

Film Authorship: A Case Study of Thai Film Director

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M.L Bhandevanov Devakula**

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Abstract

One of the approaches to studying films is authorship which studies personal styles of film directors. This article discusses the film directing styles of a prominent Thai film director, M.L Bhandevanov Devakula. In this study, the primary researcher selected four films of Bhandevanov, namely *The Eternity*, *The Outrage*, *Jan Dara the Beginning*, and *Jan Dara the Finale* as samples of the study. The researcher examines Bhandevanov as an auteur and traces elements throughout his film that contribute to the formation of his authorial signature. This paper is based on the qualitative method using close textual analysis of the four films and interviewed the film director. Findings suggest that the film director has the unique style of making films that are films narrative styles, *mise-en-scène*, and camera placement. The significance of this study is, it provides an understanding of Bhandevanov's style of film directing. This study may have implications for research on filmmaking, the styles of film directors, and the film industry of South East Asia.

Keywords

Auteur theory, film studies, Thai films, directing styles

1. Introduction

One of the approaches to studying films is authorship. Studying film authors, the auteur theory claims that the director's personal vision is reflected in his/her films (Chaudhuri, 2013). "Auteur" is a French that means author. According to Prince (2013), the auteur theory looks for one or more authors who leave their recognizable stylistic signature in their films and this model becomes the most employed and most deeply rooted method of thinking about film. For instance, Chaudhuri (2013) states that the prominent film directors, such as Akira Kurosawa, Alfred Hitchcock, Howard Hawks, and Jean Renoir, are absolute "auteurs" of their films.

However, it does not mean that every film director can be an auteur and a film does not need to have an auteur. Nevertheless, to qualify as "art," a film needs an auteur and the argument of authorship is essential in every art form of film (Filmreference, 2014). Moreover, some film directors' work is too diverse for them to be auteurs (Pond, 2012). Thus, Walden (2011) says to apply this theory in research, it is very important to choose a film director who is considered as an auteur.

Nonetheless, the auteur theory is one of a great research topics in film studies (Kiralý, 2015). Previous research had been done with film directors using the auteur theory as guidance such as, M.Night Shyamalan (Toye, 2012), Andrei Tarkovsky (Suwannapakdee, 2012), Nikos Nikolaidis (Fotiou, 2014), Hayao Miyazaki (Moist & Bartholow, 2007), Wong Kar-wai (Promkhuntong, 2014), and the study of Apichatpong, a Thai film director as film auteur (Owen, 2011). Thus, this research may fill the gap of studying style of a prominent and unique Thai film director, M.L Bhandevanov Devakula.

According to Lewis (2014), doing some research into the biography of the film's director might inform the studies of the films. Thus, this paper examines M.L Bhandevanov's as an auteur by close textual analysis to explore his style. In addition, the researcher interviewed him about his biography to consider how biographical experiences may shape his thoughts, philosophy and feelings that lead to his films. In combining textual and in-depth interview analysis, this paper contribute a very broad and detailed exploration of film studies and the Southeast Asia film directing style using auteur theory.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Auteur theory

Auteur theory has influenced film criticism since 1954, when it was advocated by film director and critic, François Truffaut. From the perspective of this theory, film auteur directors make films lively and express their thoughts and feelings in the films (Chaudhuri, 2013).

According to Sarris, there are three promises of film auteurs which are (1) technical - the value of the art-piece, and concentration and blend on every component of mise-en-scène; (2) personal style - an auteur is confident to show his characteristics as his signature, the aesthetics of visual presentation should be the demonstrations of a director's mind, feelings and thoughts, and (3) inner meaning - detailed in directing a film that is extrapolated from the tension between a director's personality and his material.

Moreover, Kolker (2006) explained the role of director in film production and control which has three attributes; (1) The technical skills of the film director will result in technical usage in the production of the films; (2) the directors will convey their own identity or uniqueness in the visual or the film narrative that recognizable style; (3) The film's philosophy, attitude or idea towards the world, which may be called "a world view" is the director's specific style.

