



PHLENG PHASA: EXOTIC IN THAI MUSIC

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Abstract

In the context of increasing global cultural exchange, the evolution of Thai music reflects deep-rooted interactions between local traditions and foreign influences. This research explores Phleng-Phasa, a unique genre in Thai music that exemplifies the dynamic cultural interplay between Thailand and other nations through sound, storytelling, and artistic adaptation. By examining how Thai musicians historically responded to cross-cultural encounters—whether through trade, diplomacy, migration, or war—this study reveals how global interaction shaped a distinctive musical identity within Thai tradition. The purposes of this research were: to study the history, music traits, utilization, and the new creation of Phleng-Phasa (foreign accent) in Thai music. The research methodology was qualitative, including document research and fieldwork, gathering data by interviewing three key informants and analyzing the data through descriptive analysis. **The research findings were:** (1) Phleng-Phasa was an authentic Thai composition created by ancient Thai composers inspired by foreign people and foreign musical cultures. These interactions—through trade, marriage, and even warfare—encouraged Thai musicians to compose music that imitated the melodies, idioms, and rhythms of other nations. The resulting songs included newly composed works, adaptations of original melodies, or reimagined pieces



named by adding the nation's name before the title. This genre was categorized as Phleng-Phasa (literally “language song”); (2) The musical traits of Phleng-Phasa included imitation of foreign musical idioms, rhythms, instrumental tone colors, and textual phonetics from languages such as Mon, Burmese, Khmer, Lao, Vietnamese, Malay, Japanese, and Western languages. Contemporary compositions also incorporate elements from Japanese, Korean, Caribbean, and African music; (3) The utilization of Phleng-Phasa appeared in two main forms: for general entertainment and as accompaniment in traditional Thai dramatic arts like Khon (masked drama) and Lakhon (stage drama); and (4) While new Phleng-Phasa compositions continue to emerge, they remain relatively rare in the modern era.

Keywords: Phleng-phasa, Exotic Thai music

Introduction

Phleng Phasa (literally, “language song”) is a type of traditional Thai music that arises from the fusion of Thai musical culture with other musical cultures different from the main tradition of Thai music. This cultural blending, or acculturation, occurs through four main cases: 1) migration of other ethnic groups or people from different regions into Thailand; 2) commercial contact and trade; 3) intercultural marriage; and 4) war between groups (Tramote, 1997). Foreigners who came to Thailand did not arrive empty-handed but brought with them their musical culture. Some brought musical instruments; others brought vocal traditions, whether for entertainment or rituals. When the opportunity arose, they performed with their instruments and sang their songs. Observant and intelligent Thai musicians took note of these musical and lyrical elements, adapting them to fit Thai musical characteristics and integrating them with existing Thai music. Sometimes they composed entirely new songs inspired by these ideas or borrowed parts of foreign melodies to incorporate into newly arranged compositions, which led to the development of distinct musical traits in Thai music not previously present.

What Thai musicians borrowed from these foreign and intercultural influences were musical idioms and language accents. These musical traits were



collectively called “Phleng Phasa” (language songs). Phleng Phasa originated in two ways: from intercultural music within the country (intracountry) and from foreign cultures outside the country (intercountry) (Royal Academy, 2006). Examples of intracountry intercultural music include the Talung accent from Southern Thailand and the Lao accent from Lanna (Northern Thailand). Examples of intercountry intercultural music include accents from the Mon, Burmese, Khmer, Vietnamese (Yuan), Chinese, Malay (Khaek), Javanese, and Western (Farang) cultures. These various accent-based songs were originally grouped together under the name “the twelve languages suite.”

Research Objectives

1. To study the history of phleng phasa; and 2 to study the music traits of phleng phasa; and (3) to find out the usage of Phleng-phasa.

