MAPA-RHYMES IN CLASSICAL THAI POETRY

ABSTRACT

Descriptions of rhyme patterns in classical Thai verse are found in Thai versification textbooks and Thai literary anthologies. These descriptions are meticulous in their discussion and detail. Because of this detail, it appears that each verse form has its own idiosyncratic pattern that must be learned individually. To determine the validity of this impression, this study examines and compares the rhyme patterns of the five classical Thai verse forms: rāay, khloōn, kāap, chān, and kleeen. The study concludes that the rhyme schemes are not idiosyncratic; but, rather, they are based on three primary couplet patterns (meta-rhymes), with the use of each pattern dependent upon the number of lines (wāk) in each stanza. These patterns, moreover, are highly conservative in that they have exhibited little or no change throughout the history of Thai literature.
Meta-Rhymes in Classical Thai Poetry

Poetry has always held a significant position in the literature of Thailand. Working with five different verse forms, Thai poets, over the centuries, have created a body of work that compares in quality with the very best of Western literature. Much of the beauty of this poetry derives from the mastery of rhyme patterns that characterize all forms of classical Thai verse.

Traditionally, descriptions of classical Thai verse forms and rhyme patterns have been found in Thai versification textbooks known as chânthâlák (Pali chanda – prosody; laksana – characteristics) and in Thai literary anthologies. Phya Uppakit Silpasarn’s Lâk phaasâa thay [Principles of the Thai language] (1968) is generally considered the best of the chânthâlák series and Phrañ náʔ nákhecn’s Prâwât wannâ-khâdii thay sâmrap nâkstiksâa [History of Thai Literature for Students] (1964) the best of the anthologies. Sources in Western languages have

1. The following phonetic transcription is used in this study:

**Consonants**

Bilabial Labio-Alveolar Palatal Velar Glottal Dental  

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stops</th>
<th>P ph b t th d c ch k kh</th>
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<td>Fricatives</td>
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<td>Nasals</td>
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<td>Trills</td>
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<td>i, ii, ia</td>
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<td>Mid</td>
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<td>e, ee</td>
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<tr>
<td>Low</td>
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<td>a, aa</td>
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**Tones**  

- mid tone  
- low tone  
- falling tone  
- high tone  
- rising tone

All of these studies recognize the importance of rhyme for Thai poetry, both as a source of aesthetic pleasure and as a feature in constructing stanzas (see Hudak 1981 for details). A few of the studies discuss similarities in the rhyme schemes between two or three of the Thai verse forms (Uppakit 1968; Hudak 1981). None, however, investigates the rhyme schemes of all five of the classical Thai verse forms: rāay, khloop, kāap, chān, and klcen. Because of this lack of a single study on rhyme in classical Thai poetry, this paper considers the following. First, it examines Thai stanzaic components and specific types of rhyme required for stanzas; second, it compares the rhyme schemes of the classical verse forms and reduces them to those primary patterns, meta-rhymes, that consistently appear in all the classical forms.

Descriptions of all the major verse types in the chānthālāk consist of a scheme of each verse type, a list or discussion of the constraints on each form, and a short example that, in theory, exhibits the constraints, although this is not always the case. In some versions, there are attempts to provide a history of the verse forms. All chānthālāk list the constituents requisite for a poem: khānā?, the structure of each verse type; phāyaan, the specific number of syllables set for each verse type; and sāmphāt, the rhyme requirements.

The khānā? of a Thai poem consists of several components which are found in all verse forms, their number and arrangement dependent upon the verse type. Each verse type has a required number of syllables, phāyaan, arranged into groups called wāk. Usually two wāk complete a line of poetry, a bāat; and one or more bāat form a stanza, bōt. Each stanza exhibits specific rhyme patterns. A typical stanza without the rhyme pattern appears as follows.

2. Each 0 represents one syllable. In Thai, wāk making up a bāat are generally printed on the same line.
While the kháná? describes the basic requirements for the structure of a particular verse type, it is the rhyming patterns that create the greatest variation and often determine the excellence of the poem. In fact, it is the rhyme that signals a poem, for without rhyme, a poem cannot exist in Thai. Mosel (1961:9) relates an incident in which Prince Bidyalankarana, wishing to determine the importance of rhyme in poetry, inserted a few stanzas of blank verse into a lecture on poetry, only to discover that the audience was completely unaware of the blank verse because of the lack of rhyme. Rhyme in Thai can be divided into two major types: 1) sâmphât nèck — external rhyme, or rhyme that occurs between end syllables of wák; and 2) sâmphât nay — internal rhyme, or rhyme that occurs between syllables within a wák.

