

**Thai Classical Music for the  
*Phrommas* Episode  
in *Khon* Performance**

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## Abstract

The *Phrommas* is one of the best-known episodes from the Thai masked dance-drama called *khon*, whose narrative is adapted from the Indian epic, the Ramayana – in Thai tradition the Ramakian. The dramatic text and its music together form the *Phrommas* repertoire, arranged by Prince Narisaranuvatiwongse in 1899, which continues to be performed to the present day. This research considers the repertoire from three main perspectives: 1) its significance in relation to the theatre, 2) the musical characteristics of the individual pieces which constitute it, and 3) its current state within modern Bangkok.

The significance of the *Phrommas* repertoire is constructed through both internal and external factors. Internal significance is found mostly within conventional meanings that enable a tradition of using pieces of pre-existing music within the directionality of the *Phrommas* narrative, whereas external significance is manifest through three main aspects involving cultural association: 1) creation and function, 2) transformation and continuation, 3) interpretation and implication. The characteristics of the music reflect a wide range of refined musical techniques, which require complex inculturation in order to be understood. Direct expression is found in the delivery of the text and specific musical devices, whereas indirect theatrical meaning is reflected not only through a conventional musical implication, but also the individual interpretation of the musicians. The current state of the *Phrommas* repertoire in modern Bangkok largely depends on the patronage system associated with government and royal institutions, with these aspects contributing in turn to the structural issues of performance and transmission, which thereby bring about the continued relevance, popularity, and sustained future of the *Phrommas* repertoire in Thai society. The *Phrommas* repertoire thus emerges as a multi-expressive art form demonstrating a particular and revealing instance of how music is created, transmitted, used and survives within its culture.

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In addition, I would like to thank all the Thai music masters in Thailand who kindly provided me with valuable and useful information throughout my fieldwork in Bangkok, Thailand. Furthermore, I would like to thank my supervisor, Dr Daniel March, for his kind support, guidance and encouragement. Thanks are also due to my previous supervisor, Dr Neil Sorrell, for his initial advice and directional guidance in the early stages of my research, and to the University of York for giving me the opportunity to study for a PhD and to expand the knowledge of Thai music culture through this thesis. I would like to thank Dr David W Hughes, for numerous comments and suggestions, and in particular for his advice in the preparation of the prefaces.

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## **Declaration**

I declare that this thesis is a presentation of original work and I am the sole author. This work has not previously been presented for an award at this, or any other, University. All sources are acknowledged as References. This research has been approved by the Arts and Humanities Ethics Committee of the University of York.



Suchada Sowat

September 2018

## **Background information about the author**

I grew up in a family in which all members are Thai musicians. My parents, Ms Amporn and Mr Lumyong Sowat, were both professional musicians with expertise in different aspects of Thai classical music. My mother was a Thai classical vocalist whilst my father is a *khong wong yai* player; both of them were full-time Thai music teachers at The College of Dramatic Arts in Bangkok. I started learning Thai music by observing and participating in various events: as my parents had extra jobs, they travelled a lot around Bangkok and into the provinces to perform Thai music and they took me along with them to the many places at which they performed. Being exposed to the various genres of Thai musical performances enabled me to see, hear, explore, try, and learn Thai music through this informal training, and the *Phrommas* repertoire is one of the performances I experienced in my childhood.

I started singing at the age of 4 as a junior singer. I was trained by my mother and then played other Thai musical instruments at the junior cultural summer camp held annually by The College of Dramatic Arts. This provided me with a wide range of performance practices enabling me to play many different Thai musical instruments. At that time, I was playing Thai music purely as a hobby because I was being educated in the general school system, but I still had a chance to learn the *piphat* plus other musical instruments with my father at home.

I decided to devote myself to becoming a professional Thai musician when I was 16 years old by starting high school level at The College of Dramatic Arts in Bangkok where my parents worked. This College provides specialist training to students in Thai classical music and dance; I chose Thai classical singing as my major and learned to play other Thai musical instruments plus folk musical instruments as my minor subject. From there I continued on to university with the intention of becoming a Thai music teacher. I graduated from the Faculty of Education (BA and MA in Music Education), Chulalongkorn University in Bangkok. After finishing my master's degree, I started working as a Thai classical singing teacher and researcher at the Buditpatanasilpa Institute, Bangkok, Thailand (2009-2011). In 2012, I was given a great opportunity to study in the UK when I received a scholarship from HRH Princess Maha Chakri

Sirindhorn of Thailand to do a master's degree at SOAS, University of London (MMus Ethnomusicology). I then enrolled in 2014 at the University of York to continue my studies at PhD level.

Other members within my family are also Thai music masters, including both of my uncles, Mr Natthapong Sowat (expert in *ranat ek*) and Mr Boonchuay Sovat (expert in woodwind and other instruments). My family members have devoted themselves to Thai music and they are a group of masters I have done interviews with during my fieldwork in Bangkok, Thailand.

As a professional Thai musician and teacher, I have been hearing and teaching the *Phrommas* repertoire as a vocalist for many years, even hearing it when I was young. This encouraged me to explore why this musical repertoire is still being performed in modern-day Thai society. These combined experiences have inspired me to carry out research on Thai Classical Music for the *Phrommas* Episode in *khon* performance.

## Romanisation of the Thai language

To explain about how Thai alphabet can be romanised, first of all, thanks for Dr David W Hughes for helping in the preparation of these prefaces. Various scholars have used their own preferred romanisation of the Thai language. This can cause difficulties in recognising the same term in different publications, and also in understanding how a particular term is pronounced.

Swangviboonpong (2003: viii-xii) shows how six different authors, two of them Thai (including himself), have romanised 22 common musical terms. One term, for a three-string fiddle, has been romanised differently by all six authors (*saw sam sai*, *sau saam saaj*, *so-sam-sai* etc.)

In this thesis, for simplicity, I have chosen the romanisation system of The Royal Institute of Thailand (see <http://www.jdat.org/dentaljournal/sites/default/files/หลักเกณฑ์การถอดอักษรไทยเป็นอักษรโรมัน%20ฉบับราชบัณฑิตยสถาน.pdf>). For people who can read Thai, I have also inserted the Thai script of most Thai terms. The system used by The Royal Institute does, however, require some explanation for readers who are not familiar with Thai and thus will often be misled as to pronunciation. Some details:

- The letter *s* at the end of a word is pronounced like the English *t*. Thus Prince Naris's name is pronounced as if spelt Narit.

- An *h* following the consonants *p*, *t*, and *k* indicates a breathy sound after the consonant; without the *h*, those consonants will sound more like *b*, *d* and *g* to English native speakers. Thus the word *that* is not pronounced like the English word 'that', but like 'tat' (see below regarding vowels). A *ph* is not pronounced like an English *f* (as in 'phrase' or 'philosophy').

These two points mean that the genre *Phrommas*, the focus of this thesis, is not pronounced *frommas* but rather *prommat*. (The double *m* really is like two *m*'s, as in 'roommate'.)

Details of vowels are too complex to explain fully here; again, see Swangviboonpong 2003. But here are a few examples. Basically, the five vowels *a*, *e*, *i*, *o*, and *u* are close to Spanish pronunciation. But in English, most vowels have so-called 'long' and 'short' versions; thus in Standard English the vowel *u* is different in 'tub' and 'tube'. In The Royal Institute's system, *u* rhymes with 'tube' as in the words *khru* and *thum*. But *o* represents two very different sounds: *khong* rhymes with 'Kong' as in King Kong, but *khon* rhymes with 'cone'. And vowel diphthongs are confusing too: *oe* rhymes with the vowel in 'bird', *ae* with 'bat'. Further detail is beyond the scope of this thesis.

## **Thai speech tone and melody**

The Thai language – unlike English but similar to other languages such as Chinese – has speech tones: each syllable has a pitch contour that must be respected in speech. There are five speech tones: high, medium, low, falling, and rising. These tones have implications for most sung melodies as well.

There are ways to indicate these tones via diacritics (e.g. an acute accent to represent a high tone), but this is virtually never done in music studies. However, details can be found in Swangviboonpong 2003: 45-75, who draws on and re-examines Tanese 1988 and 1980. To give one example: if two notes of the same pitch occur in sequence in the core melody, and the first is sung to a medium-tone syllable and the second to a rising-tone syllable, then the second note will usually be approached with a slide from below.

The melodic impact of speech tones will not be examined in detail in the current thesis, though some brief further discussions will be included. Also, some of the vocal slides heard in the video examples are the result of such tonal sequences.



## **List of Thai monarchs and their reign dates**

This list only includes dynasties and monarchs cited in this thesis; full lists are easily found online. I have also added updated information about the current Kings of Thailand in the Thonburi and Rattanakosin era.

### **Thonburi Period (1768–82):**

King Taksin, r. 1768–82

### **Rattanakosin Period (1782-present):**

King Rama I (Phutthayotfachulalok), r. 1782–1809

King Rama II (Phutthaloetlanaphalai), r. 1809–24

King Rama III (Nangklaochaoyuhua), r. 1824–51

King Rama IV (Mongkut), r. 1851–68

King Rama V (Chulalongkorn), r. 1868–1910

King Rama VI (Vajiravudh), r. 1910–25

King Rama VII (Prajadhipok), r. 1925–35

King Rama VIII (Ananda Mahidol), r. 1935–46

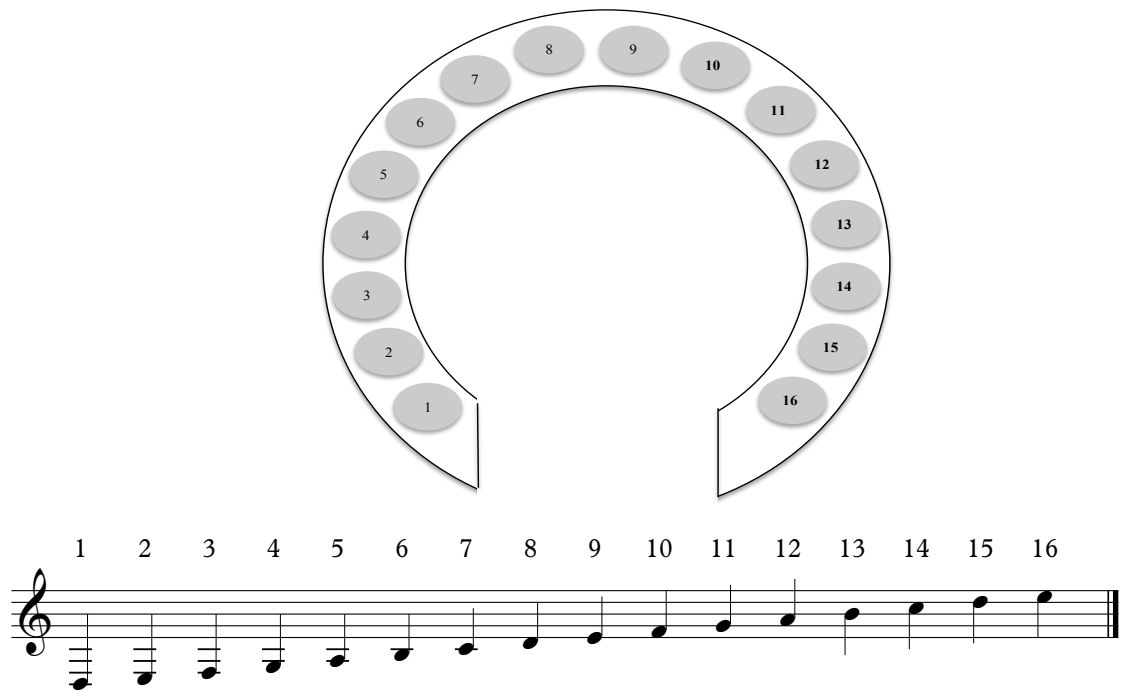
King Rama IX (Bhumibol Adulyadej), r. 1946–2016

King Rama X (Vajiralongkorn), r. 2016–present

## Notation policy

Western notation is used to represent the music within the musical analysis sections of this thesis. However, because of the tuning system used in Thai classical music, staff notation can only approximate to the actual pitches, and therefore is only a representation of the sound produced. As the *Phrommas* repertoire is played by the *piphat* ensemble, the music will be notated principally by the pitches located on the *khong wong yai* (Large gong circle) which plays a key role in providing the basic melody in Thai classical music.<sup>1</sup> The *khong wong yai* has sixteen gongs, which are represented in western staff notation as shown in Figure A below.

Figure A: The pitches on *khong wong yai* notated in the notation



<sup>1</sup> Somsak Ketukaenchan, *The Thang of The Khong wong yai and Ranat Ek: a Transcription and analysis of musical practice in Thai music*, Vol.II (York, 1989).

## Notation of specific musical instruments

### ***Taphon* (Double-headed drum)**

The *taphon* can produce twelve sounds from a combination of both heads of the drum. Each individual sound has a particular name to represent it. For the *Phrommas* repertoire there are seven main sounds used: *theng*, *tha*, *pa*, *ting*, *tup*, *phroeng*, and *phloeng*, produced by the right (R) and left (L) as well as both sides (B) of the drum. Figure B below shows how these are notated.

Figure B: Sounds of *taphon* located in the notation

|        | Tha (R) | Theng (R) | Ting (L) | Tup (L) | Pa (R) | Phrueng (B) | Phloeng (B) |
|--------|---------|-----------|----------|---------|--------|-------------|-------------|
|        | ถะ      | เพ็ง      | ตึง      | ตูป     | ปะ     | พริ้ง       | เพลิง       |
| Taphon |         |           |          |         |        |             |             |

### ***Klong that* (A pair of large barrel-shaped drums)**

*Klong that* is a pair of drums: male (high pitch) and female (low pitch) drums. Both are played along with the *taphon* to create a particular drum pattern. There two sounds made by the *klong that*: *tum* (high sound from mae drum) and *tom* (low sound from female drum), which are usually tuned a fourth or fifth apart. Figure C below shows how these are notated.

Figure C: The sounds of *klong that* in the notation

| <i>Tum</i> (Male drum) | <i>Tom</i> (Female drum) |
|------------------------|--------------------------|
| Klong That             |                          |

### ***Klong khaek* (a pair of two-headed drums)**

*Klong khaek* are a pair of two-headed drums used to accompany pieces which are not considered as belonging to *naphat*. There are two drums: *tua phu* (male), which provides the high pitches, and *tua mia* (female), which produces the lower pitches. Each *klong khaek* has two heads that provide different sounds: *klong khaek tua phu* (male) produces *ting* (ติง) (from the larger head) and *cho* (โช) (from the smaller head) while *klong khaek tua mia* (female) produces *tham* (ทัม) and *cha* (ชอ). Both *klong khaek* are always played together. Figure D shows how these sounds are notated.

Figure D: *klong khaek*'s sounds

Ting (M)          Cho (M)          Tham (F)          Cha (F)

Klong Khaek

M = Male drum, *tua phu* and F = Female drum, *tua mia*

### ***Ching*: ‘ching and chap’**

*Ching* (a pair of small cup cymbals) is one of the most important rhythmic musical instruments used in the *piphat*. *Ching* is notated as a plus and minus sign: minus for *ching* (undamped sound) for the soft beat and *chap* (damped sound) for the strong beat. The figure below illustrates how the *ching*'s sounds are represented within the notation.

Figure E: Example of the *ching*'s sounds in the notation

♩ = approx 80

Khong Wong Yai

Taphon

# Chapter 1

## Introduction

This chapter outlines the structure and the purpose of the research, starting with the relevant basic concepts in order to understand the broad field under investigation. A review of relevant background literature will be presented to indicate the significance of the research topic, before the method to be applied is introduced.

### 1.1 Basic concepts

Thai classical music remains a living tradition in current-day Thailand. Historically it was deeply associated with the court tradition, but now can be found in a number of different contexts throughout society. This music has a number of different functions: purely musical performance, music for accompanying ritual, and music for accompanying theatre. One of the most important functions is its use within theatrical traditions, and it is one particular theatrical and musical art form that forms the main topic of this thesis.

The *Phrommas* (พรหมมาศ) repertoire is one of the best-known bodies of music within the Thai classical music community; it has been performed continuously from 1899 to the present day. There are many complicated layers to be found in the relationship between music and theatre that are written into its history and development and many different social and cultural influences associated with its construction, development, and usage. For example, the *Phrommas* repertoire, as an ordered collection of individual pieces, was initially constructed based on a social demand to serve a particular court function in the context of a Southeast Asian colonial atmosphere which implicitly reflected the inspiration of the creator; whilst the *Phrommas* repertoire was initially arranged to form a musical selection, it was based on a theatrical theme expressed through the dramatic texts used as lyrics of the vocal pieces chosen (see more details about the *Phrommas* repertoire in Chapter 3).

Like many art forms found in Thailand, the *Phrommas* shows the influence of external cultural sources. India and China are the dominant cultures that have shaped many of the customs now found in Southeast Asia. Both countries have explored useful resources around them, travelling by sea and establishing trade routes that created not only economic collaboration, but also cultural influence. In addition, the people of Southeast Asia generated local practices based on an interaction with two dominant societies, China and India, a situation that helped form their culture through the movement of people and ideas across borders.<sup>2</sup> As Bernard Groslier comments, ‘In the north the Chinese system was directly imposed, preparing the ground for the future political development of the whole peninsula. In the south India casually dropped the seeds of the fairest flower of humanism ever to bloom in the land for which Malted Burn devised the felicitous name of Indochina.’<sup>3</sup> Both China and India thus influenced local culture throughout the countries in Southeast Asia, including Thailand.

In particular, the influence of Indian culture can be understood as the phenomenon of ‘Indianisation’, where Indian culture grew and had great influence on the belief-system of the rulers. In Milton Osborne’s discussion of the history of the culture of Southeast Asia, he emphasises the involvement of Brahmanism: ‘The Brahmins of the legends brought wisdom and advice to Southeast Asian rulers’.<sup>4</sup> In Thailand, these involved Brahmans who worked as counsellors within the court, and this process influenced and shaped both the way of life and normative belief within the culture. Osborne’s idea suggests that Indian culture – in particular Hinduism – has very much influenced the court tradition, which was the most significant cultural space which in turn induced other common cultural-local practices across society.

In this narrative, Brahmin tradition became the prominent doctrine, spreading through Southeast Asia through varied art forms such as literature, music and theatre. According to James Brandon, Indian culture was the prominent cultural influence for

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<sup>2</sup> Craig A. Lockard, *Southeast Asia in World History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 2.

<sup>3</sup> Bernard Philippe Groslier, *The Art of Indochina Including Thailand, Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia* (New York: Crown Publishers, 1962), 52.

<sup>4</sup> Milton Osborne, *Southeast Asia: An Introductory History* (Singapore: CMO Image Printing Enterprise, 2000), 22.

Southeast Asian theatre seen through the Indian epic, Ramayana, in which Brahmanism, the cult of Shiva worship, is paramount; it provided a religious basis of theatrical performance to be developed as dramatic materials.<sup>5</sup> The concept of God worship was blended into the epic to be used as a theme of the theatre. The Ramayana was also passed down through public recitation, and this process existed long before written and translated collections seen in a number of different languages such as old Javanese, Cambodian, and Malayan.<sup>6</sup> To illustrate its spread, the Ramayana has a number of different names, becoming Hikajat Seri Rama (in Malaysia), Serat Rama (in Java)<sup>7</sup>, Ramakerti (in Cambodia)<sup>8</sup>, and Ramakian (in Thailand).

Thailand is one amongst a number of countries in Southeast Asia that has been influenced by Indian culture, which has therefore shaped many of its customs and beliefs. It could be said that Thailand displays the way that two prominent Indian influences, Hindu tradition and Buddhist doctrine, have blended together. While Buddhism is more popular as a common belief-system within the broader population, Hinduism appears through the respect of gods, which affected the conceptions of hierarchy and kingship<sup>9</sup>. In other words, whilst the hierarchy of Hindu gods is used to construct an understanding of the status of the king, the concepts of virtue and moral behaviour from Buddhist belief are viewed as representing the ideal for the king. This concept can be also found in several art forms, in particular in the literature. One of the clearest examples of how Hindu tradition and Buddhist doctrine inspire art forms is the creation of the classic Thai epic, the Ramakian (รามเกียรติ์), which was influenced by the great Indian epic, 'Ramayana'. Whereas the theme of the Ramayana predominantly reinforces a Hindu conception of divinities, the Thai Ramakian incorporates an emphasis on the morals of the main actors based on Buddhism's core belief alongside the belief of gods within the status of actor and the story line.

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<sup>5</sup> James Brandon, *Theatre in Southeast Asia* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1967), 15.

<sup>6</sup> Brandon, *Theatre in Southeast Asia*, 22.

<sup>7</sup> J. Kats, "Ramayana in Indonesia," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental Studies*, 4, no.3 (1927): 579-585.

<sup>8</sup> Saveros Pou, "Indigenization of Ramayana in Cambodia," *Asian Folklore Studies*, 5, no.1 (1992): 89.

<sup>9</sup> Anthony Reid, *A History of Southeast Asia Critical Crossroads* (Malaysia: Vivar Printing Sdn Bhd, 2015), 36.

The Ramakian epic has a number of distinct episodes. This classic Ramakian was supplemented by the episodes written by King Rama I (r.1782-1809), King Rama II (r.1809-1824) and King Rama VI (r.1910-1925)<sup>10</sup>; they consist of various episodes such as Khap Phiphek (ขับพิเภก), Nang Loy (นางลอย), Chong Thanon (จองถนน), Nakhabat (นาคบาท), and Phrommas (พรหมาสูตร).<sup>11</sup> They were written in the form of ancient Thai verses. The story of the Ramakian had been composed as a form of dramatic text, which is one of the ancient Thai verse forms used as the theme of Thai classical theatre known as *khon* performance.<sup>12</sup> *Khon* is one of the Thai classical court dances in which there are four main types of characters, namely *phra* (พระ) (male), *nang* (นาง) (female), *yak* (ยักษ์) (demon) as well as *ling* (ลิง) (monkey). *Khon* has a musical accompaniment called *wong piphat* (วงปี่พาทย์) (the *piphat* ensemble)<sup>13</sup> which has a particular repertoire and performance practices to accompany *khon* performance (more details on *khon* and its origin can be found in Chapters 2 and 4).

One of the most famous episodes of the Ramakian epic is the *Phrommas*, which concerns the war between Phra Lak (พระลักษมณ์) and Inthorachit (อินทรชิต). The *Phrommas* dramatic text was first written by King Rama II (r.1809-1824) but it was not until 1899 that Prince Narisaranuvatiwongse or Prince Naris (1863-1947), one of King Rama V's brothers, revived the *Phrommas*; he rearranged the *Phrommas* dramatic text to be used as '*bot konsoet*' (บทคอนเสิร์ต), (the word *konsoet* was derived from the English word 'concert') a performance of a kind of musical selection based on the story of the *Phrommas* known as 'The *Phrommas* repertoire' (ดัดพรหมมาศ)<sup>14</sup> (more details about the *Phrommas* episode and the repertoire can be found in Chapter 3).

<sup>10</sup> Paula Richman, ed., *Many Ramayanas: The Diversity of a Narrative Tradition in South Asia* (Oxford: University of California Press, 1991), 57.

<sup>11</sup> Fine Arts Department, *Bot lakhon ruang Ramakian phraratchaniphonnai phra bat somdet phraphutthaloetlanaphalai lae bo koet* Ramakian *phraratchaniphon nai phrabat som det phra mongkutklao chaoyuhua chabap hosamut haeng chat* บทละครเรื่องรามเกียรติ์ พระราชนิพนธ์ ในพระบาทสมเด็จพระพุทธเลิศหล้านภาลัย และบ่อเกิดรามเกียรติ์ พระราชนิพนธ์ในพระบาทสมเด็จพระมงกุฎเกล้าเจ้าอยู่หัว ฉบับหอสมุดแห่งชาติ (Bangkok: Akson Borikan Press: 1956), 1-12.

<sup>12</sup> Singaravelu Sachithanatham, *The Ramayana Tradition in Southeast Asia* (Kuala Lumpur: University of Malaya Press, 2004), 142.

<sup>13</sup> Tramot, *Duriyangkhasatthai*, 24.

<sup>14</sup> Mattaniya Phongsuwan, "Proposed Guidelines for the Inheritance HRH Prince Narisaranuvatiwongse's



Prince Naris's work in relation to the *Phrommas* repertoire as *bot konsoet* established this new Thai classical performing art, where the *Phrommas* repertoire combines the dramatic text of Ramakian with a selection of musical pieces played in a specific order based on the story of the *Phrommas* dramatic text – this was considered as a creative form of Thai classical performing art at that time. The *Phrommas* repertoire was first used as a musical selection in the court reception (the reception taking place in court for royal guests) in 1899 or during King Rama V's reign (which was significant in bringing in influences from outside the country) and the *Phrommas* repertoire has been used as one of the court entertainments. The *Phrommas* repertoire was originally created as a musical repertoire, but it is nowadays performed along with *khon* dance in contemporary Bangkok - its current status is, therefore, intertwined with the existence of *khon* performance. However, apart from its use within these performances, the *Phrommas* repertoire also plays an important role in the education of Thai classical musicians, particularly through the conservatoires. Both these environments have benefitted from government and royal support for their preservation, transmission and performance of the repertoire. The government is mainly involved in education whereas royal support plays a key role in maintaining the status of *khon* and its music in contemporary Bangkok. There is a complicated relationship between the two sectors (government and royal support) associated with the existence of the *Phrommas* repertoire. A full discussion of the current existence of the *Phrommas* repertoire will be undertaken in Chapter 6.

The significant musical features of the *Phrommas* repertoire encompass not only a selection of musical pieces, but also the way that music expresses theatrical meaning based on the story of *Phrommas*. There are 31 pieces in the *Phrommas* repertoire including both vocal and non-vocal pieces, in which there are found a variety of different musical techniques, differing relationships between music and singing, and a complex relationship to the theatrical element of the performance (more details can be found in Chapter 5).

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Holistic Wisdom," (PhD Dissertation, Chulalongkorn University, 2010): 246.

All these aspects lead to the idea that the *Phrommas* repertoire is a ‘multi-expressive art form’: it is associated with a number of elements related to musical, theatrical, cultural and social factors, especially the *Phrommas* repertoire itself, which encompasses not only sophisticated musical elements and expression, but also the elaborated and specific representation associated with *khon* performance. In addition, the continuation of the *Phrommas* repertoire suggests that there should be a particular structure of existence related to other factors in Thai society, which is useful to understand how music is created, adapted, and continues to exist within a particular culture. The focus of my research is therefore to explore the interaction of these differing levels; this can not only provide greater understanding of Thai musical culture, but also express a number of elaborated and specific cultural perceptions to non-Thai people through a form of classical performing art.

## **1.2 A review of relevant background literatures**

There has already been limited research that provides a number of useful starting points in respect of both Thai classical music and the dance drama associated with *khon* performance. Those discussed below include information from both Thai and non-Thai writers on various aspects of the phenomenon, such as the appearance of *khon* and its musical accompaniment from early scholars' perspective, initial characteristics of *khon* music, initial knowledge about the play and the characters in *khon* performance, and the importance of the *khon* dramatic text as well as the way to approach and understand Thai music in order to analyse the musical characteristics of the *Phrommas* repertoire.

### 1.2.1 Previous works undertaken by Non-Thai writers

There is only limited discussion about *khon* and its music in the literature written by non-Thais. Historically, some non-Thai writers have explored traditional Thai performing arts. The earliest of these works dates back more than 300 years: Simon de La Loubère described the Siamese theatres including *khon* in 1687:

The Siamese have three sorts of Stage-Play. That which they call *Cone* is a figure-dance, to the Sound of the Violin, and some other Instruments. The dancers are masqued and armed, and represent rather a Combat than a dance: And 'tho' every one runs into high Motions, and extravagant posture, they cease not continually to intermix some word. Most of their Masks are hideous, and represent monsters, Beasts, or kinds of Devils'.<sup>15</sup>

Over 100 years ago, in 1912, Col. G[erolamo]. E[milio] Gerini described Siamese theatre, which included *khon* in this way:

The theatre where the *khon* and *lagor* are performed is anything but an elaborate building. It processes the beautiful simplicity of an ancient Greek theatre, only more simple still. Neither stage nor scenery is required, and very little stage furniture is used. The chief requirement is a clear space where the dances and actions can be performed adequately. A wide bench is provided at either end of the clear space to form a throne for the chief personages.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Simon de La Loubère, *A New Historical Relation of the Kingdom of Siam*. Translated by A.P. vols. (London: Oxford University Press, 1693): 49, quoted in Terry E. Miller and Jarernchai Chonpairot, *A History of Siamese Music Reconstructed from Western Documents, 1505-1932* (USA: Northern Illinois University Center of Southeast Asian Studies, 1995), 104-105.

<sup>16</sup> Gergini, Col. G[erolamo]. E[milio], *Siam and its Productions, Arts, and Manufactures*. (International

Both writers provided initial characterisations of *khon* as one of the Siamese theatres that comprised martial arts and theatrical characteristics and its musical accompaniment for a western audience. However, it was not until the 20<sup>th</sup> century that any subsequent studies of other aspects of Thai theatre and music appeared.

In James Brandon's 1967 study of various theatrical traditions in the Southeast Asian region, he investigated the different forms of theatres influenced by the great Indian epic, Ramayana, including *khon*. He describes the musical ensemble used to accompany *khon* performance as 'piphat ensemble', which includes six instruments: *khong wong* (a set of tuned bronze bowls arranged in a semicircle), *ranat* (wooden xylophone), *klong* (large tripod drum struck with a paddle stick), *taphon* (horizontal drum tapped on both ends with the fingers), *ching* (small bell-cymbals), and *pi* (double-reed oboe).<sup>17</sup> Brandon's discussion is a preliminary survey of the musical characteristics to understand the primary characteristics of Thai music for non-Thai musicians.

Another well-known study of Thai classical music written by David Morton in 1967 provides information about the musical ensembles which accompany Thai classical theatres, and he focuses particularly on *khon* (masked dance-drama) and *lakhon* (dance-drama). *Khon* music is mentioned in Morton's work because it relates to the *piphat* ensemble by which both *khon* and *lakhon* are accompanied. While the singing and dialogue are mainly used in *lakhon* together with playing of the band, in *khon* it is the instrumental part which plays the key role in largely performing the melodies.<sup>18</sup> Morton's work here involves the preliminary codifying of the existing practice of Thai music with the theatre.

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Exhibition of Industry and Labour, Turin, 1911): 85-86, quoted in Terry E. Miller and Jarernchai Chonpairot, *A History of Siamese Music Reconstructed from Western Documents, 1505-1932* (USA: Northern Illinois University Center of Southeast Asian Studies, 1995), 107-108.

<sup>17</sup> Brandon, *Theatre in Southeast Asia*, 128.

<sup>18</sup> David Morton, *Traditional Instrumental Music of Thailand* (USA: University of California, 1967), 184.

Terry Miller has also explored Siamese traditional music in various aspects, including Siamese music history and development, and the theory and practice of Thai musical notation. While Miller's work in 1984 draws upon the existence of Siamese musical instruments throughout history based on documents written by foreigners who arrived in Siam<sup>19</sup>, the same writer has written about the variety of notation types used in Thai music and its necessity in performance and teaching platforms as well as some discussion about traditional and contemporary ways of teaching and learning Thai music.<sup>20</sup> However, there is no mention of the Thai classical music used for *khon* performance in Miller's works.

Yoko Tanese-Ito wrote in 1988 about speech-tones and vocal melody in Thai court songs. Her work provides useful information about Thai classical singing associated with the different tones in the Thai language. She states that 'different song texts or the successive verses of a single song, can be sung to the same basic melody, which can be adapted to different sequences of speech tones.'<sup>21</sup> It could be argued that what Tanese found is one of the vocal principles of Thai classical singing associated with the way a Thai vocalist sings in the function of music for theatre, even though she has not actually mentioned anything about Thai classical singing for theatre.

In the same century, Pamela Myers who was inspired by Morton's work has shown that a deeper comprehension of Thai classical music can be achieved by learning Thai music from within Thai culture. Her work illustrates the comprehension of Thai music elements, especially, the Thai scale in relation to *khon* performance. She interviewed Thai musician Uthis Naaksawat who described the Thai pitch system as *bandaisiang* (บันไดเสียง) in which is '*thang phiang o laang* (ทางเพียงออล่าง), the lowest, is used in *duekdamban* theatre (ละครดึกดำบรรพ์), *piphat mai nuam* (ปี่พาทย์ไม้นวม) (the *piphat* ensemble using soft beaters to play on melodic percussion instruments) and in *lakhon*.

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<sup>19</sup> Terry E. Miller, "Reconstructing Siamese Musical History from Historical Sources", *Asian Music* Vol. 15, no.2 (1982): 32-42.

<sup>20</sup> Terry E. Miller, "The Theory and Practice of Thai Musical Notation", *Society For Ethnomusicology*, Vol. 36, no.2 (1992): 197-221.

<sup>21</sup> Yoko Tanese-Ito. "The relationship between speech-tones and vocal melody in Thai court song", *Musica Asiatica* 5, Richard Widdess (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988): 109.

The mode which is one step higher, *thang nai* (ทองใน), is associated with *khon* and *lakhon* and so forth'.<sup>22</sup> Myers's research provides further background information on the Thai musical pitch system associated with *khon* music, which is one of the resources to understand *khon* music.

In Francis Silkstone's work, 'Learning Thai classical music: memorisation and improvisation', the three main musical elements were discussed: basic melody, realisation, and the techniques of improvisation. He researched the processes of memorisation and improvisation in Thai music in which the concept of basic melody in Thai musical ensembles was mentioned: he states that '*thamnonglak* (ทำนองหลัก) literally means melody basis – it can be translated as basic melody. One meaning of *lak* (หลัก) is a pillar or pole. Musicians often draw on this image to describe the effect of an ensemble: the *khong* melody is the central pillar around which the melodies of other instruments wind like creepers'.<sup>23</sup> Even though Silkstone has studied the particular idiom of musical instruments to understand its style and melodic structure, the concept of basic melody can be related to the function of the musical ensemble, which is one of the crucial elements of music in the *Phrommas* repertoire.

In addition, the significance of *naphat* is discussed in the later work written by Deborah Wong in 2001. She wrote about the Thai music ritual '*wai khru*' (ไหว้ครู) in which *naphat* plays a key role in accompanying particular stages of the ritual. Essentially, she has shown the way in which *naphat* repertoire can function in contexts other than the theatrical; *naphat* is not only performed in the *wai khru* ritual as sacred pieces which regulate and represent particular processes of the ritual, but is also used as a musical accompaniment for different types of Thai theatres, including masked dance-drama (*khon* โขน), the great shadow theatre (*nang yai* หนังใหญ่), hand-puppet theatre (*hun krabok* หุ่นกระบอก), and working-class dance-drama (*like* ลิเก).<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Uthis Naakasawat, *Don Tri Thai* (Bangkok: Thanakhan Kasikaun Thai), quoted in Pamela Myers-Moro, *Thai Music and Musicians in Contemporary Bangkok* (Michigan: the Regents of the University of California, 1993): 85.

<sup>23</sup> Francis Silkstone, *Learning Thai Classical Music: Memorisation and Improvisation* (PhD Thesis, SOAS, University of London, 1993), 11.

<sup>24</sup> Deborah Wong, *Sounding the Center: History and aesthetics in Thai Buddhist Performance* (USA: The University of Chicago, 2001), 104.

However, there was one work that provided related information about Western influence within Thai classical music during the 18<sup>th</sup> century in relation to Prince Narisaranuvatiwongse (1863-1947) who arranged the *Phrommas* repertoire. David Hughes wrote an article in 1992 about two case studies of music (Thai and Javanese music which influenced each other's musical pieces). He stated that 'in 1929, though, a more significant musical event occurred. Upon the visit of King Prachaktipok (Rama VII) and his wife, a melody called *Ladrang Siyem* was composed; *Siyem* of course means Siam. This particular piece was indeed based on a Thai melody, one of the best known of all and a very appropriate choice for the occasion: *Sanrasoen Phra Barami*, "Song to Honour the King". It was composed for King Chulalongkorn in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century by Prince Narit Sara Nuwatdiwong'.<sup>25</sup> From Hughes's work, it can be seen that Prince Naris is the person who created a lot of pieces with Western-influence inspiration; the *Phrommas* repertoire as *bot konsoet* is one of his productions.

The majority of this work undertaken by non-Thai writers forms a useful background to the concerns of this thesis, as they introduce much of the preliminary discussion of Thai music, particularly for those unfamiliar with the repertoire. They are useful as codifications of written work about Thai classical music in English. However, a detailed discussion of Thai classical music associated with theatre is something that has not yet been undertaken.

### **1.2.2 Previous works undertaken by Thai writers**

This body of work includes documents written both in Thai and in English. As Thai classical music is basically transmitted through oral tradition, there are only a very limited number of documents written about the theory and practices of Thai classical music until we reach the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

This first group of literature written by Thai writers involves the musical elements of Thai classical music and its internal relationship between a single musical instrument and the ensemble as well as the structural elements of Thai music, which are

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<sup>25</sup> David W. Hughes, "Thai Music in Java, Javanese Music in Thailand: Two Case Studies," *British Journal of Ethnomusicology*, 1, (1992): 21.

the base components applied in other functions of Thai classical music, including Thai music for theatre. Within the function of Thai classical music for theatre, there are primary musical elements that need to be learnt in order to properly understand Thai classical music structure. One of the crucial ideas is the understanding of melodic structure in Thai music. According to Boonchuay Sovat, the basic melody works as the heart of Thai music because it plays a key role in constructing instrumental realisations or, specifically the particular idiomatic instrumental variation as well as the melody of singing.<sup>26</sup> The idea of the basic melody has been applied to all functions of Thai music, including music for theatre in which there are both vocal and instrumental parts that cooperate with each other in varied ways. The fundamental understanding of basic melody is therefore important in order to explore further complicated layers of Thai music for theatre.

There have also been some works which explored the initial elements of Thai music and attempted to codify them particularly in respect of the internal relationship between Thai musical instruments. One of those was conducted by Somsak Ketukaenchan, who investigated Thai music by analysing the concept of the *thang* (ท่วง) (an appropriate version of the basic melody) for two important Thai melodic instruments: *khong wong yai* and *ranat ek*. His work illustrated a crucial concept for understanding Thai music in which a number of instrumental parts performed by various instruments are developed from the ‘basic melody’ produced by the *khong wong yai* (ฆ้องวงใหญ่).<sup>27</sup> Similarly, Somsak Ketukaenchan has given the same idea as Boonchuay Sovat about the basic melody, which is executed in *khon* music as well because it is a fundamental ideological concept found in any type of Thai classical music function.

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<sup>26</sup> Boonchuay Sovat, “Analysis of Khaek Mon Bangkhunphrom Melody,” (Master Dissertation, Mahidol University, 1995), 1.

<sup>27</sup> Somsak Ketukaenchan, “The Thang of The Khong wong yai and *Ranat Ek*: a Transcription and analysis of musical practice in Thai music Vol.II,” (PhD Thesis, University of York, 1989), 3.



Furthermore, the significance of basic melody can be found in other previous work by Bussakorn Sumrongthong. Her work was about the melodic organisation seen through the concept of *thang* (ทาง) (the melodic variation within the Thai xylophone). It could be said that the basic melody played by the *khong wong yai* is the core of any composition because it can be developed to become the particular ‘realisations’ played by any instrument of the ensemble, as well as the vocal material, which is one of the important musical elements used for the function of music for theatre.<sup>28</sup> However, as my main research focus is to explore the way that the instrumental and vocal parts cooperate with each other to accompany *khon* and how they reflect theatrical meaning in the *Phrommas* repertoire, I will therefore apply the concept of basic melody to make the notation by presenting the basic melody (played by *khong wong yai*) as instrumental part along with vocal melodies sung in particular pieces.

In terms of Thai classical music associated with the theatre, there is some literature that mentions this point. One of the best-known books in the area of Thai classical theatre and related elements is *khon khong* Thanit Yupho (โขนของชนิด อยู่โพธิ์) [*khon* of Thanit Yupho]; it is a substantial source of knowledge on *khon* performance and its context, and provides a valuable insight into the elements of *khon*: the origin of *khon*, the categories of *khon* and the development of *khon* in a particular period of Thai history. Importantly, in Yupho’s book, there is a chapter written by Montri Tramot, who was invited to write a section about the musical accompaniment of *khon*.<sup>29</sup> This provides some useful information regarding the history of *khon* and its musical accompaniment, which I draw upon, particularly in Chapter 2.

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<sup>28</sup> Bussakorn Sumrongthong, “*Melodic organisation and improvisation in Thai music with special reference to the Thaang Ranaat Eek.*” PhD Thesis, University of York, 1997.

<sup>29</sup> Thanit Yupho, *Khon* (Bangkok: Khurusapha Print, 1983): 120. โขน เป็นมหรสพที่ได้รับการยกย่องว่าเป็นการแสดงที่ยิ่งใหญ่ มีศิลปะสูง เป็นศิลปะชั้นครูและเป็นการแสดงที่เก่าแก่ จะมีแสดงก็แต่ในงานมหกรรมใหญ่ ๆ เท่านั้น วงดนตรีที่ใช้ประกอบการแสดงโขน ได้แก่ วงดนตรีที่เรียกว่า ‘ปี่พาทย์’ (บางสมัยเรียกว่าพิณพาทย์) คือ วงดนตรีที่ประกอบด้วย ปี ระนาด ฉิ่ง กลอง ตะโพน ส่วนขนาดวงที่จัดเป็นเครื่องห้า เครื่องคู่ และเครื่องใหญ่นั้นก็เพิ่มเติมตามกาลสมัย และฐานะของผู้เป็นเจ้าของงาน

‘*khon*’ is a high form of traditional Thai theatre considered an elaborate, refined, as well as high-skilled craft. It has always been performed on important national occasions. The musical ensemble which accompanies the *khon* is called *piphat* (it was called *phinphat* in some historical periods) which includes *pi*, *ranat*, *khong*, and *taphon*. The size of the ensemble can be modified depending on the occasion and the status of the event organizer. The types of ensembles can include *khruang ha*, *khruang khu*, and *khruang yai*.

Montri Tramot, a Thai musician, teacher, composer and Thai National Artist (1900-1995), published a further book on the function of Thai music related to various forms of Thai traditional entertainments. *Som song saeng chee wit dontrithai Khong Montri Tramot* (โสมส่องแสง ชีวิตดนตรีไทยของมนตรี ตราโมท) was written in Thai and presents evidence of the musical ensemble used for *khon* performance. There are a number of Thai music features discussed there that are particularly useful in relation to *khon* music, such as *naphat* (หน้าพาทย์) (one of the categories of pieces used for *khon*) and *rap rong* (รับร้อง) (a method in which the instrumental part always proceeds the vocal part within the same song).<sup>30</sup> This book provides useful discussion of many elements of Thai classical music, which can then be related to the way that this music is used in theatre.

Moreover, Tramot categorises the types of music, which are appropriate to accompany particular types of *khon*. While *khon klang plaeng* (โขนกลางแปลง) (outdoor *khon* performance) uses only *naphat* repertoire with no vocal pieces, *khon na cho* (โขนหน้าจอ) and *khon rong nai* (โขนโรงใน) employ both *naphat* and vocal music to accompany *khon* performance. Therefore, the way in which particular types of music are used with a specific theatrical performance needs to be explored more deeply in order to understand their relationship.

The vocal elements within *khon* include not only singing but also narration, which is unique to this form of theatre. According to Thuam Prasitthikun (National Artist of Thailand, 1896-1991)<sup>31</sup> who has written about Thai classical singing, there was

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<sup>30</sup> Montri Tramot, *Som song saeng chi wit dontrithai khong Montri Tramot* (Bangkok: Ruean kaew kan pim, 1984), 101. ‘โขนโรงใน หรือ โขนหน้าจอ ซึ่งมีบทร้องแบบละครในเข้ามาผสมด้วย ก็จะต้องมีคนรับร้องตามเนื้อเรื่อง การบรรเลงปี่พาทย์ก็ต้องมีทั้งบรรเลงหน้าพาทย์ต่างๆ โดยพร้อมมูลแล้วจึงจะตั้งรู้จักทำทางการรำของตัวโขนด้วยเพราะว่าการบรรเลงปี่พาทย์ประกอบการแสดงโขนนั้นบางเพลงจะต้องเข้าผสมกลมกลืน อย่างสนิทสนม เช่น เวลารำกลอง หรือเล่นตะโพนในเพลงกราวนอกและกราวใน เป็นต้น’

‘*khon rong nai*’ or ‘*khon na cho*’ has a vocal part influenced by the characteristics of *lakhon*’s music. The way of playing music consists of *naphat* and *rap rong*. The musicians should be able to play a particular repertoire to accompany *khon* and understand the dance movement because when they play the music for *khon*, it is necessary to make the music suit the dance properly. For example, *rua klong* or *len taphon* in *Krao Nok* and *Krao Nai* songs’.

<sup>31</sup> Thuam Prasitthikun, *Lak kitan* (Bangkok, 1986), 265.

หลักการบรรเลงร้องกับโขนจะต้องใช้เพลงให้เหมาะสมกับบทเป็นสำคัญ ถ้าตัวที่ออกครั้งแรกเป็นพระราม พอเพลงวางจบ ดันเสียงร้องเพลงซัปดาห์เป็นเพลงแรก เพลงที่สองจะเป็นอะไรไม่บังคับ แต่ที่สำคัญผู้ร้องจะต้องใช้เพลงให้เหมาะสมกับบทเป็นสำคัญ เมื่อจบแล้วต้องร้องรื้อราว ถ้าไม่มีบทพิเศษก็จะใช้จรรยาและพาทย์เป็นส่วนใหญ่ การแสดงโขนจะต้องมีเพลงหน้าพาทย์ประกอบลักษณะของการแสดง

‘The rule when arranging the vocal piece into the *khon* repertoire should consider the suitability of the pieces associated with the story of the dramatic text. Traditionally, when finishing ‘*Phleng Wa*’ เพลงวา (the

information about the vocalisation of *khon* relating to the way that suitable vocal music was chosen to fit into the *khon* play and dramatic text. Prasitthikun's book outlined not only the discipline of making *khon* music traditionally, but also basic attributes of vocalisation found in *khon* music. These components are thereby helpful in order to explore the vocal characteristics of the *Phrommas* repertoire for this research.

Interestingly, the features of vocalisation used in *khon* performance were also discussed in the book *Thai Classical Singing: its History, Musical Characteristics, and Transmission* written by Dusadee Swangviboonpong (2003).<sup>32</sup> He has talked about the fundamental features of Thai vocalisation in which *Phak* (พากย์) or *kan phak* (การพากย์) (narration) was involved; '*kan phak khon* (การพากย์โขน) require a special kind of voice production which emphasises word pronunciation over other styles of vocalisation, through the use of harshness, volume and exaggeration' (Swangviboonpong, 2003: xix). This source in particular is valuable in increasing the understanding of vocalisation usage in *khon* performance, which is one of the musical characteristics of *khon* music in the *Phrommas* repertoire being studied in this research.

Muttani Rutnin (1996), has also conducted research on Thai theatre. Her work discusses the process of Westernisation embodied in various forms of Thai theatres in particular periods of Thai history. She has mentioned two types of traditional Thai dance drama in which *khon* and its musical accompaniment were described:

For the characters, the chorus and narrators, called *khon phak*, recite the narrative and dialogue in poetic rhyme with musical accompaniment. The orchestra called Piphat consists of one or two wooden xylophones (*ranat*), an oboe (*pi*), a double-

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ending tune of the theatrical overture performed as a prior piece for theatrical repertoire), the next piece that should be sung conventionally is '*Cha pi*' ซี่ปี่, and after that any *song chan* สองชั้น pieces could be sung appropriate to the character, then '*Rue Rai*' ร้อยราษ is often sung afterwards. Especially, in the *khon* performance, there will always mainly be '*Phak* and *Characha*' พากย์-เจรจา (narration) together with the '*napha*' to accompany the *khon*'.

<sup>32</sup> Dusadee Swangviboonpong, *Thai classical singing, Its History, Musical Characteristics, and Transformation* (London: Ashgate, 2003), xix.

faced drum (*taphon*), one or two circular sets of gongs (*khong wong*), a pair of small cymbals (*ching*), and two drums (*klong*). There are several dance tunes for special *naphat* actions such as army processions, fighting, flying, walking, sleeping, and manifesting supernatural power. They are respected by the dancers and musicians as sacred, and therefore are performed as rituals.<sup>33</sup>

Rutnin has explored the basic attributes of *khon* musical accompaniment, including the musical ensemble, the particular characteristics of vocalisation, as well as the piece's categories called *naphat* used in *khon* performance. This information can be a significant source for understanding more details about *khon* music.

Some of the works written by Thai writers have drawn upon both a general idea of musical instruments, ensembles, the pieces and deeper perspectives about Thai music used for theatre. They provide a clearer guideline to approaching a deeper level of Thai classical music used for *khon*; however, the deeper internal elements of music used for *khon* and its external elements as well as its context are often neglected. Within *khon* music we cannot deny that there are a number of theatrical components attached to the music used for theatre. According to Rutnin, there are four types of characters in Ramakian: (1) refined male humans or divine beings (*phra*, e.g., gods), (2) goddesses, princesses, or refined females (*nang*), (3) robust or vigorous demons (*yak*, e.g., *Thossakan*) and (4) monkeys (*ling*, e.g., Hanuman).<sup>34</sup> The characteristics of the different characters should be understood by the musicians and dancers who are involved in *khon* performance because they need to get some idea of the characters' personalities based on the story to properly relate to the way of playing music and singing associated with the *khon* dance. Rutnin's discussion is useful because she talks about theatrical context. I also draw upon her work in my discussion in Chapter 3.

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<sup>33</sup> Mattani Rutnin, *Dance, Drama, and Theatre in Thailand: The process of development and modernization* (Chiangmai: Silkworm Books, 1996), 8.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, 9.

In terms of the dramatic text of the *Phrommas* episode, there is some complication as there is more than one version. The original version of the dramatic text was composed by King Rama II but that version was only the text with no music, whereas the later version of the *Phrommas* dramatic text was rearranged by Prince Naris ; younger brother of King Chulalongkorn or King Rama V<sup>35</sup>, who adapted King Rama II's version and added the music into the dramatic text known as *bot konsoet* (บทคอนเสิต).<sup>36</sup> This created a completely new artistic genre 'the Thai musical concert' which was inspired by King Rama V's desire to make Thai classical music more equivalent to a Western concert.<sup>37</sup> The *Phrommas* dramatic text as *bot konsoet* by Prince Naris became well known as the *Phrommas* repertoire because it has been used as both a musical selection and music for theatre (there will be more details about the *Phrommas* dramatic text and repertoire in Chapter 3).

Prince Naris also introduced a method of creating new music forms for the Thai classical community. Rutnin argued that 'in the nineteenth century, *khon* adopted romantic scenes from *lakhon nai* (ละครใน) and lost many of its original martial characteristics. New songs and sung narratives in the *lakhon* style have been added to the *kham phak* scripts'.<sup>38</sup> Therefore, this makes the *Phrommas* repertoire, which is one of Prince Naris's works, interesting in terms of musical, theatrical as well as cultural context.

As we have seen, there is only a limited amount of literature that concerns itself with *khon* in terms of the music and the theatre at a deep level. Both non-Thai and Thai writers give different perspectives on Thai classical music but none of them provide complete information of the function of music related to theatre in both music and its

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<sup>35</sup> King Chulalongkorn or King Rama V (r.1868-1910) was the fifth monarch of the royal house of Chakri in the Rattanakosin era of Thailand (1782-present).

<sup>36</sup> Duangchit Chitraphong, HRH Prince Narisaranuvatiwongse received the royal-honour name of Sangkhit Wathit Withi Wichan on the celebration of 100 years of Khamen Sai Yok song. (Bangkok: PA Living, 1988): 76, as quoted in Mattaniya Phongsuwan, "Proposed Guidelines for the Inheritance HRH Prince Narisaranuvatiwongse's Holistic Wisdom," (PhD Dissertation, Chulalongkorn University, 2010): 246.

<sup>37</sup> M.R. Chakrabort Chitrabongs, *Selected Articles by M.R. Chakrabort Chitrabongs* (Bangkok: Kurusapha Press, 2004), 21.

<sup>38</sup> Rutnin, *Dance, Drama, and Theatre in Thailand: The process of development and modernization*, 9.

context. One of the factors that brings about the limitation of the written works is the process of oral transmission, which is the principal method of learning Thai classical music: the knowledge resides with the people who are trained and involved in *khon* musical performance. This study of music in the *Phrommas* repertoire is important in order to record the sophisticated knowledge of Thai classical music for theatre, as well as filling the gap in knowledge of the broader function of Thai classical music within the culture. The study of the *Phrommas* repertoire's context also increases the understanding of Thai musical culture associated with social, cultural, and political perspectives in the Thai historical periods in which the *Phrommas* repertoire features.

### **1.3 Methodology**

As this research directly involves a particular genre of Thai classical music related to the theatre, the thesis considers not only the musical characteristics of the *Phrommas* repertoire, but also the context of the music as well. This section sets out the approach undertaken here.

#### **1.3.1 Research field**

This thesis will explore the *Phrommas* repertoire from musical, theatrical, cultural and social aspects in order to understand the way in which music is used, how it functions, and how it continues to exist in current-day Bangkok. The *Phrommas* repertoire will be explored as the central subject and will be studied from a number of perspectives, including its history, repertoire, development, transformation and current existence.

#### **1.3.2 Research questions**

The focuses of the research are: 1) the significance of the *Phrommas* repertoire in relation to the theatre, 2) the musical characteristics of the individual pieces within the *Phrommas* repertoire, and 3) the current state of the *Phrommas* repertoire in modern Bangkok.

To clarify the boundary of these focuses: 1) the significance of the individual pieces of music in the *Phrommas* repertoire will cover the use, purpose, and meaning of specific pieces from the *Phrommas* repertoire related to theatrical usage, 2) the musical characteristics of vocal and instrumental parts associated with the theatre will cover the structure of the piece, its application in the theatre, and musical expression of the piece through particular musical features, and 3) the current state of the *Phrommas* repertoire in contemporary Bangkok will be examined by looking at the structure of the existence, performance, and transmission of the *Phrommas* repertoire in modern Bangkok.

### 1.3.3 Method

This research is based on interviews, observation, participation, and musical analysis along with the study of existing documentation and literature. An important part of this is based on an approach in which sense of history is also important in order to study music in terms of understanding its cultural, social, and political influence through its origin, development, transformation, and current existence. Importantly, the approach of Jeff Todd Titon which mentions ‘the new fieldwork’ is also applied; this method emphasises human relationships rather than the raw collection of information; however, ‘musical sound and structure is documented as a form of musical experience and it is so analysed and interpreted as part of the matrix of meaning.’<sup>39</sup> Western notation is used to transcribe the musical characteristics of both vocal and instrumental parts. However, as the Thai pitch system is different to the Western system, the pitches appearing in the notation are based on the Thai pitch system specific to the *khong wong yai* (large gong circle). This transcription forms an important part of the chapter of musical analysis (Chapter 5); the notation policy can be found at the beginning of the thesis.

The fieldwork was undertaken in Bangkok, Thailand between 30 November 2015 and 31 January 2016 and involved interviews with a selected group of specialists, including senior masters of Thai classical music and dance as well as other relevant groups in Bangkok, Thailand: members of current audiences for *khon* performance and

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<sup>39</sup> Jeff Todd Titon, “Knowing Fieldwork” in *Shadows in the Field: New Perspectives for Fieldwork in Ethnomusicology*. Gregory Barz and Timothy J. Cooley, ed., (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 30.

Thai music teachers who are involved in the transmission of the *Phrommas* repertoire. The observation was undertaken by attending the Royal Khon performance involving the *Phrommas* episode on 4 December 2015 at the Thailand Cultural Centre, Bangkok and other *khon* performances taking place during the fieldwork period.

### 1.3.4 Situating myself in the research

The study of music has been developed, adapted, and applied according to the cycle of changes globally. Ethnomusicology became one of the ways in which to understand not only music itself but also its tradition and culture where music is created, used, and transmitted. Music has been studied alongside these cultural questions by looking at it in its cultural context, in culture, and as culture; the difference among these three levels of relationship are blurred. However, Bruno Nettl tried to illustrate them by thinking about their difference in emphasis. Firstly, the study of ‘music and its cultural context’ mainly focuses on the music itself and other contexts; it would show the production, performance, and experience of music. Secondly, the study of ‘music in culture’ intends to imply the aspect of culture as a holistic view descriptively assigning to music an inseparable role. Lastly, the study of ‘music as culture’ would embrace a theory of the nature of culture and applies it to music.<sup>40</sup>

The current research tries to integrate those three perspectives; all three angles are applied within the focus of the research. Whilst the music of the *Phrommas* repertoire is initially analysed based on its specific ‘musical’ domain, the cultural concepts that influence the characteristic of musical practices is then to be found within music. In terms of the integration of musical and theatrical meaning of music within the *Phrommas* repertoire, the way that music expresses a kind of meaning embraces the idea of cultural influence. Furthermore, the history, development, transformation, and existence of the *Phrommas* repertoire are all associated with other social and cultural contexts of music. To understand music, it is necessary to comprehend its context to understand that music appropriately.

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<sup>40</sup> Bruno Nettl, *The Study of Ethnomusicology: Thirty-one Issues and Concepts* (USA: University of Illinois Press 1983), 217.



In terms of the study of Thai music, there have been a number of western scholars who have chosen to study Thai music ever since David Morton went to Thailand in 1976 to explore Thai music with the assistance of Thanit Yupho who helped him to describe the fundamental features of Thai music; Morton's work was the first study in English of Thai music from an outsider's perspective. In 1993, Silkstone focused on internal musical elements of a particular Thai musical instrument by analysing Thai fiddle musical practice. Similarly, Myers and Wong have chosen the study of Thai music and its people in different perspectives, including both musicians' lives and the ritual usage of Thai music. These people participated in Thai culture to learn about Thai music and its cultural context and explain it by using their non-Thai background. This challenges me to use my own native experience to explore, study, understand and explain Thai music to other people outside the Thai cultural background.

There is some relevance as to how I am involved inside the research field. I was born into a family of Thai musicians and started learning Thai music and singing when I was about 4 years old. I have embraced Thai classical music through both the educational system and informal learning with my parents (Ms Amphon and Mr Lumyong Sowat) and continued learning Thai music as a professional musician and teacher afterwards. In addition, I have not only devoted myself to being a Thai classical singer and teacher, but also have been involved through teaching musical instruments.<sup>41</sup> This has provided me with the understanding of instrumental practices because I can integrate vocal and instrumental knowledge in order to understand the interaction between vocal and instrumental parts as well as the association with the theatre of the *Phrommas* repertoire. My experience as an insider enables me to properly convey the significance, meaning, and musical characteristics of the particular pieces in the *Phrommas* repertoire associated with the theatre along with socio-cultural perspectives.

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<sup>41</sup> Further details about Suchada Sowat's Thai music background can be found in <https://www.sowat.studio/>

Importantly, my MA dissertation was about Thai classical singing for traditional Thai theatres: *Lakhon Nai* (ละครใน) (inside court dance-drama) and *Lakhon Nok* (ละครนอก) (outside court dance-drama)<sup>42</sup>, which motivates my interest in Thai classical music for theatres and this increases my curiosity about the relationship between vocal and instrumental parts, the concept and the practical function of music with the theatre. Therefore, I decided to conduct research on Thai classical music for the *Phrommas* episode in *khon* (Thai masked dance-drama) in order to explore the musical characteristics and relationship between music and theatre as well as its context.

### 1.3.5 Thesis Structure

Having introduced the basic concepts, review of literature, and the structure of the research within Chapter 1 (Introduction), Chapter 2 (History) explores the origin of *khon* and its musical accompaniment as well as the use of music for particular types of *khon* performance, and Chapter 3 (The genesis of the *Phrommas* repertoire) narrows the focus to explore the history, development and music making of the *Phrommas* repertoire, and to discuss how it was developed, used and adapted along with changeable cultural and social contexts. The next pair of chapters explore the repertoire in more detail: Chapter 4 (Musical elements) encompasses a number of relevant musical elements, including related elements of Thai classical music and the elements of music associated with the theatre in order to understand musical characteristics within Chapter 5 (Musical analysis) which presents the analytical framework and the analysis of individual pieces of music within the *Phrommas* repertoire. Chapter 6 (*khon* music and the *Phrommas* in modern Bangkok) will portray the structural elements, current situation, and discussion about the continuation and the popularity of the *Phrommas* repertoire in modern Bangkok. Finally, Chapter 7 presents some conclusions alongside indications for further discussion beyond future research.

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<sup>42</sup> Suchada Sowat, “Thai classical singing for Thai classical dance-drama today: The characteristics, transmission and existence of *Lakhon Nai* and *Lakhon Nok* singing,” (master dissertation, SOAS, University of London, 2014), 7.

## Chapter 2

### History

Within *khon*, dance and music are inseparable from each other when it comes to actual performance practice. This research focuses particularly on the musical aspect of the art-form, but it remains essential to also explore the relevant theatrical context. The study of music from a historical perspective forms one of the important ways to understand its context; this involves not only looking at music itself but also exploring its usage and how it has been located within its particular culture and society through history.

Alan Merriam argued that ‘the study of music contributes in a number of ways to reconstruction of culture history. In certain ways it is corroborative, that is, its own history contributes to the knowledge of history in general, and both music sound and music instruments can be handled through techniques of historic documentation and archaeological investigation,’<sup>43</sup> and thereby suggests how the study of music is inseparably related to the historical development of a particular society. Similarly, having reviewed the different approaches of a number of ethnomusicologists, Nettl concludes that, despite this variation, ‘for understanding music, the significance of its relationship to the rest of culture is paramount’.<sup>44</sup> Timothy Rice also argued that ‘historical construction comprises two important processes: the process of change with the passage of time and the process of reencountering and recreating the forms and legacy of the past in each moment of the present’.<sup>45</sup> Moreover, Ruth M. Stone has also summarised how historical ethnomusicology has made a number of important contributions to the field: ‘1) historical treatment provides an expanded context in which to understand present-day performance, 2) written historical documents help corroborate oral accounts and texture ethnographic accounts, and 3) ethnomusicological inquiry that emphasises history brings historical methods to bear on topics that might

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<sup>43</sup> Merriam, *The Anthropology of Music*, 301.

<sup>44</sup> Nettl, *The Study of Ethnomusicology: Thirty-one Issues and Concepts*, 215.

<sup>45</sup> Timothy Rice, “Toward the Remodeling of Ethnomusicology”, *Ethnomusicology* 31, no.3 (1987): 474.

otherwise be excluded from the purview of the ethnomusicologist'.<sup>46</sup> These writers all suggest that the way to study music and its context is somehow associated with the historical aspects of both music itself and the more general narrative of a particular society, and thus, in this chapter the development of *khon*, and how the music associated with *khon* performance has appeared in different historical periods will be a primary focus. This chapter will discuss the journey of the theatrical tradition of *khon* together with its musical accompaniment.

The discussion draws extensively on three principal sources, in both Thai and English. While the historical narratives from Thanit Yupho and Montri Tramot regarding *khon* and its music are still central texts (written in Thai) on which any current-day understanding of *khon* is based, Mattani Rutnin has developed this narrative as a part of the development and modernisation of the broader context of Siamese theatres (written in English). Alongside the drawing together of these sources, this chapter will reinforce the knowledge through interview material from Thai classical music and dance masters gained from a period of fieldwork. Structurally, this material is presented chronologically as it is the clearest way of presenting the way in which the status of *khon* and its music has developed within specific Thai historical periods. Additionally, the discussion finally considers the different types of ensemble used for *khon* and its performance in order to give an overview of the variety of contexts involved.

## 2.1 The origin of *khon*

When Thai people talk about *khon*, they are referring to the form of Thai traditional theatre in which dancers are masked and wear traditional costumes that are imitations of the royal-court style. In his discussion of the evolution of *khon*, Yupho explains the way in which *khon* came into being through the influence of the following art-forms: *chaknak duekdamban* (ชัคนาคคีติคดาบรราช) (an ancient court-ritual entertainment for the coronation ceremony), *krabi krabong* (กระบี่กระบอง) (a traditional Thai martial art), and

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<sup>46</sup> Ruth M. Stone, *Theory for Ethnomusicology* (USA: Routledge, 2008), 186.

*nang yai* (หนังใหญ่) (the large shadow play).<sup>47</sup> These various types of art forms have each played a significant role in the construction of different features of *khon*, including the characters, story, dance movement and music. This section considers how these art forms influence the holistic construction of *khon* as a performing art. The way in which it is made up of several different types of *khon* will be discussed in section 2.3.

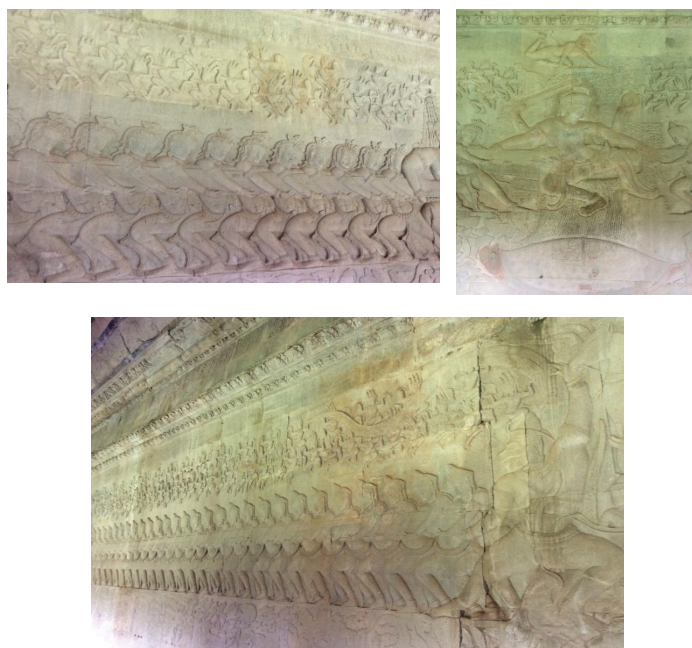
### 2.1.1 ‘*Chaknak duekdamban*’ (ชกนาคคึกค้ำบรรพ์) into *khon*

As we have already seen, Indian cultural expansion throughout the Southeast Asian region was a significant factor in shaping different types of Thai artistic formations. One of the obvious cultural reflections of this tradition can be seen in the adoption of aspects of Hindu tradition in which the worship of gods is dominant. A number of deities such as Siva, Vishnu, and Indra became the inspiration for creating religious rituals. Evidence for this comes from a rock engraving at Angkor Wat, a well-known archaeological monument located in Cambodia, from the Khmer empire. An enormous image is found engraved into the rock wall, which describes the ancient Hindu myth, ‘*kuan nam ammarit* (กวนน้ำอมฤต)’ (stirring the sacred water); this legend is involved in the belief of Hindu gods: Indra and Narayana (see Figure 2.1). The existence of this image indicates a powerful belief in the worship of these gods during the early 12<sup>th</sup> century within the Khmer empire.

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<sup>47</sup> Thanit Yupho, *Khon Khong Thanit Yupho* (Bangkok: Khuru sapha Press, 1983), 21.

Figure 2.1 *Kuan nam ammarit* engraved into the rock wall at Angkor Wat.<sup>48</sup>



The image shows the story of *kuan nam ammarit* (stirring the sacred water for eternal life); the angels are standing at the right hand side of the image in Figure 2.1, whereas the demons are at the other end; they are holding the body of Naga (the great magical serpent), which is bound around Mount Meru (the sacred mountain in Hindu tradition) to stir the sacred water from the ocean. In the legend, angels and demons have long been at war, but they finally cooperate in order to make sacred water (*nam ammarit*), to achieve eternal life. In the ritual, the god Vishnu or the god Narayana oversees the ritual, both to monitor the process of making sacred water and to ensure peace. The purpose of this rock image is to honour the virtue of god Vishnu or Narayana, one of the great gods of Hindu traditions.

There was an ancient Siamese court ritual similar to this *kuan nam ammarit* ritual, which was also directly influenced by belief in Hindu gods called ‘Indraphisek’ (อินทราภิเษก) (literally the celebration for honouring the god Indra.<sup>49</sup> The word *phisek* พิเษก means celebrating or making auspicious). Interestingly, as Buddhism has been the influential religion in Siam, and Indra is a god worshipped in Buddhism, this ceremony

<sup>48</sup> Noppakhun Sutprasoet, “kuan nam amarit,” (photograph, Cambodia, 2015).

<sup>49</sup> Yupho, *Khon Khong Thanit Yupho*, 20.

shows an integration between these two religious beliefs, Hinduism and Buddhism, within the Ayutthaya period (1351 - 1767). The ritual itself was used for celebrating the coronation of the King within this era; within the ritual, the god Indra is considered as the King of Angels, which then became a representation of the King.<sup>50</sup>

Within the Indraphisek ceremony, there was a martial ritual called *chaknak duekdamban* (ชักนาคดึกดำบรรพ์). The word *chak* (ชัก) literally means pulling or spinning, *nak* (นาค) refers to a mythical serpent, and *duekdamban* (ดึกดำบรรพ์) refers to being of great age. In the story within the *chaknak duekdamban* performance, military officers and civil officials are dressed and masked as demons (*yak*), monkeys (*ling*), and gods (*thewada*).<sup>51</sup> The story of *chaknak duekdamban* is about *thewada* (เทวดา) (an angel) and *asura* (อสูรา) (demon) who want to make the sacred water (*nam ammarit*) give them eternal life, and this process of making sacred water requires the cooperation of angels and demons to stir the ocean. *Khao phra sumeru* (เขาพระสุเมรุ) (sacred mountain) is used as the centre around which the *nak* or *naka* is bound in order to spin the mountain in the ocean to create the sacred water. It could be said that the theme of *chaknak duekdamban* performance is somewhat similar to the *kuan nam ammarit* ritual depicted at Angkor Wat.

It could be argued that *chaknak duekdamban* has influenced *khon* in terms of the various characters involved. According to Yupho<sup>52</sup>, the story of *chaknak duekdamban* was drawn from an ancient Hindu myth in which there are a number of characters similar to those found in the Ramakian, which forms the primary narrative of *khon* performance. While *chaknak duekdamban* comprises a *yak* (demon), *ling* (monkey) and *thewada* (gods), *khon* includes *phra* (male human), *nang* (female human), *yak* (demon),

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<sup>50</sup> Suchit Wongthet, *Suchit wongthet: khao phra sumen nai inthraphisek sanyalak phra chakkaphatdirat* [Suchit Wongthet: Mountain Meru in Indraphisek, the symbol of the kingship] สัจจิตต์ วงษ์เทศ: เขาพระสุเมรุในอินทราภิเษก สัญลักษณ์พระจักรพรรดิราชา. Matichonsutsapda, Oct 26, 2012, accessed Dec 13, 2017. <http://www.sujitwongthes.com/2012/10/weekly26102555/>

<sup>51</sup> Rutnin, *Dance, Drama, and Theatre in Thailand: The process of development and modernization*, 6.

<sup>52</sup> Yupho, *Khon Khong Thanit Yupho*, 23.

and *ling* (monkey) (see Figure 2.2), which suggest that both the characters and their costumes are influenced by *chaknak duekdamban*.<sup>53</sup>

Figure 2.2 Different *khon* characters and costumes: *phra* (male), *nang* (female), *yak* (demon) and *ling* (monkey) in the story of Ramakian.



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### 2.1.2 *Krabi krabong* (กระบี่-กระบอง) within *khon*

One of the features of *khon*, which is different to other forms of traditional court dance-drama, is the acrobatic fighting movements (see Figure 2.4). As *khon* was firstly performed within the royal court, most performers were military officers, which might explain the integration between masculine and elaborated dance styles within *khon* performance. While *khon* performers might be familiar with acrobatic practice from their activities as soldiers, they need to be trained in refinement through a clear structure in order to perform *khon* as a royal court performance. In *khon* performance practice, great strength of body is required because *khon* dance movements include a number of quite acrobatic actions. It has been found that *khon* has brought some movements from *krabi krabong* (sword play), one of the traditional Thai martial arts (see Figure 2.3).<sup>55</sup>

<sup>53</sup> Yupho, *Khon Khong Thanit Yupho*, 23.

<sup>54</sup> Saisawankhayanying, “The Royal Khon Performance: Nang Loy”, Jul 19, 2010, accessed Nov 17, 2016. <http://www.saisawankhayanying.com/s-featured/khon-nangloi/>

<sup>55</sup> Yupho, *Khon Khong Thanit Yupho*, 23.



In the *Krabi-Krabong*, the performers need to use not only martial arts actions but also refined dance figures in the introduction of the performance.

Figure 2.3 The *Krabi krabong* with acrobatic movements



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<sup>56</sup> Office of Performing Arts, Fine Arts Department, 'Krabi krabong', accessed Jan 23, 2018. <http://www.finearts.go.th/performing/home-page-beez5/2013-05-17-04-22-32/2013-05-17-04-24-24.html>

Figure 2.4 *Khon* dance movements within a fight scene



### 2.1.3 *Nang yai* (หนังใหญ่) within *khon* music

*Nang yai* (literally large shadow play) is one of the ancient Thai entertainments (see Figure 2.6), similar to many other shadow puppetry traditions found throughout Southeast Asia, which commonly combine music with theatre. As the best-known of these, *Wayang Kulit* (Javanese shadow play) as shown in Figure 2.5 has a musical accompaniment from the Gamelan ensemble. Similarly, a *piphat* ensemble is employed along with *Nang Yai*. Interestingly, the theatrical elements of performing the shadow plays are different based on particular indigenous traditions. Whereas a *Dhalang* plays a key role at the centre of *Wayang Kulit*, and acts as puppeteer, singer, narrator and director of the performance all at the same time,<sup>58</sup> *nang yai* involves both a group of puppeteers, *khon choet* (คนเชิด), who manipulate large leather puppets and also a narrator who performs in a unique style of narration (*Phak* พากย์ and *Cheracha* เจริจา).

<sup>57</sup> Saisawankhayanying, “The Royal Khon Performance”, Jul 19, 2010, accessed Nov 17, 2016. <http://www.saisawankhayanying.com/s-featured/khon-nangloi/>

<sup>58</sup> Edward C. Van Ness and Shita Prawirohardjo, *Javanese Wayang Kulit: An Introduction* (Singapore: Oxford University Press, 1953), 43.

