

ขอบคุณภาพจาก นางสาววราภรณ์ เชิดชู

## สารัตถะพิน: แนวทางสู่การสร้างสรรคเพลงดับ “พินทุกขนิโรธคามินีปฏิปทา”

The Essence of Phin: Conceptual Framework for the Thai Music  
Composition of “Phin-Dukkhanirodhagaminipatipada”

**วราภรณ์ เชิดชู<sup>1</sup>**

Waraporn cherdchoo

E-mail: ann.faa.cu@gmail.com

**คำคม พรประสิทธิ์<sup>2</sup>**

Kumkom pronprasit

<sup>1</sup> Doctoral Student in Doctor of Fine and Applied Arts Program in Fine and Applied Arts, Faculty of Fine and Applied Arts, Chulalongkorn University.

<sup>2</sup> Associate Professor, Dr., Thai Music Section, Department of Music, Faculty of Fine and Applied Arts, Chulalongkorn University.

## บทคัดย่อ

สารัตถะดนตรีพิน: แนวทางสู่การสร้างสรรคเพลงดับ “พินทุกขนิโรธคามินีปฏิบัติปทา” เป็นส่วนหนึ่งของวิทยานิพนธ์การสร้างสรรคผลงานทางดุริยางคศิลป์เรื่อง เพลงดับ “พินทุกขนิโรธคามินีปฏิบัติปทา” โดยมีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อศึกษาข้อมูลดนตรีพินตามแนวคิดทางศาสนาจากหลักฐานประเภทต่าง ๆ เอกสารโบราณแห่งอารยธรรมไทยและอารยธรรมอินเดีย รวมถึงคัมภีร์พระไตรปิฎก ผลการวิจัยพบว่า ส่วนที่ 1 ข้อมูลจากหลักฐานพบพินปรากฏ 2 ประเภท คือ (1) เครื่องดนตรีประเภทลิทท์ แบ่งออกเป็น 2 แบบ คือ แบบเครื่องดีดคอยาว ปรากฏลักษณะเดียวกับกระจับปี่ และแบบเครื่องดีดคอสั้น ได้แก่ พินห้าสาย และ (2) เครื่องดนตรีประเภทเรโซเนตต์ โบว์ คือ พินน้ำเต้าและพินเป็ยะ ส่วนที่ 2 การศึกษาประเด็นเครื่องดนตรี พบว่าเครื่องดนตรีพิน (bin) และวีณา (vina) ของอินเดียปรากฏ 5 ลักษณะ คือ (1) เรโซเนตต์ โบว์ (2) โบว์ ฮาร์ป (3) สตีก์ ชิทเทอร์ (4) ฟลึค ลิทท์ และ (5) กาทรวีณา (gatra vina) (ใช้คำว่าวีณาแต่หมายถึงการขับร้อง) ส่วนเครื่องดนตรีตระกูลพินไทยนั้นพบ 2 ลักษณะคือประเภทเรโซเนตต์ โบว์ และประเภทเครื่องดีดคอยาว ด้านหลังแบน ส่วนที่ 3 พินในพระไตรปิฎกพบว่า (1) ด้านความหมาย พินมีนัยแห่งหลักธรรม คำสอนโดยอุปมาจากสายและเสียงของพินเปรียบตั้งความเพียร ความพยายาม ความซื่อสัตย์ ความตั้งมั่น ความเสียสละ ความลุ่มหลง และพินยังมีนัยแสดงสถานะ เช่น ผู้มีบุญบารมี ผู้เป็นบุคคลสำคัญ สิ่งประเสริฐและธรรมนิยมปฏิบัติ (2) ด้านลักษณะทางกายภาพของพิน สันนิษฐานได้ว่าเป็นรูปแบบฮาร์ป ลิทท์และโบว์ ซึ่งเป็นกลุ่มเครื่องดนตรีเดียวกันกับที่มีใช้ในยุคหลังพระเวท (3) ด้านบทบาทหน้าที่พบว่าพินสามารถเป็นเครื่องทำทำนองและเครื่องทำเสียงครอน ใช้ประกอบการเล่นขับร้อง จึงนำไปสู่การสร้างสรรคโดยใช้ลักษณะดนตรีที่ปรากฏในพระไตรปิฎกเชื่อมโยงกับดนตรีอินเดียในยุคกำเนิดพระพุทธศาสนา

**คำสำคัญ:** พิน, วีณา, การสร้างสรรคทางดนตรี, ทุกขนิโรธคามินีปฏิบัติปทา, การประพันธ์เพลงไทย, ดนตรีพุทธศาสนา

## Abstract

This article is part of a doctoral thesis on the creation of the Thai music composition of “*Phin-Dukkhanirodhagaminiapatipada*”, which aims to study *phin* music from the religious perspectives from various types of evidence, ranging from ancient documents in the Thai and Indian civilizations to the Tripitakata Buddhist scripture. The research findings are divided into three parts. First, it reveals two types of *phin*: 1) a lute falling into two different types:

namely the long-necked plucked lutes, similar in shape to the *krachappi*, and the short-necked plucked lute such as a *phin ha sai* (a *phin* with 5 strings), 2) a resonated bow including the *phin nam tao* and the *phin pia*. Secondly, the findings with respect to organology from a study of Indian lutes (the *bin* and *vina*) reveal five different types of those instruments: (1) resonated bow, (2) bowed harp, (3) stick zither, (4) plucked lute, and (5) *gatra vina* (the word *vina* here refers to singing), while there are two types of *phin* instruments found in Thai culture: resonated bow and long-necked plucked lute with flat-backed sound box. Thirdly, a *phin* mentioned in the Tripitaka Buddhist scripture shows that: (1) in terms of meaning, a *phin* conveys implications of Buddhist teachings. The strings and its sonority are used as metaphors for perseverance, industriousness, honesty, determination, sacrifice and obsession. A *phin* also implies the status of an individual, such as a person of great merits and charismatic authority, a person of great importance and custom of excellence; (2) In terms of its physical characteristics: harp, lute, and bow types of *phin* found, which correspond to the Post-Vedic musical instruments; and (3) In terms of roles and functions, a *phin* can be both melodic and drone instruments accompanying singing. These findings provide a conceptual framework for the creation of a Thai music composition, which the musical traits appearing in the Buddhist Tripitaka and in connection with the Indian music that existed at the onset of Buddhism are utilized.

**Keywords:** *phin*, *vina*, music creation, *Dukkhanirodhagaminipitpada*, Thai music composition, Buddhist music

## Introduction

This article is a summary of the research findings for the second objective (out of three objectives) of the thesis on the creation of a Thai music composition of “*Phin-Dukkhanirodhagaminipitpada*”. Under this research topic, the research project is granted FY2018 Thesis Grant for Doctoral Degree Student established by The National Research Council of Thailand (NRCT). Additionally, alongside an advice and information, this thesis is supported by

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The thesis is a creative composition of *phin* music based on the Buddhist doctrine of *Majjhim Patipada* (the Middle Path) whose full name is “*Dukkhanirodhaḡaminipatipada*”. This doctrine, which comprises eight paths, evolved from the discovery of a process for the contemplation and understanding of the natural philosophy that will eventually lead to the cessation of suffering.

The said path to the cessation of suffering is associated with Indra, an important Hindu god who is widely known and highly revered by most Thais. Indra is a principal deity in Indian mythology who has close connection to Buddha and Buddhism; he appears in many events in the life history of Buddha. Buddhists believe that Indra appeared in a vision to Buddha during his self-period mortification, playing a three-stringed *phin* to remind him of the true path to the cessation of suffering. The plucking of a three-stringed *phin* has the following implications: “...*Too tight a string will break upon plucking, too loose a string will not resonate well. Only a string that is moderately, not too tightly or too loosely stretched, will produce a perfect tune. Upon listening to Indra’s phin music, Phra Mahasat [the Buddha] recognized the implication of the vision and realized that “Majjhim Patibat” (the practicing of moderation) is the only path to enlightenment...*” (Somdet Krom Phra Paramanuchitchinoros, 1965, 117). This anecdote is a perfect synthesis of the belief in Indian gods and a Buddhist doctrine. It represents a creative thinking process that provides solution to the explication of the Middle Path doctrine through an effective metaphor for the application of this Buddhist doctrine to the Buddhists’ ways of life and actions and most importantly the way to attain enlightenment. The musical traits of the *phin* were aptly employed to explain one of the most important Buddhist teachings.