External rhyme, considered compulsory for poetry, is always the type in which two syllables are alike in all respects except the tones and the initial consonants. In earlier poetry the tones on the syllables also had to agree for the syllables to rhyme. In the following example taken from the klccn classic? Ìnâw of Rama II (1809-24), these external rhymes are underlined.

dêckmây thûk phan kê bandaan
flower every kind then produce
bêckbaan keêsêcêkhâcêcê klin
bloom pollen spread in air smell
phummarêetrên rêcê booybin
bee fly in circles call fly
prâsâan slan phian phinphât khêcê
unite sound as orchestra ring

(ktêcê rhymes with the final syllable of the second wák of the following stanza, linking the two.)

Flowers of every kind bloom and produce fragrant pollen floating
and spreading in the air. Bees fly in a circle buzzing, uniting their sounds like the sounds of an orchestra.

External rhyme is considered compulsory in poetry for several reasons. First, it helps create the melodious and pleasing quality (phayré?) essential to Thai poetic aesthetics. Repeatedly, in literary anthologies, in printed introductions to the poetry classics, in reviews of new literary compositions, and in the poems themselves, highly esteemed and valued works are described as phayré?.

A second reason for external rhyme is discussed by Mosel in “Sound and Rhythm in Thai Poetry.” In that article, Mosel (1959:31) claims that Thai verse forms, with the exception of chan, have demarcative rhythm, which “…is obtained by grouping the syllables into a fixed number or groups with a fixed number of syllables.” These groups are marked by pauses at the end of each group. To emphasize these groups, external rhyme pairs are used. Kuo (1980:22) also makes the claim that external rhyme patterns help to determine and to mark rhythmic groupings.

Finally, external rhyme is instrumental in the formation of stanzas, for it orders formalized patterns of syllables. In the formation of stanzas, external rhyme is discussed in terms of rounds or râat. A râat yay (major round) is completed when the end syllables of two wâk rhyme. One completed râat yay is necessary for one stanza. In his discussion of klccn, Phya Uppakit Silpasarn (1968:359) maintains that the minimum number of bâat per stanza is generally two (each bâat consists of two wâk) because the râat yay begun in the first bâat is completed in the second. Schematically, such a klccn stanza appears as follows with the râat yay linking the second wâk of the first bâat with the first wâk of the second bâat:

\[
\begin{array}{l}
\text{bâat 1} \\
\text{a} & 000000 \\
\text{b} & 000000 \\
\text{bâat 2} \\
\text{c} & 000000 \\
\text{d} & 000000 \\
\end{array}
\]

In maalinii chân 15, however, a stanza consists of a single bâat divided into three wâk:

\[
\begin{array}{l}
a & \star\star\star\star\star\star00 \\
b & 0\star00 \\
c & \star00 \\
\end{array}
\]

3. The chân meters are based on two different types of syllables designated as light and heavy. Each * represents a light syllable and each 0 a heavy one.
The single bàat of this meter completes a stanza because the rûat yay begun on the last syllable of wák a is completed on the last syllable of wák b. The basis for the Thai stanza, then, is the couplet, "the most rudimentary form of stanzaic organization..." (Fussell 1979:129). Phya Uppakit's claim that the minimum number of bàat per stanza is generally two probably results from the fact that most popular verse forms, including the klccn stanzas, have stanzas of two bàat.

Conceivably, a single complete stanza could consist of only two wák, provided that the end syllable of these wák rhymed. In most cases, however, stanzas appear in series. With this arrangement, the stanzas are nearly always linked to each other with another rhyme also considered part of the rûat yay. In a series of maalínii chán 15, this linking rhyme occurs between wák c of the first stanza and wák a of the second.

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{a} & \quad \star\star\star\star\star\star 00 \\
\text{b} & \quad 0\star 00 \\
\text{c} & \quad \star 00 \\
\text{a'} & \quad \star\star\star\star\star\star 00 \\
\text{b'} & \quad 0\star 00 \\
\text{c'} & \quad \star 00
\end{align*}
\]

These linking rhymes between stanzas are almost always present and can continue for thousands of stanzas.

