



ขอบคุณภาพจาก: <https://bit.ly/2x6xP9>

ระเบียบวิธีการร้องเพลงโคราช กรณีศึกษาครูกำปั่น ข่อยนอก
(คณะกำปั่น บ้านแท่น) : แนวคิดการสร้างสรรค้บทเพลงชุด
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The Singing Methods of Pleng Korat, A Case Study of Khru Gamphan Khoink
(Gamphan Bantaen Band): Concepts for the Creation of the Wiwat Pleng Korat
(Evolution of Pleng Korat) Suite

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Received: March 19, 2019

Revised: May 28, 2019

Accepted: June 13, 2019

¹ The article is part of the research entitled “The Musical Creation of The Evolution of Pleng Korat” This research subject is supported by Chulalongkorn University, Graduate School Thesis Grant No.2 Fiscal Year 2019.

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บทคัดย่อ

บทความนี้เป็นส่วนหนึ่งของงานวิจัยเรื่องการสร้างสรรค์บทเพลงชุดวิวัฒนาการเพลงโคราช มีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อศึกษาระเบียบวิธีการร้องเพลงโคราช กรณีศึกษาครูกำปั่น ข่อยนอก โดยใช้ระเบียบวิธีวิจัยเชิงคุณภาพในการศึกษาเพลงโคราชแบบดั้งเดิมและเพลงโคราชแบบประยุกต์ ผลการวิจัยสรุปว่า การร้องเพลงโคราชแบบดั้งเดิมและแบบประยุกต์มีความสัมพันธ์กับสังคมและวัฒนธรรมเชิงวิวัฒนาการด้านการสร้างสรรค์ สะท้อนภูมิปัญญาเพลงโคราช ระเบียบวิธีประกอบด้วยเรื่ององค์ประกอบฉันทลักษณ์ 1) องค์ประกอบเพลงพบเหมือนกัน 10 ประการคือ ผลความเนื้อความ คำคู่ การเล่นสัมผัสคำ จำนวนคำ สะดือเพลง การเหยียบปลายเพลง การร้องโอ้ การร้องสร้อย การเอื้อนเสียง และการใช้ภาษา 2) โครงสร้างฉันทลักษณ์แบบดั้งเดิมมีโครงสร้างหลากหลายและแยกย่อยเพลงแบบประยุกต์วิวัฒนาการจากการใช้ต้นรากกลอนเพลงแบบดั้งเดิมทั้งหมดและแบบผสมผสานระหว่างกลอนเพลงก้อมกับกลอนหัวเดียว ส่งผลให้โครงสร้างมีความร่วมสมัยขึ้น เรื่องทำนอง 1) ทำนองโอ้คล้ายกันทุกประการ 2) ทำนองกลอนแบบประยุกต์มีการใช้โน้ตถี่ การซ้ำโน้ต และการใช้โน้ตในจังหวะยกมาก 3) ทำนองสร้อยพบการยืดขยายจากทำนองสั้นไปยาวตามวิวัฒนาการ โดยแบบประยุกต์มีความหลากหลาย 4) ทำนองเอื้อนแบบประยุกต์มีทำนองสั้น แบบดั้งเดิมใช้หนึ่งพยางค์ เรื่องจังหวะ 1) ทำนองโอ้มีจังหวะลอยเหมือนกันทุกประการ 2) ทำนองกลอนแบบดั้งเดิมมีจังหวะลอยและจังหวะสามัญ แบบประยุกต์มีจังหวะสามัญอย่างกระชับ 3) ทำนองสร้อยมีจังหวะสามัญ แบบดั้งเดิมใช้ร้องสอดประสานทำนอง แบบประยุกต์ใช้ร้องระหว่างบท 4) ทำนองเอื้อนในเพลงแบบประยุกต์มีจังหวะสามัญและจังหวะลอย เรื่ององค์ประกอบการแสดงประกอบด้วย 1) หมอเพลงต้องมีความรู้เพลงโคราช 2) ผู้ฟังต้องมีความเข้าใจภาษา 3) บทร้องมีเนื้อหาดำเนินการเฉพาะ 4) ทำนองมีลีลาเฉพาะ 5) จังหวะสนุกสนาน 6) การร่ายรำประกอบ 7) การแต่งกายสะท้อนวัฒนธรรม 8) สถานที่สะท้อนภูมิปัญญามนุษย์และสังคม 9) แสงสีเสียงเพิ่มอรรถรส 10) โอกาสที่ใช้แสดงสะท้อนวิถีชีวิต 11) ขั้นตอนการแสดงบ่งบอกภูมิปัญญาเพลงโคราช 12) ความเชื่อสัมพันธ์ระหว่าง

เพลงโคราช ครูและลูกศิษย์ ทั้งนี้ ระเบียบวิธีดังกล่าวซึ่งปรับตัวเป็นวิวัฒนาการ
แบบดั้งเดิมสู่แบบยุคต่ออย่างน่าสนใจ ได้ใช้เป็นแนวคิดการสร้างสรรคผลงาน
ทางดุริยางค-ศิลป์ไทย

