

Sound Change, Value of PL-SKT Loanwords and Reflections of Society and Beliefs in the Epic *Thao Hung or Cheuang*

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Abstract—The objectives of this study were to explore the linguistic changes, to discover the value of Pali (PL) and Sanskrit (SKT) loanwords in an old and important epic work entitled “*Thao Hung or Cheuang*”, and to describe the society depicted in this work and its beliefs. The conceptual framework of this study consists of (1) usage of PL-SKT words through sound change theories (2) values of the PL-SKT loanwords applied in *Thao Hung or Cheuang* and (3) reflections on the society and beliefs of the people in this epic. A qualitative method was employed and the data were collected from volumes 1-4 of the Dictionary of the Vocabulary in the Northeastern Thai Literary Work *Thao Hung or Thao Cheuang* published by the Royal Society of Thailand. The findings revealed that there are 679 PL-SKT loanwords in the work. The vowel and consonant sound changes were made for the sake melodiousness of the poetry of the work. The values of PL-SKT words can be categorized into five dimensions, namely, 1) language usage 2) word usage 3) sound usage 4) semantic usage and 5) aesthetic usage. The work also reflects the society it depicts, namely: urban society on a plateau which is class-based and agricultural, in which there is gender inequality between men and women and marriage between relatives of the ruling class, and in which there are multiple cultural influences. The following two types of beliefs were found in the society, namely: old beliefs and Brahman and Buddhist beliefs.

Index Terms—sound change, value, Pali-Sanskrit, loanwords, Thao Hung

I. INTRODUCTION

Thongprasert (1977, p. 37) stated that if one opens one of the dictionaries of the Royal Institute, one will find that Pali (PL) and Sanskrit (SKT) loanwords make up more than half of the words in the volume. Thus, it can be said that the Pali and Sanskrit languages have undoubtedly had a tremendous influence on the Thai language.

As might be expected in light of the above, the Dictionary of the Royal Institute B.E. 2554 (2013) contains many PL-SKT loanwords in the Thai language such as the term ‘พาทย์’ /phâ:t/ meaning ‘word, speech, remark, talk’ (p. 830), the term ‘พาทย์’ /phâ:t/ meaning ‘a kind of musical instrument’ (p. 830) and the term ‘กัญญา’ /kan-ja:/ meaning ‘young girl, little girl’ (p. 103). These PL-SKT loanwords were found in the Dictionary of the Royal Institute B.E.2554 (2013) and they also are found in the Dictionary of the Vocabulary in the Northeastern Thai Literary Work *Thao Hung or Thao Cheuang* Volumes 1-4 published by the Royal Institute. Sound changes were made in most of these words, and these changes were valuable in making the poem very melodious and beautiful.

In the Dictionary of the Vocabulary in the Northeastern Thai Literary Work *Thao Hung or Thao Cheuang* Volumes 1-4 published by the Royal Institute, it is stated that PL-SKT loanwords are beneficial in *Thao Hung or Cheuang* not only in making the poetry melodious and beautiful but also in revealing the values of Indic languages and in reflecting the society and beliefs of the people in those times. It is good documentary evidence for the study of the way of life of people in that time compared with the society and beliefs of people in the present day in order to reveal the similarities or dissimilarities of the worldviews that appear in the work.

This point of view is supported by distinguished Thai scholars such Nagavajara (1971), who stated that literature can reflect phenomenon of society and belief of the people in society as well. Similarly, Nakornthup (1977) declared that literature can reflect the way of life and values of the people in a society. Thus, it is suggested that people who would like to know and understand the way of life and values of the people in a society in different periods go through the literature available in each period.

An old and important literary work, *Thao Hung or Chueang* has many PL-SKT loanwords in the Thai language, and it describes different events and features of society and beliefs of people in society. It is important to say that the poets who composed this work had a good knowledge of PL-SKT loanwords in the Thai language. Not only this, they also had good knowledge and skill in describing the circumstance of society, the way of life and the beliefs of the people.

PL-SKT loanwords have had impact on the Thai language though sound changes and made the language and literature beautiful and melodious. Especially, PL-SKT loanwords in *Thao Hung or Chueang* are also found in NE Thai dialects frequently. The PL-SKT languages and Thai dialect that used in the work also reflect the society and beliefs of the people living in it in ancient times.

Thus, in this study, the researcher describes sound change, the value of the PL-SKT loanwords, and reflections of society and beliefs in *Thao Hung or Cheuang*. First, the phenomenon of sound change in PL-SKT loanwords used in the epic is presented, providing a holistic view of the value of the PL-SKT loanwords in the work. Then, the society and beliefs in *Thao Hung or Cheuang* are described, and this will contribute to academic discourse concerning language and the way it reflects the society and culture in *Thao Hung or Cheuang*.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A. Importance of the *Thao Hung or Cheuang* Literature and Its Relation to PL-SKT

Chamberlain (1989-1990, p. 14) stated that *Thao Hung or Cheuang* was one of the three most significant Southeast Asian literary works. The most respected and authoritative scholar of Lao history and culture, Mahasila Viravong, wrote in 1953 that *Thao Hung or Cheuang* was a mysterious work. It is well known in northern Laos and northeastern Thailand from oral tradition, but there is only a single extant written source (so far as we know): a palm leaf manuscript taken from Xieng Khwang by the Thai army in 1883 and placed in the National Library in Bangkok. The epic of *Thao Hung or Cheuang* is perhaps the most important piece of literature from the Southeast Asian mainland for the study of Southeast Asian civilization.