A study of the musical and religious essence of a *phin*, a bin or a vina revealed the apparent aspects of *phin* music that are repeatedly mentioned in various religious contexts regarding the meanings, origins, evidence and musical traits of the musical instruments in the *phin* family during the Buddhist

period. This part also discusses the stories of a *phin* that appeared in the Tripitaka Buddhist scripture which in connection with the existing social, cultural and religious contexts underlying the usage and elements of *phin* music in each period. It also examines implications of the relationship between religions and cultures that contribute to the presence of a *phin* in Thai music culture.

## Research Objective

The objective of this article is to examine data on the religious aspects of *phin* music from diverse sources of evidence, including ancient documents in the Indian and Thai civilizations and the Tripitaka Buddhist scripture, within three areas: (1) essence of the *phin* as a musical instrument regarding its meanings and the origin of the word “*phin*” as well as classification of *phin* musical instruments and evidence of their existence; (2) musical instruments in the vina family in Indian culture and a *phin* in Thai culture; and (3) *phin* in the Tripitaka Buddhist scripture.

## Research Methods

Qualitative research methodology was employed in the following steps:

1. Data collection and documentary research. Surveys of relevant documents, textbooks, academic papers, theses and books in various libraries, such as The Faculty of Arts Library, the music library and the Office of Academic Resources at Chulalongkorn University, The National Library of Thailand and nine other libraries in the United Kingdom, namely, (1) The British Library, (2) The British Museum, (3) School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London (SOAS), (4) University of York, (5) Music Library, Royal Holloway, University of London, (6) Durham University, (7) University of Oxford, (8) The City University, and (9) Horniman Museum & Garden.

2. In-depth interviews and semi-structured interviews of authorities and experts in the field studies of religion and music.

3. Conduct an analysis and synthesis of the research data with bringing about to a framework for the creation of a Thai musical composition.

## Research Results

### 1. Essence of the *phin* musical instruments

#### 1.1 Meanings and origins of the word “*phin*”

The word “*phin*” in the Thai music culture refers to a type of plucked string instrument. The instrument can be called by both Pali and Sanskrit terms (Yupho, 1980, 5). The Sanskrit word for this instrument, which is generally used in Buddhist contexts, is “*vina*”. For example, the word “*vina and vinang*” appear in the Pali Tripitakata. Because of its association with Buddhism, Thais have been familiar with and recognized the word “*phin*” as a type of musical instrument that has long existed in Thai society and culture.

In the traditional music culture of Thailand, the word “*phin*” rather than “*vina*” is used to refer to a group of common hand-held string instruments. Music scholars and musicians tend to agree that the word *phin* has its roots in and is a corrupted form of the word “*vina*”, which is the word for string musical instruments in India. The “v” consonant (/v/) in the word “*vina*” was corrupted into the “b” consonant (/ph/) in the word “*phin*”, and the meaning of “*phin*” is confined to the plucked string instruments instead of the entire range of string musical instruments in its Indian sense of the word (Pikul Sri, 2001, 49). The use of the word “*phin*” denoting the plucked string instrument is also confirmed by evidence from different periods. For example, various scholars and musicians agreed that the word “*phin*” found on the stone inscriptions of King Ramkhamhaeng refers to an ancient string instrument with a gourd resonator like the *phin nam tao* (a gourd *phin*) and the *phin pia* (Yupho, 1980, 5). A “*phin*” as ancient types of plucked string instruments was also found in mural paintings depicting various events in the life of Buddha. The influence of Sanskrit language in Java and Malaysian cultures was also responsible for the use of this word to refer to similar types of musical instruments in such cultures.

In summary, the word *phin* in the Thai music culture is used to refer to the plucked string instrument only. It is also the generic word that Thai people use in their general communication. *Phin* instruments are called

by different names in different regions and vary in terms of their shapes, characteristics, structures, and performing techniques. The word “*vina*” in Thai society and culture has its roots in both the Pali and Sanskrit words that have been incorporated into Thai language following the spread of Buddhism. Thailand has also embraced other aspects of Indian cultures that are highly valued by Thais, such as Indian religious beliefs, customs, traditions, rituals and literature. Referring to the *phin* type of musical instrument by the names of “*vina or bin*” is one of the distinct indicators of the social, religious and cultural bonds that exist between the two regions.

## 1.2 Classification of musical instruments

Under the Indian musical instrument classification principles of the *Natyashastra* Treatise (Text on the performing arts) and the *Sangita Ratnakara* Treatise (Text on Music and Dance), “*phin*” belongs to the stringed instrument category of “*tata*”. However, a *phin* is classified as the plucked string instrument in the Thai music culture. According to the system of musical instrument classification of Erich Von Hornbostel and Curt Sachs, such the *phin* is classified as a chordophone. Chordophones are divided into five basic types of bows, lyres, harps, lutes and zithers (Midgley, 1976, 164). A study of references to a *phin* in Thai culture and the *vina or bin* in ancient Indian documents reveals only four major types: (1) resonated bows; (2) bowed harps; (3) plucked lutes which are divided into two subtypes of round-backed and flat-backed lutes with short neck or long neck, fretted and unfretted; and (4) stick zithers which are divided into four subtypes: type 1 - lutes with hollow tubular body and two gourds, fretted and unfretted; type 2 - unfretted lutes with two gourds and wide-neck bow; type 3 - fretted lutes with wide neck and one gourd; and type 4 - lutes of type 3 but unfretted.

Classification of *phin* musical instruments in this study is limited to a *phin* mentioned in Buddhism in order to explain the characteristics and types of musical instruments in the *phin* family from documentary evidence pursuant to the musical development history of *phin* instruments in Indian and Thai music cultures.

### 1.3 *Phin* musical instrument evidence

The existence of the word “*phin*” and plucked string musical instruments in Thailand was apparent from the evidence of Sukhothai and subsequent periods. Such evidence includes ancient inscriptions, ancient documents, oral traditions, literatures, paintings, sculptures, etc. Data obtained from different scholars and documentary sources, linguistic and language development analysis as well as historical data of each period produced consistent data that led to the following conclusions:

#### 1.3.1 Inscription evidence

The types of musical instruments that occupy on inscription evidence were not clearly specified and are only speculated. There are two distinct groups of opinions on this subject.

**Group 1** The word “*phin*” is believed to mean both plucked and bowed string musical instruments as demonstrated by the phrase “*siang phat siang phin* [the sounds of the phat and *phin*]” on the stone inscription of King Ramkhamhaeng (Naksawat, 1987, 155), which implies that the sounds of the *phin* are the sounds of a group of stringed musical instruments. In the fifteenth and sixteenth Buddhist centuries, Mueang Lop Buri shrine inscription contains the phrase “*nak dit 1 khon nak si 1 khon* [one plucked string instrument musician, one bowed string instrument musician]” (The National Library, 1986, 255-256). This line clearly indicates a classification of musical instruments and it is possible that plucked and bowed string instruments were already in use during that period).

**Group 2** The word “*phin*” is believed to mean only bowed string instruments. It appears in most stone inscriptions written after 1357 (B.E. 1900). For example, the stone inscription of Wat Phra Yuen in Lumphun province contains the phrase “*ti phat dang phin* [to strike the phat, to make a sound of the *phin*]” (Naksawat, 1987, 157). The word “*phin*” also appears on the stone inscription of mount Sumonkoot (Office of the Prime Minister, 1978, 115) and on the stone inscription of *Pa Nang Kham Yia* (The National Library, 1986, 313). For stone inscriptions of the fifteenth-sixteenth Buddhist

century period, the *Sdok Kok Thom II* stone inscription, whose character is in Sanskrit, contains the word “*vina*”, which refers to the *phin* musical instrument. The inscription describes *vina* as one of the articles that King Uttayatitworaman II donated to this shrine (The National Library, 1986, 194).

Based on the opinions of both groups, scholars share the same opinions that *phin* or *vina* was used to mean a musical instrument in the ancient plucked string instrument group, namely, the *phin nam tao*, *phin pia* and *krachappi*, which are primarily classified as lute and resonated bow types of musical instruments.