Besides the rûat yay, external rhyme also includes the rûat lék (minor round) which optionally appears in stanzas with more than three wák. The rûat lék links the last syllable of a wák with one of the early syllables, usually the third, in the following wák. Schematically the rûat lék appears as follows:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{a} & \quad 000000 \\
\text{b} & \quad 000000 \\
\text{c} & \quad 000000 \\
\text{d} & \quad 000000
\end{align*}
\]

Because the rûat lék does not link the two end syllables of wák a and wák b, it cannot be the basis for a stanza.

The other type of rhyme important to Thai poetry is internal rhyme, sâmphát nay, rhyme which occurs between syllables within a wák:

dèckmáay thúk phan kê bandaan
flower every kind then produce
bèckbaan keesčn háccn klin
Examples in the above two wák include phan with ban, and keesčcn with khácčcn. Alliterative pairs such as keesčcn and klin are also classified as types of internal rhyme. While not compulsory, internal rhyme is the area in which Thai poets display their versatility. In many cases, it is thought that the poets kept their rhyming patterns secret, only revealing them before death to their students.

In all chánthalák, each rüat yay pattern appears with the kháná? of each verse type. The descriptions of the kháná? and the syllables linked by the rhyme are meticulous, but the very detail of these descriptions obscures a fundamental simplicity. This wealth of detail and description suggest that each verse type in Thai, whether it be khlooŋ, kåap, klcen, or one of the chán meters, has its own idiosyncratic rhyme scheme. Such is not the case, for all of the meters of classic Thai verse are based on similar patterns. These similarities can be best observed by dividing the five verse types into two groups. rääy and khlooŋ, the earliest Thai verse forms, form the first group; kåap, chán, and klcen complete the second. In addition to the intra-group similarities, other parallels in rhyme appear when the two groups are compared to each other.

rääy and khlooŋ

Most chánthalák and Western studies on khlooŋ acknowledge that similarities in rhyme exist between rääy and khlooŋ (Uppakit 1968, Bickner 1981, Hartman 1983). Other similarities appear among the different khlooŋ varieties. Comparing these various forms reveals that the similarities are based upon the structure of each stanzaic form, and three basic rhyme patterns.

rääy is a type of rhymed prose usually consisting of wák of five syllables each and linked together by rhyme; a series of any number of wák forms a single stanza. There are four basic types of rääy:

1) rääy booraan

00000 00000 00000 00000

2) rääy sùphâap in which the last three wák have the same pattern as the last three wák in khlooŋ 2.sùphâap.

00000 00000 00000 00000 00000 (00)

3) rääy dân in which the last four wák have the same pattern as bâat three and bâat four in khlooŋ 4 dân.
4) *ráay yaaw* in which the number of syllables per *wák* is not set and the rhyme pattern links the last syllable of a *wák* with any syllable in the following *wák*.

In these early verse types, two rhyme patterns consistently appear. Occurring in all the *ráay* forms the first pattern links the final syllable of a *wák* with an early syllable of the following *wák*, forming the *ráat lék* of a formal stanza:

\[
\begin{array}{c}
00000 \\
00000 \\
00000 \\
00 (00) \\
00000 \\
00000 \\
\end{array}
\]

The second rhyme pattern is the couplet in which the end syllables of two *wák* rhyme. This couplet also, in part, signals the completion of a passage of *ráay suphāap*:

\[
\begin{array}{c}
00000 \\
00000 \\
00000 (00) \\
\end{array}
\]

Characteristic of *ráay suphāap*, the couplet may also occur in *ráay yaaw*, although it is not listed as a required pattern.

Two basic types of *khlooŋ* verse appear in the Thai literary corpus, *khlooŋ suphāap* and *khlooŋ dán*. These two types, nearly identical, vary chiefly in syllable number, although minor differences in toné placement and in rhyme scheme also occur. In *khlooŋ*, the rhyme patterns between syllables nearly always require that the two rhyming syllables have the same tone. Both types of *khlooŋ* have varieties with stanzas of two *bâat* (*khlooŋ 2*), three *bâat* (*khlooŋ 3*) and four *bâat* (*khlooŋ 4*). Each of the numbers in the name refers to the number of five syllable *wák* in the respective stanzas. A *bâat* can be further divided into two *wák*.

