Eve,
And take a siesta or nod.*

*So began to develop
A female race from Eve Appledope
That could walk, swim and fly.
God gave a deep sigh,
This is a better world—I hope.*

*A world with justice and pity,
A world where truth means chastity,
A world without fear
Where smiles are clear,
A world of femininity,*

*A world of love and harmony,
A world with food aplenty;
But I rather fear
That this Utopia
Is a dream and not reality.*

*Still, I must give Eve a trial
To run her world in female style.
She can't make such mess
As the men's excess
When my fair, green fields they defile.*

*They spoil my ecology
With their inhumanity.
There is no solution
To their pollution,
And the smell rises up unto Me,*

*ME! In My Penthouse Heaven!
Why, it's so bad that even
My arch Arch Angel,
Whose name is Gabriel,
Can't blow his horn at seven*

*O'clock. This he did ev'ry morn
And woke up his flock at dawn
To practise their harp
At seven thirty sharp.
Now they sleep till the day's half gone;*

*And things are getting worse and worse.
I'd better give'm 'nother curse,
'Cept I'd like this time
To do it in rhyme
And can't think of a good curse in verse.*

*Perhaps I'd better ask Michael.
He knows more 'bout this than Gabriel;
He's travelled around and seen
The world; and he's even been
To that Tower of Babel.*

*But I don't know where Michael's gone.
He wasn't here last Sabbath morn,
And left no message,
Or phoned from that massage
Parlour where he gets himself shorn.*

*Michael simply loves to go down
To that wicked Bang-Bang town!
I suppose I'd better
Try and see whether
I can't cast a curse of my own.*

*"O, Ye Sons of Beelzebub—" (No! No!)
"Born of Woman, ye—" (Nein! Not so!)
'Tis better to leave
The whole thing to Eve
And she'll make everything go.*

*But to be safe I suppose
I'd better give her one of those
Computer gimmicks;
Their devilish tricks
Will help her keep clean her nose.*

*Physically almost the same
As the planet from which she came.
The climate sim'lar,
Same flora and fauna,
Different only in the name.*

*So Eve settled down on Schlodd,
And, to the satisfaction of God,
She was a success;
Her Computeress
Kept her on the path she trod.*

ENVOI

<i>The pen that I hold</i>	<i>Falters, and untold</i>	<i>the tale</i>
<i>But let me have a rest</i>	<i>And I'll do the best</i>	<i>I can</i>
<i>Try to continue</i>	<i>With this whole tissue</i>	<i>of lies</i>
<i>This dichotomy</i>	<i>This science fantasy</i>	<i>is just</i>
<i>A bed time story</i>	<i>For my grown-up baby</i>	<i>that's all</i>
<i>She likes something flamey</i>	<i>So please don't blame me</i>	<i>for it</i>
<i>If you don't like it</i>	<i>Why not try a bit</i>	<i>yourself?</i>
<i>A good place to start</i>	<i>Is to take the part</i>	<i>of Earth</i>
<i>Smug, complete with all</i>	<i>Technological</i>	<i>know-how</i>
<i>To Venus and Mars</i>	<i>To giant and baby stars</i>	<i>then on</i>
<i>To the planet Schlodd</i>	<i>Which the good Lord God</i>	<i>created</i>
<i>For Eve Appledope</i>	<i>In some pious hope</i>	<i>of his</i>
<i>God in his glory</i>	<i>A sublime story</i>	<i>that is</i>
<i>Fit for the Church Times</i>	<i>Supersonic rhymes</i>	<i>like these</i>
<i>If you have the time</i>	<i>If you have the rhyme</i>	<i>that is</i>
<i>But if you have not</i>	<i>Cross the tees and dot</i>	<i>the eyes</i>
<i>Fold up the story</i>	<i>No need to worry</i>	<i>and throw</i>
<i>These Limericks away</i>	<i>Don't forget to say</i>	<i>Amen!</i>

For my part I'd like to
Adam Dabbledott,"
(Why, you ask, two tees?
Toottees is a Robott
No body, no brain,
But he is visible
No mouth but has voice;
His is science fiction

Continue Part II
"The Travels of
With his co-pilot
that's called Toottees.
Schlodd has two dees,
they make a pair.)
And he has a lot
of missing parts;
Computed from stain-
less steel vacuum.
To people gullible,
and laughs and sings;
No ears but hears noise;
and he knows all.
With dope and diction
non-scientific.

XIII. ARCHARN AND EVE APPLEDOPE

*Once I was talking
When I look't in the sky
Or fish, or mermaid
It came down to ground
I quickened my pace,
Talking to poor Nit,
Nit's dumb. Nobody's heard
Till suddenly one day
I told my story.
"Come, Nit, come with me.
They came back and said,
"But, no, your eyesight's
"It's Eve Appledope.
Yes, I remember her.*

*To myself, walking
along my way
And there, flying high,
was a wingless bird,
To judge by its head
which was human.
On the little mound
near where I live.
Got to Archarn's place
and found she was
The Village Halfwit
as she is called.
Her speak even one word
since she was born,
She managed to say
two words:--Moo Moo!*
Archarn said, "Don't worry,
we'll handle this.
We will go and see
what it's all about."
"At first I was afraid
you had sunstroke.
Perfectly all right.
That was a girl;
You've met her. She hopes
you remember."
Created quite a stir
when I took her*

* see "The Buffalo God"

To the Marble Temple

Her dress very brief;

Some strings round her hips,

Some simply boggled,

And Eve told this yarn

"I've just come from Schlodd,

"And I'm going back now.

"There's nothing for it,

"I was told by God

"My day starts at night

"In the west the sun rises,

"I came anyway

"And waiting was Adam.

"Went One Two! One Two!

"But I went Two One!

"The gears simply crashed,

"Started with orgasm,

*Where the monks assemble
to chant their mantras.***

*She wore a fig leaf
which was tied with
And when the leaf slips,
the monks stopped short.*

*While others goggled,
giggled and gasped.*

*To Nit and Archarn,
Archarn told me:*

*The planet that God
created for me,*

*We had such a row,
Adam and I.*

*In reverse orbit
that I came here.*

*I would find things odd
if I came back.*

*And ends with first light,
different to here.*

*Moves counter-clockwise,
sets in the east.*

*And arrived today
as you must know.*

*When we met, I had'm;
he joyously*

*The way people do
going clockwise.*

*Three One! ghastly fun,
contrarywise.*

*The atoms were smashed
to smithereens;*

*Backwards till the chasm's
unbridgeable.*

** see "The Travels of Eve Appledope"

"We decided to part

"Adam has just gone,

*With Eve Appledope,
And Nit, this little yarn
To be tall as a barn-
I have always found*

Archarn was furious.

"Tell him what you know,

Nit, instead of Moo Moo!

I said, "Holy Spooof!"

"What, you don't believe me?"

She handed me something

I asked, "What is this?"

"Why, you've seen it before.

*So that we can start
separate lives.*

*And I shall go on
the next typhoon."*

*Archarn
is bound
yard door.
Archarn's tales curious.*

"What do you mean curious?"

*My tale is true.
Nit, and make it so
he'll understand."*

Said, "One Two! One Two!"

*Archarn just smiled.
Do you call that proof?"*

*Archarn unsmiled.
Why, I'll let you see--
absolute proof!"*

*With loose bits of string
attached to it.*

*And what are the pieces
of string used for?"*

*That's the leaf Eve wore
when you met her."*

**INTRODUCING
THE THAI KLOANG**



Chapter 1

INTRODUCING THE THAI KLOANG

Certain Thai characters have for long thought that Thai poetry should be made known to the world. Translations have been tried but without much success. Then I thought of using a Thai form in English, and the late Hon. Amado M. Yuzon, Filipino poet and President of United Poets Laureate International (UPLI), liked the experiment and tried some on his own. The form we have used is a Kloang (the double-vowel pronounced as in Cloak--the examples we used are Quatrains called Kloang Si Suparb or Kloang 4.) As these early efforts look promising, I venture to submit further information on the genre in the hope that other poets will find it attractive and take it up, perhaps in fun at the start, but that in due course it will develop in the idioms of other nations.

The Kloang as we have it today has been written continuously for nearly five centuries, that is, from before Tudor times. This alone would indicate that the genre has some intrinsic qualities of its own that time and tide have been unable to change. But the Kloang forms are not unchangeable. Indeed I myself have made a change in the rhyme scheme of the Triplet Kloang in English to save myself a great deal of frustration. Perhaps others can make minor variations within the format to accomodate their own idiosyncrasies without losing the characteristics of the Kloang. In this way perhaps poets can bring back creative fun again.

All that a poet needs to write a Kloang is its rhyme scheme and a few examples. But the Kloang can be a little tricky, that is to say, you can count one two three four five with your fingers and produce a Kloang that goes Thump thump thump thump thump. But the Kloang can be more sophisticated than that. English poetry is scanned by Stress, which is to say that English poetry is Qualitative. The Kloang mixes Quantity and Stress and can produce variations in rhythm. This is not to say that the Thump thump thump Kloang is bad, but it is more effective when used with its sophisticated brother.

Rhyme Scheme of the Quatrain Kloang

0 0 0 0 0	0 a
0 0 0 0 a	0 b
0 0 0 0 a	0 0
0 0 0 0 b	0 0 0 0.

At the start there were two short parts to this paper, one part comparing Thai poetry with modern English poetry between the two World Wars (1918-39) and the other on the Kloang itself. Then I was told that if I wanted to study modern poetry I should concentrate on G.M. Hopkins, T.S. Eliot and Dylan Thomas, with particular reference to *The Waste Land* because this was the most important landmark in English literature since Lyrical Ballads. I rather suspect that this suggestion was a leg-pull because Hopkins was an Irishman, Eliot an American and Thomas a Welshman. It is like suggesting to a Western scholar who wants to research on modern Thai poetry to concentrate on a northern poet of the Lanna country, a northeastern poet of the Isan Plateau and a southern poet of the Malay Peninsula. Though armed with a good knowledge of the Central Thai language, the scholar would no doubt find the dialects of the poets suggested to be obscure. I had already found that modern English poetry was obscure and the three 'English poets' suggested to me made things more difficult still. I wonder whether they wrote poetry in English or in their own dialects.

The easiest way to deal with these three masters is to print a short, rhymed piece in full, followed by two or three stanzas as well as what the experts have to say. All comments bear on the three poets' obscurity.

G.M. Hopkins : Pied Beauty

*Glory be to God for dappled things--
 For skies as couple-coloured as a brindled cow;
 For rose-moles all in stipple upon trout that swim;
 Fresh-firecoal chestnut-falls; finches' wings;
 Landscapes plotted and pieced--fold, fallow and plough;
 And all trades, their gear and tackle and trim.
 All things counter, original, spare, strange;
 Whatever is fickle, freckles (who knows how?)
 With swift, slow; sweet, sour; adazzle, dim;
 He fathers-forth whose beauty is past change:
 Praise Him.*

Hopkins: Quatrains from two sonnets

*Thou art indeed just, Lord, if I contend
 With thee; but, sir, so what I plead is just.
 Why do sinners' ways prosper? and why must
 Dissappointment all I endeavour end?*

*But ah, but O thou terrible, why wouldst thou rude on me
 Thy wring-world right foot rock? lay a lion-limb against me? scan
 With darksome devouring eyes my bruised bones? and fan
 O in turns of tempest, me heaped there; me frantic to avoid thee and flee?*

Hopkins uses 'strange metres' and is subjective. Now, strange metres are not really strange to one who knows nothing about metres, so while I can make something of the first quatrain, the second, which of course came from a different poem, beats me completely. What on earth does 'Thy wring-world right foot rock' mean? And why 'right foot rock' and not 'left foot rock'? I have looked at it from the front, from the top and bottom, and even from sideways, but without knowing Hopkins' dialect I can get no sense out of it whatsoever. It is much too subjective for me, and here is what a text book has to say:

"There comes a point, however, where we may ask whether the poet has not become so subjective that he is no longer an artist. Hopkins struggled to express to others, in terms free from subjective

contents, impressions which were highly subjective, as in 'feel-of-primrose hands' and 'fresh-firecoal chestnut falls'. Other writers, however, appear to ignore the reader (as if there were some point in writing but not for a reader) by presenting enigmas to which the sole key is within themselves. Is this fatal degree of retrospection realised? Has the boundary between intelligible and intellectually sensible subjectivity been divided from self-expression based on introspection ?...

“He (Hopkins) is much too important for an evaluation to be yet possible; we must be content to avoid the company of those who hail him as the greatest of all great and those who, perhaps through unhappy experiences among his many imitators, regard him as a misfortune.”

Considering that Hopkins (1844-89) died nearly a hundred years ago the above pronouncement seems to move in very slow motion, if it moves at all that is. Hopkins used what he called Sprung Rhythm and I have not seen a good, or even competent, explanation of what Hopkins meant. I will deal with it now and start a new chapter to do it. This means moving what I have to say about T.S. Eliot and Dylan Thomas elsewhere, to another part or another book. What I wrote about the phenomenal obscurity of these two ran to about fifty pages, and now three pages remain, much to the disgust of my gift of the gab, no doubt. But a hundred pages of verses are brought in instead and they should be more relevant to the subject under treatment, namely as an invitation for poets to try the Thai Kloangs. The poems are collected from my prose writings, including this paper, and so there are some repetitions in the two parts of the book.