Furthermore, Chamberlain (1989-1990) stated that in *Thao Hung or Cheuang*, the poets used not only old Lao, but also Indic languages. He said that to students of comparative Tai linguistics, *Cheuang* is outstanding for its sparse use of Indic vocabulary. Jarumetheechon (2016) said that PL-SKT loanwords are found in northeastern literature such as *Thao Hung or Cheuang* spread over Laos and Lan Xang in the past time. The Royal Institute (2005) stated that *Thao Hung or Cheuang* represents a source of the old northeastern dialect and of the customs and traditions of the people in northeastern Thailand and Laos by presenting pre-Buddhist Tai lexical items and local culture. Chamberlain (1992) remarked that *Thao Hung or Cheuang* provides an excellent example of poetic rhymes indicating composition prior to the devoicing sound shift that spread over East and Southeast Asia. Bandhumetha (1975) and Buaphanngam (2019) stated that the sounds of PL and SKT words that entered languages of the Tai family such as Thai, have been changed based on natural phenomena or the intention of language users for convenience or melodiousness in their poetic works.

B. Vowel and Consonant Sound Change of PL-SKT Words in Thai

Kullavanijaya (1999, p. 384) stated that language change is due to many causes such as sound change, comparison and borrowing from other languages. Concerning PL-SKT loanwords in the Thai language, Pongpaiboon (1974, p. 5) stated that historically, PL-SKT words entered and influenced the Thai language extensively in several important ways such as religion (Buddhism and Brahmanism) and literature. This view is similar to the views of Buaphanngam (2019) and of Jarumetheechon (2016), who proclaimed that not only the influence of religious factors, but also that of literature helped gain acceptance and application of PL and SKT words in their language by Thai people. This influence made the Thai language richer and more beautiful through the introduction of large numbers of terms in various fields.

Thai people have borrowed PL-SKT words to employ in the Thai language for a long time. Phiwhlueng (2020, p. 64) stated that PL-SKT words have influenced the Thai language and caused changes in such areas as vowel and consonant sounds because the original PL and SKT words were not convenient for Thais to pronounce. Royal Institute (2013, p. 82) and Phinthong (1989, p. 96) showed an example of such a word: the term ‘**เก็งญา**’/ *keŋ-ja*: /meaning ‘woman, girl, beautiful young lady,’ which is found in *Thao Hung or Cheuang*. Undoubtedly, the borrowing was effected through altering the vowels and consonants in the system of the Pali language. Although, this word underwent thorough sound change, it still has the same meaning. Thus, such aspects of sound change are interesting for analytical study of PL-SKT loanwords used in the Dictionary of the Vocabulary in the Northeastern Thai Literary Work *Thao Hung or Thao Cheuang* published by the Royal Institute of Thailand.

C. Values of Alangka (Decoration) Through PL-SKT Words

Raksamani (2006) stated that Alangka (decoration) means usage of melodious words and absolute meaningful diction in a poem. It is used for decoration or ornament of the poem. Alangka (poetic ornamentation in Indian poetics) is divided into two types namely; **ศัพท์าลังการ** /*sâp-tha:-laŋ-ka:n/* meaning sound ornamentation and **อรรถาลังการ** /*ʔât-thâ:-laŋ-ka:n/* meaning semantic ornamentation, and most Sanskrit poets pay attention to its use in poems to create language decoration. Alangka is held to be the heart of poetry. Furthermore, Pimpuang (2016) stated that PL and SKT loanwords can be found in poetry and other literature in transliterations and translations, most frequently with sound changes. In this way, poems and other literary works can be made melodious and aesthetically pleasing. For example, SKT words were applied by Sunthorn Phu, an important poet of Thailand who was honored by UNESCO as a great world poet, in order to make his poems melodious and beautiful.

D. Reflection of Society and Belief in *Thao Hung or Cheuang*

With respect to meaning, Nagavajara (1971) stated that literature transmits not only facts about a society, but also reflects the moral sense of humans in the society. This point of view is very similar to that of Boonkhachorn (1980), who studied the relations of literature with society. No matter whether a writer intends to write about it or not, literature reflects the lives of the people in each period. It can be stated that through the works of writers, reflections of society in

different times from the past up until the present day can be found because literature and society are related to each other. It is right to say that people in the society can create literature and that literature can also reflect the activities of people in that society, the events affecting them, and their thought, beliefs, customs and traditions as well.

Therefore, literature and society undoubtedly are related to each other. Literature has been compared to a mirror reflecting the changes and evolution of society in each period. Literature not only reflects the society but also presents the thought of society in that period as well. After this review of the relevant literature, the researcher was able to devise a conceptual framework and proceeded to conduct this study on Sound Change, Value of PL-SKT Loanwords and Reflections of Society and Beliefs in *Thao Hung or Cheuang*.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research study was analytical research focused on the usage of the PL and SKT languages, the value of the PL and SKT languages sources of loanwords, and presenting reflections on the society and beliefs in the Dictionary of the Vocabulary in the Northeastern Thai Literary Work *Thao Hung or Thao Cheuang* published by the Royal Society of Thailand.

Descriptive writing of research was adopted through data collection from Volumes 1-4 in the Dictionary of the Vocabulary in the Northeastern Thai Literary Work *Thao Hung or Thao Cheuang* published by the Royal Society of Thailand. Research was conducted by a qualitative method within an overall inductive framework. The methodology used in the research study was as follows:

1. Data surveying and data collection related to PL and SKT loanword use, the values of PL and SKT loanwords and reflections of people in the society, and beliefs in the Dictionary of the Vocabulary in the Northeastern Thai Literary Work *Thao Hung or Thao Cheuang*, were done.

2. The collected documents were classified into groups, categorized, analyzed and explained in terms of sound changes of PL and SKT, values of PL and SKT language and the reflection of society and beliefs in the Dictionary of the Vocabulary in the Northeastern Thai Literary Work *Thao Hung or Thao Cheuang* published by the Royal Society of Thailand.

3. Descriptions and analyses of PL and SKT language use, values and reflections of society and belief in the Dictionary of the Vocabulary in the Northeastern Thai Literary Work *Thao Hung or Thao Cheuang* published by the Royal Society of Thailand were written.

4. The results of the research, discussion and concluding remarks were presented by descriptive writing according to the objectives as mentioned in the research. Each verse of *Thao Hung or Cheuang* related to the main contents was subjected to analysis, and explanations were made through descriptive writing.