Literature Reviews

The History of Phleng Phasa (Foreign Accent Music): Phleng Phasa refers to music that features the accent or musical idiom of other nations or is partially derived from foreign musical styles. It can be categorized into two types:" Phleng Ok Sip Song Phasa (Music in Twelve Languages). This refers to a musical performance played after the main theme or standard repertoire. It functions similarly to tailpiece music (phleng hang khruang), but instead of using music from just one foreign culture, it incorporates multiple foreign musical styles into a suite of twelve languages. For example, after completing a piece like Thep Bannot (The Gods Slumber) and finishing with a concluding phrase, the performance continues with Phleng Ok Sip Song Phasa. This sequence traditionally begins with Chinese, Khmer, Talung, and Burmese styles, followed by a selection of others such as Indian, Western, Japanese, Mon, Lao, Vietnamese, Kha, and Ngiao (Royal Academy, 1999). An interesting performance technique in this genre involves changing the percussion instruments to reflect each musical style. For instance, when playing in the Chinese style, performers use Chinese drums or klong tok; for Khmer, klong khaek; for Western styles, Western-style

drums; for Burmese, the long drum; and for Talung, thon, tap, or klong chatrī. These changes not only enhance the authenticity of each musical idiom but also make the performance more enjoyable, providing the audience with a rich and varied musical experience (Roongruang, 2022).

Phleng Ok Phasa (Language-Imitating Music): This refers to music that imitates the accent or idiom of a specific language within the structure of a song. For example, in the piece *Phama Ha Thon* (Five-Section Burmese Song), the first section may imitate either Mon or Burmese styles, or in *Tao Kin Phak Bung* (The Turtle Eats Morning Glory), the return phrase may take on a Chinese or other foreign accent. This is similar in nature to a modal modulation, and is also considered a form of *Phleng Phasa*. Tailpiece music (*phleng hang khruang*) is often composed in *song chan* (second tempo) or *chan diao* (single tempo). Sometimes, these pieces are used to showcase musical skill or to present newly created or experimental styles. The performers often accelerate the tempo, creating a lively and energetic performance. These are highly popular among both performers and audiences. For instance, after playing *Khaek Mon Bang Khun Phrom*, if time allows, performers may continue with *Mon Mop Ruea Song Chan* as the tailpiece. This *Mon Mop Ruea* is thus classified as tailpiece music. In general, tailpiece music is organized into suites based on the musical accent, such as Indian, Mon, Burmese, Ngiao, Talung, Lao, and Vietnamese. The selection of which suite to perform depends on the accent of the preceding main piece. For example, if the main piece features a Mon accent, such as *Raman Ranut* or *Huan Kham Nueng*, the tailpiece should also be in the Mon style. Likewise, if the main piece is Burmese, Lao, or Vietnamese in style, the tailpiece should correspond accordingly. Emotional tone and mood are also important considerations. However, including tailpiece music is not always necessary, especially if the main piece is already long and includes complex musical techniques—such as *Saen Kham Nueng Thao* or *Phleng Thai Khruang*—which are considered complete on their own.

Another type of *Phleng Ok Phasa* is music that follows the main theme, similar to *Phleng Ok Sip Song Phasa*, but without completing all twelve styles. For instance, in the aforementioned *Thep Bannot*, if not all twelve languages are

performed, it is simply referred to as Phleng Ok Phasa. According to Thai Music Scores, Volume 1 published by the Fine Arts Department, the historical background of Phleng Phasa dates back to the Sukhothai era, during which Thailand began engaging in trade with various foreign nations. These exchanges expanded significantly during the Ayutthaya period, which also saw the arrival of foreign volunteer soldiers. These individuals brought with them their own musical instruments and vocal traditions. Thai musicians and composers learned from these art forms and creatively adapted them into uniquely Thai compositions using foreign musical idioms. Some pieces were entirely original, while others borrowed segments or elements from foreign music, modifying and embellishing them in new ways. These pieces were often named with the foreign nation or language as a prefix to indicate their origin. Such music was used in theatrical performances and court entertainments, especially when depicting foreign characters. In hom rong likay performances (traditional folk opera), particularly in the Nang Hong suite, the Ok Phasa or Ok Sip Song Phasa sections were performed, sometimes including all twelve languages, as was customary in ancient times. (Fine Arts Department, 1996).