Keywords: ระเบียบวิธีการร้อง, เพลงโคราช, ครูกำปั่น ข่อยนอก

Abstract

This article is part of a research on the musical creation of the *Wiwat Pleng Korat (Evolution of Pleng Korat) Suite* whose objective was to examine the singing methods of *Pleng Korat* (which is the unique folk song performance in Korat dialect of Nakhon Ratchasima province) from a case study of *Khru Gamphan Khoinok*. Qualitative research methods were employed to study both the traditional and modern *Pleng Korat*. The research identified the relationship between both types of *Pleng Korat* and their socio-cultural contexts from the evolutionary creation perspective of *Pleng Korat* that reflects their musical wisdom. The *Pleng Korat* consisted of four elements. The firstly was *Pleng Korat* have two prosodic elements: (1) The elements of *Pleng Korat* – the ten elements shared by both types of *Pleng Korat* are the use of phrases with secondary and primary contents, couple words, rhythming words, word numbers, *Sadur Pleng* (specific word order in a *Pleng Korat*), *Yieb Plai Pleng* (repetition of the last melody of a verse), *Oh* singing, *Sroi* (trill) singing, *Euan Siang* (drawing out the voice) and language use; (2) Prosodic structure. Traditional *Pleng Korat* use several subtle prosodic structures while modern *Pleng Korat* have evolved from all of the original songs of the traditional *Pleng Korat* and through the combining of *Pleng Gom* and *Hua Diew* verses. Such evolution has

made the prosodic structure of Pleng Korat more contemporaneous. The secondary was melody – (1) the Oh melodies are exactly the same for both types of Pleng Korat; (2) the melodies of modern Pleng Korat use more notes of short duration as well as more note repetition and syncopation; (3) as Pleng Korat evolved the Sroi melodies have been extended with modern Pleng Korat having more diverse melodies; (4) modern Pleng Korat have short Euan melodies while those of traditional Pleng Korat consist of only one syllable. The thirdly was rhythm – (1) the Oh melody of both types of Pleng Korat have exactly the same floating rhythms; (2) the verse melodies of traditional Pleng Korat use both the floating and regular rhythms while modern Pleng Korat use concise form of regular rhythms; (3) Sroi melodies with regular rhythms are used for the harmony singing of traditional Pleng Korat and the singing of bride sections in modern Pleng Korat; (4) Euan melodies in the regular and floating rhythms are only present in modern Pleng Korat. The fourthly was performance elements – (1) Mor Pleng (professional singers) should be knowledgeable in Pleng Korat; (2) the audience should have some understandings of Pleng Korat; (3) appropriate lyrics for each occasion and venue; (4) special melodic form; (5) lively rhythms; (6) accompanying dances; (7) the singer costumes should reflect the local culture; (8) the venues reflect the wisdom of local people and society; (9) the light and sound arrangement should enhance the aesthetic quality of Pleng Korat; (10) the performance occasion should to reflect the people’s ways of life; (11) the performance process reflects the wisdom of Pleng Korat; (12) the beliefs related to Pleng Korat reflect the teacher-student relationship. Data on the fascinating

evolution of the singing methods of Pleng Korat from traditional to modern Pleng Korat provided ideas and concepts for creative composition of Thai music.

Keywords: Singing method, Pleng Korat, Khru Gamphan Khoinok

Introduction

This article is based on the research findings on the singing methods of Pleng Korat, a case study of Khru Gamphan Khoinok (the Gamphan Bantaen Band), which is part of a thesis entitled “The Musical Creation of the Evolution of Pleng Korat (Wiwat Pleng Korat) Suite”. It will examine the body of knowledge on the evolution of Pleng Korat from traditional to modern forms regarding the song elements, melodies, rhythms and performance elements derived from the case study of Khru Gamphan Khoinok. The research findings have been analyzed and summarized to provide a guideline for the creation of the Wiwat Pleng Korat suite.

Pleng Korat is a form of intangible culture which, an emotional expression form of art (Ministry of Culture, 2009, a). It is a folk song performance that reflects the ways of life, customs, belief systems, language and traditions (Culture, Sport and Tourism Department of Bangkok Metropolitan Administration, 2014: 4). It is also one of the cultural heritages and local wisdoms that has been created and transmitted from generation to generation (Department of Cultural Promotion, 2016, 11). The Ministry of Culture has registered Pleng Korat as the 2009 National Cultural Heritage in the performing art category of folk songs (Ministry of Culture, 2009, 86).

Pleng Korat is outstanding for its songs and lyrics which are

delivered in the Korat dialect accents with notable singing techniques, witty dialogues of male and female Mor Pleng (professional singers) in which humor, jests and religious teachings are incorporated (Department of Cultural Promotion, 2016, 54). Pleng Korat lyrics emphasize the use of flowery language, rhymes, flexible prosody with unique singing structure and process that begin with the Oh singing, which can be fast (Chan Diew) or moderate (Song Chan) tempos created to the singer's liking, followed by the first section, the rhythm section and the verse section with clapping in the middle, the pre-final and final sections. Pleng Korat are transmitted through word of mouth or oral tradition method. Singers' costumes are in the local style of the people of Korat (Nakhon Ratchasima Province). The singing is accompanied by clapping with no musical instruments used (Sungsook, interviewed on March 6, 2017). The valuable contributions and popularity of Pleng Korat have been adversely affected by globalization trends and the changing socio-cultural contexts of recent years (Sungsook, interviewed on August 14, 2017). These factors include the use of Korat dialect which current audience find it difficult to understand, tourists' misconception that Pleng Korat are only performed as a votive offering to sacred beings after one's prayer is fulfilled, modern light and sound technology, etc. (Jexjuntuk, 2014, 111-113). However, these factors can be said to be somewhat beneficial to the promotion of Pleng Korat as they have now been included in the school curricular of Nakhon Ratchasima Province in an effort to preserve them. Pleng Korat song artists or singers have been invited as instructors for such courses (Sungsook, interviewed on August 14, 2017).