IV. RESEARCH RESULTS

The results of the research are presented based on the objectives of the research study. The research results were as follows:

A. Sound Change of PL-SKT Loanword Used in *Thao Hung or Cheuang*

After study of PL-SKT loanwords as employed in *Thao Hung or Cheuang*, the following two types of sound change were found, namely, vowel sounds and consonant sounds. They are as follows;

(a). Vowel Sound Change

Even though the vowels of some words borrowed from PL-SKT languages still remain the same when used in the Thai language, most of vowels of PL-SKT words have been changed from the original ones in order to use the words and make the poem melodious and beautiful. Ten aspects of vowel sound change were found in *Thao Hung or Cheuang*. They are as follows:

- (1) The vowel **อะ** /-a/ with no spelling consonant in a PL-SKT language must be pronounced **โอะ** /-o/ in the Thai language; for example, the term ‘**ระมย**’ (ramya, SKT) becomes ‘**ระมย**’ /rom/ meaning ‘enjoyable, pleasing, beautiful’ (Royal Institute, Vol. 2, 2008, p. 76).
- (2) Thai language has the last consonant as spelling one, and the first consonant must be pronounced as **อะ** /-a/ vowel, for example; term ‘**ปรัถม**’ (prathama, SKT) becomes ‘**ปรัถม**’ /prà-thǒm/ meaning ‘primary, elementary, first’ (Royal Institute, Vol. 3, 2013, p. 135).
- (3) Short vowels in PL-SKT can be expanded to long vowels in the Thai language; for example, the term ‘**คุณ**’ (guṇa, PL-SKT) becomes ‘**คุณ**’ /khu:n/ meaning ‘excellent, auspicious, propitious’ (Royal Institute, Vol. 3, 2013, p. 12).
- (4) Long vowels in PL-SKT words can be changed to short vowels when used in the Thai language; for example, the term ‘**วิณ**’ (vīṇa, PL-SKT) becomes ‘**พิน**’ /phin/ meaning ‘lute’ (Royal Institute, Vol. 3, 2013, p. 226).
- (5) The vowel **อะ** /-a/ in PL-SKT words can be changed to **อ** /-o:/ when used in the Thai language; for example, the term ‘**ครห**’ (garha, SKT) becomes **เคราะห** /khrǎʔ/ meaning ‘luck, chance, fortune, misfortune, omen’ (Royal Institute, Vol. 2, 2008, p. 276).

- (6) The vowel *ई* /-i/ in PL-SKT words can be changed to the vowel *อี* /-u/, when used in the Thai language; for example, the term ‘ดาวตีส’ (tÁvatiÉsa, PL) becomes ดาวตึงส์ /da:w-wá-duŋ/ meaning ‘the second tier of the heaven’ (Royal Institute, Vol. 1, 2005, p. 21).
- (7) The vowels *ई* /-i/ and *อี* /-i:/ in PL-SKT words can be changed to *เอีย* /-ia/ when used in the Thai language; for example, the term ‘วิริย’ (v Írya, SKT), and the term ‘วิริย’ (viriyā, PL) becomes เพียร /phian/ meaning ‘to be diligent, to be industrious’ (Royal Institute, Vol. 1, 2005, p. 30).
- (8) The vowel *อะ* /-a/ that is in the front or the middle of a PL-SKT word. The vowel *อะ* /-a/ can be changed to *เอ* /-e:/ when it is used in the Thai language; for example, the term ‘กัญญา’ (kaññā, PL) becomes เกื้องญา /keŋ-ja:/ meaning ‘woman, girl, beautiful young lady’ (Royal Institute, Vol. 3, 2013, p. 83).
- (9) The vowel *อุ* /-u/ in the front of a PL-SKT word can be changed to the vowel “โ” /-o:/ when it is used in the Thai language; for example, the term ‘ภุจน’ (bhujana, PL-SKT) becomes โภจน /pho:-chá-ná?/ meaning ‘to eat’ (Royal Institute, Vol. 2, 2008, p. 45).
- (10) The vowel *อุ* /-u:/ in a PL-SKT word is generally changed to “โ” /-o:/ when it is used in the Thai language; for example, the term ‘ทุร’ (dÚra, PL-SKT) becomes โทุร /tho:-rá?/ meaning ‘remote, far, distant, wicked, bad, ill’ (Royal Institute, Vol. 2, 2008, p. 1).

(b). *Consonant Sound Changes*

In *Thao Hung or Cheuang*, the following 15 consonant sound changes were found. They are as follows.