Musical Characteristics of Phleng Phasa: Phleng Phasa is a type of music composed by Thai composers who were inspired by songs or melodies from foreign peoples and cultures—both from within and beyond Thailand's borders. The musical characteristics of Phleng Phasa are expressed as follows: **Melodic Accent and Style.** The melodic phrasing and musical expression in Phleng Phasa indicate the nationality or cultural origin of the music. For instance, the music may imitate Lao, Chinese, Indian, or Western styles. These accents are created through either original composition in the style of, or borrowing melodic idioms and phrases from, foreign sources. **Rhythmic Patterns:** The rhythmic structure, or *nha thap* (percussion patterns), used in Phleng Phasa reflects the identity of foreign rhythms. Examples include Indian rhythmic patterns, Lao patterns, Mon patterns, and Khmer patterns, which distinguish the stylistic origin of the music.

Instrumentation: The instruments used in Phleng Phasa are often borrowed or adapted from other cultures. For example: 1) The *klong yao* (long drum) is

derived from the Burmese Kyeezee drum. 2) The klong tok and taew drums are from Chinese influence. 3) The klong took is used in Southern Thai Nora performance. 4) The song na and taphon Mon drums come from the Mon people. 5) Western-style drums are adopted from European traditions. Lyrics: The lyrics are often composed to mimic the phonetic accent of various foreign languages. These lyrics may or may not have literal meaning. When native speakers of those languages hear the songs, they often do not understand the words, because the Thai composers created the lyrics based on their perception of the sounds, rather than accurate linguistic content. Even when original lyrics were known, they were often adjusted to better suit Thai pronunciation and familiar speech patterns (Roongruang, 1980). The Use of Phleng Phasa in Thai Society: Phleng Phasa has been utilized in Thai society in two primary contexts: general entertainment and traditional dramatic performances. Use in General Entertainment: In public or informal entertainment settings, musical ensembles perform Phleng Phasa or music styled with foreign accents that are familiar to the general public. Examples include Lao Charoensri, Khaek Chuean Chao (Indian Invitation Song), Jin Khim Lek (Chinese Small Dulcimer Song), Farang Ram Thao (Western Foot Dance), and Phama Ha Thon (Burmese Five-Section Song). These pieces can be performed by various types of Thai musical ensembles. Use in Khon and Lakhon Performances: In Khon (masked dance-drama) and Lakhon (classical Thai drama), Phleng Phasa is used for characters who represent foreigners. Examples include the Chinese prince in Rachathirat, the kings from the seven cities in Sang Thong during the scene where Rojana chooses a husband, and the scene of Princess Laoweng's battle in Phra Aphai Mani. In these theatrical contexts, the music and singing must reflect the atmosphere, language, and cultural identity of each respective character's nationality.

Research Methodology

The research explores Phleng-Phasa, a unique genre in Thai music that exemplifies the dynamic cultural interplay between Thailand and other nations through sound, storytelling, and artistic adaptation. By examining how Thai musicians historically responded to cross-cultural encounters—whether through trade, diplomacy, migration, or war—this study reveals how global interaction shaped a distinctive musical identity within Thai tradition. The research

methodology was qualitative, including document research and fieldwork, gathering data by interviewing three key informants and analyzing the data through descriptive analysis. gathering data by studying the documents and interviewing three well known key informants: Professor Emeritus Dr. Poonphit Amatayakul; Associate Professor Pakorn Rodchangphuen, and Associate Professor Orawan Banchongsil, analyzing data by descriptive analysis.

Results

History of phleng-phasas: Thai music which are called by foreign names in kind of exoticism are actually composed by Thai composers, who had given to them the foreign accents, and thus give the correct implication by naming them according to the nationality of the music pattern whose accents had been borrowed and used in that piece; as example in the pleng khaek, (Malay) jin (China) phama (Burma), etc. The ancient Thais' spirit was very high, great respect was observed in guarding their honor in a manner spontaneously showing high level of morality. That is why the Thais usually added the nationality names of the accents imported for use in the musical pieces to guide the themes as props for their own radiance. One can so say that a Thai piece having foreign nationality name is without do not a foreign theme, but a piece composed and originated by a Thai composer. This misunderstanding and show it is still persisting among less learned groups of the population making them look down naturally with despise Thai music pieces carrying names of anything foreign as not genuine Thai traditional musical piece in fact, because of pride over charming their nationality

When calling a Thai music carrying foreign accent as mentioned in the former paragraph, the Thai musicians use the term phleng phasa, such as phasa Khmen (Khmer language), phasa phama (Burmese language), but sometimes the nomination of samniang were used in place the word phasa while give equivalent definition. As to the use of the foreign accent in Thai music, the book titled "Note Phleng Thai Lem Nueng" (Thai Classical Music Book I) published by the Fine Arts Department under the King's patronage in 1961 emphasize that: Since, the Thais have had relations with foreign people, such as Chinese who came to simply establish friendly relation with the Thais, some were settle down in this country.