Both *khlooŋ 2 suphāap* and *khlooŋ 2 dán* have identical external rhyme patterns, a couplet linking the two *bâat* in each stanza: *mâat* and *ráat* in *khlooŋ 2 suphāap*, *nécy* and *cécy* in *khlooŋ 2 dán*.

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4. The *khlooŋ* verse form was developed when the Thai language had a three tone system. Sometime between the fourteenth and sixteenth century these tones split, forming the present day five tone system. Because of this split, much of the *khlooŋ* poetry seems to be filled with errors. A significant number of these errors disappear when the original tones are used in reading the verse. See Bickner 1981 for a complete discussion.

5. In Thai, the last two *wák* (the second *bâat*) are printed on the same line.
His eyes are like the eyes of the deer. Gaze at Phra Lcc's eyebrows. They are arched like the jeweled bow. Is it not so?

Lilit phrá? lcc

There is little strength in the countryside. Baanrácan's bravery is little.

Sàdúdii bān baanrácan kham práphan baan rān Phya Uppakit Silpasarn

Schematically these two forms appear as follows. In addition, the diagrams show that the linking rhymes between stanzas are identical.

khloon 3 sùphāap

khloon 3 dān

khloon 3 stanzas also have the same external rhyme schemes. Both stanzas are formed by adding a third bāat of five syllables and by linking it to the couplet with a rāat lēk.
Phya Uppakit (1968:403) suggests that these two types of \textit{khloon} are similar, but fails to clarify the similarities; he does point out, however, that the couplet in \textit{khloon} 3 \textit{dan} may end on the fourth syllable rather than on the fifth.

\textit{khloon} 4 stanzas are far more complex. The chief difference between these stanzas and the \textit{khloon} 2 and \textit{khloon} 3 stanzas lies in the couplet structure. Couplets in the \textit{khloon} 4 stanzas are formed by the end syllables of two \textit{wak} which are separated by other intervening \textit{wak}:

\begin{verbatim}
00000
00000
00000
00000
\end{verbatim}

In the \textit{khloon} 2 and \textit{khloon} 3 stanzas, on the other hand, no such intervening \textit{wak} exist in the couplets.

Although more complex, the two types of \textit{khloon} 4 stanzas are strikingly similar both in structure and in rhyme. \textit{khloon} 4 \textit{súpháup thammáadaa} and \textit{khloon} 4 \textit{dan wiwitthámaalii} represent the two most common varieties of \textit{khloon} 4:
What are these rumors? What do they say? Whose honor is raised throughout the land? Have you two been sleeping so soundly that you've forgotten to awaken? Think for yourself: don't ask us.

Lilīt phrá? lcc

That time of destruction, separated from you (Siam),—remember the calamity: Groups of the cruel and terrible Burmese tyrannizing and threatening, savages with ruthless hearts like animals of the forest.

Sādūdii bān baānīcācan kham pr̄ophan bān rīaṇ Phya Uppakit Silpasarn
Comparing the structures of these two *khlooŋ* 4 stanzas reveals only three differences in rhyme patterns:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{khlooŋ 4 sùphâap thammádaa} & \quad \text{khlooŋ 4 dán wiwitthámaalii} \\
00000 & \quad 00(00) \\
00000 & \quad 00 \\
00000 & \quad 00(00) \\
00000 & \quad 0000(00) \\
00000 & \quad 00(00)
\end{align*}
\]

First, in *khlooŋ 4 sùphâap thammádaa*, wák two rhymes with the couplet completed by wák three and wák five. In *khlooŋ 4 dán wiwitthámaalii*, on the other hand, wák two forms its own couplet with wák five.

A second difference is found in the couplet formed by wák four and wák seven of both stanzas. In *khlooŋ 4 thammádaa*, the rhyme must fall on the fifth syllable of the wák. In *khlooŋ 4 wiwitthámaalii* the rhyme may fall on either the fourth or the fifth syllable.

The last difference lies in the linking rhymes between stanzas. In *khlooŋ 4 thammádaa* the last wák rhymes with the first wák of the following stanza. In *khlooŋ 4 wiwitthámaalii* the link is with the third wák.