- (1) The consonant *ต* /t-/ in PL-SKT words can be changed to *ด* /d-/ in the Thai language; for example, the term ‘ตารา’ (tÁrÁ, PL-SKT) becomes ดารา /da:-ra:/ meaning ‘star, performer, actor, actress’ (Royal Institute, Vol. 4, 2019, p. 163).
- (2) The consonant *ป* /p-/ in PL-SKT words can be changed to *บ* /b-/ when used in the Thai language; for example, the term ‘ปุตโต’ (putto, PL) becomes บุตโต /bùt-to:/ meaning ‘son, child, offspring’ (Royal Institute, Vol. 1, 2005, p. 54).
- (3) The consonant *ว* /w-/ in PL-SKT words can be changed to *พ* /ph-/ in the Thai language; for example, term ‘วาทย’ (vÁdya, SKT) becomes พาทย /phâ:t/ meaning ‘musical instrument’ (Royal Institute, Vol. 3, 2013, p. 130).
- (4) SKT vowel “อุ” /-u/ became the long vowel “โ” /-o:/ in the Thai language. For example, the term ‘สุภาว’ (subhÁva, PL-SKT) becomes โสภพ /sò:-phâ:p/ meaning ‘polite’ (Royal Institute, Vol. 3, 2013, p. 123).
- (5) The initial syllable of a PL-SKT word can be deleted in the Thai language; for example, the term ‘นมัสการ’ (namaskÁra, SKT) became มัสการ /mát-sà-ka:n/ meaning ‘reverence, worship; salutation of a letter to a Buddhist priest’ (Royal Institute, Vol. 4, 2019, p. 22).
- (6) The middle consonant of a PL-SKT word can be deleted when used in the Thai language; for example, the term ‘วโรณา’ (varĀna, SKT) becomes วโรณา /wo:-lá-na:/ meaning ‘to explain, to depict, to describe, to portray’ (Royal Institute, Vol. 2, 2008, p. 23).
- (7) The vowel sound at the end of a PL-SKT word can be deleted for the sake of euphony when used in the Thai language; for example, the term ‘นิล’ (nÍla, PL-SKT) becomes นิล /nin/ meaning ‘sapphire, jet, black’ (Royal Institute, Vol. 2, 2008, p. 18).
- (8) A consonant sound can be added at the end of PL-SKT word to improve the rhythm in the poem; for example, the term ‘มรณ’ (maraĀ, PL-SKT) becomes มรณาศ /mo:-rá-nâ:t/ meaning ‘death, to die, to pass away’ (Royal Institute, Vol. 4, 2019, p. 1).
- (9) *เฒ* /re:-phâ/ in SKT words (*ร* /r-/) is written under the consonant and can be changed to *ร หัน* /ro:-hăn/ (double ro: i.e. *รห*) when used in the Thai language; for example, the term written ‘วโรณ’ (varĀa, SKT) becomes วโรณ /wan/ meaning ‘colour, tint, skin, class, caste’ (Royal Institute, Vol. 2, 2008, p. 152).
- (10) In SKT words, *ร* /r-/ can be added amid other consonants when used in the Thai language; for example, the Pali term ‘นิพพาน’ (nibbÁna, PL) becomes the Sanskrit นีรพพาน (SKT) /ní-rá-pha:n/ meaning ‘Nirvana, the extinction of all defilements and sufferings, the Supreme Goal of Buddhism’ (Royal Institute, Vol. 2, 2008, p. 78).
- (11) Those PL-SKT consonants having a dot underneath them such as *จ* /c-, *ม* /m-, *ศ* /s-/ denoting they are semi-consonant sounds or spelling consonants can be used as full consonant sounds in the Thai language; for example, the term ‘สถาน’ (sthÁna, SKT) becomes สถาน /sà-thá:-ná?/ meaning ‘place, site, locality’ (Royal Institute, Vol. 2, 2008, p. 164) and the term ‘วาทย’ (vÁkya, PL-SKT) becomes พาทย /phâ:k/ and it means ‘word, speech, remark, talk’ (Royal Institute, Vol. 4, 2019, p. 149).
- (12) Some PL-SKT words used in the Thai language must have a sound added at the end of the word to make the word more melodious in verse; for example, the term ‘มรณ’ (maraĀa, PL-SKT) becomes มรณัง /má-rá-naŋ/ meaning ‘death, to die, to pass away’ (Royal Institute, Vol. 2, 2008, p. 166).
- (13) In PL-SKT words used in the Thai language, a mark is placed above a consonant to indicate it is silent; for example, the term ‘ปรัสงค’ (prasaĒga, SKT) becomes ปรัสงคิ /prà-sŏŋ/ meaning ‘to aim, to intend, to wish, to want, to desire’ (Royal Institute, Vol. 4, 2019, p. 80).

- (14) The dot denoting a spelling consonant of original PL-SKT words will be deleted when the word is used in the Thai language; for example, term ‘มโนรมย’ (manoramyā, SKT) becomes มโนรมย /má-no:-rom/ meaning ‘satisfying, satisfactory, beautiful’ (Royal Institute, Vol. 4, 2019, p. 140).
- (15) Changes other than the above such as changing ร /r-/ to ล /l-/ etc. For example, the term ‘กณญา’ (kaññā, PL) becomes เกิงญา /keŋ-ja:/ meaning ‘woman, girl, beautiful young lady’ (Royal Institute, Vol. 2, 2008, p. 27) and the term ‘รณญา’ (PL) becomes เลิงญา /leŋ-ja:/ with the same meaning ‘king’ (Royal Institute, Vol. 2, 2008, p. 147).

The observed vowel and consonant sound changes can be explained in terms of different theories of sound changes such as sound insertion, deletion and so on. These sound change theories are considered to apply in *Thao Hung or Cheuang*.

B. Values of PL-SKT Loanwords Used in Thao Hung or Cheuang

The use of PL-SKT loanwords in *Thao Hung or Cheuang* literature makes the work more beautiful and melodious. The following five dimensions of values of PL-SKT words were found in the work:

(a). Language Usage

The use of PL-SKT loanwords in *Thao Hung or Cheuang* was an important tool in communicating the meaning and intention of the poets. After Buddhism entered the society, it played an important role and PL-SKT words were used in composing poetry together with words of the NE dialect, thus adding beauty and value due to the PL-SKT languages, for example;

(1) เมื่อนั้น	ดาวดาวหน้าลมสว่าง	เลยจา
	เรียงคำคารกสาวสาว	แห่นถอย
ดูเครื่อง	<u>เกิงญา</u> พร้อมทั้งมาล	มีมาก
	น้องแผนเจ้าคำชอย	แต่งตาม

Translated: In that time, people had cheerful faces. Phaya Thaen spoke suitable words and advised a young woman. There were many things for a woman’s side. Khun Cheuang arranged accordingly.
(Royal Institute, Vol. 2, 2008, p. 26)

In the above underlined example, the term “เกิงญา” /keŋ-ja:/ meaning ‘young woman, girl, beautiful young lady,’ was borrowed from Pali and the poets used it with sound and consonant changes. Originally, it meant ‘young woman.’ In *Thao Hung or Cheuang*, the PL-SKT word is beautiful and contributes to the poem’s melodiousness.

