



## CHAPTER IV

### MESSAGES IN THAI TSUNAMI SONGS AND POEMS

The researcher has written about Thai beliefs, reflected in Thai tsunami songs and poems, in Chapter II. Thai beliefs express the transient nature of life, the law of karma, animism, *khwan* and the cycle of life. In Chapter III, the researcher analyzes the emotions in Thai tsunami songs and poems. In addition, the researcher found that Thai beliefs also influenced the emotions in the composition of Thai tsunami songs and poems. In this chapter, the researcher will study the messages in tsunami songs and poems.

Moreover, some of these songs and poems only express the emotion toward tsunami disaster, while the rest have the poets' messages which are 1) consolation to the victims, 2) encouragement to help the victims, 3) harmony among the people, and 4) harmony with nature.

These 4 messages come from the interpretation of contents, emotions, and the poets' purposes in Thai tsunami songs and poems.

#### 4.1 Consolation to the Victims

In the 2004 tsunami disaster, many people lost their beloved ones, friends, and possession. They were in sorrow, lonely, and hopeless. In Thai tsunami songs and poems, the poets try to console these victims in many ways. Some writes console the victims by saying that death is the nature of life. People have to be parted from their beloved because of death one day. The writers

persuade the victims to accept the truth that everyone has to die one day, so that the victims will be consoled in their time of pain.

*Friends, sleep, please sleep, sleep under the blue sky,*

*Beside the ocean, amid the wind, and the moon light!*

*Friends, please dream of the sweet old days and wake up with hope.*

*Give us new days after we sleep on the sandy shore.*

In "Sleep on Death", Surachai Chantimathorn encourages the victims to forget their sorrow and take a rest with nature. He encourages the victims to think of "Sleep Death" happiness, not sadness. He convinces the victims to have a hope that after they awake, they will have a new day.

*Give us new days after we sleep on death!*

*Give us new lives after we sleep on death!*

The poet says that, after death, a new day and a new life will come. In other words, he explains that death and life are the two sides of the same coin. After death there is life and after life there is also death. In Buddhist views, death and life are the conditions of changing. Birth, old age, illness, and death are not permanent conditions, but temporal conditions that continually change.

The poet describes both life and death as the nature of existence in order to help the victims to accept the death of their beloved and let go of their sorrow. Moreover, the poet also tells the victims that the hardness and sadness will be gone. He encourages the victims to think of happiness and have hope.

In Thai tsunami songs and poems, some poets also describe life as uncertain, because nothing lasts forever. The poets remind the victims that, after the disaster, they will have a new day: the sadness and any terrible thing will pass.

*The sky, once getting dark, can become bright again; let's fight.*

*The suffering comes and goes; bring our hearts back to normal.*

In "By Your Side, Andaman", the poet describes that the sky can turn from dark to bright: like suffering that comes and goes. The poet consoles the victims to think of the good side so that their heart will recover from pain and fear.

*Restore all to peace and happiness*

*Console the frightening heart*

*The day of darkness will pass*

*The new day of brightness will come.*

In "Dark Sky, New Sky", Noawarat Phongphaibul also convinces the victims not to be hopeless and frightened because "the new day of brightness will come". He tells the victims that their sadness will be healed. In Buddhism, people can let go of their suffering when they realize that nothing can be with them forever. In addition, by encouraging the victims to think positively, they will feel better and relax.

Buddhism teaches people to have right understanding. Right understanding means understand the Four Noble Truths.

*One: the truth about suffering. Two: there is the cause or the root of suffering.  
Three: there is the freedom from all suffering: it is possible for us to attain this freedom.  
Four: there is a path from where we are now to total freedom from suffering.*

Phra Bhasakorn Bhavilai describes that:

*A place where we are not ultimately in control. We are not even the masters of our own body. It will grow old, get sick and die. All is impermanent. Bodies, families, nations, and planets rise and fall. Joy will come, but it will also go. We should observe and understand the impermanence of all things and the role this plays in our suffering...*

*The cause of our suffering is our grasping and cling, to gain something that we do not have, to hold on to something that is impermanent, or to get away from that which we do not want.<sup>1</sup>*

In tsunami songs and poems the writers also encourages the victims to observe and understand that everything is impermanent in order to relieve the victims from sorrow.

*This world turns too fast*

*But life is faster.*

*Just a moment from child to adult,*

---

<sup>1</sup>

Bhaskorn Bhavilai, Karma: A New Look at the Buddhist Concept of Cause and Effect, 2006. p.125

*Just walk for a little while,*

*For year by year,*

5

*And then reach the edge of life.*

In "Through the Age", in lines 1-6, Waree Wayu says that this world turns too fast; however, human life turns faster. Very soon, a child will become an adult and then will reach the edge of life. In other words, human life is as short as "just walk for a while". The poet describes that human life as tiny, fragile, and uncertain, so that the reader will realize the importance of life in one way and will not hold on to life too much in harmful ways.

*Who can request this world to turn slower.*

*When voice goes through your mouth,*

*Your life already passes through the age of time.*

*Your word also drifts in the air.*

20

*And above the sky,*

*There are only twinkling stars.*

In line 17, the poet explains that no one can stop time or change. It is the same as what Phra Bhasakorn said: "We are not even the masters of our own body. It will grow old, get sick, and die. All is impermanent."

In lines 18-20, the poet says that as soon as the voice goes through the mouth, the word will drift in the air. In other words, time is always running and changing everything. The poet explains

that humans are powerless so that they cannot change the reality. At the moment when a person wants to stop time, he is already changed by time.

