

can be seen in Uraiwan, Anan, Shalardchai, and Sanay (1988), Shalardchai, Anan, and Santila (1993), Shalardchai (1994), and Anan (1992, 1994 and 1996). In addition to the above northern-based scholars, Banasopit (1988) examined the roles of teak industry in Northern Thailand in the political economic transformation of the Thai State during the reform period of King Chulalongkorn. Thongchai (1994) documents the process of the territorialization of the Thai State by using the power of the map to demarcate national boundaries. His narrative on the transformation of Siam to the modern Thai State gives a striking notion of the construction of nationhood. This excellent study helps demonstrate the way the Thai State still uses its control of mapping technology in the enclosure of forestland.

During 1990-1991, a research team led by Jernsak (1992) conducted a thorough study on the historical development of forest encroachment all over the country and produced a book entitled *Wiwaddhanakarn Khong Karnbukberk Thidinthamkin Nai Khetpah* (The Evolution of Land Acquisition through Encroachment in the Forest Lands). This study, using an historical approach, traced the settlement of people in the state forestlands in each region. The research results answer the critical question why there are over 10 million Thais living illegally in the state forestlands. The study reveals historical and regional differences in encroachment and residency in forestlands. The periodic changes in the pattern of resource uses give a clear picture of linkages between natural resource exploitation and macro-level social, economic, and political development, especially the penetration of state and market forces in rural areas. World capitalism also plays a part in rural transformation and commercialization of local land-based resources such as wood products and minor forest products. If anything is lacking in this study, from the political ecology perspective, it might be the minor coverage of conflict in property rights at local level despite its rich village-level data. It is also short of mentioning about people resistance towards increasing pressure on changing pattern of resource uses.

The above study became the stepping stone for another valuable research project leading to the voluminous book, *Pahchumchon Nai Prathes Thai : Naewtanay Kampattana* (Community Forest in Thailand : Development Perspective). This study, particularly the Northern region part, was conducted by almost the same group of

researchers, including Anan, Shalardchai, Santita, Yos, and legal experts like Bovomsak, Chareon, and Pisith. This Participatory Action Research (PAR) project was coordinated by the Social Research Institute, Chiang Mai University under the directorship of Chayan Vaddhanaphuti for the Northern region and by the Research and Development Institute, Khon Khaen University under the directorship of Mongkol Danthanin for the Northeast region. It is the most complete scrutiny of community forestry existing in Thailand. The legal history of forest management examined by legal experts shows how the Thai State has tightened its control over forest access (Saneh and Yos, 1993). Micro-level studies selected from various communities of each region provide a deep insight on community interactions with forest resources and with the state regarding the rights over resource uses, in both historical and contemporary dimensions. The results of this study are ramified for policy initiative to incorporate people participation in local forest resource management. Moreover, it aimed to induce institutional change when the research team publicly called for the promulgation of community forest law to recognize community rights over local forest resources, and equated them with democratic rights and processes (Saneh and Yos, 1993). The call for legal recognition of common property resource management like community-based forest management has become the contested terrain of those with power and those without.

The Western scholars whose work can be put under the rubric of political ecology include Feeny (1988), Hirsch (1990a, 1990b, 1992, 1993 and 1996), Lohmann (1990 and 1991), Vanderveest (1993, 1996a and 1996b), and Lynch and Talbott (1995). Mostly they have commonly voiced their concerns over environmental degradation and resource depletion in Thailand resulting from the growth-oriented economic development policies. Feeny, with previous work on political economy of productivity in Thailand, indicated that commercialization of agricultural products had direct effects on forest encroachment. Increased crop production through expansion of cultivated lands into the forestlands resulted from the combined effects of government policy emphasizing export of cash crop produces and sheer demands of the world market.

Hirsch (1990a), his earlier work in particular, offers the view on development discourse of the state apparatus in contradiction to the village-level discourse of

development participation. He contends that combined forces of state presence and market penetration in the villages accelerate the encroachment and settlement in the state forestland. Current works of Hirsch (1990b, 1992, 1993 and 1996) focus more on environmental issues like deforestation, impact of reforestation schemes, and the politics of conservation, especially in the context of state-village interactions. Probably, he is considered the scholar who has produced the most work of political ecology issues in Thailand. Lohmann (1991) has for many years examined specific issues like biodiversity, eucalyptus plantations, golf course proliferation, and hydroelectric dam projects, with emphasis on the environmental movements of the people who resist these activities.

Vanderveest (1993), also one of the leading political ecology advocates, has always been critical about the evolution of property relations in the Thai nation-state transformation, from property rights over people to territory control. The Thai State has increasingly expanded its control over forestlands, mostly at the expense of local control of communal resources. The state has then become more involved in the administration of property rights of land-based resources (Vanderveest and Peluso, 1995). The process called territorialization is about exclusion and inclusion of people within particular geographic units, and about controlling what people do and their access to natural resources within those territories. Although the reasons behind territorialization were the need to make territorial claims, protect resources, and collect taxes, most states later often employed territorial administrations to organize surveillance, gather information about the population, force them to settle down, and organize close control over people's everyday activities (Vanderveest, 1996a). On the current issues of increased protected areas in Thailand, Vanderveest (1996b) argues provocatively that conservation policies, especially those under the RFD administration, might have been formulated as the solution to a bureaucratic crisis such as budget allocation and competing control over forest land among the government agencies.

For legal aspects, Lynch and Talbott (1995), as lawyers, extensively examined the legal framework for community-based forest management in Asia and the Pacific region. In the case of Thailand, although the kingdom has never been colonized, they point out that its forest management has been influenced by the European mentality. The British model of forest management was transplanted to Thailand by a British forester

hired as the first Director-General of the RFD. The centralized administration of the state forest needed a supporting bureaucracy and legal system, therefore numerous laws were enacted to ensure that the state had a complete control over forest resources. They state that the Thai government has only provided rhetorical support for the concept of community-based forest management; meanwhile, most forest-dweller communities are labeled as illegal occupants in the state forestlands. The primary goal of all current official community-forestry programs in Thailand has only been to increase the number of planted trees. There are no tenurial assurance for community forestry (Yos, 1993). The legal definition of "forest" is also problematic in the first place. In addition, to classify it as "degraded" forest is even more involved with technical and political factors. For this particular issue, Bovomsak, Chareon, and Pisith (in Saneh and Yos, 1993) have already provided insightful information on the historical development of Thai forest laws. Furthermore, Pragtong and Thomas (1990) also examined the evolution of forest management in Thailand since the logging period until the conservation-oriented management at present. However, those studies cited above, except for that of Bovomsak et al, have rarely mentioned about customary rights and the traditional management system unrecognized by the formal legal framework.

For the issue of property rights, especially the common property resources (CPR) management, it has only been discussed recently in the study of natural resource management and the environmental problems in Thailand. Nevertheless, the CPR management system has actually endured in rural Thai society for several hundred years. There are at least two empirical studies supporting the fact that CPR management has existed in local resource management. First, Suthawan (1993) is convinced that assurance in resource tenure can be an important incentive for hill farmers to adopt soil conservation measures. She believes that property regimes may be diverse in Thai society, depending on available institutional arrangements. Property regimes in natural resources and the environment are not limited only to private property and state property, but can also be at some point of the continuum between the two polars (Suthawan, 1995). Second, Chusak (1994) also confirms the viability of CPR management in community-based watershed management in Northern Thailand. Drawing from empirical evidence around the Upper North, he concludes that CPR

management in watershed forests has been thriving in local communities for generations, even without a legal basis. The traditional irrigation management known widely as *Muang Fai* has been with the livelihood of the Northerner for over 700 years and become the solid ground for cooperation in CPR management in watershed forest. With present legal and political constraints, he suggests that co-management with genuine power sharing between the state and the communities might be feasible. In the pace of agrarian changes under the influence of modern Thai State and market forces, the indigenous CPR management needs to be legally recognized and protected by the state mechanisms.

Unequal power relation between the urban elites and marginal mass in the periphery can lead to bias and misperception about the origin of environmental problems. When environmental problems occur in downstream lowlands those who live there look for the culprits somewhere else. The highlanders are usually blamed for environmental damages in the lowlands. Deforestation and shifting cultivation in the upper watershed forest have become the conventional explanation for the major causes of lowland floods in rainy season, water shortages during drought season, sedimentation in the reservoirs, and lacks of recreational area. Despite the fact that settlement in the flood prone area, mismanagement of land, and over-consumption of water also contribute largely to those environmental problems, lowland urbanites, however still believe on the myth of deforestation and shifting cultivation. As Enters (1995) points out that what are the facts is often confused with what would you like the facts to be? Scientific research that revealed the counter-narrative findings was not given the significance. For, instance, Forsyth (1995) found that soil erosion in the highlands predated settlement of the hilltribes. The hill people themselves have normally avoided cultivation on the steep areas for the reason of unfertile soil in the long run. However, environmental policies and conservation measures still respond to the myth and conventional narratives. They aim to control the access to natural resources and limit pattern of resource use of the marginal people. The highlanders are always considered as the villain of environmentalism.

Another strand of political ecology although it is not a focus of this paper deserves to be mentioned, and in fact shares some of the common themes discussed

above. It is centrally developed around the environmentalism idea and the green movement such as the Green Peace group and the Green Party in Western Europe. It was derived from the belief that the present political, economic, and technological systems were not ecologically sustainable (Atkinson, 1991). It seeks fundamental change in economic behavior, worldview, and ethics regarding man and environmental relationships. Part of this idea is rooted in Schumacher's book (1973) -- *Small is Beautiful*. Some scholars look for oriental ecophilosophy such as Buddhist political ecology (Jones, 1993). This brand of political ecology focuses more on the developed countries and aims at national and global politics. Since it originates from the Western industrialized countries the main concern is central around the environmental problems that affect the quality of life of people. It somehow overlooks the conflicts in resource access and property relations at the micro level. Unlike the Third World political ecology it does not have much to say about everyday form of resistance of the powerless people. Nevertheless, its strength is in its strict concern over ecological limits. Its strategies on the environmental movement can be useful contextual sources for the environmental movement in the developing countries.

Preecha (1995a, 1995b, and 1996) whose idea derives from the political economy school based at the Faculty of Economics, Chulalongkorn University, mainly advocates this strand of political ecology in Thailand. Schumacher (1973) and other Buddhist economic thinking influence his proposition called green economics. Preecha's view of political ecology is in line with those, which developed in Western Europe such as O'Riordan (1981), Parris (1987), and Turner (1988). The most publicized environmental movement, like the Green Movement and the Green political party based on the urban middle classes, seems to be the domain of his political ecology endeavor. The conventional concept of "sustainable development" in the Brundtland Report (WCED, 1987) is also one of his principles. However, Preecha's political ecology is still within the locus of economic thinking, if only as an alternative to the conventional Marxist and Neo-Classical economics. He rejects formal economy and adopts the steady-state economy as a proper economic system for Thai society to avoid an environmental crisis. Because of his strong tie with political economy school, Preecha has maintained his

interest in grassroots environmental movement cum social movement with increasing force pressing on the power-that-be.

2.5) CONVERGING TREND OF ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL MOVEMENTS IN THAILAND

The 1990s have seen the emergence of environmental movements in developing countries. These movements are usually formed around common interests in a variety of terrains of struggle, often in opposition to the state and other political and socio-cultural institutions. These include the protests of dam construction, reforestation through eucalyptus plantations, and eviction of people from the forest reserves known as the *Kor Jor Gor* scheme. These protests have illustrated the reality of the socially disadvantaged and powerless people whose livelihoods were affected by the economic growth policies that allocate natural resources in favor of the social elites. Proliferation of resistance in the form of environmental movements reflects two major alterations. First, the ecosystems have been exploited to the point that exceeds their carrying capacity. The environmental degradation has gradually affected the micro ecosystems that rural life depends upon. Second, current political and social development has weakened the prominent role of the state in natural resource management while the resurgence of market forces has not fully substituted that of the declining state. The current political atmosphere also accepts diverse ideas and social significance. This situation allows several negotiation processes to occur.

The incidents involving arson and vandalism of eucalyptus nursery houses in the reforestation scheme are well understood as the everyday form of resistance of local people toward the state environmental policies. This kind of protest usually occurs where their voices cannot be heard in a formal political arena. The mass demonstration against the resettlement of people living in the forest reserves, the infamous *Kor Jor Gor*, has shown that the military-backed conservation policy can be in jeopardy. The people movement against Pak Mun dam and other dams in the Northeast of Thailand expresses the voices of the socially disadvantaged peasants whose livelihoods are affected by the economic-growth oriented development projects that withdraw rural resources to the

core areas. Although the protest could not actually stop the project, it did cause the state and other benefactors to invest or compensate more on environmental and social costs. The environmental policies inevitably produce the winners and the losers.