2.2 How to read films

According to Lewis (2014), films are the consequence of cautious creative design, the outcome of choices of story structure, visual design, camerawork, and so on. Film analysis helps us to understand the meaning of the film. Besides noticing the single elements that construct the meaning of the film (such as discourse and representation), textual analysis also includes understanding how the film merges to the social, historical, and the cultural. Lewis (2014) suggests the way to read a film is by understanding the film's form (the elements of narrative, mise-en-scène, camerawork, sound, and editing), and text and context of the film (the director's reflection or the history that relate to the film).

2.3 M.L Bhandevanov Devakula

The selected Thai films in this study were directed by M.L Bhandevanov Devakula. M.L is the abbreviation for Mom Luang, a Thai royal title present in the priority level of Thai royal descendants. Mom Luang Bhandevanov Devakula or, as Thai people know him, Mom Noi (his nickname) was born in 1953. He started to direct films in 1984 and became a prominent Thai film director since then. He is an award winning director whose works are unique in terms of the film's form, which is his signature of work (Boonruangpanao, 2014).

After he stopped directing films in 1996, he made a comeback in 2010. The Eternity film marks his comeback (Ministry of Culture, 2011). From 2010-2013, there were four films directed by him, which are The Eternity, The Outrage, Jan Dara (the beginning), and Jan Dara (the finale). These four films won awards. The Outrage won the Thailand National Film Association Award for best visual effects, and the best costume design, and was also a nominee for the best supporting actor award in the 6th Asian Film Awards 2012 in Hong Kong. Moreover, The Eternity won five awards from the Thailand National Film Association for best picture, best actor, and best costume design. Furthermore, all four films bought the license to be sold on the international film market.

2.4 Synopsis of the films as samples of this study

The Eternity (2010)

In 1932, Yupadee was married to Papo, a rich man who is as old as her father. Later, she met Sang Mong, her husband's nephew, and they fall in love. After her husband found out, he caught them and tied them with handcuffs so they would be together forever. They had to stay alongside each other (because of the handcuffs). When Yupadee died, the young man still had to stay with her dead body. Finally, he lost his mind; however, it seems like his memory of the love was still with him until eternity.

The Outrage (2011)

Adapted from Rashomon by Akira Kurosawa, in the year 1567, the most brutal bandit was arrested for the murder of a warlord and the rape of the wife of the warlord. The testimony of

the bandits and the warlord's wife created confusion for the prince who was the judge and the people who came to listen to the judgment, because the bandit and warlord's wife admitted that they had killed the warlord. Moreover, the spirits of a warlord came back to tell the story via a spiritualist. He said that he had decided to commit suicide himself. A monk who participated in the judgment was in wonder that why everybody was telling different stories and wondered what was the truth.

Jan Dara the Beginning (2012)

The story of a tragic life story of "Jan Dara". His mother died while giving birth to him. Based on this, Jan Dara's father usually punishes him as if he is not his son. His father is licentious. Almost all females that live in Jan Dara's father's house are molested and turned into sex objects. The tragic life of Jan Dara involves people who have emotions of love, hate, and malice. In view of this miserable life, Jan Dara, who could not bear it any longer, decided to fight his father, which eventually led to his father sending him away from his house.

Jan Dara the Finale (2013)

The conclusion story of the revenge of the "Jan Dara", who was abused by his father for over 17 years. He returned to his home, tried to take revenge on his father by taking his power and treasure, and then started to act like his father. Jan Dara started molesting and violating women. Then, his father died, unable to bear Jan Dara attitude. This tragedy peaked when he impregnated his sister, who, at the end, gave birth to an autistic child. Finally, Jan Dara has to live alone until the end of his life.