### 1.3.2 Documentary evidence

There are mentions of the *phin* in a number of documents such as in the book *San Somdet* (communications between two Princes), *Kotmai Tra Sam Duang* (the Three Seals Law) and *Bot Phleng Yao Wai Khru Mahori* (a certain mahori repertoire). *San Somdet* discusses the hypotheses about the *phin* musical instruments of ancient times in relation to their characteristics which include those of the plucked and bowed string instruments. For example, the word “*phinphat*” can be split to mean two separate groups of musical instruments; *phin* likely refers to plucked and bowed instruments while “*phat*” likely refers to percussion and wind instruments. In *Kotmai Tra Sam Duang*, there are clear references to plucked string instruments, the *krachappi* and the *jakhae*, which evolved from the musical instruments in the “*phin*” family, suggesting that these musical instruments have been in use since the time of Ayutthaya period. In *Phleng Yao Wai Khru Mahori*, the word “*phin*” appears in conjunction with words for other types of musical instruments in some verses which, when translated into English, read, “...*cha dit si khab rong thamnong klon* [in terms of to pluck, to fiddle, and to sing verses]” or “...*so, krub, krachappi, rammana, thon, khlui, ching, chab, ranat, khong...* [Thai musical instruments]” or “...*hai pricha chanceaw nai choeng phin...* [to be skillful and proficient in the art of the *phin*]”. It can be seen from this list of musical instruments that they were parts of a mahori ensemble with musical instruments in the plucked and bowed string as well as the percussion

and wind categories, which were performed as an accompaniment to the singing for court entertainment. This form of musical tradition was originated in the Ayutthaya period and has continued to the Rattanakosin period.

### 1.3.3 Literary evidence

A total of five literatures, namely, *Traiphum Phra Ruang*, *Lilit Yuan Phai*, *Anirut Kham Chan*, *Kaki*, and *Kap Phra Chaisuriya*, were studied. *Traiphum Phra Ruang*, which was composed by King Lithai of Sukhothai in 1345, describes a procession in which Indra (the Hindu god) was surrounded by male and female deities who were dancing, singing and playing music to entertain him. The procession was led by a group of *phin* musicians. The *phin* referred to in this literary work is a type of plucked string instrument, possibly the *phin nam tao*, *phin pia* or *krachappi*. There is a hypothesis based on the contents of *Lilit Yuan Phai*, a prominent literature of Ayutthaya period, that *phin* instruments were both the plucked and bowed string instruments played in an ensemble called “*phinphat*”. In the books of verses of *Aniruth Kham Chan*, *Kaki*, and *Kab Phra Chaisuriya*, which are the literary works composed between Ayutthaya and Rattanakosin periods, there were clear references to the term *phin* as the type of plucked string instrument and the *krachappi*. Study of literary evidence from Sukhothai and subsequent periods led to a hypothesis that *phin* of early periods may have referred to the types of plucked string instruments like the *phin nam tao*, *phin pia* and *krachappi*. The literatures of late Ayutthaya and early Rattanakosin periods clearly specified the names of plucked string instruments and the *krachappi* but the word *phin* was still used to mean a musical instrument of the stringed type.

### 1.3.4 Sculpture evidence

*Phin* instruments depicted on sculptures can be divided into two types, short-necked/long-necked lutes and resonated bows. One of the most distinctive examples of such sculptures is the Dvaravati stucco sculpture of the twelfth and thirteenth Buddhist centuries, discovered at *Koobuo Village*, Ratchaburi province. This sculpture depicts a group of female musicians holding two types of *phin*. The first type is the short-necked lutes

with five strings while the second type is the *phin nam tao* or the *phin pia* belonging to the resonated bow group. This sculpture is a proof that both types of *phin* were in use at the time. Similar evidence of the same period found represents in form of a sculpture of a *kinorn* (a mythical creature) playing the *phin pia*, a sculpture of *Jullapathon Chedi* in Nakhon Pathom Province. Another type of *phin* of contemporary period is that of the long-necked, flat-backed lute that appears on the sculpture of Dhatarattha god that adorns the *Merumas* (golden funeral pyre) of King Rama IX. This god holds a three-stringed *phin* as his personal musical instrument.

### 1.3.5 Painting evidence

Most mural painting evidence in this study indicates musical instruments and musical ensembles depicting various events in the life of Buddha, scenes of court entertainment and objects with magical power such as King Kanthana's *phin* and musical instruments of various deities. There are, for example, paintings of Indra playing a three-stringed *phin* from the tale of the Middle Path or paintings of King Panjasikhara playing the *phin* in the procession of gods and goddesses who congregated to welcome Buddha on his return trip from *Daodeung* (in Pali *Davadingsa*) heaven to earth. Painting evidence reveals that most depictions of the *phin* types of musical instruments are those of the long-necked lute or plucked string instruments, which are held and played in a vertical position, and the resonated bow type. Components of such instruments are based on the religious accounts and beliefs that vary from society to society.

These pieces of evidence, whether they are the etymological hypotheses about the words that appeared on various stone inscriptions, ancient documents or literary works, reveal various aspects of the *phin* instruments. However, the evidence seemingly points to the same conclusion that the word “*phin*” or “*vina*” primarily refers to plucked string instruments, possibly denoting the *phin nam tao*, *phin pia* and *krachappi*. In summary, evidence of *phin* music in Thai society reveals two principal types of *phin* instruments, lutes and bows. There are both the long-necked (e.g. the

*krachappi*) and short-necked (e.g. the five-stringed *phin*) types of Thai lutes while Thai bows are classified as the “resonated bow” type (e.g. the *phin nam tao* and *phin pia*).

## 2. A study of “*phin*” musical instruments

### 2.1 Musical instruments in the *vina* family in Indian culture

In studying musical instruments in the *vina* family in Indian culture, the majority of researchers frequently limited the scope of this study to *vina* as the plucked string instruments only. The time periods under this study were divided into three major periods: period 1 – ancient to Vedic periods, period 2 – Post-Vedic period, and period 3 – Medieval period. Details of the study results are as follows:

#### Period 1 Ancient to Vedic periods

#### Characteristics of *vina* music and musical instruments in the ancient to the Vedic periods

The data on Indian music appears primarily in the Vedas. “*Vina*” are considered the principal Indian musical instruments of great antiquity and consists of both the plucked and bowed string instruments. Most of evidence suggest that the *vina* of this period were harp-like musical instruments (Deva, 1974, 6). Other scholars, including Chalernsak Pikulsri, B. Chaintanya Deva, S. Krishnaswamy and Swarn Lata, remarked on the *vina* musical instruments of the Vedic period from three groups of data: (1) various sources of evidence, (2) relationship with other contemporaneous cultures, and (3) musical development of the period. It can be concluded that there is evidence of 15 types of *vina* during this period: (1) *bana veena*, (2) *kara kari*, (3) *kanda veena/ kand veena*, (4) *apakhatila*, (5) *gotha*, (6) *sattatantri veena* or *maha veena* and *katyayani vina/ maha veena*, (7) *vana*, (8) *alabu veena*, (9) *vakra veena*, (10) *kapisirsha/ kapisheerash veena*, (11) *chala veena*, (12) *pichoda/ pichhora*, (13) *talluck veena*, (14) *gatra veena* and (15) *yazh* (which appeared in Tamil literature). All of these *vina* instruments shared the same characteristics. From this list, the characteristics and types of *vina* in period 1, ancient to Vedic periods, can be summarized as follows:

No.	Characteristics of musical instruments	Types of musical instruments
1	Harp-shaped <i>vina</i>	Bowed harp or arched Harp
2	Ached <i>vina</i> ( <i>vakra veena</i> )	Bowed harp or arched Harp
3	<i>Vina</i> with gourd sound box ( <i>alabu Veena</i> )	Presumably stick zither/bar zither and resonated bow
4	<i>Vina</i> as singing ( <i>gatra veena</i> )	The word “ <i>vina</i> ” was found but used in the sense of singing.
5	<i>Vina</i> with similar shape to Egyptian string instruments	Shoulder harp (with the less arch depth than <i>vina</i> and bridges for string extending from the sound box leather cover
6	<i>Vina</i> of 100 strings ( <i>sattatantri vina</i> ) <i>vana</i>	1. Originated from the bow-shaped <i>vina</i> of the harp type 2. Board zither type of <i>vina</i> (found in more recent periods)

**Table 1:** Summary of the characteristics and types of *vina* instruments of period 1 (Ancient to Vedic periods)

## Period 2 Post-Vedic period

### Characteristics of *vina* music and musical instruments in the Post-Vedic period

Post-Vedic period is essential to the study of Indian music history and evolution as it is regarded as the golden age of Indian arts and knowledge under the generous patronage of Indian monarchs. Plucked string instruments were considered the principal type of musical instrument of this period. It can be concluded from the *Natyashastra* Treatise (Text on the performing arts) that there are six specific names referring to *vina* instruments of this period: (1) the *vipanachi vina*, (2) the *citra vina*, (3) the *kacchapi*, (4) the *ghosaka*, (5) the *sattatantri vina* and (6) the *parivadini*. These instruments can be divided into two types regarding their distinct shapes, bowed harps and lutes. A summary of the musical instruments of this period is presented in the table below.