Those peasant movements have later developed into the network of small-scale farmers of the Northeast. Their experience in negotiation with the state convinces them that collective movement is more likely to succeed. The social movement like the Forum of the Poor is an example of environmental movement cum social movement, which in fact manifests that the environmental problems and social problems are inseparable. In Northern Thailand, the expansion of protected areas, such as national parks, wildlife sanctuaries, and class 1A watersheds can be considered as a result of modern environmentalism supported by the urban-based middle class people. These people only recently turn to appreciate the forest in the new form of *Thammachat* nature and wilderness. Despite in the past these elite people viewed the forest as *Pa Thuan* – uncivilized, savage, and untamed – believed to be outside the Thai space (Stott, 1992). Increased demands on recreational values of the forest from the urban people are in conflict with the way forest dwellers view the forest as sources of their survival. Conservation policy thus becomes the battlefield for people with unequal power relation generating further conflict and resistance.

Protected area policy has stirred up discontent among the forest dwellers as the park officials intend to relocate them from park areas. In fact, some highland communities were already evicted from the newly declared protected areas. These people are marginal, powerless, and economically disadvantaged in the larger Thai society. They staged the protests and took to the streets to express their hardship from the government policies. This collective resistance gave birth to the Northern Farmer Network as the regional organization to negotiate with the government concerning the environment-poverty agendas. The forms of resistance by the Northern Farmer Network are not violent as like resource vandalism in the Northeast. Their struggle is rather in the form of contested points of view and knowledge. They invented their own discourse on resource management to contest with the state discourse. For example, the Karen minorities call their agricultural system "rotational cultivation" instead of "shifting

cultivation", a pejorative term labeled by the state and the conservationists as a destructive system.

They sometimes adopt the government conservation discourse to explain their patterns of forest use. The Karen classifies their forestland into watershed forests, wildlife sanctuaries, community forests, village woodlots, and sacred groves. They employ mapping techniques, usually used by the government to make claims of forestland, to demarcate their village boundaries and forest uses. All these strategies are an attempt to contest with the state discourse that keeps saying the people and forest cannot co-exist. The government campaign to reforest 50 million *rai* to celebrate His Majesty the King's 50th anniversary of accession to the throne is also contested by the villagers' call for ordaining 50 million trees to commemorate the same event. Strategic contest for forest access is not just to secure material resources but also to give meaning to their cultural practices.

Struggles to have their communal rights recognized by the government were ramified by a call for institutional change, the promulgation of a community forest law in order to legalize the villagers' *de facto* rights in forest management and environmental conservation. The villagers were successful in pushing a community forest law through the cabinet council. They also managed to have the RFD compromised on the issue of community forests in protected areas. However, this, in turn, evoked strong opposition from the urban-based conservationists (deep green) fearing that the community forest law would give a free license to the local people to plunder the forest resources and threaten the fragile biodiversity. Not surprisingly, this disagreement represents dualism in environmentalism - a clear class conflict and dividing views on environmental conservation between rural villagers and urban middle-class people. The community forest law eventually becomes political terrain for the stakeholders to contest their view and discourse on environmental conservation.

Urban environmental problems are mostly centered on pollution problems such as water, air, noise, and traffic. Responses to these problems are usually in the form of collective concern over the seriousness of the pollution in the particular area. The voices of the urban people are mostly heard by those responsible for the problems and the mechanisms to tackle the urban pollution are already at hand, although temporary.

However, the measures to tackle urban environmental problems usually concentrate on technical solution. For example, they plan for more roads, express ways, and computerized traffic light as solution for traffic congestion despite the root cause of the problem lies in social and political structure that needs institutional change. Under present circumstance, the ones with power and the have can avoid direct effect from environmental problems while the powerless and the have-not must face polluted environment inevitably. In Bangkok traffic, the upper class people can stay comfortably in their air-conditioned car while the lower class people have to risk their life in the poor condition bus and expose themselves to the pollution (Ross, 1997).

In contrast, the industrial pollution occurring in the peripheral areas quite often receives slow responses, if any at all. The case of the Northern Industrial Estate in Lamphun is an example of the struggle of the workers to get attention from the government and the private firms on the harmful pollutants and unhealthy working environment that has claimed the lives of more than 20 workers. The government instead attempted to play down the voices of the workers for fear of damage to foreign investment. This has led the local workers to form a group called the Lamphun Forum to raise the problems to be heard in national politics. The "not in my back yard" (NIMBY) phenomena also occur in many urban and suburban areas where the people oppose the much needed but unpleasant facilities like the construction of garbage plants and toxic waste-treatment plants. The cases of the garbage plant in Hang Dong District, Chiang Mai and the toxic waste-treatment plant in Rayong illustrate the collective movement of local people suffering from environmental policies that favor one group of people and condemn another.

Two high-profile incidents of factory related pollution in the region are air pollution from EGAT's Mae Moh power plant in Lampang and water pollution from the Phoenix Pulp mill in Khon Khaen. Every year the villagers within the vicinity of Mae Moh power plant and lignite mine suffer from sulfur dioxide and dust. Meanwhile the people live on the riparian of the Nam Pong River have to tolerate water pollution from the pulp mill that causes the death of fish. These are periodic change in the environment but the problems have never been solved outright because the vested interest of the powerful

people is involved. People suffering from the pollution have to opt for informal political arena to voice their concerns, as the government seems not to treat the case seriously.

Proliferation of the environmental movements has signified the complexity of the environmental problems. The environmental degradation is no longer viewed as a mere ecological process. It is linked to the contextual sources of socio-economic structures and political processes. Mainstream environmental study alone may not be sufficient to trace the root causes of the problem. Multiple views on the environmental problems will be widened by social and economic differentiation between rural and urban, and between the rich and the poor. Division of ideas on nature conservation is witnessed from the recent split between the urban-based conservationists and the forest-dependent villagers regarding protected area management. Thus the environmental policies that produce winners and losers tend to heighten social conflicts and extend the political process to a wider arena. Some may turn to violence.

2.6) CONCLUDING REMARKS ON ENVIRONMENT DEVELOPMENT NEXUS: DYNAMIC ROLES OF STATE, MARKET, AND CIVIL SOCIETY

Environmental concerns in the 1990s are not only caused directly by the increasing ecological crisis but also fueled by the drastic change in global economics and the politics of the late 1980s. Poverty has become inseparable from the development-environment debate. Eradication of poverty through strengthening and protecting livelihood strategies is as much an environmental sustainability issue as a resource-based development question (Peet and Watts, 1993). In short, the environmental crisis is in fact a poverty problem.

Periodical evolution of development paradigms can be seen as a constant oscillation of dominant roles between the state, market, and civil society. The 1950s were the time when the state-led development planning was accepted widely. In contrast, the 1980s were the period in which the market was shifted to a center stage of the development paradigm. By the 1990s, in a rather different geopolitical and economic environment, role substitution between state and the market that prevailed in the past is not capable to tackle the newly-emerged problems, the environmental conflicts in

particular. Development discourse seemed to gravitate around the "balance" between state, market, and civil organizations (Janvry, Sadoulet, and Thombecke, 1993). In other words, the 1990s have demonstrated a growing concern with *institutions*, whether expressed in terms of agrarian institutions, state-society institutions, market institution or social movements that are expanding rapidly. In general term, it is a matter of good governance. Roles of big, clumsy, and inefficient government organizations may be reduced to pave the way for more diverse social institutions to take on the tasks.

In addition, a dilemma that, both neoliberal, authoritarian, and bureaucratic development approaches have not succeeded in solving the postmodern conflicts. This provides considerable momentum for a focus on institutions within civil society, especially arrangements based on negotiation, cooperation, and persuasion. Local institutions, in particular, have proven to be able to solve growing conflicts between environmental conservation and economic development. As Janvry, Sadoulet, and Thombecke (1991: 4) remark, "when the state fails to deliver public goods, insurance, management of externalities, minimum basic needs, and democratic rights, civil organizations may fill the vacuum. The same holds for the market where market failures lead to the emergence of civil institutions, many of which take the form of organizations." In short, the role of grassroots organizations has emerged in the context of diminishing states and expanding markets (Uphoff, 1993). Re-construction of common property institutions and the promotion of local knowledge systems and resource management are seen as the emergence of civil institutions.

The rise of political ecology has been shaped and challenged by wide-ranging debates within social theory. In the late 1980s and early 1990s it was the period in which postmodernism began to influence social sciences. The advent of environment-versus-development discourse was one of its outcomes. Environmental crisis is one of many world problems that theories developed in the modern age are short of proper explanation (Gare, 1995). An attempt here to assess the state of knowledge on the environmental problems through political ecology approach is by no means to ignore other approaches in studying man and environment interactions. The author only offers an alternative perspective that might be useful in viewing the environmental problems in Thailand. This view is based on current environmental issues and their reflections.

Environmental discourse channeled through many environmental activities and movements can speak for itself about which direction the social scientists should pursue the environmental problems.

PART III PROPERTY RIGHTS AND THE ENVIRONMENT: ECOLOGICAL ECONOMICS APPROACH (Suthawan SATHIRATHAI)

3.1) THE TERM 'ECOLOGICAL ECONOMICS'

The term 'Ecological Economics' can be defined as "a new 'transdisciplinary' approach to understanding and managing the ecology and economics of our world for sustainability⁵ on local, regional and global scales" (Costanza, 1991).

Ecological Economics is quite different from conventional 'environmental and natural resources economics'; its domain encompasses the entire web of interaction between economics and ecological sectors with institutions as linkages. While environmental and natural resources economics mainly emphasizes the adoption of conventional economic tools, ecological economics will include also ecological and institutional framework for analysis. Nevertheless, it is not an easy task for the development of a new transdisciplinary approach to take place, especially when conflicts between various disciplines exist. It is also difficult to entirely divorce ecological economics from environmental economics; conventional economic tools of analysis will have to be applied when appropriate (Costanza, 1991). The range of the ecological economics approach is, therefore, rather wide, encompassing various aspects of economics. In this paper, the emphasis will be on the application of institutional economics in analyzing the roles of property rights in natural resources and environmental management.

⁵ Indeed, there has been a lot of debate over the term 'sustainability' itself. In this context, sustainable development will be defined according to the Brundtland Commission as "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (WCED, 1987). Even though sustainability is a general target to be achieved, it is, however, not the aim of this paper to focus on the definition of the term.

While environmental and natural resources economics has been quite well-established, ecological economics has only recently emerged in western countries including organizations as the Beijer Institute of Sweden, the Institute of Ecological Economics of the University of Maryland in the US and the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) in the UK. In Thailand, there are several organizations which use the environmental and natural resources economics approach such as the Thailand Development Research Institute (TDRI) and Faculties of Economics of several universities, including that of Kasetsart, Thammasat and Chulalongkorn. However, no organizations in Thailand have formally adopted the ecological economics approach. Faculty of the Environment and Resources of Mahidol University may be closer in adopting this new approach but with the inclination towards ecology rather than economics.

Generally, conventional environmental and natural resources economics has concentrated on valuation based on welfare economics and applied price theory; it has particularly focused on how to price or value natural resources and the environment when there is no market. Less emphasis has been put on institutional aspects except for the issue of 'property rights' which have been accepted as an important concept but with more weight put on private ownership.

Ecological Economics, on the other hand, emphasizes linkages between ecological and economic systems; property rights institutions are seen as part of "cultural or social capital" by which societies convert "natural capital" that is natural resources and the environment into "man-made capital" (Berkes and Folke, 1995). This social capital or an institutional sector is like a set of rules of a game which determines such a conversion process of which sustainability has been considered as a target (see the diagram and its explanation developed by the author in Figure 1). Property rights regimes in focus include not only private property but also open access, communal property and state property; they also exist along a spectrum ranging from open access to private ownership (Hanna and et. al., 1995; Eggertsson, 1993).