Chapter 2

THE THAI USE OF QUANTITY AND STRESS

The ingredients that go into a poem can be separated in many ways--Sense from Sounds, Visual from Aural Aspects, and such. By Visual Aspects I mean the number of syllables in a line and positions of rhyme words, both internal and external rhymes. Visual Aspects can be seen with the outer eye, but Aural Aspects can only be heard by the inner ear (by this I do not mean when poems are read aloud.) As a simple example, if an English poet puts together a line of eight syllables, the chances are that they would be in iambic tetrameters that scan—one Two/ one Two/ one Two/ one Two (with the stress on Two.) But a Thai poet would scan the same eight syllables in the Glon form of One two three/ One two/ One two three.

Edwin Muir: from "The Child Dying"

(first and last stanzas)

*Unfriendly friendly universe,
I pack your stars in my purse,
And bid you, bid you so farewell.
That I can leave you, quite go out,
Go out, go out beyond all doubt,
My father says, is the miracle...*

*Hold my hand, oh hold it fast--
I am changing—until at last
My hand in yours no more will change,
Though yours change on. You here, I there,
So hand in hand, twin-leafed despair—
I did not know death was so strange.*

(Scanned as a Thai Glon 8)

*Unfriendly/friendly/universe,
I pack (pack)/your stars/in my purse,
And bid you/bid you/so farewell.
That I can/leave you/quite go out,
Go out, go/out be/yond all doubt,
My father says/is the/miracle.*

(Scanned as iambic tetrameters)

*Hold my/hand (hold)/oh hold/it fast—
I am/changing/until/at last
My hand/in yours/no more/will change,
Though yours/change on./You here,/I there,
So hand/in hand/twin-leafed/despair—
I did/not know/death was/so strange.*

So far there is nothing difficult. But there are other dimensions to Aural Aspects. English poetry is qualitative, and scansion is by stress. Thai poetry uses both Quantity and Stress, sometimes Quality by itself, sometimes Quantity, sometimes, particularly in the Kloang, a combination of the two. I will handle this aspect first and deal with the Thai use of Rhymes later.

The Kloang, or more specifically the Quatrain or Kloang 4 Suparb, is essentially a thirty word composition and we now consider how these thirty words can be arranged so that they become a kloang. The Couplet or Kloang 2 Suparb will be dealt with later.

*One two three four five six seven
Eight nine ten eleven twelve.*

The above is the basic metre of the Kloang, if such a word as basic can be used for a metre that can be used in so many ways. In principle the Kloang has a line of three feet, and after the second foot there is a break where the rhyme word occurs. But sometimes the break can be ignored and the line read through to the end, or even over into the next line. However if the break is there, it is stronger than a caesura, and for variation a minor caesura can also be used somewhere in the first two feet.

The third foot (after the rhyme) can be a iambic (seven) or spondee (eight nine) or 'six seven' or 'seven eight' or even 'seven eleven' (two stresses) but not 'eight nine ten' (three stresses).

The two front feet can NOT be two spondees (one two three four) or three spondees (one two three four five six), but can be anything in between, from two and a half spondees (one two three four five), to 6 7 8 9, or 6 7 8 9 10, or even sprung to 7 8 9 10 11 (using the word 'sprung' in Hopkins sense, but without necessarily stressing the first syllable.) The best way to explain the rhythm of the Kloang is through a Limerick; and the best way to explain a limerick is through Hopkins' Sprung Rhythm.

G.M. Hopkins on Sprung Rhythm

"The poems in this book are written some in Running Rhythm, the common rhythm in English use, some in Sprung Rhythm, and some in a mixture of the two. And those in the common rhythm some are counterpointed, some not.

"Common English rhythm, called Running Rhythm above, is measured by feet of either two or three syllables (putting aside the imperfect feet at the beginning and end of lines and also some unusual measures, in which feet seem to be paired together and double or composite feet to arise) never more or less.

"Every foot has one principal stress or accent, and this or the syllable it falls on, may be called the Stress of the foot and the other part, the one or two unaccented syllables, the Slack...

"Sprung Rhythm, as used in this book, is measured by feet of from one to four syllables, regularly, and for particular effects any number of weak or slack syllables may be used. It has one stress, which falls on the only syllable, if there is only one, or, if there are more, then scanning as above, on the first, and so gives rise to four sorts of feet, a monosyllable and the so-called accentual Trochee, Dactyl, and the First Paeon. (The first Paeon is a foot consisting of one stressed syllable followed by three slack ones.) And there will be four corresponding natural rhythms; but nominally the feet are mixed and any one may follow any other. And hence Sprung Rhythm differs from Running Rhythm in having or being only one nominal rhythm, a mixed or 'logaoedic' one, instead of three, but on the other hand in having twice the flexibility of foot, so that any two

stresses may follow one another running or be divided by one, two or three slack syllables...

“Note on the nature and history of Sprung Rhythm--Sprung Rhythm is the most natural of things.

(1) It is the rhythm of common speech and of written prose, when rhythm is perceived in them.

(2) It is the rhythm of all but the most monotonous music, so that in the words of choruses and refrains, and in songs written closely to music, it arises.

(3) It is found in nursery rhymes, weather saws, and so on; because, however these may have been once made in running rhythm, the terminations having dropped off by the change of language, the stresses come together and so the rhythm is sprung.

(4) It arises in common verse when reversed or counterpointed, for the same reason.”

Anyone interested further should read the whole article (“Author’s Preface”, printed in *Modern Poets on Modern Poetry*.) The situation is like this. In the Thai Kloang, quantity is mixed with quality. Within the next few paragraphs, I shall submit that all the poetry of the world is the same. Hopkins seemed to have stumbled on this point without knowing it, so his explanations are not very clear. Perhaps the reason is because by his upbringing he was too stressed-centric. But to give honour where honour is due, Hopkins was far more modern than T.S. Eliot or Ezra Pound, whose prose explanations were really only excuses for the kind of poetry that they and their followers wrote. I don’t think they understood how quantity was, is, or should be used. One simple example will clarify Hopkins’ viewpoint.

<i>I hapt on horses</i>	<i>in fun</i>
<i>Such a sight was one</i>	<i>I loved.</i>

Each line has three stresses, two in front and one behind. The first line could be sprung, or changed to ‘I happened upon some horses in fun’ and the stresses would remain the same. These lines are translations of a Kloang from the Ayutthaya period corresponding to the Restoration Period in England. The reign of Charles II produced some pretty fruity ribaldry and the reign of King Narai did the same in Siam. This quatrain is bawdy, but allowing this, it can probably hold its own as a ribald piece in any company. On this understanding I will give the whole quatrain.

<i>I happened upon some horses</i>	<i>in fun</i>
<i>Such a sight was one</i>	<i>I loved</i>
<i>Seeing what was done</i>	<i>frenziedly</i>
<i>Hurrying home I shoved</i>	<i>my dear, dear wife.</i>

All Kloangs can be read One Two Three Four Five, or Thump Thump Thump Thump Thump/Thump Thump, but a poet would do better to count the stresses with his ears and not count the syllables with his fingers. He will then know for himself whether the lines sag in the middle or not. Also he can make variations in the rhythm.

The Kloang is very like a Limerick. Rhyme schemes apart, they have the same number of stresses—thirteen—3,3,3,4 in a Kloang, and 3,3,2,2,3 in a Limerick. The basic line of both is seven syllables, or five in the short lines of the Limerick and the front part of the Quatrain or the Couplet Kloang. The Limerick line is usually sprung to eight or nine syllables, while in the Kloang it is under-sprung, if that is the right expression, where iambs are used instead of trochees.

'I went to school in a bus' is not poetry—text book.

<i>I went to school in</i>	<i>a bus</i>
<i>Then an octopus</i>	<i>got on</i>
<i>Never seen such fuss</i>	<i>before</i>
<i>He got all trod on!</i>	<i>Poor octopus.</i>

I went to school in a bus
Never have I seen such fuss
Dear old ladies faint
Gentlemen say " 'Taint"
When on boarded a hippopotamus.

The last line is a little sprung but will pass for three stresses, or can be read as a iambic pentameter line. In the Kloang it would be of four stresses, and would be written:

When on boarded a hip- popotamus.

A iambic line consists of an even number of syllables, six, eight and ten, and the line is divided in half by a caesura. In an unsprung seven syllable line the caesura cannot cut the line in half. Mister William Shakespeare has kindly supplied examples in his "The Phoenix and the Turtle." The poem is in 13 Quatrains and 5 Triplets; and is in three movements, the first of five quatrains, the second of eight quatrains and the third of five triplets. The story is metaphysical so let us have only the second and third movements. The measure is tightly woven and cannot be scanned as a stressed iambic line, so it lacks variations in rhythm that can be found in a limerick and a kloang.

From 'The Phoenix and the Turtle'

Anthem

*Hence the anthem doth commence:
Love and constancy is dead,
Phoenix and the turtle fled
In a mutual flame from hence.*

*So they loved as love in twain
Had the essence but in one;
Two distincts, division none:
Number there in love was slain.*

*Hearts remote, yet not asunder;
Distance, and no space was seen
'Twixt this turtle and his queen;
But in them it were a wonder.*

*So between them love did shine
That the turtle saw his right
Flaming in the phoenix' sight:
Either was the other's mine.*

*Property was thus appalled,
That the self was not the same;
Single nature's double name
Neither two nor one was called.*

*Reason, in itself confounded,
Saw division grow together,
To themselves yet either neither,
Simple were so well compounded;*

*That it cried, 'How true a twain
Seemeth this concordant one!
Love hath reason, reason none,
If what parts can so remain.'*

*Whereupon it made this threne
To the phoenix and the dove,
Co-supremes and stars of love,
As chorus to their tragic scene.*

Threnos

*Beauty, truth, and rarity,
Grace in all simplicity,
Here enclosed, in cinders lie.*

*Death is now the phoenix' nest;
And the turtle's loyal breast
To eternity doth rest,*

*Leaving no posterity:
'Twas not their infirmity,
It was married chastity.*

*Truth may seem, but cannot be;
Beauty brag, but 'tis not she:
Truth and Beauty buried be.*

*To this urn let those repair
That are either true or fair;
For these dead birds sigh a prayer.*

William Shakespeare.

The Limerick

I will have a great deal to say about the Limerick, so I will put myself in the groove now. Edward Lear is called the father of the Limerick though he did not invent the form. Many useless conjectures have been put forward about the form's origin, so I will add another even more useless one. Shakespeare was its great, great grandfather.

*Death is now the phoenix' nest;
And the turtle's loyal breast
(Leaving) no posterity:
('Twas not) their infirmity,
To eternity doth rest.*

*Truth may seem, but cannot be;
Beauty brag, but 'tis not she:
(To this) urn let those repair
(That are) either true or fair;
Truth and Beauty buried be.*

* * *

*The Limerick's father is Edward Lear;
Its great, great grandpappy's Shakespeare.*

*Queen Elizabeth One
Thought it was great fun,
But I doubt about Victoria.*

* * *

*There was an old man who said, "Hush!
I perceive a young bird in a bush."
When they said, "Is it small?"
He replied, "Not at all.
It is four times as big as the bush!"*

Edward Lear (1812-88).

*Now what in the world shall we dioux
 With the bloody and murderous Sioux,
 Who some time ago
 Took an arrow and bow
 And raised such a hellabelioux?*

Eugene Field (1850-95).

*The principal food of the Sioux
 Is Indian maize, which they brioux.
 And then, failing that,
 They'll eat any old hat,
 A glove, or a pair of old shioux.*

(Adapted by Anon.).

There are other Sioux verses but they are dirty. People are always adapting other people's stuff, sometimes to make the clean ones dirty or vice versa. If I change the last line to "And the whole tribe celebrates and scrioux" it will fit either, depending on how the name Sioux is pronounced, and nobody will care or know what it's all about.

The Lear Limerick (as above) and the (supposed) Shakespearean Limerick are quite different. The Lear variety is a single-stanza verse, while the Shakespearean is an ordinary stanza form than can be used together to make a poem or tell a story. The following example consists of five verses and first appeared in 1881, probably before the Eugene Field stanza, which is generally considered the first of the Sioux breed.

C.F. Adams: from "Prevalent Poetry"

*A wandering tribe called the Sioux
 Wear moccasins, having no shioux.
 They are made of buckskin,
 With the fleshy side in,
 Embroidered with beads of bright hyioux.
 When out on the war-path the Sioux
 March single-file--never by tioux—
 And by 'blazing' the trees
 Can return at their ease,
 And their way through the forest ne'er lioux.*

*All new-fangled boats he eschioux,
 And uses the birch-bark caniouxs,
 These are handy and light
 And, inverted at night,
 Give shelter from storms and from dyiouxs.*

*The principal food of the Siouxs
 Is Indian maize, which they briouxs
 And hominy make,
 Or mix in a cake
 And eat it with pork, as they chiouxs.*

The last stanza was changed by somebody into a single-verse Limerick (above.) Adams kept strictly to the iambic measure, whereas the same eight syllables of the longer lines could be varied by the use of the Thai Glon 8 measure where the scansion would be 3,2,3.