Both *khlooŋ 4 thammádaa* and *khlooŋ 4 wiwitthámaalii* serve as models from which other *khlooŋ* varieties derive. As models, these stanzas exhibit the most common rhyming patterns as defined in the versification textbooks. The variations are based on changes in these rhyme patterns. Those stanzas differing from the *khlooŋ 4 thammádaa* stanza include *khlooŋ 4 sùphâap cátáwaathanthii* and *khlooŋ 4 sùphâap triiphíttháphan*:

*khlooŋ 4 sùphâap varieties*

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{thammádaa} & \quad \text{cátáwaathanthii} & \quad \text{triiphíttháphan} \\
00000 & \quad 00(00) & \quad 00000 & \quad 00(00) \\
00000 & \quad 00 & \quad 00000 & \quad 00 \\
00000 & \quad 00(00) & \quad 00000 & \quad 00(00) \\
00000 & \quad 0000(00) & \quad 00000 & \quad 0000(00) \\
00000 & \quad 00(00)
\end{align*}
\]
khlooŋ 4 cättàwaathanthii places the rhyme on the fourth syllable of the third wák rather than on the fifth syllable as in khlooŋ 4 thammádaa. Phya Uppakit (1968:386) notes that the compounded name of the stanza suggests that there is a requirement to place the rhyme on the fourth syllable (cättàwaa – four; thanthii – walking stick, to have ill effects). In khlooŋ 4 triiphittháphan the rhyme falls on the third syllable of the third wák. Phya Uppakit (ibid.) also explains that the name of the stanza implies that the rhyme falls on the third syllable (triiphit – three places; phan – character, letter). Neither the khlooŋ 4 cättàwaa-thanthii nor the khlooŋ 4 triiphittháphan variety has any linking rhyme between stanzas. These similarities are briefly acknowledged in the literature. (Uppakit 1968:386-87; Jones 1970:199; Bickner 1981:109).

For khlooŋ 4 dän stanzas, the khlooŋ 4 dän wiwíthámaali stanza provides the model. Phya Uppakit (1968:391) maintains that the meaning of wiwíthámaali—to be in good order, systematic—has no significance for the structure of the stanza. Variations of the khlooŋ 4 wiwíthámaali stanza include khlooŋ 4 dän bátat kuncheen, khlooŋ 4 dän cättàwaathanthii, and khlooŋ 4 dän triiphittháphan. Like the súpháap stanzas, the dän varieties differ from the khlooŋ 4 wiwíthámaali stanza in rhyme patterns:

**khlooŋ 4 dän varieties**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>wiwíthámaali</th>
<th>bátat kuncheen</th>
<th>cättàwaathanthii</th>
<th>triiphittháphan</th>
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The khlooŋ 4 bátat kuncheen stanza displays the simplest variation with the addition of a linking rhyme between the last syllable of wák six of the first stanza and the fourth or fifth syllable of the first wák of the following stanza. bátat kuncheen translates as the footprint of an elephant, Phya Uppakit (1968:494) explains; and the rhyme pairs occur diagonally across from each other, similar to the position of the elephant’s legs when walking. The khlooŋ 4 dän cättàwaathanthii varies only slightly from khlooŋ 4 bátat kuncheen. As the stanza name suggests, the rhyme falls on the fourth syllable of the fifth wák and on the fourth syllable of the
underlying 5-syllable line in Thai (Siamese) canonical form and the feature of rhyming syllables according to their membership in the earlier A, B, and C tones categories... the historical picture might well be viewed as one where the "primitive" rāay of an earlier oral tradition became the polished khloonη of a more self-conscious written tradition.”

Historical literary evidence seems to support this claim, for, according to Mosel (1959a:6-7), the earliest rāay predates the Sukhothai period (thirteenth century) while the earliest khloonη begins to appear in the fourteenth century.

A closer examination of these forms in terms of their rhyme scheme further suggests that the forms are closely related. In the examination of rāay sùphāap it was stated that the last three wák of the stanza must be the same as khloonη 2 sùphāap. In fact, the last three wák of rāay sùphāap with the rhyme scheme and the tone placement constitute the khloonη 2 sùphāap stanza:

```
  00000
  00000  0000(00)
```

khloonη 3 sùphāap, furthermore, is the same as the last four wák of rāay sùphāap:

```
  00000
  00000  0000(00)
  00000  0000(00)
```

An even more striking parallelism occurs with the khloonη 4 dān in which the last four wák are the same as the last four wák of rāay dān:

```
  00000  00(00)
  00000  00
  00000  00(00)
  00000  00(00)
```