In lines 21 and 22, the poet writes that "above the sky, there are only twinkle stars". The word "sky" has an image of greatness and emptiness. The greatness of the sky reminds the readers that a human is just a tiny life form in this world. The emptiness reflects the nothingness of life. Time is always running and will turn life to death and turn the body to dust. The phrase "twinkling stars" is an image of small spots in the darkness which are as tiny and unstable as human life.

In addition, even though the life of stars is very long in comparison with human life, it is also the destiny of disappear someday.

So, in "Through the Age", Waree Wayu describes human life as too short, tiny, unstable, and uncontrollable in order to encourage the victims not to hold on to their life. In other words, he asks the victims to let go of their pain and sorrow from the disaster. According to Buddhism, one can reduce suffering by observing and understanding the truth that everything is impermanent.

The poets above express the Buddhist concept that life is impermanent and encourage the victims to accept this fact that in order to reduce their sorrow and pain. Moreover, some poets also console the victims and try to reduce their fear. They express their compassion toward tsunami victims and convince the victims that they will not be left alone. These poets console the victims and tell them to live with hope because many people will help them restore their homes.



*I'll sing for you, cry for you, the tears and the kindness for the victims  
To console their heart and tiredness "khwon uey..." please come back.*

In "Calling Khwan", Kanakam Aphiradee expresses her compassion toward tsunami victims. The poet expresses the idea of "Calling Khwan". "Calling Khwan" has an image of love, care, and warmth, like a mother who is consoling her children.

*Although I cannot bring back what you've lost,  
How can I leave you alone?  
Please, let me embrace you with kindness,  
Let me embrace you with song.*

20

*Let me embrace you with song...*

In lines 17-21, the poet also expresses her compassion toward the victims. She says "Although I cannot bring back what you've lost, / How can I leave you alone?" In other words, the poet explains that she will do anything she can in order to help the victims. The word "embrace" has an image of love, warmth, and gentleness, like a mother who tries to console and protect her children. The poet uses the image "let me embrace you with song" to console the victims. She tries to make the victims feel warm and safe.

*Chanting, asking for being blessed, making a wish before going to sleep;  
Dedicating from the depth of my heart to encourage you;  
My only wish, you can recover from the disaster.  
I will sleep later but now I want you to be all right.*

*Please sleep, Tsunami, don't wake up and destroy.*

5

*Beloved sea and brutal wave, the pain and the dead on the beach, Tsunami!*

In "Brutal Wave, Beloved Sea", Danupol Kaewkarn expresses his compassion toward tsunami victims. He cares the victims, so he dedicates his time before sleep to chant and make a wish for the victims to recover from disaster. Before going to sleep, he wants to know that tsunami victims are all right. In other words, the poet expresses his compassion in order to cheer the victims up and give them a will to fight with disaster.

In line 5 and 6, the poet pleads, "don't wake up and destroy". In other words, the poet tries to make the victims believe that tsunami will never come again in order to lessen their fear.

*The big wave charged and flooded.*

5

*So sad: how cruel the earth is!*

*I will encourage you to let you stand up and fight.*

*Let this not happen again; pray to the Triple Gems to protect you.*

In "To Shed Tears", the poet encourages the victims to fight the disaster. The poet prays to the Triple Gems to protect the victims from harm. Thai people believe that by praying to the Triple Gems, they will be safe from danger. So the poet consoles the victims by making them believe that they will be protected by the goodness of the Triple Gems.

*The big wave destroyed and went away,*

*But every heart still cared,*

10



*We'll send this song to dry your tears.*

*Let the nightmare not happen again; don't be sad.*

*The waves of kindness never become dry.*

*Send a cheer and a wish from the North to the South*

*To live peacefully, we don't want to see you suffer.*

15

*Raise the hands to say a prayer to save you from any harm.*

In lines 9-16, the poet consoles the victims and tells them "don't be sad". He says that all Thai people always care for them in order to cheer the victims up and make them feel better. The word "wave" (line 13), has an image of water that is flowing continually. So, in line 13, "the waves of kindness never become dry" means that Thai people will never stop sending help until all tsunami victims are completely recovered. In addition, the phrase "wave of kindness" has an image of care that can heal not only physical damage but also mental damage.

*Oh Andaman, your suffering was almost beyond any treatment.*

5

*People all around the world heard and the help poured in.*

*To shed your tears.*

*We love you, we care for you, Andaman.*

*We will stay by your side, Andaman.*

In "By Your Side, Andaman", the poet writes that people all around the world are trying to help tsunami victims in order to cheer them up. In this song, the writer also expresses his love and compassion toward tsunami victims in order to console them.

*Wish all the souls from the disaster to go to heaven.*

15

*Anyone who survived, we will be by your side.*

*Please know that Thai always love you.*

In "Chaotic Andaman", Phanom Chaiyarote also expresses his love and compassion in order to console the victims. He cares for tsunami victims, the dead and the living. He wishes the dead ones to go to heaven.

In Buddhist belief, death is not the end of life but just a transformation of life-form. In Thai tsunami songs and poems, there are poets who make a wish for tsunami victims to go to heaven, such as Phanom Chaiyarote, and Naphacharee Nambenchaphol.