Khru Gamphan Khoinok (Nithi Worapaiboon) of the Gamphan Bantaen Band is the key contributor to the preservation, promotion and restoration of Pleng Korat. He plays the important roles of artist, teacher and promoter of Pleng Korat as well as the co-founder of Pleng Korat Association. He is the owner of the famous Bantaen Pleng Korat Band and creator of the modern Pleng Korat or Korat Zing performance. Khru Gamphan was honored and recognized by the Research Institute of Northeastern Art and Culture of Mahasarakham University as an Isaan folk artist in the field of folk art and folk media for mass communication on the National Artist Day of 24 February 2002 under the National Issan Folk Artist Day Project (Mahasarakham University, 2002, 1-48).

The remarkable origin and significance of Pleng Korat has inspired the researcher to pursue a study of the singing method of Pleng Korat. A quality research method was employed for data collection, analysis, synthesis and conclusions of the research findings which were subsequently used as a basis or the creation of a musical suite that reflects the culture of Pleng Korat through their music, songs and Thai musical bands. The research findings shall be beneficial to the preservation and promotion of Pleng Korat which will eventually, either directly or indirectly, benefit the Thai people, society and culture.

Objective

To study the singing method of Pleng Korat through a case study of Khru Gamphan Khoinok (Gamphan Bantaen Band).

Research Method

Qualitative research methodology was employed with the following research steps:

1. Data search and compilation, documentary surveys of books, textbooks, research works and academic articles from various learning sources and libraries.

2. Field studies based on interviews of the following music experts:

2.1 Khru Gamphan Khoinok, national artist in Isaan folk art (Pleng Korat), the first and former president of the Pleng Korat Association;

2.2 Khru Gawao Chokchai, a folk artist in Pleng Korat (Khru Gamphan Khoinok's wife);

2.3 Khru Bunsom Sungsook, a folk artist in Pleng Korat and the current president of the Pleng Korat Association.

3. Compilation and presentation of data on the case study of Khru Gamphan Khoinok (Gamphan Bantaen Band) in two key topics as follows:

3.1 The singing method of traditional Pleng Korat.

3.2 The singing method of modern Pleng Korat.

4. Data analysis and synthesis which can be divided into four topics as follows:

4.1 Prosodic elements

4.2 Melodies

4.3 Rhythms

4.4 Performance elements

5. Conclusion and discussion of the research results which are presented as descriptive and comparative analysis.

Research Results

The study reached conclusions on the evolution of Pleng Korat through a comparison of traditional and modern Pleng Korat Zinging methods derived from the case study of Khru Gamphan Khoinok (Gamphan Bantaen Band), which can be summarized into four topics as follows:

1. Prosodic elements
2. Melodies
3. Rhythms
4. Performance elements

1. Prosodic elements consisting of the following song elements and prosodic structures:

1.1 Song elements. There are 10 elements in Pleng Korat: secondary and primary contents, couple words, rhythming words, word numbers, Sadur Pleng (specific word order in a Pleng Korat), Yieb Plai Pleng (repetition of the last melody of a verse), Oh singing, Sroi (trill) singing, Euan Siang (drawing out the voice) and language use.

1.1.1 Secondary and primary contents. Traditional Pleng Korat evolved from Pleng Gom (Gom songs), using short phrases with appropriate ratio of secondary and primary contents. “Primary content” is the essence or the primary meaning of a song, a melodious piece that can be instantly understood, while the “secondary content” is the secondary meaning of a song which is not the song’s primary content or may not be consistent with the primary content but adds more aesthetic quality to the song. Word meanings and rhyming sounds or rhyming consonants can be used

for this purpose. However, modern Pleng Korat prefer the use of primary content to make the songs easier to understand and more accessible.

1.1.2 Couple words. Modern Pleng Korat emphasize couple words rhyming, especially the genuine couple words and rhyming of words in the same consonant group. For entertaining purpose, modern Pleng Korat appear to have larger number of couple words than traditional Pleng Korat. The more double words a Mor Pleng (professional singer) can use in composing a song the higher recognition he or she will receive. Two types of couple words are found in traditional Pleng Korat – genuine or principal couple words and supplementary couple words. Both types of double words influence the meaning of a song and enhance its aesthetic quality. For example, although Ngram Nor and Long Mor are couple words, Long Mor is a supplementary couple word that has no meaning. These rhyming couple words are unique to Pleng Korat and are not found in any other type of folk songs.

1.1.3 Rhyming words and phrases. Traditional Pleng Korat employ rhyming consonants, vowels, final consonants, intonations, words and couple words for both mandatory and free rhyming as required by the verse prosody. Free internal prosodic rhyming refers to the addition of couple words or short phrases which are repeated at certain section of a phrase as deemed appropriate by a singer. Modern Pleng Korat put more emphasis on rhyming phrases than on other forms of rhymes. They prefer using short phrases in a rhyme that is not required by the song prosody. This type of rhymes results in a short Sroi melody of three to four words,

some of which are double words that extend from a song sentence. Modern Pleng Korat also use creative rhymes in the combined characteristics of Hua Diew and Pleng Gom verses under the prosodic framework of traditional Pleng Korat. Pleng Gom verses consist of short phrases in which the first word rhymes with the last word of a verse in the form of word repetition. Its content is delivered in a spoken language focusing more on the conveying of messages than on pleasant melodies. Singers of Pleng Gom must be witty and adept at dialogue songs as evident in an example taken from the tape recordings of Pleng Korat Treatise Vol. 1 in which the female singer asked, “Did you, Brother, take a short cut or have a path cut to here?” to which the male singer answered, “I took a direct path here, I did not get lost or reached here by accident”. The female singer went on to enquire, “Did Brother jump through a window or tear down a wall to come to me?” to which the male singer retorted with “I did not tear down a wall but simply walked through a door” (Tornsoongnern, 2003, 55-56).