3. Methodology

This study attempted to look at the style of M.L Bhandevanov Devakula in directing films as an auteur. For the purpose of this study, the researcher analyses four selected Thai films that are directed by Bhandevanov. In order to examine the films, this study engaged in close textual analysis to highlight Bhandevanov's signature within his body of work. However, as this paper discusses about four films, the directing style of Bhandevanov, which found in all four films, will be presented. In addition, an in-depth interview was conducted to understand his background, personality, and to highlight his views to explore biographical elements, which can help in the deep understanding of the film director's works.

4. Results

4.1 Bhandevanov Devakula's Background

From the in-depth interview, Bhandevanov grew up in a strict Thai royal descendant family. He said that even though he grew up in the time that Thailand had changed from a monarchy to a democracy, his family still was strict and taught him about family honor. He stated that the title Mom Luang (M.L) doesn't mean that he is more important than others, but he must be a role model for others. It can be seen that the honor of family led him to the idea of being a role model for his friends and society because he took the responsibility of his family's image. Bhandevanov also indicated about the conflict of culture in his family as it is high. He said his father graduated from a school in the United States of America and brought him up in American style. However, in the house there were many strict rules.

Bhandevanov developed his skill of telling stories from drawing on paper to directing the state show. When he was a university student, he took a directing course. A scene from *All My Sons*, a play by Arthur Miller, was chosen as his examination's musical project. The life as university student led him to know many people who inspired and taught him about art and films, and gave him chances to practice his skill of directing and reading classical novels.

Bhandevanov have done much work in directing films, T.V series, and stage plays. He was a rising star in the Thai film industry at that time. He worked as an assistant director of a Thai film when he was just 19 years old and worked as film director before he was 25 years old. He also does the scriptwriting and film screenplay himself. He has his own way of adapting the novel to the film. He mentioned that:

I choose only the novels which reflect society then I will read them until I understand well. After that, I will write the film screenplay according to the novel but in new narrative ways (Devakula, 2015).

In the view of directing film, the meaning of the scenes are important to Bhandevanov. He is very meticulous when creating films. He talked about *mise-en-scène* that:

Mise-en-scène is whatever you put into the frame and must have meaning or make sense...the meaning of the scene must be clear then you can create elements of films to

feel like that whether the camera moves, or lighting must have feeling inside (Devakula, 2015).

He added:

In the scenes of my films, all the clothes, makeup, hair, location, color, photos, and so on must deliver meaning. For example, why Yupadee (a main female character in *The Eternity*) hold a red umbrella or, why she always make-up. They were all presented the meaning of each scenes. For instance, the scene that Yupadee with make-up means she is fake. The selected location is the intricate landscape as the representative of the complicated human mind (Devakula, 2015).

Bhandevanov stated that he pays much attention in film production because, to him, film is an art. Thus, he uses all his money to make good productions. “The society does not know, no one knows because no one has ever done this. They do not believe that a person is working hard on this for the art,” he said.

Moreover, he is choosy in casting the actor or actress. Their personality must be similar to the characters in the novel, their acting skill, and teamwork skill are also considered. For the originality of the film, Bhandevanov said, “I never imitate anyone.” He was comparing his work with new generation film directors that they may copy the style from somewhere. “It is not for me; to me, all of my pictures are mine” said Bhandevanov. His aim of directing films is to present the Thai tradition and culture. Moreover, he wishes that the audiences may learn something about good or sin from the characters in the films.

At present, he enjoys teaching acting to professional actors and actresses and students from institutes. Also, he directs films if he likes the novel which the film production company offers him. Furthermore, he has been interesting in Buddhism study and meditation.

Figure1 is M.L Bhandevanov Devakula, when the researcher conducted an interview with him at Kantana Studio, Bangkok, Thailand in June, 2015. In the next section of this paper, the result from close textual analysis with the selected four films directed by Bhandevanov will be discussed.



