

CHAPTER SEVEN

CONCLUSION

This thesis has studied the sermons of Phra Phayom Kalayano in an attempt to explore the discourse structures present behind those renowned orations. This chapter, then, will summarize the findings and conclusions of the thesis.

It has been found that the sermons of Phra Phayom follow a predictable surface structure composed of the following units: salutation, stage, body, conclusion, and terminus. All of these save the body are well-organized and somewhat formulaic in nature.

The body of Phra Phayom's sermons is organized loosely around a series of mainline points marked by the particle *Aw!* These *Aw!* statements serve to create new points of departure for the megasection that is to follow. In so doing, *Aw!* keeps the sermons "on track," often bringing things back to the mainline after digression into material that is of little relevance to the main theme(s) of a sermon.

The megasections themselves show evidence of associational, rather than logical, sequencing. That is, the content of paragraph C is more influenced by the content of paragraph B than by any sort of global argument. The basic theme of the *Aw!* designated mainline material will often be lost after only a few paragraphs, as associations between one story and another are formed in Phra Phayom's active mind. Indeed, it is not unusual to find

entire sermonettes on matters not related to the mainline embedded within megasections.

While the *Aw!* statements themselves can be viewed as mitigated commands, much of the hortatory impact of Phra Phayom's sermons lies with his illustrations. As demonstrated in chapter 6, more than 50% of a typical Phra Phayom sermon is given over to storytelling--accounts of (generally) real events that show the validity of what Phra Phayom is saying. Since all of Phra Phayom's stories--even those which are humorous--have some sort of moral, they can be viewed as mitigated commands. Explicit commands of a "Do this! Don't do that!" nature are rare in Phra Phayom's sermons, often being found in material that is not related to the main theme(s) of the discourse; Phra Phayom's harshest words are clothed in stories and jokes.

Phra Phayom's stories and declarations receive enhancement through the rapport he cultivates with his audiences. Through rhetorical questions and the tag *na³* 'you know' Phra Phayom makes his listeners feel that they are a part of the preaching process, that their response is both important and required.

It is thus the packaging of all these different and sometimes seemingly contradictory features--formulaic organization and "stream of consciousness" storytelling, the authority of a monk and the humor of a comedian, the theory of the dhamma and the reality of current events--that give Phra Phayom his unique style and remarkable popularity. That this formula works is obvious enough: his tape cassettes sell as well as those of many Thai pop stars, donations have poured into his various foundations and projects, and some 100 monks have come to Wat Suan Kaew to learn from him.

In the final analysis, then, Phra Phayom's hortatory speech is distinctly Thai, subtly Buddhist, and best understood as the effort of one man to make a difference in his world.

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