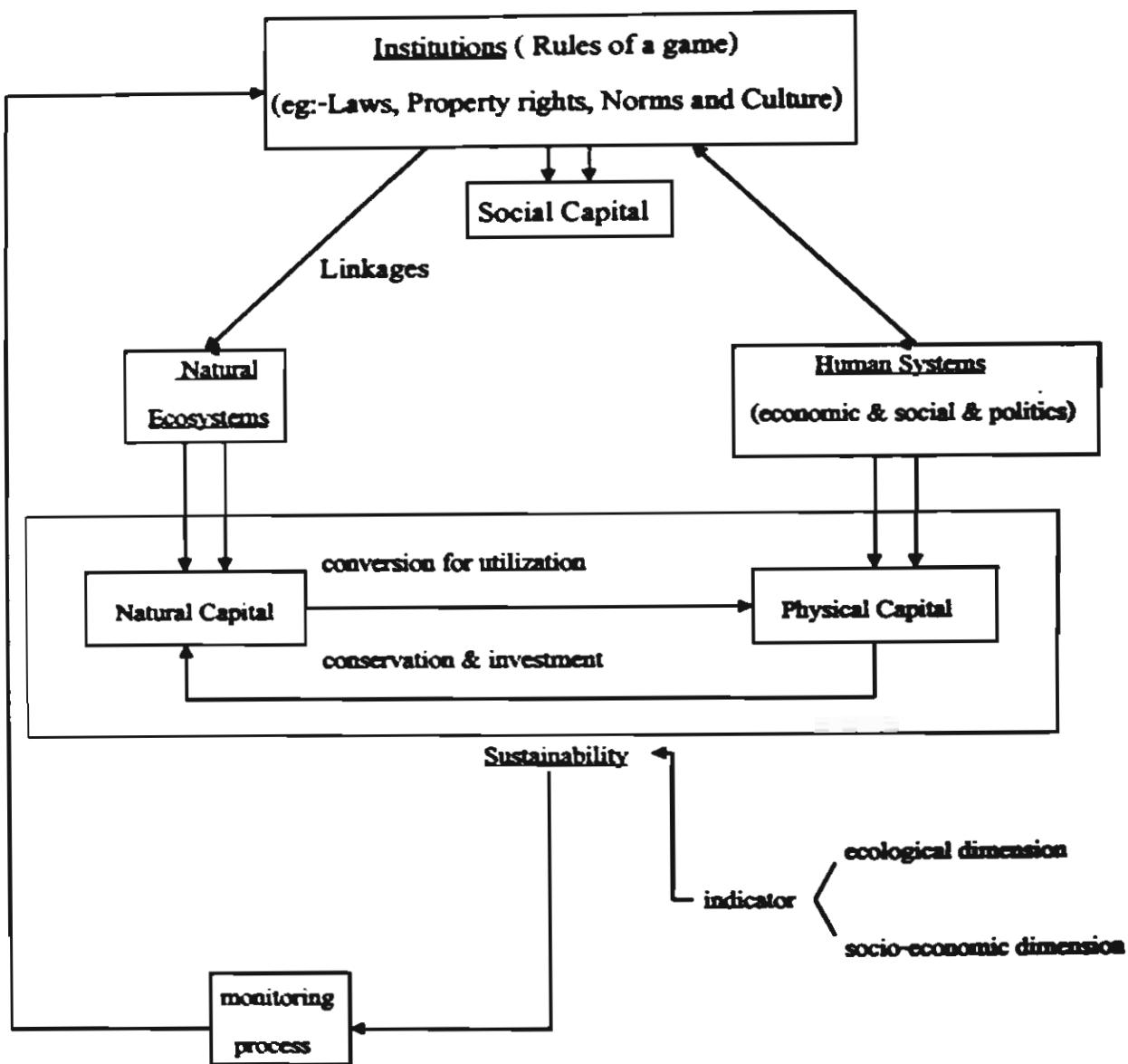


Figure 1:

The diagram shows a relationship between 'natural ecosystems' (natural resources and the environment) and 'human systems' which comprise economics, social and political systems. The maintenance of the human systems requires conversion of natural capital into physical capital used in the production process. At the same time, in order to keep the conversion process sustainable, investment in management and conservation of natural resources and the environment is vital. The concept of 'sustainability' is, however, debatable both in terms of its own definition and with respect to how to measure it (indicators). Moreover, natural systems and human systems are linked through 'institutions' which regulate and control the process of converting natural capital into physical capital. Institutions are like rules of the game and mainly include, laws and regulations, property rights, norms and culture. They can also be called social or cultural capital. Institutions are dynamic and adaptive to changes in natural ecosystems and human needs. If sustainability can be well defined and measured, the process of converting natural capital for human use can be monitored. It is therefore possible to redesign and adjust institutions accordingly so as to maintain both ecological and human longterm objectives.

As previously mentioned, the ecological economic approach highlights linkages between ecological and human systems partly through property rights regimes. Performance of a property rights regime can be measured in three dimensions: economic, social and ecological which are also interconnected (Hanna and et. al., 1995). This paper, however, will focus more on the economic dimension. Property rights regimes are an important institution and incentive in dictating the use and conservation of resources.

3.2) PROPERTY RIGHTS REGIMES AS AN INSTITUTION AND INCENTIVE

Institutions are formal (laws and regulations) and informal (norms and customs) rules and constraints which structure incentives and influence human interaction (North, 1990). 'Property rights' are bundles of entitlements which define rights and duties of owners in the use of a resource; 'property rules' are rules under which those rights and duties are exercised (Bromley, 1991). The combination of both property rights and property rules define a 'property regime' which create a certain security of people's expectation about their control of resources (Bromley, 1989). In this respect, property rights regimes are an important institution.

Moreover, since property right systems are intrinsic to the use of resources and include their associated benefits and costs, it is clear that the prevailing systems will certainly influence incentives and behaviour with respect to the allocation of resources (Coleman, 1966; Ciriacy-Wantrup, 1985; Libecap, 1989).

Generally, property rights regimes or property regimes can be classified into the following 4 categories:- i) open access ii) communal property iii) private property and iv) government or state property.

Open access refers to the absence of property rights. Communal property are arrangements in which a group of people or a community jointly control a resource. Private property is the control of resources by private individuals. When a resource legally belongs to or is supposed to be controlled by the state, it is considered to be under a government or state property regime. However, resources formally labeled state property may in practice be controlled privately or by groups. In several occasions,

the open-access situation may also be caused by the state imposing controls without having the means by which to enforce it (Bromley and Chapagain, 1984; Commander, 1986; Repetto and Gillis, 1988; Feeny and *et. al.*, 1996).

In the arena of natural resources, it is well known that a situation in which property rights are ill-defined or absent, leading to an open-access or *res nullius* resource, will culminate in resource degradation (Clark, 1977; Dasgupta and Heal, 1979; Hardin, 1968; Stevenson, 1991). This is caused by the over-exploitation of the resource due to everyone having free access to it with the result that nobody has any incentive to manage or conserve it for future use (since someone else can always come to harvest it). This is a prime example of when "everybody's property is nobody's property". The classic works by Gordon (1954) and Cheung (1970) analyze the case of open-access fisheries in which their arguments can be applied to the open-access resource situation in general. An open-access situation can be better described by a game-theoretic framework in the form of one shot Prisoners' Dilemma Game (PD)⁶ (Stevenson, 1991; Sandler, 1992; Ostrom and *et. al.*, 1994).

Property rights regimes have to perform important functions of limiting use, coordinating users and responding to changes in environmental conditions (Hanna and *et. al.*, 1995). In the absence of property rights, as in the case of an open-access situation, there is no incentive for conservation and efficient allocation of resources; leading to overexploitation. It seems clear that there will be benefits in filling in this institutional vacuum. However, it is also important to realize the transaction costs involved in the establishment of well-defined property rights which include costs of exclusion, coordination, information gathering, monitoring and enforcement (Eggertsson, 1991 and 1993; Hanna and *et. al.*, 1995). These costs are also determined by the characteristics of a resource as discussed in the following section.

3.3) COMMON POOL RESOURCES AND COMMUNAL PROPERTY REGIME

Recently, there has been a debate surrounding the famous Hardin's "Tragedy of the Common" approach which claims that all resources held in 'common' will inevitably

be overexploited (Hardin, 1968). Several works have criticized a terminology used, such as 'common', and questioned the accuracy of this approach (Wade, 1988; Ostrom, 1991; Bromley, 1992; Quiggin, 1993; Feeny and et. al. , 1996). In fact, the tragedy occurs as a result of an open-access situation rather than because resources are held in common. The heart of the issue seems to be centred on the confusion between the characteristics of the resources and the institutional arrangement over the control of the resources in question.

The word 'common-property' resources is confusing. In fact it refers to a kind of resource for which exclusion is difficult and joint use involves subtractability (Ostrom and et. al. , 1994; Feeny and et. al. , 1996). However, the term is often used to refer to open access which is a type of property regime, not a class of resources. It is better to use the term 'common-pool resources' (CPR) to define a resource which has two important characteristics, i.e., exclusion is not possible or involves high costs but at the same time its use is subtractable⁷. Global climate and fishery resources are clear examples of this type of resource. Nevertheless, because of its characteristics, property regimes over the control of CPR may easily fall into a category of open access or no property. This is partly due to the high cost involved in establishing well-defined property rights over a resource as a result of the in exclusivity characteristics of CPR. Policy solutions to this problem has become another issue of the arguments.

When resources are CPR, there is a tendency that policy prescription becomes polarized, either to privatize (Demsetz, 1967; Johnson, 1972; Welch, 1983) or to nationalize them (Carruther and Stone, 1981; Ophuls, 1973).

A private property regime, characterized by the highest exclusivity and transferability, has been advocated on the ground that it creates incentive for the efficient allocation of resources (Cheung, 1970; Demsetz, 1967; Furubotn and Pejovich, 1972). However, because the regime provides the most exclusive ownership structure, its implications for equity often becomes questionable (Dasgupta and Heal, 1979; Libecap, 1986; Eggertsson 1991). Moreover, an exclusive private property regime may not be applicable to a situation where exclusive and enforcing costs are paramount such

⁷ See end notes 2 for explanation.

as ocean fishing. (Eggertsson 1991; Feeny and *et. al.* , 1996). When there is a possible economy of scale in resource management, such as grazing (in a less capital-intensive society), imposition of a private property regime in which land may have to be divided into small parcels for each individual owner may not be the most suitable (Field, 1985; Dahlman, 1980)

In a state property regime, ownership and control over the use of resources are in the hands of the state. It often becomes a metaphor, especially in developing countries, that the public domain will have to be protected by the state (Ostrom, 1991). This includes, for example, forest land, watersheds and fisheries. Individuals and groups may be granted usufruct rights over the resources for a certain period of time (Cernea, 1985). However, it often becomes the case that the imposition of state control, either directly or indirectly, without the ability to enforce the arrangement leads to an open-access situation which culminates in resource degradation (Bromley and Chapagain, 1984; Commander, 1986; Repetto and Gillis, 1988; Southgate, 1988).

While policy prescription has so far concentrated on these two types of property regimes, several pieces of evidence have supported the argument that common or communal property is a promising type of property regime for CPR (McCay and Acheson, 1987; Ostrom, 1991; Bromley, 1992). In fact, provided that exclusivity is well enforced, a common property regime is similar to private property for the group (Bromley and Cernea, 1989). It is only when exclusivity completely breaks down that the resource becomes an open-access one like the one described by Hardin in the "tragedy of the common" (Hardin, 1968). The free rider problem is commonly blamed for the break-down of the common property. Based on the strict self-interest assumption, there is an incentive for individuals to shirk responsibility to the group or community to which they belong. This free rider problem can be represented by the prisoner's dilemma game in which players prefer a non-cooperative outcome to a cooperative one, leading to an inferior Nash equilibrium (Runge, 1981; Sandler, 1992). The paradox is that individually rational strategies can lead to a collectively irrational outcome (Campbell, 1985; Taylor, 1987).

In fact, the justification for privatization or nationalization of the common resource is based upon the belief that there is a need for an external force to change the outcome.

However, there is evidence that local rules can successfully regulate the common resources without having to be imposed from outside (McCay and Acheson, 1987; Wade, 1988; Ostrom, 1991; Bromley, 1992). The group incentives which facilitate coordinated behaviour in communal property regimes can be analyzed as the assurance game⁸ (Runge, 1986; Sandler, 1992). In this type of game, there is no longer a dominant strategy such as a non-cooperative strategy which is a dominant outcome in the standard Prisoner dilemma. The key is that the decision to use common resources will be conditional on the expected decisions of others. Participants will design their own self-binding contracts based on information as well as customs or conventions they have which will better fit the local situation. In enforcing their regulations, they can even hire someone outside as an enforcer (Runge, 1986; Ostrom, 1991).