At a certain period of times, foreign mercenaries serving in the Thai Army; such as Cham, Malaysian and Japanese. These foreign peoples brought with them their own music and instruments, either for the purpose of religious worship or entertainment. The Thai artist among them took closely notice, memorized and studied those foreign musical themes, with a view to broadening their musical outlook, grasped spirit and musical themes of the foreign music. Thai musicians began to compose their own music, using the traditional Thai musical sequences and coloring them with the selected foreign accents, or using short phrases from the foreign music and put it into their new compositions. These pieces of Thai music were given the name of various nationalities, by way of briefing the listeners to the national accents which has been employed, such as pieces which are called Lao siang thian (Lao oracle of light), Khaek Lopburi (Malay at Lopburi province), Mon do dao (Mon gazing the stars), Jin keb bubpha (Chinese picking flowers) and Khawm glawm luk (Khmer lullaby) (Royal Academy, 2007).

The method of composing Thai music in foreign accent is the same as which of composing the variation based on the theme. It is up to a Thai composer to create his own style by imagine of composing a Thai theme with foreign accent color. The underlining reason for it is practice could be: 1 To giving variety to listener; 2 to injecting essentially foreign characters into the drama; 3 to depicting foreign characters opposing and defeated by the Thai army those inspiring the Thai pride of the mightiness of their king; 4 to showing off the high level of ability and skills of Thai musicians in resenting a Thai musical piece beautifully in a foreign theme; and 5 To show off the Thai musical identification.

Music traits of phleng phasa: Phleng phasa manifests itself in five aspects: Mode and scale, Melodical idioms. Beat and Rhythmic Pattern, Instrumental timbre, and Song text. 1) Mode and Scale: A Regular Thai music appeared in pentatonic mode based on seven pitches equidistant tuning system such as 1 2 3 – 5 6, but phleng-phasa such Bhama (Burma) and Mon used hexatonic such as 1 2 - 4 5 6 7 for example. 2) Musical Idioms: There are three kinds of musical idiom found in phleng phasa; using the existed short passage of the original tune; derive the tune from the origin; and compose the new melody by imitate the sound of other music.

A) Using the existed passage of the original tune: this is such as in a tune borrowing. American tune “Marching through Georgia” composed by Henry Clay during American civil war referred to William Tecumseh Sherman’s army marching from Georgia to Savannah port in Georgia in late 1860, this favorite tune has played by Thai ensemble until now a day both instrumental and vocal music with Thai lyric under the title Farang-yihem, the lyric or the text that in-understandable. Another example is the tune that borrowed from Guangdong folk song to put into Thai phleng-phasa Chinese idiom and got Thai title Jin budkri kratha (literally, Chinese melts the pan) is as following. ||-6-5|-6-1|-3135|6---|565-3|2--5|-1-1|-5--|3512|-3--|2321|672|6535|67567| -6--||.

b) Phleng-phasa that derived from original melody: As in Thai tune entitled Yo-salam (title of the tune is meaningless) and is difficult to trace back to its origin except using dept musical structure analysis, and finally the researcher can proof this song derived from American’s tune “You Are My Sunshine”, is as following: ||-512|-3--|-532|-1--|-234|-5-5|6561|-5--|-356|-1--|5654|3--1|2354|3--2|123|2321|612|-1--||.

c) Composing the new melody imitated the sound of foreign tune or language. This kind of tune is hard to understand for one who lack of experience especially for etic (outsider of Thai music culture), but clearly understood for the emic (insider of Thai music culture) because this knowledge is a tacit knowledge, for example:

Mon idiom: || -- 4 | - 7 - 1 | - 2 54 | -2-1 | -7- 2 | 4- 5 | - 7 -2 | 171 -| - 2 - ||

Chinese idiom: || -- 5 | -- 5 | --6- | ---1 | -3 -1 | -3 -5 | -6-- || .