Figure 1 M.L Bhandevanov Devakula, a film director

4.2 Auteur: The Perspective of Study the Films

The idea of ‘auteur’ is signatures and the personal vision of the film director that are present in his films. According to Prince (2013), by highlighting the uniformity and integrity of a director’s artistic vision, the auteur critic argues in favor of a unified body of work. Moreover, these film elements can even be tied to the director’s private life. Thus, it can be argued that the director is a true auteur (Prince, 2013). Moreover, according to Sarris (1970) and Kolker (2006), a film auteur must have three promises in his works: the technique to create art-piece, the unique style, and the philosophy or world view of film director is relation with the film. Therefore, this part presents Bhandevanov’s favorite way of directing films, which are films narrative styles, mise-en-scène, and camera placement. In addition, his personal vision, which may be embodied in his films, will be discussed.

4.2.1 The Narrative Style

Film is a narrative medium and every film has at least a few basic narrative structures(Kuhn & Schmidt Johann, 2014). The four films of Bhandevanov have the same style of film narrative, which use narrators to tell the stories, and flashback scenes in the story order.

4.2.1.1 Narration

A signature of Bhandevanov's films is using narrators to tell the story to the audience. A person who sets up the story and comments on the situations is a narrator (Lewis, 2014). In the four films of Bhandevanov, a first-person narrator and third-person narrator were adapted. He always sets a scene to introduce the narrators before they start telling the story; thus, the audience will understand exactly who is telling the stories.

For example, the narration of *The Outrage* is first-person narration. The stories are told by the bandit, the wife of the warlord, and the spirit of the warlord as they confess to the prince about the death of the warlord. Figure 2 shows scene 27 of *The Outrage*: the judgment court, which is decorated by local handicraft flags and has people coming to listen to the judgment. Shot 12 of the scene presents a bandit with ancient local folk dress and stained skin with incantation tattoos on his body, sitting down on the floor impolitely and speaking in a strong loud voice. This character is a narrator who tells the situation from his truth who was accused as a murderer of the warlord and raped his wife.

Scene 7, shot 1 (Figure 3) in *The Eternity* film presents Nipon and Tip who are the narrators of the film. However, this film has two techniques of narration. Nipon is the first-person narrator who communicates with the audiences, while Tip is the third-person narrator who tells the story to Nipon. The difference is the first-person narration is a commentary on the story by a character who used "I"; while the third-person narration is a commentary on the story by a character using "he," "she," or "they" (Lewis, 2014).



Figure 2 A shot presenting the bandit, one of narrators in *The Outrage* film.



Figure 3 A shot presenting two guys who are narrators of *The Eternity* film.

4.2.1.2 Flashback Scenes

The narrative of Bhandevanov's films always uses flashback scenes to recapitulate the past of the stories in the film. The flashback is used when the story refers to the past, assumed as a story-being-told, or a subjective memory. Sometimes intertitles will be used to mark a return to the past (Turim, 2013).

For instance, The Eternity films scene 16, shot 1 as presented when Tip is starting to tell the story about Sang Mong (Figure 4). This shot inserts an intertitle, a piece of text to indicate the time together with the flashback to bring the audience back to the time in which the story happened. Another example from Bhandevanov's films is from Jan Dara the Beginning film, scene 3, shot 1 (Figure 5). The scene is presented to the audience after Jan Dara started to tell his story. Jan Dara, who was the main character is also a first-person narrator of this film. The shot uses a flashback and intertitle to a specific time and place, which gives the image of Jan Dara's memory in Pijitwanich Mansion in the year 1915.



Figure 4: A flashback from The Eternity with intertitle to state the time.



Figure 5: A flashback from Jan Dara the Beginning with intertitle to state the time.

4.2.2 Mise-en-scène

The word *mise-en-scène* means everything that appears in the frame. According to Pramaggiore and Wallis (2011), *mise-en-scène* is the artful arrangement of everything that the audiences see. *Mise-en-scène* presents the stylistic signature and individuality of the film auteur (Fotiou, 2014). The element of the *mise-en-scène* refers to the setting, the makeup of the characters, lighting, and the position of the characters (Lewis, 2014). Thus, this part will discuss Bhandevanov's signature in his film's *mise-en-scène*.