*Send a kiss with the wind as the smell of incense*

*Lead every soul in the Andaman*

*To heaven to rest in great happiness*

*In the celestial abode of Mahabrahmabhumi.*

*The cold won't be cold when the clouds disappear from the sky.*

10

*Wish you all enjoy looking at the twinkling stars from the heaven.*

*Don't be worry, my dear, if it's time to say farewell then let it be.*

*See you again someday in the next life under the Andaman sky.*

In *For the Beloved*, Naphacharee Nambenchaphol makes a wish for the tsunami victims to go to heaven to rest in great happiness. She tells the survivors not to worry about their dead

beloved because they will be happy in heaven. Moreover, the poet also consoles the survivors by saying that they have a chance to meet their beloved again in the next life.

People who pass away go to heaven.

People who are alive make merit

And make a prayer with tears,

In tribute to those who have gone,

Bringing an end to all suffering and illness of humanity

5

Bringing an end to all burdens, leave the bodies.

The good deed will be the judgment,

To judge all spirits with justice.

In lines 1-4 of "For Those Who Survive", Phanda Thammada describes how people who are alive still make merit and pray with tearful tributes to those who died. In other words, one who lives still cares for the dead one and feels sad. However, in lines 5-8 the poet explains that after death, Karma will be the judgment for each spirit. In other words, the poet convinces the readers not to be worried about the dead ones because they will be judged fairly by their own Karma.

*The one who is left behind is still in pain.*

*Please don't be sad, dear,*

10

*You have got a friend,*

*Or at least I will be your shelter.*

*Maekhwanmuang stop the suffering.*

*Wipe away the tears of the age,*

*Feel the wind which passes the forest,*

15

*The ripples of waves come and visit their friend, the beach.*

In lines 9-12, the poet consoles tsunami victims with the words that he will be their friend and shelter. The word "shelter" is an image of a place where one can take rest and be covered away from rain and sun light. Moreover, in line 13, the poet says that not only the poet himself but also *Maekhwanmuang*, or the guardian spirit, will look after tsunami victims and try to heal their pain. So, the poet tries to make the victims feel safe and warm by telling them that the poet and guardian spirit care for them.

The flowers beside the tomb still have their fragrance,

The bees swarm around the blooming flower.

The grass spreads its blades to play with the elephants,

The spiders weave their webs.

20

I will be nature to draw the dream,

To erase all your sadness.

Please forget everything that makes you upset.

Enjoy walking among the people.

In lines 15-20 the poet illustrates the beautiful scene of nature. He convinces the readers to be enchanted by the beauty of nature so that their pain will recede. The flowers and their fragrance present an image of beauty, while the tomb represents death. So line 17 says that death is not

miserable. In death there is beauty. In line 18, blooming flowers present life and birth. So life is beside death. The poet tries to convince the reader not to feel too much sorrow because death is not a miserable thing. Death is the nature of life.

In line 19, the grass is an image of a thing that is small and low while the elephant is something that is great and high. This scene shows that both small things and great things can live in harmony together.

In line 20 spider webs is an image of connection. In other words, every life lives corresponding with others like the web of life. So everyone is a part of each other.

In lines 21 and 22 the poet says that he will be like nature, to draw the dream and erase all sadness. In other words, the poet tells the victims to live co-relating with other people in order to forget their sadness, as he says, "Please forget everything that makes you upset. / Enjoy walking among the people".

As in "For Those Who Survive", in Thai tsunami songs and poems, the poets illustrate the scene of nature in order to console the victims.

*Bodies of our compatriots pile on each other dying,  
While the rest wallow their heads in sand crying.*

In "Ocean Weep", Noawarat Phongphaibul uses the allusion to the Ramayana in the chapter 'Nangloy' (นางลอย) that:

*The river will be the city.*

*The mountain will be the crematorium.*

*Dragon and gilen<sup>2</sup> (กิเลน) will be the vehicle.*

*The moon and the stars will be the candles.*

*Vichiankaew flowers, lotus, and the clouds in the sky*

*Will be the tassels and ceiling.*

*Trees will be the tiered umbrellas.*

*The many golden gems and flowers*

*Will be the tassels which are spread around.*

*The riverside will surround the body of my beloved,*

*Instead of the golden curtain.*

*The sound of waves will replace*

*The glorious sound of drums, phinphat<sup>3</sup> and gongs<sup>4</sup>.*

*Cicadas and crickets will be the conchs and horns.<sup>5</sup>*

---

<sup>2</sup> Gilen means dragon-headed unicorn

<sup>3</sup> Phinphat means (พินพาทย์) classical Thai orchestra

<sup>4</sup> Gong is an instrument consisting of tuned gongs set in a circular frame

<sup>5</sup> Duangmon Jitjamnong. *Value and Outstanding Characteristic of Thai Literature in Early Rattanakosin Period*, 1997. pp.79-80.



This is the scene in which Rama, the hero in the Ramayana, cries out with pain when he sees the fake body of Srida floating in the river and thinks that his beloved is dead. The poet uses the relationship between humans and nature to display the relationship between the characters, especially the feeling of love and care, when one wants to console his beloved although his beloved is dead. Even though the beauty and the greatness of nature cannot reduce the sorrow, it is still the representation of the magnificent and beautiful things that one can offer to each other when they lack other things.<sup>6</sup>

By using an allusion to the Ramayana, Noawarat expresses his compassion and care toward tsunami victims in order to make them feel overwhelmed with love.