3. Beat and Rhythmic Pattern: The rhythm articulated by ching (a small hand cymbals) in Thai tunes usually play in equal tempo such as || ching -| chab -| ching -| chab -|| (ching is open stroke and chab is damp stroke), but in Chinese accent the ching plays differently as ||----| cing -| ching -| chab -|| For rhythmic pattern (na-thab) that is played by drums to articulate the musical structure in phleng -phasa appeared in variety form bases on kinds of the tunes as shown in the following examples. There are five categories of rhythmic pattern (nathab)

in thai music; nathab probkai, nathab sawng-mai, nathab taphone-klawng, nathab phasa and nathab phised (special nathab). The Nathab phasa is the rhythmic pattern that use for emotional expression of foreign musical language or accent. The following examples present some of nathab-phasa. The terms thang, ting, jo, ja indicate basic drum strokes; thang (low tone, open hand on a big drum face), ting (high tone, open hand on a big drum face), jo (high tone, open hand on a small drum face) and ja (high tone, close hand on a small drum face). Following are some examples of nathab phasa.

Nathab Jin

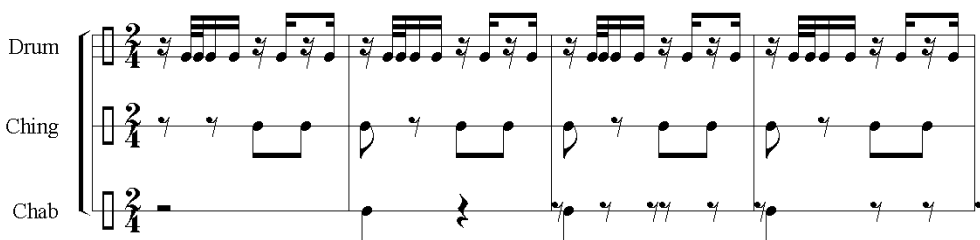


Figure 1. Nathab Jin Music Score.

Nathab Phama

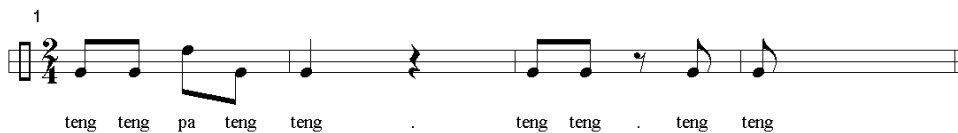


Figure 2. Nathab Phama Music Score.

Nathab Yuan

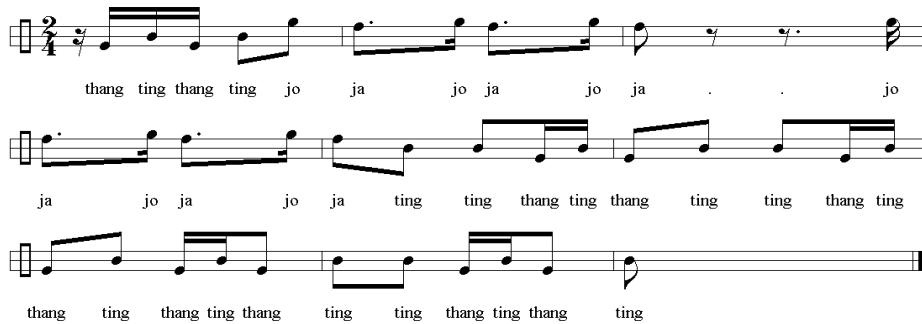


Figure 3. Nathab Yuan Music Score.