No.	Characteristics of musical instruments	Types of musical instruments
1	Harp-shaped <i>vina</i> ( <i>vipanci</i> , <i>parivadini</i> )	Bowed harp
2	Flat-backed, short-necked lute ( <i>kacchapi</i> )	Short-necked lute
3	Lute-shaped <i>vina</i> ( <i>citra</i> )	Short-necked lute
4	<i>Vina</i> ( <i>ghosaka</i> ) in the same shapes as <i>tambura</i> *	Long-necked lute*
5	<i>Vina</i> with different numbers of strings, such as 3, 5, 7, 9 and 14 strings. Drone <i>vina</i> . Note* Since the <i>ghosaka</i> is a <i>tambura</i> type of musical instrument, there is a speculation that it is a long-neck instrument, but this remains a speculation.	Presumably bowed harp and lute type

**Table 2:** Summary of the characteristics and types of *vina* instruments of period 2 (Post-Vedic period)

### Period 3 Medieval period

#### Characteristics of *vina* music and musical instruments in the medieval period

Indian music of the Medieval period was influenced by the encroaching Islamic culture at the time when Hindu was the predominant culture under the rule of Emperor Akbar of the Mogul dynasty who provided continuing patronage to India music (Pikulski, 2001, 36-37). Under these cultural influences, India underwent a process of cultural assimilation between Hindu and Islamic cultures. Such assimilation became apparent in the music cultures of Northern India or “Hindustani music” and Southern India or “Carnatic music”. The music cultures of both regions were noticeably different as the fretted stick zither types of plucked string instruments becoming predominant in the North while the long-necked lutes or unfretted plucked lutes were predominant in the South (Wade, 2001, 307). Long-necked plucked lutes were influenced by the plucked lutes of Central and Western Asia (Miner, 2000, 344). However, with Islamic culture came Persian and Arabic music cultures which, after subsequent assimilation, had significant impacts on the development of both the traditional and folk music of India. This is evident from the forms of a *vina*

of the medieval period as the bowed harp types of *vina* were largely replaced by the lute types of *vina*.

Musical instruments of this period were mostly cited in the *Sangita Ratnakara Treatise* (Text on Music and Dance) written by Sarngdeva of the eleventh-thirteenth Buddhist centuries, which specified ten plucked string instruments: *ada tantri*, *nakula*, *tri-tantri*, *chitra*, *vipanchi*, *mattakokila*, *alipini*, *kinnari*, *pinaki* and *nishant-vina*. The *Sangitra Parijata Treatise* of the seventeenth Buddhist century mentions seven musical instruments: *rudra-vina*, *bhama vina*, *taumbura*, *swaramandala*, *pinaki*, *kinnari* and *ravanakara* (Bandyopadyaya, as cited in Wrazen, 1986, 36). Four musical instruments, whose names had been known since the Post-Vedic period, that remained in existence until the fifteenth Buddhist century are: (1) the *tritantri*, (2) the *chitra*, (3) the *vipanchi* and (4) the *swaramandala*. Contemporaneous to these instruments were the following four musical instruments in the folk music category: (1) the *ektara*, (2) the *gopiyantira*, (3) the *gottuvadyam*, and (4) the *kinneri*. They are considered the basic forms of instruments in the early development of other Indian musical instruments.

*Vina* instruments that existed during the medieval period can be divided into two groups. Group 1 regarding a stick zither (both fretted and unfretted) type consists of (1) the *bin* or *rudra vina*, (2) the *kinneri* and (3) the *gottavadyam*. Group 2 regarding a plucked lute type can be divided into two types: type 1 - long-necked plucked lutes, including the *sitar*, the *tambura*, the *surbahar*, the *sarasvati vina*, the *ektara* and the *gopiyantira*; type 2 - short-necked plucked lutes, consisting of the *rabab* and the *sarod*. A summary of musical instruments of this period is presented in the table below.

No.	Musical instrument names	Characteristics and types of musical instruments
1	<i>Bin /Rudra vina</i>	Stick zither, fretted
2	<i>Gottavdyam</i>	Stick zither, unfretted
3	<i>Sitar</i>	Long-necked lute,fretted
4	<i>Tanbura</i> are divided into four types:	
	1. Arabian/Turkishinfluences resulted in musical instruments with the shape of a <i>tanbur</i> .	Long-necked lute, round back, fretted
	2. It is speculated that its name may come from <i>tumapuru</i> , which is the name of a Gandharvas (low-ranking deity) who holds a musical instrument in the same shape as a <i>sarasavati vina</i> .	Long-necke lute
	3. Similar in shapeto a long-neckedPersian lute.	Long-necked lute
	4. Present-day <i>tambura</i> acts as a droneinstrument.	Long-necked lute, unfretted
5	<i>Sarasvati vina</i>	Long-necked lute,fretted
6	<i>Surbahar</i>	Long-necked lute
7	<i>Ektara/tuntune</i>	Long-necked lute,unfretted
8	<i>Gopiyontra</i>	Long-necked lute,unfretted
9	<i>Rabab</i>	Short-necked lute
10	<i>Sarod</i>	Short-necked lute

**Table 3:** Summary of the characteristics and types of *vina* instruments of period 3 (Medieval period)

## 2.2 Musical instruments in the “*phin*” family in Thai culture

Musical instruments in the *phin* family in Thailand are apparent in three main regions. A *phin* is known as the *krachappi* in the ancient court music in center region, as the *phin pia*, *phin nam tao* and *sueng* in the folk music of the Northern region, and as the *sung* or *phin* and the *phin krasae mui*<sup>3</sup> (in Thai-Khmer culture) in the Northeastern region. These musical instruments can be played by plucking with fingers and with a plectrum and exist in two varieties: group 1 belongs to a resonated bow consisting of the *phin nam tao* or *phin krasae mui*, and *phin pia*. Group 2 belongs to a long-necked plucked lute consisting of the *krachappi*, the *sueng*, and *phin*. Among

<sup>3</sup>The word “*phin krasae mui*” or “*khsae muoy*” in Khmer language (Narom, 2005, 111). It can be called by many names, such as *phin krasae diew/ phin sai diew*, which are the corrupted terms of “*sadiu*” (Kunst, 1949, 25). The meaning of this word is ‘monotone’ *phin* or one-string (Wiwathanapathapi, 1995, 21). This *phin* is apparent to be identical in shape to the *phin nam tao* of the South-eastern (Isan) folk culture of Thailand.

both groups of musical instruments, the *krachapi* is the only instrument that is still used in traditional Thai musical ensembles, appearing in the *mahori khruang si* (four pieces) and *mahori khruang hok* (six pieces) musical ensembles. A summary of musical instruments in the “*phin*” family of Thailand is presented in the table below.