*Friends, sleep, please sleep, sleep under the blue sky  
Beside the ocean, amid the wind, and the moon light!  
Friends, please dream of the sweet old days and wake up with hope.  
Give us new days after we sleep on the sandy shore.*

*One morning, the storm raged and the big tidal wave arose.*

5

*It was a moment of life-and-death, also, of disaster!*

*Coconut trees sway, white clouds roll by, and children on the beach;  
Sea-shells, crabs and fishes on the beach, sand dunes and coral reefs;*

---

<sup>6</sup> Ibid. p.79

*Look at the horizon where the blue sky meets the sea,  
And be blessed with life-force.*

10

*Give us new days after we sleep on death!  
Give us new lives after we sleep on death!*

In "Sleep on the Death", Surachai Chanthimathorn draws the beautiful beach "beside the ocean, amid the wind, and the moon light". He encourages the readers to take a rest under the blue sky and wake up with hope. In lines 7-10, the composer also illustrates the beautiful scene and encourages the readers to absorb the life-force from nature.

In lines 5 and 6, the composer describes the moment when the disaster happened: the moment when the beach was covered by the death. He contrasts the terrible and beautiful sides of the beach in order to say that life also has two sides.

The poet tells us that after death, there is new life. In other words, both death and life are parts of nature. He convinces the audiences to sleep on the death, not to run away from it. By accepting and overcoming the death, the composer believes that the new days and new lives will come. On the other hand, people who always struggle with the past will not be able to move ahead or look forward.

By encouraging the readers to appreciate nature, the poets make the readers have awareness of only the present: not to think about the sadness in the past.

#### **4.2 To Encouragement to Help the Victims**

The songs and poems which are mentioned above are the songs and poems written for tsunami victims who were depressed and sad. The songs and poems which the author will analyze next are quite different. The poets wrote them to encourage Thai people to help the tsunami victims. In other words, the poets expected that Thai people will be persuaded by these songs and poems to help tsunami victims.

*Some are dead, some lose their relatives, and some are injured.* 5

*They are very cold and sad.*

*The house, money, everything is taken into the ocean*

*What a pity for their companions in this world.*

*In sorrow, having nothing, and so lonely,*

*They search for their beloved and relatives* 10

*With confused mind and staggering legs,*

*Then fall down on the sand.*

*Some were watching their children playing around;*

*Suddenly the waves crushed and drowned them,*

*Like the hand of a bloody demon.* 15

*The hand of the great reaper took away the children so fast, like the giant wheel,*

*That the mother had no chance to pull them back.*

*Oh dear! Her honey is gone,*

*The mother's heart is broken,  
Lying down, crying incessantly in deep sorrow.*

In "Wiping Away Andaman's Tears", Phrakru Sil Sangwaraphira illustrates the terrible scene of tsunami victims. In lines 5-7 he says that some people die, lose their relatives, and are injured, which means they are seriously damaged by tsunami. "They are very cold and sad", which means they are in the hard time. "The house, money, everything is taken into the ocean", which means they are homeless and they lose everything, even money to buy what they need, so they must be very depressed.

In lines 8-12, the poet says that tsunami victims have nothing; they are lonely, pitiful, and in sorrow. The poet draws the picture of tsunami victims who are tired and confused. However, they keep looking for their beloved and fall down on the sand the moment they found the bodies.

In lines 13-20, the poet illustrates the moment when children are taken from their mother by the big waves. The poet uses simile; he says that the tsunami is "like the hand of bloody demon" and "the hand of the great reaper" to express its brutality. The tsunami can take the children from their mother; make her heart broken, with no mercy. The scene when the mother is "lying down, crying incessantly in deep sorrow" is very pitiful.

The poet moves the heart of the readers so that they will be motivated to help tsunami victims. When people sympathize with others, they will try to help them get rid of sadness and hardness.

*On 26 December 2004, the earth shook violently, and  
 Andaman's in sudden danger from the big tidal waves from Sumatra- 5  
 The big wave raged upon the beach,  
 Flooded the land in a wink with no escape.*

*Villagers, fishermen, and tourists were swallowed by the big wave  
 Tens of thousands got lost and injured and all their possessions  
 Screams were heard just a moment before they were lost in the wave. 10  
 Husbands and wives, parents and children were separated;  
 Some were left alone. Oh, dear.*

*It deprived us of our beloved one. How many tears must we shed?  
 Or this is a test of Thai warrior-blood. No way! You won't defeat us.  
 Let's donate money and give things to the victims 15  
 And help them rebuild their homes.  
 We have always said, "Thais never leave their fellows,  
 Thais always help each other, remember that we all are Thais."*

*No matter what race or religion they belong to,  
 Once sad and in danger, no matter how far, 20  
 Thais will do their best for them*

In "United Thai Hearts to Fight against the Tsunami Disaster", Sek Saksit also describes the terrible scene when the big waves attacked. Tsunami victims were injured; many lost their beloved and are left alone.

The poet draws this terrible scene in order to encourage people to join together and help tsunami victims.

*The way it is, how terrible it is,* 5  
*This sadness is beyond lamentation-*  
*It is beyond death and*  
*There is no word in this world that can explain it.*

*Look! Brother,*  
*Here, where death is everywhere.* 10  
*Sometimes, the flower in the mind*  
*Can bloom from the inside.*

*Sometimes, in silence, there is the sound of heaven,*  
*The song of Tanyong Andaman,*  
*That wakes up the mind from inside.* 15

*Listen! Brother,*  
*Listen to the sound of the crazy wave,*  
*Listen to the sound of death*  
*Ask us what to do in the future.*

*The answer is in the question.* 20  
*The beauty is in the heart of heaven.*



*The truth is in the Andaman,  
To make the paradise become real.*

In "The Song of Tanyong Andaman", Tuak Banthad encourages the reader to show their concern for tsunami victims. In lines 5-7, he uses hyperbole explaining that the sadness from the disaster is "beyond lamentation" and "There is no word in this world can explain it". In lines 9 and 10, he points out that many people were killed in order to create the feeling of sympathy.