Let us give this dead horse in mid-stream one more wallop. A Double Limerick is an adaptation of the French Double Ballade, and a Triple Limerick is an extension of the same. Three rhymes are repeated throughout, but not necessarily with the same sense. For instance in the example below, the rhyme words are Siouxs, Miouxs (moose, amuse, Muse, bemuse) and Jiouxs (Jews, juice); also booze and hues. The measure is strictly that of the Kloang with 7,7, 5,5,7 syllables. Of course this measure can be mixed with the iambic and Glon rhythms, as well as the rhythms used by Lear and others. This subject will be discussed later. In short the Limerick has all the variations in rhythm that anyone can possibly desire.

About the Siouxs

(Triple Limerick)

*I've wondered about the Siouxs--
 Do they eat the meat of miouxs?
 Or do they eat pork
 And live in New York,
 Same as uncircumcised Jiouxs?*

*How do they themselves amiouxs?
Do they biouxs? or drink lime jiouxs
With their Peking duck?
On these points I'm stuck
And must ask about the Siouxs.*

*Pointless points! but tell, O Miouxs,
What you know about the Siouxs?
It came int' my head,
Some Indians are red,
Some black—what colours are Jiouxs?*

(Addendum)

*Are they brown or pink, these Jiouxs?
Or are they red like the Siouxs?
The hiouxs of races
Appear in faces
That bewitchingly bemiouxs.*

Chapter 3

QUANTITY AND SAPPHO

In brief, quantitative verse means that one word or syllable is longer or shorter to pronounce than another word or syllable. In quality one word or syllable is heavier (stressed) or lighter (unstressed) compared to another. The terms quantity and quality are only comparative and one word or syllable can be heavier or lighter, longer or shorter, than another word. If you put a heavy word near a light word, it is heavy; but if you put it near a heavier word, it becomes light. The same with quantity; if you put a long word by a short word, it is long; put the same word near a longer syllable and it becomes short. And of course, one word or syllable can be short or long, or light or heavy. This happens in all languages.

Today some modern poets seem to have run into a blank wall with the stressed iambic pentameter line and, they say, they write quantitative poetry, that is, Free Verse, Prose Poems and machine poetry. Free Verse and Prose Poems are in themselves contradictions in term. If you write verse, you must accept some restrictions, in the use of rhymes, meters, etc, and without these restrictions you are not writing verse at all. Then if you write prose you are not writing a poem; and when you write a poem, you are not writing prose. You cannot do both at the same time; in fact there are many poems, written to the correct stanzas, that are really prose, and there seems more justification in calling them prose-poems than prose cut up arbitrarily into short lines. As for machine poetry, this means using a typewriter to create a poem, particularly the space bar of the machine. Can you not imagine a conversation like this?

“Say, this is a lovely poem you’ve got. What make of typewriter wrote it?”

“No, no, you’re wrong. This isn’t a typewriter poem at all. It’s my new computer poem. Glad you like it. The machine cost me a packet.”

I am afraid these people don't know what they are talking about, and as far as I know no text book has explained quantitative verse properly. The English language has only a few vowels, A,E,I,O, and U though a few more can be added by using two vowels together, Ae, Ai, Ao, Au, and such, and they are longer than the ordinary or single vowels. In English qualitative poetry, the stresses can vary, that is, a word heavy by nature (such as a verb) can be read as unstressed to fit the meter. If you put ten syllables in a line, and the syllables happen to be short-long, then you have a iambic pentameter line. But if the syllables won't fit into the pattern, you can still force the measure by reading stressed words as unstressed and vice versa. This is of course putting the cart before the horse, because your words should fit the measure in the first place.

To find examples of quantitative verse you have to go all the way back to Greek or Latin poetry, to Pali or Sanskrit poetry, or, of course, to Thai poetry! We have far more vowels than in English, short A/long A, short E/long E, short I/long I, short O/long O, short U/long U, and a host of others. So Thai poetry uses both quantity and quality, especially in the Kloang. In this way you can have your cake and eat it at the same time, though the Thai measure is really much tighter than in stressed poetry.

I have said above that a word or syllable can be long or short, light or stressed, depending on what word it is placed close to. The agent that turns a light word into a heavy one, or make a short word long, and vice versa, is Internal Rhyme, or 'internal contact' as the Thai call it. This could be rhyme words placed within the line itself, or alliteration, or both. And of course the natural sounds of speech.

I would say that the poetry of all races, the language of all races, even some prose, must contain both quantity and quality. Poetry, by its very nature, is speech, and speech, even the speech of dogs barking and cows mooing, must have both stress and quantity. Rhymes accentuate the one or the other, or both; and I personally have noticed that when dogs bark, and cows moo, they do it in rhyme. If we add tones as well (as the Thai do in their poetry), then the sound becomes musical. This is not to say that sound by itself, no matter how musical it may be, would be poetry unless it has sense as well.

For example let us have another Limerick. Everybody knows the limerick, and yet it is not recognised as a poetry form like the Sonnet, Ode, Villanelle and such. At least I have never seen the stanza given in any text book. Perhaps the reason is because the stresses of a limerick can be varied in so many ways. The same with the Kloang, and the Kloang is one of the mainstays of Thai poetry!

*Once there were twins as yet unborn,
 Who were still without any horn.
 Then they heard something,
 "Look out, father's coming,"
 Said one to his brother unicorn.*

First I should explain that Thai is a tonal language. But there are some words called 'dead words' which cannot change their tones. (This is not quite accurate. Dead words can have two tones, while others have five.) Dead words are generally heavier than ordinary words.

In the first line of the above limerick, the stresses fall on *Twins* (long), *Yet* (dead word) and *Born*. In the second line on *Still* (long), *Out* (dead) and *Horn*. In actual fact, *As Yet* in the first line, and *With Out* the second, are all dead words, but the second syllables are heavier and so are stressed by comparison.

In the third line *Heard* is the only dead word, and in the fourth both *Look* and *Out* are dead words, so the stress falls on *Out*. The last line can be scanned in several ways. I myself would scan it by three and a half stresses--One/broth/u/corn.

Sappho

Mr. Paul Roche, poet and translator of Sappho (*The Love Songs of Sappho*) has discovered that Sappho mixed quantity with stress, and he has explained this phenomenon in the Appendix to his book. His explanation is the same as mine except that he uses different terms; and it is essentially the same as Hopkins', except that Hopkins did not quite realise that he himself was using a little quantity in his own poems.

"My conclusions then are these: in Greek and English (and probably in all poetries) there are two sets of sonic principles operating at once: the rhythm set up by the meter or the arrangement of fixed quantities, and the rhythm set up by the natural time values of speech. Either set of principles can be given the supremacy. If overwhelmingly the first, we get incantation. If overwhelmingly the second, we get no meter at all and only such emotions as can be squeezed out of prose. The art of reading poetry is to use the natural speech values as a foil to the metrical, and play them off as counterpoint, always leaving enough of the meter to keep it a foil and never

letting the counterpoint take over...in either case, what emerges from the tension between the two sets of values is a new music based on both."

Roche uses a nursery rhyme to illustrate:

Hickery Dickery Dock
The mouse ran up the clock
The clock struck one
The mouse ran down
Hickery Dickery Dock.

I would say that these lines are of two stresses, though the first and second lines might have two and a half stresses. Roche however says they are each of three stresses and he rewrites them into iambic tetrameters as follows:

The mouse that ran, ran up the clock,
The clock struck one, the mouse ran down
The clock, O hickery, O dock.

The word Ran (a verb) is used five times in the two examples, three times unstressed (equivalent to short) and twice stressed (equivalent to long). Struck, another verb and therefore stressed by nature, is short in the second sample. All this can be seen more easily if I turn the verse into a Kloang, where the main stresses in the first line are on the first and last words, with a minor stress within the line.

<i>Hickery Dicke-</i>	<i>ry Dock</i>
<i>The mouse up the clock</i>	<i>did run</i>
<i>It ran down in shock</i>	<i>Hickery!</i>
<i>When the clock struck one</i>	<i>Dickery Dock!</i>

Hickery Dickery Dock is really a limerick, so let us have another example. There are slight variations in the meters though the number of stresses in the two versions is the same.

Dickery Dock Hickery
The mouse went out to sea
It sailed in a boat
With a nanny goat
Hickery Hock Dickery

<i>Dickery Dock Hic-</i>	<i>kery</i>
<i>The mouse went to sea</i>	<i>with goat</i>
<i>A wave struck nanny,</i>	<i>and she</i>
<i>Was sick in the boat</i>	<i>Sickery Goat.</i>

Poetry written in such ancient languages like Greek and Latin, Pali and Sanskrit, is said to be quantitative, while English poetry is stressed. I doubt if such a clear-cut distinction can be accepted unless we say that ancient poetry followed prosody more strictly than does English poetry today, when the locations of stresses can be varied. Surely all poetry, particularly oral poetry, must utilize both quantity and stress. This is true in Thai poetry anyway, and the medium that changes a stressed word into a quantitative one, or the other way about, is internal rhymes—both consonants and alliteration.

Roche does not mention rhyme as a binding agent, but then Greek poetry is not often rhymed. However he has found one example of an internal rhyme in Sappho, which he says "making this one of the unforgettable lines in Greek literature." The rhyme is in a piece called 'Call to Aphrodite', which is "one of the few texts of Sappho (perhaps the only text) which is both complete and undamaged," and "one of the most intricately knit of all Sappho's love songs and her acknowledged masterpiece." Throughout the ages Sappho has been praised for the musical quality of her lyrics, and Roche says of her poetry:

"The genius of Sappho is that she keeps a miraculous balance: a balance between sound and sense, between verbal uselessness-for-the-sake-of-sound and verbal precision for the sake of sense. Nine-tenths of the time she manages to give the impression of incredible economy—which is also real. She is as clear as a mountain spring and as swift as clean water over tinted pebbles. One might say that she is also as hard and clear-edged as marble, but this too is partly delusion. She wrote in fact in the softest of all Greek dialects—not at all the crystalline and finely chiseled Attic Greek of two centuries later—and her imagery is rich and sensuous."

Anybody would think that Sappho was a Thai poet! but then her poetry was written to be sung. By this I don't think Roche is saying that Sappho's poems were like the songs that Shakespeare and Robert Burns wrote, which were put to music and became good songs though not necessarily good poems. A Thai poem could be written and sung at once, but again the song is part of the art of

drama while the poem is of the art of literature. And here we come to another aspect of Thai poetry, an aspect that I cannot explain in English. I will do what I can, and anyone interested should ask a musician or linguist who also knows poetry. But first I should explain that I shall be talking about Thai Prosody only and not about Thai poets or Thai poetry. Thai Prosody is top of the class--world class--and I make no such claims for Thai poets or Thai poetry.

Greek poetry is quantitative; Sappho adds stress to the quantitative Greek poetry that she wrote, and according to Roche, she produced a better poetry than the ordinary poetry produced by other Greeks. Leaving aside rhymes, alliterations and such, because they are optional and can be available to all prosodies, what Roche says must surely be true. Quantity and stress are both optional in a prosody that uses both, so in theory Sappho could use quantity only, or stress only, or both together. This must be a better prosody than one that is merely quantitative or uses stress only. I said above 'in theory' but in actual fact a practical example can be cited.

Thai prosody uses both quantity and stress. In some genres like those that have Indian prototypes only quantity is used. The Thai add compulsory external rhymes but keep the measure strict. This means using too many Indian words and the exercise becomes court poetry not appreciated by the common people like the genres that have Thai derivations. These use measures of mixed quantity and stress, and in this paper I am introducing the Kloang in English. I only know English and Thai so cannot introduce any other language, though I have seen a few verses in French.

English poetry is based on stress, though with a little manipulation a little quantity can be introduced to break the monotony of the usual iambic line. But English prosody can never be as good as Thai prosody because Thai is also a tonal language. It is possible to write the shape and sound of a Limerick, a Sonnet, a Villanelle, or any other form used in English, in Thai exactly, but the reverse cannot be done because English lacks the tones of the Thai to cope with the variations of the tones, many of which are compulsory. So I make the claim that Thai prosody is the best in the world, and for any other prosody to be as good, it will have to be tonal and uses both quantity and stress. In such a case neither would be better than the other but simply that both are tops.

To return to the Kloang, a quatrain that is highly admired is one with the triple high tones, that is, a high tone in the seventh word of the first line, the fifth or rhyming word in the second line, and the final word of the quatrain. Why this should be so I do not know. It would be best to ask a linguist or musician or someone with longer ears. Meanwhile we are not done with Sappho and I shall return to the good lady in due course.