1.1.4 Word numbers. Modern Pleng Korat are outstanding for the large number of words used in each phrase, which are from 8 to 10 words. While traditional Pleng Korat prefer 6-8 words in each phrase modern Pleng Korat prefer phrases of 8-10 word as required by its prosody which is based on the combined rhyming words of Hua Diew verses, Pleng Gom verses and traditional Pleng Korat verses. An example of such 8-word phrase can be found in this Pleng Korat Zing: “Pi Yarkja Krajum Krajim, Pi Yarkja Lim Krajor Krajae”.

1.1.5 Sadur Pleng (specific word order in a song). Both traditional and modern Pleng Korat still place rhyming words at the

Sadur Pleng position, except in some modern Pleng Korat in which the original forms of Hua Diew and Pleng Gom verses or verses with no specific Sadur Pleng are used such as the Assachan, Nang Maew Khor Fon, Korat Khor Tornrub and Korat Rungrueng songs. Modern Pleng Korat with specified Sadur Pleng position are the Korat Zing and Khon Krathok songs. Sadur Pleng position is the last word of the Prob Mua Klang Klom section (the verse section with clapping in the middle) which must rhyme with the last word of the verse. This position is called “Sidur” or “Sadur”. The Sadur Pleng position in the following example is the word “Mao” in the second section of the phrase “Deknoi Khon Toh Muean Kub Tangmo, Nor Yar Dai Mokmun Muo Mao” which rhymes with the word “Rao” in the fourth section of the phrase “Tao Laew Maimi Khon Rak Mun Chang Anet Anart Nor... Khon Rao” (Uitrakoon, 1978, 33).

1.1.6 Yieb Plai Pleng (repetition of the last melody of a verse). This is a composition technique which is similar to the Sadur Pleng technique. It is found only in the traditional Pleng Korat and modern Pleng Korat that were originated from the traditional Pleng Korat. For example, the last phrase that is repeated at the beginning of the following phrase of the Tarm Khao Rueng Thamna song (asking about the rice growing effort) composed by Khru Gamphan Khoi Nok goes as follows: “...Tham Pai Tham Ma Ai Raina Kae Tham Mai Rue Thai Tae Mong Eebing Sarm Mum, Bonn Euan Pai Tham...Mun” (“...All in all, did you work on your land at all or just ploughed at its three corners and not elsewhere...”). This phrase can be analyzed as using the Yieb Plai Pleng technique in the form of a repetition of the same clause while modern Pleng Korat prefer

repeating a short melodious phrase several times, which result in distinctive melodies and beats that are similar to the Yieb Plai Pleng technique. Such practice can be used, to the composer's liking, at the beginning and ending of a line. Modern Pleng Korat that employ Yieb Plai Pleng technique are the Korat Zing and Khon Kratok songs.

1.1.7 Oh singing. This technique is only used in traditional Pleng Korat without any musical or rhythmic instrument. The modern Pleng Korat that use this technique are the Korat Zing, Khon Kratok, Korat Khor Tornrub songs which have the musical accompaniment of a keyboard or a Luk Thung String musical band. New lyrics for the introduction section can be composed as in the case of the traditional Assachan song where the introduction section has been modified to "Assachan Salawei Assachan Salawa". Or the Oh singing can be replaced by a Sroi melody of "Chai Ya Cha Chi Cha" in the introduction section of the Korat Rungrueng song while other modern Pleng Korat with other types of mixed verses, such as the Nang Maew Khor Fon song, tend to drop Oh singing in the introduction section. However, Khru Gamphan Khoinok stated that there is no prohibition against using Oh singing with modern Pleng Korat.

1.1.8 Sroi singing. Sroi melody is used more often in modern Pleng Korat than in traditional Pleng Korat because the former use regular tempo for the entire song. For example, there are short, long and Sroi of "Chai Ya Cha Chi Cha..." are sung in short, long and simulating melodies while traditional Pleng Korat use the short and long forms of Sroi singing, such as, "Cha Cha Cha" and "Cha Cha Cha Chaiya Chaiya".

1.1.9 Euan Siang (drawing out the voice). In traditional Pleng Korat, a short single word is sung either in a mournful, gentle or rough drawn-out voice as required by the mood of each song with a floating rhythm. The first sentence is usually ended with the symbol words of “Dok Na Nong Na” or “Er Er Er...Er” to enhance the aesthetic of the song. The drawing out of one word is not normally used in modern Pleng Korat where short, moderate beats are required. Therefore, the traditional Euan Siang of “Er Er Er Er Er Er” is replaced by the phrase “Dok Na Nong Na” or “Cha Cha Chai...”.

1.1.10 The use of Korat dialect. Both modern and traditional Pleng Korat still use the Thai Korat dialect which has the unique sing-song sounds of alternating high- and low-pitch sounds that differ from the Central region dialects. However, modern Pleng Korat put emphasis on the use of more Central Thai dialect double words that better suit their terse, lively tempos and performance while still retaining the beauty of Pleng Korat verses and the unique accents of Korat dialect.

These research on the singing methods of both types of Pleng Korat found that the original concepts of traditional Pleng Korat are still fundamental to the evolution of traditional Pleng Korat into modern Pleng Korat. These concepts are: the use of Korat dialect, Sadur Pleng, Yieb Plai Pleng, Oh singing, Sroi melody, double words, secondary and primary contents and internal rhyming of the song verses. Nevertheless, the evolution of Pleng Korat must comply with the composition requirements. For example, modern Pleng Korat have more of the terse tempos, word numbers, drawing out of the voice style, phrase format and repetition of the

melody while traditional Pleng Korat focus on the use of melodious music style, profound meanings, language use, double-word rhymes as well as primary and secondary contents. Pleng Korat have gone through an adjustment process that have evolved into the new singing methods that still retain some of their original forms.