Moreover, from the game-theoretic analysis, even though the Nash equilibrium of a one shot PD game is a defecting strategy, a cooperative outcome can result from a repeated PD game given that 'retaliation' is effective⁹ (Sandler, 1992; Seabright, 1993; Ostrom and et. al., 1994). The idea that repetition can sustain cooperation comes from the fact that individuals who are tempted to defect may decided not to do so since they may lose the benefits of cooperation in the future. As long as the discounted future returns are high enough (with a low discount rate) and the high costs of retaliation outweigh the benefits of defecting, cooperative equilibrium strategies can occur. This helps explain successful cases of local communal management of CPR. Given time, people will build up long-term interactive relationships and expect to gain in the future from cooperation. This is contrast to the situation when they look for only short term benefits, like in the case of open access. Cultural norms and traditions can help to build up 'trust' for assurance and form 'punishment' to enhance the costs of retaliation (Seabright, 1993). A secured communal property regime is vital to ensure the net long-term streams of benefits from cooperation. Nevertheless, there are cases in which de jure rights imposed by the state come into conflict with existing de facto communal property regime (Lynch and Alcom, 1991). Once the indigenous management system

⁸ See end notes 3 for explanation.

⁹ See end notes 4 for explanation.

has been undermined by new legislation, it may lead to an open-access situation (Wade, 1988; Gibbs and Bromley, 1990; Ostrom, 1991).

3.4) A SPECTRUM OF PROPERTY REGIMES AND CONTRACTUAL ARRANGEMENTS IN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

A property regime in resource management is a structure of rights and duties which characterizes the relationship of primary decision units (such as households or community) to one another with respect to the resource and their uses (Bromley and Comea, 1989). The scope of these primary decision units will influence the types of property regimes whether that regime is private property, state property, or common or communal property (Bromley, 1991; Ciriacy-Wantrup, and Bishop, 1985; Wade, 1987).

The discussion in the previous section focuses mainly upon three distinctive types of resource management regime, namely private property, state property, or common or communal property. In fact, property rights exist as a continuum, ranging from open-access conditions at one extreme to very exclusive rights held by individuals, namely private property rights (Libecap, 1986).

The model developed by Field (1985) based on common grazing land has examined factors which drive the property rights system to vary from the common or communal property where the degree of exclusivity is low to the most exclusive individual ownership. The model focuses only on one dimension of the property, i.e., the degree of exclusivity which can be determined by the optimal number of commons. As the number increases, along with the degree of exclusivity, the property rights system will move towards private property. There are three types of cost functions in the model, namely standard cost of production, cost of internal governance and cost of exclusion functions. The optimal commons is determined when the marginal return to investment on internal governance is equal to the marginal return to exclusion. When the costs of internal governance fall as a result of some exogenous factor such as people adopting a common ideology, the return to investment per monetary unit spent on internal governance will increase. In this case, the new equilibrium will associate with smaller optimal number of common (larger size of commons) which means the property rights

system will move towards a communal property regime. If the technological change reduces the cost of exclusion, the marginal return to investment on exclusion will be greater. The new optimal number of commons in this case will be higher (smaller size of commons) which implies the shift of the property rights system towards a private property regime. However, the model becomes indeterminate when one assumes that the value of the resource increases. Even though the model emphasizes only one aspect of property right, i.e., exclusivity, it provides a basic analytical framework in understanding the spectrum of property rights (See Figure 2).

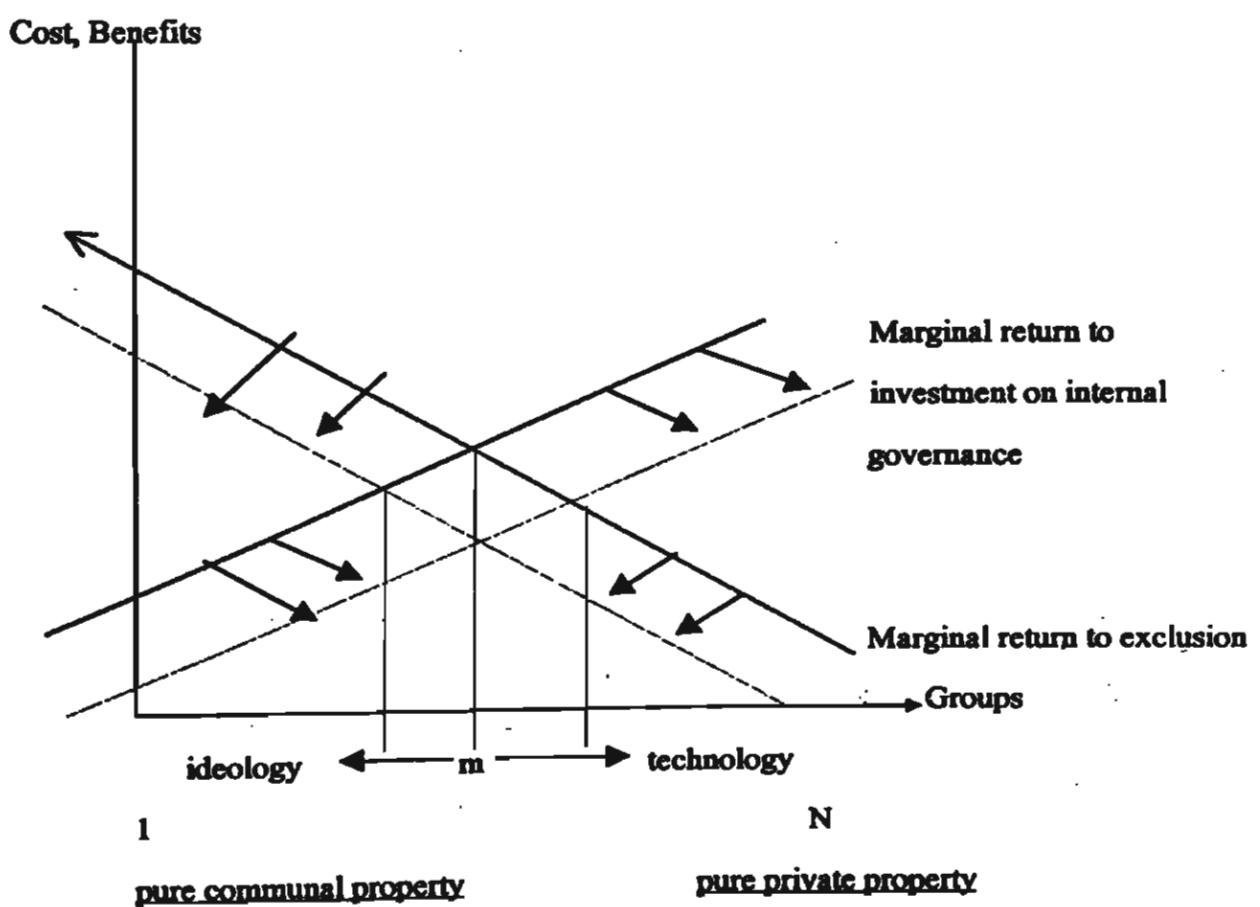


Figure 2.

Another interesting aspect of applying property rights analysis in resource management problems is that property rights can be divided (Barzel, 1991). It is important to note that "property is not an object but rather a right to a benefit stream that is only as secure as the duty of all others to respect the conditions that protect that stream" (Bromley and Cernea, 1989). Nonetheless, an object or in this case, a natural

resource over which a right extends has several attributes. As an ownership of the object or even of an organization can be divided (Alchian, 1977; Posner, 1986), it might be possible that different decision-units can have rights over distinctive attributes of the same resource including, its management. As a result, different kinds of resource regimes can be applied to different attributes of the resource.

The model developed by Bromley and Hodge (1990) gives a good example of rural land as a factor of agricultural production being privately owned but with property rights to other land attributes, i.e, country-side and community attributes (CCA), which include the environmental quality and services of the land may be with the collective. The model shows that by shifting the entitlement from the status quo in which farmers have control over all attributes of the land to the alternative property rights arrangement, the new level of rural environment can be enhanced. (higher level of CCA) The higher level of CCA is the result of the shift in the initial property right. Under the status quo, those who are concerned for the rural environment have to bear all the transaction costs involved in the bargaining process while the land owners have to bear all transaction costs in negotiating for the reduction in CCA in the alternative entitlement. In fact, under each kind of entitlement, there will be an optimal level of CCA. When there is a general agreement to allocate certain rights to the land owner and to the state, that combination of rights determines a particular reference point (Hodge, 1989). The two extreme entitlements, i.e; the one in which property rights over the CCA are with farmers and the one in which property rights over the CCA are with the state represent two different reference points. There will be a continuum of possible reference points (with corresponding optimal levels of CCA) ranging between the two extreme entitlements, each of which defines different degrees of private property rights as attenuated by collective decisions.

The above model provides a good analytical framework in analyzing possible contractual arrangement regarding rights to the use of land. Other contractual arrangements which also give useful theoretical guidelines are the open-field system and the sharecropping arrangement.

The open field system is unique in terms of the property right arrangement, i.e, a) there is private ownership of an arable land but collective ownership of grazing

grounds; b) private decision-making regarding crop growing has been attenuated by well defined social rules and regulations; c) private ownership of arable land is in the scattering of strips under the fallow system; and d) the privately owned arable land becomes interchangeable with the collectively owned grazing area (Dahlman, 1980).

One of the scholars in this area who tried to explain such a peculiar contractual arrangement is Dahlman (Dahlman, 1980). His crucial underlying assumption is the increasing return to scale in grazing. It then becomes the question of choice between a private or a collective property regime; which one will better exploit the economy of scale in grazing. The criterion is the transaction costs. He concludes that transaction costs are lower under collective rights as long as outside users can be excluded. However, there is the potential problem that an individual farmer can consolidate his arable plots to increase his holding, thus leading to higher bargaining power in grazing. To prevent such a problem, scattering is then introduced in order to make independent grazing impossible and to encourage more interaction in the community. McCloskey (1986), however, explained the scattering as a behaviour toward risk. Farmers diversify their plots of land against crop failure. McCloskey, concluded that high transaction costs prevent other cheaper forms of crop insurance. In short, transaction costs become the key underlying factor in explaining this kind of contractual arrangement.

Sharecropping is another interesting contractual arrangement which is considered to be inefficient according to a standard neoclassical economics (Johnson, 1950). However, several theories have been developed to explain its existence (Cheung, 1969; Stiglitz, 1974; Barzel, 1991). The interest of the present discussion is not on sharecropping per se, but on the theoretical framework related to property rights used in explaining such a contractual arrangement.

Barzel (1991) adopted the concept of residual claimants in explaining the choices of tenancy contracts. The concept of residual claimants has been used in the theory of economic organization (Alchian, 1977). For example, the person who monitors the team production should be granted the right to claim net earning of the team after payments to other inputs has been subtracted (residuals). In receiving this residual reward, he, as a residual claimant will have incentive to reduce shirking in the team production since his earnings also depend upon the performance of the team.

Barzel (1991) compared three types of tenancy contracts namely the wage contact, the rental contract and the share contract. He explains that when land is uniform while there is a variability in labour input, the tenant becomes a residual claimant since he can solely affect the outcome. The rental contract will be appropriate because it provides an incentive to the tenant who can claim whatever is left over after paying the fixed rent. On the other hand, when labour input is uniform and there is a variability in land instead, the landowner will be a residual claimant. In this case, a wage contract is suitable because the expected outcome will be the function of land quality only and this gives the right incentive for the land owner to improve and maintain his land quality. However, in reality there is a variability in both input factors: land and labour. Therefore, both the land owner and the tenant are residual claimants and that is why share tenancy, which stands halfway between the wage contract and the rental contract, applies.

According to Barzel, the party who is more inclined to affect the outcome by manipulating the particular attribute (a residual claimant) should be granted rights to control such an attribute. (Barzel, 1991) In fact, natural resources and the environment comprise several attributes. Consequently, the ownership or the property rights of such resources may be divided among residual claimants of each attribute of the resource. Barzel has provided an interesting analytical framework which may be applied in analyzing different property regimes and contractual arrangements in resource and environmental management.