Figure 2.5 *Wayang Kulit* (Javanese shadow play)



Figure 2.6 *Nang yai* (Thai large shadow play)



The flat figures used as puppets in *nang yai* display different characters based on the story of Ramakian. The word *nang* (หนัง) refers to the carved leather (mostly from buffalo skin), which is held and placed against the translucent screen to create the shadow. In order to control the puppets on the screen, puppeteers are required to move their body along with the movement of the *nang*. The narration is considered as a crucial element used with *nang yai*, and the unique style of narration is called *Phak* and *Cheracha* (see Figure 2.7), which is a kind of ancient Thai vocalisation. Part of the evidence to suggest what *khon* received from the *nang yai*, is *kam phak* (คำพากย์) (the verses used as words for narration). According to Prince Dhaninivat (1885-1974), ‘the book of the *Khon* before the screen was just the identical *kam phak* of the shadow-

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<sup>59</sup>IndoIndians. “Wayang Kulit in Indonesia –Light and Shadow”. May 10, 2010, accessed March 17, 2016. <https://www.indoindians.com/history-of-wayang-in-indonesia/>

<sup>60</sup>MThaitravel. “Nang Yai Wat Kha-non”, Oct 6, 2014 accessed March 17, 2016. <https://travel.mthai.com/blog/97649.html>

play in use before the composition of the Ramakian of 1798 by King Rama I'.<sup>61</sup> This suggests that *khon* incorporates the influence of *nang yai* through its use of narration. There are various types of *Phak* and *Cheracha* based on the lyrics taken from the traditional Thai verse (see more details about traditional Thai verse in Chapter 4, and *Phak* and *Cheracha* in Chapter 5).

Another important element of *nang yai* is the musical accompaniment using the *Piphat* ensemble (see Figure 2.7), which includes a number of melodic and rhythmic percussion instruments such as the *ranat ek* (high pitch xylophone), *khong wong yai* (large gong circle), *taphon* (double-headed drum), and *ching* (a pair of small cup cymbals); all musical instruments are also used to accompany *khon* performance. Moreover, there is a group of pieces particularly used in *nang yai* known as *naphat* to represent certain actions of the performers, including *Choet* (เชิด) (to represent the action of walking, fighting etc.), *Rua* (รูด) (to represent the action of showing supernatural power), and *Ot* (โอด) (to represent the feeling of sorrow). This group of *naphat* pieces is considered as a high-level piece within the Thai classical music tradition and they are largely used to accompany the *khon* performance (see more details in Chapter 4). It is believed that the use of *naphat* pieces in *khon* performance is influenced by its use within *nang yai* <sup>62</sup>, so the influence of *nang yai* extends not only to the vocalisation, but also to the pieces used for the musical accompaniment.

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<sup>61</sup> Prince Dhaninivat, "The Shadow-play as a possible origin of the masked-play," in *The Siamese Theatre Collection of reprints from journals of Siam society*, ed. Mattani Rutnin (Bangkok: Sompong Press, 1975), 118.

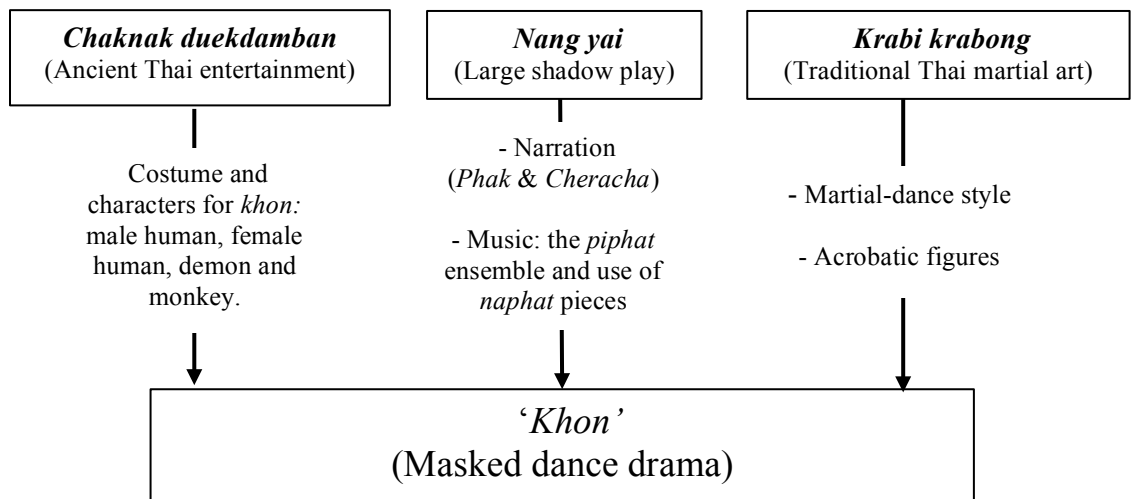
<sup>62</sup> Theeraphat Thongnim, *Khon*, (Bangkok: O.S. Printing, 2012), 12.

Figure 2.7 Vocalist performing *Phak* and *Cheracha* (left); the *piphat* ensemble (right)



Thus, we can see the way in which *khon* was developed from the integration of a number of different ancient entertainments: while the *khon* costumes and characters are derived from *chaknak duekdamban*, the acrobatic dance figures are inspired by the combat style of *Krabi krabong*, and musically, the accompaniment and the narration employed in *nang yai* have become a substantial source for *khon* (these are summarised in Figure 2.8).

Figure 2.8 The origin of *khon*



<sup>63</sup> Thapanat Thamthiang, “*Khon Rong*,” (photograph, Bangkok, 2017).

## 2.2 Development through Thai historical periods

The development of *khon* and its music has always been engaged with political, social and cultural influences, which have shaped the existence and characteristics of *khon* in different ways within different periods. Knowing the history of *khon* along with the history of the culture in which it is located is important in order to understand the holistic concept of the development. This section will provide a brief overview of *khon* and its music by looking at not only the artistic aspect but also the relevant contexts within a number of Thai historical periods.

### 2.2.1 Sukhothai period (1240 - 1438)

The Sukhothai era is considered the first historical era of Thai history. According to Kasem Udyanin and Kasem Suwanagul, the most important Sukhothai concept was that of a paternal king who was the father of his people.<sup>64</sup> One of the manifestations that reflect this perspective is in the way that the king was addressed. The word ‘*pho khun*’ (พ่อขุน), which literally means the great father, was officially used to name the kings of Sukhothai such as Pho Khun Sri Indharathit (พ่อขุนศรีอินทราทิตย์) and Pho Khun Ram Khamhaeng (พ่อขุนรามคำแหง). Moreover, according to a stone inscription believed to be constructed by King Ram Khamhaeng (1237 - 1298) and found by King Mongkut or King Rama IV (r. 1851-1868), when people had problems, they could ring the bell held at the front door of the palace to ask for justice from King Ram khamhaeng, who would investigate and dispense a reasoned judgment.<sup>65</sup> The relationship between the ruling class and common people was fairly close and this formed the basis of social and cultural activities in the Sukhothai era.

As the role of the Sukhothai kings was represented as being like a father figure, there were no strict rules on court traditions stated in the stone inscription of Sukhothai. Furthermore, the words *khon*, *lakhon*, or *nang* were not mentioned and the existence of the royal dance troupe or royal orchestra had not been stated in the stone inscription

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<sup>64</sup> Kasem Udyanin and Kasem Suwanagul, “Development of Thai Administration,” Kyoto University Research Information Repository, Kyoto University (1965) 3(3): 108-116, 12, 1965, accessed Jan 31, 2018, <https://repository.kulib.kyoto-u.ac.jp/dspace/bitstream/2433/55107/1/KJ00000132834.pdf>

<sup>65</sup> David Wyatt, *Thailand: A Short History* (New Heaven: Yale University Press, 2003), 42-43.

until the reign of King Lithai (1354 - 76). Rutnin suggests that ‘the Siamese court had not yet developed its own royal dance troupe and all entertainment was performed and improvised by the people’.<sup>66</sup> Musically, according to Tramot, there were ancient musical instruments before the Ayutthaya period, including a *phin nam tao* (พิณน้ำเต้า) (single-stringed harp), *so sam sai* (ซอสามสาย) (three-stringed fiddle), and *ban do* (บัณเฑาะว์) (two-faced drum).<sup>67</sup> However, there was no mention of music in relation to dance during the Sukhothai period.

It can be argued that the Ramayana had already reached the people in the Sukhothai era: the obvious evidence is found in the name of the kings, in particular King Ram Khamhaeng, as the word Ram (ราม) refers to Rama (ราม) (a form of Vishnu from Hindu tradition and the hero of the Ramayana epic).<sup>68</sup> This could reflect a sense of Hindu influence within royal custom and the representation of the belief in gods through the name of the king: the leader of the kingdom ruling peacefully under the father-king role. However, this does not of course prove the existence of *khon* and its music during this period.

However, although there is no evidence to clearly indicate the existence of *khon* performance during the Sukhothai era, there was a mention of Thai musical instruments in the stone inscription of King Ramkhamhaeng. However, all these musical developments mentioned do not directly translate into the musical ensemble for the *khon* performance.

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<sup>66</sup> Rutnin, *Dance, Drama, and Theatre in Thailand: The process of development and modernization*, 27.

<sup>67</sup> Tramot, *Duriyangkhasatthai*, 10.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid., *Dance, Drama, and Theatre in Thailand The process of development and modernization*, 27.

### 2.2.2 Ayutthaya (1351 - 1767) and Thonburi (1767 - 1782) periods

After the end of the Sukhothai period, the Kingdom of Ayutthaya adopted numerous traditions and customs from the earlier state. The government system of Ayutthaya still had a monarchy and the King was still important, as he was in Sukhothai. However, a prominent difference between the two Kingdoms was in the broader role that the King fulfilled. While he was considered as a father-king in Sukhothai, in Ayutthaya his status was much more as a god-king, based on the ‘*thewa racha*’ (เทวราชา) system influenced by Indian tradition.<sup>69</sup> This political system characterised the administration of Ayutthaya as well as other social and cultural activities.

Unfortunately, the wars within Ayutthaya and the external conflicts with neighbouring countries means that a significant part of the cultural heritage and much historical evidence has been lost. However, there is still a chronicle, *phongsawadan* (พงศาวดาร) in which *khon* was written about as one of the court performances during the Ayutthaya period. It might be assumed that *khon* was fairly popular as a kind of court entertainment based on the Ramakian epic representing the influential Ramayana through a number of Ayutthaya’s customs.

As the concept of god-king became a fundamental part of Ayutthaya’s bureaucracy it caused an obvious separation between court and common customs. Elaborate traditions were formed in order to serve court functions, and court cultures including those of entertainment were established. Both Yupho and Rutnin believe that *khon* became fully formed in Ayutthaya<sup>70</sup>, developed from *chaknak duekdamban*, as discussed above.<sup>71</sup> Moreover, *khon* was considered as a high-level court entertainment particularly to serve the royal command during the Ayutthaya period, and most of the actors were court officers. Yupho suggests that the royal *khon* troupe has been taken as one of the king’s ‘adornments’ in Ayutthaya, in order to express the king’s glory, and

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<sup>69</sup> Kasem Udyanin and Kasem Suwanagul, “Development of Thai Administration,”: 109.

<sup>70</sup> Yupho, *Khon Khong Thanit Yupho*, 21.

<sup>71</sup> Rutnin, *Dance, Drama, and Theatre in Thailand The process of development and modernization*, 46



this could suggest that the status of *khon* and its music during the Ayutthaya period flourished as a royal entertainment.

Furthermore, Ayutthaya also established contact with a number of foreign countries such as Portugal, Holland, China, India and France in order to increase trade and broaden international relations, especially in the reign of King Narai (r. 1656-1688). His diplomatic strategies had been useful for later historical studies in terms of not only studying the diplomatic aspect but also exploring the characteristics of Ayutthaya's arts. There was evidence from a non-Thai record, namely La Loubère (1693), the diplomat who brought a mission from King Louis XIV of France. He described the features of Ayutthaya's court entertainments which he encountered during the court reception, stating that 'the Siamese have three sorts of Stage-Play. That which they call *cone* is a figure-dance, to the Sound of the Violin, and some other Instruments. The dancers are masqued and armed, and represent rather a Combat than a dance'.<sup>72</sup> Interestingly, the musical instruments which accompanies the *cone* or *khon* had the sound of a fiddle, which is different to the use of musical instruments in current *khon* music.

In addition, according to Tramot, a well-known Thai music master, there were some Thai musical instruments and ensembles constructed and used within court functions during this time. These were (1) *wong khap mai* (วงขับไม้) – an ensemble consisting of three musicians: 1) a singer who also played *krap* (กรับ), a small hand-clapper, 2) a fiddle player who played *so sam sai* (ซอสามสาย), a three-stringed fiddle, and 3) a drummer who played *thap* (ทับ), a single-face drum - and (2) *wong banleng phin* (วงบรรเลงพิณ) - an ensemble which included only one musician who sang whilst playing an ancient harp called *kra chap pi* (กระจำปี่).<sup>73</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> La Loubère [Simon] de, *A New Historical Relation of the Kingdom of Siam*. Translated by A.P. vols. (London: Oxford University Press, 1693): 49, quoted in Terry E. Miller and Jarernchai Chonpairot, *A History of Siamese Music Reconstructed from Western Documents, 1505-1932* (USA: Northern Illinois University Center of Southeast Asian Studies, 1995), 104-105.

<sup>73</sup> Tramot, *Duriyangkhasatthai*, 10.

After the fall of Ayutthaya, Thonburi became the new capital of Siam. It was established by King Taksin (r. 1767-1782), who tried to gather the Siamese people and re-form the country after the terrible disaster of war. As the war impacted the sustainability of the Kingdom, one of King Taksin's strategies was to reconstruct the court arts derived from Ayutthaya. He refurbished court dance dramas, including both *lakhon* and *khon*. This phenomenon might have facilitated the continuity of *khon* and its music as well. According to Rutnin, '*lakhon luang* (ละครหลวง) and *khon luang* (โขนหลวง), royal *lakhon* and *khon* institutions, were therefore indispensable royal prerogatives, which would support his status equalling that of the great Ayutthaya Kings in times of peace'.<sup>74</sup> It appears that *khon* and its music were reconstructed and treated carefully in order to serve the reconstruction of court tradition during this period.

### 2.2.3 Early Rattanakosin period (1782 - 1910)

After the end of the Thonburi era, King Rama I or Phraphuttayodfa Chulalok the Great (r. 1782-1809) decided to move the capital of Siam to the other side of the Chaopraya river in present day Bangkok. It could be said that there have been diverse social, political, and cultural situations which have taken place during the Rattanakosin period and these factors have affected the state of *khon* and its musical accompaniment. The development of *khon* can be divided into three eras respectively: 1) *khon* in the early Rattanakosin period, 2) *khon* in the King Rama VI period, and 3) *khon* after the Siamese revolution. Each period involves a particular development of *khon* determined by factors that have sometimes supported and sometimes discouraged its existence.<sup>75</sup>

Although the establishment of the Rattanakosin kingdom resulted in the reconstruction of Siamese territory, there were still wars between Siam and its neighbours. King Rama I tried to gather together many lands around Siam to unite as a single powerful territory and to adopt many of the state's customs. This led to a reconstruction of the political administration and court tradition of Rattanakosin. The ideal system of Ayutthaya became the model of Rattanakosin's administration,

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<sup>74</sup> Rutnin, *Dance, Drama, and Theatre in Thailand The process of development and modernization*, 27.

<sup>75</sup> Yupho, *Khon Khong Thanit Yupho*, 73.

as King Rama I recreated and gathered the country together to symbolise the authority of the King and civilisation of Siam with court traditions derived from Ayutthaya together with the establishment of a new dynasty, Chakri<sup>76</sup>; one of his efforts was to reconstruct the court tradition, including the court entertainments, which had flourished in the Ayutthaya period. His heritage to the Thai nation, the Royal Grand Palace in Bangkok, embraced the holistic sense of arts and knowledge; and the construction of the Royal Grand Palace was the centre of Rattanakosin's knowledge and crafts in relation to theatre, literature, and music. The mural painted at the Royal Grand Palace described the Ramakian epic, and it was one of the symbols of the establishment of the kingdom and of its founder (see Figure 2.9). Surat Jongda has also given further information in relation to this aspect; he stated that 'King Rama I, Phraphutthayotfachulalok, the current mural has seen many changes and much renovation, but the theme of the Ramakian still remains'.<sup>77</sup>

Figure 2.9 The *Phrommas* episode within the mural at the Royal Grand Palace, Bangkok



The construction of the Royal Grand Palace is not the only manifestation of the stability of the Rattanakosin period: various forms of court performing arts were refurbished as tools to implicitly communicate the power of the Kingdom, and there was a general encouragement of court entertainments. King Rama I supported all types

<sup>76</sup> Rutnin, *Dance, Drama, and Theatre in Thailand The process of development and modernization*, 52.

<sup>77</sup> Surat Jongda, interviewed by Suchada Sowat, Jan 29, 2016.

<sup>78</sup> 'The *Phommas* episode within the mural at the Royal Grand Palace', Bangkok 15 Dec 2015.'

of *mahorasop* (มหหรสพ) (royal entertainments) derived from Ayutthaya, including *khon*, *nang* (shadow play), *lakhon* (dance drama), and *hun* (puppetry).<sup>79</sup> His command to encourage courtiers to practise all types of *mahorasop* or royal entertainments inside the royal palace clearly facilitated the continuity of *khon* and its music.

The relevant phenomenon is the continuations of the Ramakian dramatic text that were composed by different kings in a number of different periods. While King Rama I was the substantial author for the Ramakian dramatic text during his reign, his son King Rama II, Phutthaloetlanaphalai (r. 1809-1824) continued his father's intention to rearrange a 'great' version of the Ramakian dramatic text. King Rama II paid much attention to reinforcing Siamese art and literature especially in the use of dramatic texts, and the Ramakian text was one of his most famous works; as a result, King Rama II's period was known as 'the golden age of dance drama and literature'.<sup>80</sup> As both King Rama I and King Rama II acted as great supporters of court arts, *khon* as one of the royal court performing arts therefore became popular among the courtiers and royal family, and there were a number of royal *khon* troupes formed not only by the King but also other members of the royal family, further increasing the popularity of *khon* and its music.<sup>81</sup>

After the reign of King Rama II, Phutthaloetlanaphalai, Siam was faced with global change thanks to the arrival of Western powers through colonialism. At the beginning of the reign of King Rama III (r. 1824-1851), Southeast Asia became the destination of Westerners and Siam was faced with this force. The British appointed captain Henry Burney as an emissary to make a deal with Siam in 1825, which was about the international relationship between the Kingdom of Siam and Great Britain as well as trade agreements between the two nations.<sup>82</sup> As the British had won control of Burma, this might have affected the decision of Siam to consider the British position,

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<sup>79</sup> Rutnin, *Dance, Drama, and Theatre in Thailand The process of development and modernization*, 54.

<sup>80</sup> Yupho, *Khon Khong Thanit Yupho*, 92.

<sup>81</sup> Yupho, *Khon Khong Thanit Yupho*, 57.

<sup>82</sup> Matichon online, "Clarifying Burney and Bowling Treaty", Jun 17, 2016, accessed Feb 13, 2018. <https://www.matichon.co.th/news/177775>

and the first treaty, the ‘Burney treaty’ was signed by two parties in 1826.<sup>83</sup> Even though this convention had some positives in maintaining national security and increasing commercial channels of international trade, Siam was disadvantaged in such matters as taxation (more details can be found in Wyatt’s book). Because of the external political threats, the leader of the Kingdom did not pay much attention to the performing arts and other entertainments; private troupes patronised by the royal court and members of the royal family and noblemen were discontinued.<sup>84</sup>

After the reign of King Rama III, Nangklaochaoyuhua the expansion of colonialism continued; King Rama IV (r. 1851-1868), Mongkut, therefore tended to express the civilisation of Siam.<sup>85</sup> The arts were one of the important parts of this process. Westerners, some of them royal guests, were arriving in Siam and court entertainments became important in order to impress these visitors. King Rama IV decided to re-establish royal court theatres permanently, and royal *khon* and *lakhon* were performed in the court receptions. Reconstructing court entertainments did not only manifest the power of court and the King but also expressed Siamese civilisation to Western eyes politically.

King Rama V or King Chulalongkorn (r. 1868-1910) continued his father’s intention to develop the country amongst the serious colonial forces from the West. Although Siam was the only country which was not colonised by the West, it unavoidably lost some territories to the British and French in order to retain its broader security. Socially, this forced Siam to adapt and change its internal administration in order to survive.

Western royal guests continued to visit the King, which increased the use of court entertainments, with royal *khon* and *lakhon* often used. These, however, developed in their own way. While *lakhon nai* (inside court dance drama) involved much refinement of dance figures along with a wide range of vocal pieces, *khon* had

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<sup>83</sup> Wyatt, *Thailand: A Short History*, 153.

<sup>84</sup> Rutnin, *Dance, Drama, and Theatre in Thailand The process of development and modernization*, 54.

<sup>85</sup> More details about this history can be found in Wyatt, *Thailand: A Short History*.

more martial arts and acrobatic dance style with non-vocal pieces and narration. However, Prince Naris (1863-1947), one of King Rama V's younger brothers, created the format of *khon* music. This is a turning point of *khon* and its musical accompaniment. Prince Naris mixed the theatrical and musical attributes of *lakhon nai* and *khon* into a new form known as *khon rong nai* (โขนโรงใน), which became the root of *khon chak* (โขนฉาก) and its music.<sup>86</sup> It could be said that Prince Naris constructed a brand new court entertainment to be performed for royal guests by creating what is known as *Bot Konsoet* (บทคอนเสิต)<sup>87</sup>, which will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 3. Throughout this period we can see the different ways in which *khon* and its music relied on political, cultural and social contexts in order to survive and to develop.

#### 2.2.4 King Rama VI (r. 1910 - 1925), the golden age of Siamese performing arts

In the period of King Rama VI (Vajiravudh) Siam developed an official educational system. King Rama VI, who was taught within the European educational system, established the first school in Siam 'wachirawuth wittayalai' (วชิราวุธวิทยาลัย), known as the royal school, in order to increase the number of educated Siamese people to develop the growth of the country. The development of the educational system in Siam during the reign of King Rama VI also increased the popularity of *khon*. King Rama VI believed that performance artists, such as dancers and musicians, should also be given a broader academic education. Therefore, he established a specialised school in which the students were trained and learnt both academic subjects and performing arts subjects, including *khon*, *lakhon*, and Thai classical music. This school, called 'rong rian phran luang' (โรงเรียนพรานหลวง), very much encouraged the continued existence of *khon* and its music.

King Rama VI's reign was considered as the golden age of Siamese theatre and music because there were several remarkable developments in those art forms during that time.<sup>88</sup> One of the King's projects to support Thai performing arts was the

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<sup>86</sup> Rutnin, *Dance, Drama, and Theatre in Thailand The process of development and modernization*, 9.

<sup>87</sup> See Chapter 3 for more details about *Bot Konsoet* and the *Phrommas* repertoire.

<sup>88</sup> Pamela Myers-Moro, "Constructions of Nation and Classification of Music: Comparative Perspective

establishment of '*krom mahorasop*' (กรมมหรสพ), the Department of Entertainments, whose role was to perform and support all forms of court theatre and music.<sup>89</sup> The dancers and musicians were treated honourably by giving them the dignity related to their personal artistic abilities; for example, the musicians or dancers who had prominent performing talent or made spectacular performances or compositions, were given a titled status from the royal court as a reward for their skill. Many royal members were gathered under the King's support in order to start learning and practising *khon*. In addition, the royal project not only encouraged Siamese traditional performing arts, but also indirectly expressed Siamese civilisation and wisdom to Western eyes. Furthermore, King Rama VI was involved in theatrical productions as an actor, producer, composer, and director of many performances. He also rearranged the Ramakian dramatic text written by King Rama II into his own version, and it subsequently became one of the Ramakian texts kept by the Fine Arts Department, which is still performed as part of current-day *khon* performance.

### **2.2.5 After the Siamese revolution (1932 - present)**

After the political revolution of 1932, the status and community of Thai music totally changed. According to Swangviboonpong, this was 'when the classical tradition had declined along with the power of the monarchy, and musicians no longer had royal support'.<sup>90</sup> *Krom mahorasop* was closed down because the country faced both an internal and global economic crisis. However, King Rama VII (Prajadhipok) tried to retain Siamese performing arts by engaging in Thai classical music as a musician: he had a passion for playing the *so sam sai* (three-stringed fiddle) and composed a number of Thai classical pieces. After the Siamese revolution in 1932, the court performing arts were moved to under the government's supervision, and the power of the court was

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from Southeast and South Asia", *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, Vol.35, No.2 (Jun 2004): 202.

<sup>89</sup> Fine Arts Department, *Khon: The Siamese Wisdom in Dramatic Works* (Bangkok: Fine Arts Department Press, 2013), 181.

<sup>90</sup> Swangviboonpong, *Thai classical singing, Its History, Musical Characteristics, and Transformation*, 10.

reduced; in effect, Siamese court arts were taken care of and used by the government through the operation of the Fine Arts Department (กรมศิลปากร).<sup>91</sup>

The work of the Fine Arts Department embraced not only a section focused on performance, but also an educational division for artists as well. King Rama VI had established *rong rian phran luang* to provide artists with academic knowledge along with dance and musical knowledge, and this structure became the skeleton for the government to subsequently establish The College of Dramatic Arts or ‘*wittayalai natsin*’ (วิทยาลัยนาฏศิลป์), which has played a key role in providing performing arts knowledge and practice as well as academic subjects such as mathematics, language, and science – the work of the College of Dramatic Arts will be discussed in detail in Chapter 6.

To conclude, changing political and social factors have very much affected the existence and continuation of *khon* and its music in particular historical periods as summarised in Table 2.1, *khon* has been considered as a high level of performing art because it is blended with court tradition and usage. The popularity of *khon* and its music have mostly relied on the support of the King during different periods, which have constructed particular trends of entertainment. While the early form of *khon* was used as a court performance within court ritual in eras such as the Ayutthaya period, it was later developed and used to serve the court not only as a performing art, but also as an indirect means to express the civilisation of the country within the changing environment. Therefore, the development of *khon* and its music during different periods of Thai history demonstrates the dynamic existence of *khon* and its music. To begin to understand *khon* and its music in more detail, the next section will present different types of *khon* and the formation of repertoires used with these particular *khon* genres.

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<sup>91</sup> Yupho, *Khon Khong Thanit Yupho*, 74.



Table 2.1 Timeline of *khon*'s development

| Period                                |                                     | Situation   | Factors   |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|---|
| Sukhothai<br>(1240 - 1438)            |                                     | There is no clear evidence of <i>khon</i> – there is evidence of music but not in relation to theatre. However, the influence of Hindu tradition was blended within many cultural practices.  | The influence of Hindu tradition in Southeast Asia.   |
| Ayutthaya and Thonburi<br>(1351-1782) |                                     | Evidence of <i>khon</i> and its music as one of the court entertainments with high prestige.  | Re-construction of the kingdom by refurbishing court tradition and arts.  |
| Rattanakosin                          | 1782-1910                           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- In the early period, there was a reconstruction of the court tradition from Ayutthaya after terrible damage from the war.</li> <li>- The development of new formations of court entertainment to be approached by changing audiences, becoming the substantial source of later <i>khon</i> music.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Uniting a new kingdom by reconstructing court tradition to embody the power of the kingdom and court.</li> <li>- The arrival of Westerners in Siam through regional colonisation.</li> </ul> |
|                                       | 1910-1925                           | Thai performing arts were greatly supported by royal reinforcement with direct involvement of the monarch.  | The King's interest in Thai classical performing arts, which brings about other developments and support within Thai classical performing arts.   |
|                                       | 1925-1932                           | Thai performing arts were maintained, but reduced in popularity.  | The political situation influenced royal support for Thai performing arts.  |
|                                       | After the Siamese revolution (1932) | The location of Siamese court arts changed from the court to under the government's control in both performance and transmission.   | Political change in the country dramatically affected the existence of Siamese performing arts.   |

## 2.3 Categories of *khon* and their musical accompaniment

As we have seen, *khon* is one of the Thai classical theatres considered as a high level performing art, which has been performed to serve different purposes on various occasions alongside changes in its broader performance environment. The use of *khon* in society has given rise to a number of different types of *khon* and its musical accompaniment. This section will present an initial categorisation of these different types, and include a brief description of each, alongside discussion of differences and similarities within particular types. There are five primary categories of *khon*, discussed in turn below.

### 2.3.1 *Khon klang plaeng* (โขนกลางแจ้ง)

*Khon klang plaeng* is considered as an early form of *khon* because it is performed in an outdoor area, which is the same as *chaknakduekdamban* in the Ayutthaya period.<sup>92</sup> The word ‘*klang plaeng*’ means being in an outdoor venue, and *khon klang plaeng* is performed in the open air (see Figure 2.10), with only a bench as a set, used for seating the main actors such as Phra Ram, Thossakan, and other royal characters. The musical accompaniment for *khon klang plaeng* is called *wong piphat* or the *piphat* ensemble (see more details in Chapter 4). According to Yupho<sup>93</sup>, one of the unique features of *khon klang plaeng* is the location where *khon* is performed: it is generally a large yard and the use of music for *khon klang plaeng* is mostly non-vocal music (*naphat*) to accompany particular actions of the characters. Importantly, there is also the use of *Phak* and *Cheracha* (see section 2.1.3, and more details in Chapter 5), which is considered as one of the primary characteristics of *khon*; because all *khon* actors wear masks and are silent, the narration is very important.

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<sup>92</sup> Thongnim, *Khon*, 25.

<sup>93</sup> Yupho, *Khon Khong Thanit Yupho*, 38.

Figure 2.10 *Khon klang plaeng*



### 2.3.2 *Khon rong nok* or *khon nang rao* (โขนโรงนอก หรือ โขนนั่งราว)

Another type of *khon* is called *khon rong nok* or *khon nang rao* as seen in Figure 2.11, and is developed from *khon klang plaeng*. The word *rong nok* (โรงนอก) literally means the outdoor theatre, whereas *nang rao* (นั่งราว) means sitting on a large-horizontal bamboo rail. These two literal meanings embody the attributes of this type of *khon* performance. King Rama VI or King Vajiravudh, who was the great supporter of Thai classical theatre and music, stated that *khon nang rao* was to be performed on the stage set outdoors, and with a bamboo rail laid down across the stage horizontally for characters to be seated during the play.<sup>95</sup> The way that *khon* dancers sit on the bamboo rail became one of the prominent features of *khon nang rao* and is therefore reminiscent of one of the ancient *khon* categories.

The *piphat* ensemble is also used in *khon nang rao* but there are two *piphat* ensembles set at both left and right sides of the stage. Importantly, the two *piphat* ensembles will play alternately, and there are no vocal pieces in *khon nang rao*; rather, a group of *naphat* pieces are used throughout the *khon* performance.

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<sup>94</sup> Fine Arts Department, “Khon Klang Plaeng,” (photograph, Bangkok, 2015).

<sup>95</sup> King Vajiravudh, quoted in *Khon*, Yupho (Bangkok: Khurusapha Print, 1983), 39.

Figure 2.11 *Khon nang rao*<sup>96</sup>



### 2.3.3 *Khon na cho* (โขนหน้าจอ)

*Khon na cho* is more developed than the two previous types of *khon*. It is still performed on an outdoor stage with an upright large white screen (see Figure 2.12). ‘*na cho*’ (หน้าจอ) literally means being in front of the screen. This type of *khon* is thus similar to *nang yai* (large shadow play) because that too uses a white screen. Traditionally, *nang yai* and *khon* were performed alongside each other as a counterpart and they were called ‘*nang tit tua khon*’ (หนังติดตัวโขน) (*nang* attached to *khon*); in the performance, *nang yai* is played as a prelude followed by *khon*. However, nowadays both are performed separately.<sup>97</sup> The music used for *khon na cho* uses the same musical forces (the *piphat* ensemble) as the previous *khon* genres.

Figure 2.12 *Khon na cho*



<sup>96</sup> Thaigooview, “*Khon nang rao*”, Jul 2009, accessed March 23 2015, <http://thaigooview.com/node/30379>

<sup>97</sup> Lumyong Sowat, interviewed by Suchada Sowat, Jan 15, 2016.

<sup>98</sup> Fine Arts Department, “*Khon Na Cho*,” (photograph, Bangkok, 2015).

### 2.3.4 *Khon rong nai* (โขนโรงใน)

In ‘*Khon rong nai*’ (โขนโรงใน) as seen in Figure 2.13, the term *rong nai* (โรงใน) literally refers to being inside. However, the word *rong nai* is not meant simply to describe only the location but it shows the importance of the integration in relation to *lakhon nai* (inside court dance drama)<sup>99</sup> from which the word *nai* (ใน) was brought into *Khon*. In other words *khon rong nai* is the *khon* mixed with the *lakhon nai*, which includes romantic dance figures and elaborated dance movements along with martial arts and acrobatic figures from *khon*.<sup>100</sup>

Essentially, the common word, *nai* found in both *khon rong nai* and *lakhon nai* can also indicate the use of musical characteristics within the *piphat* ensemble, as the use of romantic and vocal songs found in *lakhon nai* was brought into the *khon* musical style. Consequently, *khon rong nai* has not only non-vocal music, *Phak* as well as *Cheracha*, which is considered as one of the signatures of *khon*, but also a set of vocal music influenced by *lakhon nai* music.

Figure 2.13 *Khon rong nai*



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<sup>99</sup> Ruttnin, *Dance, Drama, and Theatre in Thailand The process of development and modernization*, 11.

<sup>100</sup> Lumyong Sowat, interviewed by Suchada Sowat, Jan 15, 2016.

<sup>101</sup> Fine Arts Department, “*Khon rong nai*,” (photograph, Bangkok, 2015).

### 2.3.5 *Khon chak* (โขนฉาก)

The last *khon* genre is that which is the focus of the current research. It is the most recent formation of *khon*, which has been called *khon chak* (โขนฉาก) since King Rama V's reign.<sup>102</sup> *Chak* means a backdrop used for theatre. *Khon chak* was developed during the reign of King Rama V in the Rattanakosin era and it is the manifestation of an innovation of *khon* production during that time. Prince Naris (1863 - 1947), was a creator of this theatrical form, and *khon chak* brings together modern theatrical elements, including the use of a fantasy backdrop related to the story, lights, and other related props found in *lakhon duekdamban* (a kind of Thai classical theatre created by Prince Naris during the eighteenth century with inspiration from Western classical opera) into *khon* performance.<sup>103</sup>

However, the influence of *lakhon nai* (inside court dance drama) can still be seen through *khon chak* as well. Whilst scenery, light and props are used, *khon chak* has followed the musical accompaniment style from *lakhon nai* as seen in *khon rong nai*. Therefore, *khon chak* shows the creativity of classical Thai theatre production, which integrated both *lakhon nai* and early *khon* to make the variety of *khon* genres. Importantly, *khon chak* has become the model of the subsequent *khon* formation seen nowadays in current Bangkok as well.

Figure 2.14 *Khon chak*



<sup>102</sup> Chawalit Sutthranon “*Khon*: The valuable form of performing arts” in *Khon Autchariya Nattakan Siam*, Fine Arts Department (Bangkok: Amarin Printing, 2013), 23.

<sup>103</sup> Surat Jongda, interviewed by Suchada Sowat, Jan 29, 2016.

<sup>104</sup> Fine Arts Department, “*Khon chak*,” (photograph, Bangkok, 2015).

## 2.4 Creativity beyond uniqueness and similarity

From the history of *khon* performance, there emerge a number of different factors that bring about the formation and development of particular types of *khon* and its music. Among the variety of types of *khon* performance, there are some common features shared, but a number of important differences remain in order to accommodate the purpose of the performance. This section will explore this question of the uniqueness and similarity of *khon* performance genres and their music.

### 2.4.1 Epic, Narration, and the *piphat* ensemble

Various types of *khon* genres have been developed gradually to serve the demand of the audience and the appropriation of the area where *khon* is performed. However, the fundamental elements, which shape initial characteristics of *khon*, are still similar. There are two crucial features found in every type of *khon* genre. The first element is the story used as the theme of *khon* performance: the Ramakian epic. The second feature of all types of *khon* is a musical accompaniment and the use of vocalisation of *Phak* and *Cheracha*, which is important for masked dancers. Thirdly, the *piphat* ensemble is always used.

### 2.4.2 Location

On the other hand, there have been interesting variations among the family of different *khon*, which is manifested in the creative development of *khon*. The location of *khon* performance should be firstly considered. While *khon klang plaeng* is performed in a large yard outdoor venue with simple theatrical decoration such as a bench for the main actors without any stage, the later *khon* types such as *khon nang rao* have a stage and bamboo rail (*rao*). The subsequent evolution of *khon* could be seen through *khon chak*, which has brought about modern theatrical practices and staging and became an indoor *khon* performance. Therefore, the location of *khon* performance became one of the criteria which differentiates the various *khon* types.

### 2.4.3 Musical accompaniment

Essentially, musical accompaniment is one of the important aspects to understanding the different characteristics of *khon* genres. Although the *piphat* ensemble has been used to accompany any *khon* type, there are different ways of employing it. While *khon nang rao* has two sets of *piphat* ensemble to accompany *khon*, other types of *khon* have only one or a non-fixed number of *piphat* ensembles (as seen in Figure 2.15). This is because *khon nang rao* is mostly performed outdoors and the stage is quite large; the long distances between the left and right sides of the stage may affect the audibility of the music for the dancers.

Musically, the use of two sets of the *piphat* ensembles in *khon nang rao* can also be a tool to challenge the musicians of each ensemble. According to Lumyong Sowat, he stated that ‘because the music is played interchangeably, when one ensemble finishes a particular section of the piece, the other needs to continue the same piece immediately with no audible gap, and this became an interesting point of musical accompaniment use for this type of *khon*’.<sup>105</sup>

Figure 2.15 The *piphat* ensemble with singer



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<sup>105</sup> Lumyong Sowat, interviewed by Suchada Sowat, Jan 15, 2016.

<sup>106</sup> ‘The *piphat* ensemble’, Bangkok, Jan 11, 2016.



Another aspect that should be considered is the way in which *khon* has been integrated with other types of theatre: this can be seen through the characteristics of *khon rong nai* and *khon chak*. *Lakhon nai* (inside court dance-drama) was influential in shaping not only the grace of the dance movements but also the musical style of *khon* music. The use of vocal music in *lakhon nai* was brought into the *khon* musical style, which was historically mostly non-vocal music, and this mix of non-vocal and vocal music became the prominent feature of *khon rong nai*. The relationship between music and theatre will be explored in detail in Chapter 4.

With regards to *khon chak*, Prince Naris was the influential creator who brought the inspiration of Western theatrical influence that arrived in Siam during the reign of King Rama V.<sup>107</sup> A number of contemporary theatrical elements were brought into *khon chak* such as backdrops, props, and other decorations related to the story. Consequently, *khon chak* acquired far more modern theatrical elements amongst the family of *khon*.

From the discussion in this chapter, it could be said that *khon*, as one of the Thai classical performing arts, is a multi-faceted art form that has its own journey in terms of its history, the development of its ensembles and the performance contexts. *Khon* is related to the changes in society that have taken place within Thai history, as evidenced through its origin and transformation and the modern integration of musical and theatrical traditions. The subsequent chapters of this thesis explore the way in which music is used for *khon* performance by selecting a particular musical repertoire, the *Phrommas* repertoire. Importantly, even though the *Phrommas* repertoire is currently used in *khon* music, its original formation was as a musical ‘selection’, which has particular features that are associated with a number of important artistic elements and their social and cultural context. The next chapter will consider the history and the broader context of the *Phrommas* repertoire, as well as its transformation in relation to *khon* performance.

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<sup>107</sup> Prince Narisaranuvatiwongse, *Chumnum bot lakhon lae bot khaprong*, 4.

## Chapter 3

### The genesis of the *Phrommas* repertoire

As this research focuses on a single Thai musical repertoire known as the '*Phrommas*', an important part of any examination of that music is its particular history and development, which draw upon its significance within the society which created and sustained it. The way in which the *Phrommas* repertoire involves not only music and theatre but also broader social and cultural contexts can be seen through its creation, function, and transformation. It could be said that the *Phrommas* repertoire is a 'multi-expressive' art form because it involves significance in a number of differing contexts. Culturally, the narrative which forms the dramatic text used as lyrics is derived from the great epic, the Ramakian, influenced by the Indian Ramayana in which is found an aspect of localisation as it is blended with Thai cultural perception. Socially, the history of the repertoire manifests changes in the political environment in Siam during the regional colonial period. Musically, the development and transformation of the repertoire illustrates the musical and theatrical context that has maintained the continuation of the *Phrommas* repertoire in Thai society. All these angles have made the *Phrommas* repertoire significant in terms of this multi-expressive art form. The main purpose of this chapter is to discuss this significance by presenting three perspectives: 1) the narrative derived from the Ramakian epic, 2) invention and transformation of the *Phrommas* repertoires, and 3) the process of constructing the repertoire as a 'selection'.

#### 3.1 The Narrative

The narrative of the *Phrommas* episode is one of the important elements of this research. It is a crucial guideline to understanding the music within the particular repertoire and the narrative itself is also significant from a number of different perspectives. The narrative of the *Phrommas* will be explained from three angles to draw out its importance: 1) Indian Ramayana moving towards a localisation of Ramakian, 2) the synopsis, and 3) the implication and application of the narrative.

### 3.1.1 Indian Ramayana expanding towards a localisation of Thai Ramakian

The Ramayana has been widely significant across Asia as a tool of the expansion of Hindu cultural tradition; ‘the presence of the Rama story in almost all the countries in Asia certainly proves the close cultural contact between Hindu India and Asia’.<sup>108</sup> The narratives of Ramayana that are found within different national traditions have common and distinguishing features. The Ramayana contains the story of a combat between Lakshmana, Rama’s younger brother, and Indrajit, the son of Ravana, in which the Brahmastra (a sacred weapon of Indrajit given to him by the god Brahma) is mentioned as a powerful sword causing enormous destruction.<sup>109</sup> In the Thai Ramakian, the *Phrommas* is mentioned as a holy sword, which also has extreme power and it is used by Inthorachit (son of Thossakan, king of the demons) to strike Phra Lak (Phra Ram’s younger brother) within the narrative of the *Phrommas* episode (details of the narrative can be found in section 3.1.2).

The narrative of the Ramayana was also adapted in a number of different versions within Southeast Asia. Whilst the Indian Ramayana directly signifies the belief in Hindu Gods through its story, in the Ramakian, a sense of virtue from Buddhist doctrine is embodied within a number of different episodes through the behaviour of the characters and the narrative. The ethical concept known as *thamma chana atham* (ธรรมะชนะอธรรม) (good conquers bad) is manifested in the Ramakian, including within the *Phrommas* episode; the characters in the Ramakian are separated into *thamma* (ธรรมะ) (good) represented as Phra Ram (พระราม) and his alliances and *atham* (อธรรม) (bad) represented as Thossakan and his demon party. Even though Thossakan (ทศกัณฐ์) tries to defeat Phra Ram by deceiving him, Phra Ram finally defeats Thossakan by virtue, and this underlying ethical consideration is manifested through the narrative of the Ramakian.

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<sup>108</sup> Santosh N, Desai. “Ramayana: An Instrument of Historical Contact and Cultural Transmission between India and Asia. *The Journal of Asian Studies* 30, no.1 (1970): 5.

<sup>109</sup> Bishnupada Chakravarty, *The Penguin Companion to the Ramayana* (New York: Thomson Press, 1998), 72.

The narrative of the *Phrommas* episode in the Ramakian of Thailand also has a number of distinguishing features. There is no mention of a deceitful plan by any demon to lure Lakshmana in the Ramayana, but the narrative of the *Phrommas* episode within the Ramakian portrays the deceitfulness of Inthorachit (the demon) to lure Phra Lak. Hence, it could be argued that the Ramayana has principally inspired only the main story line of the Ramakian but that details of the Thai Ramakian were localised.<sup>110</sup>

Even though the Ramayana was originally spread by oral traditions into Southeast Asian countries, including Thailand, the localised formation of Ramayana or Thai Ramakian was finally written down within the context of one of the ancient Thai great epics: the Ramakian was written in the form of *bot lakhon* (บทละคร) which directly means the dramatic text. The term dramatic text embraces a form of Thai poetry known as *klon bot lakhon* (กลอนบทละคร), which has a particular literary structure. *Klon bot lakhon* was normally used as the dramatic text of ancient Thai theatres. This concept involves a verse formation describing the narrative with no spoken script; the words in the verse are used as lyrics, performed by a singer with musical accompaniment, and this is how the literature, music, and theatre are integrated in classical Thai theatre (more details can be found in Chapter 4).

The Ramakian dramatic text is not only for performing within the theatre, but also as a text for reading as a poem. The Ramakian was written in different periods of Thai history as part of court tradition, and each King has therefore played a key role in the patronage of Ramakian literature. There are some distinguished Ramakian dramatic text versions composed by King Rama I, King Rama II, and King Rama V respectively. According to Theeraphat Thongnim, who has discussed the potential of the Ramakian dramatic text in different versions, ‘whilst the version of King Rama I is appropriate for reading, the Ramakian of King Rama II and King Rama V are well-known as suitable forms to be used for the theatre because the text is not too descriptive, and this facilitates the actor to execute their theatrical performance easily.’<sup>111</sup>

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<sup>110</sup> Surat Jongda, interviewed by Suchada Sowat, Jan 29, 2016.







<sup>111</sup> Theeraphat Thongnim, interviewed by Suchada Sowat, Jan 18, 2016.

In particular, the Ramakian is significant for the *Khon*; it is about a long war between Phra Ram (พระราม) and Thossakan (ทศกัณฐ์), which symbolises the conflict between good and bad. There are different characters in the *khon* performance influenced by the narrative of the Ramakian epic (the details of the relationship between the Ramakian epic and *khon*'s characters are to be found in Chapter 2 in the section on the origin of *khon*).

### **3.1.2 A synopsis of the Ramakian and the *Phrommas* episode**

Before describing the narrative of the Ramakian and the *Phrommas* episode, it would be worth knowing all the main characters in the story. Table 3.1 provides all the main characters, namely the human (Phra Ram, Phra Lak and Sida), monkey and demon.

Table 3.1 Main characters of the Ramakian involved in the *Phrommas* episode

| Name   | Description   | Image   |
|--|---|---|
| Phra Ram (พระราม)<br>(Rama in Ramayana)          | Son of King Thossarot of Ayothaya city and re-incarnation of the god Narayana.  |  112   |
| Sida (นางสีดา)<br>(Sita in Ramayana)             | Phra Ram's wife, the re-incarnation of Phra Laksami (wife of the god Narayana).   |  113   |
| Phra Lak (พระลักษมณ์)<br>(Lakshmana in Ramayana) | Phra Ram's younger brother who plays a key role in fighting with Inthorachit in the <i>Phrommas</i> episode.                            |  114   |
| Hanuman (หนุมาน)<br>(Hanuman in Ramayana)        | The loyal, powerful monkey soldier of Phra Ram.   |  115  |
| Thossakan (ทศกัณฐ์)<br>(Ravana in Ramayana)      | Demon King of Longka (Demon city) who kidnaps <i>Sida</i> from Phra Ram – this is the key factor causing the great war of the Ramakian. |  116 |
| Inthorachit (อินทรชิต)<br>(Indrajit in Ramayana) | The powerful demon son of Thossakan who plays a key role in fighting with Phra Lak in the <i>Phrommas</i> episode.                      |  117 |

<sup>112</sup> Netiphong Yotphaka, Apr 24, 2018.

<sup>113</sup> Nanthana Sathitsommon, Apr 24, 2018.

<sup>114</sup> Netiphong Yotphaka, Apr 24, 2018.

<sup>115</sup> Konkhon, “Khon characters”, Apr 7, 2016, accessed: 5 October 2015.  
<https://khonsite.wordpress.com/category/องค์ประกอบการแสดงโขน/>

<sup>116</sup> Veerakorn Sukhasat, Apr 24, 2018.

<sup>117</sup> Suphachai Suphakornkun, Apr 24, 2018.

Phra Ram, one of the sons of King Thossarot (ท้าวทศรถ) from Ayothaya city, is expected to succeed to his father's throne. However, his stepmother, Kaikesi, has cheated him of his succession by asking King Thossarot to give the throne of Ayothaya to her son, Phra Phrot, and asks King Thossarot to deport Phra Ram to the jungle as a priest. As Kaikesi has saved King Thossarot's life in the war, the king has given Kaikesi a pledge: she can be granted whatever it is that she wishes. So, King Thossarot reluctantly follows Kaikesi's wishes.

Phra Ram leaves the throne along with his wife, Sida, and his younger brother, Phra Lak. The three royals decide to be ordained as priests and live in the jungle where they meet Sammanakkha (นางสัมนักขา), a female demon, younger sister of Thossakan; she falls in love with Phra Ram and disguises herself as a beautiful girl to attract Phra Ram but is rejected. Once she knows that Phra Ram is married to Sida, Sammanakkha tries to hurt Sida, and that makes Phra Ram and Phra Lak very angry. So, they punish Sammanakkha by cutting off the tip of her nose; she is very angry with the brothers and goes back to Longka city to tell Thossakan this story. Hence, to take revenge against Phra Ram and Phra Lak, Thossakan abducts Sida and this is the starting point of a great war between Phra Ram and Thossakan in the Ramakian. Phra Ram and Phra Lak gather the monkey army to fight to rescue Sida from Thossakan.

Because of the long war in which many demons died, Thossakan, King of demons, orders a number of his demon relatives to fight Phra Ram and Phra Lak. Thossakan asks Inthorachit, his beloved son who is the most powerful demon in Longka city, to fight Phra Ram's troops, and this is the beginning of the story of *Phrommas*.

After the death of Sang Athit (แสงอาทิตย์) and Mang korn kan (มังกรกัณฑ์), both Thossakan's nephews, Thossakan orders his soldier Kalasun (กาลสุร) to inform Inthorachit of this bad news and asks him to fight Phra Ram's army. At that time, Inthorachit is deep in the forest making the ritual for creating the sacred and powerful bow called the *Phrommas* to be used in the battle and this ritual cannot be disturbed by any bad news because that would affect the power of the *Phrommas* weapon. Inthorachit is very angry with Kalasun because he tells him bad news, which can destroy the completion of the *Phrommas* bow. However, he follows the order of

Thossakan and makes a plan to defeat Phra Ram's troops. His plan is that he will disguise himself as the God Indra and order his demon soldiers to disguise themselves as angels to lure his enemies into thinking that they are angels who have come to bless Phra Lak's army. Inthorachit wishes to make them think that he is the God Indra who has come to bless Phra Lak and his army before fighting with the demons, and so whilst they are enjoying the parades of angels, Inthorachit can kill Phra Lak easily.

On Phra Ram's side, Phra Lak offers to fight Longka's army. While Phra Lak's troop is travelling to the battlefield, they meet Indra's caravan with beautiful angels and heavenly priests in the sky, and they believe that Indra and his troupe have come to bless Phra Lak's army to enable them to gain victory; all angels (disguised demons) are dancing with refined dance movements whereas Phra Lak and his army are enjoying the beautiful dance with no awareness of danger.

Figure 3.1 God Indra's caravan dancing in the air to lure Phra Lak and the monkey soldiers<sup>118</sup>



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<sup>118</sup> Vichakan.com, "The Royal Khon Performance in episode of Phrommas", Jun 21, 2009, accessed: 6 October 2015.  
[http://www.vcharkarn.com/forum/view?id=167551&section=forum&ForumReply\\_page=3](http://www.vcharkarn.com/forum/view?id=167551&section=forum&ForumReply_page=3)



While Phra Lak and his monkey soldiers are watching the angels dance in the sky, God Indra or Inthorachit shoots Phra Lak using his sacred bow, *Phrommas*, which makes Phra Lak and the monkey soldiers become unconscious. However, Hanuman, the chief of Phra Ram's army soldier is not hit. He is very angry with Indra and flies to the sky to fight with Inthorachit. Hanuman kills God Indra's elephant, Erawan (ช้างเอราวัณ); Inthorachit thrashes Hanuman using the *Phrommas* bow; Hanuman falls down onto the battlefield. This war makes Inthorachit and his demon army happy because they think that Phra Lak is already dead; they then head straight back to Longka city. However, although Phra Lak was hit by the *Phrommas* bow, he does not die because the *Phrommas* bow has not been created properly and it therefore works ineffectively. Phra Ram then arrives at the battlefield and saves Phra Lak and the monkey army.

### 3.1.3 Application and implication of the narrative

The *Phrommas* repertoire is considered as one of the high value musical repertoires within the Thai classical music community. This section will present the value of the *Phrommas* repertoire through its application and implication in relation to different aspects: 1) the theatricality of the repertoire in relation to the use within theatre, 2) the way that this repertoire has been used as a model repertoire, and 3) the moral quality of the narrative within the *Phrommas* repertoire. There will be a comment from Thai classical music masters taken from the fieldwork in Bangkok about the value and importance of the *Phrommas* repertoire to reinforce its valuable features.

For the theatrical aspect, in the episode of *Phrommas*, the narrative includes a number of characters, including *phra* (male), *nang* (female), *yak* (demon), and *ling* (monkey) covering all types of actors in Thai classical dance. While males and females are found as angels and God Indra, the demon and monkey are also found directly in the story of the *Phrommas* episode. According to Theeraphat Thongnim, 'one of the reasons that makes the *Phrommas* episode popular is that this episode embraces a full set of characters (*phra*, *nang*, *yak*, and *ling*), which makes the *Phrommas* attractive in terms of theatrical embellishment'.<sup>119</sup> Similarly, Boonchuay Sovat, has also argued that

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<sup>119</sup> Theeraphat Thongnim, interviewed by Suchada Sowat, Jan 18, 2016.

‘the *Phrommas* episode has a kind of grand finale scene (the battlefield scene where Inthorachit is shooting Phra Lak using the *Phrommas* bow) in which all characters are performed at the same time with full theatrical adornments, and this is one of the factors that increases the popularity of the *Phrommas* episode’.<sup>120</sup> Thereby, both points of view from the music and dance masters suggest that the narrative of the *Phrommas* episode is one of the crucial elements which makes the *Phrommas* significant and valuable.

In addition, in terms of the musical elements within the *Phrommas* repertoire, the musical form created specially as *Bot konsoet* or musical selection is one of the factors that enhance the valuable attributes of the repertoire. Sirichaicharn Fachamroon has given some thought to the reason why the *Phrommas* is considered one of the model musical selections. He stated that ‘the *Phrommas* is one of the *tap khru* (ตบครู)<sup>121</sup>, which can be used as ideal musical selection to teach Thai professional musicians and singers because it includes a number of pieces which have both fundamental musical features and prominent musical attributes for music for theatre’. From his point of view, the *tap* (ตบ) means a selection of the pieces and *khru* (ครู) means a master; in this context it refers to a sense of model or ideal pattern to be followed. Hence, the *Phrommas* repertoire is considered as the ideal musical selection that professional musicians and singers should learn in order to understand the concept of music for theatre, and this is one of the factors that bring about the importance of the *Phrommas* repertoire within the Thai music community.

Morally, the story of the *Phrommas* episode manifests some moral thoughts influenced indirectly by Buddhist doctrine. Lumyong Sowat has provided a critical point on the *Phrommas* narrative: ‘we always hear the phrase *thamma chana atham* ธรรมะชนะอธรรม (good conquers bad) but in the *Phrommas* narrative, so why does Inthorachit (representation of bad) conquer Phra Lak (representation of good), even though Phra Ram can save his brother’s life. The hidden message in this story is one of

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<sup>120</sup> Boonchuay Sovat, interviewed by Suchada Sowat, Jan 14, 2016.

<sup>121</sup> ‘*Tap Khru*’ ตบครู can be translated as a model set of musical repertoire which is well arranged, and it includes a number of compulsory and advanced musical characteristics and techniques which can be applied to other repertoires in the same function of music.

mindfulness *khwam mai pramat* (ความไม่ประมาท) which is one of the Buddhist teachings'.<sup>122</sup> In other words, if Phrak Lak is aware of a danger hidden in the beauty, he may not be hit by the disguised demon. It could be argued that one of the interesting features of the *Phrommas*'s narrative is a complicated moral thought hidden in the narrative, which requires a cultural background in order to understand it. It is features such as these, which also make the *Phrommas* episode attractive.

The narrative of the *Phrommas* episode has shown not only the broad influence of the Indian Ramayana in Southeast Asia, but also how this epic is localised in Thailand through the Ramakian epic. A differentiation of the Ramayana and the Ramakian reflects a particular cultural perception in Thai society such as religious beliefs put into the narrative. In addition, the application of the *Phrommas* narrative has enabled an increase in theatrical embellishment within the *khon* performance whereas the moral thought is manifested through the narrative. Importantly, an understanding of the *Phrommas* narrative is important as a guideline to understanding the musical attributes, especially the connection and reflection between the narrative and the music of the *Phrommas* repertoire. More detail will be provided through a sample of music in Chapter 5 (musical analysis).

### **3.2 Invention and Transformation**

As the *Phrommas* repertoire is one musical phenomenon created in Siam during the period of regional colonisation in the nineteenth century, the story of its creation is crucial to understand the significance of the repertoire in relation to the wider context. Since that time, the *Phrommas* repertoire has also been used for many different functions since 1899 (the year that the *Phrommas* repertoire was created and performed). This section will present a discussion of the invention of the *Phrommas* repertoire and its transformation.

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<sup>122</sup> Lumyong Sowat, interviewed by Suchada Sowat, Jan 15, 2016.

### 3.2.1 Invention: the *Phrommas* repertoire as ‘*bot konsoet*’

As mentioned earlier, the *Phrommas* episode was written as a dramatic text by King Rama II (r.1809-1824); later, it was rearranged by Prince Naris (1863-1943), and became a well-known *Phrommas* text. During the period of colonisation in neighbouring Southeast Asian countries in the nineteenth century, and especially in the reign of King Rama V, Siam had to survive amongst the colonial pressure that was present throughout mainland Southeast Asia. As there was a significant arrival of representatives of Western nations within the Siamese court, King Rama V wished to express Siamese cultural civilisation in a number of different ways: Siamese performing arts was one of those. During this time, there was a continued engagement with foreign visitors, and within royal receptions, Thai music was used as a court entertainment for the foreign guests.<sup>123</sup> King Rama V wanted to have a new form of entertainment that would be suitable for these foreign guests; he commanded Chao Phraya Thewet Wong Wiwat (1852-1922)<sup>124</sup> (เจ้าพระยาเทเวศร์วงศ์วิวัฒน์), head of *krom mahorasop* (กรมมหรสพ)<sup>125</sup> (the Entertainment Department) at that time, to find a new form of Siamese court entertainment. Chao Phraya Thewet Wong Wiwat asked the sophisticated artist Prince Naris, who was his counsellor, to help seek a new form of court entertainment; Prince Naris therefore developed this new context for the performance of Thai music.<sup>126</sup>

Prince Naris (1863-1943), one of the sons of King Rama IV, was skilled in a number of traditional Thai arts, including painting, architecture, literature, music, and theatre. As a result of his interests and skills, as well as his dedication to Thai traditional

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<sup>123</sup> Chulalongkorn University, ‘History of *wong piphat duekdamban* from the past to the present’ in performance leaflet, *piphat duekdamban* (Bangkok: Chulalongkorn University Press, 2007),7.

<sup>124</sup> Chao Phraya Thewet Wong Wiwat was the director of the Department of Entertainment during the reigns of both King Rama V and also King Rama VI. He was one of the noblemen who had a chance to travel to Europe as one of the King’s followers during the nineteenth century. He had his own theatre troupe through family heritage and devoted himself as one of the great supporters of Thai classical performing arts.

<sup>125</sup> *Krom mahorasop* กรมมหรสพ is the prior formation of the Office of Performing Arts, Fine Arts Department.

<sup>126</sup> *Ibid.*,10.

arts, he has become known as the ‘diamond’ of all Ratanakosin arts. Significantly, he was honoured by UNESCO as a person of world importance in 1963.<sup>127</sup>

Prince Naris had an interest in Thai music; he stated in his personal booklet that he saw a *piphat* ensemble played in a Buddhist court ceremony and joined musicians playing *ching* (a pair of small cymbals) and *krap* (a small hand clapper).<sup>128</sup> Moreover, he also learnt other musical instruments such as *klong khaek* (a pair of double-headed drums), *so* (Thai fiddles) as well as *khlui* (Thai flute) from professional court musicians. His musical ability has reflected on his compositions. The outstanding example is his composition called *khamen sai yok* (เขมรไทรโยค), for which he composed both melody and lyrics when he accompanied King Rama V (Chulalongkorn) to the waterfall called *sai yok* (ไทรโยค) in Kanchanaburi province and incorporated a musical theme from an existing Thai piece and extended it to form this new composition.<sup>129</sup> The lyrics of the song describe the beauty of the *sai yok* waterfall, and the piece has remained popular within Thai music right until the present day. Prince Naris was also the creative director of Thai theatres particularly during the reign of King Rama V; he engaged as a director, composer and arranger with a group of experts. He collaborated with a group of experts who evolved his theatrical works: Chao Phraya Thewet Wong Wiwat (เจ้าพระยาเทเวศร์วงศ์วิวัฒน์) as a producer, *mom khem* (หม่อมเหม) as a choreographer, Luang Sano Durinyang (Thongdi) (หลวงเสนาะดุริยางค์ ทองดี) as a vocal master, Phra Pradit Phairo (Tat) (พระประดิษฐ์ไพเราะ ดาด) as a musical director.<sup>130</sup>

Moreover, Prince Naris has also been well-known in terms of his theatrical productions, which assembled not only theatre but also particular formations of music used for that theatre. Prince Naris’s theatrical production was considered as a modern form of Thai classical performing art at that time: it was very different to ancient Thai

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<sup>127</sup> Phongsuwan, “Guideline for The Inheritance, H.R.H. Prince Narisaranuvatiwongse, Holistic Wisdom,” (PhD Thesis, Chulalongkorn University, 2010), 3.

<sup>128</sup> *Ibid.*, 103.

<sup>129</sup> Montri Tramot, *Duriyasan of Montri Tramot* (Bangkok: Kasikon Bank, 1995), 122, quoted in Mattaniya Phongsuwan, “Guideline for The Inheritance, H.R.H. Prince Narisaranuvatiwongse, Holistic Wisdom.” (Bangkok: Chulalongkorn University, 2010), 244.

<sup>130</sup> Duangchit Chitraphong. “HRH Prince Narisaranuvatiwongse received the royal-honour name of Sang-khit Wathit Withi Wichan” in *Chumnum bot lakhon lae bot khabrong phraniphon nai somdetchaofa kromphraya Narisaranuvatiwongse*. (Bangkok: Siwaporn Press, 1972), 9.

classical art forms and introduced a number of modern theatrical elements such as lighting and a realistic backdrop which had not previously been used in ancient Thai performing arts. Musically, he reconstructed the formation of a musical ensemble, which comprises a number of lower tone musical instruments to make bass sounds within the ensemble (known as *wong piphat duekdamban* วงปี่พาทย์ดึกดำบรรพ์) whereas the ancient Thai musical ensemble mostly used treble musical instruments to give a very prominent sound to the ensemble.<sup>131</sup> There are a number of Prince Naris's musical and theatrical works. According to Lumyong Sowat, 'Prince Naris's productions have been considered as complete and refined Thai classical performing arts; music especially because he selected and gathered a group of masterpieces within his production'.<sup>132</sup> One of Prince Naris's works, which is the main focus of this research, is the *bot konsoet* (บทคอนเสิร์ต), which is the original formation of the *Phrommas* repertoire.

This new musical performance was known as *bot konsoet* (บทคอนเสิร์ต): *bot* (บท) literally means transcription or dramatic text and *konsoet* has the common as concert in English. The idea of making *bot konsoet* was influenced by the idea of a 'musical selection' of Western classical music in order to make a compact musical performance in which various pieces are collected and played in a particular order.<sup>133</sup> The prominent feature of *bot konsoet* is that it is very much shorter than the ancient Thai musical performance; it takes only about one hour for the whole performance whereas traditional Thai musical performance takes about five times as long.

*Bot Konsoet* was also known as *lakhon muet* (ละครอนมืด). The word *lakhon* (ละคร) means theatre and *muet* (มืด) means darkness, therefore, it literally means theatre in darkness. However, the original appearance of *bot konsoet* was as a musical rather than a theatrical performance because the audience would not see any theatre but would hear the music.<sup>134</sup> The reason why Prince Naris named this new form of musical

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<sup>131</sup> Chulalongkorn University, 'the formation of *wong piphat duekdamban*' in performance leaflet, *piphat duekdamban*. (Bangkok: Chulalongkorn University Press, 2014), 2.

<sup>132</sup> Lumyong Sowat, interviewed by Suchada Sowat, Jan 15, 2016.

<sup>133</sup> Duangchit Chitraphong, "A musical performance, *piphat duekdamban* from *bot konsoet* of Ramakian epic in the episode of Nakhabat to accompany Tableaux Vivants quoted in performance leaflet, *piphat duekdamban*. (Bangkok: Chulalongkorn University Press, 2010), 22.

<sup>134</sup> Chulalongkorn University, 'History of *piphat duekdamban*' in performance leaflet, *piphat*

performance *lakhon muet* was because he wanted to invite the audience to imagine their own theatrical image based on the meaning of the lyrics.<sup>135</sup> Metaphorically, this process could make theatre invisible - hence ‘theatre in the darkness’. This is an interesting aspect of the construction of *bot konsoet* and the hidden meaning of its application. It could be argued that Prince Naris brought a new trend to Thai classical music, because the features of *bot konsoet* involved the integration between musical performance and musical expression as a representation of theatrical meaning.

The *Phrommas* repertoire is one of Prince Naris’s *bot konsoet* works; it was created in 1898 and first performed in 1899 and Prince Naris used the Ramakian dramatic text from King Rama II’s version but rearranged it into a new form by cutting some parts of the original and adding his own verse as connecting tissue in order to create a short version of the *Phrommas* episode. The music in the repertoire was selected to accompany the text; this is how the *Phrommas* as *bot konsoet* was created and it was performed as a musical selection in court in 1899 (Figure 3.2). Subsequently, it became well known by a community of Thai musicians as one of the famous musical selections performed in public.<sup>136</sup> One of the factors that makes the *Phrommas* repertoire widely known in public is the way that the College of Dramatic Arts had put it into the curriculum as one of the repertoires that should be learnt by professional musicians. Indeed, a number of students who graduated from the College of Dramatic Arts have brought the *Phrommas* repertoire to perform in public on their own because it includes various pieces in one selection which are easy to recognise as a predetermined order.

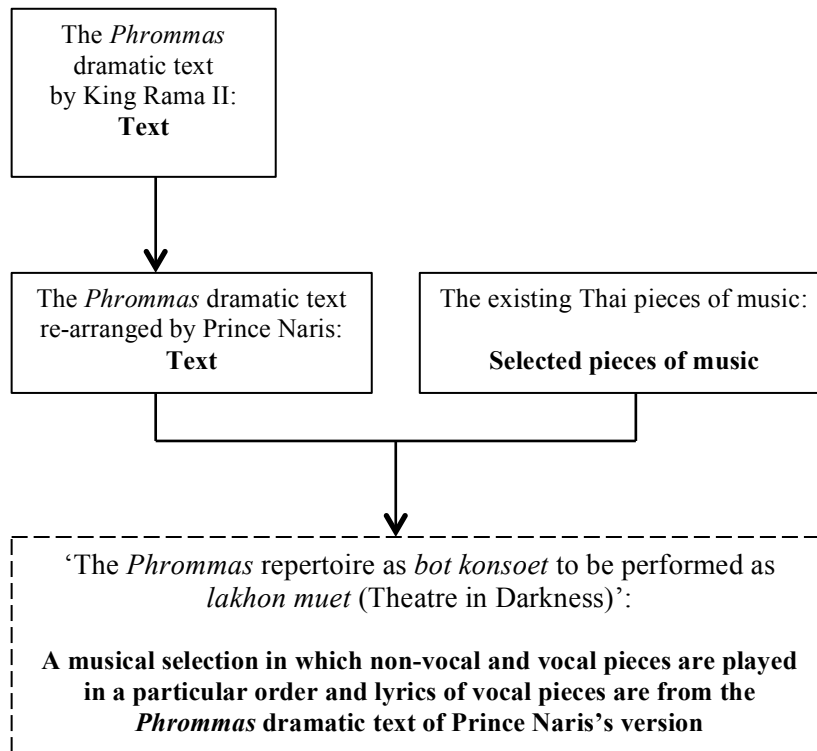
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*duekdamban*. (Bangkok: Chulalongkorn University Press, 2014), 2.

<sup>135</sup> Narisaranuvatiwongse, Prince, “*lakhon muet*”, quoted in Duangchit Chitraphong, ed., *Chumnum bot lakhon lae bot khabrong phraniphon nai somdet phrachao borommawongther chaofa kromphraya Narisaranuvatiwongse* (Bangkok, 1972), 4.

<sup>136</sup> Theeraphat Thongnim, interviewed by Suchada Sowat, Jan 18, 2016.

Figure 3.2 The process of creating the *Phrommas* as *bot konsoet*



### 3.2.2 Transformation: The *Phrommas* repertoire as music for *Khon*

The *Phrommas* repertoire has various functions: while it is performed purely as a musical selection, it is also used as a theatrical accompaniment. The function of the *Phrommas* repertoire has transformed over time, and it is this process that will be the focus of this section.

While the *Phrommas* was performed as *bot konsoet* from the nineteenth century, it was not until 1960 that the *Phrommas* repertoire was performed with the *Khon* performance. Although there was a *Khon* performance (during 1899-1909) of the *Phrommas* episode under the production of Chao Phraya Thewat Wong Wiwat (1852-1922)<sup>137</sup>, there was no clear mention of the use of the *Phrommas* repertoire in that *Khon*

<sup>137</sup> Chao Phraya Thewat Wong Wiwat was the director of the Department of Entertainment during the reigns of both King Rama V and also King Rama VI. He was one of the noblemen who had a chance to travel to Europe as one of the King’s followers during the nineteenth century. He had his own theatre troupe through family heritage and devoted himself as one of the great supporters of Thai classical performing arts.



performance.<sup>138</sup> Even though the *Phrommas* repertoire was performed as a musical selection, in its original form it embraces a clear theatricality, including the lyrics which form the dramatic text of the Ramakian epic. This has inspired the subsequent use of the *Phrommas* repertoire to accompany *Khon* performance.

The clearest evidence of the use of the *Phrommas* repertoire with theatre comes from 1960 under the administration of the Fine Arts Department known as *krom silapakon* (กรมศิลปากร) when the *Phrommas* repertoire as *bot konsoet* by Prince Naris was selected to accompany the *khon* in the episode of *Phrommas*. In that version of the *Phrommas* dramatic text, there are contributions from Montri Tramot (ครูมนตรี ตราโมท) (a musical editor), plus Seri Wangnaitham (ครูเสรี หวังในธรรม), Thanom Modthet (ครูถนอม โหมดเทศน์), and Praphan Sukhonthachat (ครูประพันธ์ สุขนธชาติ) (dramatic text arrangers). The Fine Arts Department edited the *Phrommas* dramatic text from Prince Naris's version to make it suitable for *Khon* performance. Whilst it contains a huge amount of *Phak* and *Cheracha* to accompany the performance, most pieces from the *bot konsoet* version are still the same; some vocal pieces replaced by *Phak*, *Cheracha*, and other different vocal pieces but the rest of the pieces in the *bot konsoet* version by Prince Naris are the same.<sup>139</sup>

Importantly, the *Phrommas* repertoire has been transmitted into the music institutions to preserve the ideal musical selection and music for *khon*, which brings about the continuation of the *Phrommas* repertoire (more details can be found in Chapter 6). However, it could be said that the philosophy of playing the pieces in the *Phrommas* repertoire as *bot konsoet* and as a musical accompaniment for theatre are different because the main purpose of playing music depends on the function of particular usage (more details about how Thai classical music accompanies Thai classical theatre will be discussed in Chapter 4). The changeable function of the *Phrommas* repertoire displays the variety of Thai classical music within these different contexts.

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<sup>138</sup> Surat Jongda, interviewed by Suchada Sowat, Jan 29, 2016.

<sup>139</sup> For the *Phrommas* dramatic text used for *khon* edited by The Fine Arts Department, it was found that some vocal pieces from the original version by Prince Naris were replaced: *He Klom Chang* (เห่กล่อมช้าง) is replaced with *Cheracha* (เจรจา) and *Chom Talat* (ชมตลาด) is replaced with *Chui Chai* (ชุยไช).

For the main focus of this research, I will be looking at the *Phrommas* repertoire in the *bot konsoet* by Prince Naris. Importantly, I will be studying the way that music represents and expresses theatrical meaning and the relationship between music and theatre. To understand the *Phrommas* repertoire clearly, it is necessary to know the history of its invention and transformation. The development of the *Phrommas* repertoire is shown in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2 The *Phrommas* repertoire's development

| Year   | Creation & Use   | Factors for development  |
|--|--|--|
| 1899   | Origination of the <i>Phrommas</i> repertoire in <i>bot konsoet</i> ; it was used as court entertainment.  | New form of Thai entertainment for foreign visitors in court.                              |
| 1960   | The Fine Arts Department edited the original version of the <i>Phrommas</i> repertoire in the <i>bot konsoet</i> by Prince Naris in order to perform it as part of <i>khon</i> . Most pieces in the repertoire are the same. | Finding a new form of Thai entertainment to make a contemporary form of theatre.           |
| 1932<br>(Siamese<br>revolution)<br>to the<br>present | The <i>Phrommas</i> repertoire is one of the model musical-repertoires taught in music institutions and performed with <i>khon</i> performance.  | Preserving a refined work of Thai classical music and theatre as one of cultural heritage. |

Table 3.3 Differentiations of the *Phrommas* dramatic texts in two versions:  
Prince Naris's and that of *krom silapakon* or the Fine Arts Department

| Prince Naris's version   | Edited version by <i>krom silapakon</i><br>(Office of Performing Arts,<br>Fine Arts Department)   |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Using fewer amounts of <i>Phak</i> and <i>Cheracha</i> (narration).</li> <li>- Using more vocal music and non-vocal music to communicate the narrative.</li> <li>- Using <i>naphat</i> pieces to represent particular actions based on the story of the dramatic text.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Using more <i>Phak</i> and <i>Cheracha</i>.</li> <li>- Using <i>Phak</i>, <i>Cheracha</i>, and other vocal pieces instead of original vocal pieces (<i>bot konsoet</i> version) to communicate the narrative in <i>khon</i> performance.</li> <li>- Using <i>naphat</i> pieces to represent particular actions based on the story of the dramatic text.</li> </ul> |
| <p><u>Formation</u><br/>A musical performance with no theatre in the performance known as <i>bot konsoet</i> or <i>lakhon muet</i>.</p>  | <p><u>Formation</u><br/>A musical repertoire to accompany <i>khon</i> in the <i>Phrommas</i> episode.</p>   |

The *Phrommas* repertoire has its own history and development throughout different periods. Its invention and transformation have shown how it has survived in society as both a musical selection and also music for theatre. The repertoire is reconstructed by using the dramatic text of the Ramakian narrative as the interconnection of different usages. Even though the *Phrommas* repertoire is used to serve different functions, the crucial structure from Prince Naris's version remains the same. In the next section, there will be a discussion on the process of music-making in the *Phrommas* repertoire, which makes this musical repertoire significant.