1.2 Prosodic structure. The original prosodic structures of traditional Pleng Korat are the Oh melody; the 4-section verses consisting of an introduction section of two sentences, the primary heading section (with clapping in the middle) of two sentences, the last heading section of one sentence and the final section of one sentence; and short harmonious Sroi sections. The Sadur Pleng and Yieb Plai Pleng techniques appear in the primary heading section to mark the beginning of a new verse. A sweet melodious trill is applied just before the last word of a sentence and the initial phrase of the last heading section is repeated to make the song more entertaining.

The research found modern Pleng Korat to come from two origins. Firstly, they were originated in the traditional Pleng Korat as evident from the use of Oh melody as an introduction to a verse melody, each of which consisting of six sentences. They also have the four sections of the introduction, primary leading, secondary leading and final sections which are the exact replica of the traditional Pleng Korat. The Sroi Euan melodies as well as the Yieb Plai Pleng and Sadur Pleng techniques are also retained with some modification for entertaining purpose. There are more repetition of the phrases and the last words of the verses. Secondly, modern Pleng Korat were originated from a combination of traditional Pleng Korat, Hua Diew and Pleng Gom verses with a special emphasis on the use of rhyming

words and double words. One verse consists of the four phrases of the Sadub, Rub, Rong and Song phrases which equal two sentences. The Sroi and Euan melodies have also been modified to match more lively tempos. In summary, modern Pleng Korat still adhere to their original prosodic structures with certain modifications made in compliance with modern composition principles for entertaining purpose as permitted by the song lyrics, melodies and rhythms.

2. Melodies. Both types of Pleng Korat are similar in terms of melody as they adopt the concept of “Roi Nuea Tamnong Diew (a hundred lyrics with the same melody)”. The mood of a song must also match its lyrics. Pleng Korat have no fixed melody but use alternating high and low pitches in each phrase with adjusted melodic content. Traditional Pleng Korat emphasize the drawing out of melodious voice that matches the mood of a song and the singer’s singing style while modern Pleng Korat emphasize more lively melodies. The melodies required by the song structure are as follows:

2.1 Oh singing melody. Both types of Pleng Korat still use the Oh singing that begins with the line: “Oh, Oh Oh Oh, Err... Euay, Er Er Er Er... Euay”. The Oh singing melody is used for the calibrating of a singer’s voice. There is no fixed scale in Oh melody except for the modern Pleng Korat where the melody can be decided upon by singers and musicians during a practice session. Modern Pleng Korat may or may not include a Oh singing melody, depending on the song’s and the singers’ characteristics, but it is preferred in the songs that were originated from traditional Pleng Korat. In such case, the Oh melody is performed only once in the FGAXCDx scale with no vocal bridge in B and E notes.

2.2 Klon (verse) melody. Both types of Pleng Korat use the same melody for all verses. Such melody is associated with the prosodic structure of the original song. One verse of traditional Pleng Korat consists of six sentences and four melodies in each section. There are two sentences in the introduction melody, two in the primary leading melody, one in the last leading melody and one in the final melody. For the modern Pleng Korat that were originated from traditional Pleng Korat, such as Korat Zing, one verse still consists of six sentences and four melodies while the song of Khon Kratok uses repeated melodies similar to the second type of verse melody. The second type of verse melody refers to the original songs with a combination of Pleng Gom and Hua Diew verses. Songs of the second type of verse melody are: Assachan, Nang Maew Khor Fon, Korat Rungrueng and Korat Khor Tornrub. These songs have different melodies consisting of four melodies of two sentences each, which are equivalent to four phrases. Essential verse melodies found in both types of Pleng Korat can be summarized as follows:

2.2.1 Differences in their melodies. Three differences were found. First, repeated melodies are prominent in modern Pleng Korat which emphasize the repeating of short and long melodies in the unique style of traditional Pleng Korat. Second, lengthy and diverse melodies in terms of melodic patterns and melodic direction are prominent in modern Pleng Korat that were originated from traditional Pleng Korat. Third, lengthy and concise melodies are prominent in modern Pleng Korat that were originated from a combination of traditional Pleng Korat, Pleng Gom and Hua Diew verses. They also use two notes in a similar manner to the use of double words.

2.2.2 Characteristics of melody

2.2.2.1 Melodies of the same scale. FGAXCDx scale is preferred and Note B vocal bridge is used to create the unique accents of Korat dialect.

2.2.2.2 Matching melodic direction to the verse prosody. The up and down melodies together with the emphasizing of certain melodic pitches are used to match the song's lyrics and melodies as follows:

2.2.2.2.1 Traditional Pleng Korat. The melodic direction used is one of emphasizing of certain melodic pitches alternating between the up and down melodies. Diverse melodies are used in Sections 1, 3 and 6 while regular rhythms are used in the lyrics of Section 2, mostly with an emphasis on certain melodic pitches.

2.2.2.2.2 Modern Pleng Korat. A study of all six modern Pleng Korat revealed the similarities and differences in melodies that can be divided into three groups. Group 1 – Korat Zing and Khon Kratok songs. 2-4 notes per bar of syncopated and regular rhythms are used. The melodic direction used is one of emphasizing of certain melodic pitches alternating between the up and down melodies. Repetition of the end word of a sentence, a bar and a phrase are also found. The prosodic style of traditional Pleng Korat verses is more prominent in the Korat Zing than in the Khon Kratok songs. The latter stresses the use of double words and terse rhythms in a similar style of Pleng Gom and Hua Diew verses while the original verses of traditional Pleng Korat are still retained. Group 2 – Assachan and Nang Maew Khor Fon songs. The emphasizing of

certain melodic pitches is found in almost all bars of these songs. For example, Assachan song regularly alternates between the up melody and the emphasizing of certain melodic pitches while Nang Maew Khor Fon regularly stresses the emphasizing of certain melodic pitches in conjunction with the down melody at the final note. Group 3 – Korat Rungrueng and Korat Khor Tornrub songs. An up or down melody is used in the first bar, followed by the emphasizing of certain melodic pitches in the second bar, alternating regularly at half a phrase interval.