3.5) TOPICS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH IN THAILAND

In Thailand, there has not yet been an empirical research which has directly applied this type of analysis. However, there are several studies which have recorded and investigated successful cases of local communal management of natural resources and the environment, particularly forests in different regions of Thailand (Deetate, 1989; NGO-Cord *et.al.*, 1989; Kanchanapan and Kaosa-ard, 1991; Thungsuro, 1991; Ramitanond *et.al.*, 1993). It is interesting to observe that these cases may be classified into 2 broad categories: the cases in which local communities have had long established cooperation in management and conservation of forests for more than a decade, and other more recent cases in which local communities have been conserving forests for

less than 10 years. The first category may be explained in the game-theoretic context by the repeated PD game. These people have developed long-term interactive relationships and constructed effective rules and norms which successfully induce cooperation. Through their experiences, some villagers have also realized the direct benefits from the conservation of watershed forests uphill in terms of water availability for growing paddy¹⁰.

The second category is probably more interesting. There seems to be a trend among farmers and local communities to use conservation as a strategy to claim rights on land and forest resources (Sathirathai, 1993 and 1995). The empirical study on the impacts of property rights on the adoption of soil conservation practices in northern Thailand has indicated that direct benefits of soil erosion control from the farmers' point of view may not be sufficient to induce their adoption of the systems. Farmers, however, tend to adopt soil conservation practices as a bargaining strategy to claim land rights (Sathirathai, 1993). The policy implication is that land rights that are conditional on the practice of soil conservation systems may be used as an incentive for farmers to adopt such systems. The same may apply in the case of forest conservation; communal property rights granted to local communities conditional on their protection of communal forests may be used as an incentive for forest conservation. At present, the new legislation on community forests is about to be promulgated¹¹. An empirical research is therefore needed to understand 'incentive systems' required in inducing and sustaining cooperative actions in the management and conservation of community forests in the both mentioned categories.

Property rights, although, are not in themselves sufficient conditions for resource sustainability, they are necessary conditions (Hanna and et. al., 1995). In this situation, it is important to understand how a communal property rights regime has evolved in those cases classified under the first category and how property rights regimes can be used as policy instruments in the cases belonging to the second category. Moreover, since property rights can be divided as discussed in the previous section, it is possible that

¹⁰ Based on the author's own interview with local villagers in Ban Tung Yoa, Lumpun Province, for example.

¹¹ The Community Forest Bill is now in the process of being submitted to the first reading of the House of the Representatives.

different types of property regimes can be applied to different attributes of the same resource. For example, an arable land of a local watershed may be designated private property whereas a non-arable land of the same watershed may be assigned under a communal property regime. A thorough research is required before property regimes can appropriately be designed to induce the right incentive.

Last but not least, a research is also required to evaluate the performance of property right regimes. A good example of this type of research is the study conducted by Ostrom and Gardner (1993) which compared farmer-managed irrigation systems with governmental agency-managed irrigation systems in Nepal. It turned out that the farmers' systems are more productive and the results of the study could be explained by a game-theoretic analysis. It is also important for all this research work to incorporate ecological consideration into the analysis. According to Berkes and Folke (1995), there is evidence of co-evolution, making local communities and their institutions in tune with the natural process of the particular ecosystems. A research conducted should also take into account this important issue.

END NOTES:

1) The prisoner's dilemma (PD) game can be shown to represent open access. Imagine two cattle owners who use a grazing area that is at its maximum economic yield. Bringing in extra cow will become suboptimal. However, if one herdsman decides not to cooperate by adding another cow to the grazing ground while the other herdsman cooperates, he will earn extra income from the additional cow while causing a negative return to the other person. If both of them cooperate, no one gains or loses at this point. However, if both of them defect by adding more cows to the area, both herdmen will lose a portion of their income. The pay-off matrix is shown in Figure A. There is no guarantee that if one herdsman cooperates by not adding another cow, the other herdsman will do likewise. On the contrary, there is an incentive for them to become free riders since they realize that if they cooperate by not adding more cows, the other person will be likely to shirk any-way. A Nash equilibrium for this game is therefore for both herdmen to defect by bringing in additional cows the result of which is a tragedy for both of them.

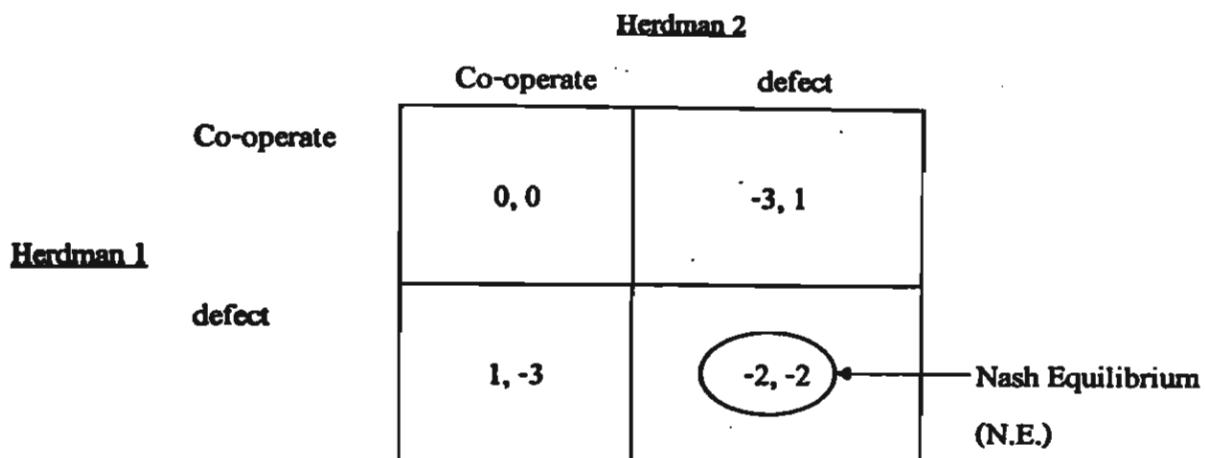


Figure A.

Source : Stevenson 1991

2) In economics, it is possible to classify goods or resources based on two important attributes: 1) exclusion—the ability of excluding individuals from benefiting from a good and 2) subtractability— one person's consumption of a product will reduce the availability of that product to other people. Based on these criteria, the four types of goods can be identified:- private, public, club or toll goods and common-pool resources (CPR) (see Figure B.). Private goods can be best analyzed by theory of markets. Public goods are opposite to private goods. CPR share with private goods the subtractability attribute and with public goods the difficulties of exclusion.

Subtractability

		Low	High
		Public Goods	Common -Pool Resources
Exclusion	Difficult	Club goods	Private goods
	Easy		

Figure B.

Source : Ostrom and et. al., 1994

3) In the assurance game, there is an incentive for both players to cooperate. Imagine two hunters trying to capture a big fierce animal. If one hunter commits while the other defects there is a tendency that not only both of them will not get any food, they may even be threatened by the angry animals. From the pay-off matrix in Figure C., there are possible 2 Nash equilibrium. However, for both of them to cooperate is likely to dominate since it is a win-win solution which means they both gain.

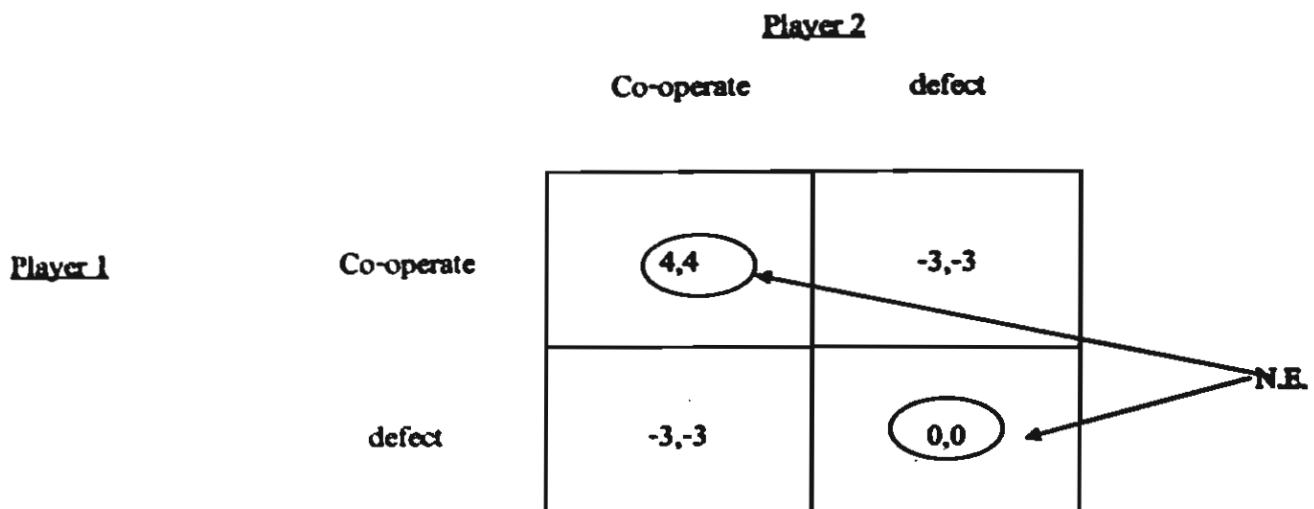


Figure C.

Source: Sandler 1992

4) Experiments conducted by Axelrod (1984) using a computer to simulate repeated PD games indicated that the strategy that worked best was a 'tit-for-tat strategy' from which retaliation is also effective. If the game is infinitely repeated, cooperative behaviour is the rational response to a tit-for-tat strategy. With an infinite horizon, there is an incentive for both players to cooperate since the expected gains will outweigh those from defecting and each player can expect the other to behave in the same manner.

POTENTIAL RESEARCH FOR NEW GROUND OF KNOWLEDGE

Problems of environmental and natural resources degradation including inequality in the access to and control of natural resources can come about as a result of an inadequate property rights policy in Thailand. A good example is the case of forests in Thailand. Under the current law, forests belong to the state with the Royal Forestry Department (RFD) acting as the sole governmental agency empowered to manage and control all forest land, which accounts for almost half of the country. However, without effective control and monitoring, most of the forest area has become an open-access and has been destroyed at the alarming rate of almost 3 million rai per annum in the last 3 decades. In the previous section, problems of natural resources exploitation have been discussed in length in the context of property rights.

The potential topics for future research in Thailand has already been identified by each approach in the previous section. It is not an easy task to propose research topics for developing new ground of knowledge regarding property rights and the environment

in Thailand based on the three different approaches altogether, there are certain conflicts in these various disciplines. However, the common view shared by all the approaches is that property rights could play a vital role as a policy instrument in correcting the existing problems of environmental and natural resources degradation. Although property rights are not in themselves sufficient conditions for resource sustainability, they are certainly necessary conditions. Another common view shared by these approaches is that property rights regimes exist in continuum along a spectrum ranging from open access to private ownership with common or communal property in between. In Thailand, the design of appropriate property rights regimes to be used as policy instruments are essential.

In order to appropriately design suitable property rights regimes, there is a need for thorough research work in order to develop analytical frameworks based on various approaches including that of anthropology, political ecology and ecological economics. Important factors and conditions which bring about the success or failure of different kinds of property rights regimes along the spectrum need to be identified. This kind of research work has to also be carried out both on the theoretical and empirical basis.

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**THE DEVELOPMENT AND TRENDS OF
LITERARY STUDIES IN THAILAND**

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THE DEVELOPMENT AND TRENDS OF LITERARY STUDIES IN THAILAND

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The purpose of this article is to survey the development and trends of literary studies in Thailand from the beginning to the present time with concentration on these last 3 decades (1965-1995). By analyzing some distinguished researches on literary studies which contribute new trends, new paradigms or reinterpretations of major literary texts and create interesting debates among scholars in this field. The attempt will be made to criticize and evaluate these works and suggest new trends for the future.

The contents will be divided into 5 parts.

Prologue: Paradigm Shift in Thai Literary Studies

Part 1: The Pragmatist: Traditional Thai Poetics As a Paradigm for Literary Studies

Part 2: The Hegemony: Literature as National History and Identity

Part 3: The West Wind: The Paradigm of The New Criticism

Part 4: The Anti-Hegemony: The Local Voice

Part 5: The Outsiders: The Extrinsic and the Interdisciplinary Paradigms

Trends for the Future: The Interdisciplinary Paradigms

This article is the conclusion of my two researches: *The Development and Trends of Literary Studies in Thailand from the Beginning to 1985* (Boonkhachorn: 1987) and *The Development of Literary Studies in These Past Three Decades and Trends For the Future* (in progress).