No.	Musical instrument names	Characteristics and types of musical instruments
1	<i>Phin nam tao/phin krasae mui<sup>3</sup>/phin krasae diew/ phin sai dew</i> (one-string)	Resonated bow, unfretted
2	<i>Phin pia</i> of all sizes	
3	<i>Krachappi</i> (traditional music)	Long-necked plucked lute, fretted, flat-backed
4	<i>Krachappi</i> ( <i>Phu Thai</i> folk music)	
5	<i>Sueng</i> (Northern folk music)	
6	<i>Phin</i> (Northeastern folk music)	

**Table 4:** Summary of the classification of musical instruments in the *phin* family of Thailand

Apart from identifying the connection between different families of musical instruments, the present study of musical instruments in the *vina* family of India and in the *phin* of Thailand can also explain the flows of social and cultural exchanges via music and musical instruments between the two countries that resulted in the roles of music in their ways of life. Such exchanges and assimilations are the outcomes of the religious beliefs and development that spread from India to Southeast Asia. These are evident from the use of similar names for similar musical instruments in both regions, such as the Pali and Sanskrit terms of *phin* and *vina*. These are the languages that the Lord Buddha used in the dissemination of Buddhism and the languages for the written records of Buddhist teachings, providing the fundamental roots for various languages in Southeast Asia over a long period of time.

By implication, as a type of musical instrument the word *phin* in diverse forms, *bin* or *been* and *vina* (or *veena*), although representing various forms of their orthography, they seemingly denote the identical meaning. In

Indian culture, the word *bin* or *been* is prevalent in Northern India cultures or in Hindustani music while the word *vina* (or *veena*) is prevalent in Southern India cultures. Such language differences are the results of the competing religious influences between the long-established Hinduism and the more recent Islam in different parts of India. In Thai music culture, the word “*phin*” is the principal and generic word used to refer to a type of plucked string musical instrument. The Pali word “*vina*” is also found exclusively in Pali texts or written records, such as in the Pali version of the Tripitaka Buddhist scripture.

In summary, there are five varieties of *bin* or *vina* musical instruments in India: (1) resonated bows (unfretted), (2) bowed harps, (3) stick zithers (both fretted and unfretted), (4) plucked lutes (long-necked and short-necked with round-backed sound box) and (5) *gatra vina* (the word *vina* is used here in the sense of singing). The musical instruments in the *phin* family of Thailand are found in two varieties: resonated bows and plucked lutes with long neck and flat-backed sound box.

### 3. *Phin* in the Tripitika scripture

A discovery of the *phin*-related accounts that appear in 45 Volumes of the Pali Tripitaka –consisting of the *Vinaya Pitaka*, the *Suttanta Pitaka* or *Sutra*, and the *Abhidhamma Pitaka* –of Siam in Thai script and the Thai Tripitaka of Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University. Four *phin*-related accounts in the *Vinaya Pitaka* and fortythree *phin*-related accounts in the *Suttanta Pitaka* have been found. In summary, these *phin*-related accounts were studied within three aspects as follows:

#### 3.1 Meaning

The meanings of the word “*phin*” appearing in the Tripitaka can be likely categorised into two distinct aspects: direct meanings with musical implications and implicit meanings with religious implications of Buddhist teachings and doctrines. In its direct meanings, *phin* is used with the musical connotation that the word is widely known and understood as referring to a type of musical instruments whose sound is produced by the plucking of strings.

It refers to a musical instrument with various components of trough, bow, string, peg, and so on. It is the musical instrument performed for the entertainment, relaxation, recreation, welcoming and congratulating of gods, kings, and commoners alike. It can also be used as a gesture of respect, worshipping or melodious offering to Buddha. In its implicit meanings, the word *phin* is used, for its musical traits, as a metaphor to explain (or to simplify) sophisticated abstract Buddhist doctrines and teachings to be tangible and simply understandable. The metaphor can explicate abstract concepts with concrete examples for better understanding by the audience. Buddha frequently used metaphors with concrete examples of real events or incidents in his teachings. The use of the strings and sounds of the *phin* as a metaphor can be summarized as follows:

**Metaphor 1** Using distinct states of tension in *phin* strings as a metaphor for perseverance by comparing the tight, loose, and moderate tension of the strings to the Middle Path doctrine.

**Metaphor 2** Using the straightness of *phin* strings as a metaphor for honesty and integrity.

**Metaphor 3** Using the perfect pitches against discord of *phin* strings as a metaphor for strong determination to adhere to sexual abstinence.

**Metaphor 4** Analogy between the stretching of a human body and the stretching of *phin* strings on *phin* body is used for a metaphor, which sacrifice and ability of problem solving is considered a property that leaders should possess in order to bring happiness to the people under any circumstances. This metaphor appears in the tale of the monkey king who stretched his body across a river to allow his followers a safe crossing.

**Metaphor 5** Using the stretching or straightening of a *phin* string as a metaphor for great industrious.

**Metaphor 6** Using the sounds of the *phin* as a metaphor for infatuation and obsession. Musical sound is considered forbidden because they could arouse the emotional states of *Chanta* (pleasure) and *Rakha* (passion). The Lord Buddha complimented Panjasikha on his music which is considered

the most beautiful song whose lyrics refer to *Buddha, Dharma* (Buddha's teachings), *Sangha* (monks) and the *Arahants* (one who has attained Nirvana).

Apart from the metaphors provided by the strings and sounds of the *phin*, other implicit meanings of *phin* are as follows:

***Phin* as an indicator of great merits and powers.** The *phin* is used to indicate Buddha's great merits and powers that are so great that they can cause musical instruments to produce musical sounds on their own in the absence of musicians.

***Phin* as an indicator of a person's important status.** The *phin* is used to represent great wealth, prosperity, fertility, status and nobility of important persons like a king.

***Phin* as an indicator of sublimity or items of sublimed quality.** The *phin* is used to signify sublimity or items of sublimed quality, such as saints, gods and goddesses in heavenly abodes or human beings who had accumulated vast amount of merits in their lifetime and reside in heavenly abodes after death.

***Phin* as an indicator of the observation of customary practices.** The *phin* is used to indicate the observation of customary practices that students should have for their teachers. Students must respect and honor their teachers and should not behave offensively or compete against them. This meaning of the *phin* appears in the tale of Khuttilajarn and his student, Musila, who compete with one another.

### 3.2 *Phin* characteristics

The exact types of *phin* or *vina* instruments had never been clearly specified in the Tripitaka accounts. However, it can be postulated from the contexts of these accounts that they belonged to a variety of *phin* instruments that includes harp-shaped, gourd-shaped, and lute-shaped, which the types of *phin* are found in the Post-Vedic period. Two conclusions can be reached on this issue as follows:

#### Conclusion 1 *Phin* varieties

The Tripitaka accounts that mention a variety of *phin*

instruments may have used the word “*phin*” (a translated form of Thai) or, alternatively, “*vina*” (an original form of Pali system) to denote all types of musical instruments, except the leather instruments (Pikulski, 1997, 270) or to mean a variety of *phin* instruments. Post-Vedic musical instruments in the Tripitaka accounts are mentioned in Volume 28 and Volume 32 of the Tripitaka. In Volume 28 of the *Tripitaka*, the *Suttanta Pitaka* in Volume 20 - *Kuthathaka Nikaya Jataka*, *Mahosatha Jataka* part 2, there are statements, when translated into English, like: “*Kho Prachachon Thang Lai Chong Dit Phin Thuk Chanit* [let all people pluck all types of *phin* instruments]” (Ku. Cha. (Thai) 28/777-779/303-304) or “*ahanyantu sapphavana*” in Pali (Ku. Cha (Pali) 28/685/244), and phrases from the *Wessandorn Jataka* like, “*dit phin* [plucking the *phin*]” “*dit jakhe* [plucking the *jakhe*]” or “*sappa vina*” and “*kotha*” in Pali (Ku. Cha. (Pali) 28/1239.5-1239.7/443-444). In Volume 32 of the Tripitaka, the *Suttanta Pitaka* in Volume 24 - *Kuthathaka Nikaya Upathana* part 1, in the section where there is a reference to Buddha as a person of great perfection and sublimed powers, there is a phrase that reads: “...*phin took chanit jong banlang*... [all types of *phin* shall play]” (Ku. OrPor. (Thai) 32/43/7) or “*vina sappa*” in Pali (Ku. OrPor. (Pali) 32/1/42/5). These accounts used the words “*phin*” in the same sense as the Thai phrase “*phin thang lai* [all kinds of *phin* instruments]” or “*sappa vina*” and “*kotha*”. Therefore, it can be postulated that mentions of *phin* instruments in the Tripitaka refer to more than one type of *phin* instruments, possibly harps, bows and lutes of the Post-Vedic period.