2.2.2.3 Matching melodic pattern to the lyrics.

Both types of Pleng Korat use 1-3 note syncopation together with 2- and 4-note down beats per bar are found as follows:

2.2.2.3.1 Traditional Pleng Korat.

A combination of Section 1 and Section 4 in regular, Keb and syncopated melodic patterns are played during the floating rhythms, as in xxxx --x-x ---x xx-x x-xx; a combination of Section 2 and Section 2 in syncopated melodic patterns are played during the regular rhythms, as in xx-x x-xx xx-x x-xx xx-x -xxx x-xx, etc. Such melodic patterns are reflected in the lyrics and in the song melody despite the lack of any musical accompaniment.

2.2.2.3.2 Modern Pleng Korat. Syncopated

rhythms of 2-3 notes per bar and Keb rhythms of 2-4 notes per bar are used for entertaining purpose. They can be found in the Korat Rungrueng and Korat Khor Tornrub songs as xx-x --xx- -xx- --xx- -xxx -xx-, etc. Such melodic patterns provide lively entertainment in the style of the Luk Thung String music.

2.2.2.4 Matching rhyming notes to musical

composition. Both types of Pleng Korat share this characteristic of melody.

2.2.2.4.1 Traditional Pleng Korat. Note C is used at the last sound of the line (Luktok) of the last bar while the fifth pair (Note F and Note High C) are found at the Sadur Pleng position which rhyme with the last note of a verse, suggesting a vocal bridge between sections. The last sound of the final section melody is Note G and not Doe as found in Sections 1 and 2, suggesting that the last heading melody is the ending sentence. The pre-final section melody is, therefore, the ending melody of the regular rhythm of the bridging melody between the primary heading and the final sections which is also the final section of the melody.

2.2.2.4.2 Modern Pleng Korat. Repetition of the beginning and end notes of a sentence as well as repetition at the Sadur Pleng position are found in the Korat Zing and Khon Kratok songs in which the melodic patterns and melodic directions are found to consist of four consecutive notes of xxxx xxxx and to comply with the double words of the Korat Zing song. The use of two notes per bar in a regular rhythm, -x-x --x-x, is also found in the Nang Maew Khor Fon song while other songs stress the repetition of 2-4 notes in a concise syncopated rhythm.

2.3 Sroi melody. Comparison of Sroi melodies in both types of Pleng Korat can be summarized as follows:

2.3.1 Diverse scales. Traditional Pleng Korat were found to use the scale of FGxCDx and Note B vocal bridge to produce the unique accents of the Korat dialect while modern Pleng Korat use the more diverse scales of DEFxABx EFGxBCx FGxCDx

GABxDEx. The first three notes of the scale are mainly used in these songs except for the Nang Maew Khor Fon song in which a different order of notes in the DEFxABx scale is used while the Korat Zing song still uses the FGACDx scale whose original songs differ from the traditional Pleng Korat of the Assachan, Nang Maew Khor Fon, Korat Khor Tornrub and Korat Rungrueng songs which use other scales. No Sroi melody is found in Khon Kratok song.

2.3.2 Diverse singing techniques. In traditional Pleng Korat, the harmonious singing technique at a regular rhythm is found in the singing of the primary leading section with no musical accompaniment. In modern Pleng Korat, the harmonious singing technique is used between verses at a regular and mimicking (lor) rhythms with the musical accompaniment of a Luk Thung String music band, emphasizing concise and lively music.

2.3.3 Diverse Sroi melodies.

2.3.3.1 Traditional Pleng Korat. The Sroi melodies of traditional Pleng Korat can be divided into three (out of five) styles as follows:

2.3.3.1.1 The first style is the short melodies with an emphasis on certain melodic pitches at the down beat rhythms of “Cha Cha Cha Chaiya Chaiya”, ---x -x-x -xx -xx.

2.3.3.1.2 The second style is the short melodies with an emphasis on certain melodic pitches at regular rhythms to make the melodies livelier. There are two types of melody – One is the “Cha Cha Cha (Ar)”, --x -x-x, and the other is the “Chai Ya Cha Chi Cha”, -x -x -xxx, with an emphasis on the use of more diverse notes at shorter intervals.

2.3.3.1.3 The third style is the extended melodies with an emphasis on certain melodic pitches at regular rhythms, the use of more diverse notes and word repetition ending which differ from the first and second styles of Sroi melodies, resulting in to more concise and entertaining singing. The first form this style is the singing of “Chai Ya Cha Chi Cha Cha Chai Ya Cha Chi Cha...”, -x-x -xxx ---x -x-x -xxx, while the second form is the “Chai Ya Cha Chi Chaa Cha Chi Cha Chai Ya Cha Chi Cha”, -x-x -xxx ---x -x-x -x-x -xxx, which is an extended form of the first form and created by repeating of the word “ChaChiCha” to lengthen the melody.

In summary, the three styles of Sroi melodies in the traditional Pleng Korat are found to be related to one another in terms of their evolution. The first style was lengthened into the second and third styles via the use of more frequent language use and more word repetition in a melody to create more diverse and longer melodies. The third style of Sroi melody has clearly evolved from the first style and is a confirmation of the existence of regular rhythms in primary leading melody section. Although traditional Pleng Korat are not accompanied by any musical instrument, the melodious harmony between the Sroi melody and the primary leading melody can still be achieved.