Chapter 4

THE THAI USE OF RHYMES AND ALLITERATION

There are two systems of rhyming in English and two in Thai. The Thai forms are External and Internal Rhymes, while in English there are Head Rhymes and End Rhymes. Head Rhymes, or Alliterative verse of the Middle Ages, are obsolete though alliteration is still used. There is only one difficulty about Head Rhymes and End Rhymes, and that is to combine the two in actual use. An example of each is sufficient to start with before dealing with the ways the Thai use rhymes.

From "Sir Gawayne and the Grene Knight"

*Sithen the sege and the assaut • was cesed at Troye,
The borgh brittened and brent • to brondes and askes,
The tulk that the trammes • of tresoun ther wroght
Was tried for his tricherie • the trewest on erthe.*

From "The Prologoue to the Canterbury Tales "

*Whan that Aprille with his shoures sote
The droghte of Marche has perced to the rote,
And bathed every veyne in swich licour,
Of which vertu engendered is the flour;
Whan Zephirus eek with his swete breeth
Inspired hath in every holt and heeth
The tendre croppes, and the yonge sonne
Hath in the Ram his halfe cours y-ronne,
And smale fowles maken melodye
That slepen al the night with open yē;
(So priketh hem nature in hir corages) :
Than longen folk to goon on pilgrimages*

There are two ways that the Thai use rhymes, which are called Sampat or Contacts. External Rhymes are invariably placed on different lines, some at the end of the line, and some somewhere within the line. External Rhymes are compulsory. Internal Rhymes can be of rhymes or alliteration or both, and are placed in the same line. They are optional.

For examples I will use a variety of the Glon genre instead of the Kloang I have been using. The Glon is a genre with as many variations as the Kloang, and the Glon 8 (eight words to a line, occasionally extending to nine) is perhaps the most popular of all Thai forms. Sunthorn Phu, a poet of the Early Bangkok period, was the great exponent of this form, and I have recently translated a few stanzas from his "Nirat Phu Khao Thong", a poem he wrote about a trip he took to Ayutthaya. At that time he was a monk.

Rhyme Scheme of Glon 8

0 0 0 0 0 0 0 a
 0 0 a 0 0 0 0 b
 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 b
 0 0 b 0 0 0 0 c

 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 d
 0 0 d 0 0 0 0 c
 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 c
 0 0 c 0 0 0 0 e.

Sunthorn Phu: from Nirat Phu Khao Thong

(translated with end rhymes)

*In front of the wharf I saw the King's boat--
 Tears came to my eyes at the memory,
 When Phra J'muen Wai and I were afloat,
 By the golden palanquin would we be.*

*The King was wont to compose poetry,
 Which it was my duty to recite
 Through the long, long Kathin ceremony,
 To his satisfaction and my delight.*

(Translated with original rhyme scheme)

*Near to, I could smell the King's scent,
Sweetly rend'ing the air at hand:
The King died, tasteless became the land--
He died, and scentless my own fate.*

*In the Palace His ashes in an urn,
I in turn my merit dedicate
To Him, and the Majesty in state
For a great and glorious reign.*

“This passage is tricky. The poet is playing with the words ‘taste’ and ‘smell’ in a sort of sense-pun. In the reign of King Lertla, who was a poet himself, Sunthorn Phu was a royal scribe and the King’s favourite. When the King went on his royal business by water, Sunthorn Phu would be in the same boat, near to the King; to while away the time the King would compose poems and Sunthorn Phu, as scribe, would write down or read back the verses. He was near enough to get the full whiff of the scent that the King used--and imagine how strong would a king’s scent be! When King Lertla died, Sunthorn Phu became ordained, during which time he wrote this piece; so he said that his destiny, as a monk, was without scent—the scents of a layman. As a monk the poet attained merit, which merit he transferred to the late and regnant monarchs.”

(from *Journal of the Siam Society*)

Internal Rhymes consist of rhymes, alliteration, consonance and things like that. They are optional and can be used or not at the poet’s convenience. There are no internal rhyme-words in the above example, but the last line contains alliteration. There are probably three reasons for this. First, English has more grammar than Thai, and to cut out too many words would make the whole thing telegraphic. Then English is a multi-syllabic language, while in the mono-syllabic Thai rhyme words come together more easily. Finally I was born lazy.

Internal rhymes in a Glon line are usually placed on the third and fourth or fifth words; and on the fifth and sixth or seventh words. In an English tetrameter line, an internal rhyme would be placed on the fourth syllable, which cuts the line in half. In a Thai Glon 8 line, the main, or compulsory external rhyme in

the second and fourth lines, can be placed on the third or fifth word, but not on the fourth word in the English way.

Variation in External Rhymes in the Glon 8

0 0 0 0 0 0 0 a
 0 0 0 0 a 0 0 b
 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 b
 0 0 0 0 b 0 0 c

I have put together an example to show Internal Rhymes in a Glon. The words are mainly monosyllabic, and of course the whole thing is nonsense.

*Count One Two you are yet alive
 Three Four Five you are far from dead
 Six Seven when a hen an egg laid
 Eight Nine Ten then to bed on a bier.*

*Ten Nine Eight rather late to get up
 Seven Six mix a cup of good cheer
 Five Four Three we'll take breakfast here
 Two One What! No beer? Cheerio!*

I wonder if the way the Thai use internal rhymes is as clear as I think it is. To make sure I will scan the above verses and explain one or two points. In the first line Two and You are internal rhymes placed together; Are and A (in Alive) are internal rhymes placed apart; and You and Yet are alliterations. In the second line Are and Far are internal rhymes; Five and Far are alliterations; and Five by itself is one of the two compulsory external rhymes (the other being Dead at the end of the line.) Notice that in lines 4, 6 and 8 the external rhymes within the lines (Bed, Cup and Beer have been moved to the optional fifth syllable.) A third verse will be added and scanned in two ways.

*Count One Two/you are/yet alive (a)
 Three Four Five (a)/ you are/far from dead (b)
 Six Seven/when a hen/an egg laid (b)
 Eight Nine Ten/then to bed (b)/on a bier (c)*

*Ten Nine Eight/rather late/to get up (d)
 Seven Six/mix a cup (d)/of good cheer (c)
 Five Four Three/we'll take/breakfast here (c)
 Two One What!/ No beer? (c)/ Cheerio! (e)*

This is no matter for laffing (f)
For without quaaffing (f) beerio (e)
Makes me feel, I fear, queerio (e)
Aweary go (e), Oh alack—back to bed.

This is no/matter/for laffing
This is/no mat/ter for/laffing

For without/quaaffing/beerio
For with/out quaf/fing beer/io

Makes me feel/I fear/queerio
Makes me/feel I/fear queer/io

Aweary go/Oh alack/back to bed
Oh dear/io/awear/y go/back t' bed.
(Oh deario/awear/y go/back to bed.)

That is all about Thai Rhymes. There is no need to say anything about Kloang rhymes except that in some of the Quatrain forms, the rhyme on the second, third and fourth lines can be optionally moved from the fifth word to the third or fourth word of the same line. This seems a good variation but modern poets do not often use it.

Variations in External Rhymes in the Kloang

0 0 0 0 0	0 a (0 0)
0 0 a a a	0 b
0 0 a a a	0 0 (0 0)
0 0 b b b	0 0 0 0.

(Parentheses are called 'soi kloang')

Both the Kloang and Glon forms have very strict tone rules. This is a subject I cannot explain on paper and anyone interested must ask a musician or linguist. In the Quatrain Kloang, fourteen of the thirty words come under tone

rules; and in the Couplet seven of the fourteen words. This makes the Kloang difficult but people seem to manage easily enough.

But what English loses in not being a tonal language, it gains in being a polysyllabic tongue. In the monosyllabic Thai, such rhymes as Mystical, Physical, Quizzical are not possible, and I must confess I find playing with these long rhymes quite good fun, though perhaps a little childish.

Chapter 5

ENGLISH END RHYMES

To rhyme or not to rhyme is not a question but a rat race, particularly for those who do not use rhymes. This chapter is redundant because everybody knows about end rhymes. But I would like to continue with the subject of Limericks before returning to the Kloang, and I will keep the examples to as few and as short as possible.

Four lines of verse, if each line ends in a rhyme, can take one of four forms: 1) Couplet, rhyming a,a,b,b; 2) Alternating Rhymes, a,b,a,b; 3) Enclosing Rhymes, a,b,b,a; and Single Rhymes, a,a,a,a. Such rhymes, particularly if used with a iambic measure, soon become monotonous for both writer and reader. So poets have tried to find variations to get round this dilemma. The first way is to vary the rhyme sounds. There are several kind of rhymes: Single or Masculine Rhymes; Double or Feminine Rhymes; Triple Rhymes; Ear Rhymes (rough/fluff); Eye Rhymes (rough/though/through); and near or Para-rhymes.

Wilfred Owen: Strange Meeting

*It seemed that out of battle I escaped
Down some profound dull tunnel, long since scooped
Through granite which titanic wars had groined.
Yet also there encumbered sleepers groaned,
Too fast in thought or death to be bestirred.
Then, as I probed them, one sprang up, and stared
With piteous recognition in fixed eyes,
Lifting distressful hands as if to bless.
And by his smile, I knew that sullen hall,
By his dead smile I knew we stood in Hell.*

Lord Byron: Fragment

*I would to heaven that I were so much clay,
 As I am blood, bone, marrow, passion, feeling--
 Because at least the past were pass'd away--
 And for the future-- (but I write this reeling
 Having got drunk exceedingly to-day,
 So that I seem to stand upon the ceiling)
 I say--the future is a serious matter--
 And so--for God's sake--hock and soda-water!*

Thomas Hardy: from "The Voice"

*Or is it only the breeze, in its listlessness
 Travelling across the wet mead to me here,
 You being ever dissolved to wan wistlessness,
 Heard me more again far or near?
 Thus I: faltering forward,
 Leaves around me falling,
 Wind oozing thin through the thorn from norward,
 And the woman calling.*

Another variation in the use of end-rhymes is to leave out a rhyme (Keats); and then add another rhyme (FitzGerald.) The second case is really a telescoping of a Couplet and Alternating Rhymes into the same quatrain.

Keats: from "La Belle Dame Sans Merci"

*'O what can ail thee, knight-at-arms,
 Alone and palely loitering?
 The sedge is withered from the lake,
 And no birds sing...
 'I see a lily on thy brow
 With anguish moist and fever dew;
 And on thy cheek a fading rose
 Fast withereth too.'*

FitzGerald: from "Omar Khayyam"

*A Book of Verse underneath the Bough,
A Jug of Wine, a Loaf of Bread--and Thou
Beside me singing in the Wilderness--
Oh, Wilderness were Paradise enow!*

*Myself when young did eagerly frequent
Doctor and Saint, and heard great argument
About it and about: but evermore
Came out by the same door where in I went.*

Still another variation is to add Internal Rhymes in the English manner. These rhymes tend to break the line in half.

Coleridge: from "The Ancient Mariner"

*Nor dim nor red, / like God's own head,
The glorious Sun uprist:
Then all averred / I had killed the bird
That brought the fog and mist...
The fair breeze blew, / the white foam flew,
The furrow followed free;
We were the first / that ever burst
Into that silent sea.*

A.P. Herbert: from "The Farmer"

*The Farmer will never be happy again;
He carries his heart in his boots;
For either the rain / is destroying his grain
Or the drought is destroying his roots.
You may speak, if you can, / to this querulous man,
Though I should not attempt to be funny,
And if you insist / he will give you a list
Of the reasons he's making no money.*

Other variations are to add a line to a Quatrain (thereby turning it into a Quintet) or two lines (Sestet) or more to make a Sonnet, a Villanelle, Ballade or Double Ballade. The extra line in the Quintet can be added to the top, or the middle, or the end. The rhyme scheme of the Limerick is in essence a telescoping of a Couplet and Enclosing Rhymes.

Two pre-Lear Limericks

*There was an old lady of Leeds
Who spent all her time on good deeds.
She worked for the poor
Till her fingers were sore,
This pious old lady of Leeds.
There was a sick man of Tobago
Lived long on rice and sago;
But at last, to his bliss,
The physician said this:
"To a roast leg of mutton you may go."*

* * *

*There was an old man with a beard
Who sat on a horse when he reared;
But they said, "Never mind!
You will fall off behind,
You propitious old man with a beard."*

Edward Lear.

*I'd rather have fingers than toes;
I'd rather have ears than a nose;
And as for my hair,
I'm glad it's still there.
I'll be awfully sad when it goes.*

Gelett Burgess.

Nonsense Verse and Humorous are not the same. The difference may be difficult to see or explain, but if we introduce another category--Ridiculous Verse--

and put that in between, then there should be no difficulty. Of the four examples above, the first is ordinary; the second Humorous; the third (Lear) is Nonsense; and the last Ridiculous. Nonsense Verse is more difficult to write than Humorous or Ridiculous. It must transcend the two.