(b). Word Usage

Most of PL-SKT words used in *Thao Hung or Cheuang* are transliterated and transliterated with sound change, so the sound of the word may or may not be similar to the original word, for example:

(2) แด้นั้น	<u>สม</u> ยาดนงแถม	<u>จอมมโน</u>
	ทวนพลายพับจอดเอา	คำชู่
	<u>เริงโย</u> ขึ้นกนทน	ช่างถาว
	บายสิสนแท้	เมื่อจักเมื่อ

Translated: Khun Cheuang, the handsome king, gave a smile to a dear woman. The elephant picked up Khun Cheuang and he rode it without realizing that it is the time to go back.
(Royal Institute, Vol. 3, 2013, p. 236)

In the above stanza, the term ‘สม’ /sôm/ is derived from ส /sǎŋ/sǎm/ prefixation in PL-SKT meaning together, with and good; the term ‘เริงโย’ /reŋ-jo:/ was used by poets through transliteration and change of the sound of the word a little bit from the original ‘รัญโย’ /ran-jo:/. However, its meaning is the king. Not only this, there are many PL-SKT words that were used with sound change such as the term ‘กนทน’ /kon-thon/. It may be derived from the term ‘กฤษ’ /kun-chara/ meaning ‘elephant.’ Compounding of Thai and Pali as in the word ‘จอมมโน’ /cɔ:m-má-no:/ meaning ‘beloved woman’ or ‘sweetheart’ is also found.

(c). Sound Usage

Poets used PL-SKT loanwords and played with the sound of the words in *Thao Hung or Cheuang*. The word play makes the verse more melodious, for example:

(3) เมื่อนั้นอ้าวตา	ติดจอดน้องแล้วเส้า	<u>ไซสาร</u>
	ย็นคำวอนคอบใจ	จงท้าว
เห็นนิ้า	<u>สมสม</u> คราาหน้าขุนเตียว	ดูเกิง กั้นแล้ว
	พระเจ้าหมื่นมาวแข็งขัน	ขาดคดี

Translated: Then, Queen Au-ka who missed King Engka opened the letter and read it. She found Engka’s request and confession and learned that there would be a war in the future because Thao Suem had undoubtedly decided on it.
(Royal Institute, Vol. 4, 2019, p. 90)

In the above underlined example, PL-SKT terms were found with repeated consonants usage, namely, the word ‘สม’ /sôm/ and the syllable ‘สม’ /sôm/ in the word ‘สมครา’ /sôm-khra:m/ meaning ‘war, combat’ in this context. This

makes the more verse melodious through the repetition of ‘ส้ม’ /sǒm/. Not only this, the consonant ส /s/ also is repeated, namely, the terms ‘สาร’ /sǎ:n/ ส้ม /sǒm/ ส้ม /sǒm/ from the term ‘ส้มคราม’ /sǒm-khra:m/. The words that poets used in *Thao Hung or Cheuang* were often alliterative, making the verse melodious and beautiful.

(d). *Semantic Usage*

The use of PL-SKT words in *Thao Hung or Cheuang* in order to make the verse melodious and impart beautiful meaning is an important language strategy of the poets. This device helps reader appreciate the meaning of the PL-SKT loanwords in the work, for example:

(4) ฟังยิน	ฟ้าร้องเสียงมี	เดือนสาม ฝนเยอ
	ทุกที่ซมเรียกขวัญ	เมื่อหืออง
<u>ดุดัง</u>	อาวรามธือนทหยัง	ย็นโศก
	<u>มโนนาถ</u> ของคือมา	จิมจริง

Translated: People heard the sound of thunder in the third month. Everybody began to soothe good omen or soul of people to go back home. As if dear man becomes worried and sorrowful. His heart is like a man who is mad.

(Royal Institute, Vol. 4, 2019, p. 112)

In the stanza above, there is a PL-SKT term ‘ทหยัง’ (hadayaĒ, PL) meaning ‘heart.’ Another term ‘มโนนาถ’ /má-no:-nâ:t/ means ‘refuge of mind’ and it refers to Thao Eangka. The poets borrowed a word and used it in a transliterated form, changing the sound of the original term, namely, ‘ทหย’ (hadaya, PL) so as to become ทหยัง /hà-thá-jaŋ/, while preserving the meaning. This word was used by the poets to communicate the feeling of love and desire that a man, Thao Eangka, has for his dear lady. Not only this, the poets used a simile introduced by the word the words ‘ดุดัง’ /du:-dàŋ/. In this context, it means when people hear the sound of thunder, they will try to soothe good omen or soul to go back home. On the contrary, Thao Eangka is worried and heard only a sad sound in his heart. Another word is used for indicating metaphor is ‘คือ’ /khu:/. In this context, it means heart of Eangka became like that of a mad man.

(e). *Aesthetics Reflected the Beauty of Poem*

Chitchamng (2023, p. 19) stated that beautiful scenes will consists of the beautiful and meaningful words that the writers has written in their poetic works. It is not the direct meaning of word that is available in the general dictionary. To *Thao Hung or Cheuang*, it brought the aesthetics of PL-SKT loanwords to the poem. Thus, it enables readers to appreciate in the beauty of verse in *Thao Hung or Cheuang*, for example;

(5) พอเมื่อ	ฮวันฮวันฟ้าร้องเรียง	<u>ฤดูฝน</u> ฝนเยอ
	เจืองหาญจติจากดาว-	<u>ดั่งสฟ้า</u>
	เอา <u>ปฏิสนธิ</u> เขาลือพา	คัพพะวิก
	ขาวใหญ่หน้าในทอง	แมตน

Translated: When the rainy season came, the thunder roared more and more. Khun Cheuang braved passing from the second heaven where Indra dwells to be conceived in Queen Chom and the prince grew great in her womb.