2.3.3.2 The Sroi melodies of modern Pleng Korat can be divided into three (out of five) styles as follows:

2.3.3.2.1 The first style is the short regular Sroi melodies that appear between verses, which come in two types – one is the extended version of six bars of two notes each as found in the words “----ChaiCha ---- ChaiCha Chaiya

ChaiChaay”, ---- -x-x ---- -x-x -x-x -x-x, of the Nang Maew Khor Fon song; the other is the extended version of eight bars of 2-3 notes each as found in the words “Chai Ya ChaChiCha ---- ---- Chai Ya ChaChiCha ---- ----”, -x-x -xxx ---- ---- -x-x -xxx ---- ----, of the Korat Rungrueng song. Regular down beat rhythms are used in both types.

2.3.3.2.2 The second style is the extended regular Sroi melodies that appear between verses, which come in two types – one is the extended version of eight bars of two notes each, at regular and syncopated rhythms as found in the words of “---- Chai Chaa - --- Chai Chaa Chai Ya ChaiChaay Chai Ya Chaay-euay”, “----x-x ---- -x-x -x-x -xx- -x-x -x-x”; the other is a chorus of three-sentence long with bars of 1-2 notes each, at regular down beat rhythms as found in the words “ErEr ErrEuay ErEr ErrEuay Er ErrEuay Er ErrEuay Er ErrEuay ErEr ErrEuay Er ErrEuay Er ErEuay”, -x-x -x-x ---- ---- -x-x -x-x ---- ---- / ---x -x-x ---x -x-x ---x -x-x ---- ---- / -x-x -x-x ---x -x-x---x -x-x ---- ----.

2.3.3.2.3 The third style is the extended mimicking (Lor) Sroi melodies that appear between verses, emphasizing on the mimicking of the melodies before and after the Sroi through the repetition of verses, phrases and sentences. The melodies are two-sentence long (including the repetition of sentences) with bars of 2-3 notes each. They also appear as regular down beats and 3-note syncopation. The same lyrics for the Korat Rungrueng song appear in the Korat Khor Tornrub song as “Chai Ya ChaChiCha (---- ----) Chai Ya ChaChiCha (---- ----)”, -x-x --xxx (---- ----) -x-x -xxx (---- ----).

In summary, the three styles of Sroi melodies of the modern Pleng Korat are found to be related to one another in terms of their evolution in the same manner as the traditional Pleng Korat, with the emphases placed on the repetition of phrases and sentences. The Sroi melodies were extended from fewer to larger numbers of words and bars, especially for the Assachan song of the second style and for the Korat Khor Tornrub song of the third style of melodies. They clearly reflect the evolution of Pleng Korat from traditional to contemporary styles. Apart from the including of musical instruments for entertaining purpose, the Sroi melodies also contribute to the songs' excitement and provocation. The Sroi melodies of modern Pleng Korat still reflect the original Sroi melodies of "Cha Cha Chaay" with modification made to the melodies. Such evolution symbolizes the strict adherence of modern Pleng Korat to their original singing method.

2.4 Euan melody. This is the melodies of short phrases that appear in modern Pleng Korat to replace the "Er Er Er Er Er" sounds of the traditional Pleng Korat before the last word of the first sentence and Section 4. This singing style of drawn-out voices in modern and traditional Pleng Korat still use gentle and sweet voices while the Euan melodies of modern Pleng Korat are more novel and shorter. The FGxCDx scale is used to create smooth listening and to represent the word used at the Sadur Pleng position and at the ending of the first sentence, as required by the original prosody of the traditional Pleng Korat. These are the melodies for the words "*Dok Na Nong Na...*" and "*Cha Cha Chai...*" .

3. Rhythms. The research found the rhythms of both traditional and modern Pleng Korat to be different and diverse, aiming to combine entertaining benefits with the local wisdom behind the songs. Pleng Korat were found to employ both the floating rhythms and regular rhythms at the last note of a bar.

The rhythms of modern Pleng Korat melodies are the regular rhythms of relatively fast and concise tempos which are similar to the moderate (Song Chan) and fast (Chan Diew) tempos of the classical Thai songs or to the tempos used by Luk Thung String music bands. They are also similar to the rhythms of the primary leading section or the verse section with clapping in the middle of the traditional Pleng Korat which are two-sentence long. In summary, regular rhythms are found in the singing of Pleng Korat despite their lack of musical accompaniment. Furthermore, the rhythms of the Korat Zing song of modern Pleng Korat appear to have extra rhythms, before and after the eighth bar in the form of a repetition of the beginning and ending note of a sentence to make the song more colorful and entertaining. They are found in the first sentence and the first two verses of the Korat Zing song.

Nevertheless, the rhythms of modern Pleng Korat appear to belong to two types – floating and regular rhythms. Floating rhythms are used when a song begins with the Oh singing with musical accompaniment of a band. Regular rhythms at moderate to fast tempos are also used. In traditional Pleng Korat, floating rhythms are used at the beginning of the Oh melody right into the melodies of Sections 1, 3 and 4. Regular rhythms appear in the the second section melody in the prosodic form of the traditional Pleng Korat verses.

The Sroi melodies of both types of Pleng Korat have distinctive melodic rhythms. In traditional Pleng Korat, floating rhythms are used to produce melodic harmony in the primary leading section while the rhythms of modern Pleng Korat are more distinct as they are used for between verse singing and for musical accompaniment.

Rhythms of the Euan melodies of traditional Pleng Korat cannot be clearly identified as they appear as repetition of a single note. This is different from the rhythms of modern Pleng Korat that belong to two types – the first type is the floating rhythms for the melody lyric of “Cha Cha Chai” while the second type is the regular for the melody lyric of “Dok Na Nong Na...”.