What a Rat Race

<i>To rhyme or not to rhyme</i>	<i>if that's</i>
<i>The question, then what's</i>	<i>th' reply?</i>
<i>Dogs like to chase cats--</i>	<i>cats rats</i>
<i>And rats (don't know why)</i>	<i>like chasing me.</i>

An American painter once upon an evening became frustrated by the Japanese Mu, or the Chinese Yin Yang, or some other rat race that goes round and around in small circles. So I quoted the above verse at him, changing the first line to read "To Mu or not to Mu". After that I produced another quick quatrain on the spur of the moment. The poor wop, being only a painter and not an asinine poet, thought what I said was an illusion, or delusion, or some kind of philosophy in reverse, i forget exactly what now.

<i>Rats like chasing me,</i>	<i>i said</i>
<i>They run straight ahead</i>	<i>at me:</i>
<i>I run back instead</i>	<i>Mu Nu!</i>
<i>So rats (as you see)</i>	<i>chase cats--cats dogs.</i>

(Note: Nu is Rat in Thai)

<i>End Rhymes can be saved by</i>	<i>a trick.</i>
<i>Take a Limerick,</i>	<i>mix with</i>
<i>A stanza that's quick-</i>	<i>moving,</i>
<i>And then just fix with</i>	<i>some mustard sauce.</i>

My verses seem to get more and more obscure the older I get. The last stanza means that the trouble with rhymes, the monotony of end-rhymes, does not necessarily mean that the fault lies with rhyme-sounds. I think the reason is more because of the rigidity in the rhythm of the iambic metre. One solution surely is to vary the rhythm in the lines, or follow some Thai genres like the Chan, Garp or Lilit, where several stanza forms are used in the same poem. This will give the necessary variety. Luckily examples are readily at hand.

Sir Alan Herbert's "The Farmer" is a poem in 13 quatrains. The first two have already been used above, and a few more follow. Hilaire Belloc's use of the Limerick as an ordinary stanza form in a story was the first example I saw of such use. I followed his example and even produced a story of fifty verses, but with more varied rhythms. Then I found that one Charles Follen Adams (1842-1918) had already anticipated Belloc by some 30 or 40 years. Adams was born 30 years after Lear (1812-88) and died 30 years after him. Adams' "Prevalent Poetry" was published in 1881 before Belloc had reached his teen-age. The poem is printed in chapter 2 above.

A.P. Herbert: from "The Farmer"

(continued)

*He will tell you the Spring was a scandalous thing,
For the frost and cold were that bad;
While what with the heat and the state of the wheat
The Summer was nearly as sad.*

*The Autumn, of course, is a permanent source
Of sorrows as black as your hat;
And as for the Winter, I don't know a printer
Who'd pass an opinion on that...*

*Poor fellow! his pig declines to grow big
(You know what these animals are);
His favourite heifer is very much deafer,
The bull has chronic catarrh.*

*In fact, when you meet this unfortunate man,
The conclusion is only too plain
That Nature is just an elaborate plan
To annoy him again and again.*

*Which makes it so difficult not to be rude,
As you'll find when you're lunching together;
He is certain to brood if you speak of the food,
And it's fatal to mention the weather.*

*You must never, I beg, refer to an egg,
However deplorably done;
And it's cruel to say: 'It's a very fine day!'
When he's probably sick of the sun...*

*But you cannot go wrong if you stick to this song
And assume that his heart's in his boots,
For either the rain is destroying his grain
Or the drought is destroying his roots.*

HILAIRE BELLOC: OBITER DICTA

(from "Ladies and Gentlemen")

SIR HENRY WAFFLE K.C.

*Sir Antony Habberton, Justice and Knight,
Was enfeoffed of two acres of land
And it doesn't sound much till you hear that the site
Was a strip to the south of the Strand.*

HIS LORDSHIP

*A strip to the South of the Strand
Is a good situation for land.
It is healthy and dry
And sufficiently high
And convenient on every hand.*

SIR HENRY WAFFLE K.C.

*Now Sir Antony, shooting in Timberley Wood, (Wold?)
Was imprudent enough to take cold;
And he died without warning
At six in the morning,
Because he was awfully old.*

HIS LORDSHIP

*I have often been credibly told
That when people are awfully old
Though cigars are a curse
And strong waters are worse
There is nothing so fatal as cold.*

SIR HENRY WAFFLE K.C.

*But Archibald answered on hearing the news:-
"I never move out till I must!"
Which was all very jolly for Cestui que Use
But the Devil for Cestui que Trust.*

HIS LORDSHIP

*The office of Cestui que Trust
Is reserved for the learned and just
Any villian your choose
May be Cestui que Use,
But a lawyer for Cestui que Trust.*

SIR HENRY WAFFLE K.C.

*Now the ruling laid down
In Regina v Brown
May be cited---*

HIS LORDSHIP

(rising energetically)

*You're wrong! It may not!
I've strained all my powers
For some thirty six hours
To unravel this pestilent rot.*

THE WHOLE COURT

(rising and singing in chorus)

*Your Lordship is sound to the core.
It is nearly a quarter to four.
We've had quite enough
Of this horrible stuff
And don't want to hear any more.*

LITTLE SILLY MAN

(rising at the back of the Court)

*Your Lordship is perfectly right.
He can't go on rhyming all night.
I suggest---*

(He is gagged, bound and dragged off to a Dungeon.)

Chapter 6

THE SUBLIME AND RIDICULOUS

Quatrain Kloangs

<i>More examples of Verse, which in one sense Step int' an incense- Where the moon leans through</i>	<i>Nonsense means to filled vale, the morning's mist.</i>
<i>Where the sun and stars and There supersonics Double Limericks Illuminating Lear's</i>	<i>moon mix, appear; flash by, sublime Nonsense.</i>

The rhythms of the Quatrain Kloang and Limerick are very similar and, except for the different rhyme-schemes, the two formats can be called the same. On the other hand the Limericks that Adams wrote used an entirely different rhythm to those of Hilaire Belloc, though the rhyme-schemes are the same. It is a question of what similarities one looks for. I have turned some Limericks written by anthologised poets into the Kloang form. The first lines can generally be retained intact, and also the last line in one or two cases, but with the changed rhyme-scheme not all the sense can be kept and the exercise turns into parodies, or even into burlesque in some instances. Of course the Kloangs are not as good as the Limericks. This is only natural. If I had written the Kloangs first then the Limericks would not be as good.

*The Reverend Henry Ward Beecher
Called a hen a most elegant creature.
The hen, pleased with that,
Laid an egg in his hat—
And thus did the hen reward Beecher.*

Oliver Wendell Holmes (1809-94).

<i>The Reverend Henry Ward</i>	<i>Beecher</i>
<i>Said, "Elegant creature."</i>	<i>The hen</i>
<i>An egg in the preacher's</i>	<i>hat laid</i>
<i>And thus did the hen</i>	<i>reward Beecher.</i>

<i>The Reverend Henry Ward</i>	<i>Beecher</i>
<i>Said, "Elegant creature,</i>	<i>this hen."</i>
<i>Pleased with the preacher,</i>	<i>the hen</i>
<i>Clucked, and an egg then</i>	<i>laid in his hat.</i>

*There was an old man with a beard
Who said, "It is just as I feared.
Two owls and a hen,
Four larks and a wren,
Have all built their nests in my beard!"*

Edward Lear (1812-88).

<i>There was an old man with</i>	<i>a beard</i>
<i>Who said, "It is weird.</i>	<i>A hen,</i>
<i>Two owls, as I feared,</i>	<i>four larks</i>
<i>In my beard, with a wren,</i>	<i>have built their nests."</i>

*There was a young man of Oporta,
Who daily got shorter and shorter.
The reason he said
Was the hod on his head,
Which was filled with the heaviest mortar.*

Lewis Carroll (1832-98).

<i>A young man of O-</i>	<i>porta</i>
<i>Got shorter and shorter.</i>	<i>He said,</i>
<i>"This heavy mortar</i>	<i>I've put</i>
<i>In a hod on my head</i>	<i>makes me grow down."</i>

*I wish that my room had a floor;
I don't care so much for a door;
But this walking around
Without touching the ground
Is getting to be quite a bore.*

Gelett Burgess (1860-1951).

<i>I wish my room had</i>	<i>a floor;</i>
<i>I don't care for a door</i>	<i>so much.</i>
<i>It is quite a bore</i>	<i>walking</i>
<i>Around without touch-</i>	<i>ing any ground.</i>

Oliver Wendell Holmes was born before Lear but died after him. His pun on the name Henry Ward Beecher (hen reward Beecher) is probably the most sophisticated limerick of them all. It is possible to keep the first and last lines, and the pun, intact: but the two middle lines of the Kloang, with two double rhymes to negotiate in fourteen syllables, become too tied up. Leaving out the pun gives the Kloang more breathing space. I have seen parodies of this limerick and one might be given. It is not a particularly clean one, but the limerick is a rather shady character so I won't apologise.

*The Reverend Henry Ward Beecher
Called a hen a most elegant creature.
The hen laid on her back
And exposed her egg-track,
"Lay that," she said, "you old Sunday school teacher."*

Edward Lear and Lewis Carroll were the Grand Masters of Nonsense Verse. Lear's example is true blue Nonsense, but Carroll's is Humorous. Gelett Burgess was perhaps the greatest American writer of Nonsense, but his example is not quite Nonsense nor Humorous; it is a good example of Ridiculous.

The Limerick can be looked at in several ways, and each way of looking produces more than one aspect. First look at it as a one-verse stanza in its prose sense. There are two main aspects—the Lear Limerick and the ordinary or non-Lear version. Lear was the father of the Limerick though he did not invent the form; nor does anybody know where the name originated. I have two books of Limericks, one English and one American. The English book is *The Pan Book*

of *Limericks*, edited by Louis Untermeyer, an American. The editor wrote in the Introduction:

“If the origin of the word remained in obscurity, the form did not. It became the favourite of people everywhere, from serious poets to naughty schoolboys, from housewives trying to supply the fifth line in a contest which would win them an automatic dishwasher to their husbands rowdily regaling their companions at a stag party...It embraced every topic, territory, and temperament; nothing was too sacred or too obscene for those five small lines. The limerick absorbed solemnities and absurdities, traditional legends and off-color jokes, devout reflections and downright indecencies without a quiver or the loss of a syllable. It refused to recognize borderlines or any other limits.”

Surely the variations that can be applied to the Limerick's contents, which of course are optional, must count in its favour. What is dirty is a question of taste—some people like cheese that smells, others hot curry. But not all Limericks are dirty, nor are they all flat without dirt. Limericks of the ‘middle way’ are the best. These are the ones with wit, finesse, verbal contortions and such. They are on the way to being nonsense without reaching Lear's “nonsense verses made of moonshine and magic”, as Untermeyer put it.

*There was a cook of County Kerry
Who said, “I put in my curry
More and more chillis
As the weather turns chilly,
Till your tail, lady, turns curly.”*

The editor of the other limerick book I have stated that sex is without question the most desirable gag topic, and he adds that “even in an era of sexual awareness, erotica still titillates, and funny stories about lechery, lewdness, and lasciviousness get the biggest laughs.” Not from me. I'm a prude myself and prefer something that I can chew. As for sex being the greatest laugh-getter, that is rubbish. The greatest laugh maker is laughing gas.

*There was a printer with wit
 Who said, "Four-letter words we omit.
 OUT we always chuck
 Such words like, say, Sh--;
 And of course we never print F---."*

*There was a titty who's a prude
 And she said, "Limericks are crude.
 All right with finesse,
 But sex in excess
 Is a bore not in the mood."*

Anonymous pieces are tricky and you never know whether you have the rhyme words right. I suspect the last rhyme is wrong, and perhaps the original went 'Is a bore not in the nood.'

The Lear Limerick is not the same as an ordinary limerick. I mean in *contents* of course. The point of an ordinary limerick is that it has a plot: it is witty, nitty, nutty, smutty, funny, punny or what have you. A Lear Limerick has no plot; in fact the point is that it has no point. Lear was an artist, and when he discovered the Limerick he wrote that it was "a form of verse lending itself to limitless variety for rhymes and pictures." So it is difficult to say whether the pictures illustrated the verses or the verses were captions for his paintings. Not unlike the question of the egg and the chicken, and which came first. I should imagine that this was the way Lear wrote his limericks (if he did not think out the whole verse in his head.) He would put down the first line, say, "There was an old man with a beard," and then go on to the second line--"Who sat on a horse and he reared," or "It is just as I feared," and go on like this to the end. There is no sense, but Lear's Nonsense transcends ordinary humorous verse and becomes sublime. It is perhaps the most difficult exercise in this particular game.

Double Limerick

*There was an old man with a beard
 Who said, "It is just as I feared.
 Two owls and a hen,
 Four larks and a wren,
 Built their nests, laid their eggs, reared*

*Their chicks, and, just as I feared,
I sat on a horse and he reared.
I fell off behind,
And what do I find?
ALL the eggs broke in my beard."*

A Double Limerick is based on the French Double Ballade. It gives more elbow room for nonsense, but with the restriction of the main rhymes to three sounds, the exercise becomes contrived and cannot rise to the stars in the way a Lear Limerick does.