(Royal Institute, Vol. 1, 2005, p. 21)

From the example words in the above, the term ‘ฤดู’ /rú-du:/ meaning ‘season,’ the term ‘จติ’ /cù(t)-tì/ meaning ‘to pass away or to die,’ the term ‘ดาวดั่งส’ /da:w-wá-duŋ/ meaning ‘the second tier of the heaven,’ and the term ‘ปฏิสนธิ’ /pà-tì-sǒn-thí/ meaning ‘conception, birth’ as used in the above were done through sound change according to the procedure of Thai language way. They have obvious meanings and made draw readers to appreciate in the beauty of the poem.

C. *Reflection of Society and Beliefs in Thao Hung or Cheuang*

Manorat (2006, p. 35) stated that literature offers not only beauty and aesthetic values but also reflects aspects of the society, the way of life, and the worldview of people in a given time as well as different problems in the society that poet may have experienced. As with the above mentioned characteristics, *Thao Hung or Cheuang* reflects aspects of society and beliefs as follows;

(a.) *Society*

Thao Hung or Cheuang reflects the following features of the society in which it was created:

1. *Class-Based Society*

The society of *Thao Hung or Cheuang* was hierarchical and the power was in the hands of the ruling class as in this stanza:

(6)	ยศโยคขาวไท้	นามเดี่ยว
	ทันความธรรมย่อจ่อม	ราชให้
หมอนคำ เต็งขุนใหญ่	บัวบานเจ้าทั้งจ่อม	ย็นยาก
	เพราะเพื่อไธลูกเตา	แทนเชื้อสืบสาย

Translated: A king who was great with an honorable name was known well as Khun Chom with righteousness. Both Queen Chom and the king Khun Chom felt unsatisfied because they had no heirs.

(Royal Institute, Vol. 1, 2005, p. 6)

The term ‘ท้าวไท’ /thá:w-thay/ here means ‘great king,’ the term ‘ธรรม์ยา’ /than-jam/ means ‘righteous ruler.’ Here, it means the righteous king. The word Chom means the great one. Here it refers to Khun Chom, who is the father of Khun Cheuang. Thus, it obviously reflects a monarchical system, in which there are rulers, noble men, and royal courts (Manorat, 2006, p. 39).

2. *Agricultural Society*

The society and people in *Thao Hung or Cheuang* are obviously agricultural, for example;

- | | | | |
|-----|-------|-------------------|----------------|
| (7) | สุดอย | คืนคอบให้หลานราช | น้ดดา ย้อนเทิน |
| | เขาก็ | ประนมมือเลยเลิกลา | ส่ถานกขาง |
| | | คองคองขามนาหลวง | แสนงอน |
| | | ซางเลิงมาไปพริอม | พองสวน |

Translated: You go back and please inform Khun Cheuang. Ai Khwang and Han Plai said goodbye and went down from the royal hall. Sometimes they passed grand farms and overhanging rocks. Sometimes they also passed gardens and elephants and horses running very fast.

(Royal Institute, Vol. 1, 2005, p. 168)

The passage contains the term ‘นา’ /na:/ from *นาหลวง* /na:-lũaŋ, which means ‘grand grounds or farms’ and which appears in scenes of *Thao Hung or Cheuang*. Moreover, the term ‘สวน’ /sũan/ meaning ‘an area planted to trees’ is also found. Therefore, it can be said that people in those days made their living through agriculture because scenes involving farms and gardens are common.

3. *Inequality in Society Between Man and Woman*

In *Thao Hung or Cheuang*, inequality between man and woman in society is also found, for example;

- | | | | |
|-----|-------|----------------------|----------|
| (8) | ขอแถ | บุญมากเจ้านบหมอก | พระแซ่ไซ |
| | ดีแถ | รองรองเดือนสองงาม | เงาซาย |
| | เราก็ | ดูแนนห้องทั้งสอง | เสมอกาด |
| | ขอขมา | แนนเพื่อนพินทั้งด้าย | ต่างสวน |

Translated: Let both of you who become persons of importance (Khun Cheuang and Queen Ngommuan) tell the Moon that shown and its shadow has gone out. We checked destiny for both of you already (Khun Cheuang and Queen Ngommuan). It is equal, but the destiny of Khun Cheuang still has another place.

(Royal Institute, Vol. 2, 2008, p. 121)

In the above stanza, the term ‘แนน’ /nɛ:n/ means ‘spouse,’ and the term ‘ต่างสวน’ /tá:tɔŋ-sũan/ means another one, another place. It can be explained that Khun Cheuang and Queen Ngommuan have a destiny together and they can get married. However, this passage tells that Khun Chom had greater rights because he still had another destiny: to get married with another woman. This indicates men have greater rights than women.

4. *Marriage Between Relatives of the Ruling Class*

In *Thao Hung or Cheuang*, descriptions of customs related to marriage between relatives of the ruling class are found, for example:

- | | | | |
|-----|--------|--------------------|---------|
| (9) | เราจัก | แหนธำงดวยโดยแถง | การดอง |
| | | เดินกันจัดหมากหลาย | สามล้าน |
| | | สองแสนสิ้นหัวเปอ | คำคาด |
| | | พลแจกซองซันเขม | เรือซัน |

Translated: We will advise about the wedding ceremony. Please arrange great trays of gifts of gold (from the groom to the bride's family) and betel arranged in the great trays of gifts.

(Royal Institute, Vol. 1, 2005, p. 111)

Among the words in this excerpt, the term ‘ดอง’ /dɔ:tɔŋ/ means ‘marriage, wedding, married state.’ It is found that people in of the ruling class at that time preferred to marry relatives of the same class. Doing so was believed to support the power of rulers in the society. Thus, this poem depicts marriage between relatives of the ruling class.

5. *Multicultural Society*

Thao Hung or Cheuang presents a multicultural society in which there were beliefs based on old myths as well as beliefs derived from Brahmanism and Buddhism, for example:

- | | | | |
|------|-----------|--------------------|----------|
| (10) | เมื่อนั้น | งอมชอบขอขานเทียว | ทูลถวาย |
| | | เวโรเบียบบาปใด | ดลของ |
| | | เป็นคนธำงรวมกัน | กลันโศก |
| | ดุดัง | แนนเพื่อนพองกายพูน | หากเหลือ |

Translated: Then, Queen Ngommuan said, “Sin comes to encroach me and make me left out. I must endure the grief. There seems the destiny of my husband gone more than me”.