4.2.2.1 The Setting

According to Pramaggiore and Wallis (2011), setting refers to the places in the film combined with functions of setting that determine the mood of the scene or entire film. In Bhandevanov's films, setting plays an important role in presenting a specific time and place. He sets the period pieces in films to create the places in the past. Some films, such as *Jan Dara the Finale* re-creates the real world from the past in scene 95 (Figure 6), and scene 45 in *The Outrage* uses the film's set to launch an imaginary ancient kingdom in the northern part of Thailand (Figure 7).



Figure 6: A scene presenting Bangkok's situation during World War II in 1941.



Figure 7: A scene presenting the warlord's palace in Pa Muang state, an imaginary state in the film.

Moreover, Bhandevanov has highly stylized and color tone sets to control the mood of the scenes. The red color is well known to symbolize passion or sexual desire; the film auteur links the color and its meaning present in the film (Han, 2015). In Bhandevanov's films, red, white, and black play important roles in forming the mood of the sexual scenes or the bad/good of the characters. Figure 6 shows the dark color which reflects the pressure, fright, and sadness of people in the situation of World War II.

Furthermore, Figure 8 (scene 46, shot 1) presents the bedroom of warlord in *The Outrage* film using red on props together with the bed in the sexual scene. Figure 9 from scene 102, shot 51 is set in the temple, showing a woman praying in front of a Buddha statue, using white to mean the peaceful mind of the character.



Figure 8: A shot that is set by using red color and props presents human desire in The Outrage

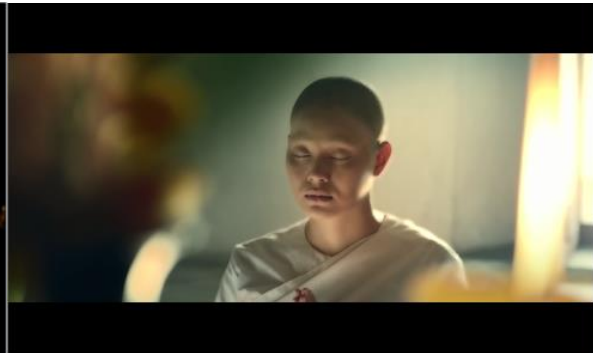


Figure 9: A set using religion props and location and white to present peaceful mind.

4.2.2.2 Costume, Makeup, and Hair

Mise-en-scène also includes how the characters look, which can present the characters' personality and even specify the time or place of the story in the films. Thus, "costume, makeup, and hair are important to the overall effect of an actor's performance" (Lewis, 2014, p.66). Bhandevanov neatly creates the look of the characters. Figure 10 shows a main character from The Outrage wearing Myanmar traditional dress with a Myanmar hair style. In this frame, all of the props are Myanmar architecture and luxury handicrafts as she married and stays with a rich Myanmar guy. The color of the scene is red, same as her heavy makeup, which reflects her confidence and ambition.

In contrast, Figure 11 shows the same actress playing a different character in The Outrage. In this film, her hairstyle is the traditional style of Lanna, an ancient kingdom in northern of Thailand, mixed with Myanmar traditional clothes. The costume presents the era of the film in which the Lanna kingdom was colonized by Ung Wa kingdom (Myanmar). Her face which has less makeup with a light tone of clothes and props show the innocence of the character.



Figure 10: shows the look of the female character in the Eternity film



Figure 11: shows the look of the female character in the Outrage film

4.2.2.3 Character Placement

Character placement is where the characters in the scene are blocked from presenting their status or importance in the scene. According to Pramaggiore and Wallis (2011), character placement and movement can produce artful compositions, offer the characters' stories, and underline the theme of the film. In Bhandevanov's films, the class and the power of the characters are highlighted via blocking them.