We now leave the *contents* of the Limerick and go on to its *forms*. I am afraid what I say now will be redundant, especially since coming across C.F. Adams' Sioux poem (chapter 2 above). So I will limit myself to one example each of what I wish to submit.

I came upon the Limerick late in life. Before that I thought the genre a poor, truncated thing that can only be used for single stanzas. And it had no basic form. Anything that rhymes a,a,b,b,a, was a Limerick, and every Tom, Dick and Harry, every poet and naughty schoolboy, could invent his own rhythm and count his own fingers to any syllabic count he wanted. All this was of course to the good but I didn't realise it at the time. It was a frustration until I saw that the Limerick could easily be adapted to the Kloang rhythm, and after that the variations can be applied. The first thing is to find some base where the variations can take off.

Adams used a syllabic count of 8,8,6,6,8, and his scansion is iambic, that is, he used four stresses in the longer lines. Belloc used the same basic rhythm but some of his lines are sprung to ten and even eleven syllables, though the stresses remain the same. I use the basic Kloang rhythm of 7,7,5,5,7, with three stresses in the long lines. Lear seems to have used the same Kloang rhythm of three stresses, though his syllabic count is 8,8,5,5,8. This of course is speaking generally because everybody springs his stresses except Adams.

*There was a Northern belle of Chiang Mai,
Who was bedded by a Southern Thai.
An artist he was,
Dipped his brush in apple sauce
And painted a rose on her butterfly.*

<i>Said the Northern belle,</i>	<i>"Indeed</i>
<i>What I sorely need</i>	<i>are some</i>
<i>Good books I can read</i>	<i>while I</i>
<i>Wait for you to come,</i>	<i>you flutterby."</i>

The syllabic count of the limerick above is 9,9,5,7,10. All the lines except the middle one are sprung, and the last, with 10 syllables, has four stresses instead of the usual three. But the scansion is not the same as a iambic line.

Imitations of Lear

*"Poets and painters I welcome,
And," added the Northern belle, "some
Good books I can read
Are what I sorely need
Till they all to the wall come."*

*I bought her a book of travel,
But she preferred something naval.
"Your thing goes beep-beep,
And I fall asleep,"
She said, "with it on my navel."*

Lear wrote over 200 limericks, of which I have seen between 20 and 30. He repeated the rhyme word in the last line, and of those I have seen only two failed to do so. This was necessity not choice, otherwise his two verses would disintegrate. My two verses above imitate Lear in double rhymes, on the whole a futile exercise.

But the three limericks show something else as well, viz. the Limerick need not be limited to single stanzas. They can also be used as any other regular verse form and run together to make a poem or tell a story.

All the examples so far have been humorous or nonsense verse, so we are not quite done with the limerick. It would be as well to summarise the problem of End-rhymes being monotonous when used for any length. There are two partial solutions. The first is to vary the rhyme positions or rhyme sounds, by using double and para-rhymes. The second solution is to vary the rhythm within the lines themselves. At the end of the last chapter are examples from A.P. Herbert

and Hilaire Belloc. Herbert introduced internal rhymes to vary his rhythms, while Belloc mixed his limericks with quatrains. In the limerick the rhyme scheme can be retained and variations within the lines can be introduced at the same time. These variations are of course optional. And we now return to Sappho, first to her 'sublime fragment'.

Chapter 7

SAPPHO'S SUBLIME FRAGMENT

The Limerick does not appear in any text book of prosody that I have seen. Yet surely it has good claims to being the best stanza form in English. It is an easy form that any anthologised poet and naughty schoolboy can use. More limericks must have been written than all the other standard forms like the Sonnet, Villanelle and Rondeau put together. Then it is the most international of all forms. I have seen limericks written in Greek, Latin and French; in English and Scots; and no doubt the Spaniards, Italians and Germans use them; as well as Scandinavians, East Europeans and even Russians if they can think of anything to laugh about.

The best thing about the limerick lies in the variations in rhythm that it can call up. Of course these variations are optional. They can be of three or four stresses in the longer lines; and two or three stresses in the shorter lines. Then the rhythms can be mixed, or sprung to nine, ten and even eleven syllables. For formal pieces a steady rhythm can be maintained, while for 'good fun pieces' the rhythms can be mixed in the way Hilaire Belloc mixed his in his short story above.

Obviously, with so many writing the limericks, ranging from poets to schoolboys, some are very good and some very bad. But the format should not be judged by these two extremes. Then some are dirty and some are clean, and again the limerick should not be judged on the question of its cleanliness or dirt. It seems that prudes have bullied people into accepting the limerick as an entirely dirty form. I should say that if anyone should write a prayer as a sonnet, it does not follow that all sonnets are pious, or even that that sonnet is a good one. Or the prayer for that matter. And, in theory at least, the limerick can be used for something lighthearted or serious. I say in theory because in actual fact I cannot remember coming across even one serious limerick, let alone a sequence of them. I will submit an example now. It is an 'adaptation' of a Sapphic Quatrain. This format is unrhymed and it uses 11,11,11 and 5 syllables (making a total of 38),

Two Couplet Kloangs use 28 syllables, a Quatrain 30, and a Limerick anything between 31 and 35, all with rhymes. The whole exercise is an interesting experiment.

Sappho

Sappho is supposed to have been born in 615 or 612 B.C. In such a case she would have been a near contemporary of the Buddha (623-543) and she has now passed her twentyfifth centenary. The ancients called Homer The Poet, and they called Sappho The Poetess. Some people consider Sappho to have been the greatest lady poet of all time. Unfortunately she has come down to us in very short fragments, but the ancients quoted enough from her to give an idea of what she wrote and the background to her poems.

Sappho used many stanza forms, but her favourite was a quatrain today called the Sapphic Quatrain, though there is no evidence that she invented it. Of her fragments there are about eight, or ten at the very most, that are considered longer fragments. These have been called the "great and very great poems of Sappho". Except for one complete poem of seven quatrains, they run to about four quatrains plus or the equivalent, each not even covering one sheet of ordinary writing paper. Of these there are two "very great poems of Sappho." One is Fragment No. 1 in the catalogue, of seven stanzas already mentioned; and the other, Fragment No. 31, is of four Quatrains and the first of a fifth stanza.

The books on Sappho that I have are one full book; one half of another book; and one quarter of still another, with about a dozen translations in anthologies made by various hands. The full book is "The Love Songs of Sappho" by Paul Roche. Roche is a poet and he rendered all the fragments, short and long, into the Sapphic measures. The half book is Sir Denys Ross' "Sappho and Alcaeus". The Sappho part runs to about 150 pages; has 12 Greek texts divided into chapters, with straight prose translations, commentaries and interpretations. But the 12 texts are not all longer fragments, some being short fragments run together. The quarter book is Ivor Brown's "Dark Ladies." This book deals with four ladies: Helen of Troy, Sappho of Lesbos, Cleopatra and Shakespeare's Dark Lady. The Sappho part runs to about 80 pages. Brown has collected a few 18th and 19th centuries verses, and he himself translated some with rhymes.

Sappho has been translated innumerable times over the ages. To judge from the comments of the latest of the art on the efforts of their predecessors, the exercise is not easy, though Sappho did not use rhymes. Straight prose translations are all right provided they are accurate, because at least we know what the poet said. Then there is modern syllabic verse translations where prose is cut up arbitrarily into short lines, and Roche says of this exercise in general that it would be better in prose. I would add that the prose translations might be done line by line so that we can see how the poet put his lines together to make a stanza. Roche adds, "modern syllabic verse cannot possibly give an indication of Sappho's tight preoccupation with metre and sound."

The best way to translate is in the form of the original stanzas. In this way we not only know what the poet said but the way he said it. But that is not all. There are still problems of speed and sound, and such things like the feeling of the poem. Both Roche and Brown agree that the Sapphic Quatrain in English is sticky and does not flow in the way Sappho wrote. As for sounds, we do not know how Sappho's Aeolian Greek was pronounced, but according to Roche, she was euphonious no matter in what Greek dialect. And as for the feeling of the poems, we do not know whether Sappho was really putting down her real feelings, or she was putting on something on her readers as poets generally do, or even that the masters have not overinterpreted. Such are some of the problems of translating Sappho that make the exercise difficult. Yet as Greek poetry is not rhymed I cannot help feeling that the difficulties are a little exaggerated. For all that, Sappho comes through well enough even in bad translations. Besides being The Poetess, she was one of the few Timeless Poets.

Translations in rhyme must contain some paraphrase to accommodate the rhyme-words. How much paraphrase is used depends on the ability of the translator, though of course the aim in translation is to keep as much of the sense of the original as possible. In the case of an *imitation*, the aim is to create a new poem based on the ashes of the old. Even if most of the sense is kept, translators consider that imitations should not be called translations.

Reading translations of poetry by themselves is not a very satisfactory pastime. If possible the translations should be read with the original, but in the case of Sappho it is not possible to give the original. The next best thing is to compare two translations, and we are lucky here to have the best of both professors and poets, those of Ross and Roche.

I will start with Fragment 31, to which Roche has given the title "I more than envy him". This is the second of the two "very great poems of Sappho". It is in four Sapphic stanzas plus the first line of the next, and is the most anthologised of Sappho's pieces. Besides the translations by Ross and Roche, I have seen four others: two in the Sapphic metre (one with rhymes added), one in syllabic verse and the last an imitation.

Sappho: Fragment 31

(Prose Translation)

*Fortunate as the gods he seems to me, that man who sits opposite you, and
listens nearby to your sweet voice
And your lovely laughter; that, I vow, has set my heart within my breast
a-flutter. For when I look at you a moment, then I have no power to speak,
But my tongue keeps silence, straightway a subtle flame has stolen beneath my
flesh, with my eyes I see nothing, my ears are humming,
A cold sweat covers me, and a trembling seizes me all over, I am paler than
grass, I seem to be not far short of death....
But all must be endured, since....*

Sir Denys Ross.

I more than envy him

(Sapphic Quatrains)

*He is a god in my eyes, that man,
Given to sit in front of you
And close to himself sweetly to hear
The sound of you speaking.
Your magical laughter—this I swear--
Batters my heart—my breast astir--
My voice when I see you suddenly near
Refuses to come.*

*My tongue breaks up and a delicate fire
Runs through my flesh; I see not a thing
With my eyes, and all that I hear
In my ears is a hum.*

*The sweat runs down, a shuddering takes
Me in every part and pale as the drying
Grasses, then, I think I am near
The moment of dying.*

(fragment)

*But I must bear with it all
because I'm now a beggar...*

Paul Roche.

Quoted by Longinus in his *On the Sublime*; also mentioned by Catullus and Plutarch. I have also entered the lists, but not having enough Greek I cannot translate. So I have made "adaptations" from Roche's translations into the Kloang forms (mainly in Couplets, with a few Quatrains inserted.) I have tried to keep as much of the sense as possible, but with rhymes, as stated above, it is necessary to resort to paraphrase. There is no problem about speed because the Thai forms use less words than the Sapphic Quatrain; and as for sound, euphony is a must in Thai poetry, but of course my sound will not be the euphony of Sappho.

I was told that what I produce is Thai poetry. I don't see why this should be so at all. Roche translated into Sapphic forms and his efforts are not called Greek but English. I adapted Sapphic forms (via Roche) into Thai forms in the English language, so why should they be called Thai? So to make things clear, I adapted one piece into an English form—the Limerick! Would this be English or Thai? It happens that the piece in limericks is Sappho's Fragment 31, which is her 'sublime fragment'. I have also, perhaps mistakenly, introduced a little more feeling than the plain factual statements in the translations of Ross and Roche. It does not matter. What matters is that to turn Sappho's sublime fragment into limericks must be the height of the sublime and ridiculous. Yet the limerick in its formal dress and on its best behaviour can hardly be called ridiculous. After that we leave the Limerick and return to the Kloang.

I MORE THAN ENVY HIM

(Limericks)

*Like a god that man I place--
 In front of you, face to face,
 He sits, and near you
 He can sweetly hear you
 Converse, devouring your grace.*

*Your laughter so magical,
 I swear, bestirs my heart and all
 Of a sudden, my voice
 Can produce no noise.*

*Delicate fires then enthrall
 My flesh, and my eyes can see
 Not a thing when, suddenly,
 You appear, Oh, so near;
 And my ears only hear
 The buzzes of a busy bee.*

*I perspire and feel like crying;
 Complexion pale like the drying
 Grasses; and I fear
 That it must be near
 The moment of my dying.*

(Limerette)

*I am a beggar now
 And must bear with it, I vow...*

Chapter 8

THE KLOANG IN ACTUAL USE

At the start, the late Honorable Amado Yuzon, Philippino poet and Founder-President of United Poets Laureate Internation (UPLI), asked me to write a paper to introduce the Thai Kloang form. The reason was because he wanted UPLI to hold an International Kloang Competition jointly with World Poetry Society Intercontinental (WPSI). The competition was announced, and the first part of what I wrote was published in *Laurel Leaves*, official organ of UPLI. Unfortunately I got ill and had to go to hospital, where I stayed nearly a year. So the scheme fell through.