Nathab Khaek

Bangkok style

Samchan



Songchan



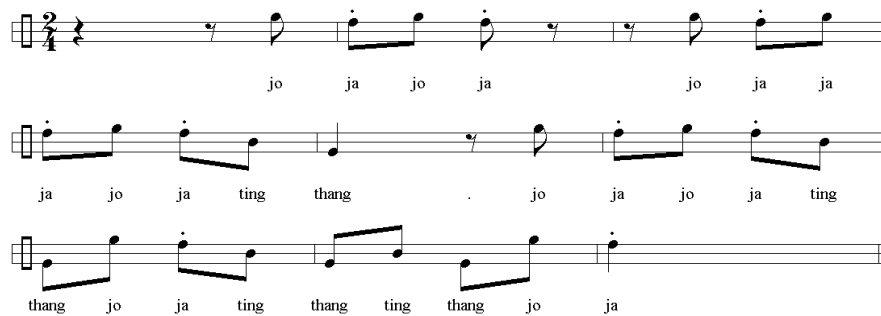
Chandio



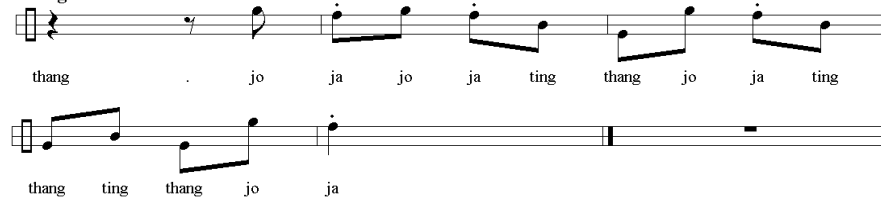
Figure 4. Nathab Khaek Music Score.

Nathab Khmen

Samchan



Songchan



Chandio



Figure 5. Nathab Khmen Music Score.

Timbre of music (instrumental timbre): The standard Thai classical ensemble has its own requirement of instruments for each particular type such as the piphat ensemble consists of melodical percussive instruments, circle-gong set, and xylophones; double reed wind instrument; and rhythmic percussion, drums, cymbals and single gong. The Khruang-sai ensemble consists of floor zither, fiddles and flute. And a mixed ensemble between the two types said earlier namely Mahori ensemble which having three-string fiddle as a lead instrument. To make the sound of music close to foreign music accent, the specific instruments will be added into standard ensemble such as; Chinese drum (klawng-tok), wood block and Chinese cymbals (taew) for Chinese accent; long drums (klawng yao) that derived from Burmese Ozi for Burmese accent and bass drum (klawng American) and snare drum (klawng taek) for Western music accent.

Song text or lyric: The text in phleng-phasas is always created by Thai composers by imitating the accent of foreign language with aware less of the meaning even if the song text included some word from the song origin such as in the song Mon-Yadle; the song text is as follow, ya-le jia-te kalayiam kapon tah gawd teh arwao kalayiam pah la ar ne priang jah priang. This Mon people never understand these words, yes it sounded like Mon language but meaningless. In the Thai song named Farang-Yihem that derived from American's "The Heavenly Bridegroom Soon Will Come", Thai composer wrote the text in Thai to imitate the American language accent as follow.

English	Thai
The Heavenly Bridegroom soon will come	Yihem prai ma su wen su kam
To claim his bride, and take her home	Tu ren ree sa-prai an ted hue hon
To reign will Him on high	Su si dis sa prin aw ra fly
Trim your lamp and be ready	Yor ram yor ram saem re wee ree
For the midnight cry.	Fa la mee nai kraai
None understand this song text, but it sounds close to western.	

Utilizing of Phleng-phasas: Utilizing of phleng-phasas appears in two categories, in musical performance and in performing arts. For musical performance divided in to two occasions, for entertainment and for funeral. For entertainment is to have Thai ensemble such as mahori ensemble, khruang-sai ensemble and piphat ensemble to perform any phleng phasa for any entertain occasion such as for banquets, wedding, meeting etc., and music selected to perform for these occasions must be joyful, not in slow tempo and having nice lyric suited to a specific event, such as the pieces Lao-duangdoen, Khmen-khaokhio, Khaek-khao thao, etc. For funeral; for regular people a regular ensemble will play sad melody such as Yad-le, Mon-kla, etc. For a particular people such as high priest a specific ensemble will be used and specific category of music will be selected to suite with the event and not included in this paper. For performing arts: The foreign accented music or phleng-phasas performs for accompany the performing arts such as khon (mask drama) and lakhawn, both for



lakhawn-nai (Court stage drama) and lakhawn-nawk (Ordinary stage drama) is according to the story and scenery of the drama; regularly in the scene that having the cast performing foreign people as in a drama entitled Sung-thawng in the scenery of Rotchana (a princess) selects her groom from international princes including a prince from Chinese, Burma, Vietnam, Cambodia etc., the music will perform Phleng-phasa matches with each actor.