Figure 12 from *The Outrage*, scene 27, shot 4 presents the placement of the characters in the judgment court. The prince is sitting down on his judge's bench, decorated with gold and silver mosaics and traditional props, which indicate his social status. Having the vassals sit in a lower position, and with bodyguards surrounding him, presents his importance and power over people. This blocking can make the audience understand the power of the prince who can judge people in his kingdom. Whereas, Figure 13 from *The Eternity* (scene 81, shot 10) presents the scene that a rich and powerful Myanmar man is assaulting a Tai woman who is one of his concubines. He stands above her who has already sunk to the floor under his feet. This scene also ties the history of that time into it, which presents that Myanmar has power over Tai, a tribe in Myanmar.



Figure 12: The blocking from *The Outrage* shows the social class and power of the prince.



Figure 13: The position of characters show the powerful and power acceptance of the characters.

4.2.2.4 The lights and sound

The style of lighting is geared to the theme and mood of a film. The director uses lighting for psychological purposes (Giannetti, 2011). Bhandevanov uses the light to present the feeling of characters, and the meaning of the scene. Figure 14 is the scene from *The Eternity* (scene 8, shot 18) when a guy hears a loud groan from far at night. The night with under lighting (the light is below the subject) and the contrast between light and dark, which is called the *chiaroscuro* lighting style (Lewis, 2014), together with mystery music gives horrific, scary, mystery, and curious feelings.

Dissimilarly, Figure 15 from *The Outrage* (scene 82, shot 1) balances three-point lighting while fill light softens the shot, making the actor glow. Combined with the sound of the praying part, which means “and show how to be happy and peaceful”, a part from the homage of the Buddha, a Buddhist praying, the scene presents that the monk has already understood the truth of life and nature of humans.



Figure 14: The light, which gives a horrific effect.



Figure 15: The light, which shows the happiness of life understanding.

4.2.3 Camera Placement

The camera work has a major impact on the visual of the film (Prince, 2013). According to (Lewis, 2014), camera positions give the audience perspective on the scene and it depends on how the film director has chosen to show it to them. The four films of Bhandevanov have the same camera work which reflects his style of directing film. In this part, a discussion about using the camera to present the meaning of the scene in his films will be presented.

4.2.3.1 Shot and Angle

In every single film, Bhandevanov uses extreme long shot or the established shot for shooting the first scene to launch the place and the story of the films. For example, in Figure 16, the first scene of Jan Dara the Finale, an extreme long shot shows Jan Dara in old age to sit down alone beside the road. The meaning of this shot is that he is alone in space. Moreover, Figure 17 presents a first scene and first shot of The Eternity presents the layers of mountain, which introduce the audience to the place of the story, which is set in the deep forest, also the deep and complicated human's mind (Devakula, 2015).



Figure 4.16 An extreme long shot from Jan Dara the Finale.



Figure 4.17 An extreme long shot from the Eternity

In the four selected films, Bhandevanov usually uses eye-level shots to connect the audience and the characters in the films. However, he also uses some low angles and high angles to present the dominant and weak characters. Figure 4.18 and 4.19 shows the angle of scene 120 of The Eternity, at the time that Sang Mong, who has already become insane, runs to his uncle and says, “Uncle, don’t leave me” from his subconscious mind. Figure 4.18 shows the high angle where the camera is above a character. This angle makes him look weak and gives meaning to his submission under his uncle’s power. In contrast, Figure 4.19 uses a low angle camera to show the dominance and authority of the uncle.



Figure 4.18 A high camera angle that shows the weakness to the character



Figure 4.19 A low camera angle that gives authority to the character.