Yuzon was a poet of International repute and a superb rhyme maker and his collection, *The Citizen's Poems*, was highly praised by competent people. He took to the Kloang like a duck to water, and we corresponded in that medium. (At that time I had not as yet introduced the Couplet form and we used the Quatrain.) The Kloang can be used for all sorts of things, from eulogies of gods and kings to stories in Billingsgate slang, so I will print a few verses from our letters. I will comment at the same time.

On Reading "The Citizen's Poems"

<i>My friend, your poetry</i>	<i>is young</i>
<i>It is fresh, strong,</i>	<i>robust</i>
<i>Your song is the song</i>	<i>of youth</i>
<i>With flesh and blood, lust</i>	<i>and naivety.</i>
<i>I am of an old-</i>	<i>er race</i>
<i>A race with a face</i>	<i>to save</i>
<i>My poetry's a phase</i>	<i>of age</i>
<i>Very, very brave</i>	<i>but decadent.</i>

From Yuzon's reply

<i>You write enlight' ningly</i>	<i>good prose</i>
<i>To translate you chose</i>	<i>samples</i>
<i>That smell like a rose</i>	<i>at dawn,</i>
<i>That fade like temples</i>	<i>when day-lights close.</i>

The comparison of a verse to the smell of a rose and the sight of temples at dusk may seem rather a mixed metaphor in English, but in a Thai kloang this would be quite in order; in fact a Thai reader would probably supply his own sound, either of bells ringing or monks chanting as the poem may strike him.

On Receiving Praise from Mr. Yuzon

<i>Yes, yes, Indra praised</i>	<i>Brahma</i>
<i>Brahma praised Indra</i>	<i>in turn</i>
<i>Yes, yes, poets they are</i>	<i>superb</i>
<i>Yes, yes, yes, both earn</i>	<i>their mutual praise.</i>
<i>Many thanks for your</i>	<i>letter</i>
<i>I could do better</i>	<i>or worse</i>
<i>Depends on whether</i>	<i>you like</i>
<i>To read poetry, verse</i>	<i>or doggerel.</i>
<i>I am simply swamped</i>	<i>with work</i>
<i>Work I cannot shirk</i>	<i>nor shift</i>
<i>Unlike an Arab, Turk</i>	<i>or Jew</i>
<i>I cannot get a lift</i>	<i>from a Camel.</i>
<i>I will write again</i>	<i>when free</i>
<i>And I will not be</i>	<i>so terse</i>
<i>I write hurriedly</i>	<i>today</i>
<i>So I write in verse—</i>	<i>Hope you don't mind.</i>

The above verses contain more words and rhymes than substance. The only thought I had was Indra praised Brahma and Brahma praised Indra, and this single thought is expanded to four quatrains. And yet however thinly the subject matter has been spread, these are true kloangs, because there is a thread running through the sequence (the thread of course being many thanks for your letter; I am frightfully busy and will write again.) Normally verses like these

would be torn up, and I only print them here to show that a sequence of quatrains must have some connecting link to bind them together.

In another letter, a long one of which three verses are given, Yuzon introduced a variation in the form by adding an end rhyme to close up the quatrains, and poets may find this device attractive.

<i>This morning, I got</i>	<i>letter</i>
<i>And I felt better</i>	<i>a lot;</i>
<i>In rhymes and meter</i>	<i>I could</i>
<i>Now see what and what not</i>	<i>to make me good.</i>
<i>Worms from the petal</i>	<i>must go:</i>
<i>And rust from the raw</i>	<i>metal.</i>
<i>Why can I not so</i>	<i>evoke</i>
<i>From their sum-total</i>	<i>a master-stroke?</i>
<i>And now I will close.</i>	<i>Regards</i>
<i>To you, to all bards,</i>	<i>to Muse,</i>
<i>Whose holy standards</i>	<i>can end</i>
<i>Armed conflicts and choose</i>	<i>Peace as Man's Friend.</i>

I cannot say I like Yuzon's additional rhymes. They are not functional and clip Pegasus' wings to no purpose. However, if poets in other languages like them, then let them be used optionally, like Internal Rhymes. In any case, in the Kloang in Thai, the first and third lines can have a Soi (already mentioned elsewhere) which is optional. It is a good flowing device from line to line but is a little complicated in English, so I try to dispense with the Soi altogether. Yuzon soon gave up his experiments of additional rhymes.

In another letter Yuzon explained the aims of UPLI, which was to use the combined voice of poets with their pleas for love as a war deterrent. I will quote one quatrain where he gave the manifesto of UPLI, so to say.

<i>Our world crusade is</i>	<i>for peace</i>
<i>Our mission is this--</i>	<i>to dare</i>
<i>To use poetry's pleas</i>	<i>for love--</i>
<i>This our cause, our care,</i>	<i>our obsession.</i>

The reason for bringing in the Hon. Amado Yuzon is because some people think that the Kloang is difficult to write. I do not agree and think that any com-

petant rhymer can handle the format easily enough. But to call Yuzon a competent rhymer is to underrate him altogether. He was an internationally recognized poet in his lifetime and his name was submitted for the Nobel Prize. But this was nearly twenty years ago. After that I got ill and went to hospital for nearly a year. When I came out I had to leave the pollution of Bangkok, and came to Chiang Mai where I have been since.

I left poetry for many years and returned gradually, first to Thai poetry, and then to English. I developed the Couplet Kloang, a form I had already introduced casually, and then went on to the Limerick with an idea of mixing them with the Kloang. This I never quite managed to do. The Couplet in Thai is tricky because seven of the fourteen syllables come under tone rules, but in English it must surely be the easiest rhymed form there is; easier than the Limerick which in turn is easier than the Quartet Kloang. The Couplet is not used by itself in the way I have used it in English; it is used mixed with the Quatrain in a genre called *Lilit*. There are several short examples mixing the two forms in this book. I will use a Sapphic example here. It is Fragment 1, Sappho's only complete poem and her masterpiece. It is in seven Quatrains and Roche calls it "Call to Aphrodite".

Sappho: Fragment 1

(Prose translation)

Richly-enthroned immortal Aphrodite, daughter of Zeus, weaver of wiles, I pray to you: break not my spirit, Lady, with heartache or anguish;

But hither come, if ever in the past you heard my cry from afar, and marked it, leaving your father's house,

Your golden chariot yoked: sparrows beautiful and swift conveyed you, with rapid wings a-flutter, above the dark earth from heaven through the mid-air;

And soon they were come, and you, Fortunate, with a smile on your immortal face, asked what ails me now, and why am I calling now,

And what in my heart's madness I most desire to have: 'Whom now must I persuade to join your friendship's ranks? Who wrongs you, Sappho?

For if she flees, she shall soon pursue; and if she receives not gifts, yet shall she give; and if she loves not, she shall soon love even against her will.'

Come to me now also, and deliver me from cruel anxieties; fulfil all that my heart desires to fulfil, and be yourself my comrade-in-arms.

Sir Denys Ross.

Roche made three versions of the poem, the second and third being "further attempts on the part of the translator to extract the beauty of the original." All three versions are of a very high standard and I do not know which to choose. So I will select the second version which is in the strict Sapphic measure, though one line has dropped out from the last stanza.

CALL TO APHRODITE

(Sapphic Quatrains)

*Aphrodite--deathless--chaired in splendour,
 Daughter of Zeus and sweet intriguer,
 Listen and not let my love be routed
 By sorrows, my lady.*

*Come as before when before you hearkened
 To the faraway call of my voice and leaving
 Your father's house you came on a golden
 Chariot harnessed*

*To the beat of the wings of your two swans teaming
 Fair and strong as they hummed on high
 Swift through the sky as they brought you downwards
 To the dark of the ground.*

*Then with a smile, O you blest lady,
 Demanding on your endless features
 What was it troubled me now, what made me
 Come to you calling*

*Now, and what did my heart want?
 "Whom shall I now make over to love you?
 Who is it, Sappho, that's offending?
 Let her be running,*

*Soon she'll run after. Let her refuse your
 Gifts, she'll be giving. Let her not love you,
 Soon she'll be loving--like it or no--"....
 O come to me now,*

*Unloose me again from this merciless craving:
 Do what I long to have done--O my own
 Comrade in battle.*

Paul Roche.

I would have thought that this masterpiece of Sappho would be the most anthologised of her poems. Such is not the case. The only full versions I have seen are the four translations made by Ross and Roche. Ivor Brown translated one stanza and collected three others in his book, one of the 18th century and the other two 19th. Perhaps the reason is because Sappho is difficult to translate after all. The difficulty seems to lie in the words of 'hushed agony' that Sappho put into the goddess' mouth. Brown says:

"The first of the two well-preserved pieces is a Hymn to Aphrodite, begging the aid of the goddess, who must leave the skies, assuage the troubled mind of the singer, and make room for Sappho in the heart of her loved one....The beginning of the hymn invokes the blest goddess of the glistening throne and smile of deathless beauty to descend from the heavens in a bird-drawn chariot. (The translators vary the rendering of the Greek "strouthoi" between swans, doves and sparrow.) Will Aphrodite come to Sappho's aid as an ally in the strife of love? Here the poetess uses language of rich texture and thus makes more striking the following simplicity of the cry from the heart. "Who is it, Sappho, does thee wrong?" Again a literal translation misses the plaintiveness, the hushed agony of the Greek."

As for the swans and the sparrows, Ross says that the Greek *strouthoi* means sparrows and there is no evidence of it meaning anything else. Other professors argue that *strouthos* is generic and can mean any bird, particularly a large bird; and in Roman times the traditional bird for drawing Venus' car was the swan, something the Romans might have borrowed from the Greeks. It seems the Romans liked their art to be realistic, and they wanted Venus to be human both in shape and size. I think Ross has the better case and sparrows would be a better manifestation of the god's arrival, who of course would be invisible to ordinary people gathered at the ceremony, if there was a ceremony, than swans. It is difficult to imagine swans arriving from the sky even without the invisible chariot. Sappho of course, being the goddess' shaman or slave, would be able to see her and converse with her. ("...Eros my slave and of course you too, Sappho"--fragment.) This sort of thing is still believed in by some people, though of course the phenomena can be explained as a coincidence. But I am following Roche's translations in my adaptations, and I follow him here too. Swans are easier to rhyme than sparrows.

CALL TO APHRODITE

(Couplet and Quatrain Kloangs)

O, Aphrodite, one

O, Daughter of Zeus,

Let not my heart be

*Come to me now as
You heard me cry (sore
From afar; I implore
Father's house depart,*

*Your golden chariot,
By beautiful swans,
From heaven down on
Dark earth; and bringing*

Then, with a rare smile

“What may your trouble be,

“Whom do you wish me to

“You will be seeing

“She who spurns your gifts,

“She who does not love,

Come to me now, again,

Free me from this craving,

I long to have done,

*Who, on dappled throne,
is immortal;*

Weaver of ruses,

I address thee:

Broken, my lady,

routed by sorrows.

*before;
my heart)
from your
and harnessing*

*which, drawn
winging
to this
you suddenly.*

On your features, while

You asked, “What, now ?

That makes you call to me,

heart beseeching ?

Make over to love you ?

Tell me, Sappho.

Her, who is fleeing,

chase after you;

Soon will her heart shift,

and be giving;

Soon will she approve,

like it or no—”

Free me from this pain

so merciless;

From this heart-raving--

Do for me what

O, my own, my one

ally indeed.

(Adapted from Paul Roche's *The Love Songs of Sappho*)

Chapter 9

ONE FOR THE ROAD

One more chapter, I think, to tie up loose ends and finish this paper with another Sapphic fragment. Kloangs can have what is called a 'soi' in the first and third lines--a sense-word followed by a sound-word. The sound-word part of the Soi invariably has no sense, and it is usually low-toned; and I need hardly add that there are certain conventions in their use viz. some Sois are exclamatory, some questioning, some addressed to males or females, and others to younger worthies than your good self. In Thai some people have tried using two sense-words but without success, though two sound-words would pass very well. In English I have tried to avoid them altogether though this means giving up a good 'flowing-device' in a stanza. There are a few examples and there is no need to point them out.

In the first and fourth chapters I gave the rhyme-schemes of two variations of the Quatrain Kloang. The first is of a Kloang Suparb that uses thirty syllables, and the other of a Kloang Dun, or fast-moving Kloang, that uses two syllables less. Also in the Kloang Dun the rhyme positions in the second, third and fourth lines can be varied. I have not given any example in the quatrain form, and will supply quick examples in Couplets to show how the thing works.

<i>Just cut short its tail</i>	<i>And it wags what's avail- able.</i>
<i>That's all for today,</i>	<i>Hip, Hip, Hip, Hooray three times.</i>
<i>Steel's stronger than tin;</i>	<i>It is far more in-</i> <i>destructible.</i>
<i>But some prefer tin,</i>	<i>Which is quite incom-</i> <i>prehensible.</i>

Of the ways round the monotony of end-rhymes, rhyming on the penultimate syllable of a rhyme-word is a very effective way. Rhymes should be audible,

and when they are moved too far apart, say with three lines in between, I am not convinced that they can be heard and their only purpose is to end a line. There is an example in English of this penultimate rhyming that I have come across. It is by Richard Wilbur, a very civilised poet, and he varies the length of his lines to make the rhymes flow in a way not unlike in a Thai Kloang with its rhymes inside the lines.