### Conclusion 2 Harp type

This hypothesis comes from the mentions of the *phin* in many documents that clearly indicate that they were, based on the descriptions of their shapes, the number of strings, and harp type. Such accounts appeared in Volume 18, Volume 26 and Volume 28 of the Tripitaka. In Volume 18 of the Tripitaka, the *Suttanta Pitaka* in Volume 10 - *Sangyutta Nikaya Sarayatana Wakka*, is an account which, when translated into English, reads: “*as for phin, there are many factors involved. For a phin that had been well crafted by a craftsman to produce perfect melodies, it has to rely upon its many components,*

namely, the trough, leather, bow, pegs, strings, plectrum and suitable human effort for a particular *phin*” (Sang. Sara (Thai) 18/246/260-261). In Volume 26 of the Tripitaka, the *Suttanta Pitaka* in Volume 18 - *Kuthathaka Nikaya Wimana-Petawatthu Theratheri Katha* is the tale of *Khuttatilla Wimana* and his student in which *Khuttalajarn* talked about his 7-stringed *phin* music instruction to the student in the words that can be translated into English as follows: “*behold god Kosi, it is I who taught my student, Musila, to play the most melodious and delightful tunes of the 7-stringed phin*” (Ku. Peta. (Thai) 26/327-326/53). Another mention of a *phin* was found in the tale of *Maharatha Wimana* (the *Great Wimana Carriage*) in which a very large magical carriage appeared to a cow herdsman who had been accumulating great merits. The carriage can produce beautiful sounds similar to the sounds made by a well-crafted *phin* with perfect trough and bow. A statement from this tale, when translated into English, reads: “*my supreme god, the sounds made by the carriage, elephants, horses and the accompanying music on both sides of the garden amuse you in the same way that the beautiful phin music made by a perfectly assembled trough and bow*” (Ku. Peta. (Thai) 26/1033/128). Another account from Volume 28 of the Tripitaka, the *Suttanta Pitaka* in Volume 20 -*Kuthathaka Nikaya Jataka* part 2, the tale of *Mahajanaka Jataka*, about Buddha’s comment on the practice of his *Wiriya Barami* in the words which, when translated into English, read: “*when will I be able to straighten my mind in the same way that a phin musician can straighten all seven strings of his phin to produce the most delightful and captivating sound? When will my intention be realized?*” (Ku. Cha. (Thai) 28/238/219). All of the above accounts give clear descriptions of the *phin*. Beside the number of its strings, the arched harp-shaped was also indicated. These descriptions are consistent with the opinion indicated by Chalernsak Pikulsri that a *phin* of this period belongs to the harp-shaped type. He also explained that the six components of such *phin*, which are, *tona* (sound box), *jumma* (leather), *tantha* (bow-shaped wood), *upavina* (tip of a *phin* which can be decorated), *tanti* (string), and *kona* (plectrum) (Pikulsri, 1997, 274-275).

### 3.3 Roles and functions of *phin*

The above mentioned conclusions about the shape of a *phin* can lead to the identification of its roles and functions. A *phin* can be used as a melodic and drone instrument to accompany singing. Hypotheses on the roles and functions of a *phin* are as follows:

#### A hypothesis that *phin* is used to accompany the singing

This hypothesis is based on two accounts from the Tripitaka. The first one was from Volume 5 of the Tripitaka, the *Vinaya Pitaka* in Volume 5 - *Mahawakka* part 2, the tale of *Kosampika Khanthaka Thikhawuwatthu* relating to *Thikhawukumara*. *Thikhawukumara* was practicing his music while residing in an elephant house near a palace in the city of Banares when King Prommathatkasiraj ordered him to come to the palace and later appointed him his trusted page. This tale identified the use of *phin* music as an accompaniment to singing in the words which, when translated into English, read: “one early morning, after waking up *Thikhawukumara* started singing beautifully to the accompanying tunes of a *phin* near the elephant house. King Prommathatkasiraj, who woke up at that moment and heard the distant singing and *phin* music from the direction of the elephant house, asked courtiers, ‘Who woke up so early to sing and play *phin* music in the direction of the elephant house? The courtiers answered, “It was the young student of *Hatthajam* who woke up early to sing and play the *phin* at the elephant compound” (Wi. Mor. (Thai) 5/461/348-349).

The second account was from Volume 10 of the Tripitaka, the *Suttanta Pitaka* in Volume 2 - *Thikha Nikaya Mahawakka*, the tale of *Sakkapanyahasutra*, relating the tale of *Thao Sakka*’s problems. *Thao Sakka* (Indra) ordered deities from the *Daodueng* heaven to seek an audience with Buddha and ordered *Panjasikha*, a Gandharvas (low-ranking deity), to play a yellow *phin* in the color of a *matoom* fruit (a bael) while reciting an incantation at the meeting. The incantation, which was a serenade sang by *Panjasikha*, contained statements about Buddha, Buddha’s teachings, the *Sangha*, *Arahants*

(enlightened monks) and *Kama* (carnal desire). Buddha praised the serenade for its beautiful melodies and the *phin* instrument for its role and function in keeping the melody to the same pitches as the singing voice in the words which, when translated into English, read: “...*Panjasikha, the sounds of your phin strings are harmonious with your singing voices and vice versa. The sounds of your phin strings are not unequal to your singing voices and vice versa...*” (Tee. Mor. (Thai) 10/349/277).

### **A hypothesis that *phin* is a melodic instrument**

This hypothesis is based on six accounts from four Volumes of the Tripitaka - Volume 4, Volume 22, Volume 26, and Volume 27, whose contexts to be taken into consideration are as follows:

The account from Volume 4 of the Tripitaka, the *Vinaya Pitaka* in Volume 4 - *Mahawakka* part 1, the tale of *Sakulabutra* which, when translated into English, reads: “*that night Yasakulabutra woke up before the others and saw some of his attendants asleep. Some female attendants had a phin lying near their armpits, some had a taphon (a specific kind of drum) next to their necks while others had a Pong Mang (another kind of drum) on top of their breasts*” (Wi. Mor. (Thai) 4/25/31).

The account from Volume 22 of the Tripitaka, the *Suttanta Pitaka* in Volume 14 - *Ungkhuttara Nikaya Panyajaka-Chakkanibat*, the tale of *Hathisariputtasutra*, relates the story of *Phra Jittahatthisaributra* which, when translated into English, reads: “*having been muted by the sounds of the elephants, horses, chariots, foot soldiers and the resounding dins of drums, the bandor [small drums], the conch shell, and the phin*” (Ang. Panjaka. (Thai) 22/60/558).

Three *phin*-related accounts were found in Volume 26 of the Tripitaka, namely, the tales of *Khuttatilla Wimana*, *Pesawati Wimana* and *Kanthaka Wimana*. In the *Suttanta Pitaka* in Volume 18 – *Kuthathaka Nikaya Wimana-Petawatthu Theratheri Katha*, the tale of *Khuttatilla Wimana*, are the statement which, when translated into English, reads: “*behold Thao Kosi, I had taught the art of the 7-stringed phin, which has the most melodious and*

*delightful sounds, to my student, Musila. He, however, intends to have a contest of phin music against me on stage. May you give me support on this matter*” (Ku. Peta. (Thai) 26/327-328/53). The words that appear in the tale of *Pesawati Wimana*, when translated into English, read: “*your heavenly dwell (wimana) is full of ambient music of the big phins, drums, the cymbals, and the small bells. It is as prosperous and thriving as the city of Indra*” (Ku. Peta. (Thai) 26/649/72). The account from the tale of *Kanthaka Wimana*, when translated into English, reads: “*You rejoice in dancing, singing, music and being delighted by the sounds of drums, the conch shell, the taphon, the phin, and the bandor [a small drum]*” (Ku. Peta. (Thai) 26/1180/148).

Volume 27 of the Tripitaka, the *Suttanta Pitaka* in Volume 19 – *Kuthathaka Nikaya Jataka* part I, the tale of *Khutthatila Jataka*, contains the same account as the one in Volume 26 of the Tripitaka, the *Suttanta Pitaka* in Volume 18 - *Kuthathaka Nikaya Wimana-Petawatthu Theratheri Katha, the tale of Khuttatilla Wimana*.