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PROLOGUE: PARADIGM SHIFT IN THAI LITERARY STUDIES

Thomas S. Kuhn in *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (1970: first published 1962) suggested that particular learned communities or specialities rested upon acceptance of "a set of recurrent and quasi-standard illustrations of various theories in their conceptual, observational, and instrumental applications" These are the community's paradigms, which can be found revealed in its "textbooks, lectures, and laboratory exercises. (Kuhn: 1970, 43) A paradigm is constituted by a set of beliefs which both enables and constrains research: a framework or scaffold which can underpin or support further work but which of necessity also excludes a range of possibilities. Kuhn's concept of the paradigm shift entered into literary study in relation, very often, to arguments about interpretation. We interpret the evidence of a text differently when our literary paradigms change, just as the scientist interprets the evidence provided by an experiment when his or her scientific paradigms change. (Hawthorn: 1992)

In this article, the effort will be made to analyze the paradigms and the paradigm's shifts in Thai literary studies from the beginning to the present time.

PART 1: THE PRAGMATIST; TRADITIONAL THAI POETICS AS A PARADIGM FOR LITERARY STUDIES

Before the contact with the West, the center of cultural and literary activities were the royal palace and the temples. The literary texts which descended to the present time were the productions of these two centers. Popular or common or folk literature certainly did exist; however it is hard to trace the historical periods of those oral literatures. The major literary activities supported by the royal palace had authority until the Western educational system influenced Thai literary study.

The word "poetics" is Greek in origin and means "the art of poetic creation. "Poetics signifies writing that deals with the art of poetry or presents a theory of the art. The most famous instance of such a treatise is Aristotle's *Poetics*. Emil Staiger, in his afterword in *Basic Concepts of Poetics*, concludes that poetics is only a question of the practical instructions which would accomplish for the poet what the doctrine of

counterpoint and harmony does for the composer. Poetics teaches what it is that constitutes the nature of poetic creation. Poetics organizes the available models and in so doing poses the problem of genre. Poetics instructs the experienced poet wanting to write.

Poetics in this sense is similar to the concept of poetics which appeared in the ancient Thai textbooks about prosody. Even though the word "poetics" had not yet been coined until a few decades ago when the knowledge of Western literary criticism influenced Thai literary scholarship, the concept of Thai poetics tended to emphasize pragmatism or practical knowledge more than theoretical knowledge. In Thai, there is nothing corresponding to the *Poetics* by Aristotle. Indian textbooks about prosody, such as *Wuttothai* or *Alangkarasat*, the art of poetics and elaboration, were occasionally cited but were not translated into Thai until the beginning of the Rattanakosin period. Kusuma Raksamani in her research titled "*Kan Wikhro Wannakhadi Thai Tam Thritsadi Wannakhadi Sanskrit*" (*The Analytical Study of Thai Literature by Sanskrit Theory of Literature*) concludes that the Sanskrit theory of literature i.e. in *Alangkarasat* never influenced Thai literary circle until Rattanakosin period. (Raksamani: 1989). Thai scholars seemed to adapt and choose only certain parts of these Pali and Sanskrit textbooks, then added Thai examples, commentary and their own points of view based on their own aesthetic and moral values. Even though there is no elucidation of the concept of Thai poetics, this concept can be indirectly derived from literary texts themselves and from textbooks about prosody.

The concept of poetics existed in Thai literary history before the contact with the West, even though the word "poetics" itself had not yet been coined. Some excerpts from traditional poetry express the poetic repertoire, the poetic process and the aesthetic values of poetry which indicate that from the very beginning of Thai literary history, the poetic phenomenon had already been observed, at least by the poets themselves. Thai poetics emphasizes on heavily the musicality of words. The musicality of Thai poetry originates from the tonal nature of the Thai language itself, from the choice of words (which includes prosodic constraints, rhyme, alliteration and assonance), and from special techniques for each prosodic form.

When explaining poetic creation or the aesthetic values of poetry, the concept of traditional Thai poetics tends to emphasize the musicality of words. The aesthetic of poetry rests heavily upon the quality of the melody of sounds which are beautiful to the ears of the listeners. This melody of sounds means the smoothness which originates from the harmonious choice of words in the well-organized order based on the strictness of poetic constraints and some specific techniques of expression.

Emphasis on the musicality of words is obvious from the beginning of the emergence of Thai poetry during the early Ayutthaya period (1350-1488). Three masterpieces of this period, *Lilit Yuan Phaay*, *Thawathotsamat* and *Lilit Phra Law* express similar standard of poetic evaluation. During that time, there was a literary convention which can be called "attawiphak" or self-evaluation in which poets (or scribes) evaluated their own works by comparing melodious poetry to celestial garlands decorating the ears of the listeners. According to the poet, his excellent poetry will endure through time. It is noticeable that the poet, with complete confidence, highly evaluates his own work; however, the reason may be because under royal patronage, poets devote and dedicate their poetry to the king; therefore, only a perfect work should be given in order to praise and entertain his patronage.

รู้มลักษณะศาสตร์ด้าน	หญิงชาย
จักษุทั่วกลุ่มพระผล	เลิศผู้
ไฟเราะเรียบบรรยาย	พระบั่ง พระนา
ลมปีสุรเสียงสุร	ล่อเล้าให้ใจ

Having known all knowledge of women and men,
I will tell the poetic story of Phra Law, the Perfect,
Narrated meticulously, most enchantingly,
Together with the sound of a melodious alluring flute.

Another stanza from the same source, *Lilit Phra law* expresses the poet's evaluation of his own poetry along with an expression of his intention to please his royal patron.

สาวกเสียงขับอ่านอ้าง	ไดปาน
พิงเสนาะไดปุน	เบรี่ยบได

ເກສາກຄອນກສ່າງກຄກນໍ
ດ້າຍນໍາເຮືອຫ້າງໄກ້

ກລກຄ່ອນ ໄຈນາ
ທີ່ຈາກຜູ້ມືບຸງ

The chanting pleasant sounds are beyond compare.

Peerless, melodious.

The artistic poetry soothes the hearts.

It is provided for the meritorious king.

It is obvious that the aesthetic value of poetry expressed in this work is based on the melodious sounds caused by neatly narrated words which can be compared to the sound of a musical instrument. This verbal melody moves and enchant the listeners. The first priority of poetic values or literariness is the musicality of words. The function of poetry is similar to that of music in which the euphony of rhythms enchant, enriches and in some cases enlightens the ears, the heart and the mind of the listeners. The emphasis on the quality of sounds still carries on to the modern period though it is not the only distinctive feature by which one evaluates poetry.

Another interesting observation can be made from these excerpts. The poetic repertoire expressed here consists of three elements. These are the producer who is the narrator or the chanter, and the text which is not the written one but the text as performance including the music and the receiver of the text who is emotionally moved by the melodious poetry. As for the narrator or the poet, he claims that he has the understanding or the knowledge of all women and men, and therefore he understands human nature and is the perfect one to narrate this poetry which is about human passions. According to the Buddhist point of view, passionate love causes misery and is one of the origins of troubles. The experience and the mature understanding of human emotions and nature are the basic knowledge that a poet is supposed to have in order to compose artistic poems. Thus it is a portion of the poetic creation.

The aesthetics of Thai poetry rests strongly upon the quality of "phairo" which signifies "melodious, sweet, musical and harmonious, pleasing to the ears and tuneful." The boundaries of poetry and music are interrelated in the area of aesthetics. The poetic process can be divided into three major elements: *the poetic process, the medium and the receiver process*. The creative process includes the melodious quality of sounds, the

action of creative process and the action of sender. The medium consists of words and sounds. The receiver processes the action of receiver and the effect on the receiver. As for the receiver process, the only action mentioned is listening and the effect on the listeners which can be divided into three steps. First, poetry like music, addresses itself to the ears. Secondly, it will entertain, move, enchant or soothe the heart and the soul of the listeners. And in some cases it will reach the third stage; that is, it will broaden the mind of the learned persons or scholars. Poetry can entertain, enchant and enrich the ears, the heart and the mind of those who listen to it.

Thomas Hudak in the chapter about "The Aesthetic of Sound" in *The Indigenization of Pali Meters in Thai Poetry* notices that the central problem of the definition of what constitutes a melodious sound (phairo') is left to the student's intuition. Hudak, from the linguistic point of view, concludes that the specific techniques used to create a language that is melodious are reduplication, intensification, the use of puns, the use of elaborate expressions, the use of particles, and the use of special vocabulary. (Hudak: 1990)

What Hudak explains as the "student's intuition" or "subjective" can be perceived from the Thai point of view as "learning from the Masters" or "listening to the voices of authority." This traditional way of learning in the Thai social context means that competence in poetic reading and aesthetic evaluation is based on the student's experience of prior texts. The more one reads, the more one can develop the ability to evaluate because the familiarity of the poetic sounds of prior texts will become the norms of poetic evaluation. In other words, memory becomes the basis of aesthetic evaluation. This way of learning is common in every field of traditional Thai arts. For example, the way to learn a Thai musical instrument tends to be by heart rather than by musical notes. The "wai kru" tradition or "pay respect to the teachers or masters" tradition is, therefore, very significant in the Thai social context because the knowledge from the teacher will guide the student's way to experience and to produce his or her own creativity.

The authoritative reference or the voice of the master has been used as a paradigm of learning since *Jindamani*, the first textbook that explains the "science" of poetry by concentrating on prosodic form. In *Jindamani*, each prosodic form is

explained briefly in prose and is followed by the pattern of numbers of words with rhymes and tonal constraints. The best example of that prosodic form, an excerpt from a literary text, is given as the masterpiece of that genre. Then the constraints of that prosodic form are explained in that prosodic form itself. This pragmatic way of learning gives the immediate effect of the aesthetic values in the unity of the sounds and meaning. It is understood that the accumulation of the authorities in memory enables the reader to recollect the prior texts when s/he encounters new texts. The comparative process and the horizon of expectation generates the aesthetic evaluative action in the immediate process which may vary with the intertexts and the reading competence of the reader. (Boonkhachom: 1992)

The traditional Thai literary convention also emphasizes the mimesis of the authorities or the imitation of the master pattern. The "paying respect to the teacher" tradition or "wai khru" is active not only in the literary field but also in other domains of cultural activities, such as music, painting, sculpture, etc. As for the literary convention, this type of mimesis can be seen in the fixed structure of literary texts. These "fixed" or constant styles of narrating can be classified into two categories: the general literary composition and the literary convention for specific genre. The literary convention of mimesis offers two types of literary activity. First, the follower paradoxically copies the master as well as competes with him. In this way, the innovation is similar to the restoration in the sense that the later poet chooses to follow only the best and improves the weak points for the better.

This paradigm of traditional Thai poetics dominates the literary world. It can be said that the literary perception conducted in classrooms has been influenced by this traditional paradigm.

PART 2: THE HEGEMONY: LITERATURE AS NATIONAL HISTORY AND IDENTITY

Somdet Krom Phraya Damrong Rajanuphap or Prince Damrong (1862-1943) played the most important role in Thai literary circle when he was the head of Wachirayan Library (at present, the National Library). He can be called the founding father of Thai literary historiography. The great achievement of Prince Damrong lies in his attempt to create a set of systems for Thai literary history. (Nagavajara, 1985) Most of

the textbooks about the history of Thai literature published nowadays can be said to follow the pattern set by Prince Damrong. During the time when Prince Damrong was the head of the National Library, manuscripts were classified, edited and printed as books with brief introductions on each manuscript's history and its author. Prince Damrong himself was interested not only in literature but also history and archeology. He concentrated on editing Thai manuscripts and initiating the foundation of a historical approach to literature in the light of history and archeology. His historical approach to literature, together with biographical and generic approaches, emphasized the historical background of literary works and authors. He wrote the studies on many important genres such as drama, the Sepha (a Verse Narrative), the Kap He Rua (The Boat Song) and Sakkrawa (Verse Repartee).

Prince Damrong in *History of the Royal Library* explains the process of collecting and editing. First, the staff had to act as collectors of the manuscripts. Secondly, they had to fulfil the function of editors, and thirdly, the personnel also engaged themselves in the dissemination and promotion of the Thai literary heritage. In the Preface of *Sepha Khun Chang Khun Phaen* (The Story of Khun Chang Khun Phaen), Prince Damrong states that the process of editing various manuscripts was very complicated and difficult due to variations of different versions. He had to solve these problems by cutting out obscene parts, polishing up words and style and editing for coherence.