### 3.3 Music-making as a significance of the repertoire

Even though the *Phrommas* repertoire is a kind of musical selection created from the intention of seeking a new form of Thai classical music for court function in the nineteenth century, it builds upon a pre-existing form of musical selection. This section will discuss this process along with the most significant aspects of making the *Phrommas* repertoire based on the concept of ‘selection’ in order to explore how the *Phrommas* repertoire was invented and why it is different to the previous formations in Thai classical music.

#### 3.3.1 Pre-existing musical ‘selection’ in Thai classical music

The concept of musical selection had already been used in Thai classical music in a number of different formations that were based on Thai classical piece categories, including *phleng tap* (เพลงตับ) (a set of vocal pieces) and *phleng ruang* (เพลงเรือ่ง) (a set of non-vocal pieces). Both categories have particular features related to their functions within conventional performance practice.

*Phleng tap* (เพลงตับ) is a set of vocal pieces; the word *phleng* (เพลง) literally means the pieces or the song (in a Thai music context, the word *phleng* generally covers all the musical pieces, including vocal and non-vocal pieces) whereas *tap* (ตับ)<sup>140</sup> means role or order; the two words are combined to represent a group of musical pieces. To understand the attributes of *phleng tap*, it is important to explain the knowledge of lyrics used in vocal pieces within Thai classical music. Theoretically, all lyrics are written in the form of ancient Thai verses with specific rhymes based on particular epics; some lyrics are small sections taken from a much longer poem. The concept of lyrics used in Thai vocal pieces is crucial for categorising different types of *phleng tap*.

There are two types of *tap*. Firstly, *tap phleng* (ตับเพลง) which is a set of vocal pieces put into a specific order based on the musical correspondence of individual pieces, and where the lyrics do not create an overall narrative. In other words, the construction of *tap phleng* does not concern the corresponding narrative within

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<sup>140</sup> Another meaning for *Tap* (ตับ), which is not related to any musical context, is the liver.

lyrics; rather, it focuses on a smooth connection of the musical pieces. Lyrics used in *tap phleng* can be taken from different epics. According to Lumyong Sowat, ‘different pieces within *tap phleng* are formulated by the following criteria: the coherent key from one piece to another or the pieces selected should employ the same key, formation of the drum pattern in each piece which should be the same pattern, and the corresponding style of the piece from one to another which should be matched to make a smooth connection within *Tap*’.<sup>141</sup> There is a group of *tap phleng* such as *tap mahori* (ดํมโหรี): this consists of three pieces and the lyrics of the three pieces do not narrate the story of any epic. Another is *Tap lomphatchaikhao* (ดํลมพัดชายเขา), which contains four pieces and lyrics are from different epics. These two *tap* do not relate to each other in each piece but all the pieces in both *tap* (*Tap mahori* and *Tap lomphatchaikhao*) are performed in the same key, and with the same drum pattern which is *nathap propkai* (see Table 3.4).

Secondly, *tap ruang* (ดํเรื่อง) is, on the other hand, a set of vocal pieces in which lyrics are from the same story and continuation of the narrative is paramount. The connection of the pieces in *tap ruang* is not the first priority of its formation and usage but it is basically smooth from one to another.<sup>142</sup> The pieces used in *tap ruang* can have different drum patterns and characteristics but they have a suite of lyrics to communicate the narrative. For example, *Tap Wiwaphrasamut* (ดํวิวาห์พระสมุทร) and *Tap Nitthrachachrit* (ดํนิทราชาคริต). These two *tap* use lyrics which communicate the narrative of the epic (see Table 3.4).

On the other hand, while *phleng tap* is a set of vocal pieces, a set of non-vocal pieces is called *phleng ruang* (เพลงเรื่อง) which literally means piece story but the musical term refers to a group of non-vocal pieces played in particular order (further information in section 4.1.6). There is an interesting comment about the construction of *phleng ruang* from Boonchuay Sovat, who suggests that ‘the purpose of selecting different pieces in *phleng ruang* is to gather a number of pieces, which is an indirect method to facilitate musicians to remember loads of pieces by using them in a particular order’.<sup>143</sup>

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<sup>141</sup> Lumyong Sowat, interviewed by Suchada Sowat, Jan 13, 2016

<sup>142</sup> More details can also be found in Chapter 4.

<sup>143</sup> Boonchuay Sovat, interviewed by Suchada Sowat, Jan 14, 2016.

Structurally, *phleng ruang* can be categorised into four genres: *phleng cha* (เพลงช้า) which mostly includes slow pieces, *phleng songmai* (เพลงสองไม้), which has moderate pieces, *phleng rew* (เพลงเร็ว), which comprises a group of fast pieces and *phleng ching* (เพลงฉิ่ง), which contains a group of moderate to fast pieces with no drum in any piece. The prominent characteristic of this kind of selection is that there is no vocal piece in any set of *phleng ruang*.

Table 3.4 Different types of musical selection in Thai music

| Types           | <i>phleng tap</i><br>(A set of vocal pieces)                               |   | <i>phleng ruang</i><br>(A set of non-vocal pieces)                   |                           |  |  |
|-----------------|--|---|--|---------------------------|--|--|
| Sub types       | <i>tap phleng</i>  | <i>tap ruang</i>  | <i>phleng cha</i>  | <i>phleng song mai</i>    | <i>phleng rew</i>                      | <i>phleng ching</i>  |
| Prominent trait | The connection of each individual piece is more important than the lyrics. | The narrative of the lyrics is more important than the connection of the music. | A set of slow pieces.  | A set of moderate pieces. | A set of fast pieces.                  | A set of moderate to slow pieces with no drum pattern.             |
| Examples        | - Tap Mahori<br>- Tap Lomphatchaikao                                       | - Tap Wiwaphrasamut<br>- Tap Nitthrachachrit                                    | - Phleng Ruang<br>Phra Ram<br>Doen Dong<br>- Phleng Ruang<br>Soi Son | - Phleng Ruang<br>Sinuan  | - Phleng Rew<br>Ruang Khaek<br>Matinmu | - Phleng Ching<br>Phra Chan<br>- Phleng Ching<br>Tuang<br>Phrathat |

Some pieces from both *phleng tap* and *phleng ruang* are selected to be performed as a theatrical repertoire in a particular way depending on the demand of the director of the theatre. Within the *Phrommas* repertoire, there are some pieces selected from both *phleng ruang* and *phleng tap*. For example, *Mon Ram Dap* (7<sup>th</sup>) is taken from *phleng ruang* selection called *Phleng Ruang Ram Dap* (เพลงเรื่องรามดาบ), *Soi Son* (19<sup>th</sup>) (สร้อยสน) is selected from *Phleng Ruang Soi Son* (เพลงเรื่องสร้อยสน), and *Phat Cha* (พัชรา) (21<sup>st</sup>) is selected from *phleng tap* called *Tap Mahori* (ด้นมโหรี). The pieces mentioned are used within a particular order within the *Phrommas* repertoire (more details can be found in

Chapter 4 about the categories of Thai pieces and Chapter 5 about a list of pieces in the *Phrommas* repertoire).

Even though the *Phrommas* repertoire is a kind of musical selection, which is conventionally considered as one of the *tap ruang* repertoires (see previous paragraph about *tap ruang*), the purpose of the selection is to communicate the narrative. The music in the *Phrommas* repertoire is well arranged at the same time. Significantly, the *Phrommas* repertoire includes both vocal pieces and a group of *naphat* pieces particularly used for theatre, even though it was not originally conceived as a musical accompaniment for actual theatre. This complicated aspect of the *Phrommas* repertoire became one of its most interesting characteristics, and this aspect will be discussed in the next section.

### **3.3.2 The *Phrommas* repertoire: ‘Composition as a selection’**

Even though the concept of musical selection was, as we have seen, already found in Thai classical music in *phleng tap* and *phleng ruang*, the method used to create the *Phrommas* repertoire represents something different. Another important factor, which leads to the significance of the *Phrommas* repertoire, is its origin as a new type of composition, which I will be here calling ‘composition of selection’.

As the *Phrommas* repertoire is arranged from existing musical pieces, each individual piece is not therefore a new composition, but the process of bringing this music together represents a new form of musical forming, and thus it can be argued that the *Phrommas* repertoire is a kind of composition: composition as musical selection. This type of composition involves the whole structure of the repertoire; individual pieces of music are not as important as how they are allocated and used together, the features that brought them together, and why they are used in a particular way. It could be argued that the centre of the *Phrommas* repertoire is the dramatic text, which plays a key role interconnecting all the other constituent parts: the text communicates the narrative, and sit is particular emotions within the narrative that shape how pieces of music are selected. According to Boonchuay Sovat, ‘the dramatic text appears to be the centre for establishing the way to use the pieces of music in the

*Phrommas* repertoire, but it is actually the emotion taking place in a particular order in the narrative that is transcribed as a literal form seen as *bot* (text or dramatic text) and that is interpreted by the music maker, choreographer, and vocalist'.<sup>144</sup> His argument draws a broader connection between the *Phrommas* repertoire both as a musical selection and as music for actual *khon* performance. Both functions of the *Phrommas* repertoire are created through the complicated structure of the dramatic text in which the emotion and the narrative are paramount. Therefore, it could be said that the narrative is the key element in the musical formation of the *Phrommas* repertoire.

This narrative also inspired the unique style of the *Phrommas* repertoire: the new form of *bot konsoet*, which was also known as *lakhon muet* (theatre in darkness), acted as a display of the individual ideas of Prince Naris, and his creation of *bot konsoet* not only introduced a new trend within Thai music, but also expressed his individual style of producing a musical work integrated with theatrical presentation. This style involves the presentation of music in order to lead people to create a theatre in their imagination, and *lakhon muet* (theatre in darkness) became one of the principal legacies of Prince Naris's musical work, which has been passed down until the present day.

Structurally, the narrative clearly determines the particular order of the pieces within the *Phrommas* repertoire, and its structure is unique due to its particular relation to the theatrical manifestation derived from the narrative; the pieces must be played in the predetermined order, an order that has been transmitted from its formation to the present (more details can be found in Chapters 5 and 6). Therefore, the narrative manifested in the dramatic text became a central substantiality that establishes the unique structure of this musical selection.

Even though there was no actual theatre when the *Phrommas* repertoire was first performed as *bot konsoet*, since then *lakhon muet* (see section 3.2.1), a conventional usage of the music with theatre, has come into being.<sup>145</sup> In that context, the same

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<sup>144</sup> Boonchuay Sovat, interviewed by Suchada Sowat, Apr 4, 2018.

<sup>145</sup> Lumyong Sowat, interviewed by Suchada Sowat, Jan 13, 2016.



relationship as within the original *bot konsoet* takes place; for example, a group of *naphat* pieces in the *Phrommas* repertoire as *bot konsoet* is performed with the same function as when those *naphat* pieces are used in the actual theatre, as they are used to accompany the actions of characters based on the narrative (more details on the *naphat* pieces can be found in Chapter 5).

However, there are particular uses of some pieces that distinguish the repertoire. For example, there is one piece which is never used in a theatrical context as it is conventionally used in other musical functions: *Phat Cha* (พัชชา) which is part of the *mahori* (มโหรี) repertoire (a group of pieces performed as entertainment for the King's relaxation). *Phat Cha* is used in the *Phrommas* repertoire to describe the moment that Phra Lak and his monkey army enjoy the beautiful dance of angels. As they are serenely unaware of the surrounding danger so the music is, therefore, appropriate.

Furthermore, there is a piece that is only used in the *Phrommas* repertoire, *He Klom Chang* (เห่กล่อมช้าง); it is believed that this was composed specifically for the *Phrommas* and it has never been used in other repertoires.<sup>146</sup> The musical characteristics of *He Klom Chang* illustrate the manifestation of theatrical meaning: the movement of music was designed to represent the movement of the angel in the air (more details can be found in Chapter 5).

In addition, some prominent musical features in the *Phrommas* repertoire make it outstanding: in the piece called *Chang Prasan Nga* (ช้างประสานงา), the repetition of the vocal part emphasises the meaning of the lyrics, as the first and second cycles employ different keys but use the same vocal practice and lyrics. Furthermore, the use of particular keys in *Soi Son* in the *Phrommas* repertoire, which is different to the original key of *Soi Son* used within the *phleng ruang* function, could reflect the idea of transposition due to theatrical usage and also the smooth connection from one piece to another as a musical selection in which the pieces are performed in order and the harmonious connection of the pieces is crucial.

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<sup>146</sup> Boonchuay Sovat, interviewed by Suchada Sowat, Jan 14, 2016.

Significantly, the *Phrommas* repertoire also brings together two distinct types of music, one that was used to accompany theatrical performances and a second that was used for entertainment outside of the theatre. This combination resulted in a distinctive new form of musical selection. It was not until the period of Prince Naris that a group of pieces used with the theatre were gathered as a proper selection. Traditionally, musicians and singers had improvised their performances along with theatrical narrative using stock repertoires; each performance therefore varied; there was no evidence of any deliberate process of theatrical selection mentioned before 1899.<sup>147</sup> This performance practice constitutes ‘oral theory’<sup>148</sup> transmitted from musician to musician. The establishment of the *bot konsoet* became the first written document in which there is dramatic text with predetermined pieces of music performed in a particular order.

Finally, the importance of the *Phrommas* repertoire comes about through its structural features as a musical selection. It works as a model of musical repertoire for theatre taught within the music institutions for professional musicians until the present day (see more details in Chapter 6); musicians and singers can apply the predetermined formation of music in the *Phrommas* repertoire to understand and perform other musical repertoires for theatre. From this perspective, part of the significance of the *Phrommas* repertoire is found in terms of its application by those within the Thai classical music community.

In conclusion, it could be argued that the *Phrommas* repertoire is a kind of composition as a selection, which comes into being through a number of related elements, including the narrative seen as the dramatic text, conventional usage of music, and personal experience of the arranger. These features have made the *Phrommas* repertoire important in terms of both the innovative musical work and in the reconstruction of music for theatre within the Thai classical music community. The *Phrommas* repertoire itself embraces sophisticated elements of music, literature, and theatre that enable its complicated functions as both musical selection and music for theatre seen through its invention and transformation. Thereby, the *Phrommas*

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<sup>147</sup> Boonchuay Sovat, interviewed by Suchada Sowat, Apr 4, 2018.

<sup>148</sup> The term ‘oral theory’ in this research refers to the principle of musical practice passed down from generation to the next by oral tradition.

repertoire is a canonical example of how Thai music is created, used, and functions within the culture and how it is associated with political, musical, theatrical, cultural, and ethical influences, and it is its function as a multi-expressive art form which makes it of such value and interest.

## Chapter 4

### Musical elements

To study the role and function of the music that makes up the *Phrommas* repertoire, it is necessary to understand a number of the key musical elements. This chapter will consider the basic musical concepts in order to understand the particular musical characteristics of this repertoire in terms of the broader relationship between Thai classical music and theatre. The first section of the chapter (4.1) will look at a number of key elements within Thai classical music, while the second section (4.2), will explain the important elements that relate to music for theatre and, in particular, *khon* performance, which is key to understanding the *Phrommas* repertoire performed with *khon* - the material in this chapter unlocks the musical analysis undertaken in Chapter 5.

#### 4.1 Structural elements

##### 4.1.1 Groups of Thai musical instruments

Thai musical instruments can be divided into four main categories: 1) *khruang dit* (เครื่องดีด) (plucked), 2) *khruang si* (เครื่องสี) (bowed), 3) *khruang ti* (เครื่องตี) (percussion) divided into melodic and rhythmic percussion, and 4) *khruang pao* (เครื่องเป่า) (woodwind).<sup>149</sup> This division is based on the way instruments are played; while *khruang* means ‘instrument’, the second term refers to the action of playing: *dit* (ดีด) (Plucking), *si* (สี) (Bowling), *ti* (ตี) (Hitting), *pao* (เป่า) (Blowing).<sup>150</sup> Table 4.1 gives examples of Thai musical instruments within the particular types.<sup>151</sup>

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<sup>149</sup> Montri Tramot, *Duriyang-kha-sat Thai*, 6.

<sup>150</sup> Pamela Myers-Moro, *Thai music and musicians in contemporary Bangkok* (Berkeley: Centre of South and Southeast Asia Studies, University of California 1993), 26.

<sup>151</sup> More details on Thai musical instruments can be found in Morton’s *The Traditional Music of Thailand* (1976).

Importantly, Thai instruments are further categorised into two main groups based on their tone and role within the ensemble.<sup>152</sup> While the melodic instruments that produce high, treble and loud sounds are considered as *khruang nam* (เครื่องนำ) or *phuak nam* (พวคนำ) (leader), the others that provide low or soft sounds are *khruang tam* (เครื่องตาม) or *phuak tam* (พวกลตาม) (follower) (see Table 4.1). The instruments that provide the rhythmic pattern such as the *ching* and certain types of drums are not considered as either *khruang nam* or *khruang tam*. The idea of *khruang nam* and *khruang tam* is also applied to Thai musical ensembles, thus there are three main types of Thai musical ensembles: *piphat* (ปี่พาทย์), *khruangsai* (เครื่องสาย), and *mahori* (มโหรี)<sup>153</sup> and musical instruments in each ensemble can be divided as shown.

Table 4.1 Musical instruments divided into *khruang nam* and *khruang tam*

| <b>Musical ensemble</b>    | <b><i>khruang nam</i><br/>(leader)</b>       | <b><i>khruang tam</i><br/>(follower)</b>  |
|----------------------------|--|---|
| <i>piphat</i> ensemble     | <i>pi nai</i> (oboe)                         | <i>ranat thum</i> (alto xylophone)        |
|                            | <i>ranat ek</i> (treble xylophone)           | <i>khong wong yai</i> (large gong circle) |
|                            |  | <i>khong wong lek</i> (small gong circle) |
| <i>khruangsai</i> ensemble | <i>so duang</i> (treble fiddle)              | <i>so u</i> (alto fiddle)                 |
|                            | <i>chakhe</i> (zither)                       | <i>khloi phiang o</i> (flute)             |
| <i>mahori</i> ensemble     | <i>ranat ek</i> (treble xylophone)           | <i>ranat thum</i> (alto xylophone)        |
|                            | <i>so duang</i> (treble fiddle)              | <i>so u</i> (alto fiddle)                 |
|                            | <i>chakhe</i> (zither)                       | <i>khong klang</i> (medium gong circle)   |
|                            | <i>so sam sai</i><br>(three-stringed fiddle) | <i>khloi phiang o</i> (flute)             |

The functions of *khruang nam* and *khruang tam* are applied where there are separated musical phrases played by different groups of instruments. Musicians have been taught when they learnt the piece<sup>154</sup> that when they reach a part that involves a melodic alternation part, the whole ensemble will separate as either *khruang nam* or *khruang tam* (Figure 4.1 gives an example).

<sup>152</sup> Boonchuay Sovat, interviewed by Suchada Sowat, Jan 14, 2016.

<sup>153</sup> See Chapter 4 (4.2.4) for more details about Thai musical ensembles.

<sup>154</sup> Lumyong Sowat, interviewed by Suchada Sowat, Jan 15, 2016.

Figure 4.1 Example of *khruang nam* and *khruang tam* (*Soi Son*)

Instrument 1 is *khruang nam* whereas Instrument 2 is *khruang tam*

#### 4.1.2 Key and pitch arrangement: Seven *thang* (ทางเสียง)

Theoretically, the Thai tuning system involves the division of the octave into seven equally-spaced pitches, and within certain musical ensembles there is a group of particular notes used in each pitch level.<sup>155</sup> In Thai music theory, those pitch levels are called *thang* (ทาง) or *thang siang* (ทางเสียง). The word *thang* has several meanings in Thai music terminology. *Thang* literally means the way or path, but *thang* has three musical meanings as follows: 1) a unique style of musical performance created by a particular master;<sup>156</sup> 2) the idiomatic variation of a particular musical instrument developed from the basic melody such as *thang ranat ek* (*ranat ek*'s realisation), *thang ranat thum* (*ranat thum*'s realisation), etc.; and 3) the different 'keys' used in Thai music.<sup>157</sup>

The third of these is most relevant for the present purposes. There are seven *thang* within Thai music: (1) *thang phiang o lang* (ทางเพียงออล่าง), (2) *thang nai* (ทางใน), (3) *thang klang* (ทางกลาง), (4) *thang phiang o bon* (ทางเพียงออบน), (5) *thang nok* (ทางนอก หรือ ทางกรวด), (6) *thang klang hap* (ทางกลางแหบ), and (7) *thang chawa* (ทางขวา) (see Table 4.3). The names of all *thang* derive from certain types of woodwind instruments used within particular ensembles. However, in order to explain the pitch arrangement and the usage

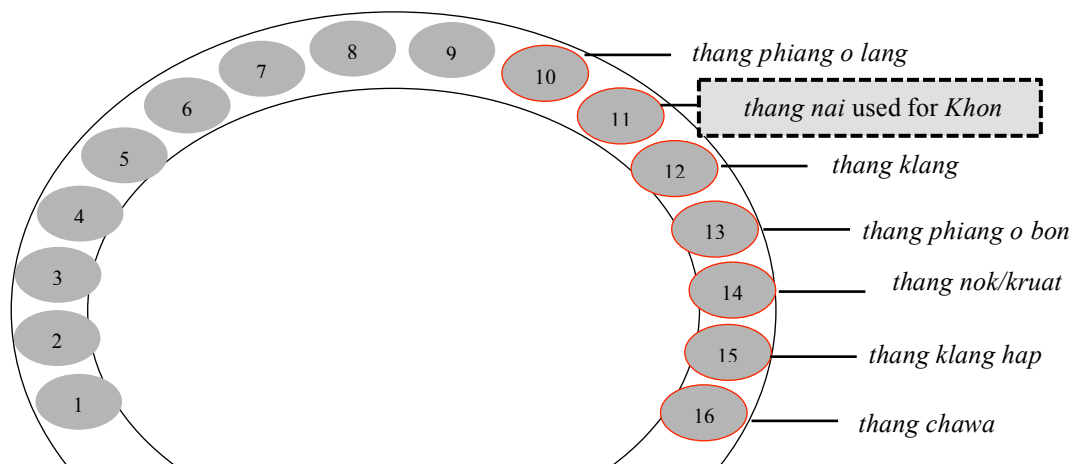
<sup>155</sup> Boonchuay Sovat, *The Sound Frequency of the Notes used in the Thai Musical Scale* (Bangkok: Ruankaew Print, 1999), 23.

<sup>156</sup> In the Thai classical music community, the existing pieces can be remade based on particular sophisticated masters making their own style of musical practice within that piece. For example, the piece called *Phaya Sok* (one of the advanced pieces that requires highly-skilled musicians to play its solo version), has a number of versions based on different masters' styles. Each style intends to show the musical ability and creativities of the masters who make it, such as *Phaya Sok* based on Master A's style or *Phaya Sok* based on Master B's style.

<sup>157</sup> Tramot, *Duriyangkhasatthai* (Bangkok, 1938), 36.

of different *thang*, it would be easier to talk about them in relation to the pitches located on the *khong wong yai* (a large gong circle); the first pitch, *thang phiang o lang* appears as the tenth gong (out of sixteen gongs) of the *khong wong yai* as seen in Figure 4.2 and the next *thang* will employ the higher pitch as the starting note of each *thang* respectively (See Table 4.2).<sup>158</sup>

Figure 4.2 The level of starting notes of seven *thang* located on the *khong wong yai*



The numbers located in the picture of the *khong wong yai* (from the 10<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> gong pieces) identify the first note of a particular *Thang* that includes seven notes for each.

Table 4.2 Pitch order of each *thang*

| Thang                | Woodwind instrument used in the ensemble | Order of pitches located on the <i>khong wong yai</i> |   |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|----------------------|--|---|---|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
|                      |  | 1   | 2 | 3   | 4   | 5   | 6   | 7   | 8   | 9   | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 |
| <i>Phiang o Lang</i> | <i>Khloi phiang o</i>                    |   |   | 1/8 |     |     |     |     |     |     | 1  | 2  | 3  | 4  | 5  | 6  | 7  |
| <i>Nai</i>           | <i>pi nai</i>                            |   |   | 7   | 1/8 |     |     |     |     |     |    | 1  | 2  | 3  | 4  | 5  | 6  |
| <i>Klang</i>         | <i>pi klang</i>                          |   |   | 6   | 7   | 1/8 |     |     |     |     |    |    | 1  | 2  | 3  | 4  | 5  |
| <i>Phiang o Bon</i>  | <i>khloi phiang o</i>                    |   |   | 5   | 6   | 7   | 1/8 |     |     |     |    |    |    | 1  | 2  | 3  | 4  |
| <i>Nok</i>           | <i>pi nok</i>                            |   |   | 4   | 5   | 6   | 7   | 1/8 |     |     |    |    |    |    | 1  | 2  | 3  |
| <i>Klang hap</i>     | <i>pi klang</i>                          |   |   | 3   | 4   | 5   | 6   | 7   | 1/8 |     |    |    |    |    |    | 1  | 2  |
| <i>Chawa</i>         | <i>pi chawa</i>                          |   |   | 2   | 3   | 4   | 5   | 6   | 7   | 1/8 |    |    |    |    |    |    | 1  |

Note: all *thang* are based on an equal-distant pitch system.

<sup>158</sup> Tramot, *Duriyangkhasatthai*, 37.

Table 4.3 describes the features of each *thang* along with the characteristics of the particular musical ensemble where it is used.

Table 4.3 Table of *thang* and its usages

| <i>Thang</i>  | Musical ensemble and its usage  |
|---|---|
| 1) <i>Thang phiang o lang</i> (ทางเพียงออคำง): used in the <i>piphat</i> ensembles to accompany <i>lakhon</i> (dance drama).  | The prominent features of this <i>piphat</i> ensemble used for <i>lakhon</i> are the use of <i>thang phiang o lang</i> , <i>mai nuam</i> (ไม้ نرم) (soft mallets) for melodic percussion instruments, <i>khluai phiang o</i> (ขลุ่ยเพียงออ) (Thai flute) and <i>so u</i> (ซออุ) (alto fiddle).  |
| 2) <i>Thang nai</i> (ทางไน): used in the <i>piphat</i> ensemble to accompany <i>khon</i> (masked dance-drama).                | The <i>piphat</i> ensemble particularly used for accompanying <i>khon</i> performance. The prominent features are the use of <i>mai khaeng</i> (ไม้แข็ง) (hard pair of mallets) for melodic percussions such as <i>ranat ek</i> , and the use of <i>pi nai</i> (Thai oboe). This kind of <i>piphat</i> ensemble is also used for the ritual known as <i>wong piphat phi thi</i> (วงปี่พาทย์พิธี).   |
| 3) <i>Thang klang</i> (ทางกลาง): used in the <i>piphat</i> ensemble to accompany <i>nang yai</i> (large shadow play).         | The <i>piphat</i> ensemble used for <i>nang yai</i> (หนังใหญ่) (large shadow play) is different to other types of <i>piphat</i> ensemble. It uses <i>mai khaeng</i> (ไม้แข็ง) (hard pair of mallets) for melodic percussion, and the <i>pi klang</i> (ปี่กลาง) (a kind of Thai oboe that has a higher pitch than <i>pi nai</i> ) in the ensemble. This musical ensemble is only used for <i>nang yai</i> (large shadow play).   |
| 4) <i>Thang phiang o bon</i> (ทางเพียงอบน): used in the <i>khruangsai</i> and <i>mahori</i> ensembles.                        | The <i>khruangsai</i> ensemble (วงเครื่องสาย) includes stringed instruments (bowed and plucked instruments) together with some percussion and woodwind instruments. The <i>mahori</i> ensemble (วงมโหรี) is used to perform purely music with no relation to the theatre.   |
| 5) <i>Thang nok</i> (ทางนอก): used for the <i>piphat sepha</i> ensemble.  | The <i>piphat sepha</i> ensemble (วงปี่พาทย์เสภา) is a type of <i>piphat</i> ensemble particularly used with <i>khap sepha</i> (ขับเสภา). <sup>159</sup> This <i>piphat</i> ensemble will be played alternately with <i>khap sepha</i> . The prominent features of this ensemble can be seen through the use of <i>thang nok</i> (also known as <i>thang kruat</i> ), the use of <i>mai khaeng</i> (ไม้แข็ง) (hard pair of mallets) for melodic percussion instruments, as well as the use of <i>pi nok</i> (ปี่นอก) (Thai oboe pitched a fourth higher than the <i>pi nai</i> ). |
| 6) <i>Thang klang hap</i> (ทางกลางแหบ): is not normally used but it is sometimes used in the same way as <i>thang klang</i> . | The <i>piphat</i> ensemble used for <i>nang yai</i> (large shadow play) as in <i>thang klang</i> .  |
| 7) <i>Thang chawa</i> (ทางชวา): used in the <i>khruangsai pi chawa</i> ensemble.  | The <i>khruangsai pi chawa</i> ensemble (วงเครื่องสายปี่ชวา) has the same instruments as the <i>khruangsai</i> ensemble. However, the prominent features of this musical ensemble are the use of <i>thang chawa</i> and the use of <i>pi chawa</i> (ปี่ชวา) (a kind of Thai oboe) in the ensemble. This kind of musical ensemble has the function of performing purely music.   |

<sup>159</sup> *Khap sepha* is a traditional Thai vocalisation that employs the mix of recitation and singing to narrate a story derived from a traditional epic or folk tale.



In the *Phrommas* repertoire, the *thang* employed is *thang nai*, which is suitable for the woodwind instrument called *pi nai* that is a vital component of the *piphat* ensemble used for *khon*. Woodwind instruments are the key factor in determining the group of pitches employed in different *thang*, and the musical ensemble in which particular woodwind instruments are used also plays a vital role in signifying the usage for different occasions.

### 4.1.3 The concept of ‘basic melody’ and its application to the *Phrommas* repertoire

In order to understand the music of the *Phrommas* repertoire, it is necessary first to consider the principles of melodic organisation within Thai music. This section discusses the principal concepts of the basic melody that are used in the notation within Chapter 5. A number of related aspects are involved here, including knowledge coming from Thai classical music theory, its application in relation to the *Phrommas* repertoire, and how the basic melody informs work in the analytical chapter to follow.

#### 4.1.3.1 *Thamnonglak* (ทำนองหลัก)

*Thamnong* (ทำนอง) literally means ‘melody’, whereas *lak* (หลัก) means ‘principal, main or core’; musically then, *thamnonglak* means the basic melody or the principal melody working as a core of the piece. The importance of the basic melody is that it is a ‘skeleton’ of the piece, which can be developed into particular realisations by specific instruments (*thang*).<sup>160</sup> In other words, different musical instruments (*thang*) have their own version of playing, developed from *thamnonglak*. This notion has been named differently in English by different writers: amongst the non-Thai scholars who have talked about this concept, Morton used the word ‘variants’ in his 1967 work<sup>161</sup>, whilst the word ‘realisation’ is preferred by Myers<sup>162</sup> and Silkstone.<sup>163</sup> Thai scholars have also

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<sup>160</sup> *Thang* in this section does not mean the key but refers to the particular realisation of musical instruments such as *thang ranat ek* (*ranat ek*’s version).

<sup>161</sup> Morton, *The Traditional Music of Thailand*, 21.

<sup>162</sup> Myers-Moro, *Thai music and musicians in contemporary Bangkok*, 79.

<sup>163</sup> Silkstone, *Learning Thai Classical Music: Memorisation and Improvisation*. 11.

proposed further words: while Ketukaenchan preferred ‘variation-making’ in 1989 for his research<sup>164</sup>, Sumrongthong in her 1997 thesis, used a group of phrases: the way of performing on a particular instrument, and its characteristic realisation/embellishment of the basic melody to refer to this same concept.<sup>165</sup> Although there are various terms used here, they all recognise the concept of ‘*thang*’ as identifying the significance of individual musical instrumental parts developed from *thamnonglak* (the basic melody).

Another important element, which always comes along with *thamnonglak* is ‘*luk tok*’ (ลูกตก). The word *luk* (ลูก) literally means a unit or a component whereas *tok* (ตก) means to fall down, and these two words are put together to refer to the main notes in a particular musical sentence within the piece. *Luk tok* works as a meeting point between *thamnonglak* and different realisations of various musical instruments as well as the vocal part. Figure 4.3 gives an example of *luk tok* within *thamnonglak* in the piece called *Chang Prasan Nga*.

Figure 4.3 *Thamnonglak* and *luk tok* (in *Chang Prasan Nga*)

The figure displays three staves of musical notation for the Khong Wong Yai instrument. Each staff is labeled 'Khong Wong Yai' on the left. The first staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The melody consists of several measures, with an 'X' marking a specific note in the final measure. The second staff starts with a measure number '4' and continues the melody, with another 'X' marking a note. The third staff starts with a measure number '7' and continues the melody, with 'X' markings above the first and last notes. The notation includes various rhythmic values and accidentals.

‘X’ identifies *luk tok*.

The rhythmic instruments are not directly involved in articulating the melodic aspect of *thamnonglak*, but it is necessary for the musicians who play rhythmic instruments to understand *thamnonglak* in order to execute their performance properly.

<sup>164</sup> Ketukaenchan, *The Thang of The Khong wong yai and Ranat Ek a Transcription and analysis of musical practice in Thai music*, Vol.II, 3.

<sup>165</sup> Sumrongthong, *Melodic organisation and improvisation in Thai music with special reference to the Thang Ranaat Eek*, 57.

This further demonstrates the importance of *thamnonglak* in terms of the structural features of Thai music, and it is applied to any kind of Thai classical music.

#### 4.1.3.2 *The application of thamnonglak in the Phrommas repertoire*

Although *thamnonglak* is the basic melody to be memorised by the musicians in the ensemble, it is played by only one musical instrument, the *khong wong yai* (large gong circle), whose role is to provide the basic melody for the ensemble. However, as Boonchuay Sovat remarked, ‘the reason why the *khong wong yai* usually gives the basic melody to the ensemble does not mean that the *khong wong yai* has no realisation; it actually has, but there has been an agreement that the *khong wong yai* always plays only the basic melody in the ensemble’.<sup>166</sup>

The different instruments in the *piphat* ensemble have particular roles, and this is especially true for the *khong wong yai* in relation to the basic melody. Lumyong Sowat, a senior Thai classical music master who has expertise on the *khong wong yai*, emphasised the significance of *thamnonglak* by a simple metaphor: ‘the house needs to have the main pillar or the pole which has to be stable, consistent as well as reliable to keep the house strong; this concept should have been instilled into the *khong wong yai* players’.<sup>167</sup> Their roles are not to control other instruments in the ensemble, but rather to create a sense of strength and stability, which is a vital part of the tradition of performing Thai classical music as an ensemble.

Within the *piphat* ensemble, then, the role of *thamnonglak* given by the *khong wong yai* is most commonly simply to provide the basic melody. However, where music is used in theatre, the emphasis in practice is often towards the relationship between vocal and instrumental parts and their role in accompanying the action, rather than the demonstration of how each musical instrument performs its own *thang* (realisation).<sup>168</sup> There are some pieces in which *thamnonglak* is not as important as the vocal melody, which requires particular types of vocalisation. For example in *Rue Rai* (เรือสำเภา) and *Rai*

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<sup>166</sup> Boonchuay Sovat, interviewed by Suchada Sowat, Jan 14, 2016.

<sup>167</sup> Lumyong Sowat, interviewed by Suchada Sowat, Jan 15, 2016.

<sup>168</sup> See more details on the different meanings of *thang* in section 4.1.3.

*Rut* (รำขลุ่ย), there is no basic melody performed in the instrumental parts, it is pure vocalisation performed along with the *krap phuang* (กรับพวง) (hand clapper). However, there is a basic melody within the vocalisation of *Rue Rai* and *Rai Rut* perceived by the singer; the singer has to create a kind of compromise between the demands of the tones of the language<sup>169</sup> – which suggest particular pitch levels - and the shape of the conceptualised melodic line.

For pieces that have both vocal and instrumental parts, *thamnonglak* still acts as the basic melody that is developed to be the vocal part as well. Especially in the pieces in which the vocal part has its own realisation based on the same vocal melody but with changeable lyrics, the common melody or the destination notes (*luk tok*) found in *thamnonglak* are considered vital as the pillar for the vocal variation such as *Chang Prasan Nga* (ช้างประสาธนา). Interestingly, *He Choet Ching* (เห่เชิดฉิ่ง) is the unique exception in which vocal and instrumental parts play different melodies. On the other hand, there is a piece within the *Phrommas* repertoire in which the role of the *khong wong yai* is changeable: in *Soi Son* (สร้อยसन), the role of the instruments in the ensemble are changed, and divided into two groups: leader and follower, with the *khong wong yai* no longer playing *thamnonglak* at all (this will be discussed in detail in the musical analysis within Chapter 5).

#### 4.1.4 Phrase and sub-phrase

There are three main units that make up phrases of differing lengths: *wak* (วรรค) (‘phrase’), *prayok* (ประโยค) (‘sentence’), and *thon* (ท่อน) (‘part or section’). Theoretically two *wak* are equivalent to one *prayok*, whereas the number of *prayok* can be extended according to the composer’s wish, but this has to relate to the length of the *nathap* (หน้าทับ) (drum pattern)<sup>170</sup>, as will be explained in the next section. With regard to *thon* (ท่อน) (sections), some pieces have a special vocabulary to identify the section; within the *Phrommas* repertoire, *Choet* (เชิด) includes several sections, each of which is called *tua*

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<sup>169</sup> Tanese-Ito. “The relationship between speech-tones and vocal melody in Thai court song”, 109.

<sup>170</sup> Sovat, “Analysis of Khaek Mon Bankkhunphrom Melody,” 138.

(ตัว) ('body'). Figure 4.4 illustrates the example of *wak*, *prayok* and *thon* as found in the first section of the piece called *Khaek Borathet song chan* (แขกบรเทศ สองชั้น).

Figure 4.4 musical phrases within *Khaek Borathet song chan* (แขกบรเทศ สองชั้น) (Section 1)

The figure shows a musical staff in 2/4 time. The melody consists of several phrases. Below the staff, brackets indicate the following groupings:

- Wak 1** to **Wak 8**: Eight individual rhythmic units, each marked with a bracket.
- Pra-yok 1** to **Pra-yok 4**: Four larger rhythmic units, each marked with a bracket that spans multiple 'Wak' units.
- Thon 1 = Section 1**: A single large bracket spanning the entire duration of the first section, encompassing all 'Wak' and 'Pra-yok' units.

#### 4.1.5 Rhythmic structure and drum pattern

##### 4.1.5.1 *Changwa* (จังหวะ)

*Changwa* meaning rhythm, embraces the whole field of rhythmic elements, including the rhythmic pattern employed in particular pieces and the measurement of the piece's length. *Changwa* is used as a prefix followed by a particular identification of certain types. Montri Tramot, National Artist of Thailand, proposed a definition of *changwa* as follows: 1) *changwa thuapai* (จังหวะทั่วไป) is a formation of regular pulses taking place by weak and strong beats in music. *Thuapai* (ทั่วไป) literally means 'being general', and this concept can be understood through the rhythm of clapping which synchronises with the beat of any piece; 2) *changwa ching* (จังหวะฉิ่ง) means the rhythmic pattern provided by *ching* (a pair of small cup cymbals), a significant rhythmic instrument in the ensemble; and 3) *changwa nathap* (จังหวะหน้าทับ) indicates the rhythm formed by the drum pattern of the piece.<sup>171</sup> The last two of these terms are used to understand musical structure because they can be linked to further structural elements within the piece. *Changwa* is used as a prefix not only to classify particular types of

<sup>171</sup> Tramot, *Duriyangkhasatthai*: 28-29.

rhythmic formations, but also to quantify a number of units within the piece relating to the use of the drum pattern (*nathap*).

#### 4.1.5.2 *Nathap* (หน้าทับ)

*Nathap* means the duty of the drum; the term is derived from two others: *nathi* (หน้าที่) (role or duty) and *thap* (ทับ) (an ancient single-headed drum).<sup>172</sup> *Nathap* plays a crucial role in Thai classical music. There are three main types of *nathap*: 1) *nathap prop kai* (หน้าทับปรบไก่อ้), 2) *nathap song mai* (หน้าทับสองไม้) and 3) *nathap phiset* (หน้าทับพิเศษ). *Nathap prop kai* is used in a piece whose musical phrasing is strict, regular and predictable, whereas *nathap song mai* is used where it is irregular, flexible and unpredictable. *Nathap phiset* (special drum pattern) is used for particular pieces requiring a specific drum pattern other than the first two types.

*Nathap* aligns with *changwa* in measuring the length of a piece. Theoretically, one unit of each *nathap* is equivalent to one *changwa* (in which case it means a single unit of a piece’s length). In figure 4.5 *nathap* is presented by using the Thai system of notation: this involves eight *hong* (ห้อง) (bar) per line with each bar comprising four notes. The strong beat is at the end of the bar. Syllables are used to represent the different sounds produced by the drum. The drum sounds involved are: *tham* (ทั้ม) represented as ‘th’, *ting* (ติง) represented as ‘t’, *cho* (โ้ชะ), and *cha* (ชะ).

Figure 4.5 Examples of *nathap*

##### 1. *Nathap prop kai* (หน้าทับปรบไก่อ้)

*sam chan* (สามชั้น)

|          |           |          |           |          |           |           |           |
|----------|-----------|----------|-----------|----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| - th – t | - cho-cha | -cho-cha | - cho-cha | - - - -  | - cho-cha | - cho-cha | - cho-cha |
| - t - t  | - th t th | t th t - | - cho-cha | - t - th | - t - t   | - th - t  | - t - th  |

*song chan* (สองชั้น)

|          |           |           |           |          |         |          |          |
|----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|----------|---------|----------|----------|
| - th – t | - cho-cha | - cho-cha | - cho-cha | - t - th | - t - t | - th - t | - t - th |
|----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|----------|---------|----------|----------|

<sup>172</sup> Ibid., 27.

*chan diao* (ชั้นเดียว)

|          |         |          |           |
|----------|---------|----------|-----------|
| - t - th | - t - - | t th - t | - th t th |
|----------|---------|----------|-----------|

2. *Nathap song mai* (หน้าทับสองไม้)

*sam chan* (สามชั้น)

|          |           |           |           |         |           |         |           |
|----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|---------|-----------|---------|-----------|
| - th - t | - cho-cha | - cho-cha | - cho-cha | - t - t | - th t th | - t - t | - th t th |
|----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|---------|-----------|---------|-----------|

*song chan* (สองชั้น)

|           |         |           |          |         |
|-----------|---------|-----------|----------|---------|
| -- chocha | t t - t | -- chocha | t t - th | - t - - |
|-----------|---------|-----------|----------|---------|

*chan diao* (ชั้นเดียว)

|           |          |         |
|-----------|----------|---------|
| -- chocha | t t - th | - t - - |
|-----------|----------|---------|

Within the *Phrommas* repertoire, there are pieces that employ irregular drum patterns (*nathap phiset*). An example is *La* (ลา), in which the drum pattern is called *nathap phleng la* (หน้าทับเพลงลา). *Nathap phiset* is mostly found in *naphat* pieces, and the drum patterns are performed by a combination of two types of drums: *taphon* (ตะโพน), a double-headed drum and *klong that* (กลองทัด), a pair of large barrel-shaped drums played with sticks. Importantly, the length of the *naphat* piece is defined by the number of beats played by the *klong that*, known as ‘*maiklong*’ (ไม้กลอง) or ‘*mai*’ (ไม้) *mai* (ไม้)<sup>173</sup> means ‘stick’). There are two main types of *maiklong*: *maidoen* (ไม้เดิน) (consistent beats) and *maila* (ไม้ลา) (the swing or irregular beat). These two types of *maiklong* are applied to the *naphat* pieces (see Figure 4.6). The number of *maidoen* (ไม้เดิน) or *mai* (ไม้) is used to identify how long the piece is. The stroke on the *klong that* is equivalent to one *mai* and the *klong that* pattern is always synchronised with the *taphon* pattern. In the notation below, different notes in the *taphon* part represent different sounds of the *taphon* played for the piece *La*, and the *klong that* part shows two sounds of *klong that* played with two hands (see the notation policy for all representations of drum patterns and Chapter 5 section 5.3.1.1 for an example of *taphon* sounds).

<sup>173</sup> The literal meaning of *mai* (ไม้) used in general context, is ‘wood’.

Figure 4.6: Example of drum pattern used in a *naphat* piece (*maiklong* in *La*)

The image shows a musical score for two instruments: Taphon and Klong That. The score is written in 2/4 time and consists of five systems. The top staff is for Taphon and the bottom staff is for Klong That. The tempo is marked as 'approx 80'. The piece is labeled 'Mai Doen 1' through 'Mai La etc.' and ends with a 'rit.' marking.

#### 4.1.5.3 *Atra* (อัตรา)

*Atra* literally means a rate, but in Thai music this word means musical metre.<sup>174</sup> The function of *atra* is always bound with the *nathap* (drum pattern) because they are used together to identify particular types of rhythmic pattern in any piece. Different *atra* indicate different lengths of *nathap*, which also thereby indicate the length of the piece. *nathap* and *atra* function alongside the concept of ‘*chan*’ (ชั้น), which literally means level. There are three main levels within Thai music: *sam chan* (สามชั้น) (*sam* means three), *song chan* (สองชั้น) (*song* means two), and *chan diao* (ชั้นเดียว) (*chan diao* means single level). Theoretically, *sam chan* is the longest length based on the *nathap* pattern and *chan diao* is the shortest. For example, if *nathap* is notated, *nathap prop kai sam chan* is sixteen bars, *nathap prop kai song chan* is eight bars, and *nathap prop kai chan diao* is four bars.

<sup>174</sup> Myers-Moro, *Thai music and musicians in contemporary Bangkok* (USA: University of California at Berkeley, 1993), 85



Another musical element that relates to the concept of *atra* and *nathap* involves the *ching* (a pair of small cup cymbals), which plays a key role.<sup>175</sup> The *ching* can produce two main sounds: *ching* (ฉิ่ง) (open sound) and *chap* (ฉับ) (damped sound). While *ching* regulates the soft beat, *chap* regulates the hard or strong beat in the piece. The frequency of *ching* strokes (*ching* and *chap*) is linked to particular *atra* and *nathap*; a number of the *ching* strokes within certain *nathap* are based on the *atra*, which quantifies the *ching* strokes in the piece; Figure 4.7 shows how this relates.

Figure 4.7 *Ching* strokes within one *nathap* and *atra*

|   |                |
|---|----------------|
| - | = <i>ching</i> |
| + | = <i>chap</i>  |

*Nathap (atra sam chan)*

|                      |          |           |          |          |          |          |          |          |
|----------------------|----------|-----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| <i>Ching</i> strokes |          | -         |          | +        |          | -        |          | +        |
| Drum pattern         | - th - t | -cho-cha  | -cho-cha | -cho-cha | - - - -  | -cho-cha | -cho-cha | -cho-cha |
|                      |          | -         |          | +        |          | -        |          | +        |
|                      | - t - t  | - th t th | t th - t | -cho-cha | - t - th | - t - t  | - th - t | - t - th |

*Nathap prop kai (atra song chan)*

|                      |          |          |          |          |          |         |          |          |
|----------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|---------|----------|----------|
| <i>Ching</i> strokes | -        | +        | -        | +        | -        | +       | -        | +        |
| Drum pattern         | - th - t | -cho-cha | -cho-cha | -cho-cha | - t - th | - t - t | - th - t | - t - th |

*Nathap prop kai (atra chan diao)*

|                      |          |         |          |           |
|----------------------|----------|---------|----------|-----------|
| <i>Ching</i> strokes | - +      | - +     | - +      | - +       |
| Drum pattern         | - - t th | - t - - | t th - t | - th t th |

<sup>175</sup> Boonchuay Sovat, interviewed by Suchada Sowat, Jan 14, 2016.

#### 4.1.6 Categories of pieces

The *Phrommas* repertoire collects together pieces that belong to specific categories according to the theory of Thai classical music. Thai classical music can be classified into three main types: *phleng naphat* (เพลงหน้าพาทย์), *phleng ruang* (เพลงเรื่อง), and *phleng mahori* (เพลงมโหรี).<sup>176</sup> The word *phleng* means ‘piece’ and does not distinguish between vocal and non-vocal music; *phleng* is used as a prefix followed by the name of the specific composition, but can also be followed by the name of particular categories of Thai classical pieces. For example, *phleng Rua* refers to a specific piece whereas *phleng naphat* refers to the category of pieces to which *Rua* belongs; each of these categories has its own particular attributes and functions. In what follows, the fundamental properties of each of the main categories of piece will be discussed.

***Phleng naphat*** (เพลงหน้าพาทย์) is one of the most important categories of Thai classical pieces. *Naphat* is the piece to accompany or represent a particular action and these are widely used as ritual repertoire, as each *naphat* represents particular parts of a ritual. There are three levels of *naphat* piece: 1) *naphat chanton* (หน้าพาทย์ชั้นต้น) (primary-level *naphat*), 2) *naphat chanklang* (หน้าพาทย์ชั้นกลาง) (middle-level *naphat*), and 3) *naphat chansung* (หน้าพาทย์ชั้นสูง) (high-level *naphat*). Each level has an associated group of pieces, and, in accordance with tradition, musicians who play *naphat* must start from the primary level and finally progress to the high level. Table 4.4 gives examples of the different levels of *naphat* pieces.

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<sup>176</sup> Tramot, *Duriyangkhasat Thai*, 22.

Table 4.4 Levels of *naphat* repertoire

| Level <sup>177</sup>                                     | Name of piece   |
|--|---|
| <i>Naphat chanton</i><br>(Primary-level <i>naphat</i> )  | <i>Choet, Samoe, La, Rua, Ot, Krao Nai, Krao Nok</i> etc.             |
| <i>Naphat chanklang</i><br>(Middle-level <i>naphat</i> ) | <i>Trabongkan, Tra Nimit, Tra Non, Tra Hom Rong</i> etc.              |
| <i>Naphat chansung</i><br>(High-level <i>naphat</i> )    | <i>Phram Ok, Phram Khao, Bat Sakuni, and Tra Ong Phra Phirap</i> etc. |

*Naphat* is used in two contexts within Thai classical music: 1) for the *wai khru* (พิธีไหว้ครู) ceremony<sup>178</sup>, and 2) for theatre to accompany particular actions of the dramatic characters; it is this second aspect of *naphat* that is associated with the *Phrommas* repertoire.<sup>179</sup> Most *naphat* used in the theatre comes from *naphat chanton* (primary-level *naphat*) and *naphat chanklang* (secondary-level *naphat*) to manifest actions such as walking, fighting, travelling, crying, appearing and disappearing, and so on. However, some episodes within a narrative may require high-level *naphat* for the important actors who represent particular Gods, for example Phra Narai or Narayana based on Hindu tradition represented through the *naphat* called *Bat Sakuni*.<sup>180</sup>

As examples of the kind of representation involved, *Ot* is used to represent the action of crying or sadness, *Choet* is for walking or for fighting, whereas *Rua* is for the appearance or disappearance of a character. *Naphat* is always played by the *piphat* ensemble; most *naphat* use *taphon* and *klong that* but there are some pieces which have

<sup>177</sup> Lumyong Sowat, interviewed by Suchada Sowat, Jan 15, 2016.

<sup>178</sup> *Wai khru* (ไหว้ครู) is the Thai musical ritual influenced by Hindu tradition to pay homage to Thai music masters, including both musical gods and human masters. In the *wai khru* ritual, the leader of the ritual will recite and ask for different *naphat* pieces from the *piphat* ensemble present at the ceremony as a musical accompaniment; a number of *naphat* pieces are played in the *piphat* ensemble to accompany particular parts of the ritual. A group of *naphat* pieces used in the *wai khru* ceremony are known as '*naphat wai khru*'.

<sup>179</sup> Boonchuay Sovat, interviewed by Suchada Sowat, Jan 14, 2016.

<sup>180</sup> Ibid.

no *taphon* and *klong that* but are still considered *naphat*.<sup>181</sup> Some *naphat* pieces involve their own predetermined representation, which relate to their musical meaning in the theatre, and therefore, an understanding of *naphat* requires a basic concept of the conventional meaning involved.

***Phleng ruang*** (เพลงเรื่อง) is the second of the principal categories. The word *ruang* (เรื่อง) literally means a story or a theme, but in musical terms, *ruang* refers to a specific group of pieces played in a particular order. '*phleng ruang*' is used as a prefix followed by the particular name of that musical selection, for example *phleng ruang Sinuan* (เพลงเรื่องสินาวล), *Phleng Ruang Soison* (เพลงเรื่องสร้อยสน), *Phleng Ruang Phraram Doen Dong* (เพลงเรื่องพระรามเดินดง) etc. Theoretically, *phleng ruang* can be divided into four types: *phleng cha* (เพลงช้า), *phleng songmai* (เพลงสองไม้), *phleng rew* (เพลงเร็ว), and *phleng ching* (เพลงฉิ่ง). Within any particular *phleng ruang* type, there are at least three pieces, grouped in such a way that they employ similar musical features, such as the same key or rhythmic pattern. As Thai classical music is an oral tradition, *phleng ruang* formations play a key role in helping musicians remember the repertoire, by grouping them into a form of musical selection<sup>182</sup> - this is one of the cultural-creative aspects hidden in the formative structure of the piece categories. *Phleng ruang* is a kind of memory store or resource from which pieces can be selected to be used with theatre with and without any vocal addition. Some pieces are brought from the *phleng ruang* category to allocate into the dramatic text of the *Phrommas* repertoire, for example *Soi Son* (สร้อยสน), *Mon Ram Dap* (มอญรำดาบ), and *Thayae Klong Yon* (ทะแยกลองโยน).

***Phleng mahori*** (เพลงมโหรี) is another category of piece involving two types: (เพลงเกร็ด) and *phleng tap* (เพลงตับ). The word *mahori* (มโหรี) refers to a kind of musical ensemble, which includes four types of Thai instruments namely 1) *khruang dit* (เครื่องดีด) (Plucked), 2) *khruang si* (เครื่องสี) (Bowed), 3) *Khruang Ti* (เครื่องตี) (Percussion), and 4) *Khruang Pao* (เครื่องเป่า) (Woodwind). The *mahori* ensemble was originally used as a court entertainment. Within *phleng mahori*, there are further subcategories. First comes (เพลงเกร็ด), which refers to the pieces that are played individually - most of them are in

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<sup>181</sup> Ibid.

<sup>182</sup> Ibid.

*song chan* (the moderate metric level), and are much shorter than *phleng ruang*. Most vocal pieces found in the *Phrommas* are considered. Secondly is *phleng tap* (เพลงตับ), which means a selection of pieces played in a particular order: *Tap* (ตับ) literally means ‘row’ or ‘line’. *Phleng tap* is therefore similar to *phleng ruang* but involves vocal rather than instrumental pieces. *Phleng Tap* can be divided into two further types: *tap ruang* (ตับเรื่อง) (a selection based on the narrative) and *tap phleng* (ตับเพลง) (a selection based on musical coherence); most *phleng tap* pieces are performed as *mahori* ‘pure music’. The various categories are summarised in Figure 4.8.

In the *Phrommas* repertoire, all the aforementioned categories of piece are found; while a group of *naphat* pieces is used to accompany particular actions, some pieces from *phleng ruang* and are mainly employed as vocal music. Structurally, the *Phrommas* repertoire is formulated based on the structure of *phleng tap*. Table 4.8 illustrates the pieces that appear in the *Phrommas* repertoire along with the narrative context and its original category.

Figure 4.8 Categories of Thai pieces from Montri Tramot's theory

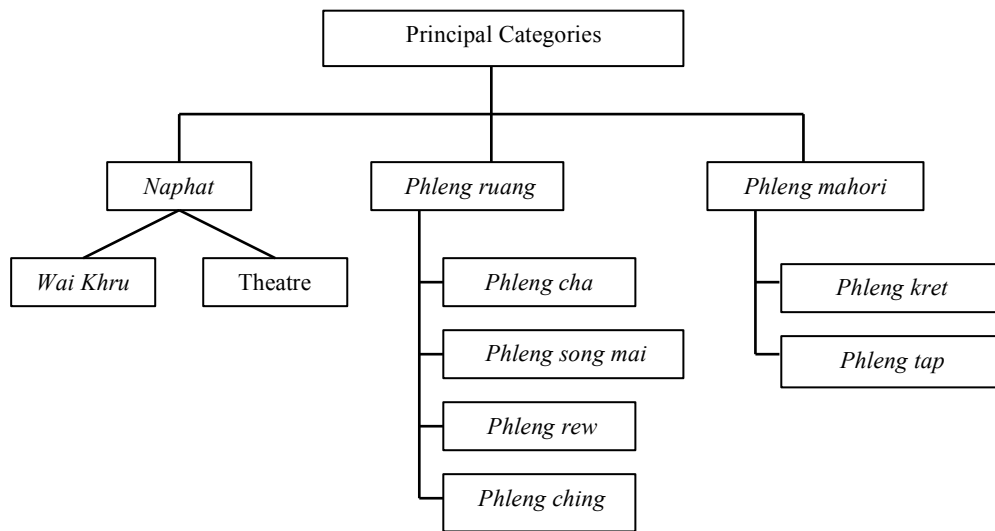


Table 4.5 Individual pieces in the *Phrommas* repertoire and their original category

| No | Name of piece  | Use within the <i>Phrommas</i>  | Original category   |
|----|--|---|---|
| 1  | <i>Wa</i> (วา)   | Beginning of the narrative, indicating that the theatre begins.   | <i>naphat</i>   |
| 2  | <i>Samoe</i> (เสมอ)                                      | Thossakan arrives in the throne hall to discuss the war with his demon soldiers.  | <i>naphat</i>   |
| 3  | <i>Rua</i> (รว)  |   |   |
| 4  | <i>Phak and Charecha</i><br>(พากย์-เจรจา)<br>(Narration) | In the throne hall; a demon soldier reports that Thossakan's grandchildren (Sang a thit and Mang korn kan, died in the war.               | Special vocalisation only used in <i>khon</i> performance |
| 5  | <i>Krao Nai</i> (กราวไน)                                 | Kalasoon flies towards Inthorachit's pavilion.  | <i>naphat</i>   |
| 6  | <i>Choet</i> (เชิด)                                      |   |   |
| 7  | <i>Mon Ram Dap</i><br>(มอญรำดาบ)                         | Kalasoon arrives at Inthorachit's pavilion to create the <i>Phrommas</i> bow.   | <i>phleng kret</i>  |
| 8  | <i>Rue Rai</i><br>(ร้อยรำย)                              | Inthorachit is informed that his cousin has died; he is very angry but has to be patient because this news is from his father, Thossakan. | <i>phleng kret</i><br>(Only used for theatre)             |
| 9  | <i>Phram Ok</i><br>(พราหมณ์ออก)                          | Inthorachit departs from the pavilion.  | <i>naphat</i>   |
| 10 | <i>Chang Prasan Nga</i><br>(ช้างประสานงา)                | Inthorachit plans how to deceive Phra Lak and his monkey army.  | <i>phleng kret</i>  |
| 11 | <i>Farang Khuang</i><br>(ฝรั่งควง)                       | Rutthakan, demon soldier, receives orders from Inthorachit; he prepares the demon army.   | <i>phleng kret</i>  |
| 12 | <i>Tra Non</i> (ตระนอน)                                  | Inthorachit disguises himself as God Indra.   | <i>naphat</i>   |
| 13 | <i>Chom Talat</i> (ชมตลาด)                               | Describes the beauty of Indra, who is actually Inthorachit in disguise.   | <i>phleng kret</i><br>(Only used for theatre)             |
| 14 | <i>Bat Sakuni</i> (บาทสกุณี)                             | God Indra/Inthorachit departs from the pavilion.  | <i>naphat</i>   |
| 15 | <i>Krao Nok</i> (กราวนอก)                                | All the disguised demons are marching to the battlefield.   | <i>naphat</i>   |
| 16 | <i>Tayae Klong Yon</i><br>(ทะแยกลองโยน)                  | Describes the elaborate procession of Indra and angels.   | <i>phleng kret</i>  |
|    | <i>Choet</i> (repeated)                                  | Indra/Inthorachit's parade heads toward   | <i>naphat</i>   |

|    |   |  |   |
|----|---|--|---|
|    |   | the battlefield.   |   |
| 17 | <i>Krabok</i> (กระบอก)                                | All angels arrive at the battlefield; Indra orders them to dance to lure Phra Lak and his monkey army.                               | <i>Phleng Kret</i>                                      |
| 18 | <i>Khaek awang chan diao</i><br>(แขกอาหวัง ชั้นเดียว) |  | <i>phleng kret</i>                                      |
| 19 | <i>Soi Son</i> (สร้อยสน)                              | The beautiful dance of angels in the air.  | <i>phleng raung</i>                                     |
| 20 | <i>He Klom Chang</i><br>(แห่ล้อมช้าง)                 | Phra Lak and his monkey army enjoy the serene angel dance.   | <i>phleng kret</i><br>(Only used for theatre)           |
| 21 | <i>Phat Cha</i> (พิศชา)                               | Describes the enjoyment of Phra Lak and his monkey army.   | <i>phleng kret</i><br>under the<br><i>phleng mahori</i> |
| 22 | <i>Malaengwan Thong</i><br>(แมลงวันทอง)               | Indra prepares the <i>Phrommas</i> bow to shoot Phra Lak.  | <i>phleng ruang</i>                                     |
| 23 | <i>He Choet Ching</i><br>(เห่เชิดฉิ่ง)                | <i>Indra</i> shoots Phra Lak.  | <i>naphat</i>   |
|    | <i>Choet</i> (repeated)                               |  |   |
| 24 | <i>Rai Rut</i> (ร้ายรุศ)                              | Sacred arrows drop from the air hitting Phra Lak and the monkeys.  | <i>phleng kret</i><br>(Only used for theatre)           |
| 25 | <i>Ot</i> (โอด)                                       | Phra Lak and his monkey army become unconscious.   | <i>naphat</i>   |
| 26 | <i>Ling Lot</i> (ลิงโลด)                              | Hanuman, chief monkey soldier of Phra Ram, is not hit by the <i>Phrommas</i> bow. He angrily flies into the air to fight with Indra. | <i>phleng kret</i><br>(Only used for theatre)           |
| 27 | <i>Ling Lan</i> (ลิงลาน)                              | Indra fights with Hanuman and strikes him with the <i>Phrommas</i> bow.  | <i>phleng kret</i><br>(Only used for theatre)           |
| 28 | <i>Ot Hap</i> (โอดแหบ)                                | Hanuman is unconscious and lies on the battlefield which makes all demons glad.  | <i>naphat</i>   |
| 29 | <i>Krao Ram Phama</i><br>(กราวรำพม่า)                 | Indra and his demon soldiers celebrate the victory over Phra Lak's army.   | <i>phleng kret</i>                                      |
|    | <i>Choet</i> (repeated)                               | Indra and his demon soldiers return to Longka city.  | <i>naphat</i>   |

Table 4.5 illustrates that many of the pieces selected for inclusion in the *Phrommas* belong to different categories, and the way they are used is often different from their original function. On the other hand, some pieces in the *Phrommas* repertoire exist only for use in the theatre.

## 4.2 Elements of music for theatre

There are many different repertoires within Thai classical music that are used for theatrical traditions. However, a number of common elements and approaches emerge. This section will consider some of those common aspects in as far as they are used within the *Phrommas* episode, before looking in more detail at a number of approaches that are particular to the music under discussion.

### 4.2.1 The relationship between Thai classical music and Thai classical dance drama

According to James Brandon, in most Southeast Asian theatre, music sets a tone and an atmosphere within which performance is created, and creates the potential unrivalled by spoken words for conveying and amplifying emotional states.<sup>183</sup> In Thai classical theatres, music has often been used alongside the theatrical performance and the relationship between them has many complicated layers. Even though music is used for the theatre, it still retains its own discipline to be applied to the musical performance. Hence, there are a number of related aspects that need to be examined to understand the concept of Thai music for theatre: 1) the purposes and function of music for theatre, 2) the performance (from both dance and music perspectives), and 3) the idea of the expression.

#### 4.2.1.1 *Purpose and function*

Music works as the complement to facilitate the dancer in performing in the theatre.<sup>184</sup> The main purpose of Thai classical music for theatre is to communicate the narrative through the lyrics within the vocal piece. In addition, melodic and rhythmic features as well as the lyrics themselves also represent particular meanings of the narrative. It is important for both musicians and vocalists to understand this concept in order to produce an effective performance.

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<sup>183</sup> Brandon, *Theatre in Southeast Asia*, 125.

<sup>184</sup> Sirichaicharn Fachamroon interviewed by Suchada Sowat, Jan 20, 2016.



*Khon* (masked dance drama), of which the *Phrommas* forms a part, is a kind of theatre in which the dancers perform with no spoken word and the story is narrated by vocal and musical means, with the dancers using their body movement to suit and express the meaning of the lyrics based on the narrative. A feature of Thai classical theatre is that it comprises both dance and music, and that the music to accompany the dance uses both vocal and non-vocal pieces. For example, while the dancers perform particular actions related to the story, music can represent that action using a *naphat* piece, or vocal music to communicate the narrative and particular feeling of the actors through the dramatic text itself. Hence, the relationship of music to theatre can be perceived in two main aspects: 1) the performance and 2) the expression.

#### 4.2.1.2 *The performance: dancers' and musicians' understanding*

There are two major types of Thai classical theatres that are principally related to this research: *lakhon* (ละคร) (dance drama) and *khon* (โขน) (masked-dance drama). Significantly, to perform in the theatre properly, the knowledge of the interrelationship between dance and music is one of the first elements a dancer should have, especially a basic understanding of the musical accompaniment. It is not necessary for a dancer to be able to play music, but they should as a minimum recognise the name of the piece and its rhythmic pattern to be applied with the dance.

In *khon* performance, the dancers need to recognise the lyrics from the dramatic text: as they need to practice and make the choreography suit the lyrics, they automatically memorise the words and the meaning of the lyrics.<sup>185</sup> Moreover, for the *naphat*, *khon* dancers who act as *phra* (male humans), *nang* (female humans), *yak* (demons), and *ling* (monkeys) need to know a group of basic *naphat* pieces and their function to integrate them within the dance figures. The easiest way is to remember the prominent beat of the drum in particular *naphat* pieces; for example, in the *Krao Nai* piece used to accompany the *yak*'s dance, most of the dancers must know the pattern called 'tom tom tom tom' played by *klong that* in order to move appropriately.

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<sup>185</sup> Surat Jongda, interviewed by Suchada Sowat, Jan 29, 2016.

In respect of vocal music, dancers should understand the basic element of Thai classical singing which includes two main components: *khamrong* (คำร้อง) (lyrics or words, and *uan* (เอื้ออน) (wordless vocalisation). As the vocal music used with theatre has both *khamrong* and *uan*, the dancer needs to understand this vocal structure to choreograph the dance figure properly, and this practice is known as *ti bot* (ตีบท), which implies the creation of the choreography based on the lyrics sung. Traditionally, the process of *ti bot* is improvised based on the ability and experience of the dancers; however, they will have a stock of dance figures from which they can draw. In dances with vocal music, the dancers will catch the word from lyrics sung and immediately choreograph appropriately. However, there are some predetermined figures that are fixed before the performance, in particular the movement used for groups of *naphat* pieces.

To play music appropriate for the theatre, musicians should have the understanding of relevant theatrical elements such as the narrative of the theatre, dramatic text, and initial knowledge of Thai classical dance. A high level of training is required: performing in this context is not about showing off musical skills or advanced techniques but rather being adaptable, and able to respond to unpredictable musical events. Musicians should at least know which dance figure is which, and how it relates to the music, in particular those that work as a signpost to give musicians a cue to change, stop, or start a piece. For example, in the piece *Choet* (เชิด), musicians need to know the dance movement called *soi thao* (ซอยเท้า) (the way that dancers step more frequently), which is a sign for the musicians to change the version being played, from *Choet song chan* (เชิดสองชั้น) (medium) to *Choet chan diao* (เชิดชั้นเดียว) (fast).

Furthermore, knowledge of the different characters and the epic within the theatre is also important, especially the Ramakian epic, which is the theme of *khon* performance. Musicians should have learnt about the various characters and their status in the story because this theatrical knowledge can help them to perform a piece of music for theatre properly. The characters have their own status within the story - god, king, human, soldier, animal – and those characters are accompanied by particular pieces of music related to their status: the status of the piece has to be related to the status of the

characters.<sup>186</sup> For example, the use of *naphat* pieces with the theatre is dependent on conventional usage: a high level of *naphat* is mostly used for high status characters such as a god and a king.

Musicians should have both enough stock of *khon* repertoires and also well-trained musical skills to accompany *khon* performance played in changeable locations and situations; they may never see the location until the performance day, which can challenge their ability to adapt the music to the dance in unpredictable conditions: for example, a longer stage may require a longer length of music. This is one of the characteristics of the way that Thai classical music is used with the theatre; i.e. there is no written piece of a fixed length for *Choet* in the theatre, but the pieces of music and the way to perform them are informed by the musicians' experience.

#### 4.2.1.3 *The expression: direct and indirect*

The concept of expression in music is of course one of the broadest and most complex topics, which needs to be interpreted within a system of perception within a specific culture, and any proper examination lies far outside the scope of the present discussion. However, within the limited context of Thai classical music for the theatre, ideas of musical expression can initially be understood through both musical and lyrical mediums. As a starting point, one could consider expression to be divided fairly simply into direct and indirect expression: direct expression can be seen through the meaning of the lyrics of vocal pieces and through some particular musical characteristics, whereas indirect expression is far more complicated, relying much more heavily on conventional usage of music and cultural understanding. Before looking at the music in the *Phrommas* repertoire in detail, it is important to think through some of these ideas of how the music expresses itself and is represented in the context of Thai classical music for theatre. This section presents a discussion of direct and indirect expression within Thai music in relation to that theatrical context.

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<sup>186</sup> Lumyong Sowat, interviewed by Suchada Sowat, Jan 15, 2016.

For direct expression, one of the significant roles of music for theatre is to represent, express, and communicate the narrative. While lyrics sung describe the narrative through the meaning of words, melodic and rhythmic features are also articulated in certain ways to represent an event taking place in the narrative. The meaning of the lyrics is the most prominent element here, though, and the words sung are the key to communicating the narrative and emotion. According to Wattana Kosinanon, she stated that ‘*Rue Rai* (เรือสำเภา), the vocal part has a vital role in describing the story and reflecting the feeling of the actors; it can be seen through not only the words, but also the variable speed of the vocal part associated with the meaning of the lyrics’.<sup>187</sup> More details about characteristics of *Rue Rai* can be found in the analysis in Chapter 5.

While the vocal part is more obviously expressive, the sounds of the drums and particular rhythmic pattern are also able to directly convey the theatrical meaning based on the story, in particular the *taphon* and *klong that*. For example, in *Choet*, the beats of the *klong that* are consistent to represent the punctual walking rhythm of the actors, and this aspect also relates to a conventional meaning of *Choet*, which represents the action of walking or fighting (further detail is given in Chapter 5). Hence, musical ‘motions’ become one of the elements which express the theatrical meaning explicitly.

On the other hand, ‘indirect expression’ involves not only the musical characteristics but also conventional concepts related to that music in the particular culture. In other words, even though the rhythm, melody and style are used to represent theatrical meaning, there is no universality of musical meaning; we cannot understand what a particular piece means until we know its conventional meaning within the culture where it is used.

Prominent examples of this type of indirect expression are found in the use of a group of *naphat* pieces, which have their own conventional meaning and usage. This concept requires understanding of the Ramakian narrative and the culturally constructed perception of the characters within the Ramakian. The moral ideas of

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<sup>187</sup> Wattana Kosinanon, interviewed by Suchada Sowat, Jan 18, 2016.

Buddhism are reflected through different characters; while Phra Ram represents the manner of *thamma* (ธรรมะ) (Virtue), Thossakan (the demon) is the representation of *atham* (อธรรม) (Immorality); these ideas also affect the conventional usage of music with the theatre in relation to these various characters: some pieces are conventionally used for *thamma* whilst others are used for *atham*. For example, *Krao Nok* (คราวนอก) is used for *Thamma* characters, including Phra Ram's allies and his monkey army, whereas *Krao Nai* is used for Thossakan's colleagues and all the demon characters. Knowledge of the Ramakian and an understanding of the ethical personality of the characters are crucial for choosing the pieces to perform. In addition, the rhythmic pattern provided by the drum is also a kind of indirect expression. It does not directly convey what the character is, but indirectly manifests their manner and personality based on, for example, a common perception of the demon and monkey within the broader culture (in the analysis of *Krao Nai* and *Krao Nok*, there will be further detailed discussion of this concept).

Another interesting example of this type of expression can be seen in the piece called 'Ot' (โอด), which is considered as both a *naphat* piece and also a piece to reflect the emotion of sadness. The sad feeling is perceived through the rhythmic pattern of the *klong that* to represent the action of crying; the unpredictable beats of the drums represent tears dropping.<sup>188</sup> This perception is also bound with 'insider' knowledge of the conventional use of *Ot* (more details of *Ot* can be found in Chapter 5).