The above mentioned data reveals that the *phin* had been used in conjunction with other rhythmic instruments like drums, the cymbal, the *bandor*, the bell, etc. It is, therefore, possible that the *phin*, in this context, can be used as the principal melodic instrument. Narratives on the *phin* instruction that *Khuttilajarn* gave to his student, *Musila*, and their *phin* contest led to a hypothesis that *phin* was more likely to be a melodic rather than just a drone instrument. In addition, opinions on the roles and functions of *phin* instruments as indicated in the Tripitaka suggest that *phin* could be used both as an accompaniment to singing and as a melodic instrument. This hypothesis is consistent with the opinion of Chalernsak Pikulsri (Pikulsri, 1997, 271-272) who asserted that there are two types of *phin* instruments– one the non-melodic instruments, or called a drone, to accompany the singing and the other the melodic instruments. He clearly stated that the type of *phin* which can be used as a melodic instrument is a harp type. Therefore, the 7-stringed *phin* mentioned in the tale of *Khuttatila Jataka* is presumably a harp type functioning as a melodic instrument.

## Conclusion and Discussion

The research results found implicit data that can be divided into three parts: *phin* from the musical perspectives, *phin* from the religious perspectives, and *phin* from the philosophical perspectives.

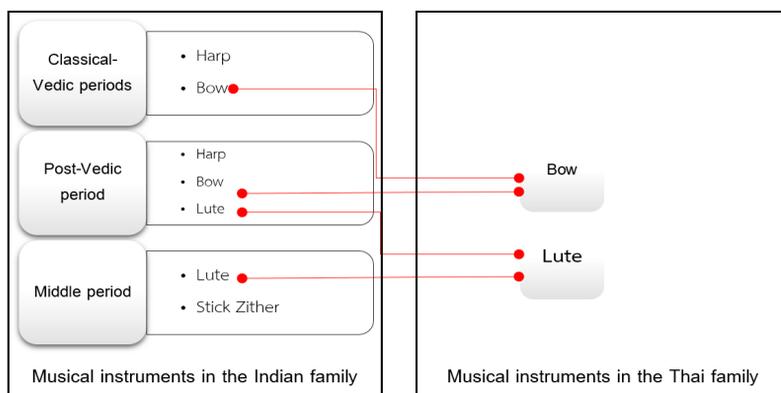
### Part 1 *Phin* from the musical perspectives

*Phin* or *vina* instruments that existed at the onset of Buddhism and during the periods in which it flourished in India were: the Post-Vedic harp, lute and bow types of plucked string instruments. A harp existing in that period generally appeared as a string instrument with the largest number of strings when compared to other string instruments of the same period. Harps are also ancient musical instruments that have existed in India since the Ancient period. Indian monarchs, such as those of the Gupta dynasty, had high regard for harp. Bow string instruments are another type of musical instruments that had also existed in India since the ancient period. They are identical in shape to the instruments in the *phin nam tao* and *phin pia*, and are often depicted in bas relief sculptures of India and Southeast Asia. This group of musical instruments generally appears in Hindu culture in which the beliefs in Gods and deities prevail. Another type of *phin* is that of the plucked string lutes, whose existence in the Post-Vedic period has been confirmed by various evidence, and by bas relief sculptures in various sites that indicated its connection to Buddhism. There are also several documents with similar mentions of the *phin* instruments, for example, there is a type of musical instrument called “*kacchapi*” that has the shape of a short-necked lute with round back and three or five strings. It was depicted in the *Koobuo* stucco sculptures as an instrument called “*phin ha sai* (a 5-stringed *phin*)”.

Furthermore, a hypothesis about the type of music that existed during the periods in which Buddhism flourished can lead to the discovery of the link between Post-Vedic *phin* instruments in India and *phin* instruments that appear in Thai culture. The data on the characteristics of *phin* music and musical instruments in Indian and Thai cultures brings to light the timeline and traces of the arrival of various music cultures that came to Thailand via social,

religious and economic contacts. Such music cultures are the final products of the social, religious and economic interactions between India and Southeast Asia that has begun since the seventh-eighth Buddhist Centuries. These interactions brought with them the belief systems, the faiths in Brahminism and Hindu Gods, Buddhist doctrines and the Islamic culture of Persia that reached Southeast Asia via Indian culture. These are the reasons for the similarity that exists between musical instruments of the harp, bow and lute types. Examination of the links between musical instruments in the *phin* family of Thailand and of India revealed many consistencies and connections between the two music cultures.

The four major types of *phin* or lute instruments in Indian music culture are: (1) harp, (2) bow, (3) lute and (4) stick zither while only two major types exist in Thai culture: (1) bows and (2) lutes. Such differences can be explained by the fact that a bow in Thailand had religious link with India music culture of the Ancient period to the Vedic periods while a lute is linked to the music culture of Post-Vedic period. However, the links between Thai and Indian lutes in the Post-Vedic period differ only in the shape of the instruments. Thai lutes of this period were long-necked lutes while Indian lutes were short-necked lutes. The connections between the instruments of the two countries are shown in the table below:



**Table 5:** Comparison of the connection between musical instruments in the India and the Thai *phin* families

Therefore, it can be postulated that the Thai long-necked plucked lute may be related to the Indian *vina* of the medieval period, which was the time when India had assimilated Islamic, Persian and Arabian cultures into its music culture. Long-necked plucked lute appeared in great number from that time onward and had become the predominant form of Indian *vina* of the medieval period. Although the Thai long-necked plucked lute, the *krachappi*, is apparently similar in shape as well as type to the Indian long-necked plucked lutes of the Medieval Period, this Thai *phin* naming “*kachappi*” according to lute types of the Post-Vedic era has been still used present-day.

To sum up, the results representing the similarities with respect of nomenclatures, shapes, and types in musical instruments of Southeast Asian communities present-day indicate the trace of participation in culture and religion among the cultures, which Indian culture is strongly likely regarded an origin.

## Part 2 *Phin* from the religious perspectives

In Buddhism, the *phin* and the concept of the Middle Path are used as a metaphor for achieving of the cessation of suffering through perseverance. The *phin* is compared to the gateway to success that will allow Buddhist practitioners a clearer insight into the Buddhist doctrine of Magga 8 or the eightfold path to the cessation of suffering. According to the tale about the vision of the 3-stringed *phin* of the Middle Path, *phin* can introduce us to the understanding of the actual state of things, generate ideas that evolve into the necessary knowledge and understanding that will eventually put one on the Middle Path. Indra, the God who appeared in the role of the 3-stringed *phin* musician in this tale, customarily assumed the role of a patron of Buddhism and leader of all gods and deities in heavens. Since he appeared in many events in the life of Buddha, his connection with Buddha was widely recognized and remembered by most people. Therefore, a *phin* that appear in Buddhist accounts usually have components that can convey meanings, express ideas and indicate one’s roles and statuses as well as the occasions for and the use of *phin* music. Descriptions of *phin* instruments in the Tripitaka made it possible

to postulate that three major types of *phin* instruments existed at the onset of Buddhism, namely, harps, lutes, and resonated bows. This can be postulated despite an absence of clear identification of the names and types of such instruments.

### Part 3 *Phin* from the philosophical perspectives

The philosophical implications of *phin* for the Buddhist doctrine of the Middle Path can be divided into three concepts: (1) a *phin* from the Buddhist philosophy perspectives of, (2) a *phin* from the Brahmin and Hindu philosophy perspectives of, and (3) a *phin* from the musical philosophy perspectives. Details of these perspectives are as follows:

#### Concept 1 *Phin* from the Buddhist philosophy perspectives

The *phin*-related accounts in the Tripitaka use a *phin* to indicate the enhancing of wisdom and as a metaphor for the perseverance, industriousness, knowledge, ideas and understandings of the actions that will put a person on the path to the cessation of suffering. From the religious philosophy perspectives, such a *phin* symbolizes the development of wisdom. In the tale of the Middle Path, the focus is evidently on the three attributes and qualifications of the strings of a *phin* rather than on the number of the strings. For this reason, thus, it seems to be true for a *phin* to be used without the condition of specific instrumental types or the number of strings it contains. This fact is demonstrated in the explanations of varieties of the tension of the string: too tight a string will result distraction, too loose a string will result laziness, and a string that is not too tight or too loose will result a suitable level of moderation. The sounds of *phin* music are also taken as implying the beauty or goodness that lure one into *kilesa* (desire). A *phin* can be an instrument for the attainment of wisdom and a better understanding of Buddhist teachings. It is through such path that Buddha gained wisdom for the understanding of the highest level of Buddhist philosophy, *Sammāsambodhiyarn* (enlightenment). This is the ultimate wisdom that only Buddha and all *Arahants* (enlightened monks) had attained.