These similarities are occasionally mentioned in the literature; but because of their wording, the discussions on this point seem to suggest that the khloonη stanzas have been used to terminate the rāay stanzas. Since, historically, formalized khloonη patterns do not appear until well after the rāay stanzas, this cannot be the case. Rather, the khloonη stanzas must have developed from the rāay, the poets adopting the same tone placement, canonical form, and rhyme scheme as the last
third \textit{wák} in the following stanza. Aside from these rhyming pattern differences, the two stanzas are identical. A similar pattern of rhyme on the fourth syllable appears in the \textit{súpháap} variety.

\textit{khlooη} 4 \textit{dán triíphltháphan} presents only a slightly different variation. In this case the linking rhyme from the last \textit{wák} of the stanza falls on the third syllable of the third \textit{wák} in the following stanza. There is no rhyme with the third syllable in \textit{wák} five of the first stanza because the tones of the two rhyming syllables are different. This requirement for the rhyme to fall on the third syllable is suggested by the name of the stanza.

All the external rhyme patterns occurring in \textit{ráay} and \textit{khlooη} can be reduced to three basic couplet types. First, a couplet may be formed by two \textit{wák} with one \textit{wák} immediately following the other as in the \textit{khlooη} 2 and \textit{khlooη} 3 stanzas:

\begin{verbatim}
  00000 00000
  00000 00000
\end{verbatim}

A second couplet type may be formed by two \textit{wák} with one or more \textit{wák} intervening between the rhyming pair as in the \textit{khlooη} 4 stanzas:

\begin{verbatim}
  00000 00(00)
  00000 00
  00000 00(00)
  00000 00(00)
\end{verbatim}

These two couplets, with end syllables of the \textit{wák} rhyming, form the \textit{ruat yáy}, the basis of a Thai stanza. The third couplet type, most prominent in the \textit{ráay} stanzas, may be formed by the end syllable of a \textit{wák} and one of the early syllables of a following \textit{wák}:

\begin{verbatim}
  00000
  00000
\end{verbatim}

This couplet, the \textit{ruat lék}, is never the sole basis of a stanza, other than in \textit{ráay}.

A final observation on \textit{ráay} and \textit{khlooη} concerns their historical relationship. It has been suggested that on the basis of "... the similarities in syllable number and tone placement in \textit{ráay} and \textit{khlooη},...,\textit{ráay} may have been the forerunner of the \textit{khlooη} verse forms" (Hudak 1981:21). Hartmann (1983:4) makes the same point about the two forms:

because "...both share the common feature of an ideal or
wák of ráay súphāap and ráay dān.

kàap, chân, and klcn

While the similarities in ráay and khlooŋ are occasionally acknowledged, those in the second group are not. The three couplet patterns found in the first group also occur in kàap, chân, and klcn, the appearance of each pattern dependent upon the number of wák in a stanza.

1. The three-wák stanzas

The first of these patterns, the couplet without intervening wák appears in stanzas consisting of three wák as kàap chàbanŋ 16:

kàap chàbanŋ 16

sáamsipsāam sìa sìophaa—
thirty-three head beautiful
sìa nìŋ cèt nāa—
head one seven tusks
dàŋ phètchárát ruucii—
like diamond jewel bright, glorious
(The elephant) had thirty three beautiful heads and each head had seven tusks which were like bright diamonds.

Kham phāak raammákian
Royal Composition group, Rama II

In this three-wák stanza the final syllables of the first two wák, phaa and nāa, complete the couplet without intervening wák. The final syllable in the third wák, cii, provides the linking rhyme with the last syllable of the first wák in the next stanza. Other verse types with this same rhyme pattern include maalinii chán 15, meekháwìpphùt-chïtaa chán 19, sàthunláwìkkiílìtì chán 19, and ?ïïhïsì ? chán 20:

maalinii chán 15

6. Other verse forms with this pattern include: pàjëatháka? chán 15, sàsikàl? chán 15, manìkhànàníkkàr? chán 15, wàanlitì chán 16, hècàrniì chán 17, stîkhirìì chán 17, maníhákkantaa chán 17, and kùsùmìlitá-dàawënliìa chán 18.
The three-wák pattern is almost identical with the one in the khlOOTJ 2 stanza which also consists of three wák. The difference resides in the linking rhyme; in khlOOTJ the rhyme is with the first syllable of the wák, not the last syllable as in these forms.