In contrast, a convention of the musical and theatrical meaning of the piece is also a significant factor for shaping the way music is bound with theatre. This can be seen in the use of some *naphat* pieces that have no melodic and rhythmic link to the theatrical usage, but are conventionally used for a particular moment in the theatre. For example, *La* (ลา) has its own conventional meaning in a theatrical context, but the piece itself does not seem to include any direct musical expression. In addition, some pieces in the *Phrommas* repertoire are also used to symbolise particular behaviours of the actors. For example, in *Soi Son*, the way that different groups of musical instruments interact (*luk lo* (ลูกล่อ), *luk khat* (ลูกขัด), and *luam* (เหลื่อม)) manifests the interaction between

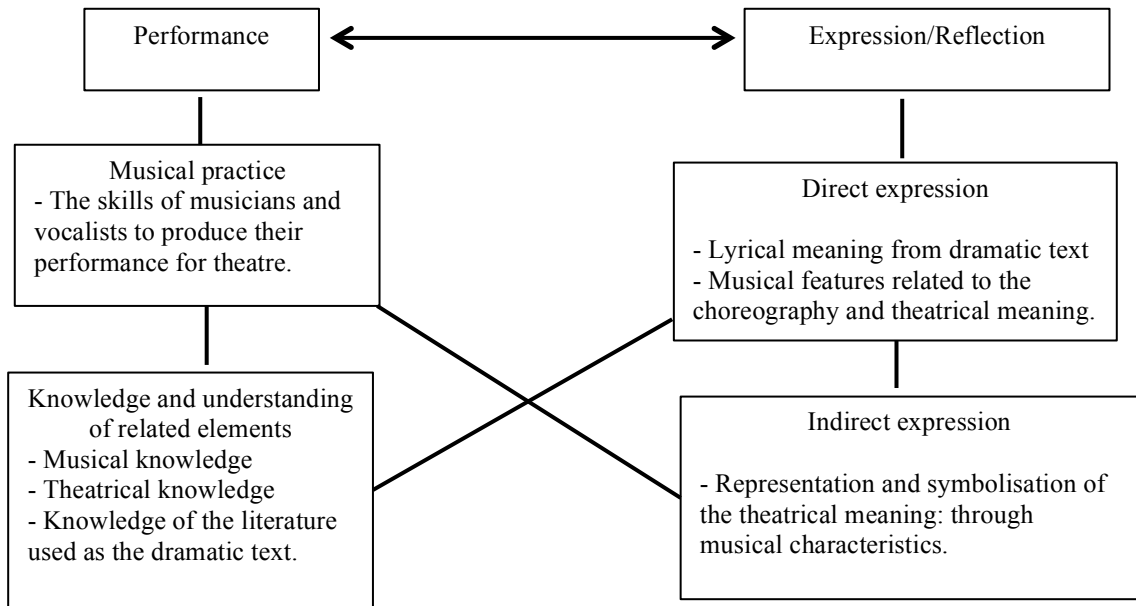
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<sup>188</sup> Boonchuay Sovat, interviewed by Suchada Sowat, Jan 14, 2016.

male and female angels based on the narrative of the *Phrommas*. Although this feature is used in the vocal piece, which more clearly expresses the direct meaning of words, musical characteristics themselves also communicate the theatrical metaphor through various musical techniques used. Thus, the indirect expressions of music associated with the theatre have such complicated layers and they are very much based on cultural understanding plus the individual experience of the perceiver. While conventional usage is a key element to characterising performance practices, the interpretation of the musicians, vocalists, dancers, as well as the audience is the complement to fulfilling the theatrical appreciation at the same time.

To summarise, the relationship between Thai classical music and theatre comprises a number of relevant elements regarding performance practice and the expression of music. When music is used along with the theatre, musicians need not only knowledge and a skill of music but also must possess other essentials such as knowledge of dance movement and literature to be applied to the performance practice. On the other hand, a complication within the concept of expression requires a concept of music established from its own culture to understand the way music is expressed; some can be found directly through literal and musical means whereas other forms of expression involve ‘insider knowledge’ to understand the meaning of music with theatre. Figure 4.9 summarises these ideas.

Figure 4.9 The relationship between music and theatre



#### 4.2.2 Text

In any kind of theatre, the dramatic text is a vital element to communicating the narrative. For Thai classical theatres, the dramatic text is from traditional Thai verse called ‘*bot roikrong*’ (บทร้อยกรอง)<sup>189</sup> that includes various types of poem to be used as lyrics in vocalisation with theatre. This section will describe the fundamental concepts of traditional Thai verse associated with the *Phrommas* repertoire.

*Bot roikrong* refers to a group of traditional Thai verses; the word *bot* (บท) literally means text or transcription, whereas *roikrong* (ร้อยกรอง) means ‘to correspond’ or ‘to link’. However, the word *bot* also refers to not only text or transcription but also a unit of verse. *Bot* and *roikrong* are therefore used together to identify a certain type of traditional Thai verse, which includes a particular rhyme pattern. In the *Phrommas* dramatic text, there are four types of *Bot roikrong* used as lyrics for vocal music: *kap chabang siphok* (กาพย์ฉับฉิ่ง ๑๖), *kap yani sipet* (กาพย์ยานี ๑๑), *klon bot lakhon* (กลอนบทละคร),

<sup>189</sup> Aekarin Simahasan and others, “Bot Roikrong.” Trueplookpanya, 2009, accessed May 2016, [http://www.trueplookpanya.com/new/cms\\_detail/knowledge/2432-00/](http://www.trueplookpanya.com/new/cms_detail/knowledge/2432-00/).

and *rai yao* (ไร่ยาว) (see Figure 4.10 and Table 4.7). Each type has its own structure of *samphat* (สัมผัส) (rhyme).

Figure 4.10 The structure of *bot roikrong*

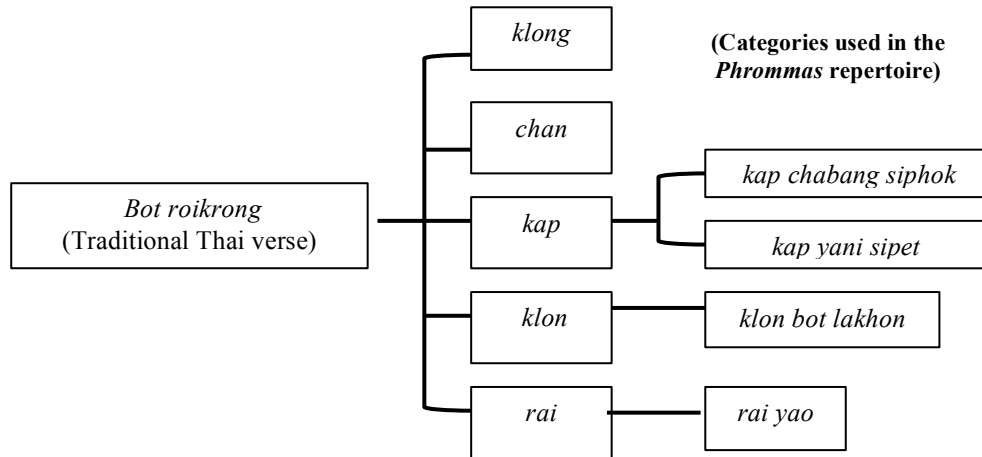


Table 4.6 Categories of traditional Thai verse used as lyrics in the *Phrommas* repertoire

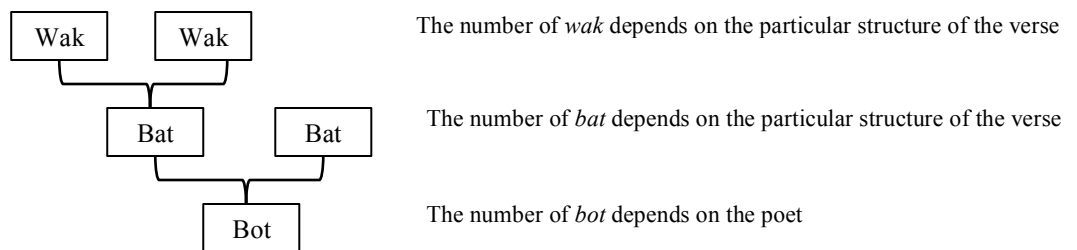
| Name of pieces                   | Type of verse used as lyrics |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. <i>Wa</i>                     | non-vocal                    |
| 2. <i>Samoe</i>                  | non-vocal                    |
| 3. <i>Phak</i>                   | <i>kap chabang siphok</i>    |
| 4. <i>Cheracha</i>               | <i>rai yao</i>               |
| 5. <i>Krao Nai</i>               | <i>klon bot lakhon</i>       |
| 6. <i>Choet</i>                  | non-vocal                    |
| 7. <i>Mon Ram Dap</i>            | <i>klon bot lakhon</i>       |
| 8. <i>Rue Rai</i>                | <i>klon bot lakhon</i>       |
| 9. <i>Phram Ok</i>               | non-vocal                    |
| 10. <i>Chang Prasan Nga</i>      | <i>klon bot lakhon</i>       |
| 11. <i>Farang Khuang</i>         | <i>klon bot lakhon</i>       |
| 12. <i>Tra Non</i>               | <i>klon bot lakhon</i>       |
| 13. <i>Chom Talat</i>            | <i>klon bot lakhon</i>       |
| 14. <i>Bat Sakuni</i>            | non-vocal                    |
| 15. <i>Krao Nok</i>              | <i>klon bot lakhon</i>       |
| 16. <i>Thayae Klongyon</i>       | <i>kap yani sipet</i>        |
| <i>Choet</i> (repeated)          | non-vocal                    |
| 17. <i>Kra bok</i>               | <i>klon bot lakhon</i>       |
| 18. <i>Khaek awang chan diao</i> | <i>klon bot lakhon</i>       |



|                              |                        |
|------------------------------|------------------------|
| 19. <i>Soi Son</i>           | <i>klon bot lakhon</i> |
| 20. <i>He Klom Chang</i>     | <i>kap yani sipet</i>  |
| 21. <i>Phat Cha</i>          | non-vocal              |
| 22. <i>Malaeng Wan Thong</i> | <i>klon bot lakhon</i> |
| 23. <i>He Choet Ching</i>    | <i>klon bot lakhon</i> |
| <i>Choet (repeated)</i>      | non-vocal              |
| 24. <i>Rai Rut</i>           | <i>klon bot lakhon</i> |
| 25. <i>Ot</i>                | non-vocal              |
| 26. <i>Ling Lot</i>          | <i>Klon Bot Lakhon</i> |
| 27. <i>Ling Lan</i>          | <i>Klon Bot Lakhon</i> |
| 28. <i>Ot Hap</i>            | non-vocal              |
| 29. <i>Krao Ram Phama</i>    | <i>klon bot lakhon</i> |
| <i>Choet (repeated)</i>      | non-vocal              |

A unit of verse is called *bot* (บท) and there are sub units called *bat* (บาท) and *wak* (วรรค); each type of verse has its own structure with a certain set of rhyme. *Wak* is the smallest unit to be extended as *bat* and *bot* respectively (see Figure 4.11). This concept has been considered the basic knowledge a Thai classical singer should know in order to understand the structure of lyrics being sung in each vocal piece.

Figure 4.11 The relationship between *wak*, *bat*, and *bot* in traditional Thai verse

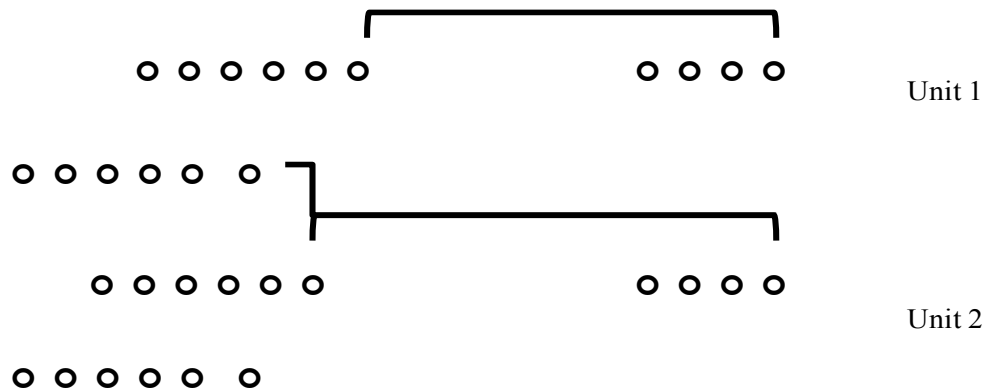


#### 4.2.2.1 *Kap chabang siphok* (กาพย์ช้าง ๑๖)

*Kap chabang siphok* is one of the traditional Thai verses found in the *Phrommas* repertoire. The word *kap chabang* refers to a kind of verse and ‘*siphok*’ (สิบหก) means ‘sixteen’ to identify that this verse includes sixteen syllables per unit. Structurally, one unit of *kap chabang siphok* includes three *wak* (sub phrases) with different numbers of syllables (the sum of the syllables of the three sub-phrases is sixteen): the first phrase is

six syllables, the second phrase is four, and the third phrase has six as shown in Figure 4.12. *kap chabang siphok* is used for *Phak* (พาทย์) in the *Phrommas* repertoire.

Figure 4.12 Formation and rhyme pattern of *kap chabang siphok*



The lines identify corresponding rhymes in the verse.

#### 4.2.2.2 *Kap yani sipet* (กาพย์ยานี ๑๑)

*Kap yani sipet* is a kind of verse considered to belong to the family of *kap* (กาพย์) but it has its own structure and rhyme pattern, which is different to *kap chabang siphok*. The word *yani* identifies a type of verse whereas ‘*sipet*’ (สิบเอ็ด) means eleven. One unit of *kap yani sipet* includes four *wak* (sub phrases). Each *wak* has a particular number of syllables and two *wak* are equivalent to one *bat*. Importantly, one *bat* includes eleven syllables in total (see Figure 4.13). In terms of the rhyme pattern, *kap yani sipet* employs a different pattern of sound correspondence within words as shown in Figure 4.14, *kap yani sipet* verse pattern is used with lyrics for *Tayae Klong Yon* (ทะแยกลองโยน) and *He Klom Chang* (เห่กล่อมช้าง) in the *Phrommas* repertoire.

Figure 4.13 The structure of *kap yani sipet*

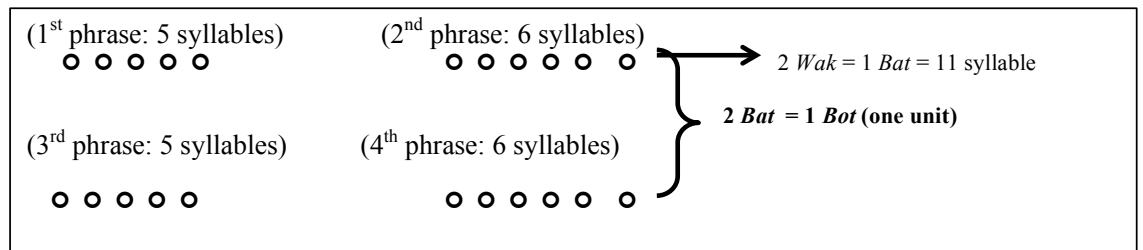
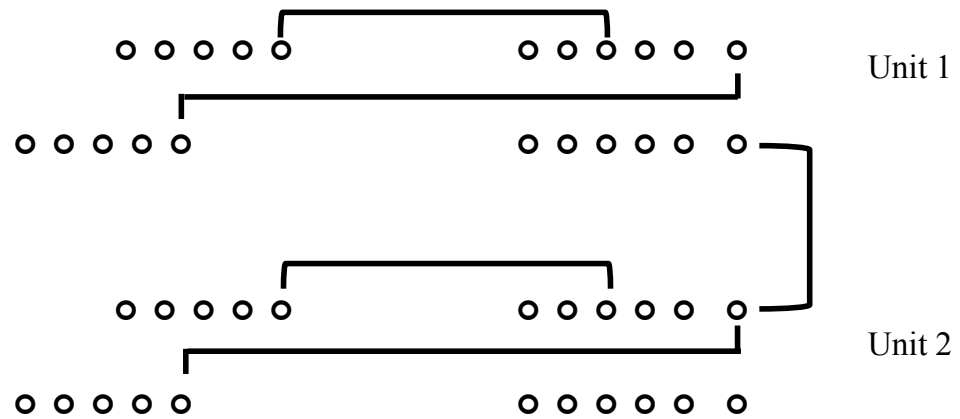


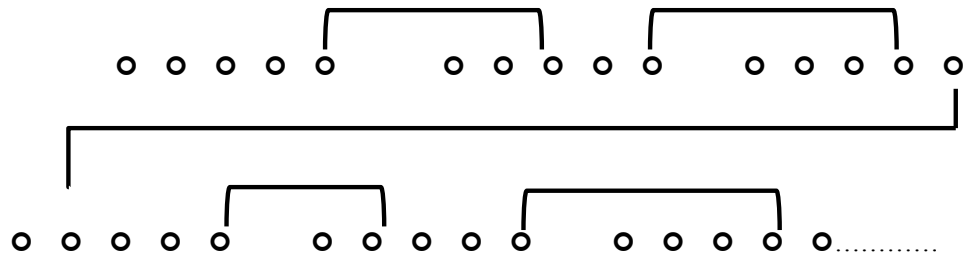
Figure 4.14 Rhyme pattern of *kap yani sipet*



#### 4.2.2.3 *Rai yao* (ไร่ยาอ)

*Rai yao* is another kind of traditional Thai verse used in the lyrics of the *Phrommas* repertoire. The poetic structure of *rai yao* is simpler than other kinds of verse and its length is more flexible without a restricted number of *wak*. However, there are five syllables in each *wak* and there should be at least one correspondence of rhyme between each individual *wak* (see Figure 4.15). *Rai Yao* is used as lyrics for *Cheracha* (เชรชา), which is a kind of narration working as a conversation between the characters to communicate the narrative quickly.

Figure 4.15 Rhyme pattern in *rai yao*



A number of *wak* in *rai yao* can be increased to as many as the poet wants, but it is necessary to have one corresponding rhyme of the word in each *wak*.

#### 4.2.2.4 *Klon bot lakhon* (กลอนบทละคร)

*Klon bot lakhon* is the most significant type of traditional Thai verse used in the *Phrommas* repertoire. The word *klon* (กลอน) refers to particular types of verse and *bot lakhon* (บทละคร) means the dramatic text. Two words are used to identify a specific pattern of verse used particularly as a dramatic text for Thai classical theatre. *Klon bot lakhon* is similar to *klon suphap* (กลอนสุภาพ), which is a popular form of traditional Thai verse. However, the unique feature of *klon bot lakhon* is the use of a prominent phrase in the first *wak*, such as *mua nan* (เมื่อนั้น) and *bat nan* (บัดนั้น)<sup>190</sup> which mean ‘at that very moment’. These phrases will be followed by a normal pattern of *klon suphap* that includes seven or eight syllables in each *wak*. The purpose of using *mua nan* and *bat nan* is to emphasise the moment in which a certain character performs. In the *Phrommas* repertoire, the *klon bot lakhon* is the form most often used as lyrics because it is easy to fit to the musical phrase of Thai pieces; examples are *Krao Nai* (กราวไน้), and *Rue Rai* (เรือรำ). Figures 4.16 and 4.17 show the difference in structure between *klon suphap* and *klon bot lakhon*.

<sup>190</sup> Wanphen Thepsopha, *Khrop Khruang Ruang Lak Phasa Thai* (Bangkok: Phor Sor Phatana Print, 2010): 187.

Figure 4.16 Verse structure of *klon suphap*

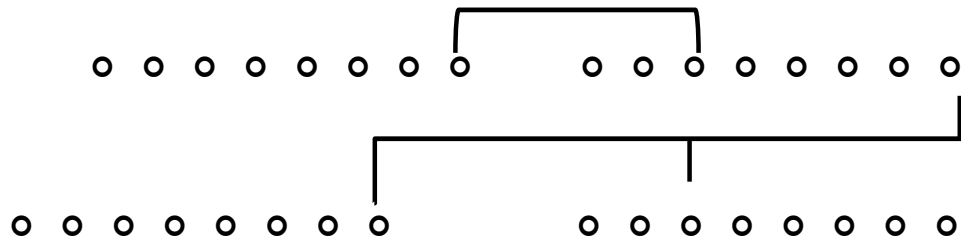
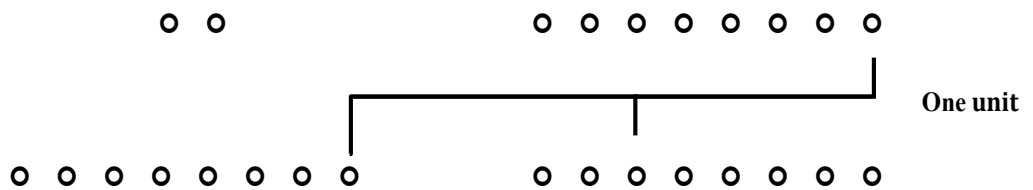


Figure 4.17 Verse structure of *klon bot lakhon*



Another significant feature of *klon bot lakhon* is the way in which the units are measured. Each line is called ‘*kham klon*’ (คำกลอน), whereas *Bot* is used to name the entire unit of verse (see Figure 4.18). Thai classical musicians and dancers prefer to use the word *kham klon* for a sub-unit of verse in *klon bot lakhon* in order to identify the length of the lyrics in a particular piece.<sup>191</sup> For example, if there are four lines of verse in *klon bot lakhon*, musicians, singers, and dancers would understand that there are four *kham klon* (see Figure 4.19).

<sup>191</sup> Wattana Kosinanon, interviewed by Suchada Sowat, Jan 18, 2016.

Figure 4.18 A unit (*bot*) of *klon suphap*

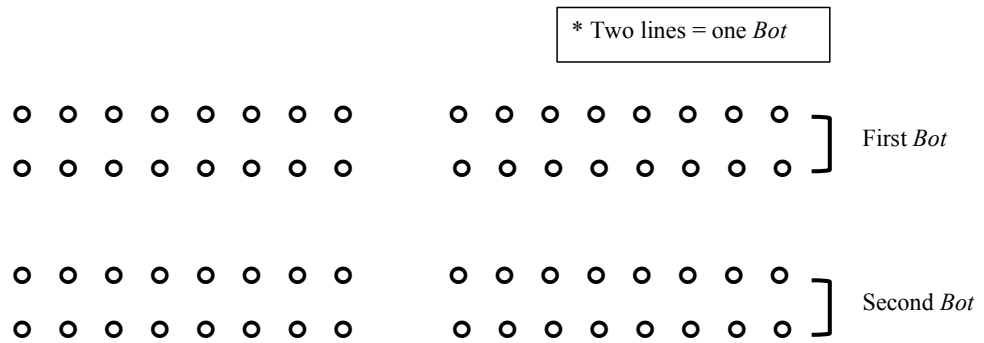
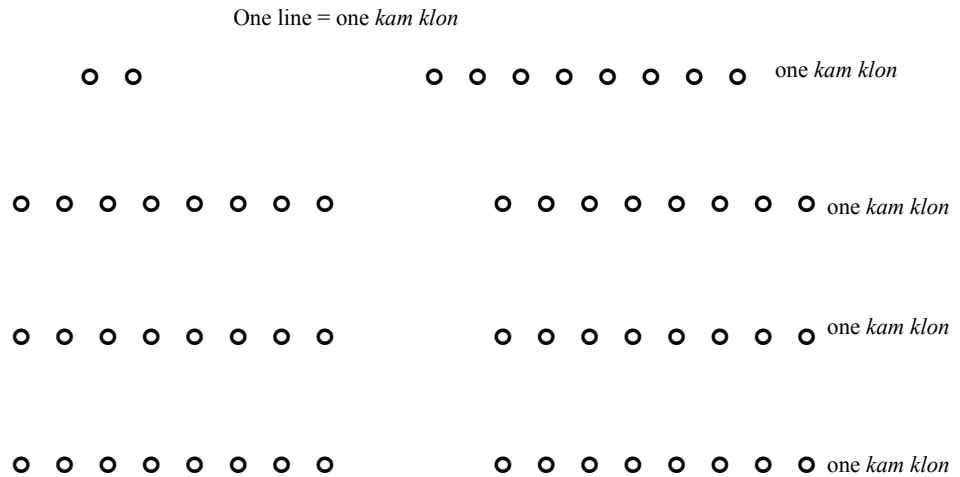


Figure 4.19 Sub unit (*kham klon*) of *klon bot lakhon*



All of the traditional Thai verse structures examined here are used within the *Phrommas* repertoire. The most common form is *klon bot lakhon* (used for 16 pieces) with *kap yani sipet* used for two pieces, and *kap chabang siphok* and *rai yao* used only once; the remainder are non-vocal. Understanding the verse structure is important for vocalists in order to align their vocal practice with it: the formation of the solo and chorus functions alongside the verse structure.

### 4.2.3 Musical accompaniment used for *khon* performance

Chapter 2 considered the different categories of *khon*; this section will explore in further detail the musical accompaniment associated with particular *Khon* types. In Thai classical music, there are two main properties which characterise the formation of *piphat* ensembles: 1) their type and 2) their size.










#### 4.2.3.1 *Basis of the piphat ensemble (wong piphat)*

*Wong piphat* (วงปี่พาทย์) refers to a Thai classical music ensemble comprised of percussion instruments (both melodic and rhythmic) and woodwind instruments. The word ‘*wong*’ (วง) literally means a circle, but in musical terms it refers to the ensemble. However, musicians generally use the word *piphat* followed by the identification of the size. Within the *Piphat* ensemble, the percussion instruments are divided into two types: melodic percussion - *ranat ek*, *ranat thum*, *khong wong yai* – and rhythmic percussion: *ching*, *taphon*, *klong that* (see Table 4.8). Theoretically, there are a number of *piphat* ensemble types, depending on their function. However, this section will focus on the musical instruments within the *piphat* ensemble most associated with *khon* performance. This *piphat* ensemble has also been known as the *piphat phithi* (ปี่พาทย์พิธี) (the *piphat* ensemble particularly used in rituals). The same construction of the *piphat* ensemble is used for two different functions: for ritual and theatre.<sup>192</sup> All musical instruments here are used in the current formation of the *piphat* ensemble.

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<sup>192</sup> Boonchuay Sovat, interviewed by Suchada Sowat, Jan 14, 2016.

Table 4.7 Main musical instruments in the *piphat* ensemble<sup>193</sup>

| Name   | Picture   |
|--|---|
| <i>Ranat ek</i><br>(Treble xylophone)                    |        |
| <i>Ranat thum</i><br>(Alto xylophone)                    |        |
| <i>Khong wong yai</i><br>(Large gong circle)             |        |
| <i>Khong wong lek</i><br>(Small gong circle)             |        |
| <i>Pi nai</i><br>(Oboe)                                  |  194  |
| <i>Taphon</i><br>(A double-headed drum)                  |      |
| <i>Klong that</i><br>(Pair of large barrel-shaped drums) |      |
| <i>Ching</i><br>(Pair of small cup cymbals)              |      |
| <i>Krong</i><br>(A horizontal bamboo rod)                |  195 |

<sup>193</sup> Photos by Suchada Sowat, Jul 27, 2017.

<sup>194</sup> Photo by Decha Srikongmuang, Jul 28, 2017.

<sup>195</sup> ‘*Krong*’, accessed 27 May 16, [instrument.wordpress.com](http://instrument.wordpress.com).



There are two types of sticks used to play the melodic percussion instruments in the *piphat* ensemble, *mai khaeng* (ไม้แข็ง) (hard mallets) and *mai nuam* (ไม้นวม) (soft mallets). *Mai nuam* provides the softer, lower and smoother sound of the melodic percussion instruments within the *piphat* ensemble.<sup>196</sup> The difference between using *mai khaeng* and *mai nuam* can be seen through musical accompaniment for the theatre: while *mai nuam* (soft mallets) are required for the *piphat* ensemble to accompany *lakhon* (dance drama), *mai khaeng* (hard mallets) are required for *khon*. Another important percussion instrument particularly used in the *piphat* ensemble for *khon* is the *krong* (โกร่ง), a horizontal bamboo rod, shown in Table 4.8.

#### 4.2.3.2 *Size, function, and application of the piphat ensemble with khon*

The current formation of the *piphat* ensemble used with *khon* performance has been adapted to suit contemporary society. The *piphat khruang ha* (ปี่พาทย์เครื่องห้า), was required for early types (*khon klang plaeng*), whilst *piphat khruang khu* (ปี่พาทย์เครื่องคู่) and *piphat khruang yai* (ปี่พาทย์เครื่องใหญ่) were later used for the subsequent *khon* types such as *khon nang rao* and *khon na cho*. However, the *piphat* ensemble for *khon* can be arranged to suit the particular location and occasion. There are three main sizes of *piphat* ensemble used with *khon*: *wong piphat khruangha* (วงปี่พาทย์เครื่องห้า) (the smallest size in Figure 4.20), *wong piphat khruang khu* (วงปี่พาทย์เครื่องคู่) (a double-sized *piphat* ensemble in Figure 4.21), and *wong piphat khruang yai* (วงปี่พาทย์เครื่องใหญ่) (the largest sized ensemble in Figure 4.22).

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<sup>196</sup> Myers-Moro, *Thai music and musicians in contemporary Bangkok*, 38.

Figure 4.20 *Wong piphat khruang ha* (small size)



*Wong piphat khruang ha* (includes *pi nai*, *ranat ek*, *khong wong wai*, *taphon*, *klong that* and *ching*).

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Figure 4.21 *Wong piphat khruang khu* (double size)



*Wong piphat khruang khu* (double size) includes *pi nai*, *pi nok*, *ranat ek*, *ranat thum*, *khong wong yai*, *khong wong lek*, *taphon*, *klong that*, *ching*, and *mong*.

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Figure 4.22 *Wong piphat khruang yai* (large size)



*Wong piphat khruang yai* (large size) includes *pi nai*, *pi nok*, *ranat ek*, *ranat thum*, *khong wong yai*, *khong wong lek*, *ranat ek lek* (metal *ranat*), *ranat thum lek*, *taphon*, *klong that*, *ching* and the addition of rhythmic-percussion.

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<sup>197</sup> Encyclopedia for Thai Kids, ‘*wong piphat khruang ha*’, accessed May 2018, <http://kanchanapisek.or.th/kp6/sub/book/book.php?book=1&chap=9&page=t1-9-infodetail02.html>

<sup>198</sup> Encyclopedia for Thai kids, “*wong piphat khruang khu*.”, accessed May 2018, <http://kanchanapisek.or.th/kp6/sub/book/book.php?book=1&chap=9&page=t1-9-infodetail02.html>

In the current usage of the *piphat* ensemble, there is integration between the size and the balance of the sound of musical instruments within the ensemble. Most current *khon* performance is accompanied by the integrated formation of the *piphat* ensemble to suit contemporary usage; some musical instruments and other additional percussion are removed and only important melodic and rhythmic musical instruments remain. Figure 4.23 shows the current formation of the *piphat* ensemble seen commonly in contemporary Bangkok.

Figure 4.23 The current *piphat* ensemble with singers for *khon*



With regard to the use with *khon* performance, it could be said that the development of Thai musical instruments in different historical periods has affected the formation of the *piphat* ensemble within various types of *khon*.

*Khon klang plaeng* (โขนกลางแปลง) is the original type of *khon* performed in an outdoor arena, and the musical accompaniment requires a louder ensemble. Two *piphat* ensembles are therefore used: one is located on the left and the other one is located on the right side of the performance area. The formation of the *piphat* ensemble used for *khon klangplaeng* was influenced by the music for *nang yai* (large shadow play).<sup>201</sup>

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<sup>199</sup> Encyclopedia for Thai kids, “*wong piphat khruang yai*.”, accessed May 2018, <http://kanchanapisek.or.th/kp6/sub/book/book.php?book=1&chap=9&page=t1-9-infodetail02.html>

<sup>200</sup> Photo by Suchada Sowat, Jan 11, 2016.

<sup>201</sup> See Chapter 2 for more details on *nang yai*.

The format of the *piphat* ensemble for *khon klang plaeng* is called *piphat khruang ha* (วงปี่พาทย์เครื่องห้า) (the smallest size).

The bamboo rod, *krong* (โกร่ง) is one of the musical symbols used to remind people of the original context of *khon* performance. As *krong*'s sound is loud and clear, it is used in the *piphat* ensemble to provide recognisable beats to help the dancer to synchronise with the music. Conventionally, *krong* will be used only when the music accompanies the dance of *yak* (demons) to reflect their brave, strong and elegant manner (see the picture of *krong* in Table 4.7).<sup>202</sup>

A difference between *khon klang plaeng* and *khon nangrao* is in the use of the stage and the bamboo rail used as a seating bench for *khon* dancers; there are also two *piphat* ensembles, one on each side of the stage. Later, during King Rama III's reign (1824-1851), there was an addition of musical instruments such as the *ranat thum* and *khong wong lek* within the previous form of *piphat khruang ha*.<sup>203</sup> The *piphat* ensemble became bigger and became known as the *piphat khruang khu* (วงปี่พาทย์เครื่องคู่) (a double-sized *piphat* ensemble) and would still incorporate the *krong* if available.

*Khon na cho* (โขนหน้าจอ) is another type of *khon* performed on the physical stage in front of a white screen backdrop - the word 'na cho' (หน้าจอ) means being in front of the screen. This formation of *khon* integrates the influences of *nang yai* (large shadow play) and *khon rong nai* (โขนโรงใน). While the white screen backdrop retains the original form of *nang yai*, the influence of *khon rong nai* is shown through the use of the musical accompaniment, which employs the same features as in *khon rong nai*.

Current-day *khon* was created from an integration of earlier *khon* (โขน) performance and *lakhon nai* (ละครใน) (court dance drama), and thereby became *khon rong nai* - the word 'nai' (ใน) (inside) reflects the influence of *lakhon nai*. Musically, *lakhon nai* has also had a large influence on the formation of current-day *khon* music with an increase in vocal pieces, and the use of *thang nai* (the key particularly used for *khon*

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<sup>202</sup> Lumyong Sowat, interviewed by Suchada Sowat, Jan 15, 2016.

<sup>203</sup> Tramot, *Duriyang-kha-sat Thai*, 6.

music). *Krong* is still used in the ensemble to give a precise beat to the dancers. Currently, modern electrical devices such as the amplifier have also shaped the use of the *piphat* ensemble; two *piphat* ensembles are not really required for the current *khon* musical accompaniment. However, there are some events that want to preserve the unique characteristic of *khon*'s musical accompaniment by having two *piphat* ensembles.<sup>204</sup>

For *khon Chak* (โขนฉาก), this type of *khon* has brought new theatrical techniques into *khon* performance. The word 'chak' (ฉาก) means the backdrop or the theatre scene, and modern theatrical elements are introduced to *khon* such as the use of a more realistic backdrop based on the narrative and the use of props etc. However, the musical ensemble is still the *piphat* ensemble played on *thang nai* and there is vocal music within the performance as well.

#### 4.2.3.3 *Discussion of the unique similarities and creative differences: 'Epic, Narration, and the piphat ensemble'*

Various types of *khon* have evolved gradually to suit the audience and the changeable context where *khon* was performed. However, the fundamental elements, which shaped the initial characteristics of *khon* still remain. There are two crucial features found in every type of *khon* genre. Firstly, the narrative: which is the Ramakian epic is always the theme of *khon*. Secondly, the musical accompaniment is the *piphat* ensemble and the use of vocalisations known as *Phak* and *Cheracha* (narration), which is the symbol of *khon* performance. These two components are found in any type of *khon*.

However, different forms of *khon* employ a number of distinguishing features due to their function. The location in which *khon* is performed is an important factor, which affects the way in which both *khon* and its music are changed. While *khon klang plaeng* was performed in a big field outdoors with simple theatrical decoration such as a bench for the main actors without any stage or even the natural scenery created by trees

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<sup>204</sup> Lumyong Sowat, interviewed by Suchada Sowat, Jan 15, 2016.

and landscape, the later *khon* types such as *khon nang rao* involved a stage plus the use of a bamboo rail laid down across the stage as seating for the actor, whilst *khon rong nai* and *khon chak* employ advanced theatrical decoration due to the changeable performance location.

Using two sets of the *piphat* ensembles is one of the remarkable features of the musical accompaniment for *khon*; two ensembles located at each side (left and right) of the stage helps the dancers to hear the music clearly. Musically, it challenges the abilities of each ensemble, as they have to perform alternately. Within *khon*, two *piphat* ensembles change over in order to play particular pieces in the repertoire - when one ensemble finishes, the other one has to immediately continue either the next section or the next piece.<sup>205</sup>

One further aspect that should be considered as a distinguishing feature of the *piphat* ensemble for *khon* is the use of vocal music from *lakhon nai* (inside court dance-drama). This had become an influential element that not only shaped the dance movements themselves, but also the musical attributes of *lakhon nai*'s musical accompaniment. The use of vocal music in *lakhon nai* is brought into *khon* music, which was traditionally non-vocal music, and this integration is an important part of recent forms of *khon*. The *piphat* ensemble has different functions, sizes, and usages which changed and developed over periods of time, linked to particular types of *khon* performance. Through the journey of musical accompaniment for *khon*, some musical features were reconstructed and represent the current formation of musical accompaniment for *khon*.

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<sup>205</sup> Even though the use of two *piphat* ensembles is a significant feature, modern amplification has brought changes. The use of two *piphat* ensembles requires more resources, so, the *piphat* ensemble performed today is a combination of a single-size and double-size *piphat* ensemble. However, there are events which tend to preserve the use of two *piphat* ensembles for *khon* such as The Royal *khon* performance held annually in current Bangkok. This phenomenon is one of the factors that encourage the existence of *khon* and its musical accompaniment effectively. More details on using two sets of *piphat* ensemble in contemporary Bangkok can be found in Chapter 7.

#### 4.2.4 Vocalisations: narration & singing: ‘Phak’, ‘Cheracha’, and ‘Khaprong’

The use of vocalisation in *khon* performance is one of the prominent musical features within *khon* music. There are two types of vocalisations used: (1) *khaprong* (ขับร้อง) or *rong* (ร้อง) (singing) and (2) *Phak* (พากย์) and *Cheracha* (เจรจา) (narration). This section will consider how these two genres relate to *khon* performance and how they are used in the *Phrommas* repertoire.

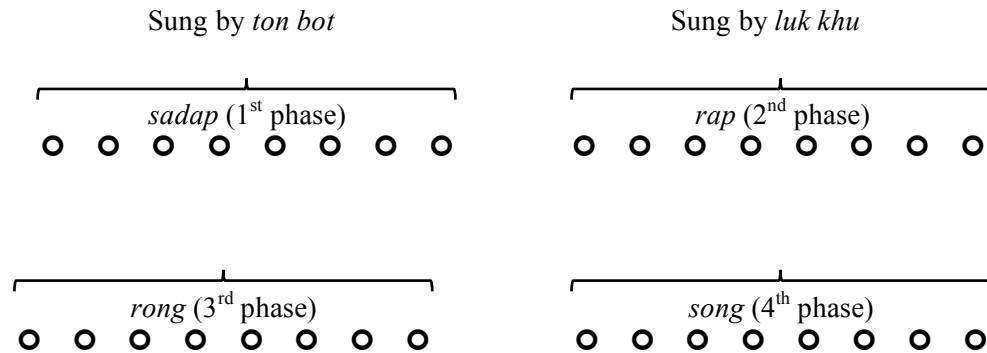
##### 4.2.4.1 *Khaprong* (ขับร้อง)

*Khaprong* or *rong* means to sing. It is a form of Thai classical singing that comprises two vital elements: *khamrong* (คำร้อง) (lyrics) and *uan* (เอื้อน) (wordless singing). *uan* is the prominent vocal technique used in Thai classical singing, involving vocal articulation without any text, used to join words that are in the song lyrics, and following the basic melody of the song. *Uan* requires a high level of skill in steady vocal breathing and precise pitching.

In the *Phrommas* repertoire, *khaprong* is mainly used. There are both normal and advanced vocal skills required for particular songs but all vocal pieces basically have *khamrong* (lyrics) and *uan* (wordless singing) within the performance practice. Structurally, the formation of *khaprong* in the *Phrommas* repertoire is *khaprong kap kansadaeng* (ขับร้องกับการแสดง) (singing for theatre). The structural components of *khaprong kap kansadaeng* include two crucial parts, that given to the *ton bot* (ต้นบท) (lead singer) and that for the *luk khu* (ลูกคู่) (chorus).

The work of *ton bot* and *luk khu* in the theatre are associated with the structure of traditional Thai verse, which includes four sub-phrases within one unit of verse. Those four sub-phrases are *sadap* (สดับ) (first phrase), *rap* (รับ) (second phrase), *rong* (ร้อง) (third phrase), and *song* (ส่ง) (fourth phrase). *Ton bot* will sing *sadap* (1st) and *rong* (3<sup>rd</sup>) phrases whereas *luk khu* will sing *rap* (2<sup>nd</sup>) and *song* (4<sup>th</sup>) phrases (the second and fourth one) as seen in Figure 4.24.

Figure 4.24 Verse structure related to the works of *ton bot* and *luk khu*



The process of *ton bot* and *luk khu* are particularly used within singing for theatre, and this pattern is found in many songs in the *Phrommas* repertoire. However, there are other vocal patterns used in the *Phrommas* episode based on the lyrics and in pieces which involve purely group singing or a single vocal solo.

#### 4.2.4.2 *Phak* (พาทย์) and ‘*Cheracha*’ (เชรชา)

*Phak* means to narrate and is considered more as a kind of narration than singing. *Phak* requires a stronger tone of voice, less vocal decoration and a very small amount of *uan* (wordless vocalisation) because it focuses more on the pronunciation of lyrics to communicate the narrative. The narrator is called *khon phak* (คนพาทย์) and the *Phak* is always performed along with *Cheracha* (เชรชา); both of them are considered as the symbols of *khon* performance influenced by *nang yai* (see more details in Chapter 2). The functions of *Phak* and *Cheracha* are to carry on the story quickly, and this is a clear contrast to *lakhon* (dance drama), where singing is mostly used to narrate the story along with refined and elaborated dance figures.

Traditionally, the *khon phak* (narrator) could only be male; however, more recently the Fine Arts Department, Bangkok has established the use of a female narrator for the female roles in *khon* performance, but it is not yet very common. The role of the *khon phak* or narrator was crucial for *khon* performance because they are the person who gives cues to the performers; importantly, all narration in which there are a number



of verses used with *khon* are improvised by *khon phak*. In early *khon* performance there was no written dramatic text used as a guideline but all the lyrics were remembered and improvised by *khon phak* for the whole episode of *khon*.<sup>206</sup> Hence, they need to have a broader knowledge of the narrative texts, of *naphat*, of traditional Thai verse used as the narration, and of *khon* performance.

*Phak* employs lyrics from the *khon* dramatic text. There are six types of *Phak* depending on the meaning of the lyrics: (1) *phak muang* (พากย์เมือง) (narration for the city scene), (2) *phak rot* (พากย์รถ) (narration used to describe the elegance of the procession of the main actor based on the narrative), (3) *phak chomdong* (พากย์ชมดง) (narration for travelling to the jungle), (4) *phak o* (พากย์โอด) (narration for sadness), (5) *phak banyai* (พากย์บรรยาย) (narration for general description), and (6) *phak bettalet* (พากย์เบ็ดเตล็ด) (narration for other purposes in the story).<sup>207</sup> In the *Phrommas* episode a combination of *phak muang* and *phak bettalet* is used. *Phak* employs both lyrics and *uan* (wordless singing), but *Phak* employs less elaborated vocal techniques than *khaprong*. However, the focus of *Phak* is to narrate the characters, and the *khon phak* should narrate by pronouncing clear lyrics with a clear, bold voice, but should also be able to perform basic *uan* properly.

### *Cheracha* (เจรจา)

*Cheracha* requires less in the way of melodic vocal delivery; *Cheracha* means to talk and is used in scenes where the story needs to move quickly. The text used in *Cheracha* is a different format of verse to *Phak*; it is called *rai yao* (ร้ายยาว). There are two types of *thamnong* (ทำนอง) (melody) for *Cheracha*: *thamnong banyai* (เจรจาทำนองบรรยาย) (descriptive melody) and *thamnong phut* (เจรจาทำนองพูด) (talking melody).<sup>208</sup> As the names suggest, *thamnong banyai* is used for general description, for example, describing general narrative in particular scenes, whereas the second *thamnong phut* is employed when the actor wants to talk or have conversation. The musical characteristics of both

<sup>206</sup> Theeraphat Thongnim, interviewed by Suchada Sowat, Jan 18, 2016.

<sup>207</sup> Montri Tramot, “*Phak Cheracha ton siang luk khu*” in *Khon Khong Thanit Yupho* [*Khon* of Thanit Yupho] (Bangkok: Khurusapha Print, 1983): 128.

<sup>208</sup> Theeraphat Thongnim, *Khon* (Bangkok: Odeon Store Print, 2012): 69.

melodies of *Cheracha* will be explained in Chapter 5 in the *Phak* and *Cheracha* analysis.

*Cheracha* will end with a text phrase to identify the name of a particular *naphat* piece to be performed next, and this performance practice places an emphasis on the experience and improvising ability of the *khon phak* (narrator), musicians, singer, and dancers. The *khon phak* has to narrate particular characters by drawing upon a stock of verse and has to understand which *naphat* piece is appropriate for which *khon* action. Therefore, for early *khon* performance their role was similar to the director because they needed to know the story in which the *naphat* piece should be played, as well as create the lyrics for *Phak* and *Cheracha*.<sup>209</sup> However, modern-day *khon* performance has changed: it is more prepared and relies more on the written dramatic text.

#### **4.2.5 Relationship between instrumental and vocal parts in the *Phrommas* repertoire**

Within Thai classical music for theatre, there are a number of particular musical techniques that are commonly used, and the interaction between vocal and instrumental parts is one of the crucial musical elements. This section will explain particular techniques found between vocal and instrumental parts within the *Phrommas* repertoire. One of the significant aims of performing music for theatre is to communicate the narrative, and the message transmitted through the vocal part is paramount. As a result some instrumental parts are reduced or minimised in order to emphasise the vocal part; and these include a group of musical techniques particularly used in music for theatre. There are five principal techniques: *song* (ลำง), *suam* (สวน), *rap* (รับ), *khiao* (เคี้ยว), and *lamlong* (ลำลอง).

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<sup>209</sup> Theeraphat Thongnim, interviewed by Suchada Sowat, Jan 18, 2016.

#### 4.2.5.1 Song (สั)

*Song* means to hand something over from one place to another. Musically, *song* refers to where either the vocal or instrumental part proceed a melody to make a specific connection from one to another,<sup>210</sup> and the melody of *song* is usually taken from the last sentence of the particular unit of the piece. In terms of music for theatre, *song* is often used to place greater emphasis on the vocal part in order to communicate the narrative; *song* can reduce the length of the instrumental part, requiring only the last sentence of a section to be played. The process of *song* is applied within some pieces of the *Phrommas* repertoire such as *Krao Nai*, and *Krao Nok*; Figure 4.25 shows the example of *Song* in the piece *Krao Nai*.

Figure 4.25 The process of *song* (สั)

The musical score consists of four staves. The top staff is the Vocal part, with lyrics: "but- nan\_ ka la soon se\_ - etc.". Above the vocal staff, there are four horizontal lines with dots, indicating a melodic line. The second staff is for Khong Wong Yai, labeled "song (Inst.)". The third staff is for Taphon. The bottom staff is for Klong That. The tempo is marked as "approx 68" at the beginning of the vocal and klong that parts. The time signature is 2/4.

<sup>210</sup> Tramot, *Duriyang-kha-sat Thai*, 36.

#### 4.2.5.2 *Suam* (สวม)

*Suam* means to wear. In musical terms, *suam* refers to the process of making melodies overlap into another performance's part; it generally takes place between vocal and instrumental parts: as the first part is about to finish, the second starts playing the same melody in order to create a smooth join. In the *Phrommas* repertoire, *suam* can be found in many pieces involving a vocal part; Figure 4.26 shows the example of *suam* in the piece called *Chang Prasan Nga*.

Figure 4.26 The process of *suam* (สวม)

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*Suam* (Inst.) *Rap* (Inst.)

#### 4.2.5.3 *Rap* (รับ)

The literal meaning of *rap* is to receive or to take something. Musically, *rap* refers to the characteristics of the instrumental parts, which take turns to play. Generally, a vocal piece in Thai music will start with singing, with the instrumental part then repeating the same section; for example, if a piece has two sections, the vocalists will sing the first section followed by instrumental parts playing the same material, before the same process is applied to the second section, and so on. In the theatre, *rap* can be applied to some pieces in order to demonstrate the skill of the dancer, if that is asked for by the director. Normally, *rap* is not very much used because the main focus is supposed to be more on the vocal part, but sometimes *rap* is needed if the dancer needs more time to complete a movement or change position. This include the demands of the director along with the time constraints of the performance: the musical and

dance director may, if there is sufficient time, agree to have *rap* in some pieces in order to show off the musical abilities of the musicians and dancers. Figure 4.27 presents the example of *rap* in the piece called *Krao Nai*.

Figure 4.27 The process of *rap* (รัว)

The musical score for Figure 4.27 illustrates the process of *rap* in the piece *Krao Nai*. It features four staves. The top staff is a vocal line starting at measure 11 with the word "er" above it. The second staff is labeled "Suam (Inst.)" and shows a rhythmic accompaniment. The third staff is labeled "Rap (Inst.)" and shows a more complex rhythmic pattern. The bottom staff is a bass line with a simple rhythmic accompaniment.

Processes of *Song*, *Suam*, and *rap* can be applied to pieces which alternate between vocal and instrumental parts. With regard to the way that vocal and instrumental parts play alongside each other, there are two crucial performance practices used in the *Phrommas* episode: *khlaol* (เคล้า) and *lamlong* (ลำลอง).

#### 4.2.5.4 *Khlaol* (เคล้า)

*Khlaol* literally means to mix or to blend two things together, and this literal meaning is directly reflected in musical terms because *khlaol* refers to the process in which vocal and instrumental parts go alongside each other. Each performs its own part based on the main notes within the basic melody, called *luk tok* (ลูกตอก); vocal and instrumental parts need to meet each other at the appointed pitch. In the *Phrommas* repertoire, there are some pieces that use *khlaol* within vocal and instrumental parts, such as *Soi Son* and *Thayae Klong Yon*. Interestingly, *uan* (wordless vocalisation) is used in the vocal part and it causes the delay of *luk tok* (see more information about *luk tok* in section 4.1.3.1). This feature also creates a variety of sounds in the piece generated from the overlap of notes between vocal and instrumental part and it is one of

the prominent features taking place in the *khiao* process. There will be more discussion on *khiao* and *luk tok* in the analysis of *Soi Son* in Chapter 5.

#### 4.2.5.5 *Lamlong* (ลำลอง)

*Lamlong* is another musical technique which takes place between the vocal and instrumental parts. The word *lamlong* literally means ‘be casual’, and, musically, *lamlong* involves the vocal and instrumental parts playing along with each other with no consideration of their meeting point. Essentially, the process of *lamlong* can only be found in the piece called *He Choet Ching* (เห่เชิดฉิ่ง), which is one of the important pieces for the theatre, being a *naphat* piece that represents using the sacred weapon of the narrative.

Although *lamlong* requires no linking *luk tok* note, there is some restriction to performing it: within *He Choet Ching*, the instrumental part plays the melody of *Choet Ching* (เชิดฉิ่ง) whereas the vocal part plays the melody of *He* (เห่) (a vocalisation associated with a particular melody), but the singer has to be able to start singing at the right pitch in relation to *Choet*’s melody, and keep singing without regard to the instrumental part. This requires a high level of skill and experience from the vocalist. In addition, when vocal and instrumental parts play together in *lamlong*, there is a combination of using both the entire *piphat* ensemble and the individual *ranat ek* (Treble xylophone). There will be more description about *lamlong* and *He Choet Ching* in Chapter 5.

All these different types of techniques, including *song*, *suam*, *rap*, *khiao*, and *lamlong* demonstrate the variety that takes place between instrumental and vocal parts. They are unique to a theatrical context, and fulfil different functions: some techniques are used to carry on the story quickly (*suam* and *song*), whereas some techniques are used to make a particular sound or texture to suit a particular scene (such as *khiao* and *lamlong*) etc. The emphasis on the vocal part to communicate the narrative is still paramount. In addition, the relationship between vocal and instrumental parts is one of the features that make it possible to demonstrate the most refined and elaborated musical techniques, which originate within the court function from which the *Phrommas* emerged.

### 4.3 Conclusion

The foregoing discussion of all these musical elements indicates the way in which a level of knowledge of musical fundamentals is essential for a complete understanding of Thai classical music in relation to its theatrical usage – it is against these norms that the particularly distinctive aspects of the *Phrommas* can be examined. There are two types here: the base elements of Thai classical music, which are the fundamental building blocks for Thai music, and the specific elements that occur within the music used for theatre.

The fundamental elements discussed in section 4.1, including groupings of musical instruments, the pitch system, the concept of basic melody and its relation to other musical instruments, musical phrases, rhythmic pattern, and categories of Thai pieces, are the essential skeletons of Thai classical music found within all genres. The musical elements discussed in section 4.2, including the purpose and expression of music for theatre, text, musical accompaniment and vocalisation used for *khon*, and particular relationships between vocal and instrumental parts, are more clearly directed towards theatrical usage. Although elements such as *suam*, *song*, *rap*, *khiao*, *lamlong* may also be found in some other Thai music genres, they are used for a different purpose. For example, *rap* can be found in concert pieces or where it forms part of high-level musical practice. On the other hand, it is quite rare to find *khiao* and *lamlong* in other genres of Thai music, especially in concert pieces where the musical and vocal skill of musicians is more of a priority.

Both these types of musical elements have to be integrated in order to understand the *Phrommas* repertoire properly. It is impossible to understand complicated musical features without knowing a simple formation that underpins them; at the same time, it is quite difficult to understand music used for theatre without knowing its specific concept in relation to the purpose, function, and expression of performing Thai music within that particular context. It is how these musical principles

manifest themselves in the particular music that forms the *Phrommas* repertoire that is the focus of the next chapter.



## Chapter 5

### The Music

To analyse the music used for the *Phrommas* episode, it is important to consider the overall structure of the *Phrommas* repertoire and how it connects with the narrative. This chapter will provide a detailed discussion of the music, starting with the structure and significance of the repertoire and of individual pieces (Section 5.1). This will be followed by discussion of the analytical framework based on Thai music theory used in the analysis of the repertoire (5.2), before a detailed examination of a representative body of the music (5.3).

#### 5.1 Structure and significance of the particular pieces in the *Phrommas* repertoire

There are twenty-nine pieces in the *Phrommas* repertoire; Table 5.1 presents all the pieces alongside their theatrical significance and function in the narrative.

Table 5.1 The *Phrommas* repertoire and the narrative

| Name of piece                                    | Significance and conventional usage   | Communicating the narrative in the <i>Phrommas</i> repertoire  |
|--|---|--|
| 1. <i>Wa</i> (วา)                                | <i>Wa</i> is used as the opening piece for all theatrical repertoires.                                | The beginning of the performance; it signals that the theatre has begun.   |
| 2. <i>Samoe</i> (สามมอ)                          | A <i>naphat</i> piece used to represent the action of walking.  | Thossakan and his demon soldiers gather together to discuss the war with Phra Ram's army.  |
| 3. <i>Rua</i> (รู้)                              | A <i>naphat</i> piece describing a supernatural action in the story.                                  | <i>Rua</i> is performed as a complement to <i>Samoe</i> .  |
| 4. <i>Phak</i> and <i>Charecha</i> (พาทย์-เจรจา) | Narration configured as melodic speaking, considered the prominent symbol of <i>khon</i> performance. | Thossakan and his demon soldiers discuss the war with Phra Ram. A demon soldier reports that Thossakan's nephews (Sang a thit and Mang korn kan) have died |

| Name of piece                                 | Significance and conventional usage  | Communicating the narrative in the <i>Phrommas</i> repertoire   |
|---|--|---|
| 5. <i>Krao Nai</i><br>(กราวไน)                | A <i>naphat</i> piece describing the action of a demon walking and gathering together.   | Kalasoon flies into the air to approach Inthorachit's ceremonial pavilion in the jungle.                                  |
| 6. <i>Choet</i> (เชิด)                        | A <i>naphat</i> piece representing the action of marching and being in a fighting scene.   |   |
| 7. <i>Mon Ram Dap</i><br>(มอญรำดาบ)           | A vocal piece talking about Kalasoon coming to see Inthorachit (Thossakan's son).  | Kalasoon arrives at Inthorachit's ceremonial pavilion to inform him of the loss of his demon nephews.                     |
| 8. <i>Rue Rai</i><br>(เรือร้าย)               | A vocal piece with refined vocal techniques used only for the theatre.   | The bad news drives Inthorachit mad but Kalasoon escapes punishment because the news is given at the demon king's demand. |
| 9. <i>Phram Ok</i><br>(พราหมณ์ออก)            | A high-level <i>naphat</i> piece representing the priest's movement. The word <i>phram</i> means the priest (in which case it is <i>Bhrama</i> ) and <i>ok</i> means to depart.  | Inthorachit departs from his ceremonial pavilion.   |
| 10. <i>Chang Prasan Nga</i><br>(ช้างประสานงา) | A vocal piece talking about Inthorachit's plan to fight with the enemy.  | Inthorachit manages a deceitful plan by disguising demons to make a beautiful angel-dance in the battlefield.             |
| 11. <i>Farang Khuang</i> (ฝรั่งควง)           | A vocal piece used for general description within the theatre.   | Rutthakan, the demon soldier receives the order from Inthorachit to set up the demon army.                                |
| 12. <i>Tra Non</i><br>(ตระนอน)                | A <i>naphat</i> piece representing the action of sleeping but when it is used in the <i>Phrommas</i> repertoire, it is allocated to the lyrics talking about Inthorachit's disguise.   | Inthorachit disguises himself as God Indra.   |
| 13. <i>Chom Talat</i><br>(ชมตลาด)             | A vocal piece used within theatre which describes the action of dressing or clothing of the character; in the <i>Phrommas</i> repertoire, <i>Chom Talat</i> describes the action of Inthorachit as God Indra who is admiring the beautiful God Indra's appearance. | Inthorachit admires himself disguised as God Indra.   |

| Name of piece   | Significance and conventional usage  | Communicating the narrative in the <i>Phrommas</i> repertoire  |
|---|--|--|
| 14. <i>Bat Sakuni</i><br>(บาทสกุณี)                       | A high-level <i>naphat</i> piece representing the action of travelling or walking of high-level Gods.  | God Indra (Inthorachit in disguise) departs from the ceremonial pavilion.                                    |
| 15. <i>Krao Nok</i><br>(กราวนอก)                          | A <i>naphat</i> piece representing the action of monkeys, humans, and angels.  | All disguised demons parade to the battlefield.  |
| 16. <i>Thayae Klong Yon</i><br>(ทะแยกลองโยน)              | A vocal piece describing the procession with elegant dance movement.   | The beauty of God Indra's procession with numerous angels.   |
| 17. <i>Choet</i> (เชิด)<br>(repeated)                     | (See previous <i>Choet</i> 's meaning)   | God Indra's parade straight toward the battlefield.  |
| 18. <i>Kra Bok</i><br>(กระบอก)                            | A vocal piece always used in the theatre for a general description of the scene.   | All angels arrive at the battlefield; God Indra orders them to dance in the air.                             |
| 19. <i>Khaek Awang chan diao</i><br>(แขกอาหวัง ชั้นเดียว) | A fast vocal piece used in the theatre.  | The angels accept God Indra's (Inthorachit) command.   |
| 20. <i>Soi Son</i><br>(สร้อยสน)                           | The piece selected from <i>phleng ruang</i> to be used with lyrics.  | The beautiful angels' dance appeared in the air.   |
| 21. <i>He Klom Chang</i> (เห่กล่อมช้าง)                   | A vocal piece particularly used in the <i>Phrommas</i> repertoire with a freely rhythmic pattern.  | Phra Lak and his monkey army enjoy the angels' dance in the air.   |
| 22. <i>Phat Cha</i><br>(พัดชา)                            | A piece collected from the <i>mahori</i> genre. In the <i>Phrommas</i> repertoire, it represents the action of Phra Lak and his monkeys enjoying the beautiful dance in the sky. | Phra Lak and his monkey military enjoy the angel dance in the air.   |
| 23. <i>Malaengwan Thong</i> (แมลงวันทอง)                  | A vocal piece describing God Indra (Inthorachit) who is intending to attack Phra Lak.  | God Indra (transformed Inthorachit) is seeking a chance to shoot Phra Lak while he enjoys the angels' dance. |
| 24. <i>He Choet Ching</i> (เห่เชิดฉิ่ง)                   | A <i>naphat</i> piece with the vocal part representing the important action of the main actor.   | God Indra (Inthorachit) is pointing the <i>Phrommas</i> bow to shoot Phra Lak.                               |
| 25. <i>Choet</i> (เชิด)<br>(repeated)                     |  |  |

| Name of piece                          | Significance and conventional usage  | Communicating the narrative in the <i>Phrommas</i> repertoire                                |
|--|--|--|
| 24. <i>Rai Rut</i> (ร้ายรูด)           | A vocal piece used for the theatre; it is a vocal piece only.  | Numerous arrows from the <i>Phrommas</i> bow explode.  |
| 25. <i>Ot</i> (โอด)                    | A <i>naphat</i> piece representing sadness and disappointed feelings.  | The failure of Phra Lak and his monkey army.   |
| 26. <i>Ling Lot</i> (ลิงโลด)           | A fast-tempo vocal piece usually used with the theatre to communicate the furious action.  | Hanuman angrily flies into the air to fight with God Indra.                                  |
| 27. <i>Ling Lan</i> (ลิงลาน)           | A vocal piece usually used with the theatre with lyrics to communicate the angry actions of characters higher than <i>Ling Lot</i> . | God Indra fights with Hanuman.   |
| 28. <i>Ot Hap</i> (โอดแหบ)             | Another version of <i>Ot</i> expressing the action of crying due to gladness.  | All demons are glad to have victory over the enemy.  |
| 29. <i>Krao Ram Phama</i> (กราวรำพม่า) | A vocal piece describing a sense of cheerfulness and victory over the enemy.   | God Indra (Inthorachit) and his demon soldiers celebrate their victory over Phra Lak's army. |
| <i>Choet</i> (เชิด) (repeated)         | (See previous <i>Choet</i> 's meaning)   | Then they return to Longka city.   |

The meaning of the pieces in the *Phrommas* repertoire and their overall order is key to understanding the musical characteristics of individual pieces. Each piece involves a number of different connections, both to its original non-theatrical use (when appropriate) and its context within the *Phrommas* repertoire, and it is these that construct significance and meaning for the music.

## 5.2 Analytical framework

The analytical framework used here has been developed from research into Thai classical music for *khon* performance. This involves many sources: existing literature, material gathered from performers through fieldwork in Thailand as well as the author's experience of performance practice. There are two main principles: 1) to group pieces into particular categories relating to the function of music for theatre and the uniqueness of particular pieces in the *Phrommas* and 2) to analyse that music in relation to its specific usage.

According to Montri Tramot (1992) there are two main genres of pieces used for theatre: (1) *phleng rong* (เพลงร้อง) (vocal pieces) and (2) *phleng prakop kiriya* (เพลงประกอบกิริยา) (pieces to accompany the actions of characters)<sup>211</sup> and this concept can be used to consider which piece is suitable for a particular scene or action. Boonchuay Sovat<sup>212</sup> (2015) also argues that there are two types of piece, but divides them differently: (1) *phleng prakap kiriya* (เพลงประกอบกิริยา) (pieces for accompanying particular actions of characters) and (2) *phleng sathon arom* (เพลงสะท้อนอารมณ์) (pieces to reflect particular feelings based on the story). These frameworks can also be used as a guideline for understanding the functions of music accompanying Thai classical theatre and it suggests that feeling and emotion is one of the crucial concepts here: the capabilities of the sound and musical techniques within particular pieces are reflective of the narrative.

In terms of the theatrical tradition of *khon* music, Sirichaicharn Fachamroon<sup>213</sup> suggests that the tradition of performing *khon* and its music has its origin in the theatrical repertoire where there are some predetermined orders of playing the piece at the very beginning of the performance. He suggests that ‘it starts with a musical overture for theatre called *hom rong* (โหมโรง) (the prelude for theatre) followed by either vocal music or *Phak* (พากย์) and *Cheracha* (เจรจา) (narration for *khon* performance), which are the symbols of *khon* performance, and after these two stages, it can be any piece which is suitable for the dramatic text to communicate the narrative’. Nevertheless, the *Phrommas* repertoire also has special musical characteristics: it comprises a wide range of pieces, which involve many particularly interesting musical features, especially the relationship between vocal and instrumental parts and their relationship with the theatre. Moreover, the author’s own experience as a Thai classical singer has illustrated how vocal practices found in the *Phrommas* repertoire involve not only singing but also the art of narration, which has its own vocal characteristics. Hence, it is important to understand the characteristics of vocalisation both alone and when combined with instrumental lines. These different perspectives have informed the analytical framework illustrated in Figure 5.1.

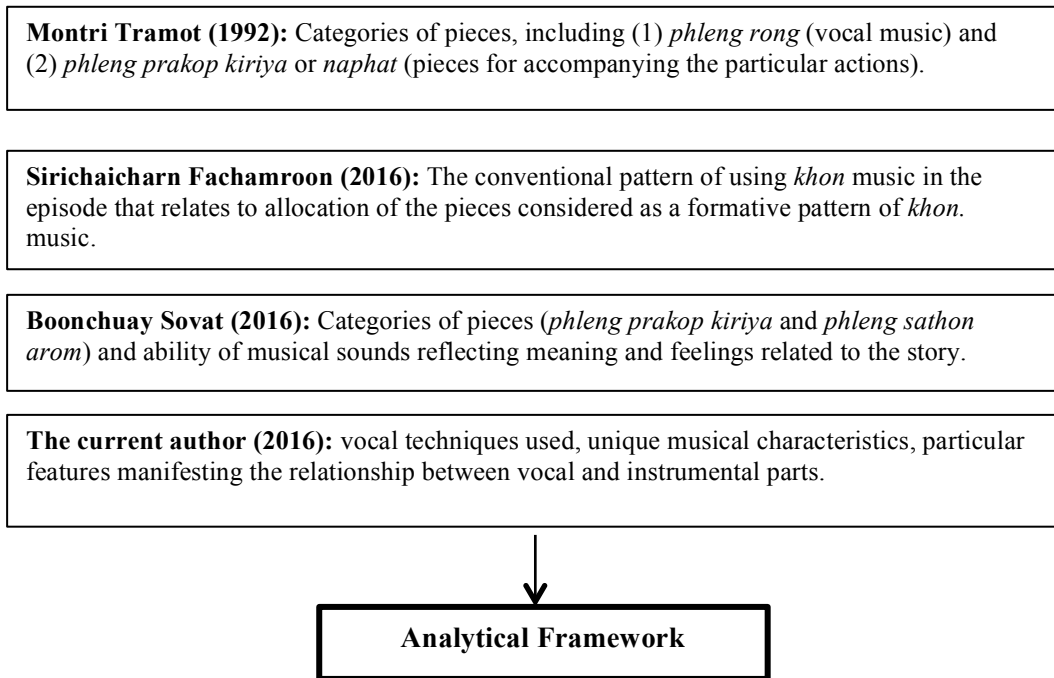
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<sup>211</sup> Montri Tramot, *The discipline of allocating music in Thai classical theatre* (Bangkok, 1992): 55.

<sup>212</sup> Boonchuay Sovat, interviewed by Suchada Sowat, Jan 14, 2016.

<sup>213</sup> Sirichaicharn Fachamroon, interviewed by Suchada Sowat, Jan 20, 2016.

Figure 5.1 Development of the analytical framework



### 5.2.1 Elements of analysis

1. **Category:** The category of the piece is one of the most obvious musical elements. The concept of category in Thai classical music depends not only on a piece's musical characteristics but also the occasion on which it is used. As the *Phrommas* repertoire is a series of Thai classical pieces it is important to know the initial background plus the piece's category to understand its functional transformation.
2. **Medium:** This refers to the physical attributes of instrumentation and voice used in that piece alongside how these components interact with each other.
3. **Structure:** The Thai word, *khrong sang* (โครงสร้าง) (literally meaning the structure) embraces the structural feature of that piece, including the length measured by the rhythmic pattern of the drums (*nathap*) which is the most important aspect in understanding the construction of Thai pieces and their sectional construction. The concept of *khrong sang* is crucial to

comprehending the basic configuration such as the length and the different sections, as well as the drum pattern for a particular style.<sup>214</sup>

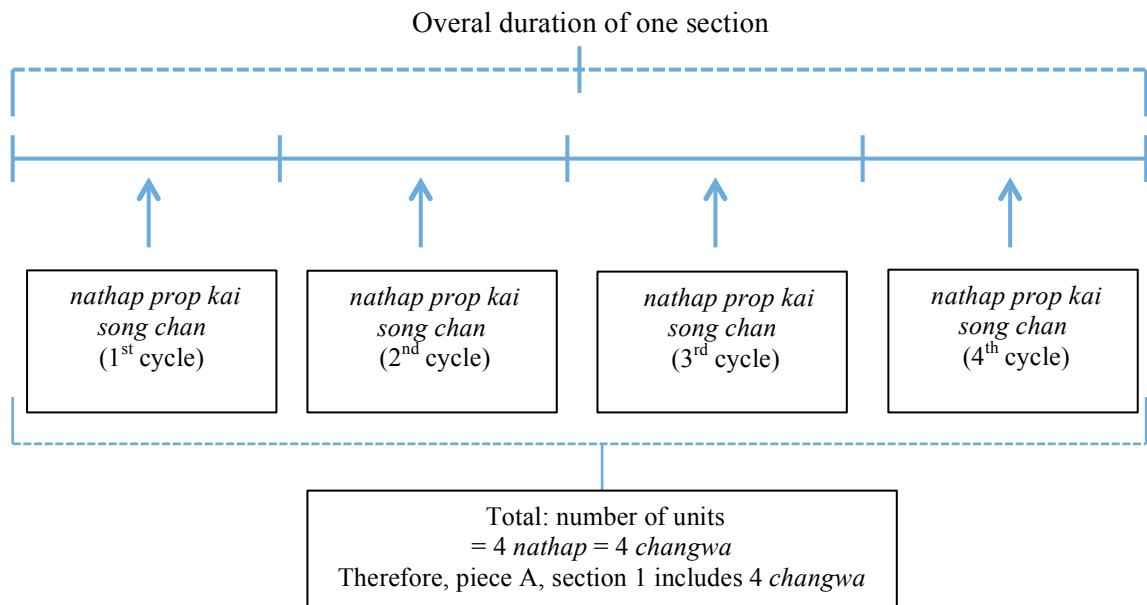
*Nathap* and *atra* (*sam chan*, *song chan*, and *chan diao*) are the basic musical elements here. The application of these rhythmic elements involves three main aspects. Firstly, the concept of ‘structure’ includes 1) the drum pattern, 2) the length of the piece, and 3) the number of sections and their combination. Secondly, the category of drum pattern will be used to suggest the style of that piece: pieces that use *nathap song mai* express a flexible style whereas those using *nathap prop kai* are more formal or restricted, and there are some pieces in the *Phrommas* repertoire which use *nathap phiset* (a special drum pattern) such as a group of *naphat* pieces.<sup>215</sup> Thirdly, the length of the piece can be measured through the length of *changwa nathap* (จังหวะหน้าทับ). In other words, *nathap* is not only played along with the piece but also used to calculate its length. For example, if a piece employs *nathap prop kai*, its length will be calculated by playing *nathap prop kai* repetitively along with the melody of each section; if *nathap prop kai* is played four times, it means there are four *changwa*. Figure 5.2 shows these structural elements.

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<sup>214</sup> Manop Wisutthiphath, *Thit Sa Di Kan Wi Kro Phleng Thai* (Bangkok: San Ti Si Ri Kan Phim, 2013): 35.

<sup>215</sup> More details can be found in Chapter 4.

Figure 5.2 Example of application of *changwa* in a piece



4. **Pitch system:** The concept of *thang* or *thang siang* (Key) and its application in different types of musical ensembles has already been discussed in Chapter 4 in relationship to the group of pitches used throughout the *Phrommas* repertoire (see more details in Chapter 4: section 4.1.2 Key and Pitch arrangement: seven *thang*). Here, this element simply reports which *thang* is used to perform a particular piece.
5. **Musical characteristics related to the theatrical usage:** When performed in a theatrical context the way the piece is performed often changes.<sup>216</sup> For example, some pieces have only their beginning and end phrases played. Additionally, there is integration between a conventional use of the piece within a theatrical context and the meaning of the text; this perspective will be shown in the musical analysis.
6. **Specific musical characteristics:** Before the *Phrommas* repertoire was used to accompany *khon* performance, it was originally created as a musical selection without theatre. However, the intention for performing the music was to stimulate the audience's theatrical imagination through the music and lyrics they heard, seen in the formation of *bot konsoet* or *lakhon muet* (see more details

<sup>216</sup> Lumyong Sowat, interviewed by Suchada Sowat, Jan 15, 2016.



about the genesis of the *Phrommas* repertoire in Chapter 3). The pieces collated for the *Phrommas* repertoire comprise elaborated, melodious, and spectacular musical features, which made the *Phrommas* repertoire outstanding and to this day contributes to the continuation of the *Phrommas* repertoire in modern Bangkok. This perspective will be described within musical analysis in terms of particular musical techniques, the format of playing, and cooperation of vocal and instrumental parts.

This critical framework is shown in Figure 5.3; although this framework is based on the *Phrommas* repertoire and theory of *khon* music, it might also form a preliminary tool to understand the holistic concept of Thai classical music for theatre especially for *khon* performance.

In what follows, 18 of the 29 pieces of the *Phrommas* will be analysed in relation to their history, structural features, instrumentation, lyrical and theatrical reflection plus their usage and specific musical characteristics, grouped as shown in Figure 5.3. Not all pieces within the repertoire are discussed here, but the selection chosen forms a representative sample through which it is possible to illustrate the musical characteristics associated with particular categories of music.