The word "flower" in line 11 implies the loving-kindness inside the mind of people. In line 16, the poet also encourages people to be concerned about the tsunami tragedy. By displaying the sadness caused by the disaster, he encourages people to learn how to care each other and help them.

In lines 13 and 21, the poet uses the word "heaven", which refers to a place of goodness. In Buddhist belief, people who will go to heaven must have goodness in their mind, such as loving-kindness and compassion. So the poet expects that when people look at tsunami tragedy, the goodness in their mind will be shaken and they will feel more compassion toward other people.

Following the Buddhist concept, the poets encourage the readers to have loving-kindness and compassion toward other people, especially tsunami victims. Loving-kindness is a mental intention, willing to bring happiness to anyone. Compassion is the will to free anyone from suffering. In other words, the poets render the emotion of sadness in order to wake loving-kindness and compassion inside the mind of the readers, so that they will be motivated to help the victims.

*Never dare, we're all surrounded They're seeking survivors*

*Oh no can't you see? We're all trembling now with pain*

*No matter who, No matter which nations,*

*There's no exception, Mother Nature masters everything.*

10

*Everyone is like a little grain of sand.*

*Andaman (Andaman), A place of paradise (A place of paradise)*

*Now we're leaving when they're dying. They suffered whilst*

*We're crying, oh life (oh life),*

*Andaman (Andaman), Still a paradise (Still a paradise)*

15

*No more pain, no more crying. Healing by love, giving our heart.*

*Oh Ohhh...TSUNAMI*

As in "The Song of Tanyong Andaman", in *Tsunami*, Yuenyong Ophakul illustrates a terrible scene of the tsunami disaster (line 8) in order to move the hearts of the readers. He says that Andaman is still a paradise (line 15), and pain will be healed by love (line 16). In other words, the poet encourages the readers to have sympathy with others in order to help tsunami victims and make this world become a paradise.

Moreover, in *Tsunami*, the poet encourages people to help each other, by explaining that "Mother nature masters everything" (line 10). When people recognize that they all are a tiny part of nature and they cannot resist the power of nature, people will feel close to each other as companions with the same fate. In the face of natural disaster, men will realize that they have to get

together in order to pass through the crisis. The relationship between men will be tightened when they are facing something bigger than themselves, like a tsunami. So the poet expresses the terror of the tsunami disaster in order to make the readers care for one another.

#### 4.3 Harmony among the People

So far, we can see that in tsunami songs and poems about the 2004 tsunami the poets try to encourage the readers to help tsunami victims. The poets make the readers have sympathy with the victims. In addition, the poets make the victims feel that both the readers and the victims are facing the same fate, which is ruled by the law of nature. The poets create a relationship between the readers and the victims so that the readers will try to help the victims enthusiastically.

Moreover, the poets not only encourage the readers to help tsunami victims but also encourage people to turn to each other in order to create a peaceful world in future.

*The suffering ocean weeps and floods the earth.*

*The three worlds are separated and overwhelmed with tears.*

In "Ocean Weeps", Noawarat Phongphaibul refers to the Traibhumikatha. The phrase word "three worlds" refers to heaven, earth and ocean. Moreover a word "three worlds" can also refer to the three planes of existence, which are the sensual plane, corporeal plane, and incorporeal plane.

Regarding Thai beliefs that appear in the Traibhumikatha, Duangmon Chitchamnong explained as follow:

*Thai people believe that "madness and immorality of men will cause the madness of nature", as seen in Thai literature. In the Traibhumikatha, this concept plays a significant role to control the ruler to behave morally; in Phra Chaisuriya, the fall of Sawatthee city is an example of the law of karma because the king and the people in ruler class are immoral.*<sup>7</sup>

This can imply that the Traibhumikatha expresses the idea that "madness and immorality of men will cause the madness of nature".

So, in "Ocean Weeps", the tsunami or the madness of nature can be caused by the immorality of men. After expressing the sadness of the tsunami and consoling the victims, Noawarat describes the noise:

*The gigantic tidal waves will roar loudly;*

10

*Likewise, the big Ocean will lament.*

*Fight side by side to save the world and face our own destination,*

*Get together and become united to bring sandhidham to Thailand.*

---

7

Duangmon Jitjarnog. *Value and Outstanding Characteristic of Thai Literature in Early Rattanakosin Period*, 1997. p.74.

In lines 10-11, the poet implies that the tsunami is a sign to encourage men to fight side by side to save the world.

The word *sandhidham* is the combination of two words, "santi" and "thamma". According to the Thai dictionary edited by Ratchabandittayasathan "santi" means peace and "thamma" means goodness. So "sandhidham" means "peace of goodness" or "peace from goodness". The poet encourages the readers to turn to each other and bring peace and goodness to Thailand. In other word, the poet believes that men can avoid natural disasters if they practice moral acts.

In conclusion, the poet explains that tsunami disaster is caused by the madness of men, in order to encourage the readers to turn to each other and practice morality.

*This earth, this sky and this sea*

5

*Are not enough to bear all of the great sadness.*

*All of us who share the suffering and relationships*

*Will keep this in our hearts forever.*

In "Dark Sky, New Sky", Noawarat renders the emotion of sorrow in order to tighten the relationship between all people who experienced the tragedy of the tsunami, both those who are involved with it and not involved with it. When people experience the same feeling or situation, their relationship will become closer. So the poet believes that the tsunami disaster will create the strong relationship between people.