2. The four-wák stanzas

The couplet without intervening wák appears in stanzas of four wák as

?inthráwíwichian chân 11:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>bay</th>
<th>phoo</th>
<th>sùwan</th>
<th>hčcy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>leaf</td>
<td>Bo tree</td>
<td>gold</td>
<td>hung</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ráyáa</td>
<td>yécy</td>
<td>bè</td>
<td>rùŋraŋ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pendant</td>
<td>hang loosely</td>
<td>not</td>
<td>ragged</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lom</td>
<td>phát</td>
<td>kràdìn</td>
<td>dan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wind</td>
<td>blow</td>
<td>bell</td>
<td>to sound</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sânè</td>
<td>sàpthá</td>
<td>?onween</td>
<td>agreeable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>melodious</td>
<td>sounds</td>
<td>to the ears</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The leaves of the golden Bo tree hang loose and not ragged. The wind blows the bells and makes melodious, agreeable sounds.

Bunnoowáat kham chân

The final syllables in the second and third wák, raŋ and dan, complete the couplet. The last syllable of the fourth wák, ween, provides the linking rhyme with
the last syllable of the first wák of the next stanza. If the rūat lék, the third couplet type, appears, it is generally between the last syllable of the first wák and one of the early syllables, usually the third, of the second wák. In the above example hécy and yécy form the rūat lék. Besides ?intharáwíchian chân 11, these rhyme patterns also occur in the following frequently used verse types: kàap yaanii 11, toodòkkà? chân 12, ?intháwọn chân 12, wásántàdilòkkà? chân 14, klccn hòk, and klccn pèet.  

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{kàap yaanii 11} & & \text{toodòkkà? chân 12} \\
00000 & & \#0\#0\#0 \\
00000 & & \#0\#0\#0 \\
00000 & & \#0\#0\#0 \\
00000 & & \#0\#0\#0
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{?intháwọn chân 12} & & \text{wásántàdilòkkà? chân 14} \\
00\#0 & & 00\#0\#0 \\
\#0\#0\#0 & & \#0\#0\#0 \\
00\#0 & & 00\#0\#0
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{klccn hòk} & & \text{klccn pèet} \\
000000 & & 00000000 \\
000000 & & 00000000 \\
000000 & & 00000000 \\
000000 & & 00000000
\end{align*}
\]

It should be noted that the couplet and linking rhyme in the four-wák stanzas are the same as those in the three-wák stanzas. The difference between the stanzas lies in the addition of another wák, which may bear a rūat lék rhyme, in the four-wák stanzas. Uppakit (1968:431) does note these similarities in rhyme between kàap yaanii 11 and the klccn stanzas.

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Similar parallels exist with the khloor 3 stanzas which also consist of a rätat lék followed by a couplet. As with the khloor 2 stanzas, the linking rhyme, falling on the first syllable of the next wák rather than the last, differentiates the khloor stanzas from these four-wák stanzas.

3. The eight-wák stanza

Stanzas of eight-wák, as maanáwákka? chān 8, include a combination of all three couplet types:

\[\begin{array}{|c|}
\hline
\text{maanáwákka? chān 8} \\
\hline
?ee & ?ilárāat \\
\hline
oh & a name \\
\hline
prāat & thürākaan \\
\hline
without & cause of anger \\
\hline
raw & kē \\
\hline
we & then \\
\hline
thōotsā & kā \\
\hline
punishment & to \\
\hline
\text{tēe} & khānā \\
\hline
but & time \\
\hline
mii & sīrī \\
\hline
have & all \\
\hline
rūuppā & lē \\
\hline
form & and \\
\hline
deem & bē \\
\hline
previous & not \\
\hline
\end{array}\]

Oh, Inlaraat, you without the cause of anger. (At that time) we bestowed punishment upon you, but now you have your entire shape and form, firm as before without any change.

\[\text{?Inlārāat kham chān}\]

The last syllables of wák two and wák three, kaan and thaan, complete the couplet without intervening wák. Three wák complete the couplet with intervening wák (this couplet is actually linked to another couplet without intervening wák):wák four, six, and seven. As in other stanzas, the linking rhyme begins on the last syllable of the last wák, klaay. Frequently, two rätat lék appear, one between the
first and second wāk, rāat and prāat, and the other between the fifth and sixth, nīi and mīi.