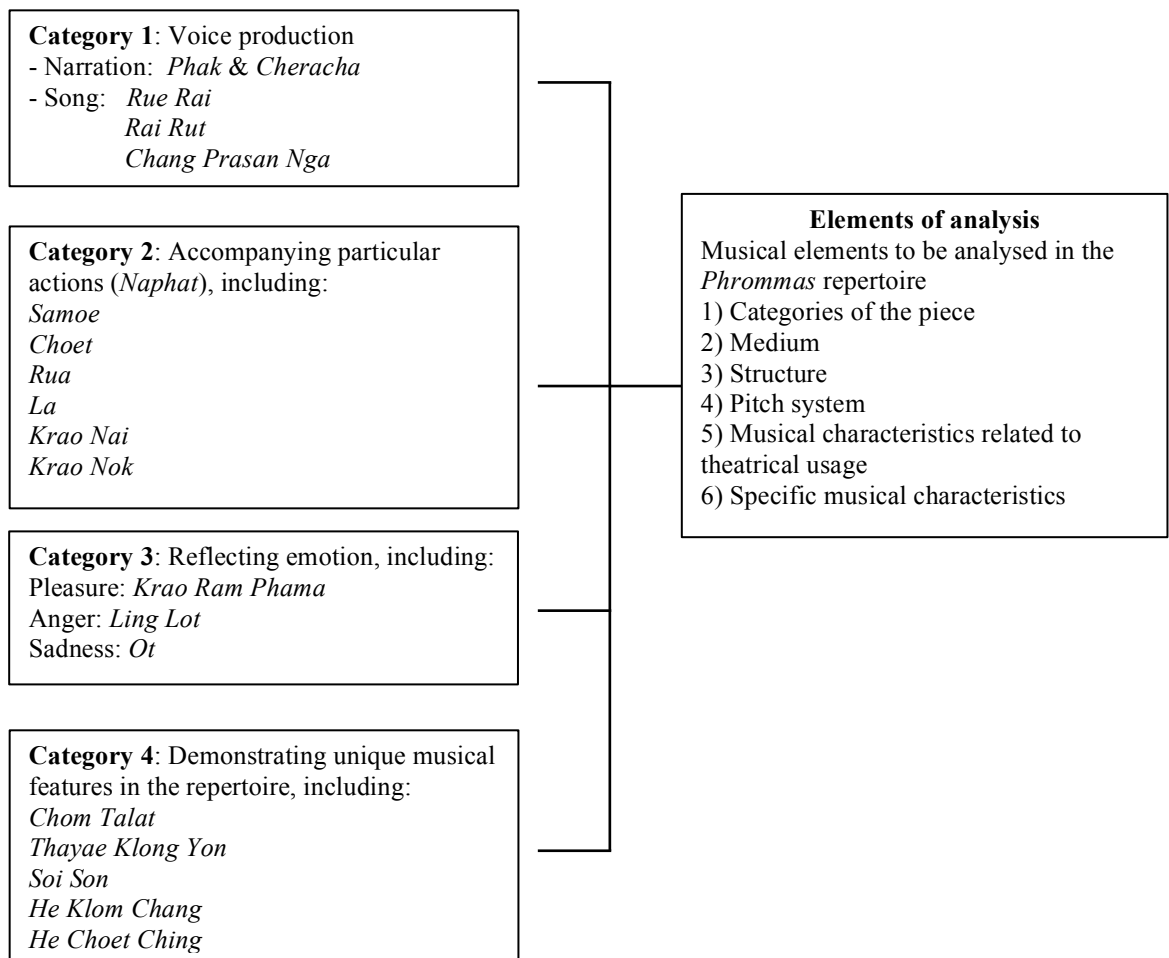
### **5.2.2 Video tracks and transcriptions**

Some of the notations in this thesis do not match what is heard in the video tracks. The purpose of the notations is to allow discussion of the skeleton of the music that affects the relationship of music with other components, rather than showing every single detail of musical and vocal technique. Some notations have been simplified to present the relationship between the instrumental parts themselves, or between the instrumental and vocal parts, or to show musical features and theatrical usages. In addition, the differences between notation and what is played in the video tracks manifest the creativities within Thai musical and vocal practices. As there is no notation used to perform the *Phrommas* repertoire, different musicians and vocalists showcase individual styles within their performance, and the decoration, realisation and adaptation found within the pieces depend on their idiosyncratic choices. An example

is the vocal part and *taphon* in *Phak*. It is for this reason that there are differences between the notation and the video tracks within this thesis.

It should also be noted that in the video tracks, as most musicians are government officers from the Buditpatanasilpa Institute in Bangkok, they wear a brown uniform which is similar to a military uniform. The student musicians of the Buditpatanasilpa Institute, however, wear a student uniform (white shirt and black trousers).

Figure 5.3 Analytical framework for musical analysis



## 5.3 The music

### 5.3.1 Voice production

The first group is focussed on various types of vocalisation found in the *Phrommas* repertoire. There are four different kinds of vocalisation: 1) *Phak* and *Cheracha*, *Rue Rai*, *Rai Rut*, and *Chang Prasan Nga*; each type represents certain characteristics of vocal practice with its own uniqueness.

#### 5.3.1.1 *Phak* and *Cheracha* (พากย์-เจรจา)

### **Phak**

#### **Category**

*Phak* (พากย์) is a kind of vocalisation, but it is generally perceived as a narration among the Thai classical music and dance community. *Phak* literally means to narrate; it is not widely considered as a piece of music because it is made of spoken melody rather than singing. *Phak* is known as the prominent symbol of *khon* performance; as the dancers are masked and silent, the narrative has to be narrated and communicated through the use of *Phak* (narration) and a group of *naphat* pieces to represent particular actions (see more details in Chapter 2). However, in the creation of the *Phrommas* more vocal music was added into the repertoire but *Phak* still remained at the very beginning.<sup>217</sup>

#### **Medium**

In the performance, *Phak* is performed by a solo *khon phak* (narrator) with the alternation of *taphon* and *klong that*. In my notation, there are three main elements in *Phak*: 1) *Phak* (narration), 2) two types of drums (*taphon* and *klong that*) played after the end of a particular unit of *Phak*, and 3) a shouted ‘*phoei*’ at the end of the drum pattern after finishing a single unit of *Phak*. I have shown them in Figure 5.4, and they can be heard in video track 1.

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<sup>217</sup> See Chapter 3 for more details about the genesis of the *Phrommas* repertoire.

Figure 5.4 *Phak* notation

♩ = approx 60

Verse 1

Phak (Voice) mua nan thos sa phak yak si ok muk  
 — kha mon tri — lae trat pra phat er —  
 rat — cha — kan — **accel.**

Taphon

Verse 2

Phoie (shouting) sa  
 tom tom  
 ran thut — thun bo mi nan — som det —  
 phra chao lan pai ron na rong er —  
 ra — ma **accel.**

2 Taphon **accel.**

Taphon

Taphon Phoie (shouting)

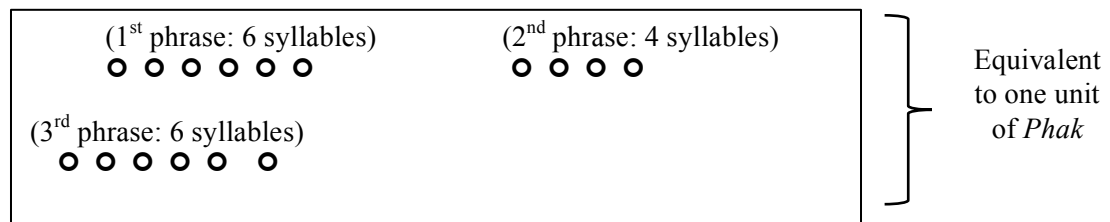
Klong That tom tom

Figure 5.4 shows only the first two units. The vocal pattern of *Phak* in the following verses employs the same melody with different words, and the drum patterns *taphon* and *klong that* are decorated according to the particular style of the drummer.

### Structure

The musical unit of *Phak* is based on the Thai traditional verse unit. As *Phak* employs Thai verse through lyrics known as *kap chabang siphok*<sup>218</sup>, a number of units are the same length as the *kap chabang siphok* unit. Figure 5.5 demonstrates the verse structure of *kap chabang siphok* in relation to *Phak*. The lyrics of *Phak* describe Thossakan's discussion with Phra Ram (Figure 5.6).

Figure 5.5 The verse structure of *kap chabang siphok*<sup>219</sup>



However, a number of syllables in *kap chabang siphok* can be a little bit flexible, which could be more or less than the fixed numbers shown in the model. For example, the first *wak* can have 6-7 syllables, the second *wak* can have 4-5 syllables, and the third *wak* can have 5-7 syllables.

<sup>218</sup> Theeraphat Thongnim, *Khon* (Bangkok: Odeon Store Print, 2012), 63.

<sup>219</sup> See Chapter 4 for more detail about Thai verses.

Figure 5.6 *Phak's* lyrics in the *Phrommas* repertoire

Unit 1

Mua nan thossaphak yaksi

เมื่อนั้นทศพัตร์ยักษ์

lae trat pra-phat rat-cha-kan

แลตรัสประพาสราชการ

(Thossakan is sitting in the throne hall having a meeting with noble demons.)

ok muk kha montri

ออกมุขมนตรี

Unit 2

Saranthut thun bo mi nan

สารันเหตุทูลบมีนาน

Pai ron-na-rong Rama

ไปรณรงค์รามมา

(The demon soldier informs him about his nephew's battle with Phra Ram.)

som det phra chao lan

สมเด็จพระเจ้าหลาน

Unit 3

Sia rot sai thossa-yotha

เสียชีวิตเสียทศโยธา

Phra ong ko sia chi wan

พระองค์ก็เสียชีวิต

(They died on the battlefield and the demon's army has been badly wounded.)

sia thep-pha-satra

เสียชีวิตศาสตรา

Unit 4

Fang khao phao phiang phloeng kan

ฟังข่าวข่าวเพียงเพลิงกัลป์

lao ning kha nueng nai chai

แล้วนึ่งคะนึ่งในใจ

(Thossakan hears bad news, feels anger and pain in his heart, and starts thinking about his plan for the war.)

cheb chai cha ban

เจ็บใจจาบัลย์

The length of *Phak* is measured by the unit of verse; one unit of *Phak* is the same length as a unit of *kap chabang siphok*; the number of *Phak* units depends on the narrative and demands of the poetry.

The drum patterns performed by *taphon* and *klong that* form the symbolic musical characteristic of *Phak*; the *taphon* pattern in *Phak* requires complicated techniques. *Taphon* and *klong that* are played at the end of each sub-section of *Phak's* words (see in Figure 5.7; video track 1, 0.38 – 0.56).

Figure 5.7 *Taphon* pattern in *Phak*

The figure displays two systems of musical notation. The first system features a Taphon staff with a melody of eighth and quarter notes, accompanied by lyrics: "theng ting pa pa pa...etc." and "ting ting ting ting tub phloeng". An "accel." marking is placed above the second measure. Below it, the Klong That staff shows a sequence of five vertical strokes representing drum hits. The second system shows a Taphon staff starting with a "6" above the first measure, followed by lyrics: "theng theng...etc.", "theng ting", and "tub phloeng ting". An "accel." marking is placed above the second measure. The Klong That staff below it shows two "tom" strokes, each consisting of a vertical line followed by a horizontal line with a downward-pointing tick mark.

Figure 5.7 shows only the skeleton pattern of the drum pattern used for *Phak*; it can be different from the notation depending on the particular style of the *taphon* player. The way that the drum pattern is changed, decorated, and adapted, relies on the individual creativities of the particular drummer. This notation may, therefore, be different to what is played in the video track.

### Pitch system

Although *Phak* is not considered a song, it has its own fixed melody associated with the musical ensemble. *Khon phak* (the narrator) should be able to start *Phak* on the right note which connects to the last pitch of the preceding piece: theoretically, *Phak* employs a group of pitches based on *khong wong yai* (Large Gong circle), including pitches numbers 11, 12, 13, and 15 to make this joining possible.<sup>220</sup> The use of pitches for *Phak* relies on *thang nai*.<sup>221</sup>

<sup>220</sup> More details of pitches located on the *khong wong yai* which are used for *Phak* can be found in the notation policy at the beginning of this thesis.

<sup>221</sup> More details about *thang siang* (keys) can be found in Chapter 4.

## Musical characteristics related to theatrical usage

The narrator needs to know the core melody of *Phak* (Figure 5.8) in order to appropriately fit the changed words within the lyrics into that core melody: there is a common melody of *Phak* that is kept in the narrator's mind, which puts the words into the melody by adapting the sound of the word to suit the main note.<sup>222</sup> A similar concept can be found in Thai instrumental practice in which there is a relationship between the basic melody and the realisation of various musical instruments.

Figure 5.8 Core melody of *Phak*



The narrator has to put lyrics into the melody by keeping the main note (in each bar). Significantly, when they reach the *uan* (wordless vocalisation) within each *Phak* unit (bars 10-11), they need to keep the exact notes of *uan*. This concept will be applied to other verses within *Phak* as well. Figure 5.9 shows the link between the core melody and its application with the lyrics of *Phak* (X marks the main notes within the core melody).

<sup>222</sup> Theeraphat Thongnim, interviewed by Suchada Sowat, Jan 18, 2016.



Figure 5.9 Links between core melody and application of *Phak*

Core melody of Phak

7

The fixed melody for *uan*

Phak (Voice)

mua nan thos sa phak yak si ok muk

x x x x x x

— kha mon tri — lae trat pra phat er

The fixed melody for *uan*

x x

rat — cha — kan —

x

An important and unique characteristic of *Phak* is ‘*phoei*’ (พ็อย). *Phoei* is a kind of yell or shout performed by those within the *khon* troupe; it starts after the *taphon* and *klong that*. *Phoei* has no exact meaning in Thai but it has been presumed that it might be adapted from the sound of shouting used in the military to encourage soldiers.<sup>223</sup> Practically, the *taphon* and *klong that* will play together after finishing one unit of *Phak* and then the rest of the troupe and all musicians will shout ‘*phoei*’ together (see Figure 5.4).

<sup>223</sup> Thongnim, *Khon*, 64.

## Cheracha

### Category

*Cheracha* is another kind of vocalisation within the same family of narration but its characteristic is rather different. *Cheracha* is a more spoken style and its purpose is to continue the story quickly. The main difference between *Phak* and *Cheracha* is the spoken melody and its purpose. While *Phak* requires some vocal techniques from Thai classical singing practice known as *uan* (wordless vocalisation) plus some fixed melodies, *Cheracha* uses a smaller amount of fixed melodies with no *uan*. There are two types of *Cheracha*: 1) *thamnong banyai* (ทำนองบรรยาย) (descriptive melody), and 2) *thamnong phut* (ทำนองพูด) (talking melody).<sup>224</sup> Both types of *Cheracha* are associated with the meaning of lyrics; the narrator has to know where to use either *thamnong banyai* or *thamnong phut*. *Thamnong banyai* is used when the lyrics involve a general description of the story whereas *thamnong phut* is used when the character starts talking in a conversation. Only a vocal line is used in *Cheracha* with no instruments.

### Structure

Although *Cheracha* has no fixed melody, there is an approximate range of notes used based on the compromise between the tone of the word within the lyrics and the approximate range of notes employed in *Cheracha*. Those used in *cheracha thamnong banyai* and *thamnong phut* are different: *thamnong banyai* employs a smaller range of notes (see Figure 5.10; video track 1, 3.08 – 4.05).

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<sup>224</sup> Theeraphat Thongnim, interviewed by Suchada Sowat, Jan 18, 2016.

Figure 5.10 Approximate range of notes in *Cheracha*

*thamnong banyai* *thamnong phut*

Figure 5.11 The melodies of *Cheracha*: *thamnong banyai* and *thamnong phut*

--thamnong banyai--      -----thamnong phut-----

Cheracha (Voice)      thai thao chao a su ri      mi phra rat cha ban cha sang se na ka la soon\_

-----thamnong phut-----

5      hai pai thun In      tho ra chit      wa saeng ar thit      sin chi wan

-----thamnong phut-----

10 mang kon kan      sia      chi wat      suek ong at cha nak ma      phra na khon

-----thamnong phut-----

15 reng      chup son Phrom mas      yok pai phi khat      phai ri

-----thamnong phut-----

19 ya cha thi ching chai      rip      pai bok luk      rak ku bad diao ni

### Specific musical characteristics relating to theatrical usage

The script used in *Cheracha* employs a traditional Thai verse called *rai yao*, which has a rhyme in each phrase. *Cheracha* does not have a fixed number of units based on the formation of *rai yao*<sup>225</sup> but the length depends on the length of the performance and the director's preference.

It could be said that the way that the narrator utters the lyrics of *Cheracha* (*thamnong banyai*) is associated with particular tones of the word based on Thai speech tones (medium, low, falling, high, and rising). On the one hand, for adapting the tones when singing, these are the most common methods: 1) Words that employ a falling tone will be uttered with a descending note that ends on the main pitch. 2) Words that use a rising tone will be uttered with a rising note that ends on the main pitch. 3) Words that use a low tone will be uttered with a slightly rising note, which intentionally appear in *Cheracha thamnong banyai* only. On the other hand, the words that occupy mid (medium) and high tones are uttered at its registered tone with no adaptation in *Cheracha*. The way of voicing particular words in *Cheracha* may not be exactly the same as the spoken tone of Thai language in general, but the meaning of the word is still clearly understood due to the context of the lyrics. Importantly, this practice requires cultural knowledge of the narrators, who are expected to be Thai native speakers because they need to adapt the tone of particular words to suit *Cheracha*'s melodic line. Intriguingly, this kind of practice is unconsciously embedded within the narrator's performance; they may not even notice this practice whilst they are performing *Cheracha*. However, different ways of performing *Cheracha* are also shaped, decorated, and adapted based on the individual styles of the narrator, which increase the creativities of the vocalisation in *Cheracha*.

From the notation of *Cheracha thamnong banyai*, the words *thai thao chao asuri* show how speech tones in Thai language affect vocalisation in *Cheracha*. The word *chao* เ้า (falling tone) needs to be uttered with a descending note; a professional narrator is expected to adjust the word's tone suddenly when performing *Cheracha*.

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<sup>225</sup> More details about traditional Thai verses used as lyrics in the *Phrommas* repertoire can be found in Chapter 4.

Figure 5.12 The work of *thamnong banyai* and *thamnong phut* in *Cheracha* lyrics

***thamnong banyai***

ไทท้าวเจ้าพระนครอุสุรี  
Thossakan, the king of demons,

**.....*thamnong phut*.....**

จึงมีพระราชบัญชา สั่งเสนากาลสุร  
commands Kalasoon, the demon soldier.

**.....*thamnong phut*.....**

ให้ไปทูลอินทรชิต ว่าแสงอาทิตย์สิ้นชีวัน มังกรกัณฑ์เสียชีวาตม์  
'Go to see Inthorachit and tell him about the many demons in the war', said Thossakan.

**.....*thamnong phut*.....**

ศึกองอาจฮึกฮัก จะหนักมาพระนคร เร่งชูปศรพรหมาศ ยกไปพิฆาตไพรี  
'The war became more serious, Inthorachit really needs to create the sacred *Phrommas* bow to kill the enemies'.

**.....*thamnong phut*.....**

อย่าช้าที่ชิงชัย รีบไปบอกลูกรักภูบัดเดียนี่  
'Go now! to tell my son'.

While *Phak* has a more melodic and rhythmic relationship with music seen through its correspondence to the drum pattern of *taphon* and *klong that* as well as '*phoei*' (shouting), *Cheracha* has flexible vocal characteristics but its application relies more on the understanding of the meaning of the lyrics seen through the different types of *Cheracha* melodies as in Figure 5.12.

### 5.3.1.2 *Rue Rai* (รื้อรำย)

#### Category

*Rue Rai* is one of the unique vocal pieces used particularly for the theatre. The word *rue* (รื้อ) literally means to dismantle - which is totally different to its musical sense - whereas *rai* (รำย) literally means to mantra or to recite; it is also the name of traditional Thai verse. However, here *Rue Rai* refers to a particular vocal piece only used for theatre; it includes only vocals and rhythmic percussion called *krap phuang* (a small hand clapper) to be played along with the voice.

*Rue Rai* is generally categorised as a part of refined vocalisations.<sup>226</sup> It is specifically used as vocal music for theatre. When *Rue Rai* is used in the *Phrommas* repertoire, it reflects one of the symbols of the influence of *lakhon nai* (inside court dance drama) within *khon* music.<sup>227</sup>

#### Medium

In the performance, *Rue Rai* includes voice (with the alternation of solo and group singing) and *krap phuang* (a small hand clapper); a female vocalist conventionally sings *Rue Rai* and this involves a refined and elaborate vocal practice.<sup>228</sup> A number of singers can be added as a chorus; all of them should be able to play *krap phuang* along with singing *Rue Rai*. The lead singer will sing a solo part, *ton bot*, followed by *luk khu* (group singing or chorus). In the notation of *Rue Rai*, there are voice and *krap phuang* (see Figure 5.13; video track 2).

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<sup>226</sup> More details can be found in Chapter 4, section 4.1.6.

<sup>227</sup> More details about the influence of *lakhon nai* music within *khon* music can be found in Chapters 2, section 2.3.4.

<sup>228</sup> Wattana Kosinanon, interviewed by Suchada Sowat, Jan 26, 2016.

Figure 5.13 *Rue Rai* notation

♩ = approx 45  
 mua eu

Ton Bot (Solo)

mua eu \_\_\_\_\_ nan eay In tho ra chit eu \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ < sit thi sak 15 yak eu sa eay mua eay 20 mua  
 eay yak eu sa eay mua eay mua

**molto accel.**

\_\_\_\_\_ **molto accel.**

nan In tho ra chit sit thi sak eay 25 dai yin bok ok khwam eu \_\_\_\_\_  
 nan In tho ra chit sit thi sak eay yak eu sa

up pa ra kro tha luem net hen se eu nee bok okkhwam ap pa ra kro  
 30 35  
 dai yin bok okkhwam ap pa ra kro

The musical score is written in 2/4 time. The solo part consists of a single melodic line. The multi-measure rest section is marked with 'molto accel.' and contains two systems of music. The first system has a vocal line with lyrics and a piano accompaniment. The second system continues the piano accompaniment. The lyrics are in Thai script and include numerical markers for measure counts.

tha luem net hen<sup>40</sup> luk khuen kra tueb bat eu wat wai<sup>45</sup>

tha luem net hen se eu nee me

**molto accel.**

ai ka la sun eay yak eu si luk kuen kra tueb bat wat wai me ai ka la

50

ai ka la sun eay yak eu si luk kuen kra tueb bat wat wai me ai ka la

**molto accel.**

sun eay yak eu ma phud hai pen lang eu klang phi thi

55 60

sun eay yak eu si chi wit

mueng thueng thi cha ban lai ma phud hai pen lang klang phi thi chi wit

65

mueng thueng thi cha ban lai ma phud hai pen lang klang phi thi chi wit



70 mueng thueng thi cha ni hak kit nit diao eu\_\_\_\_ wa rab sang 75

mueng thueng thi cha ban\_\_\_\_ lai cha yut

80 yang yok thot eay prot\_\_\_\_ hai ni hak kit nit diao wa rab sang 85

yang yok thot eay prot\_\_\_\_ hai ni hak kit nit diao wa rab sang cha yut yang yok

thot eay rit. . poco accel. .  
wa phlang thang song eu\_\_\_\_ son\_chai khla khlai ok chak rong  
90 95

thot eay prot\_\_\_\_ hai

rit. . poco accel. .  
phi\_\_\_\_ thi phlang thang song er\_\_\_\_ son\_\_\_\_ chai  
100

wa\_\_\_\_ phlang thang song er\_\_\_\_ son\_\_\_\_ chai

khla khlai ok chak rong phi\_\_\_\_ thi  
105

khla khlai ok chak rong phi\_\_\_\_ thi

## Pitch system

Although there is no instrumental part in *Rue Rai*, the singer needs to start singing *Rue Rai* at the correct pitch based on *thang nai*. It is quite challenging for the singer to start singing at the right pitch in *Rue Rai* because they need to listen to the last pitch from the previous piece to find the correlating note.

## Structure

The length of *Rue Rai* is measured in units of lyrics derived from traditional Thai verse called *klon bot lakhon*<sup>229</sup> that can be extended or reduced according to the poet. Figure 5.14 illustrates this basic structure of *Rue Rai*; one line is equivalent to one *kham klon* (คำกลอน).

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<sup>229</sup> More details about different types of traditional Thai verses used as lyrics in the *Phrommas* repertoire can be found in Chapter 4.

Figure 5.14 Musical unit of *Rue Rai* related to lyrics

Unit 1 (1<sup>st</sup> *kham klon*)

|                    |                              |
|--------------------|------------------------------|
| ( <i>ton bot</i> ) | ( <i>luk khu</i> )           |
| mua nan            | Inthorachit sithi-sak yak sa |
| เมื่อนั้น          | อินทราชิตสิทธิศักดิ์ยักษ์    |

(At that very moment, Inthorachit, a powerful demon)

Unit 2 (2<sup>nd</sup> *kham klon*)

|                               |                           |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------|
| ( <i>ton bot</i> )            | ( <i>luk khu</i> )        |
| dai yin bok ok khwam ap-pa-ra | kro-tha luem net hen seni |
| ได้ยินบอกออกความอัปรา         | โกรธาลิ้มเนตรเห็นเสนี     |

(When he hears bad news from Kalasun, he opens his eyes angrily)

Unit 3 (3<sup>rd</sup> *kham klon*)

|                                 |                     |
|---------------------------------|---------------------|
| ( <i>ton bot</i> )              | ( <i>luk khu</i> )  |
| luk khuen kra-thueb bat wat wai | me i kalasun yak-si |
| ลุกขึ้นกระทืบบาทพวดไหว          | เหมไ้อ์กาลสุรย์กษี  |

(suddenly stand ups and tramples angrily, shouting at Kalasun!)

Unit 4 (4<sup>th</sup> *kham klon*)

|                                    |                                      |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| ( <i>ton bot</i> )                 | ( <i>luk khu</i> )                   |
| ma phut hai pen lang klang phi-thi | chi-wit mueng thueng thi cha ban-lai |
| มาพูดให้เป็นกลางกลางพิธี           | ชีวิตมึงถึงที่จะบรรลั้ย              |

(How dare you tell me bad news to disturb a sacred ritual, you should be punished!)

Unit 5 (5<sup>th</sup> *kham klon*)

|                                  |                                |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| ( <i>ton bot</i> )               | ( <i>luk khu</i> )             |
| ni hak khit nit diao wa rap sang | cha yut yang yok thot prot hai |
| นี้หากคิดนิตเดียวว่ารับสั่ง      | จะหยุดยั้งยกโทษโปรดให้         |

(Nevertheless, as this is the great order from Thossakan, impunity will be granted to you)

Unit 6 (6<sup>th</sup> *kham klon*)

|                               |                                 |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| ( <i>ton bot</i> )            | ( <i>luk khu</i> )              |
| wa phlang thang song son-chai | khla-khlai ok chak rong phi-thi |
| ว่าพลาทางทรงศรชัย             | คลาไคลออกจากโรงพิธี             |

(He takes his sacred bow and leaves the ritual.)

\* The word *khom klon* (คำกลอน) or *kham* (คำ) literally means a word; it is used to identify a single line of verse in *klon bot lakhon* (กลอนบทละคร). There are six *kham klon* based on *klon bot lakhon* structure (One line = one *kham klon*).

## Musical characteristics related to theatrical usage

*Ton bot* (the solo) begins in a slow tempo with elaborate vocal techniques, called ‘*rue*’ (รู่); when *luk khu* (the chorus) begins, the music increases in speed. The purpose of *rue* is to allow the dancer to perform elaborate dance figures and also to emphasise the refined vocal technique of the singer (video track 2, 0.01 – 0.45).<sup>230</sup>

Figure 5.14 shows how *ton bot* and *luk khu* fit with the lyrics, which describe Inthorachit in the forest; the singer needs to sing dramatically faster when the lyrics describe Inthorachit standing up angrily (video track 2, 1.47 – 2.48). The singers have to understand the meaning to create a stronger tone and emphasise the lyrics more obviously (see Figure 5.13, bar 50).

In contrast, when Inthorachit releases his anger and takes the *Phrommas*, *ton bot* (the solo) has to reduce the speed again to emphasise this action (Figure 5.13, bar 89; video track 2, 2.49 – 3.21). What this means is that the vocal characteristics of *Rue Rai* have been developed to suit the theatre: the dynamic vocal practices are shaped by the meaning of lyrics to communicate the narrative. Vocally, there is cooperation between singers seen through the work of *ton bot* (solo) and *luk khu* (chorus) that can be found in other pieces for the theatre.<sup>231</sup>

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<sup>230</sup> Pattanee Promsombat, interviewed by Suchada Sowat, Feb 2, 2016.

<sup>231</sup> The formation of *ton bot* (solo) and *luk khu* (chorus) are used in many vocal pieces such as *Rue Rai*, *Chom Talat* and *He Choet Ching*.

### 5.3.1.3 *Rai Rut* (ร้ายรูด)

#### **Category**

*Rai Rut* is another piece only used for the theatre. In the *Phrommas* repertoire, *Rai Rut* is used to describe the fast movement of the *Phrommas* arrows hitting Phra Lak and his monkey army. According to Pattanee Promsombat, she stated that ‘the noticeable feature of *Rai Rut* is the quickness of singing; while *Rue Rai* is slower with refined vocal techniques, *Rai Rut* is not for showing elaborate vocal practices, instead, it is purposely used to convey any urgent situation’.<sup>232</sup>

#### **Medium**

In the actual performance, *Rai Rut* involves a vocal part sung by a group of vocalists and *krap phuang* as used in *Rue Rai*. The vocalists start singing together because there is no musical introduction from the instruments; the singers need to start *Rai Rut* straight away after *He Choet Ching*. *Rai Rut* is followed immediately by *Ot* (โอด). Figure 5.15 shows both *Rai Rut* and *Ot* but discussion of *Ot* will take place further on in this chapter. In the notation of *Rai Rut*, there are voices and *krap phuang*. *Rai Rut* can be heard in video track 3.

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<sup>232</sup> Pattanee Promsombat, interviewed by Suchada Sowat, Feb 2, 2016.

Figure 5.15 *Rai Rut* notation

♩ = approx 90

(Chorus)  
luk son kra chai dang sai fon tok thuk ling phon mai thon dai

Singing (chorus)

Krap Phuang

5 laew tong phra a nu cha se na nai sa lop pai mai pen som pra di

Singing (chorus)

Krap Phuang

Khong Wong Yai

*Ot* (instrumental part starts the piece, *Ot*)

10

Khong Wong Yai

16

Khong Wong Yai

*rit..*

### Structure

*Rai Rut* has a core melody in which there are groups of destination notes similar to *luk tok*; (see Figure 5.16).

Figure 5.16 Core melody of *Rai Rut*

X identifies the destination notes in each sub-sentence of *Rai Rut*

The structure of the melody and the destination notes within *Rai Rut*'s core melody are integrated with the lyrics to compromise<sup>233</sup> the sound of the word and fixed notes in the core melody. *Rai Rut* is divided based on Thai classical verse formation, *klon bot lakhon* (กลอนบทละคร). Figure 5.17 shows two lines of verse, which are equivalent to two *kham klon* (คำกลอน) in which there are four sub-sentences, *wak* (วรรค).

Figure 5.17 Lyrics of *Rai Rut*

|  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| <p>(1<sup>st</sup> <i>wak</i>)<br/>         luk son kraï chai dang sai fon<br/>         ลูกศรกระจายดังสายฝน<br/>         (The arrows disperse hastily like heavy rain; the monkeys are hit.)</p> | <p>(2<sup>nd</sup> <i>wak</i>)<br/>         tok thuk ling phon mai thon dai<br/>         ตกถูกลิงพลไม่ทันได้<br/>         (1st <i>kham klon</i>)</p> |  |
| <p>(3rd <i>wak</i>)<br/>         laew tong phra anucha senanai<br/>         แล้วต้องพระอนุชาเสนาใน<br/>         (Phra Lak is suddenly hit; he is immediately unconscious.)</p>                   | <p>(4th <i>wak</i>)<br/>         sa lob pai mai pen som pradi<br/>         สลบไปไม่เป็นสมประดี<br/>         (2nd <i>kham klon</i>)</p>               |  |

<sup>233</sup> The way to ‘compromise’ the tone of the word with the melody in Thai classical singing requires an understanding of the tonal system of the Thai language associated with the meaning of a particular word. There are five tones in Thai: 1) middle, 2) low, 3) falling, 4) high, and 5) rising, and those tones apply to every Thai word, with the change in tone creating a different meaning. Professional Thai classical singers need to adapt the required tone of the word with the actual pitch sung in order to maintain both the proper meaning of the word and the predetermined note of the melody.

Figure 5.18 Destination notes and the notes sung in each sub sentence of *Rai Rut*.

The figure displays a musical score for the piece *Rai Rut*. At the top, a single staff shows eight destination notes on a treble clef staff, with 'x' marks above the 3rd, 5th, 7th, and 8th notes. Below this, the tempo is indicated as '♩ = approx 90'. The score is divided into two systems. The first system is for the chorus, with lyrics 'luk son kra chai dang sai fon tok thuk ling phon mai thon dai'. It features three staves: 'Singing (chorus)', 'Krap Phuang', and 'Khong Wong Yai'. The second system continues the chorus with lyrics 'laew tong phra a nu cha se na nai sa lop pai mai pen som pra di'. It also features three staves: 'Singing (chorus)', 'Krap Phuang', and 'Khong Wong Yai'. A note above the Khong Wong Yai staff in the second system reads 'Or (instrumental part starts the piece, Or)'. The time signature is 2/4.

From Figure 5.18 it can be seen that how the singers have to manage the vocal tone of the word alongside the pitches to be sung. In the first destination note corresponding to the last word of the first sub-sentence, the word ‘*fon*’ (ฝน) (with rising tone) which means ‘the rain’ is sung with a higher pitch than the original destination note (see Figure 5.18: the 1<sup>st</sup> destination note). As *fon* employs a rising tone to keep its meaning as ‘the rain’, the singer cannot pronounce the word *fon* with the original destination note because it will affect its meaning. Instead they must sing the word *fon* with a higher pitch.

On the other hand, for the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, and 4<sup>th</sup> destination notes (see Figure 5.18) and the remainder of the sub-sentences, the singer can pronounce the word using the destination note because all of them employ the mid-tone. The process here is one of the technical vocal practices used within Thai classical singing.



## **Musical characteristics relating to theatrical usage and specific musical characteristics of the piece.**

The musical characteristics of *Rai Rut* reflect the theatrical meaning not only through the lyrics, but also the way that voice and *krap phuang* represent the rapid movement of the *Phrommas*'s arrows. Within *Rai Rut* there is no *uan* (wordless vocalisation)<sup>234</sup>; all vocal melodies are filled with words. Refined vocal techniques are not required; most important here is strong group singing. Wattana Kosinanon comments that 'the understanding of the story is crucial for singers to project their voice properly and it is one of the basic concepts that singers should have for singing with theatre'.<sup>235</sup>

### 5.3.1.4 *Chang Prasan Nga* (ช้างประสานงา)

#### **Category**

*Chang Prasan Nga* is one of the ancient Thai pieces played in the theatre.<sup>236</sup> *Chang* (ช้าง) literally means an elephant, *prasan* (ประสาน) means to coordinate, and *nga* (งา) means ivory, but when *prasan* is used with *nga* becoming *prasan nga*, it means 'to collide'. The lyrics allocated to *Chang Prasan Nga* song *chan* depend on the story required for the particular type of theatre. In the *Phrommas* repertoire, *Chang Prasan Nga* is used when Inthorachit is planning to transform himself into Indra and orders the demon soldiers to disguise themselves to lure Phra Lak and his monkey army into the battlefield.

#### **Medium**

In the performance, *Chang Prasan Nga* is performed by the whole *piphat* ensemble and the soloist singing alternately with the instrumental part. The notation shows the voice, the basic melody from *khong wong yai*, and the drum pattern from *klong khaek*, with the

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<sup>234</sup> See Chapter 4, section 4.2.4 for more details about Thai classical singing.

<sup>235</sup> Wattana Kosinanon, interviewed by Suchada Sowat, Jan 26, 2016.

<sup>236</sup> Montri Tramot and Wichian Khuntan, *Fang lae kha-chai phleng Thai* (Bangkok: Thai kasem Print, 1980), 300.

*ching* and *chap* pattern shown by - + ; CW stands for *changwa* (see Figure 5.19; video track 4).

Figure 5.19 *Chang Prasan Nga* notation

**♩ = approx. 60**  
(Lyrics 1)

chueng trat sang rut tha kan er

Vocal part

**♩ = approx. 60**

Klong Khaek CW1 CW2

6 chan kam hang cha plian

Vocal part

Klong Khaek CW3

10 plang er kai ku er pen ko si

Vocal part

Chong Wong Yai (Suam1)

Klong Khaek CW4 1st cycle etc.

(Lyrics 2)

17 chong hai ka run rat er

Vocal part

23 a su ri plaeng in si er pen kha

Vocal part

28 cha er \_\_\_\_\_ E ra wan

Vocal part

Khong Wong Yai

(Suam 2)

33 an yo tha thang lai\_ an yo tha thang lai\_ er \_\_\_\_\_

Vocal part

[\*Thuan: repeating word for emphasis]

39 hai\_klai pet\_ pen the wet\_ er \_\_\_\_\_ su

Vocal part

44 rang er \_\_\_\_\_ nang sa wan \_\_\_\_\_

Vocal part

Khong Wong Yai

(Suam 3)

49 hai\_sam rab\_ khab ram hai\_sam rab khab ram er \_\_\_\_\_

Vocal part

(Lyrics 4)

[\*Thuan: repating word for emphasis]

55 ra bam ban reng triam wai\_ er \_\_\_\_\_ hai\_

Vocal part

60 than er \_\_\_\_\_ ruek\_

Vocal part

Khong Wong Yai

(Suam 4)

64 di 3

Vocal part

(Rap: inst)

Khong Wong Yai

71

Khong Wong Yai

76

Khong Wong Yai

## Structure

*Chang Prasan Nga song chan* has only one section and it is played with *nathap prop kai song chan* (หน้าทับปรบไก่ สองชั้น) (Figure 5.20) using *klong khaek* (more details can be found in Chapter 4: section on *nathap*, the drum pattern). There are four *changwa* (based on *nathap prop kai song chan*).

Figure 5.20 *Nathap prop kai song chan* (one *changwa* or one unit of *nathap*)

- + - + - + - +

tham ting cho cha cho cha ting tham tingting tham ting ting tham

Klong Khaek

Within one *changwa* or one *nathap*, there are four pairs of *ching* and *chap*. There is one section based on the basic melody of the piece and its length is equivalent to four *changwa* (four *nathap prop kai song chan*) in *Chang Prasan Nga* (see Figure 5.21).

Figure 5.21 *Chang Prasan Nga's* melody and rhythmic pattern

The musical score is presented in three systems, each with two staves. The top staff of each system is for Khong Wong Yai (treble clef, 2/4 time) and the bottom staff is for Klong Khaek (bass clef, 2/4 time). The score is divided into sections labeled 'Chang Wa' and 'Na Thap'.

- System 1:**
  - Khong Wong Yai: [.....Chang Wa 1.....] [.....Chang Wa 2.....]
  - Klong Khaek: (.....Na Thap 1.....) (.....Na Thap 2.....)
- System 2:**
  - Khong Wong Yai: 7 .....Chang Wa 2 cont.....] [.....Chang Wa 3.....]
  - Klong Khaek: .....Na Thap 2 cont.....) (.....Na Thap 3.....)
- System 3:**
  - Khong Wong Yai: 13 ...] [.....Chang Wa 4.....]
  - Klong Khaek: ...) (.....Na Thap 4.....)

The lyrics of *Chang Prasan Nga* describe how Intorachit orders his demon soldiers to disguise themselves; the text is based on the structure of *klon bot lakhon* (see Figure 5.22) and more details can be found in Chapter 4: section: Text.

Figure 5.22 *Chang Prasan Nga's* lyrics

|  |   |
|--|---|
| 1 <sup>st</sup> <i>kham klon</i>   |   |
| (1 <sup>st</sup> <i>wak</i> )<br>Chueng trat sang rutthakan chan kam haeng<br>จึงตรัสสั่งรุทรการชาญกำแหง<br>(Inthorachit is briefing his demon soldier, Rutthakan, about his plan to transform himself to become the God Indra.) | (2 <sup>nd</sup> <i>wak</i> )<br>cha plian plaeng kai ku pen kosi<br>จะเปลี่ยนแปลงกายกูเป็นโกสีห์                                     |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> <i>kham klon</i>   |   |
| (3 <sup>rd</sup> <i>wak</i> )<br>chong hai Karunrat asuri<br>จงให้การุณราชอสูรี<br>(Karunrat, a demon soldier, will have to transform himself to become the great elephant, Erawan. <sup>1</sup> )                               | (4 <sup>th</sup> <i>wak</i> )<br>plaeng in si pen kha cha Erawan<br>แปลงอินทรีย์เป็นคชาเอราวัญ  |
| 3 <sup>rd</sup> <i>kham klon</i>   |   |
| (1 <sup>st</sup> <i>wak</i> ) with 'thuan'<br><u>*an yo tha thang lai hai klai phet</u><br><u>*อันโยธาทั้งหลายให้กลายเป็นเทศ</u><br>(All the demons will transform themselves to become angels.)                                 | (2 <sup>nd</sup> <i>wak</i> )<br>pen the wet surang nang sawan<br>เป็นเทเวศร์สุรงค์นางสวรรค์  |
| 4 <sup>th</sup> <i>kham klon</i>   |   |
| (3 <sup>rd</sup> <i>wak</i> ) with 'thuan'<br><u>*hai sam rab khab ram rabam ban</u><br><u>*ให้สำหรับขับรำระบำบรรพ์</u><br>(To dance deceptively to lure the enemy   | (4 <sup>th</sup> <i>wak</i> )<br>reng triam wai hai than ruck di<br>เร่งเตรียมไว้ให้ทันฤกษ์ดี<br>let's prepare all commands quickly.) |

*Chang Prasan Nga* is played for four cycles based on the units of lyrics. However, the instrumental part will play some phrases called *suam* (สวม) at the end of a single cycle and the instruments can then play the whole piece again, called *rap* (รับ) (see Figure 5.19; video track 4, 2.30 – 3.01) - *rap* can be omitted to save time in the performance.

The phrase that the instrumental part plays is called *suam*<sup>237</sup>, which is a musical phrase overlapping with the vocal part when the vocal part nearly finishes. This feature is used particularly for vocal music in the theatre to reduce the portion of the instrumental part and emphasise the vocal part more (see Figure 5.19; video track 4, 2.20 – 2.29).

<sup>237</sup> See Chapter 4, section 4.2.5 for more details about the relationship between vocal and instrumental parts.

## Pitch system

*Chang Prasan Nga* is performed on *thang nai*.

## Musical characteristics and specific musical characteristics related to the theatrical usage

*Chang Prasan Nga* is a very good example to demonstrate how different words are put into the same melody because it has only one section but four sets of changeable words are sung.

Figure 5.23 shows the vocal melody of *Chang Prasan Nga* in which there are a number of *luk tok* to be adapted to different realisations of instruments including the vocal part.

Figure 5.23 The basic melody of *Chang Prasan Nga* (from *khong wong yai*)



The 'X' identifies where *luk tok* are in the basic melody of *Chang Prasan Nga*.

When words are incorporated with the basic melody of the piece, the vocal ornamentations are very important. The use of *uan* (wordless vocalisation) plays a key role as a way of matching the vocal part and the basic melody. Vocal ornamentation based on Thai classical singing is one part of *uan*. When the sound of the word cannot be compromised with that note directly, the vocalist has to retain its original tone by adding some ornamentation to approach the *luk tok* and maintain the meaning of the proper pronunciation of the word. This practice causes a delay in *luk tok* within the

vocal part due to the ornamentation, but it is a very important aspect of Thai classical singing.

Figure 5.24 *Luk tok* in the basic melody and the vocal melody of *Chang Prasan Nga*

*Luk tok* from the basic melody; the main note is the top note.

Basic melody

Vocal melody

chueng trat sang - rat tha-kan +er - + -

(Lyrics 1)

*Sang* means to order, it is a word that has a lower tone within Thai.

The ornamentation based on *uan* practice to reach the exact note of *luk tok*.

As Figure 5.24 shows, the word ‘*sang*’ (สั่ง) meaning to order employs a low tone when spoken.<sup>238</sup> As the *luk tok* where *Sang* is sung does not match the lower tone, vocal ornamentation is required in order to reach the right *luk tok*. On the other hand, for some words that have compatible tones the vocalist can pronounce it directly with the same note as *luk tok*.

<sup>238</sup> There are five tones in the Thai language: 1) middle, 2) low, 3) falling, 4) high, and 5) rising and these tones are applied to every Thai word. The changeable tones create different meanings. For example, the word *mai* ใหม่; means ‘new’ when it is pronounced in low tone but *nai* ไฉ้ pronounced with falling tone means ‘no’. Hence, the tone has totally altered the meaning of the word in the Thai language.



Figure 5.25 Example of the relationship between basic melody and vocal melody

Figure 5.25 illustrates the relationship between basic melody and vocal melody through three systems of musical notation. Each system consists of a Basic melody staff (treble clef, 2/4 time) and a Vocal melody staff (treble clef, 2/4 time). The lyrics are written below the vocal melody staff. The first system shows the lyrics "Lyric 1", "chueng trat", "sang", "rut tha", "kan", and "er". The second system shows "chan", "kam", "hang", and "cha pian". The third system shows "plang", "er", "kai", and "ku er". 'X' marks are placed above the basic melody staff, and blue boxes highlight the corresponding notes in the vocal melody staff for the words "kan", "plang", and "ku".

In Figure 5.25, the word *kan* (กาน), *plang* (ปลั่ง) and *ku* (กู) are on the middle tone, and they can be sung directly with the same *luk tok*.

For the lyrics of *Chang Prasan Nga*, there are four *kham klon* based on the *klon bot lakhon* structure and the third and fourth *kam klon*, will have a repetition of particular words with the vocal part. This practice is conventionally used in *Chang Prasan Nga* and professional singers will need to know this: this feature is called 'thuan' (ทวน) which literally means to repeat or to rerun. *Thuan* is used as a verb to identify the way that some words are sung repetitively. In Figure 5.22 above, the words in bold identify where *thuan* is applied.

When the vocalists reach the third and the fourth *kham klon*, *thuan* (repeat) is used. However, the process of *htuan* in *Chang Prasan Nga* is complicated. It is not the regular repetition of the whole phrase with the same melody, but rather that some words are repeated in a different melody.<sup>239</sup> For example, in lyrics 4, the word ‘*hai*’ (ไห) uses different notes when it is repeated in the process of *thuan* (see Figure 5.19, bar 49 and 52; video track 4, 1.17 to 1.29 and 1.55 to 2.05); these notes are a fifth distant. The purpose of *thuan* is to emphasise particular words, which convey the main message of the scene.<sup>240</sup> The crucial situation of the narrative matters in terms of where lyrics are emphasised and it causes a variety of musical characteristics in the vocal part of the piece.

*Chang Prasan Nga* is one of the vocal pieces that involve not only elaborate vocal practices but also illustrates clearly how the vocal music relates to the theatre. Furthermore, the vocal practices shows that the way to compromise the word with the note very much involves an understanding of the tonal system of the Thai language. The occurrence of *thuan* also illustrates the way in which the narrative is crucial in terms of music for theatre; it causes prominent musical characteristics seen through repetition of a vocal part with a change, which is one of the most remarkable musical features in the *Phrommas* repertoire.

This section has considered vocalisation as direct theatrical manifestations to communicate the narrative of the *Phrommas* episode through their lyrics; however, they also have some musical attributes which further reflect the theatrical meaning, such as the dynamic of the speed within *Rue Rai* and *Rai Rut*. In addition, all these pieces illustrate the common formation of singing for theatre through *ton bot* (solo) and *luk khu* (group singing), and the process through which modified lyrics are put with the melody to be sung differently. While the uniqueness of *Phak* and *Cheracha* performed with a specific drum pattern became one of the symbols of musical accompaniment for *khon*, *Rue Rai* and *Rai Rut* songs are used particularly for theatre. Hence, the vocal characteristics in the *Phrommas* repertoire can show how Thai classical vocalisation is used with theatre.

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<sup>239</sup> Wattana Kosinanon, interviewed by Suchada Sowat, Jan 26, 2016.

<sup>240</sup> Pattanee Promsombat, interviewed by Suchada Sowat, Feb 2, 2016.

### 5.3.2 Pieces accompanying particular action (*naphat*)

This section will examine a group of *naphat* pieces, which are classified under the ‘primary level’ (*naphat* pieces considered the basic *naphat* repertoires among the Thai classical music community that are most commonly used for theatre) of *naphat* because they are regularly found in not only the *Phrommas* repertoire but also other theatrical repertoires. There are six pieces discussed here: 1) *Samoe*, 2) *Choet*, 3) *Rua*, 4) *La*, 5) *Krao Nai*, and 6) *Krao Nok*.

#### 5.3.2.1 *Samoe* (เสมอ)

##### Category

*Samoe* (เสมอ) literally means being equal; however, there is no correspondence between its literal and musical terms. *Samoe* is one of the pieces played within the *Hom Rong Yen* (โหมโรงเย็น) (the evening overture), which is one of the musical selections using *naphat* pieces. When *Samoe* is played in *Hom Rong Yen*, it represents the arrival of the high deities from their celestial palaces.<sup>241</sup> In the theatrical sphere, *Samoe* is used to represent the action of walking or travelling a short distance.<sup>242</sup> Conventionally, *Samoe* is always followed by the *naphat* piece called *Rua* (รัว); here there will be only analysis of *Samoe* with more details about *Rua* given later in section 5.3.2.3. In the *Phrommas* episode, *Samoe* represents the journey of Thossakan from his private room to a meeting in the throne hall with his demon nobles.

##### Medium

*Samoe* is performed by the whole *piphat* ensemble with no singing. In the notation, there is the basic melody from the *khong wong yai*, *taphon*, *klong that*, along with the *ching* pattern as seen in Figure 5.26 (*Samoe* can be heard in video track 5).

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<sup>241</sup> Deborah Wong, *Sounding the center: History and aesthetics in Thai Buddhist performance* (London: The University of Chicago Press, 2001), 120.

<sup>242</sup> Royal Academy, *Saranukrom Sab dontri Thai* (Bangkok: Arun Press, 2007), 183.

Figure 5.26 *Samoe* notation

The musical score is written in 2/4 time and consists of three systems. The tempo is marked as  $\text{♩} = \text{approx } 80$ . The first system includes three staves: Khong Wong Yai (treble clef), Taphon (soprano clef), and Klong That (bass clef). The Khong Wong Yai staff has a series of notes with '+' and '-' signs above them. The Taphon staff has a rhythmic pattern of eighth and sixteenth notes. The Klong That staff has a simple rhythmic pattern with notes numbered 1 and 2. The second system starts at measure 7 and includes the same three staves. The Khong Wong Yai staff has a more complex melodic line with a '+ etc.' marking. The Taphon staff continues its rhythmic pattern. The Klong That staff has notes numbered 3, 4, and 5. The third system starts at measure 14 and includes the same three staves. The Khong Wong Yai staff has a melodic line with a 'rit.' marking. The Taphon staff continues its rhythmic pattern. The Klong That staff has notes with a 'rit.' marking.

## Structure

The length of *Samoe* can be measured by *mai klong* (a single stroke of hitting the *klong that*).<sup>243</sup> There are five units of *mai doen* (ไม้เดิน) (consistent beats); five strokes of *mai doen* from *klong that* are played along with the pattern from the *taphon*.

<sup>243</sup> See more details on the structure of the piece and *nathap* (the drum pattern) in Chapter 4.

In Figure 5.26, the numbers identify the units of *mai doen*. In conversation with Thai music master, Boonchuay Sovat, he states that ‘among the Thai classical music community conventionally the *naphat*’s length can be measured from the units of *mai doen*; the rest of the drum patterns after *mai doen* are not included as the identification of the piece’s length’.<sup>244</sup> *Ching* is played in the *song chan* metric level along with a drum pattern called *nathap phleng Samoe* (หน้าทับเพลงเสมอ).

### **Pitch system**

*Samoe* is played on *thang nai*.

### **Musical characteristics related to theatrical usage and specific musical characteristics**

The relationship between music and theatre in *Samoe* is reflected through the rhythmic formation of *Samoe* played by the *klong that* and the dance figure performed alongside the piece. Within *Samoe*, dancers have to remember the pattern of *Samoe*’s choreography in which there are five consistent steps of walking; the five walking steps have to synchronise with the five strokes of *mai doen* from the *klong that*. *Samoe*’s dance figure is considered one of the standard choreographies for Thai classical dance in relation to the *naphat* piece. However, when *Samoe* was first used in the *Phrommas* repertoire as *bot konsoet*, there was only music with no dance known as *lakhon muet*.<sup>245</sup>

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<sup>244</sup> Boonchuay Sovat, interviewed by Suchada Sowat, Jan 14, 2016.

<sup>245</sup> More details can be found in Chapter 3 on the genesis of the *Phrommas* repertoire.

### 5.3.2.2 *Choet* (เชิด)

#### **Category**

*Choet* literally means to raise something up or ‘holding’. It is one of the *naphat* pieces in *Hom Rong Yen* (โหมโรงเย็น) (the evening overture). In theatrical usage, *Choet* is used to describe two situations: when a character travels a long distance, or a fight scene. *Choet* is also called *Choet Klong* to refer to the use of the drums, *taphon* and *klong that*, that play with the piece.

#### **Medium**

In the performance, *Choet* is played by the whole *piphat* ensemble with no vocal part. The notation shows the basic melody played by the *khong wong yai*, *taphon*, and *klong that* (Figure 5.27; video track 6).

Figure 5.27 *Choet notation*

*Choet Song Chan*  
♩ = approx 80

Ranat Ek  
Khong Wong Yai  
Taphon  
Klong That

♩ = approx 80

6

R.E.  
K.W.  
T.P.  
K.T.

10

R.E. = *ranat ek*

K.W. = *khong wong yai*

T.P. = *taphon*

K.T. = *klong that*

2

14 **accel.**

R.E.  
K.W.  
T.P.  
K.T.

17

R.E.  
K.W.  
T.P.  
K.T.

*Choet Chandiao*  
♩ = ♪ = 90

20

R.E.  
K.W.  
T.P.  
K.T.



3

The musical score consists of two systems. The first system covers measures 24 to 27. It features four staves: R.E. (Right End), K.W. (Klong Wai), T.P. (Taphon), and K.T. (Klong That). The R.E. staff has a treble clef and contains a complex melodic line with many sixteenth notes. The K.W. staff has a treble clef and contains a similar melodic line. The T.P. staff has a bass clef and contains a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes. The K.T. staff has a bass clef and contains a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes. The tempo marking 'accel.' is placed above the R.E. staff at measure 25. The second system covers measures 28 to 31. It features the same four staves. The R.E. staff has a treble clef and contains a melodic line that becomes more sparse. The K.W. staff has a treble clef and contains a melodic line that becomes more sparse. The T.P. staff has a bass clef and contains a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes. The K.T. staff has a bass clef and contains a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes. The tempo marking 'slower' is placed above the R.E. staff at measure 28 and below the K.T. staff at measure 30.

## Structure

While other Thai classical pieces use the word *thon* (ท่อน) to identify the piece's unit, *Choet* uses the word *tua* (ตัว) to label the *Choet's* units. *Tua* literally means part, piece, or section and it is musically used to label a number of sections of *Choet* (one *tua* is one section). Theoretically, there are twelve *tua* of *Choet*; the number of sections used in *Choet* are dependent on the length of the scene in the theatre. The rhythmic pattern of *Choet* is played by *taphon* and *klong that* to represent the consistent rhythms of walking (Figure 5.28).

Figure 5.28 Rhythmic pattern of *Choet*

*Choet song chan*

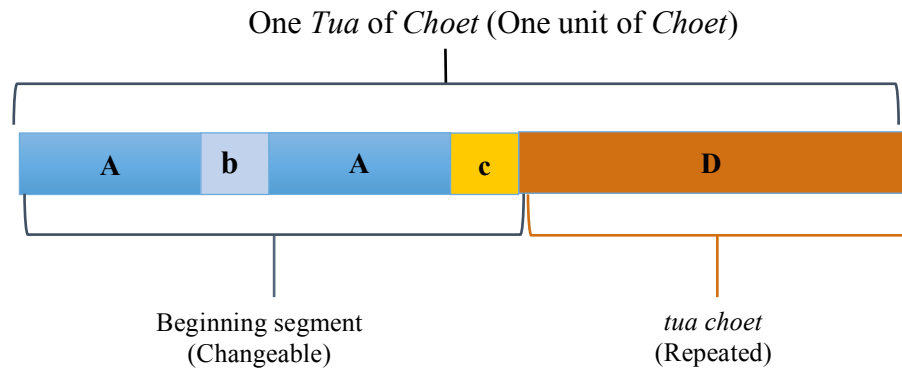
*Choet chan diao*

The musical formation of a particular unit of *Choet* can be divided into two main segments: (1) the beginning phrase, which can be changed depending on the particular *tua* of *Choet*; it is played twice but the last phrase of this segment will be changed, and (2) ‘*tua choet*’ (ตัวเชิด), the repeated segment; *tua* (ตัว) refers to the body or core in Thai.<sup>246</sup> Figure 5.29 shows the structural formation of *Choet*.

Each *tua* contains both a beginning phrase and *tua choet*; there are twelve *tua* of *Choet* based on Thai classical music theory. However, the length of *Choet* is fixed by the period of time needed for any particular performance but it can be extended by adding more *tua* from a stock of twelve *tua*. It is important for professional Thai musicians to be able to know twelve *tua* of *Choet* even though only six or eight *tua* are usually used in the performance.

<sup>246</sup> Lumyong Sowat, interviewed by Suchada Sowat, Jan 20, 2016.

Figure 5.29 The structural formation of *Choet* in a single *tua*



There are both changeable and non-changeable segments in *Choet*. Both *Choet song chan* (moderate version) and *Choet chan diao* (fast version) employ this formation but the beginning segment in *Choet song chan* is twice as long as *chan diao*. If the *khon* performance requires a longer *Choet*, then a different beginning segment can be added but it has to be followed by *tua choet* (see Figure 5.30; an example of how this process is applied in *Choet* can be found in Figure 5.31).

Figure 5.30 Adding more sections in *Choet*

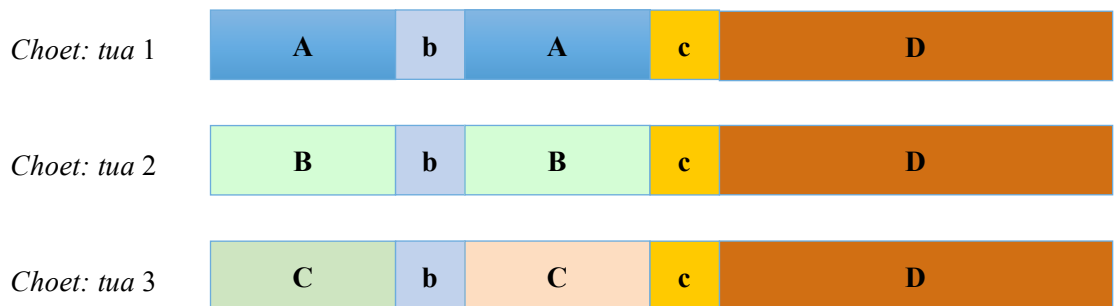


Figure 5.31 Example of *Choet*'s structure; *Choet chan diao* in *tua 1*

Beginning phrase

**Choet Chan Diao (Tua 1)** ♩ = approx 80

Basic melody by Khong wong yai

5  
b(cont.)

12

A b

A c D: Tua Choet

D: Tua Choet (cont.)

### Pitch system

*Choet* is also played in *thang nai* by the *piphat* ensemble to accompany the *khon* performance.

### Musical characteristics related to theatrical usage

The regular beats from *klong that* embody the action of walking which is a noticeable feature of music for *khon* dancers; here the dancers need to synchronise their leg movements with the drum. There are normally two versions of *Choet* played: *Choet song chan* (moderate version) and *Choet chan diao* (fast version); the beginning of *Choet* starts with *song chan* and then changes to *chan diao*. While *Choet song chan* is played to allow *khon* dancers to step in time, *Choet chan diao* is not used for making dance figures without fixed beats for stepping in time but is used to accompany

acrobatic posing within *khon* movement.<sup>247</sup> The two versions of *Choet* are used for different purposes.

### **Special musical characteristics**

Where *Choet song chan* connects to *Choet chan diao*, there is a unique musical technique called ‘*thon*’ (ถอน) which literally means to pull out something. *Thon*<sup>248</sup> in musical terms refers to the process of playing the piece with a certain number of notes corresponding to a changeable tempo (from slow to fast or medium to fast); the process of *Thon* appears when a particular part has less frequent notes to be played at a faster speed, and involves a transition of tempo. In *Choet*, *Thon* occurs after changing from *Choet song chan* to *Choet chan diao*; this musical technique requires well-trained musicians because both rhythmic and melodic parts have to synchronise. This can be heard in video track 6 (from 0.29 – 0.41).

The *thon* is also important for the theatrical function especially in *khon* dance movement. In other words, in practical performance, musicians need to notice the dance movement of *khon* performers in order to speed up the piece to go to *Choet chan diao*. The major role is with the *ranat ek*; if dancers change their leg movements, the *ranat ek* will induce the ensemble to increase the speed of *Choet song chan* by playing faster to transition to *Choet chan diao*. This is one of the prominent features of playing *Choet* with *khon*, and shows not only how music is associated with *khon* dance movement within the theatre, but also how well musicians must perform this piece: every time *Choet* is played, the process of *thon* is taking place and it is one of the most complicated musical techniques in Thai classical music.

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<sup>247</sup> Boonchuay Sovat, interviewed by Suchada Sowat, Jan 14, 2016.

<sup>248</sup> Tramot, *Duriyang-kha-sat Thai*, 18.

### 5.3.2.3 *Rua* (รัว)

#### Category of the piece

*Rua* is one of the *naphat* pieces frequently used for theatre. The word *Rua* literally means to beat repeatedly or to trill; its literal meaning is related to the musical term. Musically, *Rua* has two different meanings in Thai classical music: 1) *Rua* is the name of the *naphat* piece used to describe supernatural action in the theatre, and 2) *rua* means the way in which the sounds of percussion instruments are produced by hitting the particular note with two hands alternately at speed, to trill in other words.<sup>249</sup> There are various types of *Rua* such as *Rua La Diao* (รัวลาเดี่ยว) and *Rua Sam La* (รัวสามลา).<sup>250</sup> The word *Rua* is used as a prefix followed by the identification of its length and its level through the word *La*, which means a cycle based on the family of *Rua* (Figure 5.32). While *La Diao* (ลาเดี่ยว) means one cycle, *Sam La* (สามลา) means three cycles; *Rua Sam La* is one of the *naphat* pieces performed in *Hom Rong Yen* (the evening overture) whereas *Rua La Diao* is usually performed as not only an individual *naphat* piece, but also a complement to other *naphat* pieces. *Rua* (or *Rua La Diao*) will be played after the *naphat* piece that has more importance; a series starts with the main *naphat* piece followed by *Rua* as the ending part. For example, within *Samoe*, the actual pieces that are performed are *Samoe* and *Rua*.

There is another type of *Rua* involved in the *naphat* piece which is known as ‘*Rua Cha Pho*’ (รัวฉพาะ) (the specific *Rua*). For this context of *Rua*, the word *Rua* is used along with a higher-level *naphat* piece; the melody of *Rua Cha Pho* is different to *Rua La Diao* and *Rua Sam La*. For example, if the piece is called *Phrom Ok* (พราหมณ์ออก), *Rua* will be called *Rua Thai Phleng Phram Ok* (รัวท้ายเพลงพราหมณ์ออก) which means *Rua* for the ending of *Phram Ok*.

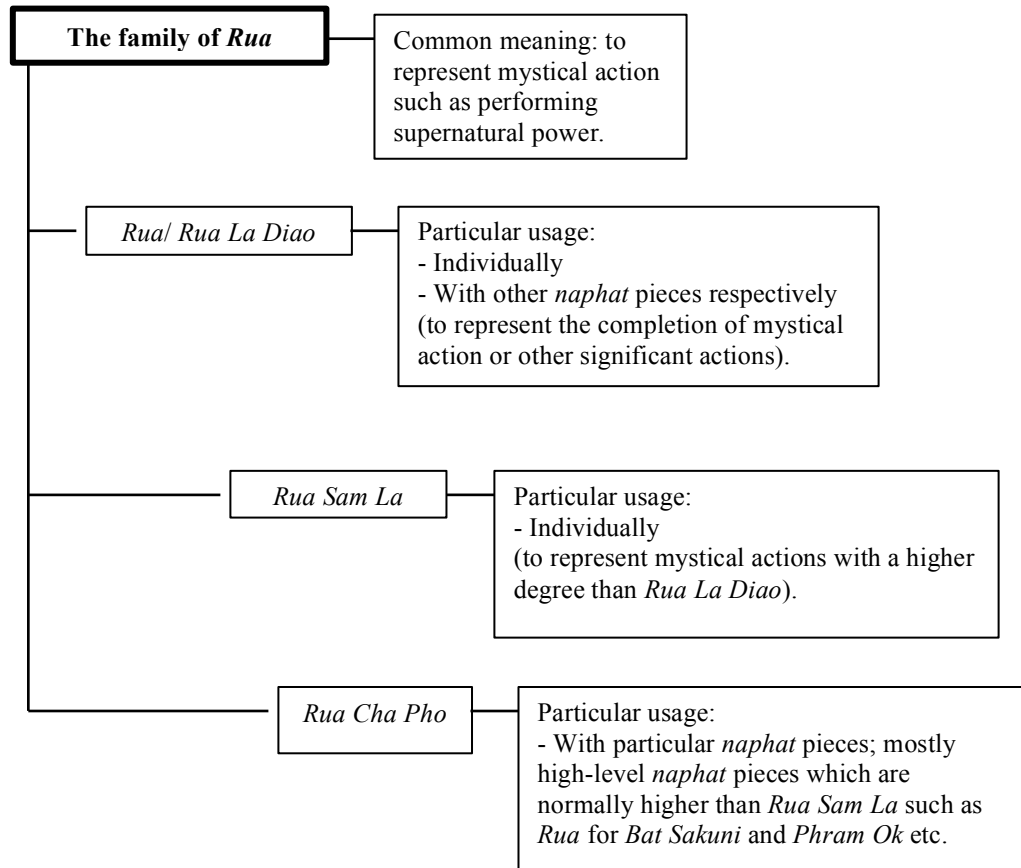
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<sup>249</sup> Tramot, *DurayangkhasatThai*, 39.

<sup>250</sup> *Rua Sam La* is considered as the higher rank of *Rua* within the family of *Rua*. For ritual music, *Rua Sam La* is played in *Hom Rong Yen* (the evening overture) to represent paying homage to the God to bring auspiciousness to the event, whereas *Rua Sam La* represents the action of the highly performing supernatural power of the important actor within the story.

*Rua* or *Rua La Diao* is used to represent mystical actions such as appearing, disappearing, or performing a supernatural power or action within the *Phrommas* repertoire.<sup>251</sup> *Rua* is used after other *naphat* pieces, including *Samoe* (*Samoe* and *Rua*)<sup>252</sup> and *Tra Non* (ตระนอน และร๊ว) (*Tra Non* and *Rua*).

Figure 5.32 The family of *Rua*



## Medium

*Rua* is played by the whole *piphat* ensemble; the notation shows the prominent musical line, the *ranat ek* which plays its own part beyond the basic melody from *khong wong yai*, the *ching* played in a free rhythmic pattern (only the *ching* sound) along with the drum pattern from *taphon* and *klong that* to regulate the piece (Figure 5.33). *Rua* can be heard in video track 7.

<sup>251</sup> Royal Academy, *Saranukrom sap dontri Thai* (Bangkok: Arun Press, 2007), 180.

<sup>252</sup> See more details in *Samoe*'s musical analysis.

## Pitch system

*Rua* is played in *thang nai* to accompany *khon*.

Figure 5.33 *Rua* notation

$\text{♩} = \text{approx } 60$  - - - - - etc.

Khong Wong Yai

Ranat Ek

tub phrueng theng tub phrueng theng

Taphon

(Start to gradually make the pattern faster)

$\text{♩} = \text{approx } 60$  accel. (female drum)

Klong That

5

Khong Wong Yai

Ranat Ek

accel. (male drum) accel. (female drum)

Klong That

7

Khong Wong Yai

(complicated notes depending on individual style of *Ranat Ek* player)

Ranat Ek

accel. (male drum) accel. (female drum)

Klong That



10

Khong Wong Yai

Ranat Ek

14

Khong Wong Yai

Ranat Ek

Klong That

accel. (female drum)

18

Khong Wong Yai

Ranat Ek

Klong That

accel. (female drum)

20

Khong Wong Yai

Ranat Ek

22

Khong Wong Yai

Ranat Ek

tub phruengheng tub phrueng theng

Taphon

(Start to gradually make the pattern faster)

25

Khong Wong Yai

Ranat Ek

tub ting tub

Taphon

tum

Klong That

28

Khong Wong Yai

Ranat Ek

phloeng tha tub ting tub

Taphon

tum tom tom

Klong That

## Structure

*Rua* has only one movement and its rhythmic pattern is free tempo. The drum pattern from the *taphon* and *klong that* is called *nathap Phleng Rua* (หน้าทับเพลงร้ว).

### Special musical characteristics related to theatrical usage

The *ranat ek* predominantly employs unusual musical techniques and complicated *ranat ek* performance practices to represent unusual, powerful, supernatural, and magical characteristics based on the narrative.<sup>253</sup> This is one of the musical characteristics which manifest the theatrical meaning and usage of *Rua*.

The *ranat ek* signals to the rest of the ensemble to carry on the piece; the *ranat ek* will start *Rua* by playing its realisation whereas the rest of the ensemble will play their own part from the directional movement given by the *ranat ek* part in each musical sentence. In other words, everyone in the ensemble has to do multiple tasks; all the musicians know the basic melody and keep it in their mind while they are performing their own part along with listening to the directional melody from the *ranat ek* to maintain a smooth movement.

*Khong wong yai* senior master Lumyong Sowat stated that ‘when you are playing *Rua*, you should not only listen to the *ranat ek* part, but also be able to predict, calculate, and synchronise your own part (the basic melody) with the *ranat ek* to properly carry on the piece’.<sup>254</sup> This is because the *ranat ek*’s melody is the most prominent melodic line, by which the rest of the melodic parts in the ensemble are led; to know this, the musician needs not only to learn from their master, but also to participate in many performances to gain sufficient experience. *Rua* demonstrates the complicated interaction of musical instruments in the *piphat* ensemble: while the basic melody is developed to be the *ranat ek*’s part, the basic melody performed by the *khong wong yai* is led by the developed part from the *ranat ek* to carry *Rua*.

The *ranat ek*’s player should understand *Rua*’s choreography in order to know when the music needs to carry on or when the particular sentence needs to be held to accompany the dance synchronously. In a conversation with professional *ranat ek* player Nittaya Rusamai, she stated that ‘the way in which the dancer produces more

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<sup>253</sup> Nittaya Rusamai, interviewed by Suchada Sowat, Apr 13, 2018.

<sup>254</sup> Lumyong Sowat, interviewed by Suchada Sowat, Jan 15, 2016.

elaborate figures and slower or faster movements in *Rua* means the *ranat ek*'s player needs to take notice and play their part to follow the dance synchronously'.<sup>255</sup>

As *Rua* is performed with a freely rhythmic pattern, Thai classical dancers have their own system to merge *Rua*'s choreography to the piece with no rhythmic identification. Senior Thai classical dancers who have in-depth experience in performance can recognise both the melody and rhythm of *Rua*; modern Thai classical dancers prefer having their own counting system to understand and merge the *Rua* melody of the dance with the music. During a conversation with a modern professional Thai classical dancer, Trirat Wisutthiphan, she stated that 'in lessons, we normally count the beat set up on our own to dance in *Rua* and also listen to the melody of *Rua* to merge the choreography with the music smoothly so this can be applied to all characters in *khon* performance'.<sup>256</sup>

The theatrical representation of *Rua* can also be seen through extraordinary musical practices applied to *klong that*. Within *Rua*, *klong that* is one of the clearest elements of the *rua* technique. In *Rua*, the drummer will hit each drum using two hands alternately along with the melody of *Rua* in a freely rhythmic pattern. However, within a freely rhythmic pattern, there is a predetermined point where *klong that* is supposed to be hit. The *klong that* player needs to listen to the melody to start hitting the drum pattern along with the *taphon*'s pattern (see Figure 5.34 in bar 4; video track 7, 0.06 – 0.34).

Another theatrical reflection within *Rua* can be seen through the *ranat ek* part in *Rua* which requires a well-trained performance practice of a player with advanced techniques. Even though there is a predetermined part for the *ranat ek* that *ranat ek* players learn from the master, the practical performance comes from the individual experience of the *ranat ek* player. Nittaya Rusama stated that 'there are various techniques and additional phrases taking place suddenly in the performance to accompany the dance; in some phrases, *ranat ek* uses the *rua* technique (hitting a single

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<sup>255</sup> Nittaya Rusamai, interviewed by Suchada Sowat, Apr 13, 2018.

<sup>256</sup> Trirat Wisutthiphan (professional Thai classical dancer), general conversation with the author, Dec 23 2015.

note with two hands alternately) to hold a certain note and other advanced *ranat ek*'s techniques are needed to perform the piece as well'.<sup>257</sup> The *ranat ek*'s realisation could be one of the elements that manifest the theatrical meaning and the use of *Rua* and it is developed and performed based on the individual experience of the *ranat ek* player.

As mentioned in the earlier section about the usage of *Rua*, it works as a complementation to the other *naphat* pieces; *Rua* is used to imply that the particular action is completed. For example, in the *Phrommas* repertoire, *Rua* is used after two *naphat* pieces: *Samoe* (สามอ) and *Tranon* (ตระนนอน). When it is used with *Samoe* (which represents the action of walking or travelling for a short distance), *Rua* means that action is finished. Similarly, when *Rua* is used with *Tranon* (in which the lyrics talk about the action of Inthorachit who mystically transforms himself from demon to God Indra), *Rua* identifies the completion of that mystical transformation. Indirectly, this manifestation not only conveys theatrical meaning, but also creates a sense of refined cultural practice. Boonchuay Sovat, suggests that 'Thai culture has an elaborate and complicated practice; doing something too rushed, too fast, or too short can never be refined culture, as reflected in the meaning of *Samoe* and *Rua* in the theatre; it is not just arrival and stop, it has to be the process of stopping elaborately; it is not that it just goes, comes, stops and that is it'.<sup>258</sup> His thought draws the idea of how a cultural concept is hidden behind musical meaning and practice; a complicated process of performing music in the theatre requires refined stages of performance.