Translated: Then the aunt carried off the son, blessed him and soothed him by calling on his spirits.
(Royal Institute, Vol. 1, 2005, p. 28)

The above verse showed that the people in the old society believed very much in the *Khwan*. The term ‘ขวัญ’ /khwǎn/ means ‘spirit, soul associated with parts of body, morale.’ Another meaning is a good omen. The *Kwan* ceremony is found in *Thao Hung or Cheuang*. The people believed that performing this ceremony would bring them happiness.

5. *Belief in Divination*

In *Thao Hung or Cheuang*, it was found that divination was practiced in the old society at that time. For example:

(15)	ซึ้งซึ้ง ^๑ ไหววอนราช	รักษา
	ชาวบนหม่อมหม่อมदार	เคยรู้
เขาก็	ดาแหงพร้อมทั้งหลาย	แล้วซึ้ง
	อ้ายดวงผู้ธรรมอ้าย	ถือผล

Translated: Khun Cheuang put his hands together in order to beg protection for the king. The gods and fortunetellers who had already arranged the fated soul mate make divination about the soul mate of Ai-kwang who is righteous before the divination of troops.

(Royal Institute, Vol. 2, 2008, p. 197)

The example words in the above selection showed that the people in the old society believed in divination, especially the divination about fated lovers, or *Naen*, or soul mates. The term ‘ซึ้ง’ /chây/ means to divine about persons who will become soul mates in the future. Thus, it can be said that the divination was a belief among the people in the old society.

6. *Belief in Prediction*

In *Thao Hung or Cheuang*, it is found that people believed in prediction, for example:

(16)	จ๊กสาวให้ชอบซึ้ง	แนสม ชอบแล้ว
	หม่อมท้าว ^๒ บอกมา	มาลพร้อม
	รมยรมยสอยสาว	สมสูบาว
	เยาวราชเจ้าผู้คิงค้อม	คู่เซียง

Translated: Let both of you predict the *Naen* or destiny. Fortuneteller will predict to all of you. Everyone felt happy and Queen *Ngom* can stay together with *Khun Cheuang*, a young king with beautiful body.

(Royal Institute, Vol. 2, 2008, p. 188)

The above stanza indicated that the people in the old society absolutely believed in dreams and prediction. Here, the term ‘ท้าว’ /thá-wa:y/ means ‘to predict, prophesy.’ If people felt an intimation that something was going to happen, they consulted a fortuneteller and requested a prediction. The people believed in this very much indeed.

(c). *Belief in Buddhist Concepts*

In *Thao Hung or Cheuang*, the Buddhist beliefs concerning the earth and the universe, Karma and God, are found. For example:

1. *Belief in Heaven and the Human World*

In *Thao Hung or Cheuang*, belief in heaven and the human world is found. For example:

(17)	จ๊กทานทัดใส่เกลิ	เกศา
	หอมย้งกรรณิกาสุด	แหงหล้า
	จ๊กมีแหงใดตาย	ดูยาก พระเฮย
	หก แหง สวรรค์นครฟ้า	บีเปรียบได้ถึงสอง

Translated: I will wear this flower in my hair. More fragrant than the night blooming jasmine, its scent fills the earth. There is nothing to equal it in all the six realms.

(Royal Institute, Vol. 2, 2008, p. 90)

The PL-SKT words in the above are ‘หก’ /hòk/ meaning ‘six’, the term ‘สวรรค์’ /sà-wǎn/ meaning ‘heaven’ and the term ‘นครฟ้า’ /ná-khò:n-fá:/ meaning ‘heaven.’ Belief in heaven—especially in the six realms of Brahma—is also found.

2. *Belief in Karma (Action)*

Belief in *Karma*, or action, is found in *Thao Hung or Cheuang*. For example:

(18)	ผอเห็น	ชะฟ้าแจ่มเมฆ	บัพพิต ฑูนเยอ
		คองคองคืดซึ้งนาง	นอนแล้ว
บัดนี้		เอโกซุ่มขวัญ	คือพี่ ดนแล้ว
ฤาวิชา		วิบาก แข็งซึ้งให้	ข้างกัน เด

Translated: Thao Eangka saw the clear and beautiful sky with the shadow of a cloud on the mountain. He slept and felt lonely because he missed his queen, Uakha, always. Now I have only one dear one named Uakha or results of Karma returned to defame and separate us.

(Royal Institute, Vol. 4, 2019, p. 111)

A PL-SKT word found in the selection is the term ‘วิบาก’ /wí-bà:k/ meaning ‘consequence, the Karmic result of accumulated merits and sins.’ Thus, belief in Buddhist *Karma* (action) and its results was found. This stanza indicated that the people in this society believed in *Karma* and its results very much indeed. People received what they desire as a result of their deeds.

3. Belief in God

In *Thao Hung or Cheuang*, belief in gods like Brahma is obvious. For example:

(19) วันนั้น	เจ้าหน้อแก้วจอมมิ่ง	มเหสี
	ผายอุทรประสูติ	กุมารแก้ว
	รศมีเพียงพรหมเขียน	โสมรราบ
	งามเลิศแล้วลือล้า	โลกคน

Translated: Today, Queen Nang Chom gave birth to a son with a beautiful appearance drawn by Brahma—the most beautiful and celebrated babe in the world.

(Royal Institute, Vol. 1, 2005, p. 32)

In the stanza presented above, the term ‘พรหม’ /phrom/ means ‘God Brahma according to the Buddhist belief.’ The God Brahma was respected the most by the people in that time. Especially, good or beautiful things people would say were created by the God Brahma.