In forms with eight wāk per stanza, the external rhyme pattern is the same as the pattern of two four-wāk stanzas combined.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>a</th>
<th>0000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>b</td>
<td>0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c</td>
<td>0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d</td>
<td>0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e</td>
<td>0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f</td>
<td>0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g</td>
<td>0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h</td>
<td>0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a'</td>
<td>0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b'</td>
<td>0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c'</td>
<td>0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d'</td>
<td>0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e'</td>
<td>0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f'</td>
<td>0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g'</td>
<td>0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h'</td>
<td>0000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

wāk a through wāk d and wāk e through wāk h represent the two four-wāk stanzas, linked together by the same external rhyme which would link two separate four-wāk stanzas (wāk d with wāk f). To distinguish two eight-wāk stanzas linked together from four four-wāk stanzas linked together, a linking rhyme between the stanzas extends from wāk h, the last wāk of the stanza, to wāk d' in the next stanza. The linking rhyme between two four-wāk stanzas would terminate at wāk b'.

kāap sūraṇāṅkhānāṇī 28 also employs the eight-wāk pattern even though it consists of seven wāk.

kāap sūraṇāṅkhānāṇī 28

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>prānaṇ</th>
<th>kan</th>
<th>khccy</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>gather</td>
<td>together</td>
<td>wait</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mūṇ</td>
<td>meen</td>
<td>tōn</td>
<td>rccy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>intend</td>
<td>look</td>
<td>body</td>
<td>trace</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
They waited together and then looked for traces of the body. But still they did not see Khawii, the cow. Quickly came the dusk and evening. Quickly came the night and early morning. They wept looking for their mother.

Sīa khoo kham chān

What differentiates the kāap form from the eight-wāk form is the absence of the first wāk, which carries no rūat yāy in the eight-wāk pattern. In kāap sūraañkhānañ 28, a rūat lék appears between wāk four and wāk five, yām and khām.

Other eight-wāk verse types include cītāpātha chān 8, sàmaanikā? chān 8, pàmaanikā? chān 8, and witçhummaalañ chān 8. Although consisting of eight-wāk, the khlooñ 4 varieties do not employ this same combination of couplet types. The khlooñ varieties, however, are similar, in that couplets with intervening wāk predominate.

Conclusion

From this examination of classical Thai verse forms, the following generalizations can be made. Three metarhyme patterns, all based on the couplet, exist as external rhyme patterns in Thai verse forms. A couplet formed by two successive wāk appears in stanzas of three and four wāk. khlooñ stanzas with three and four wāk complete a separate group from the other three and four wāk stanzas, kāap, chān, and kleeñ, because of the difference in linking rhyme patterns. In the khlooñ stanzas, this linking rhyme falls on one of the first three syllables of the first wāk of the next stanza. In the other group the rhyme falls on the last syllable of the wāk.
A couplet formed by two wák with intervening wák constitutes the second meta-pattern. This pattern appears in stanzas with seven and eight wák. The khlooŋ stanzas again form a separate group, for they display slightly different combinations of patterns from those in the kàap and chán stanzas.

The last meta-pattern is a couplet in which a final syllable rhymes with a non-final syllable in the following wák. This rhyme pattern appears only in stanzas with four or more wák. Unlike the two other couplets, this rhyme sequence cannot be used as the basis of a stanza, other than in râay.

All of the external rhyme patterns discussed in the versification textbooks can be reduced to these three couplet types. These forms are highly conservative in that they exhibit little or no change. Occasionally, nonce forms with different patterns have been tried, particularly in the chán meters, but they have remained rare experimentations. Such conservatism has constrained poets in the forms they can use. As a consequence, they have turned to developing internal rhyme patterns where, it is said, their true genius lies.

Thomas John Hudak
University of Kentucky

8. See hâlâmûkhî chán 9, ùpphâphaasôkkâ? chán 10, sàâthàraa chán 21, and phîttâhåkkâ? chán 22. More recently, there have been attempts at composing free verse in Thai.
References


Wenk, Klaus. 1961, Die Metrik in der thailändischen Dictung. Hamburg: Gesellschaft für Natur und Völkerkunde Ostasiens e. V.