*Rua* is one of the pieces, which demonstrates multiple reflections: the theatrical implication related to its usage, well-trained performance practice with experience, and cultural influence behind the meaning of *Rua*. While the dynamic musical attributes of the *klong that* and complicated musical practices of *ranat ek* demonstrate theatrical reflection directly, the way that it is used as a complementation to other *naphat* pieces manifests how it is indirectly implied to certain actions. All the manifestations are the motivating aspects to demonstrate that under the umbrella of music for theatre, there are complicated layers of theatrical and cultural reflection within music.

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<sup>257</sup> Nittaya Rusamai, interviewed by Suchada Sowat, Apr 13, 2018.

<sup>258</sup> Boonchuay Sovat, interviewed by Suchada Sowat, Jan 14, 2016.

#### 5.3.2.4 *La* (ลา)

##### **Category of the piece**

*La* is one of the *naphat* pieces traditionally performed as the last piece within *Hom Rong Yen* (โหมโรงเย็น) (the evening overture).<sup>259</sup> Literally, the word *la* has different meanings: *la* means to say goodbye or ‘a donkey’. Musically, *La* is played in the theatre to accompany the action of ending or finishing doing something, and is always played immediately after another main piece. In the *Phrommas* repertoire, *La* is played in the battlefield scene in which all angels (transformed demons) are finishing their dance movements to lure Phra Lak and his monkey army.

##### **Medium**

*La* is a *naphat* piece, with no vocal part; the whole *piphat* ensemble performs *La* in the actual performance. In the notation three lines of *La* are transcribed: *khong wong yai* (the basic melody), *taphon* and *klong that*, plus *ching* strokes (see Figure 5.34; video track 8).

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<sup>259</sup> *Hom Rong Yen* (โหมโรงเย็น) (the evening overture) is a series of non-vocal *Naphat* pieces played in order. This series of pieces is played before starting each event in order to symbolically give a sign of commencement of the event to the audience.

Figure 5.34 *La* notation

$\text{♩} = \text{approx } 80$

Khong Wong Yai

Taphon

$\text{♩} = \text{approx } 80$

Klong That

*Mai Doen 1*

5

*Mai Doen 2*      *Mai Doen 3*      *Mai Doen 4*      *Mai La* etc.

10

2

14

*rit.*

*rit.* . . .

## Structure

*La* has only one section and the rhythmic pattern is regulated by the *ching*, *taphon* and *klong that*. The length of *La* is equivalent to four units of *mai doen* (ไม้เดิน). Conventionally, the length of *La* is calculated only from the number of *mai doen* (consistent beats from *klong that*) and the remaining drum patterns which are *mai la* (ไม้ลา) (inconsistent beats from *klong that*) are not included as identification of the piece's length.<sup>260</sup>

## Special musical characteristics related to theatrical usage

In the *Phrommas* repertoire, *La* is played after *Phleng Rew* (เพลงเรือ), which comes after *Soi Son*. While *Phleng Rew* represents the action of angels (transformed demons) dancing in the sky, *La* communicates the sense that all transformed demons have completed their mission to lure away Phra Lak and the monkey army.

The prominent characteristics of *La* are the beats of *klong that* (กลองทัด) and are recognised by musicians and dancers. While the actors dance along with *La*, they need to recognise the number of *mai doen* (ไม้เดิน) to synchronise their footsteps along with *klong that*. There are four regular walking steps within the choreography of *La* equivalent to four *mai la*.

The theatrical meaning of *La* is manifested based on the conventional meaning. *La* is represented by the action of ending or to finish doing something in the narrative. Sirichaicharn Fachamroon (National Artist of Thailand) stated that 'in the past, the audiences had basic knowledge of the meaning of particular *naphat* pieces in both theatrical and other functions; while a group of *naphat* pieces have been used to represent certain processes in the ritual, they have been used to represent particular actions within the theatre but unfortunately, nowadays, modern audiences do not even know what *khon* music is'.<sup>261</sup> The lack of understanding of *khon* music of modern audiences somehow affects the appreciation and interest of people to understand musical

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<sup>260</sup> Boonchuay Sovat, interviewed by Suchada Sowat, Jan 14, 2016.

<sup>261</sup> Sirichaicharn Fachamroon, interviewed by Suchada Sowat, Jan, 20, 2016.



meaning (more details about the current existence of *khon* music can be found in Chapter 6).

The theatrical representation of *La* is formed from the conventional meaning associated with the narrative in the *Phrommas* episode. The theatrical meaning of *La* is shown as the indirect representation of music for theatre.

#### 5.3.2.5 *Krao Nai* (กราวไน)

##### **Category**

*Krao Nai* is one of the *naphat* pieces which has two different versions. Firstly, *Krao Nai* has been known as one of the highest-skilled *phleng diao* (เพลงเดี่ยว) (solo pieces) for various musical instruments such as *ranat ek* (treble xylophone), *ranat thum* (alto xylophone), *khong wong yai* (large gong circle) etc. *Krao Nai* in its solo version requires a very skilled musician. On the other hand, in the theatre *Krao Nai* is used to accompany the actions of the demon ('*yak*' ยักษ์). It is used when the demons are preparing and arranging the army, and in the *Phrommas* repertoire, *Krao Nai* is used to describe the action of Kalasun (the demon soldier) approaching Inthorachit to tell him the great order from Thossakan in Figure 5.36.

##### **Medium**

In the performance, *Krao Nai* is played by the whole *piphat* ensemble with solo singing sung alternately with the instrumental part. In the notation of *Krao Nai*, it includes both vocal and instrumental parts: the basic melody from the *khong wong yai*, the rhythmic pattern from the *taphon* and *klong that* plus the vocal part (Figure 5.35; video track 9).

Figure 5.35 *Krao Nai* notation

$\text{♩} = \text{approx } 68$  - - - - -  $\text{♩} = \text{approx } 68$  - - - - - - etc.   
 but- nan\_ ka la soon se\_

Vocal part 

Khong Wong Yai *song (Inst.)* 

Taphon 

Klong That  $\text{♩} = \text{approx } 68$  

6 ni mi sak rab sang bangkhom thot sa phak khun yak rib hora hed pai



11 er\_\_\_\_\_

*suam (Inst.) rap (Inst.)*



2

18

24

31

37

Figure 5.36 *Krao Nai* lyrics in the *Phrommas* repertoire

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <p>Bat nan<br/>         บัดนั้น</p> <p>rap sang bang khom thossaphak<br/>         รับสั่งบังคมทศพักตร์</p> | <p>Kalason seni mi sak<br/>         กาลสุรเสนีมิคักดี</p> <p>khun yak rip ho ra het pai<br/>         ขุนยักษ์รีบเหาะระเห็จไป</p> |
|--|--|

(Kalasun, the demon soldier, accepts the great command from Thossakan, King of the demons; he immediately flies into the air.)

**Structure**

*Krao Nai* used in the *Phrommas* repertoire starts with a short musical phrase from the instrumental part (*Song* สง) as an introduction leading to singing; when the singing is over, the instrumental parts play *Krao Nai*. The *nathap* used within *Krao Nai* is called *nathap phleng Krao Nai* (หน้าทับเพลงกราวไน) played by the *taphon* and *klong that* and it will be repeated throughout the piece (Figure 5.37).

Figure 5.37 The rhythmic pattern from *taphon* and *klong that* in *Krao Nai*

The musical notation shows a rhythmic pattern in 2/4 time. The top staff, labeled 'Taphon', contains four measures with notes and rests. Above the notes are labels: 'Ting', 'Tup Phrueng', 'Theng Ting', and 'Tup'. The bottom staff, labeled 'Klong That', contains four measures with notes and rests. Above the notes are labels: 'Tom', 'Tom', 'Tom', and 'Tom'.

**Pitch system**

*Krao Nai* is played on *thang nai*; the word *Nai* is directly used to identify *thang nai*.

## Musical characteristics related to theatrical usage

The pattern of the drum used in *Krao Nai* is the prominent musical characteristic, which reflects theatrical meaning. Within Thai classical music and dance, the strokes of *klong that* have commonly been known and understood by dancers and musicians. The sound of *klong that* within *Krao Nai* is crucial for the dancers who act as demons to step along with the drum beats. The sound of *klong that* is recognised as ‘*tom tom tom.....tom*’ (ต๋อม ต๋อม ต๋อม ต๋อม) and dancers will use this pattern for practising and performing *khon* choreography with *Krao Nai*.<sup>262</sup>

Figure 5.38 ‘*Tom tom tom tom*’ recognised by *khon* dancers in *Krao Nai*

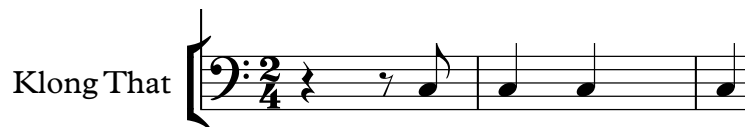


Figure 5.38 shows the drum pattern of *Krao Nai*. The pattern of the drum is precise and predictable; these musical features are considered as the representation of the *yak* (ยักษ์) or demon’s manner.

There is an interesting musical feature within the melody itself. The use of a lower pitch and punctual melodic accent in *Krao Nai* are considered to represent the strong, brave, and elegant manners associated with the *yak*. *Yak* or *asura* (อสูร) (a class of divine being from Indian mythology) is a kind of demon considered as an evil being within the Thai epics, including the Ramakian, and culturally, *yak* is perceived within Thai tradition as a mythical creature described as huge (normally *yak* is larger than a human), elegant, and strong. (Figure 5.39) and this feature can be heard in the video track 9 (from 0.42 -0.56).<sup>263</sup>

<sup>262</sup> Theeraphat Thongnim, interviewed by Suchada Sowat, Jan 18, 2016.

<sup>263</sup> Lumyong Sowat, interviewed by Suchada Sowat, Jan 15, 2016.

Figure 5.39 A group of lower pitches employed in *Krao Nai*



*Krao Nai* is used for *atham* (อธรรม) (evil manners) and the *yak* (ยักษ์) is conventionally perceived as evil (see more details in Chapter 3). Some direct musical means in *Krao Nai* are perceived to represent the manner of *yak* through the dynamic of the drum stroke and a group of pitches used in a certain range to represent the elegant and punctual manner of *yak*. However, the cultural perception of *yak* (ยักษ์) based on Thai culture is very much influential to the way that Thai people think of *yak*'s manner, which largely influences the music accompanying *yak* (ยักษ์). Both direct and indirect expressions with music are found in *Krao Nai* but they have to be related to cultural understanding related to the piece. However, if the cultural understanding is not involved, both direct and indirect expression will be difficult to understand in relation to its theatrical meaning.

### 5.3.2.6 *Krao Nok* (คราวนอก)

#### Category

*Krao Nok* is one of the *naphat* pieces; it is played to accompany the actions of walking and flying plus preparing the human army, angels, and monkey army of Rama in the theatre. However, in the *Phrommas* repertoire, *Krao Nok* is also used to accompany the parade led by the transformed God Indra (disguised demon).

In respect of cultural influence within music, *thamma* (ธรรมะ) (Virtue) and *atham* (อธรรม) (Immorality), which are influenced by Buddhist concepts became one of the normative perceptions of good and bad behaviours, which separate the two sets of characters within the Ramakian epic. In other words while *Krao Nai* is used to accompany the action of the *yak* (ยักษ์) (demon) considered as *atham* manner, *Krao Nok* is played for the actors in *thamma* (ธรรมะ) (Goodness), including Phra Ram (พระราม) and his monkey army.

However, there is complexity about the way that *Krao Nok* is used in the *Phrommas* repertoire associated with the concept of good and bad actors. Regarding the story of the Ramakian in the *Phrommas* episode, the demon. Inthorochit (Thossakan's son) is ordered by his father to make the sacred bow, the *Phrommas*, to fight with Phra Ram's army. Hence, Inthorachit disguises himself as Indra and orders his demon soldiers to transform themselves into angels; even though Indra and his angel parade are artificial, they are considered as the *thamma* actors based on their external appearance and the music that accompanies them is also categorised as on the *thamma* side.<sup>264</sup> This is the reason why *Krao Nok* is played to accompany Indra's parade even though he is 'fake'.

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<sup>264</sup> Boonchuay Sovat, interviewed by Suchada Sowat, Jan 14, 2016.

## Medium

*Krao Nok* is performed by the whole *Piphat* ensemble with group singing sung alternately with the instrumental part plus the addition of *ho* (โห) (shouted chanting). In the notation of *Krao Nok*, there are four major lines, 1) voice (chorus), 2) basic melody from the *khong wong yai*, 3) drum pattern from the *taphon* and 4) *klong that*. Importantly, there will be a section of *ho* (shouted chanting) in order to create the sense of the parade but *Krao Nok* is played by the whole *Piphat* ensemble (Figure 5.40; video track 10).

Figure 5.40 *Krao Nok* notation

The musical notation for *Krao Nok* is presented in three systems, each with three staves. The top staff is for *Khong Wong Yai* (treble clef, 2/4 time), the middle for *Taphon* (percussion clef, 2/4 time), and the bottom for *Klong That* (percussion clef, 2/4 time). A tempo marking of  $\text{♩} = \text{approx } 80$  is shown above the first system. The notation includes various rhythmic values, rests, and accidentals. The first system ends with "etc." indicating continuation. Measure numbers 7, 13, and 18 are marked at the beginning of their respective systems.



2

23

28

33

38

Khuen song kho kha-cha e ra wan tha han hae ho\_\_

42 — (Ho! solo)

45 (Ho1:chorus) *p*

Musical score for Ho1:chorus starting at measure 45. It features a treble clef staff with a whole rest, a piano (*p*) dynamic marking, and two bass clef staves with rhythmic accompaniment.

49 (Ho2: solo)

Musical score for Ho2: solo starting at measure 49. It features a treble clef staff with a melodic line, and two bass clef staves with rhythmic accompaniment.

53 (Ho2: chorus) *p*

Musical score for Ho2: chorus starting at measure 53. It features a treble clef staff with a whole rest, a piano (*p*) dynamic marking, and two bass clef staves with rhythmic accompaniment.

57 (Ho3:solo)

Musical score for Ho3:solo starting at measure 57. It features a treble clef staff with a melodic line, and two bass clef staves with rhythmic accompaniment.

(Ho3:chorus) (singing)  
 63 sa nan wan wai kha yai yok yo tha khla khlai loy fa ma nai pha yom

69 man

76

81

The text of *Krao Nok* is about God Indra preparing his angel army to parade to the battlefield (Figure 5.41).

Figure 5.41 *Krao Nok*'s lyrics

|   |   |
|---|---|
| khuen song kho khacha Erawan<br>ขึ้นทรงคอคชาเอราวัน | tha han hae ho sa nan wan wai<br>ทหารแหให้สนั่นหวั่นไหว |
| khayai yok yo tha kha khai<br>ขยายยกโยธาคลาไคล      | loy fa ma nai phayomman<br>ลอยฟ้ามาในโพยมมาน            |

(God Indra mounts his great elephant, Erawan. All the soldiers applaud loudly. Then they all come flying to the battlefield.)

### Pitch system

*Thang nai* is the crucial key used to accompany *khon* performance. However, there is an interesting aspect about the *thang siang* (ทางเสียง) or key used in *Krao Nok*. When *Krao Nok* is used in other *khon* repertoires to accompany the monkey army, *thang nok* (ทางนอก) is commonly used as the regulated key for *Krao Nok* (see more details in Chapter 4).<sup>265</sup> The word *Nok* (นอก) literally means outside whereas *Nok* musically refers to the key that is one note higher than *thang nai* (ทางใน). However, in the *Phrommas* repertoire, *thang siang* (ทางเสียง) used for *Krao Nok* (กราวนอก) is shifted. The crucial reason that changes the key's usage in *Krao Nok* relates to the connection from one piece to another within the *Phrommas* repertoire as a musical selection. As the piece played after *Krao Nok* is *Thayae Klong Yon*, which requires the lower keys to facilitate the female chorus in the piece, the keys of *Krao Nok* have been shifted to make a smooth connection throughout the repertoire. Therefore, *Krao Nok* played in the *Phrommas* repertoire is in a different key to other *khon* repertoires.

### Structure

The rhythmic pattern used in *Krao Nok* is called *nathap Krao Nok* (หน้าทับกราวนอก) played by the *taphon* and *klong that*. The pattern of the drums in *Krao Nok* (Figure 5.42) repeats through the entire piece. The piece starts from the instrumental part in order to

<sup>265</sup> Boonchuay Sovat, interviewed by Suchada Sowat, Jan 14, 2016.

lead to the vocal part (chorus) and in the middle of the vocal part, there will be *ho* (โห) (shouted chanting) which will be followed by the vocal part again and finally it ends with the instrumental part.

Figure 5.42 Drum pattern in *Krao Nok* from the *taphon* and *klong that*

The figure shows two musical staves. The top staff, labeled 'Taphon', is in 2/4 time and contains a sequence of notes and rests. Above the staff, the notes are labeled: 'Ting' (quarter note), 'Theng' (quarter note), 'Tup' (quarter note), 'Ting Theng' (eighth notes), and 'Tup Phrueng Theng' (quarter note). The bottom staff, labeled 'Klong That', is also in 2/4 time and contains a sequence of notes and rests. Above the staff, the notes are labeled: 'Tom' (quarter note), 'Tom' (quarter note), 'Tom' (quarter note), and 'Tom' (quarter note).

### Musical characteristics related to the theatre

*Krao Nok* is conventionally played when Phra Ram's monkey army is arranged and is prepared to fight, and both the rhythmic pattern and melody of *Krao Nok* suggest a sense of liveliness implicit to the monkey. To go one step further, the way the pitches move back and forth could be the representation of monkey behaviour (see for example, Figure 5.43).

Figure 5.43 Alternated and back and forth melody shape in *Krao Nok*

The figure shows a musical score with two staves. The top staff is in treble clef and contains a sequence of notes and rests. The number '2' is written above the first measure, and '18' is written above the second measure. The bottom staff is in bass clef and contains a sequence of notes and rests.

However, even though *Krao Nok* in the *Phrommas* repertoire is not used for the monkey army, it is used for the scene in which God Indra arranges the angel army. The purpose of using *Krao Nok* still corresponds to the conventional concept of using the piece for different characters as mentioned in the earlier section on *thamma* and *atham* characters.

The rhythmic pattern shows a swing accent through the *klong that* part, which seems to be metaphor for a sense of liveliness, brightness, and vivaciousness. This musical characteristic images the scene where God Indra led his angel army (all disguised demons) parading to the battlefield with gladness and braveness. The rhythmic pattern and melodic structure used in both *Krao Nok* and *Krao Nai* (see Figure 5.44 and 5.45) reflect different characters in the theatre and show differences in the rhythmic accents of the two drum styles played by *klong that*.

Figure 5.44 Main rhythmic pattern from the *klong that* in *Krao Nok*

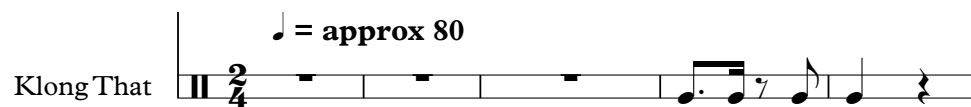
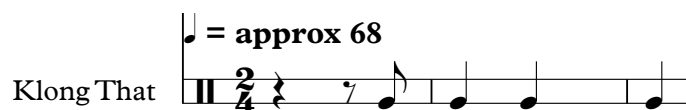


Figure 5.45 Main rhythmic pattern from the *klong that* in *Krao Nai*



The vocal line in *Krao Nok* has unique musical characteristics including the use of *ho* (โห) (shouted chanting). Generally, *ho* is a kind of vocalisation that appears in public events, especially a celebration where there is a form of parade within the community; *ho* is thus influenced by folk traditions. *Ho* can also be found in more modern uses such as in the *klong yao* (a long drum) parade mostly performed in the celebration of the ordination of a new Buddhist monk.<sup>266</sup> This context in which *ho* is

<sup>266</sup> In Thai tradition related to Buddhist belief, Thai people believe that if men (who reach the age of 20) decide to be ordained as a Buddhist monk (either temporarily or permanently), they can come closer to virtue and peacefulness and their parents can also gain merit from their devotion to the religion.

used has perhaps come to influence the sense of celebration corresponding to the use of *ho* in the *Phrommas* repertoire.

*Ho* seems to symbolise a sense of blessing and pleasure. *Ho* (โห) means praising or yelling. Within *ho*, the vocalists are separated into two groups: the solo and chorus. To make *ho*, it is important that all musicians and dancers or anyone in the same troupe should utter *ho* together to give a cheerful sound to the piece and the narrative of the theatre. Importantly, the way to make proper *ho* in *Krao Nok* has to be synchronised with the accent of the rhythmic phrase of *klong that*'s pattern. *Ho* can be heard in video track 10 (from 1.04 – 1.40).

*Krao Nok* is one of the *naphat* pieces conventionally bound to the characters in the *thamma* ธรรม (Virtue) and *atham* อธรรม (Immorality) sides related to the story of Ramakian. Significantly, within the musical characteristics, *Krao Nok* has particular musical features reflecting the theatrical meaning in two main aspects. Firstly, musical features that represent its conventional usage with a lively manner through both melodic and rhythmic means. Secondly, the vocal practice that requires well-trained vocalists seen through *ho* (โห).

The pieces analysed in this section illustrate both direct and indirect theatrical expression. Direct expression of the theatrical meaning can be seen through musical attributes such as the drum pattern, and the range of notes used as a metaphor for the scene in the narrative. In addition, some of the specific musical techniques are used to relate to the theatrical usage as seen in the changing movement of the two versions of *Choet* associated with the *khon* dance movement. On the other hand, indirect theatrical meaning of a group of *naphat* pieces is established based on the conventional usage and predetermined meaning of the *naphat* music, which is integrated with the theatre to accompany particular actions. Both direct and indirect theatrical manifestations here require cultural understanding to appreciate the concept hidden within music such as the notion of *thamma* (virtue) and *atham* (immorality), or the idea of the *yak* (demon)

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The ordination ceremony is therefore considered as an auspicious event and great celebration for the family of the man who will be ordained.

within Thai cultural perception, which affects the use of the piece and the musical reflection of the narrative.

### 5.3.3 Pieces reflecting emotion (*Phleng sathon arom*) (เพลงสะท้อนอารมณ์).

This section includes a group of pieces which are used to reflect particular emotion of the characters in the *Phrommas* repertoire. There are both vocal and non-vocal pieces with certain emotional manifestations: 1) *Krao Ram Phama* (กราวรำพม่า) (representing cheerfulness), 2) *Ling Lot* (ลิงโลด) (representing anger), and 3) *Ot* (โอด) (representing sadness).

#### 5.3.3.1 *Krao Ram Phama* (กราวรำพม่า)

##### Category

*Krao Ram Phama* is a piece used for the theatre and it is in the final section of the *Phrommas* repertoire. It is used to represent a sense of celebration. In the *Phrommas* repertoire, it describes a celebration of all demons after Inthorachit's victory with the *Phrommas* bow.

##### Medium

*Krao Ram Phama* is performed by the whole *piphat* ensemble played along with group singing. The notation of *Krao Ram Phama* in Figure 5.46 shows three main musical lines within *Krao Ram Phama*, 1) the vocal part, 2) melodic-instrumental parts, and 3) the rhythmic-instrumental part. The melodic-instrumental part is represented by the *khong wong yai* whereas the rhythmic instrumental part is shown by the *taphon* and *Klong that* to identify the rhythmic pattern along with the vocal part. Vocal and instrumental parts start together; once the vocal part is over, instrumental parts continue on their own.



## Pitch system

*Krao Ram Phama* is played on *thang nai*.

Figure 5.46 *Krao Ram Phama* notation

♩ = approx 70

di chai phai ri phi nat sin a su etc.

Vocal part

Khong Wong Yai

Taphon

Klong That

♩ = approx 70

6 rin suan san er han

Vocal part

Instrumental part

Taphon

Klong That

9 sa thang yo thi som kha ne er he

Vocal part

Instrumental part

Taphon

Klong That

The musical score is presented in three systems. Each system includes a vocal line with lyrics and pitch markers (hyphens and plus signs), and three instrumental lines: Khong Wong Yai (treble clef), Taphon (soprano clef), and Klong That (bass clef). The tempo is marked as approximately 70 beats per minute. The first system covers the lyrics 'di chai phai ri phi nat sin a su etc.'. The second system starts at measure 6 with lyrics 'rin suan san er han'. The third system starts at measure 9 with lyrics 'sa thang yo thi som kha ne er he'. The instrumental parts consist of rhythmic patterns characteristic of the Krao Ram Phama style.

13 ha khuen khao er long ka er tha ni

Vocal part

Instrumental part

Taphon

Klong That

18

Instrumental part

Taphon

Klong That

23

Instrumental part

Taphon

Klong That

28

Instrumental part

Taphon

Klong That

31

Instrumental part

Taphon

Klong That

## Structure

Main rhythmic patterns are given by the *taphon* and *klong that* with interlocking configuration to play along with the piece. The pattern will be repeated throughout the piece. The drum pattern used in *Krao Ram Phama* is called *nathap Krao Ram* (หน้าทับกราวรำ) as seen in Figure 5.47.

Figure 5.47 The drum pattern used in *Krao Ram Phama* (one unit)

The figure displays two sections of the drum pattern for *Krao Ram Phama*. Each section consists of a Taphon part and a Klong That part, both in 2/4 time. The first section's Taphon part has a rhythmic sequence: Ting (quarter), Theng (quarter), Tha (quarter), Tub (quarter), Ting (quarter), Tub (quarter), Theng (quarter), Ting (quarter). Above the notes are signs: '-' above Theng, '+' above Tha, '+' above Tub, '-' above Theng. The Klong That part has a single note labeled 'Khruem' on the second beat. The second section's Taphon part has a rhythmic sequence: Theng (quarter), Ting (quarter), Ting (quarter), Tub (quarter), Theng (quarter), Ting (quarter). Above the notes are signs: '+' above Theng, '-' above Ting, '+' above Ting, '-' above Theng, '+' above Ting. The Klong That part has four notes, each labeled 'Khruem', on the first, second, third, and fourth beats.

*Krao Ram Phama* is one of the short pieces, which includes two sections; each section has only one *changwa* based on *nathap krao ram*.<sup>267</sup>

## Musical characteristics related to the theatre

*Krao Ram Phama* is the penultimate piece in the *Phrommas* repertoire. The text again employs the *klon bot lakhon* (กลอนบทละคร) structure. The lyrics talk of the demons' pleasure (see Figure 5.48).

<sup>267</sup> *Changwa* (จังหวัด) is the word used to name a number of units within a certain section in classical Thai pieces. A number of are measured by the drum pattern employed in a particular piece and it can tell how long the piece is. See more about this aspect in Chapter 4. (4.1.2: Unit of classical Thai pieces).

Figure 5.48 *Krao Ram Phama's* lyrics

Section 1

di chai phai ri phi nat sin

ดีใจไพร่พินาศสิ้น

a surin suan san han sa

อสุรินสรวลสันนัตหรรษา

(So happy to conquer the enemy, we are delighted.)

Section 2

thang yo thi som kha ne he ha

ทั้งโยธีสมคะเนเฮฮา

khuen khao longka thani

คืนเขาลงกาธานี

(Our demon army and deception is successful; let's return to Longka city.)

Normally, in other *naphat* pieces *klong that* are hit alternately but both the male and female *Klong That* are struck at the same time in the *Krao Ram Phama* pattern<sup>268</sup> - this is called 'khruem' (ครุ่ม). 'khruem' is used to provide a louder and more prominent sound to the piece (see Figure 5.46 and 5.47).

*Krao Ram Phama* is one of the pieces used to reflect the emotion associated with the theatrical meaning of the *Phrommas* narrative; here, the manifestation of cheerfulness, pleasure, and celebration can be seen in both the lyrical meaning and musical representation through the use of a special drum pattern and performance practice.

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<sup>268</sup> Boonchuay Sovat, interviewed by Suchada Sowat, Jan 14, 2016.

### 5.3.3.2 *Ling Lot* (ลิงโลด)

#### **Category of the piece**

*Ling Lot* is one of the pieces considered in the category of; it is conventionally used in Thai classical theatres to express anger or fury. The word *ling* (ลิง) literally means ‘monkey’ whereas *lot* (โลด) means to leap; *Ling Lot* is performed in the scene in which Hanuman (the chief monkey, who has not been shot by the *Phrommas* arrows in the battlefield), is leaping towards Indra and fighting with him in fury.

#### **Medium**

In the performance, *Ling Lot* is played by the whole *piphat* ensemble with alternation of the solo voice conventionally sung by a solo male vocalist. The instrumental part (from the whole *piphat* ensemble) is played alternately with the vocal part based on the format of performing music for theatre (*song* สંગ, *suam* สาม, and *rap* รับ). In the notation of *Ling Lot*, there are vocal parts to communicate the narrative and the *taphon* and *ching* provide the rhythmic pattern (Figure 5.49). *Ling Lot* can be heard in the video track 12 and the example of *song* can also be heard in the same track (from 0.58 – 1.00 whereas *rap* can be heard from 2.00 – 2.18).

Figure 5.49 *Ling Lot* notation

♩ = approx 95

(Lyric 1) bat — — — — — bat — — — — — nan — — — — — ha nu man ha nu

Vocal part

(Inst: Song)

Khong Wong Yai

♩ = approx 95

Taphon

7 man mai tong — — — — — mai. tong son — — — — — si — — — — —

Vocal part

Inst: Suam

Khong Wong Yai

Taphon

(Lyric 2)

13 yuen tha yan dan krot dan krot dang

Vocal part

Inst: Song etc.

Khong Wong Yai

Taphon

19 ak khi chi na chi na wa\_ woei wa\_

Vocal part

Taphon

26 woei sa hat sa nai (Lyric 3) het dai pai khao\_

Vocal part

Khong Wong Yai

Taphon

33 pai khao khang phuak yak ma phlaeng phlan ma phlaeng

Vocal part

Taphon

39 phaln phra lak phra lak hai tak sai

Vocal part

Khong Wong Yai

Taphon

(Lyric 4)

45 ku chalang chi wan\_\_\_\_\_ chi wan hai<sup>3</sup>

Vocal part

Khong Wong Yai

Taphon

51 ban\_\_\_\_\_ lai hai sa\_chai hai sa\_chai in thra\_\_\_\_\_ in

Vocal part

Taphon

58 thra thi a than\_\_\_\_\_

Vocal part

Khong Wong Yai

Taphon

(Lyrics 5)

62 wa\_phlang phen phon\_\_\_\_\_ phen phon chon\_\_\_\_\_tha

Vocal part

Khong Wong Yai

Taphon



68 yan khuen ti khwan khuen ti khwan thai kha cha \_\_\_\_\_ thai kha

Vocal part

Taphon

(Lyric 6)

74 cha a san \_\_\_\_\_ ngang hak kho pha ya \_\_\_\_\_

Vocal part

Khong Wong Yai

Taphon

81 — kho pha ya e ra \_\_\_\_\_ wan ching khan ching

Vocal part

Taphon

87 khan son\_ sak \_\_\_\_\_ son\_ sak mak kha wan \_\_\_\_\_

Vocal part

Khong Wong Yai

Taphon

93 (Inst: Rab)

Khong Wong Yai

Taphon

98

Khong Wong Yai

Taphon

104

Khong Wong Yai

Taphon

### Structure of the piece

*Ling Lot* has one section. The piece is regulated by the drum pattern called *nathap samingthong song chan* (หน้าทับสมิงทองสองชั้น) (Figure 5.50), which is considered one of the extraordinary drum patterns played by the *taphon* along with the *ching* in *song chan*.

Figure 5.50 *Nathap samingthong song chan* used in *Ling Lot*

*Nathap samingthong song chan* used in *Ling Lot* (one *nathap*/one *changwa*)

+ - + - + - + -  
pa pa tub pa tub ting tub pa tub phloeng

Taphon

5 + - + - + - +  
tub phloeng tub tub ting tub phloeng ting tub pa

The text of *Ling Lot* talks particularly about the action of Hanuman. There are six *kham klon* (คำกลอน) based on the *klon bot lakhon* (กลอนบทละคร) structure as seen in Figure 5.51.<sup>269</sup>

Figure 5.51 *Ling Lot* lyrics

1<sup>st</sup> *kham klon*

|         |                         |
|---------|-------------------------|
| บัดนั้น | หนุมานไม่ต้องศรศรี      |
| bat nan | Hanuman mai tong son si |

(Hanuman, who has not been shot by the *Phrommas*'s arrows.)

2<sup>nd</sup> *kham klon*

|                                  |                           |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------|
| เย็นทะยานดาลโกรธตั้งอัคคี        | ชี้หน้าว่าเหวยสหัสสนัย    |
| yuen tha yan dan krot dang akkhi | chi na wa woei sahotsanai |

(He is extremely furious, angrily blaming God Indra)

3<sup>rd</sup> *kham klon*

|                                  |                                      |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| เหตุใดไปเข้าข้างพวกยักษ์         | มาแผลงผลาญพระลักษณให้ตกชัย           |
| het dai pai khao khang phuak yak | ma phlaeng phlan phra lak hai taksai |

(Why are you on the demon's side Indra? Why kill Phra Lak! )

4<sup>th</sup> *kham klon*

|                                 |                                |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| กูจะล้างชั้วนให้บรรลัย          | ให้สาใจอินทราที่อาธรรม         |
| ku cha lang chi wan hai ban lai | hai sa chai inthra chai a-than |

(I am going to kill you Indra, you deserve it, immoral Indra!)

5<sup>th</sup> *kham klon*

|  |                            |
|--|----------------------------|
| ว่าพลางแผ่นโผนโจนทะยาน                 | ขึ้นตีควานท้ายคชาอาสาฬ     |
| wa phlang phen phon chon tha yan khuen | ti khwan thai khacha a san |

(Hanuman suddenly leaps to God Indra, sitting on the great elephant, He furiously kills the mahout.)

6<sup>th</sup> *kham klon*

|                              |                             |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| จ้างหักคอปญาเอราวัณ          | ชิงคันศรศักดิ์มีฆวาน        |
| ngang hak kha pha-ya e-rawan | ching khan son sak makhawan |

(Then, Hanuman has broken the great elephant's head and seized the *Phrommas* bow from God Indra.)

<sup>269</sup> More details on the dramatic text structure used as the lyrics in vocal pieces of the *Phrommas* repertoire can be found in Chapter 4, section 4.2.2.

The vocal part of *Ling Lot* has the same vocal melody derived from the basic melody. However, as there are six *kham klon* (คำกลอน) in the lyrics, the melody of the vocal part is slightly modulated to compromise the tone of the word to the sound of the melody.

Figure 5.52 Vocal melody in *Ling Lot* and *luk tok* from the basic melody

The figure displays a musical score with four systems. Each system includes a 'Basic melody' staff, a 'Vocal melody' staff, and two 'Lyric' staves (Lyric 1 and Lyric 2). The music is in 2/4 time. The first system shows the beginning of the piece. The second system starts at measure 6 and includes a red 'X' above a note in the basic melody, which is also marked in the vocal melody. The third system starts at measure 12 and includes a red 'X' above a note in both the basic and vocal melodies. The lyrics are in Thai script and Romanized Thai.

(Inst: Song)

Basic melody

Vocal melody

Lyric 1 (Lyric 1) bat

Lyric 2 (Lyric 2) yuen tha yan dan krot dan

6 X

Basic melody

Vocal melody

Lyric 1 bat nan ha nu man ha numan mai

Lyric 2 krot dang ak khi chi na chi na wa

2

12 X

Basic melody

Vocal melody

Lyric 1 tong mai tong son si

Lyric 2 woei wa woei sa hat sa nai

X = *Luk tok* (destination note)

Figure 5.52 identifies the basic melody and vocal melody as well as the example of how basic melody is modulated with particular lyrics to keep the same *luk tok* (ลูกตก). There is a vocal melody that is linked to the *luk tok* in the basic melody and the vocal melody is in the singer's mind so they have to compromise the tone of the word and the note of *luk tok*. The whole *Ling Lot* is still sung in *thang nai*.

### **Musical characteristics related to theatrical usage**

As *Ling Lot* is the piece which accompanies the angry movements of the dancer in the theatre, the emotional expression is reasonably important, and the vocal part is considered a significant tool to reflect the sense of anger. *Ling Lot* is conventionally sung by a male singer because this piece requires a strong manner to express furiousness and, according to Pattanee Promsombat, the nature of a male voice is more suitable for singing *Ling Lot*.<sup>270</sup> The singer already knows where they can add vocal techniques to certain words to emphasise the feeling of anger: for example, in the fourth, fifth, and sixth *kham klon* (คำกลอน) (line) of the lyrics, the singer should increase the power of their voice because they tell of the angry behaviour of Hanuman.

The drummer who performs *nathap samingthong* is expected to have greater experience and refined technique in their performance practice because the drum pattern will be repeated as six cycles and the drummer should be able to add or create particular techniques to make complicated variations. It requires an experienced *taphon* player to perform the drum pattern of *Ling Lot* expressively, a practice that is individual to different drummers, but with a common expressive intention.

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<sup>270</sup> Pattanee Promsombat, interviewed by Suchada Sowat, Feb 2, 2016.

### 5.3.3.3 *Ot* (โอด)

#### **Category of the piece**

*Ot* is one of the *naphat* pieces; *Ot* literally means to weep or to cry, which explicitly refers to its musical meaning, and it conventionally represents the action of crying. There is another occasion in which *Ot* is played which is *thet mahachat* (เทศน์มหาชาติ) - *thet mahachat* is the Buddhist sermon held annually and its theme is from the Jataka<sup>271</sup> that tells the story of Gautama Buddha's previous lives. The *thet mahachat* uses Gautama Buddha's life known as *maha wetsandon chadok* (มหาเวสสันดรชาดก) to honour the Buddha's devotion and to teach the audience to appreciate virtue. Thai classical music is interwoven through the sermon and the meaning of the pieces relates to the story of each sermon's chapter.<sup>272</sup>

In the theatre *Ot* is always used to communicate the action of crying; it is also used to represent the failure, displeasure, and disappointment of the main actors. In the *Phrommas* repertoire, *Ot* is used in the battlefield scene in which Phra Lak (พระลักษมณ์) and his monkey army are attacked by the *Phrommas* arrows.

#### **Medium**

The whole *piphat* ensemble is used to play *Ot* with no vocal part. In the notation of *Ot*, there is a melody represented by the *khong wong yai*, a rhythmic pattern performed by the drums, *taphon* and *klong that*, along with the *ching* in the *song chan* metric level as seen in Figure 5.59; video track 13.

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<sup>271</sup> Jataka is the religious Indian tale about the previous births of Gautama Buddha.

<sup>272</sup> Tramot, *Duriyang-kha-sat Thai*, 24.

Figure 5.53 *Ot* notation

♩ = approx 82

Khong Wong Yai

- + - + - + etc.

Taphon

♩ = approx 82

Klong That

### Structure

*Ot* has one section with a specific rhythmic pattern. The rhythmic pattern used in *Ot* is called *nathap phleng ot song chan* (หน้าทับเพลงโอด สองชั้น) (Figure 5.54), which is played by the *taphon* and *klong that*. In terms of pitch system, *Ot* is still performed in *thang nai* as musical accompaniment for *khon*.

Figure 5.54 *Nathap phleng ot song chan* (the drum pattern of *Ot*)

The figure displays four measures of a drum pattern for *Ot*, consisting of Taphon and Klong That parts. The time signature is 2/4.

**Measure 1:**  
 Taphon: tub ting tub phloeng ting tub etc. tub phloeng ting  
 Klong That: tom

**Measure 2:**  
 Taphon: 4 tub tub phloeng ting tub theng ting tub theng ting  
 Klong That: tom tom tom tom

**Measure 3:**  
 Taphon: 7 tub theng ting tub theng ting tub theng ting tub theng ting  
 Klong That: tom tum tum tum tom

**Measure 4:**  
 Taphon: 10 theng ting tub theng ting tub theng ting tub theng ting  
 Klong That: tom tom tum

### Musical characteristics related to theatrical usage

As mentioned above, *Ot* is used particularly to communicate the action of crying; sometimes it refers to failure or a disappointment. However, the musical characteristic that reflects this sense is based on an indirect manifestation. In other words, there is no vocal part with lyrics to convey the sad feeling through the word but the musical characteristics themselves could be interpreted as being indirectly representative of sadness. Boonchuay Sovat comments how we perceive the sense of sadness and sorrow through *Ot*, and considers the rhythmic pattern played by the *klong that*, which gives an uncertain or unstable beat, to be the key factor of this emotional expression:



‘you could imagine how a tear is falling down from your eyes when you feel regret; it is uncertain and unpredictable as to when your tears will fall, and the drums represent it metaphorically; this is how *Ot* reflects sadness in the theatre’.<sup>273</sup> This discussion manifests a deeper layer of understanding of what music ‘means’ and how sophistication is required to understand music’s fuller implications.

On the other hand, this sadness can be seen through the dance choreography used within *Ot*. The dance movements used for *Ot* directly demonstrate the action of crying: the dancer uses the hand to cover their face to represent the crying action as well as synchronising their body in a certain way with the drum’s strokes to express the crying action.

*Ot* seems to be one of those pieces, which has a quite complicated function associated with its use in the theatre: it is the piece that reflects the emotions of sadness and failure, but it is at the same time the *naphat* piece accompanying the action of crying. Two functions of music for theatre thus occur in *Ot*, which illustrate one type of interaction.

This section has considered pieces that are considered to reflect emotion within the theatre. The narrative of the *Phrommas* episode is the common feature which channels both direct and indirect theatrical meanings of music: while the text is the direct means to communicate the narrative, some musical attributes such as the drum strokes played on the *klong that* and *taphon* and the style of singing in the vocal piece express the feeling of the actor within the narrative. The indirect theatrical meaning is established by the individual experience of the musicians, as seen in the *Ot* drum pattern (metaphorically representing a falling tear and its complicated reflection within the theatre).

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<sup>273</sup> Boonchuay Sovat, interviewed by Suchada Sowat, Jan 14, 2016.

### 5.3.4 Pieces demonstrating unique musical features of the repertoire

One of the factors perhaps contributing to the popularity of the *Phrommas* repertoire from the past to the present is the unique musical features that are located in particular pieces within the repertoire. This section comprises a group of pieces, which have specific musical attributes demonstrating the most decorated and elaborate musical features. There are vocal pieces in which there are particular forms of relationship within the instrumental part itself, and also between vocal and instrumental parts; those examined here will be 1) *Chom Talat* (ชมตลาด), 2) *Thayae Klong Yon* (ทะแยกลองโยน), 3) *Soi Son* (สร้อยสน), 4) *He Klom Chang* (เห่กล่อมช้าง), and 5) *He Choet Ching* (เห่เชิดจิ้ง).

#### 5.3.4.1 *Chom Talat* (ชมตลาด)

##### Category

*Chom Talat* is an ancient Thai piece only used in the theatre. *Chom* (ชม) literally means ‘to see’ and *talat* (ตลาด) means ‘the market’. However, the musical meaning of *Chom Talat* is not directly related to its literal meaning. In Thai classical dance practice, *Chom Talat* is used as the piece to accompany a formal set of movements known as *ram mae bot lek* (รามแม่บทเล็ก).<sup>274</sup> This dance pattern was codified by the Fine Arts Department in the 20<sup>th</sup> century and those who are trained to be professional Thai classical dancers are required to learn this dance movement at an early stage.

*Chom Talat* is used for a scene in which the main dancer is dressing for a special occasion - the meaning of *Chom Talat* is the dancer astonishing him or herself with their beautiful clothes. In the *Phrommas* repertoire, *Chom Talat* is played after the completed transformation of Inthorachit from a demon into Indra, and his taking pleasure in his new appearance.

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<sup>274</sup> Rutnin, *Dance, Drama, and Theatre in Thailand The process of development and modernisation*, 5.

## Medium

*Chom Talat* is performed by the whole *piphat* ensemble (no drums) and the singing part sung alternately with the instrumental part. It is normally sung by female singers, *ton bot* (ต๋นบต) (solo) and *luk khu* (ลุกขุ) (chorus). The only rhythmic instrument played is *ching*. In the notation, there will be voice, melody represented basic melody from *khong wong yai* and *ching* symbol. (Figure 5.55) *Chom Talat* can be heard in the video track 14.

Figure 5.55 *Chom Talat* notation

♩ = approx 50

Lyric\_1 *Ton Bot* (solo)

pen ko \_\_\_\_\_ si \_\_\_\_\_ song \_\_\_\_\_ khruang \_\_\_\_\_ er \_\_\_\_\_

Vocal part

5 er \_\_\_\_\_ ruang a \_\_\_\_\_ ram \_\_\_\_\_

*Luk Khu* (chorus)

9 luan kaew \_\_\_\_\_ kaw \_\_\_\_\_ ngao \_\_\_\_\_ ngam \_\_\_\_\_

13 er \_\_\_\_\_ wam we ha \_\_\_\_\_

17 er er \_\_\_\_\_

*Suam* (Inst.)

K.W. {

The musical notation is presented in four systems. The first system shows the vocal part for 'Lyric\_1 Ton Bot (solo)' with lyrics 'pen ko si song khruang er' and a melody line. The second system continues the vocal part with lyrics 'er ruang a ram'. The third system shows the vocal part for 'Luk Khu (chorus)' with lyrics 'luan kaew kaw ngao ngam' and 'er wam we ha'. The fourth system continues the chorus with lyrics 'er er' and shows the instrumental part 'Suam (Inst.)' for 'K.W.' (Kong Wai) with a melody line.

Lyric 2 *Ton Bot* (solo)

21 chaps phra saeng phrom mas er

25 er yat tra

The musical notation consists of two staves in treble clef. The first staff contains measures 21-24 with lyrics 'chaps phra saeng phrom mas er'. The second staff contains measures 25-28 with lyrics 'er yat tra'. The melody is written in a simple, rhythmic style with various note values and rests.

*Luk Khu* (chorus)

29 sa det ma koci su wan

33 er than dai

37 er er

The musical notation consists of three staves in treble clef. The first staff contains measures 29-32 with lyrics 'sa det ma koci su wan'. The second staff contains measures 33-36 with lyrics 'er than dai'. The third staff contains measures 37-40 with lyrics 'er er'. The melody is written in a simple, rhythmic style with various note values and rests.

*Suam* (Inst.)

K.W. 

The musical notation consists of a single staff in treble clef. The melody is written in a simple, rhythmic style with various note values and rests.

*Rap* (Inst.)

41

45

49

53

57

K.W. 

The musical notation consists of five staves in treble clef. The melody is written in a simple, rhythmic style with various note values and rests. A '3' is written at the end of the fourth staff.

K.W. = *Khong wong yai*

## Structure

The melody of *Chom Talat* includes only one section; the number of cycles that will be played are based on the lyrics. The basic melody of *Chom Talat* directly links to the rhythmic pattern of the piece. The text (Figure 5.56) concerns Inthorachit's satisfaction from his transformation from demon into Indra. There are two *kham klon* (คำกลอน) in *Chom Talat*'s lyrics.

Figure 5.56 *Chom Talat*'s lyrics

### 1<sup>st</sup> *kham klon*

|   |                                   |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| <i>ton bot</i> (solo)   | <i>luk khu</i> (chorus)           |
| pen ko si song khruang ruang a ram  | luan kaew kaw ngao ngam wam we ha |
| เป็นโกสิยฺ์ทรงเครื่องเรื่องอร่าม  | ล้วนแก้วเก้าเงงงามวามเวหา         |
| (Becoming God Indra with beautiful clothes and many astonishing accessories.) |                                   |

### 2<sup>nd</sup> *kham klon*

|   |                                |
|---|--------------------------------|
| <i>ton bot</i> (solo)   | <i>luk khu</i> (chorus)        |
| chap pra saeng Phrommas yattra  | sa det ma koei su wan than dai |
| จับพระแสงพรหมาศยาตรา  | เสด็จมาเกยสุวรรณทันใด          |
| (He is holding the sacred <i>Phrommas</i> bow and walking elegantly.) |                                |

In singing *Chom Talat*, the *ton bot* (solo) will start the first section with the *kham klon* (คำกลอน) and *luk khu* (chorus) singing the later section within the same *kham klon* as seen in Figure 5.56. In terms of the interaction between vocal and instrumental parts, the vocal part starts first and the instrumental part comes afterwards. The musical attribute called *suam* (สวม) which be heard in video track 14 (from 1.24 – 1.32)<sup>275</sup> is used in the first *kham klon*; when the singers have nearly finished singing, the instrumental part will interrupt the vocal part to start the last sentence of the basic melody of *Chom Talat* to create a smooth link between the vocal and instrumental parts which is known as *suam*. After the vocals are finished, the instrumental part will play the entire melody

<sup>275</sup> See Chapter 4 for more information on the relationship between vocal and instrumental parts used for theatre: *suam*, *song*, and *rap*.

of *Chom Talat* – this is known as *rap* (แร็ป) (see notation in Figure 5.55; video track 14, 1.32 – 2.12).

### **Pitch system**

*Chom Talat* is played on *thang nai*.

### **Musical characteristics related to the theatrical usage**

*Chom Talat* is used for the theatre to describe the narrative through lyrics. One of the prominent features of the dance movement used in *Chom Talat* is that the dancer can make a solo dance with refined choreography related to the meaning of the lyrics. The vocalists who sing *Chom Talat* should have an understanding of the lyrical meaning of the text to properly modulate their vocal practice with the dance movement. In other words, if they can understand the meaning of the lyrics, they are then able to sing along with the dance movement synchronously. This is a kind of direct theatrical expression within the singing of *Chom Talat*.

### **Special musical characteristic**

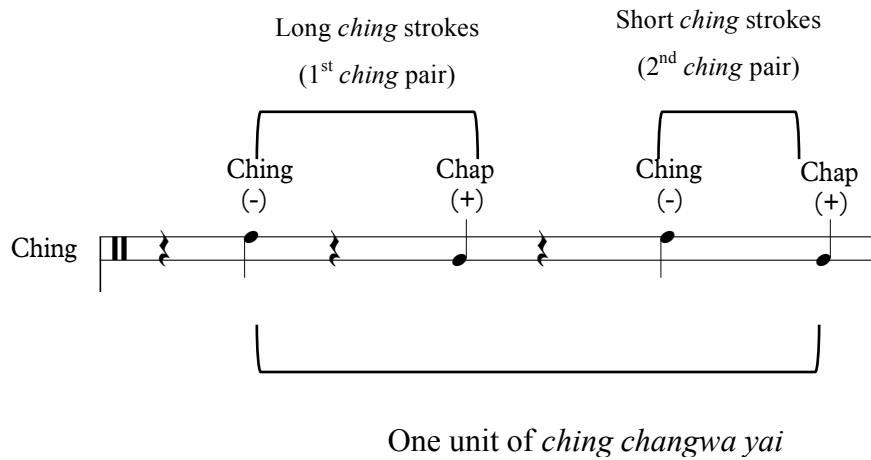
*Chom Talat* is one of the extraordinary rhythmic pieces, which means a piece that employs the extraordinary rhythmic formation, which is different to the regular pattern of metric levels such as *song chan* (สองชั้น) and *chan diao* (ชั้นเดียว). The pattern of the *ching* in *Chom Talat* is called ‘*ching changwa yai*’ (ฉิ่งจังหวะใหญ่) (literally, ‘*ching*’s huge rhythm’) which refers to a combination of rhythmic patterns including long and short *ching* strokes (Figure 5.57).<sup>276</sup>

The prominent feature of *ching changwa yai* (ฉิ่งจังหวะใหญ่) is that it is more complicated than the regular *ching* pattern. Within one bar, there are two pairs of *ching* strokes comprising long and short durations (see Figure 5.57). This inconsistency in *ching* strokes creates the uniqueness of *Chom Talat*.

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<sup>276</sup> Boonchuay Sovat, interviewed by Suchada Sowat, Jan 14, 2016.

Figure 5.57 The combination of *ching* strokes in *Chom Talat*



One *ching* pair includes two sounds: *ching* (open sound) & *chap* (closed sound)

Senior Thai music master Boonchuay Sovat has suggested an interesting thought about the musical and emotional reflection in *Chom Talat*'s rhythmic pattern: 'the inconsistent beats from *ching changwa yai* can show not only the special musical features of the piece, but also manifest a sense of extraordinary feeling of the main actor who dances along with that piece'.<sup>277</sup> In other words, in the scene in which *Chom Talat* is used, the main dancer, Inthorachit, astonishes himself with his own appearance as Indra and this reflects the sense of the unexpected that is perceived through the *ching*'s strokes. This is perhaps a personal interpretation, but it suggests some interesting relationships between musical elements used and the theatrical usage that is part of the deeper experience of the musicians.

*Chom Talat* involves both a direct and indirect relationship with the theatre. While a direct relationship is seen through the interaction between dancer and singers to synchronise their performance based on the lyrics sung to communicate the narrative, the indirect relationship takes place through the special rhythmic pattern used to regulate the whole piece.

<sup>277</sup> Boonchuay Sovat, interviewed by Suchada Sowat, Jan 14, 2016.

#### 5.3.4.2 *Thayae Klong Yon* (ตะแบกทองโยน)

##### **Category**

*Thayae* (ตะแบก) is one of the ancient Thai pieces played in *Tap Thayae* (ตัมตะแบก) (a series of vocal pieces).<sup>278</sup> *Thayae* is also used in the theatre but is known as *Thayae Klong Yon* (ตะแบกทองโยน). *Thayae* (ตะแบก) identifies the piece and *klong yon* (กลองโยน) refers to the drum pattern used to accompany the royal procession or royal court parade. When both elements are put together this becomes the piece used for theatre in a scene where a high-status actor marches in a grand procession. In the *Phrommas* repertoire, *Thayae Klong Yon* is used when Indra (the transformed Inthorachit) and his angels march to the battlefield. The piece has lyrics, which describe the beauty and refined decoration of the angels' parade. *Thayae Klong Yon* is one of the symbols of the *Phrommas* repertoire recognised among Thai musicians.

##### **Medium**

In the performance, *Thayae Klong Yon* is performed by the whole *piphat* ensemble along with group singing. In the notation of *Thayae Klong Yon*, there are three main musical lines notated, including the vocal part, basic melody from the *khong wong yai*, and rhythmic-instrumental part by the *taphon and klong that* (Figure 5.58; video track 15)

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<sup>278</sup> Lumyong Sowat, interviewed by Suchada Sowat, Jan 15, 2016.



Figure 5.58 *Thayae Klong Yon* notation

$\text{♩} = \text{approx } 60$

- + - + - + - + etc.  
chang eoi chang ni mit muan mai

Vocal part

Khong Wong Yai

Taphon

$\text{♩} = \text{approx } 60$

Klong That

7 phit chang mak khawan roeng rang

Vocal part

Khong Wong Yai

Taphon

Klong That

2

12 kam hang han chan suck su ru

Vocal part

Khong Wong Yai

Taphon

Klong That

16 thuang thi phuk khruanguang thong tho kra

Vocal part

Khong Wong Yai

Taphon

Klong That

22 win thong lo tho sang si hoi hu 3

Vocal part

Khong Wong Yai

Taphon

Klong That

28 phu cham ma ri pok tra phong thong phan na

Vocal part

Khong Wong Yai

Taphon

Klong That

4

33 rai khruang sung riang sam thaew lai kap

Vocal part

Khong Wong Yai

Taphon

Klong That

39 kaew sang phraew phrai a phi rum

Vocal part

Khong Wong Yai

Taphon

Klong That

44 sab chum sai bang saek yu pen

Vocal part

Khong Wong Yai

Taphon

Klong That

48 khu khiang klong cha na

Vocal part

Khong Wong Yai

Taphon

Klong That

52 pra khom khruok ma ho ra thuek kuek kong

Vocal part

Khong Wong Yai

Taphon

Klong That

57 siang trae sang song sam niang

Vocal part

Khong Wong Yai

Taphon

Klong That

62 nang cham riang khiang chang song 7

Vocal part

Khong Wong Yai

Taphon

Klong That

66 sao su rang nang ram fon dang kin

Vocal part

Khong Wong Yai

Taphon

Klong That

8

71 non nang nuan ra hong nak sit

Vocal part

Khong Wong Yai

Taphon

Klong That

76 rit thi rong thue thuan thong liw loy ma

Vocal part

Khong Wong Yai

Taphon

Klong That

The text (Figure 5.59) of *Thayae Klong Yon* describes the beauty of the angels' parade and the elaborate decorations within it, and are based on the *kap yani sibat* structure (a kind of Thai traditional verse).<sup>279</sup>

Figure 5.59 *Thayae Klong Yon's* lyrics

|   |   |
|---|---|
| chang oey chang nimit<br>ช้างเอ้ยช้างนิมิต            | muan mai phit chang ma kha wan<br>เหมือนไม้พิตช้างมัฆวาน    |
| roeng rang kam haeng han<br>เรียงรังกำแหงหาญ          | chan suek su ru thuang thi<br>ชายศึกสู้รู้ท้วงที            |
| phuk khruang ruang thong tho<br>ผูกเครื่องเรืองทองทอ  | kra win thong lo tho saeng si<br>กระวิลทองหล่อทอแสงศรี      |
| hoi hu phu cham-mari<br>ห้อยหูพู่จามรี                | pok tra phong thong phan-narai<br>ปกตระพองทองพรรณราย        |
| khruang sung riang sam thaew<br>เครื่องสูงเรียงสามแถว | lai kap kaew sang praew prai<br>ลายกาบแก้วแสงแพรวราย        |
| a-phi-rum sap chum sai<br>อภिरูมลับชุมสาย             | bang saek yu pen khu khiang<br>บังแทรกอยู่เป็นคู่เคียง      |
| klong cha na pra khrom khruak<br>กลองชนะประโคมครึก    | mahorathuek kuek kong siang<br>มโหรีทีกก็ก้องเสียง          |
| trae sang song sam-niang<br>แตرسั่งส่งสำเนียง         | nang cham riang khiang chang song<br>นางจำเรียงเคียงข้างทรง |
| sao su rang nang ram fon<br>สาวสุรางค์นางรำพื่อน      | danh kin non naeng nuan ra hong<br>ดังกินนรเน่งนวลหงส์      |
| nak sit rit thi rong<br>นักสิทธิ์อิทธิรงค์            | thue thuan thong liw loy ma<br>ถือทวนธงลิวลอยมา             |

Translation of lyrics: The transformed great elephant is very similar to the great elephant of God Indra with a powerful manner and a clever mind. Gorgeous decoration on the elephant, it is adorned with golden decoration. The drums, metal drums, the horns are resounding while the parade is moving with the beautiful angel dance, with accompaniment of the great hermits within the parade. All of them are flying elegantly into the air.

<sup>279</sup> See Chapter 4 for more details about Thai traditional verses.

## Structure

*Thayae Klong Yon* includes two sections, the first section has four *changwa* (จังหวะ) and the other has six *changwa* (จังหวะ). In this piece, *ching* plays in *song chan* (สองชั้น) and the drum pattern used in the piece is called *nathap klong yon* (หน้าทับกลองโยน) influenced by the drum pattern played in the royal court procession (Figure 5.60). The word *klong* means drums and *yon* (โยน) means to pass over; both terms are used musically to represent the way that the *taphon* and *klong that* interact in this piece.

Figure 5.60 The drum pattern, *klong yon* used in *Thayae Klong Yon*

The figure displays two systems of musical notation for the drum pattern 'klong yon' in 2/4 time. Each system consists of two staves: 'Taphon' (top) and 'Klong That' (bottom). Above the first system, a sequence of rhythmic symbols is shown: - + - + - + - + -.

**System 1:**  
 - **Taphon:** A staff with a treble clef and a 2/4 time signature. It contains four measures of music. The first three measures each contain two eighth notes (quarter note total). The fourth measure contains a quarter note followed by an eighth rest, with the label 'ting poeng' above it.  
 - **Klong That:** A staff with a bass clef and a 2/4 time signature. It contains four measures of music. The first three measures are empty. The fourth measure contains a quarter note, with the label 'khruem' above it.

**System 2:**  
 - **Taphon:** A staff with a treble clef and a 2/4 time signature. It contains four measures of music. The first measure starts with a '6' above it, followed by a quarter note, an eighth rest, and a quarter note. The second measure follows the same pattern. The third measure contains a quarter note followed by an eighth rest. The fourth measure contains a quarter note followed by an eighth rest, with the label 'ting poeng' above it.  
 - **Klong That:** A staff with a bass clef and a 2/4 time signature. It contains four measures of music. The first three measures are empty. The fourth measure contains a quarter note, with the label 'khruem' above it.

## Pitch system

*Thayae Klong Yon* is also played in *thang nai*.

## Specific musical characteristic related to theatrical usage

The significant musical features within *Thayae Klong Yon* involve both vocal part and the drum pattern, *nathap klong yon* (หน้าทับกลองโยน). Interestingly, there are differences between *Thayae* and *Thayae Klong Yon* when sung in two different performance contexts: when *Thayae* is sung in *Tap Thayae* (ทับตะเย), there is a significant amount of *uan* (เอื้อน), whereas there is less *uan* (เอื้อน) in *Thayae Klong Yon* within the *Phrommas* repertoire as music for theatre; Figure 5.61 illustrates this difference. *Tap Thayae*'s

(ตบตะแบ) purpose is fundamentally for listening, and it therefore requires elaborate vocal decoration, whereas *Thayae Klong Yon* in the *Phrommas* repertoire is used for communicating the narrative of the theatre.

Figure 5.61 Different vocal techniques used

(*Thayae* in *Tap Thayae* and *Thayae Klong Yon* in the *Phrommas* repertoire)

The figure displays five pairs of musical staves, each representing a different vocal technique. Each pair consists of a 'Vocal part (Tap Tha-yae)' staff and a 'Vocal part (Phrommas)' staff. The lyrics are written above the notes.

- Pair 1:** Tap Tha-yae: o wa chao duang; Phrommas: chang eay chang ni mit muan mai
- Pair 2:** Tap Tha-yae: mon tha thong cha nai; Phrommas: phit chang mak khawan roeng
- Pair 3:** Tap Tha-yae: nong chueng ma rang; Phrommas: rang kam hang han chan suek
- Pair 4:** Tap Tha-yae: sa ne ha; Phrommas: su ru thuang thi

There is another aspect, which reflects the musical characteristics in *Thayae Klong Yon* related to the theatre. As mentioned earlier, the drum pattern used in the piece is brought from the pattern of *klong chana* (กลองชนะ) (a set of drums used in royal court procession). The use of this particular drum pattern makes the piece unique.

Importantly, the way that the vocal part goes alongside the instrumental part in *Thayae Klong Yon* is called *khiao* (เคล้า) (literally, to mix two things); each plays its own version but have to meet up at the meeting point of the note, *luk tok* (ลูกตก). *Khiao* (เคล้า) is one of the musical techniques regularly used in music for theatre. The way that instrumental and vocal parts are played alongside each other give the piece a distinctive sound, creating a particular grandness in instrumentation and voice.<sup>280</sup> *Khiao* (เคล้า) is mostly used with pieces in which there is a highlight or climax situation based on the story. However, the style of *khiao* (เคล้า) in *Thayae Klong Yon* is slightly different to *Soi Son* as will be explained below.

#### 5.3.4.3 *Soi Son* (สร้อยसन)

##### **Category**

*Soi Son* is a traditional Thai piece played in the *phleng ruang* (เพลงเรื่อง) (a series of non-vocal pieces)<sup>281</sup> known as *Phleng Ruang Soi Son* (เพลงเรื่องสร้อยसन). However, *Soi Son* is selected to be performed in the *Phrommas* repertoire within the function of *rabam* (ระบำ). *Rabam* is a kind of dance choreographed and performed for a specific function and occasion.<sup>282</sup> *Rabam* can be either performed as part of a story within the theatre or excluded from the theatre. *Soi Son* functions as the piece accompanying the *rabam*, which forms part of the *Phrommas* episode within *khon* performance. This dance can also be performed separately from the *Phrommas* repertoire, but still called *rabam Phrommas* (ระบำพรหมมาศ); among Thai classical musicians and dancers, this dance is called *rabam na chang* (ระบำหน้าช้าง), which literally means ‘the dance in front of the great elephant of the God Indra’, and it takes place in the scene in which all the angels dance in front of God Indra’s great elephant to lure Phra Lak and his monkey army into the battlefield.<sup>283</sup>

<sup>280</sup> Lumyong Sowat, interviewed by Suchada Sowat, Jan 15, 2016.

<sup>281</sup> More details about the categories of Thai pieces can be found in Chapter 4.

<sup>282</sup> Rutnin, *Dance, Drama, and Theatre in Thailand The process of development and modernization*, 3.

<sup>283</sup> Theeraphat Thongnim, interviewed by Suchada Sowat, Jan 18, 2016.



## Medium

*Soi Son* is performed by the whole *piphat* ensemble playing alongside the vocal part. In the notation of *Soi Son*, there are four main musical lines: the vocal part, instrumental part group 1 (*khruang nam*), instrumental part group 2 (*khruang tam*), and the rhythmic pattern. Theoretically, the separation between the two groups is based on the theory of performing Thai ensemble music in which musical instruments are divided into two groups (more details can be found in Chapter 4). In the *piphat* ensemble, the lead-instruments are *ranat ek* and *pi nai* and the instruments which follow include *ranat thum* and *khong wong yai*. The rhythmic percussion instruments such as the *taphon* and *ching* are not included as being part of any group because they are played throughout the piece (see notation in Figure 5.65).

The text of *Soi Son* (Figure 5.62) talks about angels dancing beautifully in the air, and it describes the movement of the angels' dance figures. There are two sections of text based on the basic melody of *Soi Son*. *Soi Son* plays a key role in the story of the demons' trick to deceive Phra Lak and his army – the prominent message of the *Phrommas* episode. *Soi Son* can be heard in video track 16.

Figure 5.62 *Soi Son's* lyrics

Section 1

tang chab ra bam ram fon

ต่างจับระบำรำฟ้อน

rai riang khiang khom pra som ta

ร้ายเรียงเคียงคมประสมตา

tot kon krid krai sai khwa

ทอดกรกรีดกรายซ้ายขวา

liao lai khwai khwa pen ta tang

เลี้ยวไล่ไขว้คว่ำเป็นท่าทาง

Section 2

son chang wa pra thao khlaow khong

ซ้อนจังหวะประเท้าเคล้าคล่อง

wong wian hian hank kan kang

วงเวียนเหียนกันกันกาง

liao lot sod khlong pai tam wang

เลี้ยวลอดสอดคล้องไปตามหว่าง

pen khu khu yu klang amphon

เป็นคู่คู่อู่กลางอัมพร

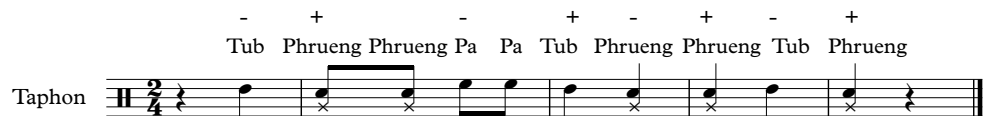
(Translation)

All angels dance with elegantly refined dance movements; they assemble their graceful dance movements together by circulating their positions in the air. Both male and female angels accompany each other to make a beautiful coupled angel dance.

**Structure**

There are two sections in *Soi Son*; each section comprises eight *changwa* (จังหวะ) based on the measurement from the drum pattern provided by the *taphon*. The drum pattern that accompanies *Soi Son* is called ‘*nathap song mai*’ (หน้าทับสองไม้). Figure 5.63 demonstrates one unit of *nathap song mai* (one unit is equivalent to one *changwa*) played on the *taphon* and this pattern repeats throughout the piece.

Figure 5.63 *Nathap song mai* from the *taphon* used in *Soi Son*



**Pitch system**

*Soi Son* played in the *Phrommas* repertoire employs a group of pitches, which is different to the way it is used in the *phleng ruang* (เพลงเรือ) version. Figure 5.64 shows different levels of pitches used in two different usages of *Soi Son*.

Figure 5.64 Different keys used in *Soi Son* for different usages



*Soi Son* in the *phleng ruang* version employs a higher group of pitches whereas in the *Phrommas* repertoire they are lower. There are two factors that make *Soi Son* in the *Phrommas* repertoire different. Firstly, all pieces in the *Phrommas* repertoire require a smooth connection of key level. The piece played before *Soi Son* in the *Phrommas* repertoire finishes at a single pitch, which has to be related to the note being started in *Soi Son*. Secondly, the use of the vocal part in *Soi Son* requires a lower pitch to enable a group of female singers to perform, and this becomes the main differentiation between *Soi Son* in *phleng ruang* (a series of non-vocal pieces) and *Soi Son* in the *Phrommas* repertoire.<sup>284</sup>

### ***Soi Son* reflecting theatrical usage through its unique musical characteristics**

*Soi Son* manifests not only how music is played differently in the theatre but also shows its unique musical characteristics through specific musical techniques. Hence, this section integrates the musical characteristics related to theatrical usage and the unique musical characteristics of *Soi Son*.

*Soi Son* is played with interaction between vocal and instrumental parts known as *khiao* (ເື່ອນຳ). This musical technique is used to emphasise the lyrics that talk about cooperative and interactive dance movements by male and female angels (Figure 5.62), and musical attributes appearing in the vocal and instrumental parts are used to represent interactive dance movements in the narrative. In places the musical sentence is divided into smaller phrases to be played by different instrumental groups. The ways

<sup>284</sup> Boonchuay Sovat, interviewed by Suchada Sowat, Jan14, 2016.

that two groups play alternately are named differently depending on the interaction involved; three of those are *luk lo* (ลูกลื้อ), *luk khat* (ลูกซัด) and *luam* (เหลื่อม).

*Luk lo* (ลูกลื้อ) is the way that the leader-instrumental group plays one phrase and the follower-instrumental group plays the same phrase to imitate the previous phrase (see Figure 5.65 with identification of *luk lo* in *Soi Son* notation; video track 16, 0.48 – 0.57). In contrast, *luk khat* (ลูกซัด) refers to where the leader-instrumental group plays one phrase and the follower-instrumental group plays a different musical phrase afterwards as seen in Figure 5.65 with identification of *luk khat* in *Soi Son* notation; (video track 16, 0.10 – 0.14 and 0.20 -0.29).

*Luam* (เหลื่อม) means ‘overlapping’ and this term is applied to musical terminology. The characteristics of *luam* (เหลื่อม) refer to the features where two instrumental groups play the same musical phrase in an overlapped position; the leader-instrumental group will start playing a particular musical phrase and the follower-instrumental group will later start the same phrase with a slight time delay to imitate the first group and both groups overlap each other. This can be seen in Figure 5.65 with identification of *luam* in *Soi Son* notation (video track 16, 1.51 – 2.08).

The notation shows the simplest version for the musical instruments because the part of a particular musical instrument can be decorated and adapted based on the individual techniques of the musicians. In other words, there will be some parts of the notation that are a little bit different to what is actually played in the video track because the notation intentionally shows the simplest version of the instrumental part to demonstrate the interaction between the instrumental parts and also its relationship with the vocal part. For example, in bar 23, what is heard in the video track is the personal style of the *ranat ek* player where the *ranat ek*'s performance is decorated by making particular notes more technical, whereas what is actually notated is a skeleton or the simplest version of this part for the *ranat ek*.

Figure 5.65 *Soi Son* notation

$\text{♩} = \text{approx } 55$       -      +      -      + etc.

tang      chab      er      ra

Vocal part

Inst(1): Ranat Ek

Inst(2): Khong Wong Yai

$\text{♩} = \text{approx } 55$

Taphon

5      bam      eu      er      ram

Vocal part

Inst1: Ranat Ek

Inst2: Khong Wong Yai

Taphon

2

9      fon      thot      kon      eu

Vocal part

Inst1: Ranat Ek

Inst2: Khong Wong Yai

Taphon

*Luk khat*

*Luk khat*

The image displays a musical score for 'Soi Son' notation, consisting of three systems of music. Each system includes a vocal line and three instrumental lines: Ranat Ek, Khong Wong Yai, and Taphon. The tempo is marked as approximately 55 beats per minute. The first system has lyrics 'tang chab er ra' with pitch accents (-, +, -, +) above. The second system has lyrics 'bam eu er ram' and includes a boxed section labeled 'Luk khat' with a blue diagonal line. The third system has lyrics 'fon thot kon eu' and also includes a boxed 'Luk khat' section. The Khong Wong Yai part in the boxed sections has pitch markings (-, +, -) below the notes. A page number '2' is located between the second and third systems.

12 krid krai er sai

Vocal part

Inst1: Ranat Ek

Inst2: Khong Wong Yai

Taphon

17 khwa rai riang er khiang 3

Vocal part

Inst1: Ranat Ek

Inst2: Khong Wong Yai

Taphon

*Luk khat*

21 khom eu er

Vocal part

Inst1: Ranat Ek

Inst2: Khong Wong Yai

Taphon

*Luk lo*

4

24 pra som ta er

Vocal part

Inst1: Ranat Ek

Inst2: Khong Wong Yai

Taphon

*Luk lo*

27 liao lai khwai khwa er

Vocal part

Inst1: Ranat Ek

Inst2: Khong Wong Yai

Taphon

*Luk khat*

31 pen tha. thang er son chang 5

Vocal part

Inst1: Ranat Ek

Inst2: Khong Wong Yai

Taphon

36 wa pra thao eu er

Vocal part

Inst1: Ranat Ek

Inst2: Khong Wong Yai

Taphon

*Luk lo*

6

40 khlao khlong liao

Vocal part

Inst1: Ranat Ek

Inst2: Khong Wong Yai

Taphon

*Luk khat*

43 lot sod khlong er

Vocal part

Inst1: Ranat Ek

Inst2: Khong Wong Yai

Taphon

*Luam*



47 ————— pai tam wang er

Vocal part

Inst1: Ranat Ek

Inst2: Khong Wong Yai

Taphon

*Luam*

51 ————— wong wian hian han er

Vocal part

Inst1: Ranat Ek

Inst2: Khong Wong Yai

Taphon

*Luam*

56 ————— kan kang er

Vocal part

Inst1: Ranat Ek

Inst2: Khong Wong Yai

Taphon

*Luk khat*

59 pen khu khu yu klang

Vocal part

Inst1: Ranat Ek *Luk khat*

Inst2: Khong Wong Yai

Taphon

62 er am phon 9

Vocal part

Inst1: Ranat Ek

Inst2: Khong Wong Yai

Taphon

*Soi Son* is a piece which not only comprises interesting Thai musical techniques within instrumental parts seen through *luk lo*, *luk khat*, and *luam* but also embraces remarkable musical features reflecting the relationship between vocal and instrumental parts as seen in *khlae*. Interestingly, the representation of all musical features has shown both direct and indirect expressions of music related to the theatrical meaning. All attributes make *Soi Son* unique and it is still regarded as one of the emblematic symbols of the *Phrommas* repertoire.