*The land is covered in pain because of the disaster.*

*We face and suffer it together.*

10

*Our stream of kindness, then,  
Will clear all the troubles from the disaster.*

In this poem, the poet reinforces the readers that men can pass through the crisis because of the stream of kindness.

*We all live on the same planet.  
We all share our sadness: we become closer.  
We all should create a new age with love  
And save the world with everlasting effort.*

In the last stanza, the poet encourages the readers to try their best to create a new age with their love. In other words, the poet tells the readers to reconsider their sadness from the disaster in order to learn how to love each other. The poet hopes that the readers will learn that kindness is the key to creating a beautiful world.

*Please sympathize with Asia.  
It's a tragedy in the world's history.  
Sharing the same fate: a large number of corpses.  
It's a burden for mankind to reconsider the future.*

20

*The suffering of heaven and the portent of earth  
Will happen because of cause and effect.  
The Sumatra tsunami signified the characteristic of Anicca.  
Here, our friends throughout the earth will be in deep sadness*



In "World-Sumatra-Tsunami", Phaiwarin Khaongam explains that the tsunami expresses the characteristic of everything, which is uncertainty (line 23); in other words, nothing lasts forever. So death is the certain thing for everyone. In lines 19 and 20, the poet tells the readers to consider death in the tsunami as a burden of mankind. The tsunami tragedy is not a burden for one person but for all men. Everyone should care about the other's life because all men are facing the same fate: they have to die one day. The poet creates the relationship between the people by pointing out that they have the same fate.

*Sending the Thai heart from all corners of the country.*

25

*Let peace be with us everywhere.*

*Let's learn and be aware that*

*Life is covered by nothing but dust.*

Phaiwarin wants to stimulate people to care about one another; moreover, he encourages the readers to help the victims, as seen in line 25. He also encourages people to create peace everywhere (line 26). In lines 27 and 28, the poet encourages the readers to consider the truth that "life is covered by nothing but dust".

According to Buddhism, the body of men is a combination of the four primary elements, which are solid, liquid, heat, and air.<sup>8</sup> Without a soul, the body will turn to dust and water as it was before.

By considering life as something uncertain, men can decrease their ego and become humble because they realize that they will lose their property and position after death, as everyone will.<sup>9</sup>

In other words, men will decrease their ego when they clearly know that property and position are just illusions. The poet encourages people to consider this fact so that the readers will realize that other people are their companions, not foes. So people can turn to each other and create peace in the world. The poet also encourages the readers to rely on themselves.

*The earth is angry. The hungry ocean*

*Devours all the living things on earth.*

*The natural disaster is the doom resulting from merit and sin.*

*All living things are weeping.*

*Does any god see*

5

*The time when big waves come?*

---

<sup>8</sup> P.A. Payutto, *Dictionary of Buddhism*, 2003. p. 70

<sup>9</sup> Vasin Inthasara. *Tilakkhana and Patikkasamuppada*, 2003. p.29.

*Gigantic waves, roaring waves*

*Devastate the earth, hell, and heaven.*

In line 3, the poet emphasizes that the tsunami disaster is caused by merit and sin, or the law of Karma. According to the law of Karma, (which was explained in chapter II), it was time for all the tsunami victims to die, because of Karma from what they did in the past. The tsunami simply performed its role to bring death to those people. Moreover, according to the Traibhumikatha, the immorality of men can cause natural disasters.

So the poet tries to convince the readers that the law of Karma has a strong effect on men. In lines 5-8, the poet says "god" did nothing but witness the tsunami disaster. In the tsunami, the gods did nothing, neither punish nor help people; they only watched it.

The poet expresses this idea in order to make the readers realize that now men should rely on nothing but their own action. In other word, nothing can help men but their own doing, so they must get together and try their best to save the world with goodness.

In conclusion, the poet describes the tsunami tragedy in order to tighten the relation between men. Moreover, he encourages people to turn to one another and practice good Karma in order to create a better world in the future, as in "Ocean Weeps" and "Dark Sky, New Sky".

*This year the Earth sent us a greeting, shaking our homeland,*

*Sent us the sadness to greet the New Year.*

*Fah's so afraid that we're lured by too much happiness, gave a warning.      5*

*The Earth shook, the waves rose high.*

*Full of sadness, the 2004 greeting card; take it and think about it.*

*It tells us to help each other, care for each other because we are brothers.*

In "Greeting Card 2005", Su Boonliang renders the emotion of sorrow in order to make the readers have sympathy with other people. In line 5, the poet criticizes materialism. He implies that nature or the spirits in nature is afraid that nowadays people are lured by happiness in materialism and do not care for others, so he sent the tsunami in order to force people to care for one another.

Nowadays, people can justify themselves with their money as much as they desire: this is legal. In other word, happiness turns into a concrete thing which can be calculated by money and property. This society lures people to believe that they can attain happiness by their own money. So it deceives people to become selfish. In other words, people do not care for the happiness of other people.

The word "lured" in line 5 signifies that "too much happiness" is the fake happiness. In other words, the poet believes that people can reach real happiness by doing good thing, such as help and love one another. So he writes about the tsunami tragedy in order to encourage people to turn to one another.