Richard Wilbur: from "Piccola Commedia"

*He is no one I really know,
The sun-charred gaunt young man
By the highway's edge in Kansas
Thirty-odd years ago.*

*On a tourist-cabin veranda
Two middle-aged women sat;
One, in a white dress, fat,
With a rattling glass in her hand,...*

*And an Orange Crush and gin.
"This state," she said, "is hell."
Her thin friend cackled, "Well, dear,
You've got to fight sin with sin."*

*"No harm in a drink; my stars!"
Said the fat one, jerking her head.
"And I'll take no lip from Ed,
Him with his damn cigars."*

(from *A Geography of Poets*)

The Kloang in Thai is a staid and sober thing. It has flexibilities, as much as anyone could want, but the variations are mild compared to the rowdiness of the Limerick. I am not saying that the Kloang cannot be applied to something lively; but if a Thai poet wanted to write something with the rowdiness of the Limerick, he would probably change to some other allied stanza. So the Kloang and Limerick can be used together, and each should complement the other.

The Couplet Kloang in English is not a distinguished format. Its best point seems to be that it is a short, rhymed stanza that can move at a faster lick than

the end-rhymed English Couplet, and even the unrhymed Japanese Haiku. But there is no doubt it can be used as connecting stanzas with the Quatrain and Limerick. Recently I started to introduce another short Thai stanza form. It is called a *Chabang* and is of the Garp family. It is of sixteen syllables, divided into 6/4/6; and its rhyme scheme is as follows;

Rhyme Scheme of the Garp Chabang 16

0 0 0 0 0 a	0 0 0 a
0 0 0 0 0 b (throw word)	
0 0 0 0 0 b	0 0 0 b
0 0 0 0 0 c (throw word)	

The last word of a stanza is called a 'throw word' to which the next stanza must attach itself. In this way a Thai poem of one page to a thousand would be connected together from the first line to the last. English stanzas are not connected in the same way and the best thing to do about these throw words is to keep them as optional to be used or not in the same way as internal rhymes and alliteration. As for scansion, the stanza can be read as a tetrametre iambic line, or scanned in some other way and mixed together. The best mixed scansion is probably like this:

0 0 0/0 0 0	0 0 0 0
0 0/0 0/0 0.	

A few useless examples. The Limerick has a syllable count of 8,8,5,5,8, and can be scanned in anyway you care to count.

<i>One Two Three Four Five</i>	<i>Six Seven</i>
<i>Eight Nine Ten Eleven</i>	<i>Egad!</i>
<i>Hundreds, Thousands, then</i>	<i>Millions,</i>
<i>Billions, Trillions, Ad</i>	<i>Infinitum.</i>

* * *

<i>One Two Three Four Five</i>	<i>My fingers I strive</i>
	<i>to count them all.</i>

* * *

*Count One Two Three Four Five Six S'ven;
 Count on, Eight Nine Ten Eleven;
 Count Thousands, /Millions,
 Billions/and Trillions;
 Count, you computerized children!*

* * *

<i>One Two Three/Four Five Six</i>	<i>S'ven Eight Nine, mix</i>
<i>With Tens, /Thousands, /Millions,</i>	
<i>To Billions/and Trillions,</i>	<i>Until Zillions—</i>
<i>That's Ad/infinitum.</i>	

The sense of the examples may be banal, but I hope the four forms show the flexibility in the rhythms that can be used. So the forms can be used together, and all four are easy. If the Limerick can be used by anthologised poets and naughty schoolboys, then surely the Quatrain Kloang can be used by unanthologised poets and naughty schoolgirls. But all the forms are rhymed, and people who do not use rhymes cannot play.

It seems to me that today there are too many people who want to become poets without first bothering to learn their trade. They condemn rhymes without trying out any themselves. This is rather like someone who has never taken a Mediterranean cruise with his favourite girlfriend. He condemns the isles of Sappho without ever having been there, and thinks that the Mediterranean consists of Nice, Cannes and Monte Carlo. So how can he know the pleasures of a Mediterranean cruise? Or the pleasures of his girlfriend for that matter. Rhymes are optional; they can be left out or used as necessary. And it seems to me that the best thing about rhymes is that subjects for poetry are not easy to come by, so a banal subject might just pass muster with rhymes; never without.

I mentioned the Japanese Haiku above. Of the hundreds if not thousands of Asian poetic forms only Japanese stanzas have come to the notice of Western poets. But I have only heard of the Haiku and do not know whether things like Ajinomoto, Tomatomi, Bananani, are poetry forms or something you can eat. And the only Haiku form I know is the 5,7,5 variety. It seems full of ritual. I understand the poem must start with something to do with nature; the Haiku must be a statement; no adjectives or any description is allowed; no rhymes, no puns, no humour or anything of that sort is allowed; and the poem becomes a telegram in 17 syllables.

I suppose the Kloang is the second eastern form to be introduced to Western poets and scholars--at least I have never seen any Persian, Indian or Chinese forms used in English or in translations. The Kloang is quite different to the Haiku; it is free-wheeling and can be used for anything—from eulogies to travelogues, for sermons or stories of any kind. The two make a complete contrast.

I also said above that Thai Prosody is top of the class--world class. Perhaps I can add a few words of explanation to this. Every race and nation have their own cultures and no doubt they are proud of what they have. I will limit my remarks to the fine arts of the countries of Southeast Asia only.

In drama, dancing and music, the Khon or masked play of the Thai and their *pinpat-dontri* (music) are no better or worse than the court dancing of the Central Javanese and temple dancing of the Balinese with their gamellan music. In architecture and stone sculpturing, the Central Javanese of the 8th and 9th centuries, and the Kambujans of a couple of centuries later, produced wonders of the ancient world in Boroburdur and Prambanan, and Nakorn Wat. The Thai never produced anything that could even be remotely compared to these complexes. I use the word 'ancient' because the Javanese and Cambodians have long given up these arts. The Thai however still retain two aspects of their old culture to this day. I refer to bronze casting and their prosody--to say nothing about Muay Thai, or Siamese boxing, which is said to be tops in the martial arts.

By 'bronze casting' I do not mean bronze candle sticks, pots and pans or anything like that. I refer to figure art of monumental size, ranging from natural to five or six times natural-size. The Thai have been casting Buddha images for six hundred years and more. The immense Sri Sakayamuni image now at Wat Sutat in Bangkok, of five times natural size, was cast at Sukhothai in 1357, long before Cellini cast his *Perseus*. Since that time the Thai never lost the art of bronze casting and today an upright image is being manufactured which I am told will be the tallest standing Buddha image in the world. Bronze casting is not art; it is a medium for creating art, and there are many foundries in Bangkok and Chiang Mai. Of course other centres cast bronze too--Rome, Paris, London and no doubt some cities in the United States; and I am not saying that any capital or country produces better casts than any other. I might say however that casting in Bangkok is probably much cheaper than in Europe or America.

The second aspect of Thai culture is its Prosody. Thai is a tonal, monosyllabic language and its poems and spontaneous rural rhyme-singing are based on

stress used as in natural speech. But Thai also has a great many Indian loan-words. These are polysyllabic and Indian prosody is quantitative. The Thai combine this Indian quantity from Pali and Sanskrit prosody with stress, to which they add tones and produce a very rich prosody. Surely only the prosodies of other languages that combine all three ingredients can match Thai prosody. However the Kloang that I have introduced in English lacks the tones of the Thai, so what I have produced is only half of the cake.

This about covers everything. I will end with another of Sappho's longer fragment and two short ones. The long piece is No. 2 in the catalogue to which Roche has given the title, "This place is calling you, Aphrodite." It is of four Sapphic quatrains plus one extra line. The writing is on a potsherd of the third century B.C. and is one of the two oldest extant fragments of Sappho. According to Ross, there was a quatrain at the front (with the last line still extant), where the name or identification of the goddess should be given; and there should have been one or more quatrains at the end to show for what purpose the god was invited. What remains is a pastoral, a medium that someone has remarked that no one has surpassed Sappho since her time.

Roche's translation has a lot of incidental rhymes which make his lines flow smoothly, though one line is missing from the penultimate verse due to lacunae in the text. I have changed the title of my adaptation to "Call to Cypris" to pair with Roche's "Call to Aphrodite". I think I have collected all the sense and imagery of the original, but somehow the equivalent of a whole quatrain has disappeared. The two short fragments are done as a Quatrain Kloang and a Limerick.

Sapphic Fragment No. 2

(Prose translation)

*Hither to me from Crete, to this holy temple, where is your pleasant grove
of apple-trees, and altars fragrant with smoke of frankincense;
Therein cold water babbles through apple-branches, and the place is all shadowy
with roses, and from the quivering leaves comes slumber down;
Therein a meadow, where horses pasture, blossoms with flowers of spring, and
gently blowing breezes....;
There, Cyprian goddess, take...and pour gracefully in golden chalices
nectar that is mingled with our festivity.*

Sir Denis Ross.

The place is calling you, Aphrodite

(Sapphic Quatrains)

*Come to us here from Crete--to this holy
Temple: place of your own most pleasing
Apple groves and altars smoking
Sweet with incense.*

*Here where the waters trickle coolly
Through apple boughs, and ground is shady
With roses, down from the leaves that shiver
Sleep drops slowly.*

*Here is a meadow, horses feeding;
Spring profuse with flowers, and breezes
Gently seeping.*

*Here then Cyprian goddess bring your
Lovable person; into golden
Goblets stir your nectar, mingling
With our feasting.*

Paul Roche.

Call to Cypris

(Quatrains and Couplet Kloangs)

<i>From Crete, O Goddess</i>	<i>of Love,</i>
<i>Come here, to your grove,</i>	<i>your shrine;</i>
<i>Fragrant, curling above</i>	<i>altars,</i>
<i>Incense smoke divine.</i>	
	<i>Cool the apple boughs;</i>
<i>Cool the waters, their ways</i>	<i>tracing;</i>
<i>Cool the rose leaves, lazing</i>	<i>slumber;</i>
<i>Cool the meadows, grazing</i>	<i>horses;</i>
<i>Cool the near-summer</i>	<i>with fresh spring breezes</i>
<i>Come, O Cypris, fill up</i>	<i>With nectar this cup</i>
	<i>of gold, stirring,</i>
<i>Mingling gracefully,</i>	<i>Our festivity</i>
	<i>with this feasting.</i>

Two short fragments

(Quatrain and Limerick)

<i>The Golden Muses</i>	<i>gave me</i>
<i>True success. To be</i>	<i>my lot</i>
<i>Is immortality.</i>	<i>I know</i>
<i>Once dead I shall not</i>	<i>be forgotten.</i>

And Hermes Said

Great glory yet will come on
You, Sappho, where shines Phaeton--
'Mongst the gods and men
Ev'rywhere, even
In the halls of Acheron.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Mom Chao Chand Chirayu Rajani, or Tan Chand for short, or Prince Chand, was born of a poetic dynasty. His father, H.H. Prince Bidyalongkorn, was one of "*the Bangkok greats*"; both his grandfathers were poets; and among his forebears was King Lertla (Rama II), generally accepted to have been the greatest Thai poet of all time. Prince Chand is a sixth generation poet in a direct line of descent from the founder of the Bangkok dynasty.

Born in 1910, Prince Chand was educated in England between 1921-1932, in London (Dulwich College) and Cambridge (Gonville and Caius College.) There were no airlines in those days and a sea journey took nearly a month. As Prince Chand himself put it, he was exiled for ten years. When he finally returned to Siam he had to relearn the Thai alphabet and, as Prince Chand again put it, he has two second languages and no first language.

He was soon writing Thai poems in his father's group of poet-friends, beginning in the Glon genre but soon took up the Kloang. Also he experimented in using Thai forms in English and in this way started on the track that turned him into a bi-lingual poet.

Thai is a tonal language and Thai prosody, which combines quantity and stress with strict tone rules, is, as Prince Chand remarks, "*top of the class--world class.*" He has written Thai Kloangs in English where the forms and varied rhythmic sounds of the originals have been retained. But he admits that in English he cannot cope with the Thai tones which can be heard not only from musical instruments and the singing voice, but also by the inner ear. This is the music of nature that frequently appears in Thai poetry. Prince Chand adds that as the verses he has submitted lack this true musical quality, what he has produced is only part of the cake.

Now in his seventies Prince Chand is living in a pastoral setting with one of his three sons in Chiang Mai province in Northern Thailand. He spends his time in doing research on the ancient history of Southeast Asia with particular reference to present-day Siam, and with his iconoclastic approach has managed to upset one or two apple carts. Also he has been writing fantasies in verse where he put himself and his rural scene into the stories. Nothing romantic, he says, nothing realistic, but simply Thai. Prince Chand's aim is not to write poetry but to introduce Thai prosody to English-speaking poets.