#### 5.3.4.4 *He Klom Chang* (เห่กล่อมช้าง)

##### **Category of the piece**

*He Klom Chang* (เห่กล่อมช้าง) is an ancient Thai piece only used in the *Phrommas* repertoire. *He Klom Chang* literally means song to soothe the elephant or to make the elephant peaceful. *He Klom Chang* employs the same name as the song used in the royal court ritual for soothing an extraordinary elephant – an elephant considered auspicious and a symbol of the greatness of the king.<sup>285</sup> The word *he* (เห่) refers to a kind of slowly elaborated vocalisation which uses refined decoration. In the *Phrommas* repertoire, *He Klom Chang* is used for the scene in which Phra Lak and his monkey army enjoy the beautiful angel dance in the air whilst unaware of the danger.

##### **Medium**

*He Klom Chang* is performed by the whole *piphat* ensemble (no drums) with singing sung alternately with the instrumental part. In the notation, the parts that are notated include the instrumental part represented by the *khong wong yai*, vocal part (solo) sung alternately with a freely rhythmic style with no rhythmic pattern from the drum, and the *ching*, which is used to give the beats to the piece. *He Klom Chang* conventionally uses a female singer to sing the piece (Figure 5.66; video track 17).

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<sup>285</sup> Montri Tramot, “He Klom Chang” in *Phleng He in Thai Culture*, Jetcharin Jirasantitham, *Journal Arts Klong Hok*, (2014):178-199.

Figure 5.66 *He Klom Chang* notation

♩ = 45

Vocal (cycle 1)  
 mua\_\_\_\_\_ nan\_\_\_\_\_ phra lak phu

Vocal part

6 song sak lae song\_\_\_\_\_ son\_\_\_\_\_ thang\_\_\_\_\_ phuak pha la

Vocal part

12 kon\_\_\_\_\_ du ram fon\_\_\_\_\_ bon me\_\_\_\_\_ kha

Vocal part

18 Inst (cycle 1)

Khong Wong Yai

Vocal (cycle 2)  
 mai\_\_\_\_\_ wa\_\_\_\_\_ su rin thon\_\_\_\_\_ su ra ap son\_\_\_\_\_ thoe

Vocal part

33 han\_\_\_\_\_ sa\_\_\_\_\_ phra\_\_\_\_\_ phloen\_\_\_\_\_ cha roen ta

Vocal part

39 \_\_\_\_\_ thang phon sa wa\_\_\_\_\_ wa non\_\_\_\_\_

Vocal part

44 phrai

Vocal part

Inst (cycle 2)

Khong Wong Yai

## Structure

*He Klom Chang* includes only one section; the instrumental part plays alternately with the vocal part. In other words, the melody of the instrumental parts played twice are the same but they are played with different styles as seen in Figure 5.66 (Instrumental part cycles 1 and 2). Similarly, the vocal part also has one section but will be sung twice with changed lyrics in the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> cycle. The notation shows only the first set of

lyrics (1<sup>st</sup> cycle). The lyrics of *He Klom Chang* (Figure 5.67) include two units of *kap yani sabet*.

### Pitch system

*He Klom Chang* is also played on *thang nai* in the *Phrommas* repertoire.

Figure 5.67 *He Klom Chang*'s lyrics

(Vocal part: 1<sup>st</sup> cycle)

mua nan

เมื่อนั้น

Phra Lak phu song sak lae song son

พระลักษมณ์ผู้ทรงศักดิ์แลทรงศร

thang phuak pha la kon

ทั้งพวกพลากร

du ram fon bon me kha

ดูรำฟ้อนบนเมฆา

(At the moment, Phra Lak and his monkey army see the angel dance in the sky)

(Vocal part: 2<sup>nd</sup> cycle)

mai wa su rin thon

หมายความว่าสุรินทร

su ra ap son thoe han sa

สุรอัปสรเธอพระราชา

phra phloen cha roen ta

พระเพลินเจริญตา

thang phon sa wa wa non phrai

ทั้งพลสรวาวานรไพร

(They think that God Indra and all his angel troops have come to dance to bless them; Phra Lak and the monkeys really enjoy the angel dance.)

### **Musical characteristics related to theatrical usages and specific musical features**

While *He Klom Chang* is sung, in that moment, Phra Lak and his monkeys are falling into a reverie because of the gorgeous spectacle in the air. At the same time, Inthorachit is trying to seek a chance to snipe Phra Lak and his army in the battlefield while they are unaware of danger.

The musical features within *He Klom Chan*, which obviously reflects a sense of falling into the reverie, is manifested through the use of a free rhythmic pattern. All musicians need to listen carefully to each other in order to play the piece because there is no fixed rhythmic pattern as a guideline. Lumyong Sawat comments that the musicians ‘already have the melody of *He Klom Chang* in their mind; when they play this piece, they control the speed and rhythm by non-verbal communication through the music they play’.<sup>286</sup> Both experience and a sophisticated understanding of musical performance are required to play *He Klom Chang* properly.

A noticeable musical technique used in *He Klom Chang* is called *kro* (กรอ) (Trilling), which is the musical technique for percussion and plucked instruments used to extend the duration of a pitch. The use of *kro* conventionally represents theatrical aspects related to the narrative. Nittaya Rusamaipointed out that ‘there is a technique called ‘*kro tit*’ (กรอติด), which literally means continued; this musical technique is adapted from the regular *kro* by Natthaphong Sawat, the senior Thai music master who directs the musical accompaniment for the Royal Khon performance s. His intention to use *kro Tit* in *He Klom Chang* is to represent the way that the angels are drifting in the air and the moment that Phra Lak and his monkey army fall unconscious due to the gorgeous dance by using continued sounds of notes in the pieces with the *kro* technique’.<sup>287</sup>

The vocalisation used in *He Klom Chang* is directly based on the individual ability of the singer; *He Klom Chang* always uses a solo vocalist. Within the Thai music community, the vocalist who who is able to sing *He Klom Chang*, must have much experience in Thai classical singing practice because the piece is based on a free

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<sup>286</sup> Lumyong Sawat, interviewed by Suchada Sawat, Jan 15, 2016.

<sup>287</sup> Nittaya Rusamai, interviewed by Suchada Sawat, Apr 13, 2018.

rhythmic pattern and it requires well-trained vocal skills to produce the requisite quality of voice.

Vocally, the soloist is required in *He Klom Chang*. The continuation of breathing for singing is considered important for *He Klom Chang* because each vocal sentence requires a long duration of breathing for the voice to remain consistent.<sup>288</sup>

Figure 5.68 The length of breath applied to singing in *He Klom Chang*

Figure 5.68 shows two musical systems. The first system is for 'Vocal (round 1)' in 2/4 time, with a tempo marking of ♩ = 35. The vocal line has lyrics: 'mua nan phra lak phu'. The Khong Wong Yai accompaniment is shown below. A bracket labeled 'Continued breathing' spans the duration of the vocal line. The second system starts at measure 6 and has lyrics: 'song sak lae song son thang phuak pha la'. It also features a 'Continued breathing' bracket over the vocal line and the Khong Wong Yai accompaniment.

Figure 5.68 demonstrates where the singer should maintain their voice throughout the sentence to make a smooth sound in the piece along with a suitable pulse for breathing.

Even though *He Klom Chang* employs a free rhythmic pattern, there is still an agreement in speed established within the theatre. The speed of singing matters because it also controls the velocity of Phra Lak's solo dance; both singing and dance have to be synchronised. This practice requires great experience from both the vocalist and the dancer performing as Phra Lak. The speed of *He Klom Chang* has not been written in the notation but it is established within the performance well beyond the trained experience of the singer and dancer.

<sup>288</sup> Pattanee Promsombat, interviewed by Suchada Sowat, Feb 2, 2016.

A free rhythmic pattern is the prominent feature of *He Klom Chang*, which is the crucial factor, which shapes the musical characteristics of both instrumental and vocal parts. Importantly, the meaning of the piece based on the lyrics and the narrative are the vital key, which characterise musical practice, including the use of solo voice and the *kro* (Trilling) technique.

#### 5.3.4.5 *He Choet Ching* (เห่เชิดฉิ่ง)

##### **Category**

*He Choet Ching* is the piece in the umbrella of *Choet* (see previous analysis of *Choet*). *He Choet Ching* is a combination of two words: *He* (เห่) and *Choet Ching* (เชิดฉิ่ง); *he* refers to a kind of singing with slow movement and refined vocal techniques and *Choet Ching* signifies the piece *Choet Ching*, which is actually the *Choet* piece played with the *ching* as a rhythmic pattern.

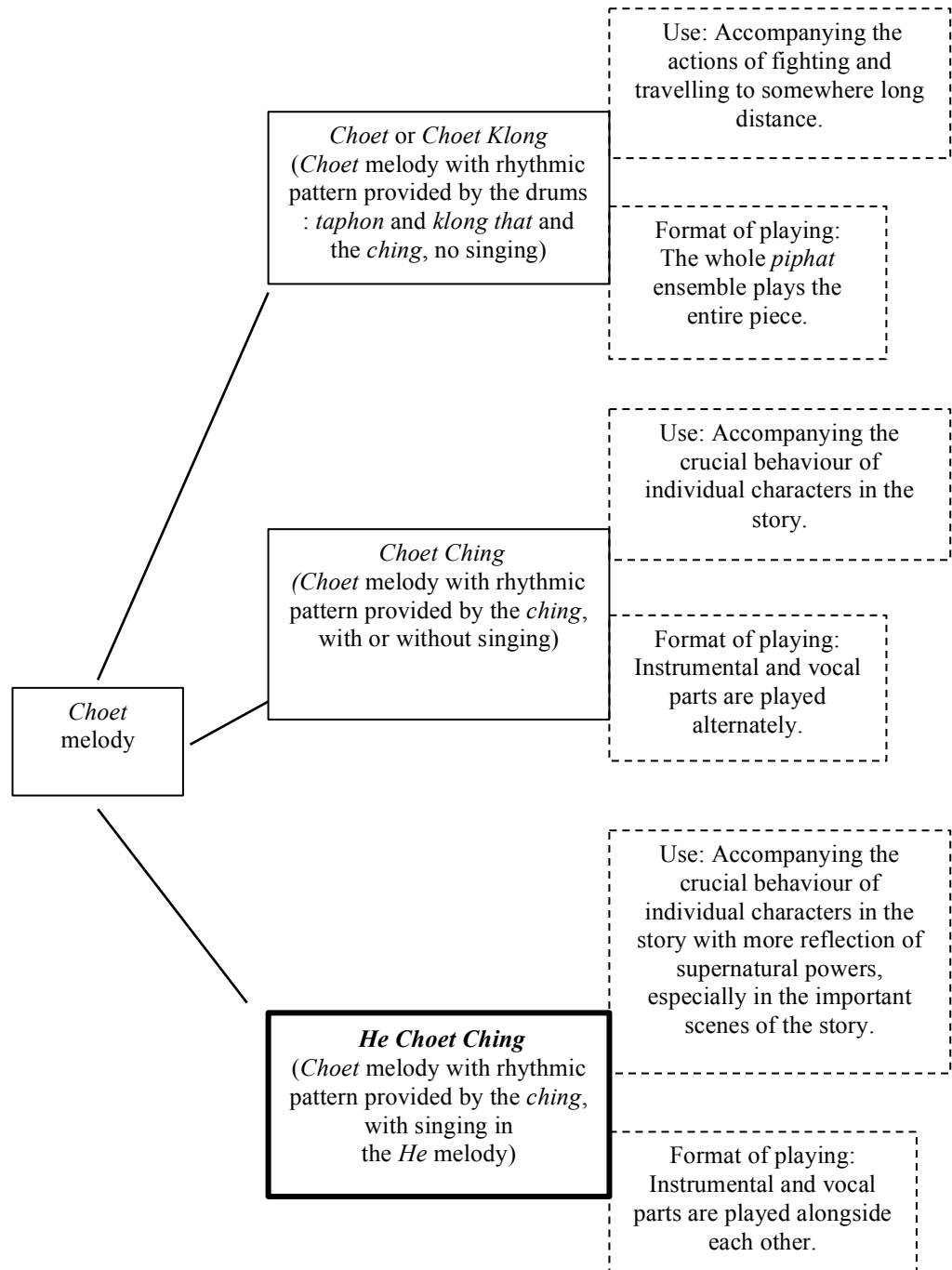
In the family of *Choet*, there are two main types often used for theatre, including *Choet Klong* (เชิดกลอง) (*Choet* with the drums: *taphon* and *klong that*) and *Choet Ching* (เชิดฉิ่ง) (*Choet* with the *ching*, a pair of small cup cymbals). However, *Choet Klong* (เชิดกลอง) has been known as *Choet* (เชิด) whereas *Choet Ching* (เชิดฉิ่ง) has always been called *Choet Ching* (เชิดฉิ่ง). *Choet Ching* is categorised as a *naphat* piece but its meaning and usage is different to *Choet*. The melody of *Choet* or *Choet Klong* and *Choet Ching* is the same but differences between the two are the use of drums and *ching* as well as singing. While *Choet* has no vocal part, *Choet Ching* can be either vocal or non-vocal but there has to be only the *ching* which gives the rhythmic pattern to the piece.

While *Choet* is used to accompany the action of fighting and travelling, *Choet Ching* is used to accompany the particular action of the individual dancers who perform the important characters. The format of playing *Choet Ching* includes both vocal and instrumental parts, which are played alternately. *He Choet Ching* is conventionally used to reflect a sense of supernatural power within the narrative. In *He Choet Ching* the vocal and instrumental parts are played along side each other.



Figure 5.69 demonstrates the differences between *Choet*, *Choet Ching* and *He Choet Ching* based on the family of *Choet*.

Figure 5.69 The relationship between *Choet*, *Choet Ching*, and *He Choet Ching*.



## Medium

*He Choet Ching* is performed by the whole *piphat* ensemble with vocalists singing elaborately. The piece starts with the instrumental part playing an introduction to *Choet* and then the vocal part begins whilst the music changes from *Choet song chan* (เชิดสองชั้น) to *Choet chan diao* (เชิดชั้นเดียว). Instrumentally, *Choet Ching* starts with the whole *piphat* ensemble but when the vocal part begins, there is only the *ranat ek* (treble xylophone) played alongside the voice. However, this formation for playing *Choet Ching* can be changed depending on the demands of the music director: in the section in which vocal and instrumental parts play alongside each other, there is either the whole *piphat* ensemble or a single *ranat ek* to play along with the vocal part. Vocally, *Choet Ching* employs both *ton bot* (ต้นบท) (a solo) and *luk khu* (ลูกคู่) (chorus); both groups work interchangeably associated with the structure of the lyrics (see notation in Figure 5.70; video track 18). In the notation of *He Choet Ching*, there is a voice, a *ranat ek* (to show the prominent melodic part played alongside the singing), the basic melody from the *khong wong yai*, and the drum part (the *taphon* and *klong that*) to show where the *Choet* melody changes its rate of motion.

Figure 5.70 *He Choet Ching* notation

Ching etc.

$\text{♩} = \text{approx } 65$

Ranat Ek

Khong Wong Yai

7

Ranat Ek

Khong Wong Yai

11

Ranat Ek

Khong Wong Yai

14 **poco accel.**

Ranat Ek

Khong Wong Yai

17

Ranat Ek

Khong Wong Yai

*Ton Bot (solo)*

21

rit.  
1

er

Vocal part

Ranat Ek

Khong Wong Yai

25

eay \_\_\_\_\_ phat\_ sai \_\_\_\_\_

Vocal part

Ranat Ek

29

mai kha men \_\_\_\_\_ khen\_ khiao \_\_\_\_\_

Vocal part

Ranat Ek

33 — nao\_ niao duay kamlang

Vocal part

Ranat Ek

37 ang sa

Vocal part

Ranat Ek

*Luk Khu (chorus)*

41 — nao\_ niao

Vocal part

Ranat Ek

45 duay\_ kam lang\_2 ang sa

Vocal part

Ranat Ek

48 eay er

Vocal part

Ranat Ek

51 eay sang ket trong

Vocal part

Ranat Ek

55 ong phra lak a nu cha

Vocal part

Ranat Ek

59 a su ra ko lan pai than dai

Vocal part

Ranat Ek

63 eay

Vocal part

Ranat Ek

*Luk Khu* (chorus)

67 a su ra ko lan pai than dai

Vocal part

Ranat Ek

71 eay

Vocal part

Ranat Ek

(The rest of instruments, *Taphon* and *Klong That* start)

75

Ranat Ek

Khong Wong Yai

Taphon

Klong That

78

Ranat Ek

Khong Wong Yai

Taphon

Klong That

81

Ranat Ek

Khong Wong Yai

Taphon

Klong That

## Structure

The structure of *He Choet Ching* can be divided into two segments, including the instrumental part and vocal part. The instrumental part employs the melody of *Choet* with the rhythmic pattern from the *ching* whereas the vocal part is sung based on the *He* (เห) melody.

The text of *He Choet Ching* describes the action of Inthorachit who aims the *Phrommas* arrow to kill Phra Lak while he enjoys the beautiful angel dance. The pattern of the lyrics is *klon bot lakhon* (กลอนบทละคร) in which there are two main lines *kham* (คำ หรือ คำกลอน) based on the *klon bot lakhon* structure (Figure 5.71).



Figure 5.71 *He Choet Ching's* lyrics

*kham* 1<sup>st</sup> (line 1)

*ton bot* (solo)

phat sai mai kha men khen khiao

พาดสายหมายเขม่นเข่นเขี้ยว

Setting a bow carefully with angry concentration, using all the strength of his back.

*luk khu* (chorus)

nao niao duay kam lang ang sa

นำเหนี่ยวด้วยกำลังองศา

*kham* 2<sup>nd</sup> (line 2)

*ton bot* (solo)

sangket trong ong Phra Lak anucha

สังเกตตรงองค์พระลักษมณ์อนุชา

Intentionally pointing at Phra Lak, then the demon suddenly shoots.

*luk khu* (chorus)

asura ko lan pai than dai

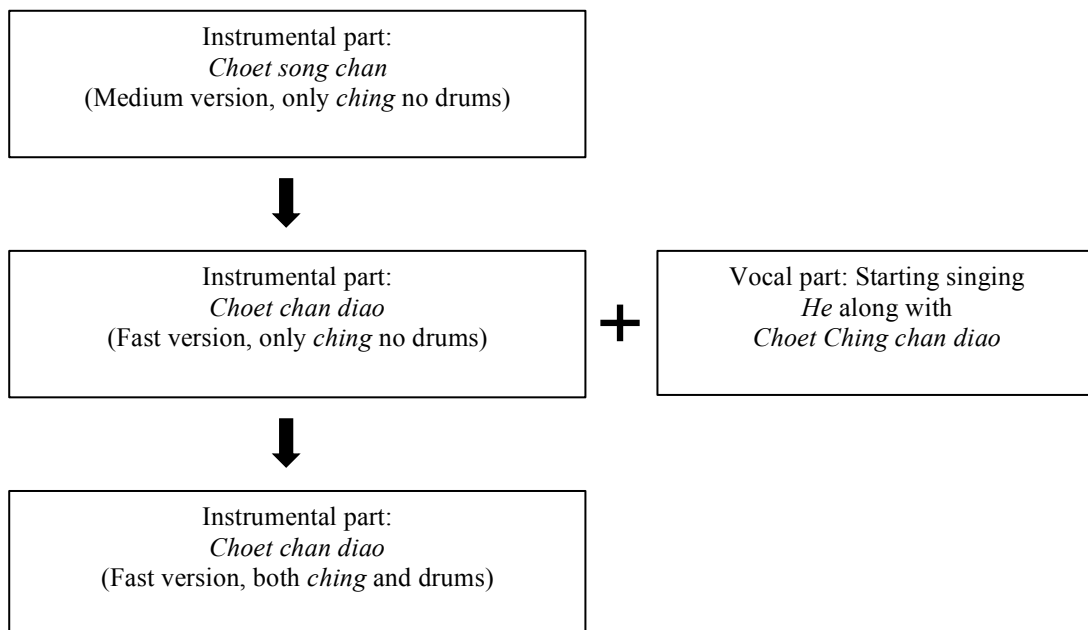
อสูรก็ลั่นไปทันใด

In Figure 5.71, there are two groups of vocalists: the *Ton bot* ตันบท (soloist) and *luk khu* ลูกคู่ (chorus). This formation is applied to *He Choet Ching* based on the structure of lyrics: *ton bot* (solo) starts singing the first sentence of the lyrics and the following sentence is sung by *luk khu* (chorus).

### **Musical characteristics and specific feature related to theatrical usage**

The format of playing *He Choet Ching* starts with *Choet Ching* followed by *Choet Klong* or *Choet*. In other words, when the vocal part finishes, there are drums (the *taphon* and *klong that*), which jump into the ongoing *Choet* melody and it automatically becomes *Choet* or *Choet Klong* (*Choet* with drums) as shown in Figure 5.72.

Figure 5.72 Format of playing *He Choet Ching*



The different uses of rhythmic instruments within *Choet* represent different meanings associated with the narrative. As the story talks about the moment in which Inthorachit aims the *Phrommas* arrow at Phra Lak, and how he needs to use much concentration, the instrumental and vocal parts play alongside each other, but only the *ranat ek* and *ching* are used. Theatrically, this performance practice helps the audience to not only hear the lyrics clearly but also represents a sense of concentration and intention to do something with supernatural power.<sup>289</sup>

In contrast, when the vocal part finishes, the instrumental part has not yet finished; they keep playing the *Choet* melody with the addition of the drums, *taphon* and *klong that*; *He Choet Ching* then automatically becomes *Choet Klong* (*Choet* with drums). Interestingly, the arrival of the drums in the piece manifests the theatrical meaning; the consistent beats from the *klong that* metaphors the manner of the arrow's flight to Phra Lak (this can be heard in video track 18 from 1.58 – 2.10). *He Choet*

<sup>289</sup> Pattanee Promsombat, interviewed by Suchada Sowat, Feb 2, 2016.

*Ching* thus represents the moment that Inthorachit points the arrow whereas *Choet* manifests the action of flight through the drum beats (see notation in Figure 5.70).<sup>290</sup>

### Specific musical characteristics

Within *He Choet Ching*, the relationship between vocal and instrumental parts, is one of the prominent features within the piece. The way that vocal and instrumental parts play alongside each other is called ‘*lamlong*’ (ลำลอง), which literally means to be casual. Each part plays its own melody with no restriction of *luk tok* (ลูกตก) (the destination) as occurs in *khlao* (เคล้า) in *Soi Son* and *Thayae Klong Yon*. The process of *lamlong* can be seen through the musical features in *He Choet Ching*; the instrumental part plays the melody of *Choet Ching* whereas the vocalists sing the *He* melody with the lyrics alongside each other.<sup>291</sup> There are no fixed notes to relate the two parts together but they are expected to play in the same key, and the singer must start singing on the right note based on *thang nai* (ทางใน), which is the main key for playing music for *khon* performance. The note used as the starting point of the vocal part is located at the 13<sup>th</sup> gong of the *khong wong yai* and there are a group of notes employed through the *He Choet Ching* melody as seen in Figure 5.73.

Figure 5.73 The first starting vocal note to *He Choet Ching*

*Tom Bot* (solo)

Vocal part

Ranat Ek

Khong Wong Yai

Taphon

21

rit.  
1

er

<sup>290</sup> Boonchuay Sovat, interviewed by Suchada Sowat, Jan 14, 2016.

<sup>291</sup> Tramot, *Duriyangkhasatthai*, 43.

The vocal practice used in *He Choet Ching* requires an experienced singer because they need to manage several tasks at the same time: 1) thinking of which note to start singing the *He* melody on while they are hearing the *Choet Ching* melody from the instrumental part, 2) considering when they should start their singing along with the *Choet* melody, 3) controlling their voice production and refined techniques, and 4) relating their singing to the dance. Hence, *He Choet Ching* is considered as one of the most complicated vocal pieces within the *Phrommas* repertoire.

The way that instrumental and vocal parts play along side each other flexibly is the symbolisation of theatrical meaning. Boonchuay Sovat suggests that *He Choet Ching* is the contradiction of Inthorachit's feelings. He also stated that 'the mix between bravery and anxiety occur at the same time, while Inthorachit is in the form of God Indra is aiming the *Phrommas* arrow at Phra Lak, there is a fear paradoxically appearing in his mind'.<sup>292</sup> The process of *lamlong* thus appears to manifest theatrical meaning indirectly. This though is one of the stimulating aspects within the musical characteristics associated with the theatrical meaning and individual experience of the musician.

*He Choet Ching* is an example of music used for theatre, which demonstrates the relationship between music and theatre in complicated aspects, including 1) direct meaning through the literal meaning of the lyrics, 2) indirect meaning associated with themes seen through the use of the *ching* and of drums to describe the different actions of the *Phrommas* arrow (pointing and shooting the *Phrommas* arrow), and 3) the complicated theatrical symbolisation of the paradoxical feeling of the character seen through the contrary accompaniment between vocal and instrumental parts seen through the *lamlong* technique associated with the narrative of the *Phrommas* episode. *He Choet Ching* is perhaps a multi-reflective example to understand the most complex level of the relationship between music and theatre in the *Phrommas* repertoire.

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<sup>292</sup> Boonchuay Sovat, interviewed by Suchada Sowat, Jan 14, 2016.

All the pieces considered in this section have shown two facets. On the one hand, the process of theatrical reflection includes both direct and indirect theatrical expression. While the direct manifestation is shown through the lyrics of the vocals, indirect theatrical expression embraces complicated additional layers. A variety of musical motions are expressed metaphorically such as the extraordinary rhythmic pattern (as seen in *Chom Talat*), the use of a particular drum pattern influenced by court procession (as seen in *Thayae Klong Yon*), the interaction within instrumental parts (as seen in *Soi Son*), and different versions of *Choet* reflecting different moments within the narrative (as seen in *He Choet Ching*). On the other hand within those indirect theatrical expressions certain musical techniques are established to be used within the *Phrommas* repertoire, especially *He Klom Chang*, which is only performed here. Hence, complicated layers of relationships between music and theatre are found, together with special musical attributes, which underpin the outstanding musical characteristics of the *Phrommas* repertoire.

## 5.4 Conclusion

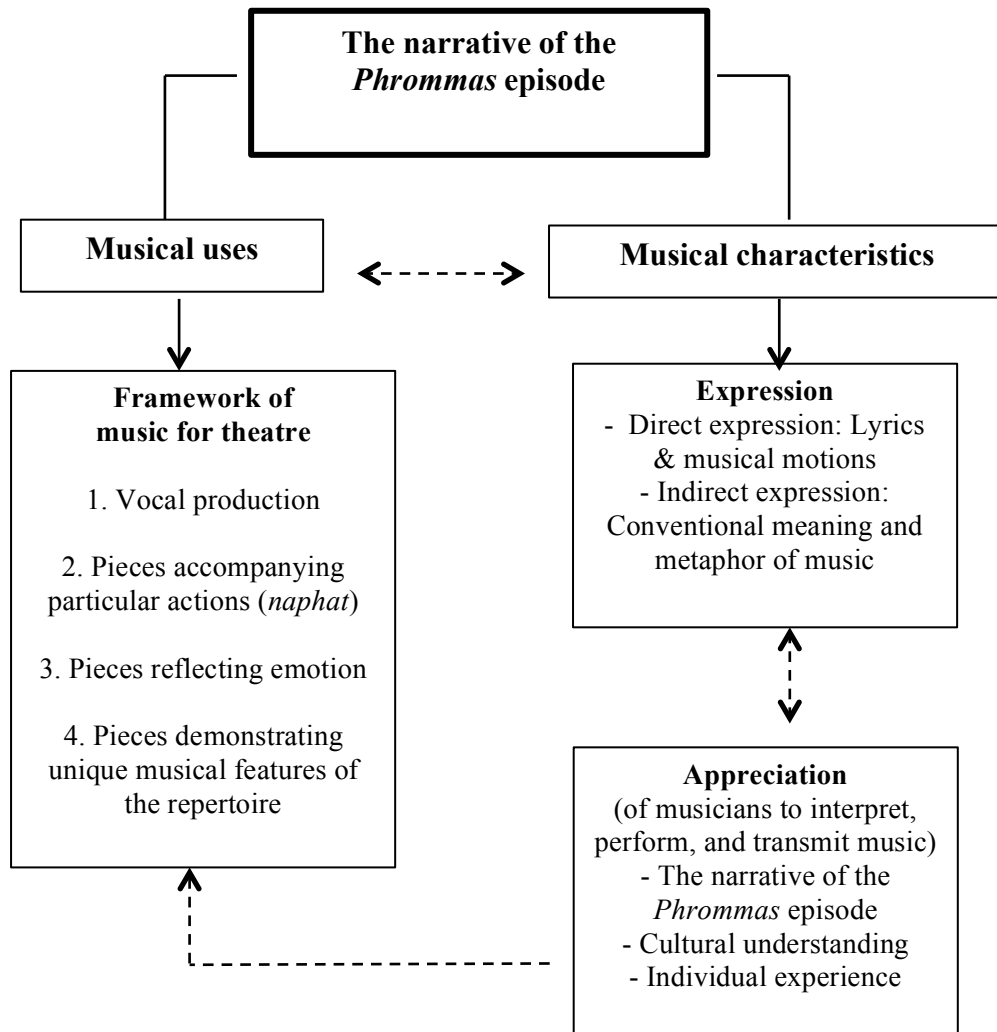
In conclusion, from all the details of particular pieces that have formed the focus of this chapter, one can see how there is a network of complicated relationships within the area of music for theatre as shown through the music in the *Phrommas* repertoire. The communication of the narrative of the *Phrommas* repertoire plays the important role in shaping two aspects: musical usage and musical characteristics, and both depend on the directional guideline of the narrative of the *Phrommas* episode.

On the one hand, the musical usage within the *Phrommas* repertoire is based on conventional meaning and use as well as the musical practices seen in sections 5.1 (structure and significance) and 5.2 (development of the analytical framework). These concepts are integrated to construct four crucial domains to understand music for theatre, including 1) vocal production which focuses on communicating the narrative through lyrics and various types of vocalisation, 2) pieces accompanying particular actions, which contain a number of *naphat* pieces based on conventional meaning, 3) pieces reflecting emotion, which emphasise expressing emotion in the narrative

through various musical attributes, and 4) pieces demonstrating unique musical features of the *Phrommas* repertoire, which underpin complicated theatrical representation.

On the other hand, musical characteristics embrace two related concepts, which interact with each other. First is the concept of expression, which includes both direct and indirect theatrical expressions within music; a direct manifestation is reflected through lyrics (the literal meaning) and some musical motions (rhythmic and melodic attributes), whilst indirect reflection is interpreted and represented based on conventional meaning and a metaphorical application of music to the narrative. Secondly, the concept of appreciation, which requires both cultural understanding (language, poetry, religion, literature, and local practices etc.) and individual experience to interpret, perform and pass down music based on the direction of the narrative. Figure 5.74 suggests the way in which all the elements discussed here interact with each other, to create the complex network of meaning associated with the music of the *Phrommas* repertoire.

Figure 5.74 The music: musical usage and musical characteristics



## Chapter 6

### *Khon* music and the *Phrommas* in modern Bangkok

#### 6.1 Introduction

*Khon* is an umbrella term that includes two distinct aspects of the same phenomenon: the music itself and *khon* in performance, and the substance of *khon* music cannot be understood without looking at the related elements of *khon* performance practice. In Chapter 2 the history of *khon* and its music within different Thai historical periods was discussed, in order to explore its origin and development. This chapter discusses the current state of *khon* music – and in particular the *Phrommas* repertoire – within modern Bangkok from a number of different angles. It will begin with a discussion of the broader perception of *khon*, factors that facilitate its current survival, and its popularity in contemporary society through its on-going performance and transmission.

When Thai people use the word ‘*khon*’, it seems likely that they imagine a kind of traditional masked dance performing art. From online discussion with audiences about their views of *khon*, *khon* is understood to be a performance where dancers wear masks and memorable characters include Hanuman (monkey), Thossakan (demon), and Phra Ram (human).<sup>293</sup> On the other hand, when Thai classical musicians and dancers talk about *khon*, they refer to a refined performing art, which embraces classical-artistic practice, craft and knowledge and which requires high skills of performance in both music and dance. This elaborate element of *khon* can be seen through its dance performance, musical performance, literature, and the refined costumes that are produced through traditional handicraft, with the performers of *khon* being dancers and musicians who have been trained as professional performers by the special secondary school for performing arts and the conservatory. These differing views come from two different perspectives: the performer on the one hand and the broader audiences. On the other hand, apart from these two different aspects, there is another group of people who

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<sup>293</sup>‘What do you think about *Khon*?’, *Pantip Network*, May 9, 2014, accessed Mar 2, 2017, <https://pantip.com/topic/32026698>



have a particular passion for *khon* performance and learn it outside of the conservatory system, and they will be discussed in section 6.3.3.

It appears that the dance aspect of *khon* is more conspicuous within culture than the musical elements, even though they obviously exist together. For the general public, even though *khon* music is one of the elements of *khon* performance, it seems to have been neglected because *khon* dance is recognised more than the music.<sup>294</sup> However, *khon* music is well known by particular groups of people such as *khon* dancers and musicians as well as particular audiences who have a personal interest in music used for *khon*.

In terms of the *Phrommas* episode, as mentioned in Chapter 3, it could be argued that the story of the Ramakian epic has a much greater involvement in the perception of Thai people than *khon* more generally. In other words, those who have gone through the educational system should have learnt at least two or three episodes from the story of the Ramakian, and will know the main characters, and which characters are represented as ‘good’ or ‘bad’.<sup>295</sup> The Ramakian epic is taught within the educational system, especially at secondary level, to educate students not only on the ancient Thai language found there, but also the moral precepts of the story. On the other hand, professional Thai classical musicians and dancers are expected to know the entire story of the Ramakian and how the various episodes are applied in *khon* performance.

The existence of the *Phrommas* repertoire can mostly nowadays be found within *khon* performances, but the *Phrommas* repertoire itself can also be performed as a piece of music in public events without any theatrical element, and it remains one of the most famous musical repertoires. Some of the musicians will have learnt this repertoire from the conservatories, and it is they who have brought the *Phrommas* repertoire to be played in non-theatrical contexts. However, as the main focus of the *Phrommas* repertoire in this research is its application to the theatre, the main discussion here will focus on theatrical, and related, contexts.

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<sup>294</sup> Pantip, “the royal *Khon* performance” accessed May 9, 2017. <https://pantip.com/tag/โขน>

<sup>295</sup>Ministry of Education, “The Basic Education Core Curriculum B.E. 2551 (A.D. 2008)”. <http://www.skn.ac.th/kan2551.htm>.

The status of *khon* and its music is dependent upon factors such as patronage, transmission, and the occasions where *khon* is performed. While in the past it was a high-ranking performing art originating in and used only in court functions, it gradually became one of the symbols of Thai cultural heritage comprising a refined performing art influenced by court culture but also used apart from its original functions. Sirichaicharn Fachamroon observes that ‘even though *khon* is nowadays performed outside the court, it still has the elaborate features and traditions of a court art within its performance; the changeable situation is that we may find it in broader places not only in the court’.<sup>296</sup> This suggests that *khon* and its music is still considered a high-ranked performing art but it can be more approachable for a broader public.

As *khon* and its music is considered one of the cultural fine arts, it is therefore preserved and supported by organisations such as the Fine Arts Department, the College of Dramatic Arts, the Buditpatanasilpa Institute as well as royal patronage, and the continuing existence of *khon* performance and music is facilitated by these factors. The current state of *khon* can be found by looking in the conservatories and the special secondary school for performing arts, at national performances, and particular events held by those who appreciate this kind of performing art, as well as at the Royal Khon performance s. This situation reflects the diversity of *khon*’s existence in current Bangkok, which will be explored further in the next part of this chapter.

It seems, therefore, that the state of *khon* music and the *Phrommas* are tied up with complicated relationships that embrace the involvement of various institutes alongside the broader public. Furthermore, it is difficult to separate *khon* dance, *khon* music, and the *khon* narrative from each other. To understand the state of *khon* music, it is necessary to know its performance situation and to examine the factors that modulate, change, and influence its continuation within current society. Thus, in this chapter *khon* music for the *Phrommas* repertoire will be described along with *khon* performance as a holistic concept under a number of different headings: 1) the structural elements of its existence to show the related factors that bring about the continuation of *khon* performance, 2) its current existence, which is a discussion of particular

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<sup>296</sup> Sirichaicharn Fachamroon, interviewed by Suchada Sowat, Jan 20, 2017.

organisations in which *khon* performance and its music are located, and 3) dialogue on the survival of the *Phrommas* repertoire and its future.

## **6.2 The structural elements of existence**

There are a number of reinforcements that support and facilitate *khon* music's status in current Bangkok and these will be discussed in this section. The existence of *khon* and its music is associated with three factors: 1) government support, 2) the educational system, and 3) royal patronage.

### **6.2.1 Government support**

As *khon* and its music is a kind of traditional performance passed on from one generation to the next, the Thai government considers Thai classical performing arts as a national cultural heritage that should be preserved. One of the roles of the Ministry of Culture is to deal with both tangible and intangible cultural heritage in which Thai classical performing arts are located and the Office of Performing Arts works to preserve Thai cultural heritage and express Thai cultural identity in the form of these arts.<sup>297</sup> Here, *khon* becomes a tool symbolising the national culture of Thailand, with one of the clearest examples of this being the *khon* performance at the Royal Albert Hall in London on 18 June 2015.

Essentially, it could be said that the transmission of *khon* and its music are directly maintained by the government based on the educational system seen through the work of the conservatories and the institutes that curate knowledge and practice in Thai classical performing arts. The educational system is also a key factor in maintaining the existence of performing arts more generally. This can be seen through the establishment of the Office of Performing Arts, the Buditpatanasilpa Institute as well as the College of Dramatic Arts, which are examples of related government-led organisations that perform and transmit *khon* and its music.

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<sup>297</sup> Fine Arts Department, 'Vision and Mission', accessed Feb 1, 2017, <http://www.finearts.go.th/วิสัยทัศน์และพันธกิจ.html>

Therefore, government support at its broadest is an important factor that facilitates the status and continuation of *khon* and its music. The dignity of refined classical performing arts considered as a kind of Thai cultural heritage, working as one of the symbolic-cultural expressions of the state and nation, is expressed for both national and international platforms where *khon* and its music are performed

### 6.2.2 The educational system

Thai classical music and dance are mainly transmitted through oral tradition, but changes in society and environment have influenced and altered this system. It could be said that the educational system is one of the most significant elements that maintains the continuation of *khon* and its music. While *khon* took place in the royal court and was transmitted only within a small community in the past, it is now known by a much wider group of people when brought into the educational system. Both colleges (secondary school) and conservatories have hugely increased the number of Thai classical musicians and dancers who have received the knowledge and performance practices of *khon* and its music from the masters.

However, it could be argued that the educational system has only changed the structure of transmission, but not the method and content. In other words, Thai classical music and dance knowledge are still taught based on an oral tradition in which not only knowledge is taught, but also tradition as well. For example, while students learn the pieces in the *Phrommas* repertoire, they also learn how to perform in an appropriate manner alongside the broader musical tradition - these customs are automatically transmitted within the teaching and learning process based on oral tradition and are considered the heart of Thai music tradition. Musical performance practice and music tradition are inseparable for Thai classical music; for example, before learning particular *naphat* pieces, students should pass the musical ritual, ‘*krop khru*’ (ครอบครู), which is one of the vital ceremonial stages in *wai khru* (ไหว้ครู) (the musical ritual which pays homage to the musical teacher) to affirm the musical level of the musicians.<sup>298</sup> In addition, within the process of transmission the roles of master and student are clearly stated:

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<sup>298</sup> More details on the *wai khru* ritual can be found in Deborah Wong’s work: *Sounding the center History and Aesthetics in Thai Buddhist Performance*.

while the master is the model respected by the learner, the student is the imitator who should pay respect to the master at the same time. This is a crucial tradition within Thai music and seems to be a basic consensus for the Thai classical music community.<sup>299</sup>

On the other hand, the educational system has limitations in terms of transmitting particular musical techniques from the master to students due to time constraints involved in any formal education system. While ancient Thai classical musicians devoted their lives (commonly beginning when they were 4-5 years old or even younger) to learn Thai music with their master, current students only have fifteen hours per week to learn Thai classical music in the specialist secondary school for the performing arts. It is an unavoidable situation within the current educational system that requires students to acquire both musical knowledge and also learn other general subjects, which are necessary to the curriculum.

### **6.2.3 Royal patronage**

As discussed in Chapter 2, *khon* was at first performed mainly as one of the court entertainments and has relied on the patronage of the King in different periods of Thai history. However, after the Siamese revolution in 1932, which reconstructed the role of the monarch's support beyond *khon*, the situation for *khon* performance, in which the *Phrommas* episode is performed, changed radically. It could be said that the status of *khon* performance changed due to social demand: *khon* became not only royal property but also a kind of Thai cultural heritage. However, there still remains a significant link between *khon* and royal patronage.

As *khon* performance is considered as refined performing arts and its music also requires well-trained musical skills to perform, *khon* production relies upon these components for its complete performance. In the past, *khon* was entirely taken care of by royal patronage seen through such things as the formation of a royal *khon* troupe in the palace. *Khon* was maintained in the royal court as a high form of entertainment in

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<sup>299</sup> Lumyong Sowat, interviewed by Suchada Sowat, Jan 15, 2016.

which the dancers were royal soldiers trained in court and the *khon* performance was played in the palace as indispensable royal prerogative.<sup>300</sup>

Currently, royal support is directly involved in the continuation, transmission, and future of *khon* and its music. One example of this is the great support of Her Majesty Queen Sirikit of Thailand who promotes the importance and the value of *khon* as a Thai national performing art, bringing about dynamic phenomena in the Thai classical music and dance community. The Royal Khon Performance has been arranged annually since 2007 and there are a number of *khon* episodes performed.<sup>301</sup> Importantly, the *Phrommas* episode is the most popular episode and is performed frequently (in 2007, 2009, and 2015). In addition, the creation of The Royal Khon Performance has not only increased the popularity of *khon* performance, but also revitalised other Thai classical crafts, such as those used for costume and stage backgrounds; all these Thai traditional crafts are from the Support Foundation of Her Majesty Queen Sirikit.

Moreover, another prominent demonstration of the direct connection between *khon* performance and its music and royal patronage is shown by Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn of Thailand, who is honoured as one of the great artists of the Rattanakosin era. She has devoted herself to Thai classical music and dance; she can play a number of Thai classical musical instruments and sings as well as performs Thai classical dance. There are many Thai classical songs for which Princess Sirindhorn has written the lyrics and which remain popular. Princess Sirindhorn has also attended a number of *khon* performances held annually, such as the *khon* performance at King Rama II Memorial Park, Amphawa, Samuthsongkhram province<sup>302</sup> and The Royal Khon Performance at the Thailand Cultural Centre, Bangkok.

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<sup>300</sup> Rutnin, *Dance, Drama, and Theatre in Thailand The process of development and modernisation*, 47.

<sup>301</sup>Thapanee Sungsitivong, *Khon: Thai traditional arts and cultural media in contemporary society context*. *Institute of Cultural and Arts Journal*, Vol.14, no.2 (2013): 28.

<sup>302</sup>“King Rama II Memorial Park”, accessed Jan 22, 2017, <https://uk.tourismthailand.org/Attraction/King-Rama-II-Memorial-Park--1047>

It could be argued that this has not only fostered the status of Thai classical music and dance itself, but also boosted the morale of both senior and younger Thai classical musicians and dancers. There is a well-known verse written by Seri Wangnaitham (ครูเสรี หวังในธรรม), National Artist of Thailand (1937-2007): ‘การดนตรีนาฏศิลป์ไม่สิ้นแล้ว เพราะพระบุตุลกระหม่อมแก้วเอาใจใส่’, which can be translated as ‘Thai music and dance have survived because Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn has fostered it attentively’.<sup>303</sup>

During fieldwork in Thailand in 2016, the author had a chance to attend an important *khon* performance held by the Buditpatanasilpa Institute on 24 December 2015 at the National Theatre, Bangkok, in which Princess Sirindhorn played the *ranat ek* in the *piphat* ensemble alongside senior Thai musicians to accompany a *khon* performance performed by senior *khon* masters. That event demonstrated how *khon* links to royal patronage. In addition, HRH has attended other *khon* performances held annually in Thailand as a special guest. This can not only enhance the survival of *khon*, but also support the continuation of Thai classical music and dance. Lumyong Sowat observes how ‘her gracious interest and devotion to Thai classical performing arts fires the spirit of senior masters to create the present musicians and dancers who will become the senior masters of the future; artists seek inspiration to do their work and she is the inspiration for us’.<sup>304</sup>

Therefore, even though *khon* has mainly been taken care of by the government, royal support still plays a key role in encouraging the status and continuation of *khon* and its music together with direct support from the government through the educational system. The work of different factors in maintaining the status of *khon* and its music can be seen in the cooperation of a number of institutes associated with the *Phrommas* repertoire’s existence, which will be explored in the following section.

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<sup>303</sup> Sattanan Chantharawiboon, “thoet phrakiat phra phu pen duang prathip hang silapa watthanatham khong chat”, accessed Jan 22, 2017, [http://www1.culture.go.th/thai/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=1764:2012-03-23-09-28-35&catid=37:articles&Itemid=354](http://www1.culture.go.th/thai/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1764:2012-03-23-09-28-35&catid=37:articles&Itemid=354)

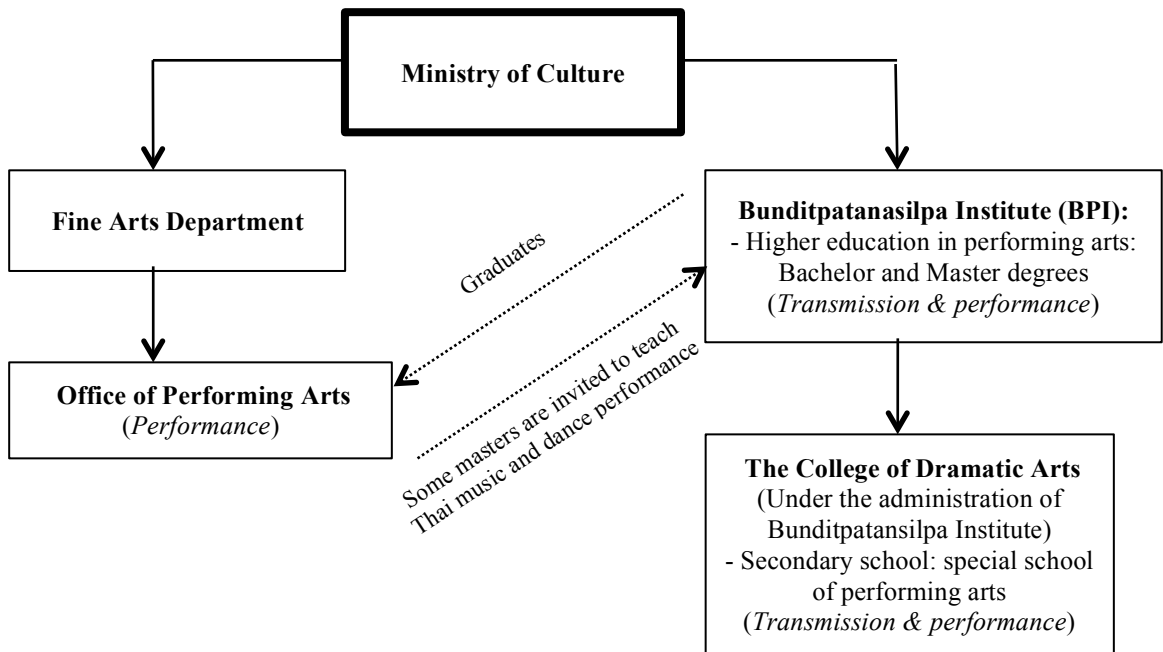
<sup>304</sup> Lumyong Sowat, interviewed by Suchada Sowat, Jan 15, 2016.

### 6.3 The current existence

Currently, there are three main institutes that have direct involvement in the survival and continuation of *khon* and its music. These three institutes are government-led organisations, all under the Ministry of Culture as follows: 1) Office of Performing Arts under the Fine Arts Department (สำนักงานการสังคีต กรมศิลปากร), 2) Buditpatanasilpa Institute (สถาบันบัณฑิตพัฒนศิลป์) and 3) The College of Dramatic Arts (วิทยาลัยนาฏศิลป์). Their structure and relationships are illustrated in Figure 6.1.

Figure 6.1 The relationship between various organisations associated with

*khon* and its music





### 6.3.1 Office of Performing Arts, Fine Arts Department (สำนักงานการสังคีต กรมศิลปากร)

The Office of Performing Arts is one of the departments within the Fine Arts Department in the Ministry of Culture. The construction of the Fine Arts Department was developed from the establishment of *krom mahorasop* (กรมมหรสพ) (Office of Entertainment) during the reign of King Rama VI (r.1910-1925). After the Siamese revolution in 1932, the government established a new organisation known as the Fine Arts Department in 1933 to standardise, preserve and transmit Thai cultural wisdom, including Archaeology, History, Architecture, Crafts, Language, Documents, and Performing Arts.<sup>305</sup> Currently, the Fine Arts Department is under the administration of the Ministry of Culture (กระทรวงวัฒนธรรม).

As Thai classical performing arts falls within the responsibility of the Fine Arts Department, there is an Office of Performing Arts (สำนักงานการสังคีต กรมศิลปากร) involving Thai classical music and dance as well as Western classical music. At the time of its establishment, a number of masters who were in *krom mahorasop* (Office of Entertainment) during the patronage of King Rama VI were invited to work there. Nowadays, there are a number of professional Thai classical musicians and dancers who work as civil servants for the government. Their work is to perform Thai classical music and theatre at the request of the Ministry of Culture and other consumers. According to the website of the Office of Performing Arts, there are clear instructions for requesting a performance from the Office of Performing Arts: there are explanations of the processes plus examples of the related documents required. The forms include both government-led and general public forms. In addition, the site also provides samples of performances.<sup>306</sup> All performers are employed as artists and they have their own levels of salary based on their performance experience.

The Director of the Office makes decisions on whether to accept an invitation to perform Thai classical music and dance. Currently, the *Phrommas* episode has been chosen to be performed within a series of *khon* episodes, which is known among Thai

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<sup>305</sup> Fine Arts Department, 'History and Mission', accessed Jan 25, 2017. [www.finearts.go.th](http://www.finearts.go.th).

<sup>306</sup> The Office of Performing Arts, Ministry of Culture, 'Service', accessed Mar 7, 2017, <http://www.finearts.go.th/performing/home-page-beez5/2013-05-17-04-22-32/2013-05-17-04-24-24.html>

musicians and dancers as ‘*khon rong*’ (โขนโรง); the word *rong* (โรง) literally means the pavilion and it is currently used with *khon* to identify a kind of *khon* performance that consists of many episodes; several episodes are performed at any one time. *Khon rong* can take about four to five hours in total, starting in the evening and finishing at midnight. The occasion on which *khon rong* is mostly performed is normally a grand event because it requires a number of performers in the *khon* troupe. The musical accompaniment of *khon rong* is still the *piphat* ensemble with twelve to fifteen members. In addition, *khon* performances given by the Office of Performing Arts take place not only in Thailand but also internationally (as mentioned in section 6.2.1).

Figure 6.2 *Khon rong* performed by the Office of Performing Arts, showing the *piphat* ensemble situated behind the backdrop



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Figure 6.2 shows one of the *khon* performances organised by the Office of Performing Arts. Various episodes have been performed, with the *Phrommas* being one of the famous episodes popular with regular audiences; it has been performed with *khon* dance in this context. A group of senior masters of the Office of Performing Arts has slightly rearranged the *Phrommas* dramatic text for this context, but most pieces originally allocated in the *Phrommas* repertoire by Prince Naris still occur - <sup>308</sup> there is an increase in *Phak* and *Cheracha* (narration) in this edited *Phrommas* text.

<sup>307</sup> Photo by Thapanat Thamthiang, ‘*Khon rong*’, May 1, 2017.

<sup>308</sup> See Chapter 3 for more details about the *Phrommas* repertoire and its development as *Khon* music for the *Phrommas* episode.

Another *khon* performance supported by not only the government, but also through royal patronage, is when the Fine Arts Department puts on a *khon* performance annually at the King Rama II Memorial Park in Samuthsongkhram province as part of a celebration in honour of King Rama II's intelligence and virtue. Princess Sirindhorn has also regularly attended this event and her presence has contributed to a broader popularity and large audience.

### 6.3.2 The College of Dramatic Arts (วิทยาลัยนาฏศิลป์)

The College of Dramatic Arts known as Witthayalai Nattasin (วิทยาลัยนาฏศิลป์) is a specialist secondary school for the performing arts, which plays a key role in transmitting and performing *khon* performance. The College was officially established in 1934 after the Siamese revolution in 1932 in order to provide knowledge of Thai classical performing arts within an educational system.<sup>309</sup> The establishment of The College of Dramatic Arts is another factor that gathers and standardises Thai classical music and dance. At the time of its establishment, the teachers of the College were masters who worked as professional musicians and dancers at the Fine Arts Department. Later, the teachers of the College of Dramatic Arts were drawn from alumni of the College. Nowadays, there is a combination of masters at the college, regular teachers who work as civil servants, and senior masters who are retired but still give advice to the current teachers of the College in both transmission and performance. There are fourteen campuses of the College of Dramatic Arts all over the country. Currently, as a special school that provides specific knowledge of performing arts, the College of Dramatic Arts is working under the administration of the Buditpatanasilpa Institute, which provides Higher Education services, and both institutes come under administration of the Ministry of Culture.

Figure 6.3 Stone sign board of The College of Dramatic Arts, Thailand

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<sup>309</sup> The College of Dramatic Arts, "History of The College of Dramatic Arts". The College of Dramatic Arts, accessed May 20, 2017, <http://cda.bpi.ac.th/pravat.htm>



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Educationally, The College of Dramatic Arts (Figure 6.3) is a specialist school, equivalent to a secondary school. However, the purpose of the curriculum is to impart the knowledge and teach the practice of performing arts alongside general subjects. There are four specialist modes of study within the college: *duriyangthai* (ดุริยางค์ไทย) (Thai classical music); *duriyangthai* (ดุริยางค์ไทย) and *khitasinThai* (คีตศิลป์ไทย) (Thai classical singing); Thai classical dance (นาฏศิลป์ไทย) (*khon* and *lakhon*; see Figure 6.5); Western classical music and Western classical dance.

The students of the College also have to study subjects (วิชาสามัญ) such as Thai Language, Mathematics, and English in the morning and have their performing arts lessons in the afternoon (four to five hours per day) plus extra rehearsals. Students are trained professionally and need to learn given repertoires at each level; the *Phrommas* repertoire is one of the repertoires allocated to year four (*matthayom 4* – students are usually 15 years old) (มัธยมศึกษาปีที่ 4). In other words, students who are in *piphat* (Thai percussion and woodwind) and *khaprong* (singing) classes are required to learn the *Phrommas* repertoire. On the other hand, for students who are *khon* dance majors, individual pieces rather than the whole *Phrommas* repertoire are chosen as lessons for dance.

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<sup>310</sup> Suchada Sowat, photos taken Jan 18, 2016.

Figure 6.4 Thai classical music lessons at The College of Dramatic Arts, Nakhonpathom, Thailand



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Figure 6.4 shows a Thai classical music lesson (*khong wong yai*). All junior students in the *piphat* major are required to learn the *khong wong yai* as a principal musical instrument for the *piphat*, and they are then able to choose their particular major (such as *ranat ek*, *ranat thum*) in the later years.

Figure 6.5 Thai classical dance lessons (*khon* and *lakhon*) at The College of Dramatic Arts, Nakhonpathom, Thailand



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<sup>311</sup> Photo by Suchada Sowat, Jan 18, 2016.

<sup>312</sup> Photo by Suchada Sowat, Jan 18, 2016.

The method of transmission at The College of Dramatic Arts is mainly based on oral tradition; the master who has expertise in a particular performing art is the model who demonstrates a performance practice that the student imitates. This process of teaching also takes place when students are learning the *Phrommas* repertoire in year 4.<sup>313</sup> In addition, students can integrate music and dance in *khon* performance when they rehearse together. In each term, there will be an onstage examination in which Thai classical music, singing, and dance students have to demonstrate a particular *khon* performance together based on their given lesson in each term. This exam can enhance their ability, understanding, and experience of how to produce *khon* and music in an actual performance.

Even though the *Phrommas* repertoire is taught in the classroom, students can gain more experience through actual performance. Students of The College of Dramatic Arts also have an opportunity to perform Thai classical music and dance on different occasions. It could be said that *khon* performance is among the most frequent at The College of Dramatic Arts. The Director of The College and teaching team will consider and manage the *khon* performance to suit particular events. In the process of managing a *khon* performance, there will be a rehearsal in which both music and dance have to be synchronised under the advice of the current teacher and senior masters of the College. Therefore, students can learn how to apply their own knowledge and practice from the classroom into actual performance and learn more specific techniques of performance in the rehearsal. Thereby, the work of The College of Dramatic Arts has become a vital element in creating professional Thai classical musicians and dancers who have the necessary knowledge and practice of Thai classical performing arts to continue their study at a higher level with the Buditpatanasilpa Institute.

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<sup>313</sup> Lumyong Sowat, interviewed by Suchada Sowat, Jan 15, 2016.

### 6.3.3 Bunditpatanasilpa Institute (สถาบันบัณฑิตพัฒนศิลป์)

The Bunditpatanasilpa Institute (BPI; Figure 6.7) provides a higher education in Thai classical performing arts to train students as professional musicians and dancers. It was officially established in 1998, and its stated purpose is to provide education in the fine and performing arts from a basic to a higher level, and to transmit, expand, and preserve the cultural heritage of Thai arts.<sup>314</sup> There is a close relationship between the BPI and The College of Dramatic Arts because it was formed with the same broad purpose. In its early history, many of the specialists from The College of Dramatic Arts were invited to teach at the BPI. These two institutes provide a similar framework of education at different levels; while the College of Dramatic Arts deals with secondary school level, BPI provides a specialised study in higher education. Currently, there are fourteen campuses of the College of Dramatics Arts all over the country under the administration of BPI and BPI itself has three faculties for higher education: 1) the Faculty of Music and Drama (คณะศิลปนาฏดุริยางค์), 2) the Faculty of Arts Education (คณะศิลปศึกษา), and 3) the Faculty of Fine Arts (คณะศิลปวิจิตร) as seen in Figure 6.6. Each faculty has a different focus and mission within their curriculum, which produces distinct graduates. In terms of Thai classical performing arts knowledge and practices, whilst the Faculty of Arts Education aims to produce graduates who can be Thai music teachers, the Faculty of Music and Drama aims to produce professional Thai classical musicians and dancers. On the other hand, the Faculty of Fine Arts intends to produce artists in numerous different areas: Painting, Thai Arts, Graphic Arts, Sculpture, Interior Design, and Ceramics.<sup>315</sup>

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<sup>314</sup> Bunditpatanasilpa Institute. *Pawathiyankrom*. (Bangkok, 2015), 93.

<sup>315</sup> Bunditpatanasilpa Institute, "Faculty of Fine Arts Curriculum". Bunditpatanasilpa Institute, accessed Oct 9, 2017, <http://ffa.bpi.ac.th/2017/>

Figure 6.6 The structure of Bunditpatanasilpa Institute's (BPI) administration

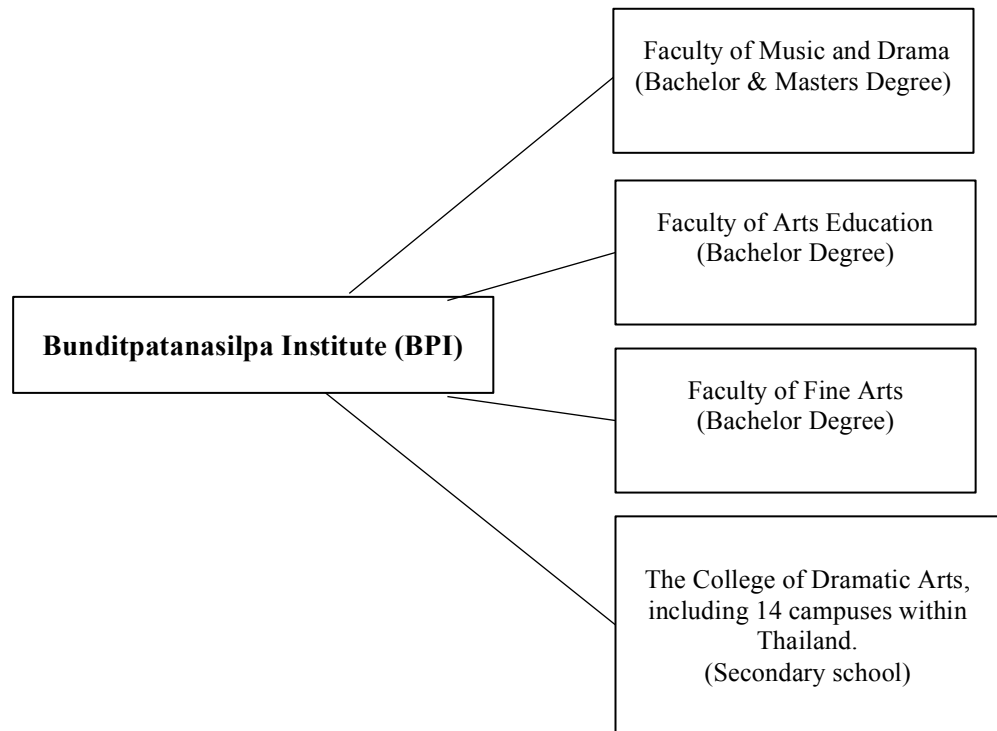


Figure 6.7 The Bunditpatanasilpa Institute, Bangkok, Thailand



<sup>316</sup> Photo by Suchada Sowat Suchada Sowat, Dec 20, 2016.



The *Phrommas* repertoire forms part of the faculty of Music and Drama's curriculum. Students in the second year have to learn the *Phrommas* repertoire (*Tap Phrommas* ตับพรหมาศ) as part of the *khon* repertoires in the subject called 'music for *khon*' (ทักษะการบรรเลงเพลงโขน); Thai classical singing and music students have to learn the *Phrommas* repertoire from the master in each major separately but they will have a rehearsal together as a whole *piphat* ensemble. In each term, students have to perform on-stage with Thai classical dance students and gain direct experience of performing music for *khon* from this performance exam.<sup>317</sup>

It could be said that the work of the BPI is one of the principal elements that encourages the status and continuation of the *Phrommas* repertoire. According to Sirichacharn Fachamroon (National Artist of Thailand and president of BPI 2012-2017), 'the musical curriculum of BPI in which the *Phrommas* repertoire is taught, is an important element that enables the current existence of the *Phrommas* repertoire through three main aspects: preserving the old repertoire by keeping the original pieces within transmission, performing this repertoire with the *khon* performance, and developing a creative way of performing the repertoire to suit contemporary society<sup>318</sup> based on the traditional convention of the repertoire', and these three roles of the BPI could maintain the survival of the repertoire effectively.<sup>319</sup>

With respect to the transmission process, the oral tradition is still the most significant. This tradition within music still plays an important role in classroom teaching; for example, when students learn a piece of music, they also know its role, status, and appropriate style of performance to suit particular uses of the piece. Moreover, the tradition of music is performed through the role of student and master in the teaching process. Respect and patience is expected from students in the class as they

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<sup>317</sup> Nittaya Rusamai, interviewed by Suchada Sowat, Apr 13, 2018.

<sup>318</sup> A creative way of performing the repertoire to suit contemporary society takes place in the way in which the repertoire is presented. An example of this is where the *Phrommas* repertoire is performed by presenting the synopsis of the *Phrommas* episode through technological presentation so as to give some background information to modern audiences and make it more attractive to them. However, the concept of creativity when performing the *Phrommas* repertoire can be varied depending on the interpretation of the music by the masters and students. This thesis has not focused on this point but it could be an interesting topic for future work.

<sup>319</sup> Sirichaicharn Fachamroon, interviewed by Suchada Sowat, Jan 20, 2017.

imitate and learn the pieces without notation.<sup>320</sup> The relationship between the master and students is quite close and this is one of the unique traditions in the Thai classical music and dance community.

However, due to changes in society, a number of modern materials have been applied to this process. Even though oral tradition remains the main path, modern equipment is now used as well. In the past a student was expected to memorise all repertoire from the master with no recording equipment, whereas current Thai music students can use modern technology to help them to memorise the pieces. For example, a recording plus notation can be used only for helping them to revise the piece after having already learnt it from the master by oral transmission. However, it is more polite if they learn the piece from the master directly first and record it later as a general record to remind themselves; they are not allowed to ask the master to sing or play any music for them to record without learning it first. In terms of the *Phrommas* repertoire, there is the same process of teaching in which students need to learn the pieces directly from the masters before practising on their own. Interestingly, within the class in which the *Phrommas* repertoire is taught, students are required to listen to the *Phrommas* repertoire performed in the Royal Khon Performance via YouTube before learning the repertoire with the master in the classroom. Nittaya Rusamai has given information about the modern way of teaching; she stated that ‘it is a kind of teaching aid that is used in modern Thai music lessons to help the students to remember the repertoire more quickly; however, they are required to attend the class to learn the repertoire from the master directly because special musical techniques cannot be experienced through YouTube’.<sup>321</sup> There is thus now a combination of the traditional method and newer approach within the education system in modern society.

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<sup>320</sup> Lumyong Sowat, interviewed by Suchada Sowat, Jan 15, 2016.

<sup>321</sup> Nittaya Rusamai, interviewed by Suchada Sowat, Apr 13, 2018.

Figure 6.8 Thai classical music lessons in the *piphat* and singing classes at BPI



Figure 6.9 *Khon* rehearsal at BPI showing Thai classical dance



The mission of the Buditpatanasilpa Institute (BPI) is to not only provide the knowledge and practice of performing arts in higher education, but also to perform various Thai classical performing arts at different events. BPI holds a number of performances at various occasions; some are by demand from the Ministry of Culture, other requests come from different places. One of the *khon* performances arranged by

<sup>322</sup> Photo by Suchada Sowat, Dec 20, 2016.

<sup>323</sup> Photo by Suchada Sowat, Dec 20, 2016.

BPI was a senior *khon* performance with royal involvement called *sinphat chaloem ratana ratchasinlapin* (ศิลป์-พัฒน์เฉลิมรัตนราชศิลป์). This *khon* performance was held on 25 December 2015 at The National Theatre, Bangkok. The author had a chance to attend this event during fieldwork in Bangkok in 2015, and the fascination of this performance was that the *khon* dancers were all senior *khon* masters and the musical accompaniment (the *piphat* ensemble) was also performed by senior Thai classical musicians with Princess Sirindhorn playing the *ranat ek*. The tickets for this performance were sold out. Apart from senior *khon* masters and senior Thai classical music masters who were involved in the performance, there were a number of young students who joined this performance as well. Even though the *Phrommas* episode was not the *khon* story on this occasion, this event demonstrates an on-going phenomena which is surviving through royal association.

Importantly, the most high-profile performance that BPI has been mainly involved in is The Royal Khon Performance s (โขนพระราชทาน) arranged by The Support Foundation of Her Majesty Queen Sirikit of Thailand. During the month-long performances, all *khon* dancers are from not only BPI and the College of Dramatic Arts, but also from other organisations that support *khon* performance such as the Kukrit Institute.<sup>324</sup> In terms of the musical accompaniment, all musicians and singers who play Thai classical music in the *piphat* ensemble, are from the BPI, including teachers and students as seen in Figure 6.10.

Figure 6.10 The *Phrommas* episode in the Royal Khon Performance

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<sup>324</sup> The Kukrit Insitute was established as the central institute to celebrate the life and work of MR Kukrit Pramoj (thirteenth Prime minister of Thailand who was also named as a World Historic Important Figure by UNESCO in 2009). The purpose of the Kukrit Institute is not only to promote MR Kukrit's works, but also to preserve and expand Thai classical music and dance. Within the Kukrit Institute, there are *khon* dance and Thai music lessons for children and adults who are interested in Thai classical performing arts.

with large *piphat* ensemble (7 Nov-6 Dec 2015 at the Thailand Cultural Centre)



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It could be argued that the formation of The Royal Khon Performance is one of the vital factors involved in the continued existence and status of the *Phrommas* repertoire in modern society. The *Phrommas* episode is the most famous *khon* episode which has been performed many times, as can be seen through its appearances in 2007, 2008, and 2015 in The Royal Khon Performance, and its popularity has contributed to the survival of the *Phrommas* repertoire. The *khon* performance always involves music whilst the rehearsals (both a purely musical rehearsal and a full rehearsal with *khon* dance) also enable the creativity of music and the improvement of musicians' ability.<sup>326</sup> The continuation of the *Phrommas* repertoire occurs through transmission from the

<sup>325</sup> The Crown Property Bureau, "Royal Khon Performance", accessed Jan 22, 2017, <http://www.crownproperty.or.th/post/ชาวประชาสัมพันธ์-มูลนิธิส่งเสริมศิลปาชีพในสมเด็จพระนางเจ้าสิริกิติ์-พระบรมราชินีนาถ-จ้>

<sup>326</sup> An aspect of creativity in this context is not just the individual process of realisation, which takes place in a particular instrumental part as a realisation (*thang*) but it is the way that an individual musical director creates, decorates, modifies, or adapts some of the musical techniques used for playing the pieces within the *Phrommas* repertoire in a specific performance. Hence, the capability of the musical director is very important because this practice requires the professional experience of a Thai classical music expert who plays a key role here. The creativity takes place here within the predetermined pieces and structure of the music in the *Phrommas* repertoire: a musical director can develop their own style here. One of the clearest examples of this perspective can be found in Chapter 5: in the piece called 'He Klom Chang' (เห่กล่อมช้าง), in which a musical technique called '*kro tit*' (กรอติด) (continued trilling) was established and used purposely by a well-known musical director of the Royal *Khon* Performance, Master Natthaphong Sowat (see more details in Chapter 5: section on *He Klom Chang* เห่กล่อมช้าง analysis).

masters, who act as directors to students who are musicians and vocalists within the *Piphat* ensemble, and this relationship obviously encourage its survival.

These illustrations of the work of the BPI suggest how the existence of the *Phrommas* repertoire can be found within *khon* performance. The BPI has played a key role in preserving and transmitting *khon* performance and its music through its educational activities and on-going performances. Even though modern educational materials are used to facilitate the effectiveness of learning, the oral tradition is still the main method of transmission. While the transmission of the BPI provides the knowledge and performance practices for the musicians and dancers, the *khon* performance arranged by BPI and other organisations become the stage where students can demonstrate their artistic abilities. Moreover, the knowledge and creativity of music can be indirectly transmitted through the process of rehearsal taking place in each on-going *khon* performance. Furthermore, the highly-regarded *khon* performance, *sinphat chaloem ratana ratchasinlapin* (ศิลป์-พัฒน์เฉลิมรัตนราชศิลป์) taken place on 24 December 2015, which was arranged with royal involvement, is further evidence to show that royal support has never been disconnected from *khon* performance.

## **6.4 Dialogue on the survival of the *Phrommas* repertoire and its future**

### **6.4.1 Transmission and performance as key elements of survival**

Oral tradition is the significant method of the *Phrommas* repertoire's transmission but has become adapted and integrated with modern elements in order to facilitate learning: tradition is still passed down based on oral tradition, but electronic equipment and modern media also now play a part. This combination approach is found in both The College of Dramatic Arts and also the BPI but there will be slightly more self-learning within the higher education environment of the BPI than in The College of Dramatic Arts: students can learn the principles of performing music and other preliminary musical elements from The College of Dramatic Arts, and they can apply it at a more advanced level within a modern environment at the BPI. Within the Fine Arts Department, transmission seems to be only a minor task for this organisation,

with some professional masters from there being invited to teach Thai music and dance performance practice at the BPI.

All three institutes have their own *khon* performance. While the Fine Arts Department arranges *khon* mainly to expand Thai classical performing arts as a national cultural heritage, the BPI and The College of Dramatic Arts perform *khon* not only to show Thai cultural heritage, but also to enrich students' experience. Each institute has its own direction, but from the results of their work one can draw a complete picture of the status and continuation of the *khon* and the *Phrommas* repertoire involving cooperation and broader support from both government and royal patronage.

Another important factor in the continued survival of the *Phrommas* repertoire is the internal quality of the *Phrommas* repertoire itself; in the next section, this will be considered in terms of refined musical and theatrical components within the *Phrommas* repertoire, and the dramatic text itself.

#### **6.4.2 Refined and notable musical pieces**

As discussed in Chapter 3, the purpose of assembling the *Phrommas* repertoire was to use music to describe the story using lyrics from the dramatic text in a music-only context known as *bot konsoet*. Existing vocal and non-vocal pieces were arranged purposely for use with the *Phrommas* dramatic text. While the dramatic text becomes lyrics for vocal pieces, non-vocal pieces are employed to manifest both musical and theatrical meaning. Importantly, all pieces used here are chosen based on the logic of a musical connection, in particularly the key of each piece allowing them to be played continuously. Interestingly, a number of fieldwork interviewees used the word *phleng phro* (เพลงไพเราะ) which literally means 'beautiful music' to identify the remarkable features of the *Phrommas* repertoire.

The consistent key used in the repertoire is one of the musical attributes that enhances the ‘melodiousness’ of the *Phrommas* repertoire. According to Lumyong Sowat, ‘the holistic key used in the *Phrommas* repertoire is purposely fixed to make well-matched sounds within the piece itself and this is what makes the *Phrommas* repertoire come alive in terms of the musical ability of itself’.<sup>327</sup> Moreover, Boonchuay Sovat developed a crucial idea about the remarkable musical attributes of the *Phrommas* repertoire: the original formation of the *Phrommas* repertoire as ‘*bot konsoet*’<sup>328</sup> was purposely created to show the melodious pieces, which describe the story with music and lyrical meaning. Because it was developed to present a new form of court entertainment used in the reception for foreign guests by the royal family rather like the idea of musical selection in a Western musical environment, the quality and aesthetic within music is therefore the first priority for impressing unfamiliar audiences. The prominent evidence that supports the virtue of the music in the *Phrommas* repertoire can be seen through its history and development as well as its current existence.