The new composition of phleng phasa: Now a day, the new lyric of existed phleng-phasa melodies still being composed by the musicians to use in a particular occasion but the new phleng phasa melody is rare. The latest existed phleng phasa were a composition in Java language series (Busensaw, Karat Raya, and Yawa) and Yipoon cha-awn (Japanese accent) composed by Luang Pradit-phairawh and some other works of a few composers. In 1995 Panya Roongruang composed a new foreign accent music entitled Friendship Dance Suite, the suite included Chinese, Korean, Japanese, Malay, Pakistan, Sri-Lanka, Turkey, Spanish and Thai, and later he composed other Japanese, Korean, African, Caribbean, Sound of the Dawn (Waeo Siang Tawan), and Arabian Mood (Arom Arab). These pieces are composed for Thai and Western mixed ensemble, a Thai contemporary music.

Discussions

This research on Phleng Phasa: Exotic Elements in Thai Music has yielded insights that align with and extend the existing body of knowledge in Thai musicology, particularly in relation to cultural fusion and musical innovation. A comparative analysis with related studies provides deeper context for interpreting the significance of Phleng Phasa in both traditional and contemporary musical practice. **First**, this study's identification of Phleng Phasa as music inspired by foreign cultures—through melodic idioms, rhythmic patterns (nha thap), instrumentation, and phonetic lyrics—highlights the historical and ongoing intercultural interaction in Thai music. This aligns with the perspective of Jitratana (2018), who argues that contemporary Thai music is characterized by the creative fusion of Thai and foreign musical elements. The paper emphasizes not only Thai-Western instrumental fusion but also the blending of Thai musical practices in innovative formats. In this regard, Phleng Phasa, though rooted in historical



tradition, may be seen as an early form of contemporary fusion, reflecting a conscious reinterpretation of foreign cultural materials within a Thai artistic framework. This suggests that Phleng Phasa could be redefined as a forerunner of contemporary Thai music due to its experimental use of multicultural idioms and creative adaptation. **Second**, in comparison with the study by Panya Rungreung et al. (2021) on the composition of Arom Arab for a Thai-Western hybrid ensemble, the present research shares a similar creative approach in incorporating the musical features of foreign cultures. While Rungreung's research focuses specifically on West Asian musical traits and applies them in a new composition, Phleng Phasa demonstrates a similar method of imitation and transformation, albeit within a traditional Thai compositional structure. Both studies highlight the role of ethnomusicological knowledge and creative adaptation in producing culturally informed works. Furthermore, the use of specific rhythmic patterns and instrumental timbres in Phleng Phasa reflects the same sensitivity to cultural sound identity found in Arom Arab. **Third**, in comparison to Waew Siang Tawan (Sound of the Dawn), another creative work by Panya Rungreung, which integrates musical elements from East Asia (China, Korea, Japan), the current study also affirms the relevance of intercultural composition in Thai musical creativity. Rungreung's use of ethnographic and analytical approaches to capture melodic, rhythmic, and tuning system characteristics of East Asian music mirrors the researcher's approach in identifying nha thap phasa (language-specific rhythmic patterns) and their application in Phleng Phasa. Both studies emphasize that integrating foreign musical characteristics—whether through tonal systems, rhythm, or structure—contributes to the richness of Thai musical expression and the ongoing expansion of its creative boundaries.

One of the unique contributions of this research is the expanded classification of nha thap into five categories, surpassing the traditional three-pattern model found in prior literature. This includes the identification of nha thap phasa, a type specifically designed to complement the accent and idiom of each Phleng Phasa piece. This finding enhances the understanding of how rhythm serves not only a structural function but also a symbolic one in culturally representative music.