From this introduction it is interesting that the printed literary works circulated until the present time are products of the evaluative and editing processes of the period. Originally, *Sepha Khun Chang Khun Phaen* was folk literature with all the elements of the folk literary tradition, such as sexual jokes, black humor and local color. The print version of *Sepha Khun Chang Khun Phaen* is the sophisticated revised version of this folk masterpiece. It is, therefore, necessary to remind oneself of the differences between the manuscripts and the printed versions. This process of "chamra" (mean to clean, to purify, to revise) or editing has been the literary tradition since the Ayutthaya period. In many manuscripts, at the end of the story, writers (or sometimes the scribes) will make the text open by inviting later poets or readers to revise if they think that some parts are inappropriate.

Prince Damrong's editing also emphasizes the historical and biographical background of each literary text. He analyzes style, compares various versions, and chooses the most appropriate one. Many texts are decided to have multiple authors over their histories. Although Prince Damrong never wrote a complete history of Thai literature, it can be said that no history of Thai literature would have been possible without his pioneer efforts. As the authority of Thai literary historiography, he is the pioneer of this field. Obviously, his works have both strengths and weaknesses. His great achievement lies in the question of authorship, oral history in writing literary history of some texts, and the development of literary genres within a historical framework.

However, there are many weak points in Prince Damrong's works which are worth considering. First, his standards of aesthetic and moral judgements were based on his social class, political values and aesthetic taste. These standards influenced his editing and the rewriting processes. Secondly, literary history from Prince Damrong's point of view was dependent on political events, for he tended to use political events as the main factor in dividing literary periods. In this way, literary history does not have its own life as one cultural activity interrelated with others in the social process. "History" in this sense is the chronology of events which tend to center around the royal dynasty. Thirdly, his hypotheses about the historical period of some manuscripts have been proved by later scholars to be wrong. However, because of his authoritative voice, the majority of the textbooks still follow his assumptions as true statements. Prince Damrong's contribution to Thai literary study helps later scholars, i.e Pleung Na Nakhon, to draw the whole frame of history for Thai literature based on Prince Damrong's hypotheses of the time and period of each literary work. Because of the lack of textbooks about the history of Thai literature, Pleung Na Nakhon's *Prawat Wannakhadi Thai Samrap Naksuksa* (History of Thai Literature for Students) is still the most popular in this field, even though it was written in 1937 and many classifications of Thai literary works to historical periods have been challenged by scholars. It is ironic that later scholars and students in this area tend to follow what Prince Damrong had stated without further study, or discussion. Later on, when the New Criticism made its way in Thai literary circles, the historical approach and the traditional text-edit approach were mostly ignored.

During the past two decades, the work by Niyada Laosunthorn, *Literary Consideration* (1992), is interesting in that it challenges conclusions of literary history. The work, a compilation of her academic articles concerning her survey of literary manuscripts supplied by the manuscript and inscription service department of the National Library, concentrates on history of Thai literature, the editing of manuscripts, and the tracing of the real period in which a literary work is written, which bravely challenges old conclusion. For example, in "Yuan Pai klong Dan: New Proposal," Niyada believes that Lilit Yuan Phai was written during the reign of Phraboromrajadhirat III (1488-1491), an eldest son of Phraboromtraiokanaj. In "Phali Son Nong, Thotsarot Son Phra Ram and Ratchasawat: Who is Real Author?", she proposes that King Bommakot wrote these three masterpieces, not King Narai as having been long concluded by the literary association committee, headed by Prince Damrong.

Niyada also conducted another research, in form of dissertation, named "*Pannasachadok: History and Its Significance for Thai Literature*," in which she surveyed 63 versions of 21 Thai literary works, which were influenced by *Pannasachadok*. In this research, she also proposes that the masterpiece might have been written before 1265. In "Khlong Lokkanit: Study on Its Sources" (1944), Niyada attempts to seek the sources of Khlong Lokkanit, written by Somdet Krom Phraya Dechadison, by judging from its manuscript and its Pali and Sanskrit scriptures. Therefore, it is not hard to say that Niyada has a significant role in the survey of ancient literature, challenging long-settled conclusions and producing new knowledge for literary studies.

There are so few people who have attempted to conduct a literary research by adopting historical approaches and to concentrate on the editing of manuscripts. A portion of those people are students at the Thai Inscription Section, Silpakorn University. Mostly, the improvement of manuscripts has been a task of foreign scholars, such as Dr. Gilles Delouche, from University of Paris, an expert on Tai. He deems the editing of manuscripts as crucial, proposing that scholars must explain characteristics of each manuscript, compare each of them, and thoroughly analyse each of them. These processes must be carefully observed as scholars have to arrange literary text accurately and present information of all manuscripts available, not just from one version of manuscripts. Delouche considers the editing of manuscripts as the most important

process, should we wish literary studies to be effective and to make a great leap. Literary critics will waste their time if they trust poorly-editing literary works. In order to work more effectively, Delouche suggests literary scholars to work together in order to edit manuscripts, gather every version of manuscripts available everywhere in Thailand, at the National Library, in temples as well as personal libraries, and subsequently have all manuscripts microfilmed and kept at the National Library. Considering next processes, he maintains that research be conducted on the history of the Thai language, vocabulary, orthography, and grammar, so that the ancient Thai language can be comprehended. (Gilles Delouche: 1985)

The trend of literary historiography and editing unpublished manuscripts declines in these past two decades.

PART 3: THE WEST WIND; THE PARADIGM OF THE NEW CRITICISM

The influence of the New Criticism emerged after 1932 in the continuing articles by H.H. Prince Narathipphongraphan in *Prachachat* (later reprinted as a book titled *Withaya Wannakam* or Literary Knowledge). He stated that he had integrated the concepts of literary criticism from Arnold Bennett's *Theory In Literary Taste* by Abercrombie, and from I.A. Richards in *Principles of Literary Criticism*. In his opinion, the guidelines for criticism have two steps. These are, first, to analyze the sounds of words and style which conveys the deep meaning, and second, to proceed from sound to senses, images, and emotions. I.A. Richards' four kinds of meanings (sense, feeling, tone, and intention) were applied along with close reading practices to excerpts from Thai classical literature. Prince Narathipphongraphan was the pioneer who introduced and applied the New Criticism to Thai literary study. Later on the New Criticism was explained in detail in the well-known textbook by Dr. Wit Siwasariyanon (first published in 1943): *Wannakhadi Iae Wannkhadiwican* (Literature and Literary Criticism). However, the New Criticism had not yet widely influenced the practice of Thai literary study until 1970 when Chonthira Sattyawatthana wrote her thesis "*Kan Nam Wannakhadi Wican Phaen May Ma Chay Kap Wannakhadi Thai*" (*The Application of the New Criticism to Thai Literature*). This Thesis presents some major approaches from the western world which include the psychological approach of Sigmund Freud, the archetypal approach of Carl

Gustav Jung, and the aesthetic approach, especially the close reading technique of I.A.Richards. As for the aesthetic approach, the close reading presented in the thesis emphasized the four kinds of meaning together with symbolism, paradox, and ambiguity. Excerpts from traditional and modern Thai literature are analyzed by using practical criticism as a paradigm of study.

This thesis established a precedent for succeeding graduate theses and has had a major influence on the teaching of Thai literature in higher education. The close reading technique seems to be the most successful part of this thesis, which has influenced the trend of Thai literary study in many ways. First, the application of the New Criticism to Thai literature vitalized the literary world, which at the time was made stagnant by the technique of paraphrasing and memorising archaic vocabulary. Second, the aesthetic approach of close reading is suitable for Thai literary studies which traditionally emphasize aesthetic evaluation more than interpretation. This "objective" or "scientific" approach seemed to upgrade with linguistic explanations the subjective mode of literary study. Third, for graduate study, *the trend in literary research has been guided by the close reading approach (or the "micro" approach) limiting research to a single piece of literature and tending to ignore context, especially social context*. It can be said that the objective of close reading is "aesthetic appreciation" instead of the many other modes of interpretation.

Another consequence of the institutionalization of the New Criticism is the focus on artistic creativity and original authorship. The most distinguished proofs are the literary awards which are major events in Thai literary circles nowadays. The intentional and the affective fallacies still play their important roles on the literary stage. With the institutional and pedagogical practices of the New Criticism still active, how can a paradigm shift occur in order to break out from the institutional self-closure and the closed evaluative criticism that limit the study of the wider social process within which texts are written and read?

PART 4: THE ANTI-HEGEMONY THE LOCAL VOICE

In these last two decades, the progress of folklore and regional literary studies in many institutions all over the country is the promising sign. Studies in local literature

have obviously been developed in quantitative terms. Many educational institutions have founded their cultural centres, for examples those in Chiangmai, Mahasarakham and Songkhla. They also offer courses at the postgraduate level. These have led to a great number of theses and research papers dealing with the transliterations of ancient manuscripts, which in turn comprise the major database for studies in regional literature. In every region of Thailand, the centers for local cultural studies play the important roles in collecting, conserving and transliterating the unpublished local manuscripts. Together with the departments of Thai language and literature of each institution, the local literary study became one of the major trends of Thai literary studies in these past three decades. Educational bodies which help champion such studies include the Thai Studies Section at Srinakharinwirot University-Songkhla, the Lanna Studies Section at Chieng Mai University, the Northeastern (I-san) Studies Section at Srinakharinwirot-Mahasarakham. Apart from these, research papers on manuscript transliteration can also be found at the Thai Inscription Section, the Department of Eastern Languages at Silpakom University. The approaches and methodologies of such theses and research papers include those attempting at depicting the picture of regional literary studies as a whole, at selecting to study literatures of certain group of peoples, at studying regional literature in comparative manners, and at conducting studies in a definite topic or story.

Information concerning regional literature can be gathered from literary sources, such as "koi"(or "but"), and palm-leaf manuscripts, or from interviews. It can be said that cultural centers in each region have played a significant role in gathering information before it is forever lost. Another point worth mentioning here is that not only information from each region from Thailand, but that from the Tai region in the South of China, has also been acculated, resulting in the widening of the scope of literary studies in comparative manners.

Many M.A. theses by graduate students of these universities are the products of editing these local treasures, i.e. "*The Analysis of Tai Lu Langka Sip Hua (Tai Lu's Ramayana)*" by Charoen Malarot (1986); *The Comparative Studies of Nang Phom Hom in Lanna, Northeastern, and Tai Lu versions* " by Kaysom Sawangwong (1988). Eventhough these theses have been conducted in a small and inclusive scale, they constitute an interesting trend in that they help increasing the amount of information

regarding regional literature and extend its scope onto an international level. Moreover, they in turn become a move to preserve unpublished manuscripts and benefit the studies of the Tai tribe, which to fully understand require the application of other areas of studies.

In addition to research in the form of theses, there also exists an attempt by Anatole Roger Peltier, a foreign researcher, to transliterate Tai Lu and Tai Kheun literatures. Peltier is an expert on Lanna's art and culture, as seen in his transliteration work of *Chao Boonlong (The Golden Peacock)* (1992), an ancient Lanna religious preaching, and in his comparative study of literary manuscripts of Tai Lu and Tai Kheun from Chiengtung in Northern Myanmar, after which were transliterated into Thai and subsequently translated into English and French. Judging from and comparing versions of the manuscripts, Peltier also transliterate *Sukwanna Wua Luang (The Golden Ox)* (1993), a Tai-Kheun's local Buddhist pitaka from Chientung, into Thai and later translated it into English and French. His research has become an interesting trend which should be promoted since it signifies an attempt to preserve manuscripts before they vanish, as well as to make regional literature known to the nation.

Another foreigner who has played a prominent role in conducting research on Lanna regional literature is Harald Hundius from Keal University, Germany. Not only does he take interest in transliteration research, but he has also studied the relationships between Lanna literature and society. He deems that Buddhism has become a moral code which determines the mentality of its social members. Literature itself reflects moral values which have been generated by Buddhism. Hundius remarks are also interesting because he believes that more important than the research itself is the fact that local monks and villagers should be encouraged to appreciate and preserve their own cultural heritage, of which they can make use when studying their own intellectual heritage. It is his belief that should Thailand wish to preserve its uniqueness, this heritage itself can be of immense use later. (Harald Hundius: 1995)

The use of other areas of knowledge and disciplines to study regional literature is another noteworthy trend. This leads us to better understanding in historical, social, and cultural manners. The Art & Culture Publishing House, led by Sujit Wongthet, once organised an academic seminar on *Mahakap Khong Usakanay Thaw Hung Thaw*

Cheung Wiraburut Song Fang Khong (*The Epic of Southeast Asia: Thaw Hung Thaw Cheung, Heroes of The Khong River*), and collected a great deal of research work concerning this epic, conducted by academics from the past to the present, such as Jit Phumisak, Thida Saraya (a historian), Srisak Walliphodom (an archeologist), Prakong Nimmannhemin (a literary scholar), Maha Sila Wirawong and Duangduen Boonyawong, two academics from Laos. The study of a specific literary work from different perspectives made by scholars from various areas of studies was an interesting trend, even though the editor's conclusion could be argued in certain points. It can be said that such academic seminar is able to generate knowledge which should be further promoted.