As in "Dark Sky, New Sky", and "World-Sumatra-Tsunami", the poet expresses the emotion of sadness in order to create the relationship between people. He also points that selfishness cannot create true happiness, but kindness and love can. Porn Rattanasuwan, a Thai Buddhist philosopher, wrote as follows:

*One who is selfish thinks that he will not help anyone unless there is a worthwhile interest. This person has the wrong idea. Anyone whose mind is always full of love and kindness will reach everlasting happiness.<sup>10</sup>*

#### 4.4 To Learn How to Live in Harmony with Nature

In tsunami songs and poems, many poets express the idea that the tsunami disaster was caused by humans. The madness of men brings the madness of nature. In "Greeting Card 2005", the poet says that the happiness that comes from selfishness is not real happiness. Moreover, some poets also claim the selfishness of men leads to natural destruction; therefore, the tsunami occurred.

*The capitalists took advantages of nature for their wealth;*

*The fishermen were also defeated.*

*The beautiful sea had been sold to fulfill rich men's dreams.*

15

*Then, the time came, as*

*The mad ocean cleaned up all those luxurious things on the beach,*

*Which were built by the careless people.*

---

10

Pom Rattanasuwan. *Happiness and Peace*, 1991. pp. 93-94.

*Maybe one day,*

*Men will have no right to possess anything;*

20

*They will lose their beautiful earth*

*Because the land will be submerged under the sea.*

*Maybe one day,*

*Men will have nowhere to live because of their false consciousness.*

*The land will be shaking like a cradle,*

*And the buildings will bury the bodies.*

25

In "Tsunami 2", in lines 13-18, Pantamuang says that the tsunami came to punish capitalists and the rich men who are greedy and selfish. Lines 19-25, illustrate the horrible scene of disaster in the future to render the emotion of fear. He tries to convince the reader not to destroy nature; otherwise men will lose their place to live on this planet.

This poem evokes the emotion of fear to warn the readers not to harm nature. The poet also convinces the readers that tsunami came to punish the people who are selfish and greedy, in order to encourage the readers not to take advantage of nature.

Phra Paisal Visalo also describes men's attitude toward nature:



*Humans fail to realize that they're part of nature. They can survive and maintain their race throughout the passage of time, simply because of nature's mercy and hospitality. Humans should be grateful to nature.<sup>11</sup>*

*Humans think that they're master. What we commonly see in this technological-driven era is humans trying to control nature and overtly, irresponsibly, and unmindfully exploit it.<sup>12</sup>*

According to Phra Paisal, in the Buddhist view, the false attitude of men leads them to destroy nature.

*Tsunami had passed but will always be remembered.*

*After a year the tragedy has passed;*

*Men tried to defeat Nature, but Nature hit back.*

*The tears of Thai people have dropped.*

This untitled poem reminds the readers about the sadness from tsunami disaster in lines 1 and 2. In lines 3 and 4, it reflects the law of causal relation, explaining that the tsunami is punishment from the nature. In other words, this poem also tries to encourage the readers to stop harming nature.

---

<sup>11</sup> Chompoo Trakullertsathien. Global Warming VS Dharma Cooling. *Bangkok Post My Life*. Vol. 2, 074, (August 20-26, 2009). p.10.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*

*Sadder than any sad songs,  
The separation of gloomy sky and earth,  
Like the hand of the universe trying to warn human about death.*

*Warning us not to be overjoyed by desire* 15  
*But know how to reduce it.*  
*Calm down, be peaceful and know the limit.*  
*Before the human race will be extinguished by the universe.*

*Ah... ah... startled because dead bodies are everywhere.*  
*They try to show and warn us,* 20  
*On the stretch of Andaman.*

In "On the Stretch of the Andaman", in lines 15-18, Phanom Nantapruerk states that the tsunami disaster is a sign from the universe to warn people not to destroy the balance of nature just serve their desire.

As in "Tsunami 2", this poem evokes the emotion of fear and sadness to remind the readers to reduce their desire and preserve nature.

Phra Paisal Visalo also describes the greed of men as the cause of natural destruction:

*It's no exaggeration to say that our natural environment is in crisis because our interior nature is out of balance. Deep down inside, people feel alone, depressed and hopeless. That is why they are trying to indulge themselves with material things.*<sup>13</sup>

He also explains that "human greed has never been fulfilled because people still want more and more, resulting in the ceaseless destruction of nature in order to pamper their luxurious and wasteful life".<sup>14</sup>

So the poet tells us that men destroyed nature to serve their greed, which can never be fulfilled; therefore, the tsunami happened. The way to save the world and human race is to learn to be sufficient.

*Men can look as far as the horizon (the Andaman Sea). 5*

*Don't lose your faith and dream!*

*Life must go on.*

*Nature is too complex, beyond our understanding,*

*But it is not too hard to learn.*

*The world has separated the land from the sea; 10*

*Men should share the land and the sea with one another;*

*Help one another; reduce the hazard in time of disaster.*

---

13  
ibid.

14  
ibid.

In "Tsunami 26 Dec", the poet suggests what men should do to prevent the disaster. Lines 5-9, explains that men cannot know everything about nature. However, he encourages the listener to think that men can learn from nature. Lines 10-12, explain that men can reduce the hazard from disaster by learning to live in harmony with nature.

In addition, Phra Paisal Visalo also describes the Buddhist attitude toward nature: "Nature is the greatest, whereas we're just a tiny life form. Nature teaches us to be humble and understand our real status. We're just a small part of it. When we feel humble, we will not be arrogant and we will get closer to nature."<sup>15</sup>

So, if men understand their status, they will learn how to live in harmony with nature. In other words, if men realize that they are a tiny part of nature, they will not try to conquer nature or take advantage of nature but respect it.