4. Belief in Circle of Life

Moreover, in *Thao Hung or Cheuang*, the cycle of life according to Buddhism is also found. For example:

(20) เยี้ยวธา	วิบาก	อายชั้นตาง	เอโก	ปฐิ
	เวรา	หลักหลักกัน	ไกลหนา	
	โทเล	ธางรามสม	เจียรจาก	
	ขอแก้ว	เจ้าจอมฟ้า	ชಾಯชู	แต่เนอ

Translated: It is as though retribution makes us avoid each other. Sin in a previous life separates us and makes us avoid each other. May *Phaya Thaen* help and support us.

(Royal Institute, Vol. 2, 2008, p. 98)

Examples of PL-SKT words found in the stanza are the term ‘วิบาก’ /wí-bà:k/ meaning ‘results of action,’ the term ‘เอโก’ /?e:-ko:/ meaning ‘to be alone,’ the term *เวรา* /we:-ra:/ meaning ‘revenge,’ and the term ‘โทเล’ /tho:-le:/ from *โทเร* /tho:-re:/ meaning ‘distant, far.’ These words communicated the cycle of life and this cycle of life will become endless if people take revenge on each other.

5. Life After Death

In *Thao Hung or Cheuang*, beliefs about life after death are found as well. For example:

(21)	สาเรต	งอมงามเงื่อน	อินทริ	กรอง
เยี้ยวขอ	ราม	ราชาอยู่ไกล	กลอยกัน	
	พอ	ระมาดตามสองปี	ปูนคอบ	กันแล้ว
	เมียน	ขอหน้เมื่อฟ้า	จึงเสถียร	

Translated: Ngommuan, a great queen, is most beautiful, like one created by the god Indra. She was separated from *Khun Cheuang* for more than two years. Since they were reunited, they are always together, and they will go to heaven together after passing away.

(Royal Institute, Vol. 2, 2008, p. 123)

An example of a SKT word in this stanza is the term ‘อินทรี’ /?in/ meaning ‘the god Indra in the second heaven where Indra dwells.’ Indra is the god that was respected the most in the society in ancient times. Especially, women and other beautiful things in the world are said to have been created by the god Indra.

V. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

To sum up, Na Nagara (1989, p. 24) observed that Tai people in different ethnic groups both in Thailand and outside of Thailand as well as people of other ethnic groups may respect *Thao Hung or Cheuang* as their king. However, Thai people believe that Thao Hung or Cheuang was a king of many ethnic groups. This view was also expressed by Punnothok (1998, p. 76). The legend of *Thao Hung or Cheuang* spread extensively over northeastern Thailand and Laos. It is noteworthy that PL-SKT loanwords found in *Thao Hung or Cheuang* most frequently are those with sound changes. As observed previously, consonant sound changes are more common than vowel sound changes. These PL-SKT

loanwords are most beautifully used, and it is obvious that the writers of *Thao Hung or Cheuang* were skilled in the use of PL-SKT languages and were able to apply PL-SKT words in the epic wonderfully.

This is in line with Nimmanahaeminda (1998, p. 103), who stated that the content and language including the vocabulary of *Thao Hung or Cheuang* indicates the writers were laureates who possessed consummate ability with PL-SKT words, royal words and other knowledge because they used the words in the work beautifully.

The writers or poets applied PL-SKT words in which there were sound changes in their literary work. By doing so, they made their poetry very beautiful and melodious. In this study, the following five values of beauty of PL-SKT words used in *Thao Hung or Cheuang* were found: 1) language usage 2) word usage 3) sound usage 4) semantic usage and 5) aesthetic usage, all of which contribute to the beauty of poem. This is called *Alangkara*, or beauty. As Raksamani (1999) stated that Sanskrit poets paid attention to the language usage and emphasized *Alangkara* as the heart of poetry. Thus, *Alangkara* made a poem beautiful, melodious and valuable in itself.

The different dimensions of the society depicted in *Thao Hung or Cheuang* were as follows. It was an urban society on a plateau. It was a class-based agricultural society in which there was gender inequality between men and women, marriage between relatives of the ruling class and multiple cultural influences. This view is similar to that of Manorat (2004), who stated that in *Thao Hung or Cheuang*, Lanna and Lan Xang settlements comprised a hierarchical agrarian society consisting of two classes: the rulers and the ruled in which there was gender inequality. The people believed in destiny or fate. This seems to be similar to the results found in this study as well. With respect to beliefs, it was found that there are two types, namely: old beliefs and belief in Brahmanism and Buddhism. Old beliefs focused on belief in Phaya Thaen, ancestral spirits, fated lovers or *Naen* (soul mates), Kwan (spirit) and divination. These points are similar to those of Nimmanahaeminda (1998, p. 103).

Regarding the old beliefs in Phaya Thaen, the findings are in line with those of Saenburan (2012, p. 8), who stated that Phaya Thaen is the world creator. This name seems to have the same reference as Thaen Fah Khuen in the Khun Borom tale and “Phaya Thaen Luang” (The Fine Arts Department, 1963, p. 140). Phaya Thaen Luang or Thaen Fah Khuen have the same meaning when compared with each other (Punnothok, 1987). In the comparative dimension, Phaya Thaen is regarded as the supreme god, comparable to Brahma in Hinduism, Jehovah in Christianity or Allah in Islam.

This belief in Phaya Thaen has been held more than 1,000 years among the ethnic groups of Tai people such as the Northern Thai people, the Shan in Myanmar, the Chinese in Xishuangbanna, the Northeastern Thai people and the Lao people. Thus, Phaya Thaen is the supreme god according to the belief of the Northeastern Thai and the Lao.

Later, people followed Brahmanism and Buddhism. In doing so, elements of Indic languages such as Pali and Sanskrit, entered the languages of the Tai family, especially the Thai and Lao languages. Evidence of the use of Pali and Sanskrit can be found in *Thao Hung or Cheuang*, and the important role of these languages in the Thai language has continued up to the present day.

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