In terms of research on regional literature, the thesis on "MahaKap Thaw Ba Cheung: An Analytical Study" by Prakong Nimmanheminda (1987) represents an attempt to study this epic from the National Library's manuscript, which Maha Sila Wirawong has transliterated. In this work, Prakong conducted the study by way of comparing it with other versions of the epic, analyzing the unity of the epic by judging from its content, language usage, and evaluating it in terms of content and literary art. This thesis inspired the aforementioned seminar. This signifies that a thesis in an educational institution can engender an academic debate in a large scale, and lead to the contribution of new knowledge.

Comparative Studies in regional literature, whether the same work in the same period or different regions is comparatively studied, or whether local literary work is studied in line with that in the royal court, or whether the same regional literary work in different regions is studied, are beneficial in that information gathered can be used to help depict the whole picture of Thai literary history. These theses include "Shared Characteristics Between Phra Malay Phun Ban Iae Phra Malay Kham Luang" by Wattana Na Nakhon (1982), a thesis of the Program in Comparative Literature, Faculty of Arts, Chulalongkorn University; and "Lanna's Versions of Ramayana: A Comparative Study" by Phichit Akkanit (1984). At present, we have not yet had any textbook or research on the complete making of Thai literary history.

If we take a look at the research on regional literature in terms of regions, the studies in the North, the South and the Northeastern regions have greatly advanced. In

each of the regions, local literary scholars can be referred to and the amount of research work is on the rise. Surprisingly enough, the Central region, however becomes the region in which the least amount of research work on its regional literature have been conducted. The majority of the research work tends to concentrate on oral literature, rather than on manuscripts. Many cultural centres in the Central region do not posses a satisfactory amount of research work dealing with the preservation, dissemination, and survey of Central regional literature. Perhaps the most outstanding centre is that of the Petchaburi Teaching College, in which Lom Phengkaew takes a regular academic post.

A doctoral thesis which attempts to accumulate and promote manuscripts of the Central region is "*Klon Suat of Central Thailand: An Analytical Study*" by Trisilpa Boonkhachom (1987). The thesis (under the supervision of the Thai Department, Faculty of Arts, Chulalongkorn University) aims at gathering unpublished manuscripts of Klon Suat, which have been collected from the ancient manuscript department of the National Library and from rural areas, at seeking to establish relationships between Klon Suat and the folk culture of the Central region, and at studying the development of this folk literary genre.

Taking into account the trends and movements regarding regional literature during the past 15 years, we can see an interesting growth in quantitative terms in all regions in Thailand. Regional educational institutions have played an important role in the preservation, dissemination and survey of regional literature. The studies embrace literary manuscripts which have not yet been transliterated and published, as well as oral literature, sources of which gradually vanish as time goes by. The growth of the regional post-graduate studies becomes a significant factor increasing numbers of research work and theses on regional literature. Nevertheless, in terms of quality of the work and its theory and methodology, it can be said that most of the work focuses only on the structure of the literary texts, i.e. form and content. Some show an attempt to study regional literature in line with society. Literature is regularly used as a foundation from which social values will be extracted for further analysis. (Siraporn Na Thalang: 1995). Regional literary studies are still confined in educational institutions in form of theses or research papers. The main motives of such studies stem from personal interest and the appreciation for regional literature, hoping to be preserved and to be

more widely acknowledged. Yet, no research so far has attributed its motive to the need to answer certain questions in which society is currently taking interest, and which regional literature can provide with satisfactory solutions. Regional literary studies generally are conducted through similar processes and methodology. The similar patterns and processes of study the same group of data inevitably leads to similar research conclusions. Current problems posing against the studies are both internal and external. The external problem is: how can regional literature be acknowledged by wider community, not confining itself in the realms of educational institutions or academic world like at present? The internal one is: how can we find and apply other new methodologies so as to avoid dullness and monotony of the results of the studies?

(Bayan Imsamran: 1995)

PART 5: THE OUTSIDERS; THE EXTRINSIC AND THE INTERDISCIPLINARY PARADIGMS

Rene Wellek & Austin Warren in *Theory of Literature* divided the approaches of literary study into two types: the intrinsic and the extrinsic approaches. The extrinsic approach cover "other" disciplines, i.e. society, psychology, ideas. In Thai literary studies' domain, the contributions of the "outside" scholars are extremely challenging and productive. The extrinsic paradigms generate in the literary world in these past three decades are, for examples, those of sociology, political sciences, history and Marxism. The research work by Nidhi Iewsriwong, Sombat Chanthomwong and Chaianan Samutthawanit are good examples showing how scholars of the other areas of studies use literature as data in their research.

The best example is the debate about literature in the Early Bangkok period by Nidhi Iewsriwong and the "inside" scholar, Duangmon Jitjamnong in her Ph.D. Thesis titled "*Khunkha Iae Laksana Den Khong Wannakhadi Samai Rattanakosin Ton Ton*" (Literary Values and distinguished characteristics of the Early Bangkok Literature).

Nidhi Iewsriwong, a distinguished historian, in *Watthanatham Kradumphi Kap Wannakam Ton Rattanakosin* (Bourgeois Culture and Literature of the Early Bangkok Period) concluded that the literature of the Early Bangkok period was produced and consumed in the society when the Sakdina literary tradition of the late Ayuttaya period

declined. The higher classes, a combination of the ruling class and the new bourgeoisie began to acknowledge the popular literary tradition. The combination of these two literary cultures engendered the lively higher class culture of the Early Bangkok period.

Moreover, there are several theses of Faculty of Political Sciences, Chulalongkorn University, which attempt to study literature in terms of politics. The theses as such are "*The Analysis of Sam Kok (Romance of the Three Kingdoms) in terms of Politics*," and "*Ramayana*" and its Political Meaning."

As for literary students, even though they wish to study literature using interdisciplinary paradigms, they usually fail to do so as they do not possess enough knowledge of other areas of studies to make their research subtle and quality-bound. However, there are still theses which attempt to adopt other disciplines of studies in literary studies, especially those under the supervision of Program in Comparative Literature, Faculty of Arts, Chulalongkorn University, where the belief that the attempt to relate other disciplines of studies to literary studies is an appropriate trend is strongly encouraged. The most popular approach is to study the relationship between literature and society. However, most of the work concentrates on finding social values as reflected in literature. Such theses are "Rural Society Reflected in Thai Novel" by Priyaporn Nusanan (1988), and "Urban Society in Thai Contemporary short Stories" by Areeya Hutintha (1996). Another popular approach is to seek relationships between literature and religion or belief. The theses which adapt such approach are "Kamma of Buddhist philosophy in Novels by Krisana Asoksin" by Walapa Alapat (1986)

The Emergence of Comparative Literature's paradigm

During the past 15 years, comparative literature has been gradually developed in Thailand although it remains just a small trend. Comparative literature is the study of literature beyond the confines of one particular country, and the study of the relationships between literature on the one hand and other areas of knowledge and belief, such as the arts (e.g. painting, sculpture, architecture, music), philosophy, history, the social sciences (e.g. politics, economics, sociology), the sciences, religion, ect., on the others. In brief, it is the comparison of one literature with another or others,

and the comparison of literature with other spheres of human expression. (Remak: 1961)

One of its important textbooks in Thai, *Comparative Literature* (1982) by Sutha Sastri attempts to provides readers with fundamental comprehension of comparative literature as a branch of sciences, with its theory and approaches of literary studies. The trend of comparative literature is able to expand and create new vision for literary studies because it is "the study of a literary phenomenon from points of view of more than one literature or from its co-ordination with one or more intellectual branches of studies." (Sutha Sastri: 1982)

Chetana Nakavajara 's work is beneficial to the domain of literary studies in Thailand. His work are *Basic Theory of Literature* (1979), *Access to Critical culture* (1981) (both of which is a compilation of his articles dealing with the application of the theory of literary studies to the current situation of literary studies in Thailand) and *For the Survival of Humanities: Compilation of Academic Articles*(1982-1989). Chetana has played a prominent role in the development of Thai literary studies in that he has produced basic knowledge of literary theory. As he said in his article "The Direction of Comparative Literary Studies," the trend of comparative literature is a suitable one because "in the modern world, literary studies which are able to provide its people with important solutions have to be conducted in a comparative way. It is my belief that literature possesses enough universal traits for us to study it in transnational manners." (Chetana Nagavajara:1989) In addition, he also proposes the idea that "art illuminates one another" by emphasizing on relationship between literature and other disciplines of arts, which comprises one of the trends of Comparative Literature. For Chetana, studying literature is studying life, as he once said that "the highest attainment of studying literature is to become a scholar, and the content of literature itself is human life, which is created by poets in artistic forms. To know literature profoundly, therefore, means to know human life. ... To study literature is an excellent way to sharpen your wits and literary scholars have a right to proudly express their attitudes towards humanity." (Chetana Nagavajara:1981)

Feminism is another interesting trend of literary studies research. Over the past 15 years, a portion of theses and research under the comparative literature section has

been devoted to the study of feminism in literature, such as "The Social Status of Thai Women (During 1932 - 1950) in Novels by Dokmaisot and K. Surangkhanang" by Saisamom Cheitrongkarn (1995), "the status of Women in Novels by Kritsana Asoksin (1954 - 1987)" by Wirawan Srisamran (1990). Therefore, feminism as another trend of comparative literature provides another alternative which brings literary studies and society into close relationships.

It can be said that the studies of literature by linking it with other disciplines of studies is a proper direction of literary studies. Therefore, trends of comparative literature may be an answer to cause literary studies in Thailand to possess universal characteristics and to relate themselves to other areas of knowledge and belief in a mutually beneficial way.

Epilogue and Trends for the Future

The domain of literary studies over the past 15 years has not been such a hive of industry. In general, theses and research work have been devoted to studies concerning aesthetics and literary structural analysis, rather than to studies concerning manuscripts. An increasing number of theses attempts to deal with contemporary literature, yet their approaches are confined to the analysis of literary elements or the analysis of relationships between literature and society by seeing literature merely as a reflection of society. Theses and research work dealing with Thai literature usually attempt to conduct the studies in a low-scale basis, that is, the aesthetics analysis of a specific literary work. The influence of the New criticism can still be perceived in such an approach and its result usually becomes the insistence on literary value of a specific literary work. Theses and research work which effect new vision in literary studies have yet to distinguish themselves.

In these past three decades, some interesting trends can be observed.

First, the expansion of the literary texts as objects of study which covers not only the royal and religious texts, but also the oral and folk literary texts including the media creates new horizon for Thai literary studies. The emergence of local literary study is promising and flourishing in these last two decades.

Second, the New Criticism's paradigm is continuingly active in academic institutions which tends to generate ahistorical and aesthetic-oriented perspectives and leads to the "micro" study of literature.

Third, the lack of new paradigms in literary discourse is one factor that causes the stagnance of Thai literary studies. The "extrinsic" scholars, fortunately, contribute controversial debates in literary circles.

Under this circumstance, how can we move to the future?

THAI LITERARY STUDIES IN THE IVORY TOWER?

The situation of literary studies within the university is not fundamentally different from the situation of any other disciplines. The situation is that the various disciplines have ceased to speak to each other. They have become too specialized. The problem is how to reconcile the "academic" literary studies to the general life of the culture in the world because the university is not really the whole world.

THE INTERDISCIPLINARY TREND AND THE COMPARATIVE LITERATURE'S PARADIGM

The specialization of literary studies, or rather the over-specialized or the separation of literary studies from other disciplines should be reconsidered. It is the necessity to understand literary texts in relation to other texts, whether belonging to other languages and cultures, other disciplines, other races, or other sex. (Koelb & Noakes,ed.: 1988) This is one principle that Comparative Literature in all its forms has stood for over the years and this paradigm seems to be one of the most appropriate paradigms for the future of Thai literary studies.

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