4.2.3.2 Off-Scene Space

Bhandevanov usually uses off-screen space, where the space of the scene does not show but the audience can understand that something important is happening. For example, in scene 75

of Jan Dara the Finale, shown in Figure 4.20, the audiences can see someone wearing a mask with a birch entry into the bedroom of a paralyzed old man and can, thus, understand that the guy has come for beating. Bhandevanov cuts the guy, and now in Figure 4.21, the paralyzed old man is in the off-screen space and the audience sees the guy with the mask as an old man does.



Figure 4.20 The offender enters the bedroom prepared to thrash.



Figure 4.21 The shot of an old man suggests arrival of the masked guy.

5. Discussion and Conclusion

This paper has discussed about M.L Bhandevanov Devakula as a film auteur. Using close textual analysis to explore his style, and an in-depth interview of him to explore how biographical experiences may shape his films, this study provides a broad and deep information on his works. In general, Thai films are comedy, ghost, and action films (Suksawat, 2013). However, the film authorship perspective lets us see the films directed by Bhandevanov are broader and deeper in scope as compared to other Thai films, especially in terms of the art of films and the full meaning in each scene.

According to Prince (2013), Alfred Hitchcock is a famous case study from an auteur perspective. The crime, guilt, sin stories and the visual elements such as the cross tracking shot, high-angle shots so common in his films. Additionally, Hitchcock's films are connected with his private life such as his relationship with his mother (Prince, 2013). Moreover, an auteur studies of Nikolaidis, a Greek film director found that his film is autobiographical and highly political, especially abide by antiauthoritarian ideology and American cinema (Fotiou, 2014).

However, this study found that, in the films' form, Bhandevanov always uses the first-person narration or third-person narration to tell stories to the audience, which can make them more engaged and understand the films. This study found that the mise-en-scène in Bhandevanov's films are artistic and neat. All the elements in the scenes, such as the place, props, color, sound, and light are present and give meaning concordantly in each scene.

His signature of camera placement is the extreme long shot to show beautiful landscapes with the full meaning related to the stories. However, he did not use many complicated camera techniques. Almost all of them are eye-level shots to make the audience like third persons in the story. The close-up shot is used on important things in the films, such as key props or to show the feelings of the characters.

In addition, he trains the actors and actresses who play in his film. Thus, he can control their acting. As Bhandevanov has high experience in directing stage plays, he teaches them how to act from their inner. For example, when the actress is angry, she does not need to scream but she can express it through her eyes, face, or voice. Thus, less camera techniques allow the actors/actress to explode their strong performance in acting in the same way as in stage plays (Jeffries, 2013). Moreover, his knowledge in choreography can be used in blocking the characters to make their body position more beautiful in scenes (Devakula, 2015).

In view of the films' contexts, Bhandevanov's films present the good and dark side of human beings and the rules of karma that relate to his concern about the morality of people. At the same time, his films foreshadow his political views. Three of the four films show the panic of characters in changing situations from the monarchy system to a democratic system in Thailand.

Moreover, as Bhandevanov is a screenplay writer for his films, it is free to tie his personality to the films. In the original novel of *The Eternity*, there are favorite books of the main characters that reflect her persona. He changes one of the books from "Khan Chang-Khan Phan", Thai local story, which appears in the original novel to "The Prophet" by Kahlil Gibran in the film. Likewise, in *The Outrage*, which is adapted from a Japanese novel, Bhandevanov also added the Buddha philosophy and Buddhism praying music in order to support the meaning of the

scenes. From the techniques, the unique style, and the world view of him is relation with the film. Therefore, the findings of this research suggest that M.L Bhandevanov Devakula is an auteur.

To conclude, the study is the first auteur study with a Thai film director by multi-method: the films' textual analysis and the in-depth interview of the film director. This study contributes to film studies with the research of a master level film director, who has a fascinating body of work that differs from the work of any other Thai film director, also add to the body of knowledge in Southeast Asia film studies by introducing a case that is significant in film auteur research.

Acknowledgment

This article is a result of a research which was funded by Universiti Utara Malaysia, Malaysia under the Postgraduate Research Grant Scheme (S/O Code: 15698).

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