The variety of musical pieces used in the *Phrommas* repertoire became another signature that makes the repertoire outstanding. There are a number of Thai classical pieces in the *Phrommas* repertoire and each has its distinct musical attributes based on the same key. According to Pattanee Promsombat, senior Thai classical singing master, ‘each piece reflects a particular emotion: the grand and elegant feeling in *Thayae Klong Yon* with Indra’s magnificent parade; the sweet, soft, and gentle feelings shown in *Soi Son* with the angel’s dance; anger and madness expressed in *Ling Lot* through *Hanuman*’s furious movement; overall, a variety of feelings are manifested through the entire repertoire’.<sup>329</sup>

There is a further suggestion on the musical uniqueness of the *Phrommas* repertoire that helps it survive: a number of pieces are from various categories and each piece has its own uniqueness. Master musicians all provide different opinions about what is the highlight piece of the repertoires: some suggest *Thayae Klong Yon* because

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<sup>327</sup> Lumyong Sowat, interviewed by Suchada Sowat, Jan 14, 2016.

<sup>328</sup> *Bot konsoet* (บทคณนเส็ด) is the dramatic text based on a particular epic, it is allocated with a selection of musical pieces. (See Chapter 3 for more details about *bot konsoet* in the *Phrommas* episode).

<sup>329</sup> Pattanee Promsombat, interviewed by Suchada Sowat, Feb 2, 2016.



the lyrics can describe the magnificent decoration of Indra's parade and directly reflect the refined theatre <sup>330</sup>, others suggest *Soi Son* because it consists of specific musical techniques used in particular groups of musical instruments to go along with the vocal part, whereas some maintain that it is the totality, because pieces are arranged and played with a particular order and all show the holistic image of the *Phrommas* repertoire itself. Sirichaicharn Fachamroon (National Artist of Thailand) observed that 'the outstanding musical features of the *Phrommas* repertoire are formulated from many factors within particular pieces collected to be used in the repertoire; it is not only one piece that makes the repertoire outstanding but there are many pieces that construct the remarkableness of the *Phrommas* repertoire'.<sup>331</sup> When the pieces are gathered and arranged in a particular order based on the story, it demonstrates the remarkable variety within music that thereby creates the uniqueness of the repertoire at the same time, and it is this combination that is one of the factors that make the *Phrommas* repertoire unique and able to survive.

#### **6.4.3 The spectacular dramatic text and the impressive theatrical elements**

As discussed in Chapter 3, the dramatic text of the *Phrommas* episode was composed to make a new form of Thai classical entertainment to be performed in court during 1899; the dramatic text of *Phrommas* was placed with selected Thai classical pieces which could be completed within one or two hours, which was very much shorter than previous Thai classical entertainments at that time. The *Phrommas* repertoire in the form of '*bot konsoet*' became the innovative entertainment of that time, and it has been performed as modern entertainment since then simply because it is not too long.<sup>332</sup> Thus, the *Phrommas* repertoire is not only an ancient Thai entertainment, but also perhaps the first contemporary entertainment in terms of its theatrical elements.

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<sup>330</sup> See Chapter 5 for more details about *Thayae Klong Yon*'s analysis.

<sup>331</sup> Sirichacharn Fachamroon, interviewed by Suchada Sowat, Jan 20, 2016.

<sup>332</sup> Boonchuay Sovat, interviewed by Suchada Sowat, Jan 14, 2016.

The dramatic text of the *Phrommas* episode enables a great variety of theatrical elements in the performance and includes a number of characters. According to Theeraphat Thongnim, senior *khon* master, the story of the *Phrommas* episode includes the full range of actors within *khon* dance: *phra* (male) such as Phra Lak, *nang* (female) such as female angels, *yak* (demon) such as Inthorachit, and *ling* (monkey) such as Hanuman, which together create a colourful variety of *khon* dancers in the theatre.<sup>333</sup> Veerasin Changkhanun also argued that what makes the *Phrommas* come alive is the grand image of the theatre because these are the scenes in which there are a number of actors and theatrical decorations based on the dramatic text of the *Phrommas*.<sup>334</sup> For example, Indra's parade imitates many refined decorations of a court parade, with all these features located in the dramatic text used as the lyrics (in *Thayae Klong Yon*)<sup>335</sup>, and this scene consists of a number of actors and decorations. The battlefield scene, which has many angels dancing beautifully and the monkey army enjoying a beautiful dance (in *Soi Son*)<sup>336</sup>, also includes a full complement of actors and a number of impressive theatrical decorations. Surat Jongda, senior *khon* master, also said that 'the *Phrommas* repertoire and the value of the dramatic text of *Phrommas* allows more opportunity for theatrical presentations, including 1) solo dances seen through Inthorachit's transformation as God Indra in *Chom Talat* and Hanuman's furious movement shown in *Ling Lot*, 2) a grand finale that can be found in the elaborate and refined parade in *Thayae Klong Yon*, and 3) the large numbers of actors used (God Indra's parade plus Phra Lak and his monkey army) in the battlefield scene for the piece *Soi Son* and others'.<sup>337</sup>

The theatrical element is one of the reasons that creates the popularity and thereby the survival of the *Phrommas* episode in *khon* performance, with its length appropriate for both ancient and modern audiences. The details of the story and imagination within the dramatic text have also enabled theatrical creativity within the *khon* production that impresses the audiences from the visible elements alone, and all

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<sup>333</sup> Theeraphat Thongnim, interviewed by Suchada Sowat, Jan 18, 2016.

<sup>334</sup> Veerasak Changkhanun, interviewed by Suchada Sowat, Jan 18, 2016.

<sup>335</sup> See Chapter 5 for more details about the musical analysis of *Thayae Klong Yon*.

<sup>336</sup> See Chapter 5 for more details about the musical analysis of *Soi Son*.

<sup>337</sup> Surat Jongda, interviewed by Suchada Sowat, Jan 29, 2016.

these elements function together to increase the favourable impression of the audience and to initiate the creativity of the producer at the same time.

#### 6.4.4 Moral manifestation of the story

One of the roles of *khon* is to provide not only entertainment for the audience, but also to reflect social and cultural norms. In the story of the Ramakian, each episode includes the Buddhist theme of good defeating evil.<sup>338</sup> There is a well-known Thai proverb influenced by religious belief ‘*thamma chana atham*’ (ธรรมะ ชนะ อธรรม), which literally means ‘good defeats bad’, and this proverb is influenced by Buddhists’ belief that morality can be taught. This became one of the important Thai social values and is an implicit theme within a number of different art-forms, including the Ramakian epic.

The main message of the story of the *Phrommas* episode does not convey the theme of good defeating evil directly, but it suggests the cautionary tale of being aware of danger hidden within beauty. The contradiction of religious belief by giving victory to the evil forces (Inthprachit) is expressed in the theme of the *Phrommas* episode. Within the story, Inthorachit (the representation of evil) uses a demon’s deception to defeat Phra Lak (the representation of goodness); obliquely, the *Phrommas* uses hidden meaning to teach morals indirectly. Lumyong Sowat, senior Thai classical music master, argued that “the beauty of the angels” dance in the *Phrommas* episode represents the beauty hidden within the danger of the *Phrommas* arrows; metaphorically, it warns the people that ‘danger may be lurking underneath the beauty’.<sup>339</sup> This is the ethical concept behind the *Phrommas*’s theme that requires in-depth cultural conception to understand the moral thought within traditional entertainment. The paradoxical situation within the story and indirect moral manifestation is arguably one of the attractive features, and it may somehow contribute to the continued popularity of the *Phrommas*.

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<sup>338</sup> Rutnin, *Dance, Drama, and Theatre in Thailand: The process of development and modernisation*, 7.

<sup>339</sup> Lumyong Sowat, interviewed by Suchada Sowat, Jan 15, 2016.

However, it could be said that these moral concepts may not be understood in the same way by different audiences, who have varied backgrounds and relationships to the *Phrommas* and its moral-cultural concepts. Those involved in the Thai classical music and dance community may be more familiar with the cultural and moral message conveyed through the *Phrommas* theme whilst others who are outside the Thai musical arena may take only the most visible or audible elements rather than engaging with multiple layers of musical meaning and cultural ideas. This is perhaps one of the limitations to any broader understanding of complex relations and meaning within the *Phrommas* repertoire.

#### 6.4.5 Cultural prestige and modern audiences

The performing arts have been associated with social and political changes that have at times encouraged and at other times discouraged its status. While Thai musicians and dancers were granted prestige during King Rama VI's period known as 'the golden age' of Thai classical performing arts, the status of Thai classical music was reduced considerably after the Siamese revolution in 1932 that very much altered the patrons from court to the government.<sup>340</sup> However, it became stable again as a cultural heritage based on the standardisation of the government to construct national arts influenced by the court tradition. Importantly, it is lively again with the great support obviously seen through Queen Sirikit and HRH Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn's patronage that revitalised the role of Thai music and dance through the Royal Khon Performance. *Khon* and its music are located as a kind of court art newly marked as prestigious.<sup>341</sup> This can be seen through its status throughout Thai historical periods as a court art that has now been supported and preserved as one of the Thai cultural performing arts. Moreover, this kind of performing art is also respected by musicians and dancers based on its musical and cultural convention that is reflected through the performance practice and the structured rules of using the pieces of music to accompany dance movement. Its performance and transmission has been retained from the past to the present among social and political fluctuations; it is still ranked as a high form of

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<sup>340</sup> See more details about the status of Thai music and musicians in Pamela Myers-Moro and Dusadee Sawangviboonpong.

<sup>341</sup> Myers-Moro, *Thai Music and Musicians in Contemporary Bangkok*, 239.

performing art due to not only its original formation, but also its innate refined features. Unavoidably, the arrival of various new theatrical forms in Thai society caused a gigantic wave of new mainstream entertainment for contemporary audiences, and western influence has now entered ancient styles of theatre. One of the clearest examples comes from the time of King Rama VI, who directly brought a Western style of spoken theatre into Siamese theatre and formed various types of modern theatre during his reign (1910-1925), such as *lakhon rong* (ละครร้อง) (singing-drama) and *lakhon phut* (ละครพูด) (spoken play).<sup>342</sup> *Khon* and its music has automatically shifted to become a traditional performing art that is performed infrequently but still maintains its prestige as court art through its reproduction and the royal patronage system.

According to *khon* master Theeraphat Thongnim, ‘even though there are a minority of contemporary audiences (about seven thousand people) who have a chance to see the Royal Khon Performance each year, it has very much stimulated the life of *khon* and its context, including music’.<sup>343</sup> Because of the impressive theatrical elements and advanced production, there has been a demand for an annual Royal Khon Performance since 2009.<sup>344</sup> The audiences for this event include a full range of age-groups: not only older people who know about *khon* and its history, but also children and teenagers who often come from primary schools and secondary schools that are sponsored to see the Royal Khon Performance. They can experience both imaginative theatre and refined Thai cultural heritage through this performance. This suggests that *khon* and its music are still perceived to have a prestigious status, which can now be something within the reach of the broader public.

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<sup>342</sup> Paradee, Tungtang. *Shakespeare in Thailand* (Doctoral Thesis)., School of Theatre, Performance and Cultural Policy Studies, University of Warwick, March 2011. Retrieved from [http://wrap.warwick.ac.uk/36865/1/WRAP\\_THESIS\\_Tungtang\\_2011.pdf](http://wrap.warwick.ac.uk/36865/1/WRAP_THESIS_Tungtang_2011.pdf).

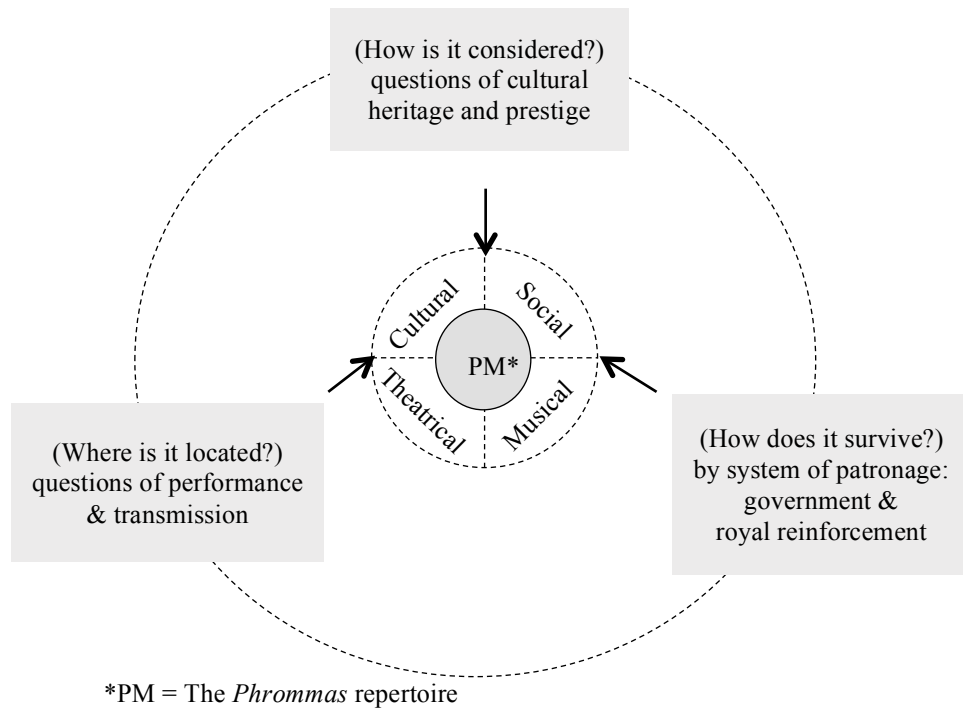
<sup>343</sup> Theeraphat Thongnim, interviewed by Suchada Sowat, Jan 18, 2016.

<sup>344</sup> Kom chat luek, “Royal Khon Performance”, Aug 12, 2014 accessed Feb 15, 2017, <http://www.komchadluek.net/news/socail/189961>

## 6.5 Conclusion

In conclusion, the current state of existence and context of the *Phrommas* repertoire comprises a number of complicated layers, each of which involves different internal components, and with a high level of interaction between these different elements. There are, however, three primary questions here, which the preceding discussion has considered in turn: 1) how is it considered, 2) how does it survive, and 3) where is it located? In terms of the first question, the way that the *Phrommas* repertoire is considered a kind of Thai cultural heritage and prestige court performing art, which should be preserved to manifest Thai culture, is the most important consideration in its current-day existence. Secondly, the system of patronage involving both government and royal reinforcement is the most significant factor in ensuring the survival of the *Phrommas* repertoire – this also has relevance in terms of the last question as to where the performance is located. Lastly, the *Phrommas* repertoire is located within the specialist secondary school for the performing arts and conservatory in its transmission through the educational system, and in performance where it exists alongside *khon* performance in various contexts supported by the government, royal reinforcement, and other public organisations. Therefore, the *Phrommas* repertoire is engaged in various contexts, including social, cultural, musical, and theatrical platforms. Figure 6.11 shows these three main aspects linked together in a big circle, whereas the smaller central circle locates the *Phrommas* repertoire within social, cultural, musical, and theatrical contexts: each aspect connects with every context in which the *Phrommas* repertoire is located.

Figure 6.11 The related elements of the current state of the *Phrommas* repertoire  
in modern Bangkok



From Figure 6.11, the arrows suggest that the three aspects mentioned act equally upon social, cultural, musical, and theatrical contexts to support the continued existence of the *Phrommas* repertoire. As already discussed, there are interrelationships between those elements; for example, the consideration of the *Phrommas* repertoire as a Thai cultural heritage and prestige court performing art became the preliminary factor, which encouraged the patronage system working through the process of performance and transmission. All of these aspects work together starting from the consideration of Thai cultural heritage which leads to the system of patronage, which causes the institution of performance and transmission platforms and then the *Phrommas* repertoire functions in both areas as a Thai cultural heritage which re-emphasises a sense of cultural heritage and prestige court performing art, and so on. All elements are bound together and interact; each element has its own structure, but they engage with each other at the same time to drive the existence of the *Phrommas* repertoire one way or another, and this ‘circle’ is what is currently in existence in modern Bangkok and what retains and nurtures the continued relevance of the *Phrommas* repertoire.

# Chapter 7

## Conclusion

### 7.1 Main findings

This thesis has focused upon three main research questions: 1) the significance of the *Phrommas* repertoire in relation to theatre, 2) the musical characteristics of the individual pieces within the *Phrommas* repertoire, and 3) the current state of the *Phrommas* repertoire in modern Bangkok. This final chapter will reconsider these research questions in the light of the previous discussion, and will provide some further suggestions for possible future directions.

#### 7.1.1 The significance of the *Phrommas* repertoire

The significance of the music in the *Phrommas* repertoire comes from two main perspectives, which can be characterised as internal and external. On the one hand, internal significance can be seen in the way in which a group of pieces are selected to become the *Phrommas* repertoire. The dramatic text of the *Phrommas* episode has played a major role in formulating the significance of the pieces in terms of the narrative of the story to communicate and represent theatrical meaning. In other words, the pieces collected to form the *Phrommas* repertoire are selected based on two dimensions: 1) a conventional meaning of that particular music, such as a group of *naphat* pieces which have their own established meaning as they represent specific actions, and 2) the appropriation of pieces which have certain musical characteristics linked to the narrative, such as a group of *phleng kret*, which are mostly used as vocal music in the repertoire (see more details about the different types of pieces used for theatre in Chapter 4 and 5). However, these two dimensions overlap; a number of *naphat* pieces have particular features relating to the theatrical meaning alongside their conventional meaning. For example, in *Choet*, which is one of the *naphat* pieces used to accompany the actions of walking, and fighting, the consistent beats of the drum pattern represent the theatrical meaning (a metaphor for the steady pace of walking) but at the same time the conventional function of *Choet* was established earlier to accompany the



action of walking, which is the reason why *Choet* is also used to communicate the narrative. The function of *Choet* with the theatre embraces both a reflection of theatrical meaning through its musical means and a conventional meaning predetermined to formulate the significance of the piece in the repertoire. Both dimensions are intertwined in some pieces in the *Phrommas* repertoire.

Importantly, there is another aspect which should be discussed: it has been found that the significance of the pieces used in the repertoire is bound with conventional conceptions of the hierarchy of the characters in the story. In Thai classical theatre, there are different levels of characters, and the various actors within epics such as the Ramakian are ranked: the king, soldier, commoner, and so on. Furthermore, the characters are also divided into two sides: *thamma* (good) and *atham* (bad). It could be said that it is this conventional conception that shapes the different usages of the pieces within the *Phrommas* repertoire. For example, the piece called *Krao Nai* (กราวไน) and *Krao Nok* (กราวนอ) have the same functions, which are to accompany the action of deploying the army: while *Krao Nai* is used when the demon soldiers are preparing the army, *Krao Nok* is used for the formation of the monkey soldiers. As another example, *Rua* (รัว) is one of the *naphat* pieces which has sub-types (*Rua La Diao* (รูลาเดี้ยว), *Rua Sam La* (รูลาสามลา), and *Rua Cha Pho* (รูลาชะพะ)) classified and used based on the different ranks of the characters in the story; the length and the more complex musical features are related to the higher power and level of particular characters (see more details in Chapter 5: *Rua* analysis). This musical usage is generated from a conventional conception of using the piece associated with the characters in the story, and this conception is part of the necessary knowledge for professional musicians who play in the theatre. Hence this is one of the complicated relationships within the internal significance of the pieces in the *Phrommas* repertoire and it can be applied to other theatrical repertoire as well.

Therefore, the internal significance of music in the *Phrommas* repertoire is one of the musical phenomena, which is a part of the broader cultural conception of Thai classical music for theatre, shaping the ways in which pieces are used to coordinate music with their theatrical manifestation, and how that is understood. Different layers of

meaning have underpinned the significance of musical usage. Even though the meaning of the lyrics have played a key role in the construction of direct theatrical meaning, the regulated concept that exists in relation to specific pieces has formed an equally important part of the internal significance within the *Phrommas* repertoire.

On the other hand, in terms of external significance, any kind of music has its own story and meaning based on the particular society and culture to which it belongs. The significance of music where it relates to other contexts apart from music itself can be explored based on three different angles: 1) creation and function, 2) transformation and continuation, 3) interpretation and implication, and the external significance of the *Phrommas* repertoire has been explored under these three headings.

Firstly, the ‘creation and function’ of the *Phrommas* repertoire can be seen from its history. As the *Phrommas* repertoire was first created with the purpose of seeking a new form of Siamese entertainment, it was to be performed as *bot konsoet* or *lakhon muet* (ละครอนมืด), which were considered as innovative forms of Siamese entertainment during 1899 (discussed in Chapter 3). On the other hand, even though the *Phrommas* repertoire as *bot konsoet* was originally used as court entertainment in the form of a musical selection performed within court receptions for royal foreign guests, it was later used in public as both a musical selection and as music for *khon* performance not just within the court (see Chapters 3 and 6) – the *Phrommas* repertoire has been transferred from one form to another. This is a part of the external significance of the *Phrommas* repertoire through its creation and function.

Secondly, the ‘transformation and continuation’ of the *Phrommas* repertoire reflects its significance through changing times. Even though the *Phrommas* repertoire was first created as *bot konsoet* (a musical selection), it was later performed as a musical selection for the theatre, which is *khon* performance. This not only shows the way in which a musical selection can be performed with different purposes but it also brings about a continuation of the repertoire itself. In other words, as the *Phrommas* episode has been performed continuously until the present day, it has become bound with its changing surroundings, which generate, stimulate, and modulate its external

significance in various ways. Thus all these elements are part of the significance of the *Phrommas* repertoire, as it is associated with other contexts.

Lastly, the ‘interpretation and implication’ of the *Phrommas* repertoire is the most complicated aspect of its external significance because the implication of music is associated with individual interpretations of particular audiences. The indirect meaning of the *Phrommas* repertoire is bound with social, cultural, and political influences. According to Lumyong Sowat who has given some thought about this, he has stated that ‘the Buddhist belief known as *khwam mai pramat* (ความไม่ประมาท) (heedfulness) is one of the vital doctrines of Buddhism; it is communicated through the *Phrommas* as an implicit message: beware of beauty because danger may be hidden within – the lesson learned from the failure of Phra Lak and his monkey army in the *Phrommas* episode’.<sup>345</sup>

In addition, the *Phrommas* repertoire is also used to imply a sense of Siamese civilisation through entertainment. As the *Phrommas* repertoire was created during King Rama V’s reign (1868-1910) in which there was an extremely strong surge of colonisation throughout Southeast Asia, even though Siam itself evaded the direct colonial control of Western powers, the kingdom had to face extreme change, integration, and external territorial losses to remain independent’.<sup>346</sup> Western culture somehow dominated Siamese cultural standing and inspired a paradoxical cultural expression within Thai performing arts, with the *Phrommas* repertoire perhaps being one of the clearest results of this phenomenon.

On the one hand, the idea of ‘musical selection’ was the inspiration to create the *Phrommas* repertoire originally known as ‘*bot konsoet*’ by Prince Naris under the command of King Rama V. The intention for creating the *Phrommas* repertoire was to seek a new form of Siamese court entertainment to be exhibited for a foreign audience. Some of the concepts of Western music had been brought into presenting the *Phrommas* repertoire with this brand new label.

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<sup>345</sup> Lumyong Sowat, interviewed by Suchada Sowat, Jan 15, 2016.

<sup>346</sup> Wyatt, *Thailand: A Short History*, 166.

On the other hand, the way in which '*bot konsoet*' was established might be an ironic manifestation of Siamese cultural standing. Using the common word '*concert*' from the Western world mixed with the Siamese word '*bot*' might be an indirect way to equalise Siamese and Western concepts in order to manifest the civilisation of Siamese people through the performing arts. Moreover, it could be said that the idea of 'musical selection' might not really be a brand new musical formation for Thai classical music. It has been found that there were *phleng tap* (a selection of vocal pieces) and *phleng ruang* (a selection of non-vocal pieces) existing in the period of King Rama V; in particular, the *Phrommas* repertoire has been widely called '*Tap Phrommas*' by Thai musicians and dancers. Therefore this could be a somewhat paradoxical and complicated cultural expression, which reflects Thai civilisation through the kind of Thai performing arts seen in the *Phrommas* repertoire.

This external significance of the *Phrommas* repertoire suggests how music is influenced by and adapts to non-musical elements: social, political, and cultural contexts within a particular society, which change and evolve over time. Furthermore, individual experience also plays a key role in contextualising peoples' perception based on those non-musical contexts related to music. Hence, the concept of the significance of the music (the *Phrommas* repertoire) comes into being through complicated layers of related elements, which challenge how we might understand music and its importance within a particular society.

To sum up, it could be seen that the significance of the *Phrommas* repertoire has numerous complicated layers. The *Phrommas* repertoire is a 'multi-expressive art form' in which there are various perspectives associated with both internal and external contexts of music. It reflects not only a musical phenomenon that shows human creativity, but it is also the manifestation of the social and cultural influences of a particular society reflected through the creation, continuation, and implication of music. It is to the deeper details of musical characteristics and their theatrical reflection in varied ways to which we must now turn.

### 7.1.2 The musical characteristics of the *Phrommas* repertoire

The musical characteristics of the *Phrommas* repertoire also display a complexity of music, tradition, and understanding. Cultural understanding has played a key role in the convention of musical meaning based on the narrative that is derived from the dramatic text, because it affects the literal meaning of the dramatic text, the ways to understand the pieces of music within the *Phrommas* repertoire, and the particular meaning of various musical techniques. At its simplest, there are two types of expression within music: direct and indirect. Examples of direct expression can be seen through the meaning of the text in vocal pieces, and in some of the non-vocal pieces through musical motions within melodic and rhythmic features. For example, in vocal pieces such as *Rue Rai* (ร้อยร้อย), *Ling Lot* (ลิงโลด), and *Chang Prasan Nga* (ช้างประสานงา), the lyrics convey the emotion and behaviour of the characters in order to communicate the narrative explicitly, whereas in some non-vocal pieces musical characteristics represent the theatrical meaning, such as with the elegant manner of the *yak* (ยักษ์) (demon)<sup>347</sup> manifested through the regular drumbeat, the precise, predictable, and steady melody of *Krao Nai*, and the *khruem* (กรรม) sound produced by both *klong that* representing a sense of elation in *Krao Ram Phama* (กราวรำพม่า).

On the other hand, indirect expression is mainly reflected through non-vocal pieces, especially *naphat* repertoire in which the meaning may not always be found through melodic or rhythmic means, requiring instead a conventional understanding alongside a cultural interpretation. Boonchuay Sovat has stated that ‘as we have already seen, *Samoe* (เสมอ) is used to represent travelling a short distance along with its complementary piece, *Rua* (รู้), which is always played after *Samoe*, and the idea of using a combination of two pieces indirectly represents elaborate court customs’.<sup>348</sup> In contrast, the uncertain drumbeats used in *Ot* (โอด) represent the unpredictable movement of the teardrops of the actors in that scene (see more details in Chapter 5 in

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<sup>347</sup> The dictionary meaning of *yak* is a giant but it does not quite represent the mythical concept of *yak* or *asura* in Thai *yak* is a supernatural evil being, who is strong, elegant, and wicked than a huge form of human being with no concern of moral perception (giant). Therefore, *yak* should be translated as a demon based on cultural perception in this context.

<sup>348</sup> Boonchuay Sovat, interviewed by Suchada Sowat, Jan 15, 2016.

the *Samoe* and *Ot* analysis).<sup>349</sup> Both direct and indirect expression requires cultural knowledge to understand the way in which the music functions and creates meaning in this new theatrical context. The dramatic text seems to be a central framework, which directs the various representations of music related to the theatre. However, some pieces already have their own conventional meaning set before they are collated to be part of the *Phrommas* repertoire and they appear to have been chosen particularly to suit the broader representational demands of the dramatic text.

Interestingly, different musical techniques are used to enrich both direct and indirect expression. In other words, the meaning of music is bound with the narrative of the theatre, and various musical techniques are built to encourage the imagination by producing particular sounds and rhythm. For example, *khruem* (ครุ่ม) is used particularly in *Krao Ram Phama* (กราวรำพม่า) to stimulate the sense of celebration through evoking the normal sound of the drum in a festive situation, a free rhythmic pattern and *kro tit* (กรอติด)<sup>350</sup> is used in *He Klom Chang* (เห่กล่อมช้าง) to represent the flying movement of the angels, and the interaction between the instrumental parts of *luk lo* (ลูกลื้อ), *luk khat* (ลูกขัด), *luam* (เหลื่อม), and the cooperation between vocal and instrumental parts in *khlae* (เคล้า) found in *Soi Son* (สร้อยสน) are used to represent the interactions between male and female angels (all discussed in detail in Chapter 5).

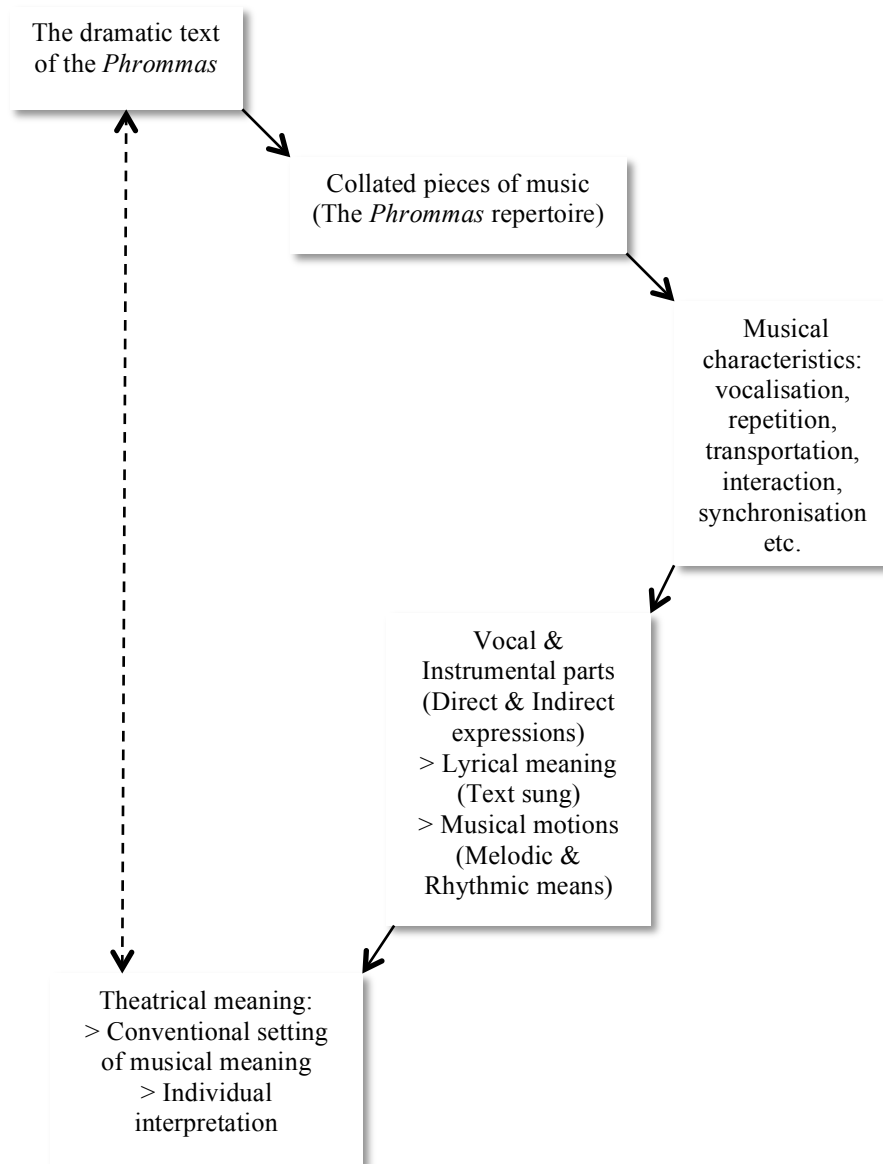
However, it could be said that both direct and indirect expression are practically inseparable. Even though there is a conventional setting of musical meaning for particular pieces such as those from the *naphat* repertoire, there are in fact some *naphat* pieces where direct expression can be seen through the lyrics and other musical motions: they are integrated within the piece of music. Figure shows a possible relationship between the types of musical expressions seen through various musical characteristics of the *Phrommas* repertoire.

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<sup>349</sup> See Chapter 5 for more details of the musical analysis of particular pieces of music.

<sup>350</sup> *Kro tit* (กรอติด) is the musical technique used for melodic percussion instruments to play the piece *He Klom Chang*. The technique was coined and created by Natthaphong Sowat, senior Thai music master and music director of the Royal Khon Performance.

Figure 7.1 Musical expression in the *Phrommas* repertoire



From that figure, the dramatic text of the *Phrommas* works as a vital source to direct the meaning of music through both direct and indirect musical expression. Moreover, direct literal meaning is blended within the vocal music as the lyrics, whereas various musical techniques not only express direct meaning through melodic and rhythmic means, but also through the conventional meaning of particular pieces that have no obvious direct musical relation. However, all these differing characteristics are associated with the narrative of the story as well as any individual interpretation by the audience in relation to the *Phrommas* episode.

There is another way in which musical meaning can be understood, which is associated with the transmission process. It could be said that a conventional perception of musical meaning has been developed in a musician's perception through the process of transmission; this perception is conveyed through an oral tradition and thereby the learning experience of a musician, which enhances the understanding of the musical meaning of the repertoire. In other words, the modes through which to understand musical meaning are developed in the learner during the teaching process and the musical meaning is re-emphasised through the actual performance in which students participate. Traditionally, senior masters do not like talking directly about what the story of the *Phrommas* communicates and how music reflects that meaning, but they let students learn the pieces gradually and encourage them to be involved in actual performance outside teaching sessions; as a result, learners can play that music and integrate it with the theatre to develop the idea of musical expression and theatrical meaning indirectly.<sup>351</sup> On the other hand, current Thai music teachers prefer guiding or telling the narrative of the *Phrommas* repertoire directly, or asking the students to do a short essay about the history and story of the *Phrommas* repertoire alongside learning the pieces in the classroom<sup>352</sup> (see more details in Chapter 6). The introduction of formal assessment has been an important factor, which encourages current teachers to increase the 'academic' knowledge of the history of the repertoire and the story of the *Phrommas* episode. Moreover, the educational system requires a performance examination in which music students play the *Phrommas* repertoire with *khon* dance students. However, there is still no academic musical analysis of the *Phrommas* repertoire, which directly discusses the musical expression associated with it. One of the limitations here is that there are only a few senior masters who have sophisticated knowledge and wide experience of the musical characteristics and its theatrical manifestations associated with the theatre. In addition, because the style of teaching Thai music is based on oral tradition, some concepts within music and its theatrical meaning are only implicitly transmitted from the master to student. However, this current research can hopefully be a preliminary entrance to exploring deeper knowledge

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<sup>351</sup> Lumyong Sowat, interviewed by Suchada Sowat, Jan 15, 2016.

<sup>352</sup> Nittaya Rusamai, interviewed by Suchada Sowat, Apr 13, 2018.



of music for theatre and its various expressions, and to fill a gap within academic writing.

Structurally, it could be argued that musical expression is not the only perspective to represent the characteristic of music for theatre. There are particular musical formations for playing music within the performance practice that put more emphasis on the vocal part to communicate the narrative, which is one of the main purposes of playing music to accompany the theatre. For example, 1) the use of *rap* (รับ), *song* (ส่ง), and *suam* (สาม) found in certain pieces of music focus more on the vocal line by omitting some instrumental parts of the same piece, but the last musical sentence of each section is played by both vocal and instrumental parts to form a connection between the two lines; this formation became one of the prominent features of music for theatre which is different to the formation of playing music as a concert piece. Moreover, a combination of vocal and instrumental parts is another outstanding formation of music used for theatre to increase the complexity of music in the important scenes, for example, the use of *khiao* (เคี้ยว) in *Soi Son* (สร้อยसन) and *Thayae Klong Yon* (ทะแยกลองโยน), and *lamlong* (ลำลอง) in *He Choet Ching* (เห่จิตรฉิ่ง) which are found in the crucial scenes of the *Phrommas* episode. Thus, the formation of musical performance practices taking place within the *Phrommas* repertoire represent how the piece is performed as a musical accompaniment for the theatre.

### **7.1.3 The current state of the *Phrommas* repertoire in contemporary Bangkok**

Through the research, it has emerged that the continued existence of the *Phrommas* repertoire involves a number of interrelated elements which embrace, encourage, and direct its state. There are three main areas involved here: structural elements, questions of transmission, and the broader popularity of the repertoire.

### 7.1.3.1 *Structural elements: system of patronage*

The crucial structure that supports the current state of the *Phrommas* repertoire is the patronage system that comprises both government and royal support with these two factors playing different roles. While the government plays a key role in providing, transmitting, and preserving specific knowledge of the *Phrommas* repertoire through the educational system and performance (seen through the construction and work of the Fine Arts Department, The College of Dramatic Arts, and the Buditpatanasilpa Institute), the system of royal patronage underpins the high value of *khon* performance as a court entertainment that requires refined practices and elaborated elements within its production. These two structural elements are inseparable as the reinforcement for the survival of the *Phrommas* repertoire and *khon* performance, and therefore the *Phrommas* repertoire is one of the examples, which show how traditional culture with its own structure is maintained in a particular society.

### 7.1.3.2 *Devices and functions: transmission and performance*

The important devices, which drive and secure the existence of the *Phrommas* repertoire are transmission and performance, which are inseparable practices and have brought about a continuation of the *Phrommas* repertoire. While students learn the repertoire from the specialist secondary school for performing arts and the conservatory, they can perform the *Phrommas* repertoire in numerous events within *khon* performance, or the *Phrommas* repertoire itself as a piece of music in ‘concert’ contexts (the *Phrommas* repertoire is currently more common as a musical accompaniment for *khon* performance). The processes of both transmission and performance evolve due to social changes, and the oral tradition, which is the major method of transmission of the *Phrommas* repertoire, is now used along with modern means, for example, the way that students listen to the *Phrommas* repertoire through YouTube before learning the individual pieces from the master within the conservatory classroom (see Chapter 6 for more details). Interestingly, even though the *Phrommas* repertoire has often been performed along with *khon* performance, it has never been written down as musical notation – instead, the music has been memorised and passed down to the next generation of Thai musicians, with the dramatic text of *Phrommas* being the only

written document involved. However, this oral status of the *Phrommas* repertoire also allows the musical director to endow a level of internal creativity and decoration based on individual style to the predetermined pieces of music in the *Phrommas* repertoire, which forms a unique pattern of improvisation and creativity.<sup>353</sup>

In respect of the performance of the *Phrommas* repertoire, it could be said that it is mainly found with *khon* performance, with many performances arranged by related organisations such as the Fine Arts Department, The College of Dramatic Arts, the Buditpatanasilpa Institute, and the Royal Khon Performance being the dynamic factors that encourage the continuation of the *Phrommas* repertoire; the more *khon* is performed, the more the repertoire is played and transmitted. In addition, a number of *khon* performances taking place in modern Bangkok demonstrate that the *Phrommas* repertoire has its own present and future derived from the past.

#### 7.1.3.3 *Insider and outsider popularity*

Even though the music of the *Phrommas* repertoire has been largely considered as one of the most famous and ‘complete’ repertoires, the traditions of music and oral transmission have modulated the perception of Thai classical musicians and dancers who are considered to have the clearest insider perspective. Within the process of transmission of this repertoire, it is not only the music but also the consideration of the *Phrommas* as a complete musical repertoire and imaginative *khon* episode that is embedded into a student’s view through this oral tradition, which gradually forms the appreciation of the *Phrommas* for an insider. This view arguably leads to the high number of performances and the continuation of the *Phrommas* repertoire.

However, the high value and profound conception of the music in the *Phrommas* repertoire is not entirely perceived by ‘outsiders’, including the general public. Most audiences can now at least experience the *Phrommas* repertoire by perceiving the visible component. Because the story of the *Phrommas* episode allows current *khon* directors to adapt a wide range of modern theatrical elements into the *khon* performance

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<sup>353</sup> See Chapter 6 for more details on the particular pattern of improvisation and creativity within the *Phrommas* repertoire.

in which the *Phrommas* repertoire is played, modern audiences perhaps tend only to perceive the more spectacular elements of the theatre, with little refined and sophisticated understanding of the music and its importance with the theatre. Thereby, the formation of popularity among outsider groups has a different formation to that of ‘insiders’, but it is however a common feature of other forms of traditional arts surviving within particular societies.

These two different points of view in relation to the popularity of the *Phrommas* repertoire from an insider’s and outsider’s perspective demonstrate the existence of multiple layers to the popularity, and the *Phrommas* repertoire survives as a kind of performing art perceived by different groups of users and each has its own perception and process for using and considering it. Therefore, the understanding of the phenomenon of the *Phrommas* repertoire’s popularity can form an important aspect of the picture of how classical Thai performing arts survive and are perceived by modern Thai society.

## 7.2 Discussion and future work

The use and function of music are two aspects of how music is located alongside people and their context. Merriam states that ‘use refers to the situation in which music is employed in human action; function concerns the reasons for its employment and particularly the broader purpose which it serves’.<sup>354</sup> From what has been found in the research for this thesis, the use of the *Phrommas* repertoire takes place on two main occasions: 1) as a musical selection known as *bot konsoet* (บทกลอนเส็ด) or *Tap Phrommas* (ตบพรหมมาศ) performed in court during its early origination (see more details in Chapter 3) and 2) a musical repertoire accompanying the theatre which is a subsequent use of the *Phrommas* repertoire and the main focus of this research. On the other hand, the function of the *Phrommas* repertoire is shown through the different purposes for which music is performed, such as representing theatrical meaning through various musical characteristics, accompanying the *khon* performance, and expressing Thai cultural heritage through performing arts.

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<sup>354</sup> Alan Merriam. *The Anthropology of Music*. (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1964): 210.

However, there is an interrelationship between the use and function of the *Phrommas* repertoire. The formation of the music performed on different occasions is shaped by the purpose for playing that music. When the *Phrommas* repertoire is performed as a musical selection, the intention of playing will be different to when it is performed within the theatre. The purpose of playing the *Phrommas* repertoire in theatre is to facilitate and support dance movement and this brings about particular musical techniques such as *suam* (สวม), or *song* (สง) (see more details in Chapter 5). The uses and different functions of the *Phrommas* repertoire thereby overlap and are interlinked. Even though the main focus of this research was to explore the *Phrommas* repertoire used with the theatre, this could lead to future work involving the study of the *Phrommas* repertoire as a musical selection.

Moreover, in the *Phrommas* the function of music is also related to its meaning shaped by the coordination of the dramatic text, conventional meaning of the piece, and cultural understanding. This is clear from a group of *naphat* pieces used in the *Phrommas* repertoire: each *naphat* piece had its own regulated meaning before it was allocated into the *Phrommas* dramatic text but its new context links to both its conventional meaning and the meaning given to it by the dramatic text (see more details in Chapter 5). Both meanings within the dramatic text and the conventional meaning of the piece require a particular cultural background in order to understand them. This is one of the complex functions of music in the *Phrommas* repertoire.

Within the *Phrommas* repertoire, the tradition of using a particular piece of music is constructed based on its conventional orientation within Thai classical music. The category of the pieces is classified from their musical attributes and their use with the theatre such as vocal and non-vocal pieces, the music to accompany particular actions (*naphat*), or a piece to express certain emotions (*phleng sathon arom* เพลงสะท้อนอารมณ์); all elements are based on the story determined by the dramatic text. It could be argued that music for theatre is used under a predetermined framework, which uses various types of music, and it requires not only cultural conception but also an understanding of the musical tradition as well. Hence, it is not in any way a universal meaning because it requires an initial concept associated with a particular cultural perception to understand the music and its function with the theatre.

In terms of the transformation of the *Phrommas* repertoire from the past to the present, the *Phrommas* dramatic text and the *Phrommas* repertoire work in a connected way, which brings about the transformation seen in its two main roles. While the *Phrommas* repertoire was used as a musical selection when it was first created, it became a prototype of music for theatre when it was performed as a musical accompaniment for *khon* (see Chapter 3 for more details about the history and development of the *Phrommas* repertoire). The music and the dramatic text of *Phrommas* have inspired later producers to configure *khon* dance with the *Phrommas* repertoire because the *khon* characters are from the Ramakian epic in which the *Phrommas* episode is included – the effect is a circular one. The common theme of Ramakian is a crucial link, which binds the music and theatre together.

In current research on the musical characteristics of the *Phrommas* repertoire, the analytical framework for Chapter 5 was developed based on an initial concept from Thai scholars and other related elements. The framework groups the pieces into four categories, derived from the most prominent attributes of the music associated with the theatre: 1) voice production, 2) the accompaniment for particular action (*naphat*), 3) the reflection of emotion, and 4) the unique musical features of the repertoire. This framework could be an initial guideline for the direction of future work relating to Thai classical music for theatre. There are a number of Thai classical music repertoires that are used to accompany various types of theatres such as *khon* (โขน), *lakhon* (ละคร) (dance drama), and *hun* (หุ่น) (puppet). The preliminary framework could form the initial step, enabling the researcher to understand the basic concept of this music; different types of theatres employ various kinds of musical accompaniment, and exploring these could be a worthwhile topic for future work in relation to music for other types of Thai classical theatres. Additionally, even though this framework was developed based on the area of Thai classical music and theatre, it could perhaps be expanded in scope to explore something of the diversity of traditional music from Southeast Asia. For example, future work may examine the way that music is used and reflected with the theatre in different traditions throughout Southeast Asia or Thailand and neighbouring countries such as Thailand-Cambodia or Thailand-Burma in order to investigate

commonality, exchange, uniqueness, localisation, and broader cultural influences within different traditions.

In conclusion, the *Phrommas* repertoire has emerged as a musical phenomenon that is used within the particular culture. Its creation history displays how the music functions to serve different social purposes, whereas its continuation demonstrates how the music itself adapts to the changeable external environment and the ways in which it is considered by those within the culture where the music is located. Importantly, the musical characteristics of the *Phrommas* repertoire related to the theatre illustrate not only the unique musical intelligence and creativity of Thai music, but also how culture affects and shapes musical tradition within that particular society. The *Phrommas* repertoire is therefore a prime example of a multi-expressive musical creation of human agents, bound with social, cultural, theatrical, and musical perspectives. This research will hopefully form a guide through which to access the concept of Thai classical music associated with Thai classical theatre, and to expand Thai cultural wisdom through the form of performing arts not just for Thais but also non-Thais, as a way of supporting the cultural diversity on this planet.

## Appendix 1: List of interviewees

1. Mr Boonchuay Sovat, senior Thai classical music master (*pi nai* and others), Chulalongkorn University and Buditpatanasilapa Institute.
2. Mr Lumyong Sowat, senior Thai classical music master (*khong wong yai*), The College of Dramatic Arts.
3. Mr Nattaphong Sowat, senior Thai classical music master (*ranat ek*), Buditpatanasilapa Institute.
4. Ms Nittaya Rusamai, Thai classical music lecturer (*ranat ek*), Buditpatanasilapa Institute.
5. Mr Noppakun Sutprasoet, Thai classical singing master, Buditpatanasilapa Institute
6. Mrs Pattanee Promsombat, senior Thai classical singing master, Fine Arts Department.
7. Mr Sirichaicharn Fachamroon, National Artist of Thailand (in Thai classical music).
8. Mr Surat Chongda, senior Thai classical dance master, Buditpatanasilapa Institute.
9. Ms Trirat Wisutthiphan, Thai classical dancer graduated from Buditpatanasilapa Institute (General conversation).
10. Ms Thassanee Khunthong, National Artist of Thailand (in Thai classical singing).
11. Mr Theeraphat Thongnim, senior Thai classical dance master, The College of Dramatic Arts, Buditpatanasilapa Institute.
12. Mr Veerasak Changkhanon, senior Thai classical dance master, The College of Dramatic Arts, Buditpatanasilapa Institute.
13. Mrs Wattana Kosinanon, senior Thai classical singing master, Buditpatanasilapa Institute.



## Appendix 2: List of video tracks

### The *Phrommas* repertoire

This section provides details of video recordings of the *Phrommas* repertoire. Table 1 gives a list of video tracks of the pieces collected and analysed in Chapter 5 (18 pieces), whilst Table 2 lists video tracks of the entire *Phrommas* repertoire (29 pieces).

**Date of recording:** Jan 11, 2016

**Venue:** Buditpatanasilpa Institute, Bangkok, Thailand

**Performed by:**

*Ranat ek* (treble xylophone): Ms Nittaya Rusamai (นางสาวนิตยา ฐิติรัมย์)

*Ranat thum* (alto xylophone): Mr Witthaya Siphong (นายวิทยา ศิริส่อง)

*Khong wong yai* (large gong circle): Mr Lumyong Sowat (นายลำยอง โสวัตร)

*Pi nai* (double-reed oboe): Mr Boonsek Banchongchat (นายบุญเสก บรรจงจัด)

*Taphon* (double-headed drum): Mr Anipon Sukkun (นายอนิพนธ์ สุขกุล)

*Klong that* (a pair of large barrel-shaped drums): Mr Somwang Sammawon

(นายสมหวัง สัมมาออน)

*Klong khaek* (a pair of double-headed drums): Mr Anipon Sukkun (นายอนิพนธ์ สุขกุล) /

Mr Somwang Sammawon (นายสมหวัง สัมมาออน)

*Ching* (a pair of small cup cymbals): Mr Supachai Khueankaew (นายสุภชัย เขื่อนแก้ว)

Vocalists: Ms Suchada Sowat (นางสาวสุชาดา โสวัตร)

Ms Sasithorn Kuakoon (นางสาวศศิธร เกื้อกุล)

Ms Phatchari Yisong (นางสาวพัชรี ยี่ส่อง)

Mr Sapphawit Phongchantharasathian (นายสรรพวิทย์ พงศ์จันทร์เสถียร)

**Table 1: List of video tracks (analysed in Chapter 5), for folder 1 in DVD**

| <b>Video Track</b> | <b>Name of piece</b>                      | <b>Duration</b> |
|--------------------|---|-----------------|
| 1                  | <i>Phak and Cheracha</i> (พากย์ - เจริงา) | 4.05 mins       |
| 2                  | <i>Rue Rai</i> (ร้อยร้อย)                 | 3.21 mins       |
| 3                  | <i>Rai Rut</i> (ร้อยรูต)                  | 0.13 mins       |
| 4                  | <i>Chang Prasan Nga</i> (ช้างประสานงา)    | 3.01 mins       |
| 5                  | <i>Samoe</i> (เสมอ)                       | 0.35 mins       |
| 6                  | <i>Choet</i> (เชิด)                       | 0.56 mins       |
| 7                  | <i>Rua</i> (รว)                           | 0.56 mins       |
| 8                  | <i>La</i> (ลา)                            | 0.37 mins       |
| 9                  | <i>Krao Nai</i> (กราวไน)                  | 1.16 mins       |
| 10                 | <i>Krao Nok</i> (กราวนอก)                 | 2.16 mins       |
| 11                 | <i>Krao Ram Phama</i> (กราวรำพม่า)        | 0.54 mins       |
| 12                 | <i>Ling Lot</i> (ลิงโลด)                  | 2.18 mins       |
| 13                 | <i>Ot</i> (โอด)                           | 0.23 mins       |
| 14                 | <i>Chom Talat</i> (ชมตลาด)                | 2.12 mins       |
| 15                 | <i>Thayae Klong Yon</i> (ทะแยกกลองโยน)    | 2.53 mins       |
| 16                 | <i>Soi Son</i> (สร้อยสน)                  | 2.27 mins       |
| 17                 | <i>He Klom Chang</i> (เห่กล่อมช้าง)       | 3.15 mins       |
| 18                 | <i>He Choet Ching</i> (เห่เชิดฉิ่ง)       | 2.10 mins       |

**Table 2: List of video tracks (the entire *Phrommas* repertoire), for folder 2 in DVD**

| <b>Video Track</b> | <b>Name of piece</b>  | <b>Duration</b> |
|--------------------|---|-----------------|
| 1                  | <i>Wa</i> (วา)  | 1.31 mins       |
| 2                  | <i>Samoe and Rua</i> (เสมอ-รัว)   | 1.47 mins       |
| 3                  | <i>Phak-Charecha</i> (พากย์-เจรจา)  | 4.05 mins       |
| 4                  | <i>Krao Nai and Choet</i> (กราวไน-เชิด)   | 2.12 mins       |
| 5                  | <i>Mon Ram Dap</i> (มอญรำดาบ)   | 3.08 mins       |
| 6                  | <i>Rue Rai</i> (รื้อร้าย)   | 3.35 mins       |
| 7                  | <i>Phram Ok and Rua Thaiphlang Phram Ok</i><br>(พราหมณ์ออก และรื้อท้ายเพลงพราหมณ์ออก) | 1.43 mins       |
| 8                  | <i>Chang Prasan Nga</i> (ช้างประสานงา)  | 3.15 mins       |
| 9                  | <i>Farang Khuang</i> (ฝรั่งควง)   | 1.17 mins       |
| 10                 | <i>Tra Non and Rua</i> (ตระนอน-รัว)   | 3.04 mins       |
| 11                 | <i>Chom Talat</i> (ชมตลาด)  | 2.26 mins       |
| 12                 | <i>Bat Sakuni and Rua Thaiphlang Bat Sakuni</i><br>(บาทสกุณี-รื้อท้ายเพลงบาทสกุณี)    | 4.17 mins       |
| 13                 | <i>Krao Nok</i> (กราวนอก)   | 2.30 mins       |
| 14                 | <i>Thayae Klong Yon and Choet</i> (ทะแยกลองโยน-เชิด)                                  | 4.35 mins       |
| 15                 | <i>Krabok and Khaek awang chan diao</i> (กระบอก-แขกอาหวังชั้นเดียว)                   | 1.53 mins       |
| 16                 | <i>Soi Son-Phleng Rew-La</i> (สร้อยสน-เพลงเร็ว-ลา)                                    | 4.02 mins       |
| 17                 | <i>He Klom Chang</i> (เห่กล่อมช้าง)   | 3.24 mins       |
| 18                 | <i>Phat Cha</i> (พัดชา)   | 1.15 mins       |
| 19                 | <i>Malaengwan Thong</i> (แมลงวันทอง)  | 1.30 mins       |
| 20                 | <i>He Choet Ching, Rai Rut, Ot</i> (เห่เชิดฉิ่ง-ร้ายรูด-โอด)                          | 2.48 mins       |
| 21                 | <i>Ling Lot</i> (ลิงโลด)  | 2.22 mins       |
| 22                 | <i>Ling Lan and Ot Hap</i> (ลิงลาน-โอดแหบ)  | 1.40 mins       |
| 23                 | <i>Krao Ram Phama and Choet</i> (กราวรำพม่า-เชิด)                                     | 1.48 mins       |

# Appendix 3: The *Phrommas* dramatic text (Thai)

The *Phrommas* dramatic text used as lyrics of the *Phrommas* repertoire

by Prince Narisaranuvatiwongse

บทคนเสียด

เรื่อง รามเกียรติ์ ตอน อินทรชิตแผลงศรพรหมาส

โหมโรง

เสมอ

พากย์

|                              |                   |
|------------------------------|-------------------|
| เมื่อนั้นทศพัศตร์ยักษ์       | ออกมุขมนตรี       |
| แลศรีสประพาสราชการ           |                   |
| สารันต์ทศทูลบมิทาน           | สมเด็จพระเจ้าหลาน |
| ไปรณรงค์รามมา                |                   |
| เสียดเสียดทศโยธา             | เสียดเทพศาสตรา    |
| พระองค์ก็เสียดชีวัน          |                   |
| ฟังข่าวฝ่าฝืนเพียงเพลิงกัลป์ | เจ็บใจจาบัลย์     |
| แล้วนั่งคะนึ่งในใจ           |                   |

เจรจา

ไท่ท้าวเจ้าอสูร มีพระราชบัญชา สั่งเสนากาลสุร ให้ไปทูลอินทรชิต ว่าแสงอาทิตย์สิ้นชีวัน มังกรกรรฐ์เสียดชีวาคม  
สึกองอาจอีกอีก จะหนักมาพระนคร เร่งซุบศรพรหมาส ยกไปพิฆาตไฟรี อย่าช้าที่ชิงชัย รีบไปบอกภูริกภูบัดเดี๋ยวนี้

ร้องเพลงกราวโน

|                      |                         |
|----------------------|-------------------------|
| บัดนั้น              | กาลสุรเสนินมีศักดิ์     |
| รับสั่งบังคมทศพัศตร์ | ขุนยักษ์รีบเหาะระเห็จไป |

ปีพาทย์ทำเพลงเจ็ด

ร้องเพลงมอญรำคาบ

|                             |                             |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| ครั้นถึงโรงราชพิธิ          | กาลสุรเสนินบังคมไหว้        |
| ทูลว่าพระบิดรงค์ทรงไชย      | ให้มาทูลข่าวปัจจามิตร       |
| แสงอาทิตย์ฤทธิรอนมังกรกรรฐ์ | ไปโรมรันเสียดพัศดับจิต      |
| ขอให้พระองค์ทรงฤทธิ         | ไปเช่นฆ่าปัจจามิตรให้มรณา ฯ |

ร้องรำยัด

|                              |                          |
|------------------------------|--------------------------|
| เมื่อนั้น                    | อินทรชิตลิตพิศศักดิ์ยกยา |
| ได้ยื่นบอกออกความอัปรา       | โกรธาลิ้มเนตรเห็นเสนี    |
| ลุกขึ้นกระเทิบบาทหวาดไหว     | เหม่อไถ่กาลสุรยักษ์      |
| มาพูดให้เป็นกลางพิธิ         | ชีวิตมึงถึงที่จะบรรลัย   |
| นี่หากคิดนึกเดี๋ยวว่ารับสั่ง | จะหยุดยั้งยกโทษโปรดให้   |
| ว่าพลางทางทรงศรชัย           | คลาไคลออกจากโรงพิธิ ฯ    |

พราหมณ์ออก

ร้องช้างประสานงา

|                            |                              |
|----------------------------|------------------------------|
| จึงตรัสสั่งรุทรการชาญกำแหง | จะเปลี่ยนแปลงกายกูเป็นโกสิย์ |
|----------------------------|------------------------------|

จงให้การุณราขอสุรี  
อัน โยธาทั้งหลายให้กลายเพศ  
ให้สำหรับขับราระบำบรर्थ

บัดนั้น  
มาเร่งรัดจัดหมู่สุรี

เมื่อนั้น  
จึงขึ้นบนแท่นสุวรรณบรรจง

เป็น โกสิย์ทรงเครื่องเรื่องอร่าม  
จับพระแสงพรหมาศยาตรา

ขึ้นทรงคอคชาเอราวัณ  
ขยายยกโยธาคลาไคล

ช้างเอษ้างนิมิต  
เริงแรงกำแหงหาญ  
ผูกเครื่องเรื่องทองทอ  
ห้อยหูฟุ่จามรี  
เครื่องสูงเรียงสามแถว  
อภีรมลันขุมสาย  
กลองชนะประ โคมครึก  
แตรสังข์ส่งสำเนียง  
สาวสุรางค์นางรำฟ้อน  
นักสิทธิ์ฤทธิรงค์

ครั้นถึงที่ประจันบานราษฎร์อน  
กับทั้งองค์พระลัทธิศักดิ์กดา  
จึงหยุดช้างทรงองอาจ  
ให้กุมภัณฑ์บรรดาจำแลงคน

บัดนั้น

แปลงอินทรีย์เป็นคชาเอราวัณ  
เป็นเทเวศร์สุรางค์นางสวรรค์  
เร่งเตรียมไว้ให้ทันฤกษ์ดี ๆ

### ร้องฝรั่งควง

รุตการประณตบทศรี  
คอยตามภูมิมรณรงค์ ๆ

### ร้องตระ

อินทริชิตชื่นชมสมประสงค์  
จำแลงแปลงองค์สุรา ๆ

### ร้องขมตลาด

ล้วนแก้วกำงามวามเวหา  
เสด็จมาเกษสุวรรณทันใด ๆ

### บาทสฤณี

### ร้องกราวนอก

ทหารแห่โห่สนั่นหวั่นไหว  
ลอยฟ้ามาในโพยมมาน ๆ

### ร้องทะเลกลองโยน

เหมือนไม้ผัดช้างมัจฉาน  
ชาญศึกสู้รู้ทั่วทั้งที่  
กระวีลทองหล่อทองแสงศรี  
ปกตระพองทองพรรณราย  
ลายกามแก้วแสงแพรวพราย  
บังแทรกอยู่เป็นคู่เคียง  
มโหรีทีก๊กก้องเสียง  
นางจำเรียงเคียงช้างทรง  
ดั่งกินนรเน่งนวลหงส์  
ถือทวนธงลิวลอมมา ๆ

### เชิด

### ร้องเพลงกระบอ

เห็นวามรนับแสนแน่นหนา  
ขึ้นรถรัตนายู่กลางพล  
ลอยเลื่อนเกื่อนกลางกลางเวหน  
ไล่กลขับราระบำบรर्थ ๆ

### ร้องแขกคาเสื่อ (อีกฉบับหนึ่ง ร้องแขกอะหวัง)

รูปนิมิตฤทธิแรงแข็งขัน

สาวสุรางค์นางฟ้าเทวี

บังคมคัลค่านับรับบัญชา ฯ

ต่างจับระบำรำฟ้อน  
รำเรียงเคียงลมประสมดา  
ซ้องจังหวะประเท้าเกล้าคล่อง  
วงเวียนเทียนหันกันกลาง

เมื่อนั้นพระลักษณะ  
ทั้งพวกพลาการ  
หมายว่าสุรินทร  
พระเพลิงเจริญตา

เมื่อนั้น  
เห็นข้าศึกเสียดังเล็งใจ

พาดสายหมายเขม้นเช่นเขี้ยว  
สังเกตรององค์พระลักษณะอนุชา

ลูกศรกระจายดังสายฝน  
แล้วต้องพระอนุชาเสนาใน

บัดนั้น  
ขึ้นทะยานคาลโกรธตั้งอัคคี  
เหตูใดไปเข้าข้างพวกยักษ์  
ภูจะล้างชีวันให้บรรลัย  
ว่าพลาถรณ์ โมน โจนทะยาน  
จ่างหักคอกพญาอร่าวัน

เมื่อนั้น  
ไม่หลีกหลบขบฟันประจันบาน  
หันเหียนเปลี่ยนท่าง่าสร้อง  
ดกกระเด็นไปกับเศียรกริ

ดีใจไพร่พินาศสิ้น  
ทั้งโยธิสมคะเนเฮฮา

### ร้องสร้อยสน

ทอดกรกริครายซ้ายขวา  
เลี้ยวไล่ไขว่คว้าเป็นท่าทาง  
เลี้ยวลอดสอดคล้องไปตามหว่าง  
เป็นคู่คู่อยู่กลางอัมพร ฯ

### ร้องกล่อม (เห่กล่อมช้าง)

ผู้ทรงศักดิ์แลทรงศร  
คูร่าฟ้อนบนเมฆา  
สุรอัปสรเชอหรรษา  
ทั้งพลสาววานรไพร ฯ

### พัดชา

### ร้องแมลงวันทอง (อีกฉบับหนึ่ง ร้องกระบอกทอง)

อินทรีชิตินดีจะมีไหนด  
จึงจับศรชัยขึ้นบูชา

### ร้องเกริ่น (เห่เชิดฉิ่ง)

น้ำวเหนี่ยวด้วยกำลังองศา  
อสุราก็ลั่นไปทันใด ฯ

### เชิดกลอง

### ร้องเชิดรำย

ตกถูกสิงพลงไม่ทนได้  
สลบไปไม่เป็นสมประดี ฯ

### โอด

### ร้องถึงโลก

หนุมานไม่ต้องศรศรี  
ชี้หน้าว่าเหวยสหัสไณย  
มาแผลงผลาญพระลักษณะให้ดิ้นย  
ให้สาใจอินทราที่อาธรรม  
ขึ้นตีความท่ายคชอาสัณ  
ชิงคันทศกดิ์มีฆวาน ฯ

### ร้องถึงลาน

อินทรีชิตฤทธิไกรใจหาญ  
รอนราญคัดฟันทันท่วงที  
ดีต้องหนุมานชาญไชยศรี  
สลบพับอยู่กับที่ยุทธนา ฯ

### โอดแหบ

### ร้องกรวราพม่า

อสุรินสรวลสันต์หรรษา  
กินเข้าลงกาธานี ฯ

### วาลงโรง (ปัจจุบัน-เพลงเชิด)

## Glossary

|                          |  |
|--------------------------|--|
| <i>Atham</i> (อธรรม)     | Evil, the devil, immorality.   |
| <i>Atra</i> (อัตรา)      | Musical metre used to measure the length of Thai piece.  |
| <i>Bat</i> (บาท)         | 1) Thai currency (Baht);<br>2) The term for a single line in <i>klon suphap</i> (กลอนสุภาพ) (a Thai classical verse form).   |
| <i>Bot</i> (บท)          | 1) A transcription;<br>2) The role of an actor in the theatre;<br>3) Lyrics used in vocal music for theatre.   |
| <i>Chan</i> (ชั้น)       | Metric level used to identify different numbers of the piece's length, including <i>sam chan</i> (which means three), <i>song chan</i> (which means two), and the measurement of the piece's length. |
| <i>Chap</i> (ฉับ)        | The damped sound produced by the <i>ching chan diao</i> (which means one).   |
| <i>Changwa</i> (ฉิ่งหวะ) | Rhythmic pattern employed in particular pieces (instrument) to accent the strong beats of the music; usually played alternately with <i>ching</i> (2).   |
| <i>Ching</i> (ฉิ่ง)      | 1) The name of the musical instrument (see below);<br>2) The undamped sound produced by the <i>ching</i> (instrument) to give the main rhythmic pattern in the ensemble.                             |
| <i>Diao</i> (เดี่ยว)     | A solo.  |

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <i>He</i> (เห่)                            | A vocalisation involving slow and refined vocal techniques.  |
| <i>Ho</i> (โห่)                            | A type of voice projection used to suggest cheerfulness.   |
| <i>Hom rong yen</i> (โหมโรงเย็น)           | The Evening Overture   |
| <i>Kham klon</i> (คำกลอน)                  | Term used within the Thai musical community for a single line of Thai verse employed as lyrics in the vocal music; it can also be abbreviated as <i>kham</i> (คำ). |
| <i>Khamrong</i> (คำร้อง)                   | Lyrics used in Thai classical singing derived from traditional Thai verses.  |
| <i>Khaprong</i> (ขับร้อง)                  | Thai classical singing.  |
| <i>Khiao</i> (เคล้า)                       | The way that vocal and instrumental parts play alongside each other based on the <i>luk tok</i> (ลูกตก).   |
| <i>Khrom</i> (คร่อม)                       | A manner of performing music with an unexpected rhythm.  |
| <i>Kro</i> (กรอ)                           | A musical technique of extending the duration of a note through trilling.  |
| <i>Kro tit</i> (กรอติ๊ด)                   | A musical technique established by Natthaphong Sowat (developed from <i>kro</i> or trilling) particularly used in the piece <i>He Klom Chang</i> (เห่กล่อมช้าง).   |
| <i>Lakhon duekdamban</i><br>(ละครดีกตำบรพ) | The court dance-drama with refined dance movements performed with elaborate musical accompaniment.   |
| <i>Lakhon nai</i> (ละครใน)                 | The court dance-drama with refined dance movements.  |
| <i>Lakhon nok</i> (ละครนอก)                | The outside court dance-drama.   |



|                            |   |
|----------------------------|---|
| <i>Lamlong</i> (ลำลอง)     | The way that vocal and instrumental parts play alongside each other with no concern about the relationship to <i>luk tok</i> (ลูกตก).   |
| <i>Ling</i> (ลิง)          | A monkey; the term is also used in the theatre for the monkey character in the Ramakian epic.   |
| <i>Luam</i> (เหลื่อม)      | Where an instrumental part is divided into two groups (leader and follower groups): both groups play the same musical material, but with the follower group delayed by a few beats.               |
| <i>Luk khat</i> (ลูกขัด)   | Where an instrumental part is divided into two groups (leader and follower groups); leading and following groups play different material (question by leading group – answer by following group). |
| <i>Luk khu</i> (ลูกคู่)    | Group singing; the term is particularly used in vocal practice for theatre.   |
| <i>Luk lo</i> (ลูกล้อ)     | Where the instrumental part is divided into two parts (leader and follower): leading and following groups play the same materials (question – answer).  |
| <i>Luk tok</i> (ลูกตก)     | The principal notes within the basic melody acting as a skeleton within the piece to be adapted to the various realisations of musical instruments and the voice.                                 |
| <i>Nang</i> (นาง)          | 1) An article to identify married women;<br><br>2) Female character in Thai classical theatre, including angel and human.   |
| <i>Nang yai</i> (หนังใหญ่) | Thai large shadow play.   |
| <i>Naphat</i> (หน้าพาทย์)  | A category of Thai musical piece used for accompanying ritual and the theatre.  |
| <i>Nathap</i> (หน้าทับ)    | A drum pattern played along with particular Thai traditional pieces. Based on the characteristics of  |

|                                |  |
|--------------------------------|--|
|                                | the piece, it is one of the types of Thai rhythmic pattern.  |
| <i>Phleng phro</i> (เพลงเพราะ) | A term that describes the aesthetic beauty of a piece of music.  |
| <i>Phoei</i> (เพ็ญ)            | The word yelled after finishing a single unit of <i>Phak</i> (พาทย์) in <i>khon</i> performance.   |
| <i>Phra</i> (พระ)              | 1) The Buddhist monk;<br><br>2) Male character in Thai classical theatre, including king, god and human.   |
| <i>Piphat</i> (ปี่พาทย์)       | A kind of Thai musical ensemble accompanying the theatre and the ritual.   |
| <i>Prayok</i> (ประโยค)         | A unit of musical structure (phrase) of Thai music longer than <i>wak</i> (วรรค).  |
| <i>Rabam</i> (ระบำ)            | Choreographed dances for specific functions and occasions.   |
| <i>Rap</i> (รับ)               | The performance practice where vocal and instrumental parts are played alternately.  |
| <i>Rua</i> (รัว)               | 1) The name of the <i>naphat</i> piece in which some musical phrases sustain a particular note by repeating it at an accelerating rate; <i>Rua</i> is used to describe supernatural action;<br><br>2) The way of playing percussion instruments by repeating a particular note with alternating hands. |
| <i>Song</i> (ส่ง)              | A musical technique in which the instrumental part plays a particular melody to hand over to the vocal part.   |
| <i>Suam</i> (สาม)              | A musical technique in which the instrumental part plays along with the vocal part to create a smooth join.  |
| <i>Thamma</i> (ธรรมะ)          | Goodness, virtue, morality.  |

|                                |  |
|--------------------------------|--|
| <i>Thamnonglak</i> (ทำนองหลัก) | The basic melody of the ensemble which forms the skeleton of the piece; it is normally provided by the <i>khong wong yai</i> (Large gong circle).  |
| <i>Thang</i> (ทาง)             | 1) A unique style of musical performance created by a particular master;<br><br>2) The idiomatic realisation of a particular musical instrument developed from the basic melody, e.g. <i>thang ranat ek</i> ( <i>ranat ek</i> 's realisation), <i>thang ranat thum</i> ( <i>ranat thum</i> 's realisation), etc;<br><br>3) Different modes or 'keys' used in Thai music. |
| <i>Thon</i> (ท่อน)             | A unit of a Thai piece or a particular section within the piece.   |
| <i>Thon</i> (ถอน)              | A musical practice in which the melodic instruments play fewer notes alongside the faster speed of the rhythmic instruments; found in the piece <i>Choet</i> (เชิด).   |
| <i>Thuan</i> (ทวน)             | Repeating to re-emphasise a particular phrase of a piece.  |
| <i>Ton bot</i> (ต้นบท)         | A solo voice; the term is particularly used in vocal practice for theatre.   |
| <i>Tua</i> (ตัว)               | A unit of the piece <i>Choet</i> (เชิด).   |
| <i>Uan</i> (เอื้อน)            | Wordless vocalisation; the prominent characteristic of Thai classical singing.   |
| <i>Wai khru</i> (ไหว้ครู)      | A musical ritual influenced by Hindu tradition; held annually to make an offering to musical gods and deceased Thai music master, it is an important ceremony to give a sense of right of passage to Thai musicians to pass particular level of learning music; especially musicians who play <i>Piphat</i> instruments.   |
| <i>Wak</i> (วรรค)              | A small unit of musical phrase in Thai music.  |

*Yak* (ยักษ์)

A demon character in Thai classical theatre; can be used for both male and female demons. It is also considered as the character of the evil side from the Ramakian epic.

**List of musical instruments used in the *Piphat* ensemble for *khon* performance:**

|                                    |   |
|------------------------------------|---|
| <i>Ranat ek</i> (ระนาดเอก)         | Treble xylophone made from hard wood considered as the leader of a number of Thai music ensembles, especially the <i>Piphat</i> ensemble. |
| <i>Ranat thum</i> (ระนาดทุ้ม)      | Alto xylophone made from bamboo.  |
| <i>Khong wong yai</i> (ฆ้องวงใหญ่) | Large gong circle.  |
| <i>Khong wong lek</i> (ฆ้องวงเล็ก) | Small gong circle.  |
| <i>Pi nai</i> (ปี่ใน)              | A double-reed oboe.   |
| <i>Taphon</i> (ตะโพน)              | A double-headed drum.   |
| <i>Klong khaek</i> (กลองแขก)       | A pair of double-headed drums.  |
| <i>Klong that</i> (กลองทัด)        | A pair of large barrel-shaped drums.  |
| <i>Ching</i> (ฉิ่ง)                | A pair of small cup cymbals considered as the most important rhythmic and time-keeping instrument within the musical ensemble.            |
| <i>Krap huang</i> (กรับพวง)        | A small hand-clapper made from thin pieces of wood separated by a number of brass leaves.   |
| <i>Krap sepha</i> (กรับเสภา)       | A pair of hand clappers made from pieces of hard wood.  |
| <i>Krong</i> (โกร่ง)               | A horizontal bamboo rod mounted on a stand, played with two sticks.   |

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*Narisaranuvatiwongse* [The collection of Prince Naris's dramatic texts]

ชุมนุมบทละครและบทขับร้องพระนิพนธ์ในสมเด็จพระเจ้าบรมวงศ์เธอเจ้าฟ้ากรมพระยานริศรานุวัดติวงศ์.

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