In conclusion, while prior studies focus on the deliberate creation of contemporary compositions through intercultural study and modern ensemble arrangements, Phleng Phasa represents an organically developed cultural form rooted in historical Thai creativity. Nevertheless, the similarities in method—cross-cultural study, musical imitation, stylistic adaptation—reveal that Phleng Phasa embodies principles of musical hybridity and innovation that remain central to both traditional and contemporary Thai music.

New Knowledges

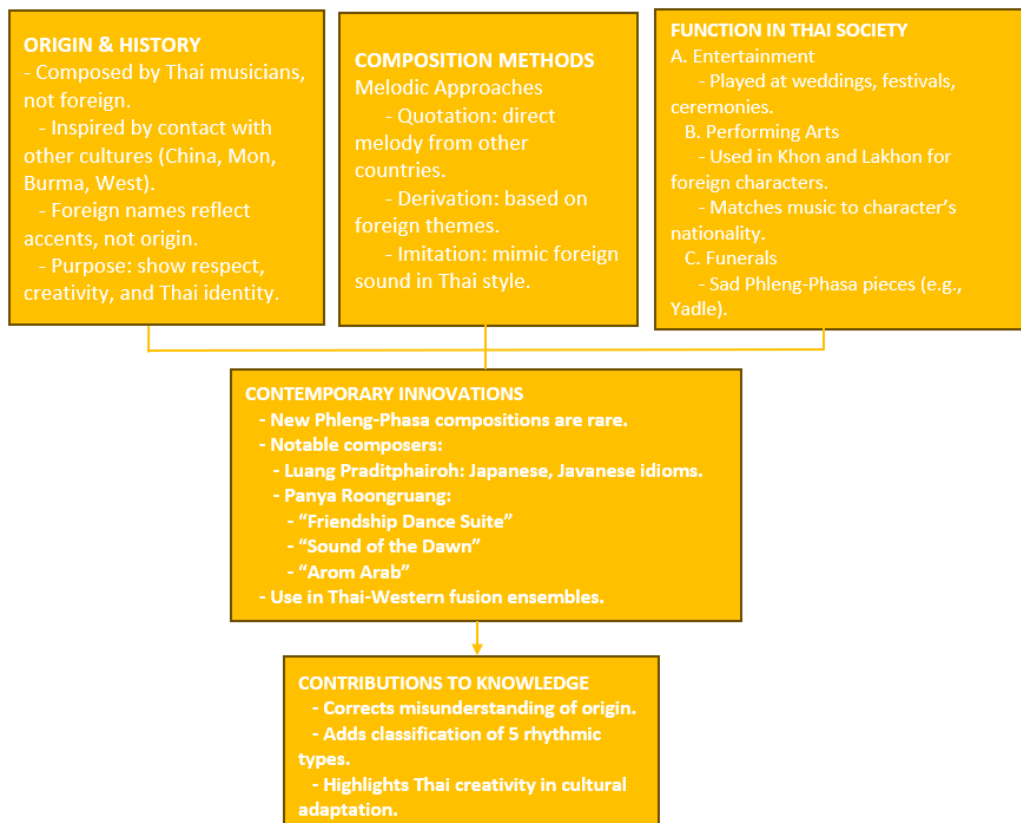


Figure 1: New Knowledges Diagram of Phleng Phasa: Exotic in Thai Music.

Conclusions

The research on Phleng-Phasa reveals that these foreign-accented Thai compositions are not imported works but creative expressions by Thai composers who integrated musical elements from foreign cultures encountered through trade, war, and migration. By imitating or adapting foreign melodies, rhythms, timbres, and linguistic accents, Thai musicians crafted uniquely Thai compositions that reflect cultural interaction while reinforcing national identity. The study identifies five distinct rhythmic patterns, including nathab phasa, and demonstrates how foreign instruments and mimicked lyrics enrich the soundscape. Though new compositions in this style are rare today, the works of prominent composers like Luang Praditphairoh and Panya Roongruang show that Phleng-Phasa continues to evolve within the broader context of Thai contemporary and intercultural music, serving both entertainment and dramatic performance.

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