#### 4.5 Conclusion

By exploring Thai tsunami songs and poems, the researcher found four messages, which are to console the victims, to encourage people to help the victims, to make people turn to each other, and to learn to live in harmony with nature.

---

<sup>15</sup> Chompoo Trakullertsathien. Global Warming VS Dharma Cooling. Bangkok Post My Life. Vol. 2, 074, August 20-26, 2009. p.11.

Many tsunami songs and poems try to console the victims by using the scene of nature. Some songs and poems (Sleep on Death and For They Who Survive) illustrate the beautiful scene of nature in order to make the readers appreciate with nature. The poets encourage people to be enchanted with nature so that they will forget their sadness.

Some songs and poems use nature to describe Buddhist concept Tilakkhana (By Your Side, Andaman and Dark Sky, New Sky). The poets say that life has two sides: good times and hard times, as this world has day and night. The poets try to cheer up the victims and make them think positively, having a hope that tomorrow will be better.

Wasin Inthasara explains that if people learn Aniccata they will become more cheerful and try their best to improve themselves because they know that everything can be changed, depending on their own action. If they do good things, their life will be better. On the other hand, if they do bad things, their life will be worse.<sup>16</sup>

Buddhism teaches people to learn Tilakkhana in order to be free from sadness and suffering. In "Through the Age", the poet tries to make the readers realize that life is very short and uncertain in order to encourage the readers not to cling on to their lives.

Phra Paisal Visalo also explains that men can be released from suffering and be joyful by learning from nature.

---

<sup>16</sup> Wasin Inthasara. Tilakkhana and Paticcasamuppada, 2003. pp.28-29.

*Several revered monks became enlightened because of nature. When they see a falling leaf or a wrinkled lotus, they realize that their life time in this world is limited. This is a wisdom derived from exposure to nature.*<sup>17</sup>

*Happiness occurs easily when humans feel enough. Everything in nature teaches lessons about Dharma and the truth of life, but only if we open our eyes and attentively listen to it.*<sup>18</sup>

By learning the truth (or Tilakkhana) from nature, people can decrease their sorrow from losing their beloved or their precious things.

In "Calling Khwan", "Brutal Wave, Beloved Sea", "To Shed Tears", and "Chaotic Andaman", the poets express their love and care toward tsunami victims in order to make them feel better. In "For They Who Survive", the poet writes that the guardian spirit also looks after tsunami victims in order to make them feel safe and stable.

In "For the Beloved", the poet also convinces the livings that their dead beloved are now in heaven, so that they will not worry about their beloved.

---

<sup>17</sup> Chompoo Trakullertsathien. Global Warming VS Dharma Cooling. *Bangkok Post My Life*. Vol. 2, 074, (August 20-26, 2009). p. 11.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.



In the case of songs and poems that try to encourage the readers to help the victims, the poets illustrate the terrible scene of tsunami victims and render the emotion of sadness so that the readers will sympathize with the fate of the victims (*Wiping Away Andaman's Tears* and *United Thai Hearts to Fight against the Tsunami Disaster*).

In "Wiping Away Andaman's Tears", the poet also expresses the Buddhist concept of the law of Karma in order to encourage the readers to do good things such as helping tsunami victims.

In addition, in "The Song of Tanyong Andaman", and *Tsunami*, the poets not only encourage the readers to help the victims but also convince them to care for one another and create a new world with love. These poets believe that when people sympathize with other people they can learn to live together in peace and create a paradise with kindness.

In "World-Sumatra-Tsunami", the poet expresses Tilakkhana in order to decrease greed and selfishness of men. Usually, men have a conflict because of their interest. So, if they realize that they cannot truly possess anything because everything in this world is impermanent, their selfishness will be decreased.

Moreover, the tsunami disaster displays the truth that life is uncertain and fragile. In *Tsunami* and "World-Sumatra-Tsunami", and "Dark Sky, New Sky" the poets write that everyone is a small part of nature and no one can resist the law of nature that he has to die one day. This idea creates a relationship between people. The poets try to convince the readers to realize that everybody is a friend. All people will suffer from death and will be sad when departed from their

beloved. The poets make the readers sympathize with other people so that they will turn to each other.

In "Ocean Weeps" and "World-Sumatra-Tsunami", the poets point out that, in the face of disaster, men should get together in order to survive. When people realize that they all are equal in the eye of nature, they will be less arrogant and more generous.

In "Greeting Card 2005", the poet criticizes Thai society in the present saying that people have become selfish because of materialism. Materialism decreases the value of morality and kindness. Only the thing that has a price has value. People think they can buy happiness. However, the poet does not agree with this idea; he thinks that the happiness from material things is not the true happiness. He describes the disaster as a greeting card from god, who wants to encourage people to care for each other.

In "Tsunami 2", the poet claims that capitalists take advantage from nature. In other words, greed and selfishness of men destroy nature; therefore, the tsunami occurred. In "Tsunami 2" and "On the Stretch of Andaman", the poets explain that capitalism gives men the false attitude that leads to the natural destruction. These poets say that nowadays men take advantage of nature as much as they can in order to fulfill their desire. However, men are a part of nature, so, if men destroy nature, they also destroy themselves.

In addition, the poets illustrate the horrible scenes of the tsunami disaster and the disasters that may happen in the future. They try to evoke the emotion of fear so that people will not dare to harm nature or else they will be vanished.

However, in "Tsunami 26 Dec", the poet has given the solution for the future. He suggests that men can learn from nature. If men share the world with nature and respect nature, they will live in harmony with nature. This is the way to save the world and prevent further disasters.