## Concept 2 *Phin* from the Brahmin and Hindu philosophical perspectives

From the Brahmin and Hindu philosophy perspectives, the implications of *phin* are based on the Brahmin and Hindu ideologies that often appear in association with the Buddhist principles. The reasons for such association are, firstly, because they share the beliefs in different types of deities, gods, goddesses, angels and Gandharvas (low-ranking deities). Apart from being revered and worshipped for their influential and significant influences over human lives, these divine beings are related to the beliefs in the supernatural powers and, therefore, can be used to reinforce certain Buddhist teachings and legends. The strong beliefs in Hindu mythology make people consider anything that is related to Gods or divine being as having the qualities of excellence, holiness, mysticism and miraculous powers. Secondly, the caste system in Brahminism and Hinduism provides clear perspective on the hierarchies of human beings and has extensive influences over the music cultures of India. For example, it is the duties of slaves and dependents to play music for their kings who are regarded as divine kings. Therefore, anything or any person that is related to kings or persons in equivalently high status are believed to be imbued with similarly great merits and powers. For this reason, such object or person must be carefully selected and dealt with because of its exalted and special status. *Phin* music symbolizes the great honor and special status of people of high caste.

A *phin* mentioned in the tales with respect to the Middle Path, therefore, reflect the religious philosophies of Brahminism and Hinduism that are closely related to the religious beliefs and faiths that are well understood by Buddhists. This religious philosophy is clearly demonstrated in the depictions of Indra playing a 3-stringed *phin* that often appear in mural paintings in the context of a Tripitaka account of Buddha talking about social hierarchies with an emphasis on the status of deities. In Brahminism and Hinduism, a *phin* symbolizes the instrument that man uses to communicate with Gods and divine beings. It is the musical instrument of the Gods and the symbol of a

specific Gandharvas who plays that instrument. Influenced by Brahminism and Hinduism, it is normal to find *phin* instruments infused with beliefs in mysticism, miracles and the supernatural.

### Concept 3 *Phin* from the musical philosophy perspectives

The musical traits of a *phin* in the Tripitaka accounts refer to the common traits of *phin* music as being delightful, melodious, mesmerizing, enchanting, poised, equalized, moderate and proper. The key implication of these Tripitaka accounts is that music plays significant roles in giving meanings to various objects. For example, the sounds of *phin* music are considered divine for the fact that they are created by a divine musical instrument. Apart from being a musical instrument of the Gods, a *phin* is also regarded the instrument for a musical offering to Buddha and prominent persons. Therefore, the sounds of music and musical instruments signify something special, something miraculous and extraordinary. *Phin* music, therefore, signifies objects of high values, unique beauty and purity. It is an aesthetic medium of subtle and profound messages that are crucial to human physical and spiritual well-being.

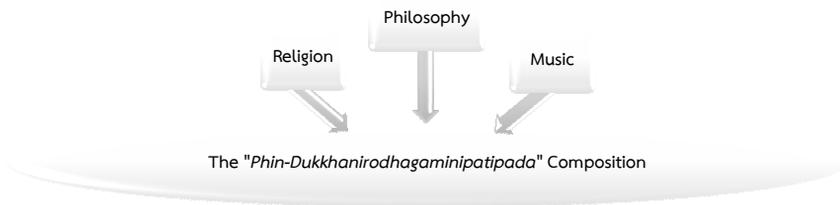
From the musical philosophy perspectives, *phin* signify objects of high values and special benefits. When used in Buddhist contexts, the sounds of *phin* music are used as a means to enhance one's wisdom, a symbol of purity, truth and serenity. When used in Brahmin or Hindu contexts, *phin* music is believed to be a medium for the communication between human beings and Gods or supernatural beings. It is used, for example, in the performing of ritual music or as symbolic representation of various Gods. *Phin* music is generally performed as a gesture of reverence, faiths and devotion. When used in musical philosophy contexts, *phin* music is often used to display the beauty, melodiousness, and delightfulness of the musical sounds.

### Conceptual framework for a creative composition

As a process of bringing various ideas into a framework of music composition, this study embraces method and techniques from the preceding works: such as the work, entitled *Pleng Ruang Puja Nakon Nan*, is based upon

the sacred *Puja* drumming of Nan province (Komkhum, Pornprasit, 2015, 52); *The Music of Rice in Amphawa* (Thatsanabanjong, Phoasavadi, 2017, 492). These works, creating a new piece, both are based upon the technique in Thai music principle of employing pillar tones (*siang lak* or *luk tok*) derived from original melodies belonging to fieldwork data. Although these works both are dealt with musical style of *piphat mai khaeng* ensemble, its methods and compositional techniques revealing are useful in this research.

Findings from the study of *phin* instruments in the *phin* family and *phin*-related accounts in the Tripitaka were used to develop the conceptual framework and direction for the creative composition of “*Phin-Dukkhanirodhagaminipatipada*”. The conceptual framework was derived from three groups of data: (1) religion, (2) philosophy and (3) music. The musical data obtained from this study focused mainly on *phin* music that existed during the Buddhist period in India and the Middle Path philosophy. The conceptual framework of this research is illustrated in the chart below.



**Chart 1** Conceptual framework for creating the music composition

The music composition is divided into seven elements: (1) meaning, (2) objectives, (3) status, (4) melody, (5) playing technique, (6) musical instrument and (7) musical ensemble. The music composition was presented in three parts as follows:

### Part 1 Overture

The overture contains three symbolic elements of Buddha, deities and human beings. The relationships between these three elements is expressed via *phin* music in connection to the musical meaning and goals of this

composition, which are, to present a musical offering to Buddha, to create a serenade sand by a God (Indra), and to entertain human beings.

## **Part 2 Song of the Buddhist teaching**

In this section, song of the Buddhist teaching of the *Dukkhanirodhagamini* patipada doctrine or the path to the cessation of suffering was selected to develop the key conceptual framework for the composition. The melodies were created from the philosophical implications of the strings and the sounds of *phin*, based on the metaphors that Buddha used for the two opposite sides of *phin* music. From the *Lokiya* (worldly) side, *phin* strings were used as a metaphor for the two extremes (tightness and looseness) of human's action. From the *Lokuttara* (transcendental) side, *phin* music was used to convey the concept of moderation in human's action in order to find the right path to the cessation of suffering. A *phin* was used in the meaning of a means to enhance one's wisdom and as a metaphor for perseverance, industriousness, knowledge, idea and understanding of moderation in action.

The melodies of this part linked such metaphors to the theories of musical sounds, performing techniques, musical instruments and musical ensemble, based on the conceptual framework of *phin* music from the Buddhist perspectives. This part consists of three sections as follows:

Section 1 Buddhist teaching on the first path of "tightness"

Section 2 Buddhist teaching on the third path of "looseness"

Section 3 Buddhist teaching on the second path of "moderation"

(*Dukkha nirodhagamini patipada* or *Magga 8* - the noble eightfold path)

## **Part 3 Song of the path to the cessation of suffering or "Vimutti"**

The final part of the composition is a presentation of the song of the path to the cessation of suffering, which is a summary of the implications of *phin* of the Middle Path with the implicit meanings of brightness, serenity and cessation of suffering.

## Recommendations

This research on *phin* music from the Buddhist perspectives has opened up new outlooks and new frontiers on the study of the relationship between music and Buddhism, which can contribute to a more completed body of knowledge on both aspects. The great number of very interesting references to music in the Tripitaka scripture can provide better understandings of the religious, social and cultural aspects of Thai society. A *phin* in the various cases representing as a music culture also reflect many of the cultural foundations that South Asian and Southeast Asian countries share with one another. Nevertheless, the explanations and interpretations of these phenomena from the musical perspectives remain quite limited, studies on other musical aspects of Buddhism should be carried out to provide more comprehensive database and guidelines for future researches in the Thai music.

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