The rhythmic identity of both types of Pleng Korat reflect the rhythmic styles that are related to their prosodic structures that begin with the Oh melody, verse melody, Sroi melody and Euan melody. Such rhythms are designed to entertain. Modern Pleng Korat retain the traditional style of floating rhythms for the Oh and Euan melodies. However, the research discovered that both the traditional and modern Pleng Korat have interesting ways of using diverse rhythms to enhance their aesthetic and that the evolution of Pleng Korat has been introduced through the cultural wisdom of their composers. Khru Gamphan Khoiнок is the pioneer of modern Pleng Korat which have been created on the foundation of traditional Pleng Korat in conjunction with their social and cultural contexts, resulting in the contemporary forms of Pleng Korat that still retain the original and creative forms of Pleng Korat.

4. Performance elements. The research findings on the performance elements of Pleng Korat, according to Khru Gamphan Khoinok's ideas, can be divided into 12 elements as follows:

4.1 Mor Pleng Korat. Mor Pleng Korat or professional singers of both types of Pleng Korat still rely on their wisdom, wit as well as knowledge on their society, culture, traditions, beliefs, secular and Buddhist values to create a large variety of beautiful verses, double words, language use and rhyming principles. They must be able to create rhymes under the prosodic requirements for mandatory, free, internal and external rhymes as well as to use clever puns and subtle meanings for the composition of lyrics. Mor Pleng or master singers must possess all of the four elements of excellent intellect, good singing voice, wit and patience. Traditional Pleng Korat are generally performed by one or two professional singers of both sexes while modern Pleng Korat can have up to four singers. Moreover, traditional Pleng Korat singers must be experts on impromptu singing while modern Pleng Korat singers can practice and prepare in advance for a performance of the employer's liking.

4.2 Audiences. Audiences of both types of Pleng Korat need good listening skills and good understanding of the song lyrics, the bantering dialogues, language use and song elements. The research found modern Pleng Korat to use larger numbers of double-word rhymes, livelier rhythms and easy to understand verses to enhance their language and musical appeals to audiences of all genders and ages. The audiences can participate in the performance by singing and dancing to the music. However, a good understating of traditional Pleng Korat prosody is still essential for the appreciation of both traditional and modern Pleng Korat.

4.3 Lyrics. The lyrics of modern Pleng Korat are modified from traditional Pleng Korat, Hua Diew and Pleng Gom which can be observed in the Assachan, Nang Maew Khor Fon, Korat Khor Tornrub and Korat Rungrueng songs. Modern Pleng Korat that were originated from the original songs of traditional Pleng Korat, such as Korat Zing and Khon Kratok songs, stress the use of double words for entertaining purpose. However, the contents of modern Pleng Korat are still similar to traditional Pleng Korat as found in courting songs and songs with double-meaning and vulgar contents. Modern Pleng Korat have more concise and easier to understand lyrics than those of the traditional Pleng Korat. Their lyrics put stronger emphasis on “primary content” than “secondary content” while traditional Pleng Korat have equal amounts of primary and secondary contents.

4.4 Melodies. Both modern and traditional Pleng Korat still retain the characteristic high and low pitch melodies of the Thai Korat dialect and the characteristic concept of “a hundred lyrics with the same melody”. However, modern Pleng Korat stress the use of floating rhythm melodies with 1 to 3 notes per bar, larger number of double words as well as more word and phrase repetition than traditional Pleng Korat. Their melodies are, therefore, more concise and provocative than traditional Pleng Korat. The latter have more melodious melodies more beautiful verses.

4.5 Rhythms. The floating and regular rhythms of traditional Pleng Korat are essentially different from the fast (Chan Diew) and moderate (Song Chan) tempos of the regular rhythms of modern Pleng Korat. Some modern Pleng Korat use the Sam Cha rhythms of the Luk Thung music to create more lively and entertaining

music which is not conducive to the drawing out of a single word. Shorter rhythms are used instead because modern Pleng Korat are sung to the musical accompaniment while traditional Pleng Korat are sung to the hand-clapping rhythms only.

4.6 Dancing. There are five dance patterns for traditional Pleng Korat: Chang Tiam Mae, Pla Lai Phun Phuang, Yong, Prachanbarn and Jok. Mor Pleng can freely select the dance patterns of their choice. The dances are usually performed during the primary heading section or the rhythm section which contain lyric rhythms. Singers of modern Pleng Korat only move their bodies to the musical rhythms as audiences at Luk Thung concerts do. The focus is primarily on the dances performed by members of the dance troupe of modern Pleng Korat bands.

4.7 Costumes. Mor Pleng of traditional Pleng Korat prefer to dress in the traditional costumes of the past which consist of a Jong Kraben loincloth of plain colors and a short-sleeve, T-shirt of any color for male singers, a similar Jong Kraben loincloth with a collarless, fitted blouse of plain colors with elbow-length sleeves for female singers. Some singers like to put a pleated betel leaves or flowers on their ears. In the past, singers of modern Pleng Korat wore similar but more colorful costumes or western clothes but today's singers have no fixed dress codes. The focus is now on the colorful costumes or back-up dancers (Harnng Krueng) with frequent changes of dancer costumes to suit the mood of each song.

4.8 Venues. The venue of modern Pleng Korat differs from traditional Pleng Korat venue in that it is usually held as an open concert with large-scale sound equipment. Concert stages must

be able to accommodate a Luk Thung band and a large number of back-up dancers while traditional Pleng Korat bands still perform in a Rong Pleng (singing hall) which is made of more durable materials to withstand the weather. Rong Pleng is erected in an open area and left standing for a long period of time. Some of the areas where such Rong Pleng can be found are in front of Thao Suranaree Monument and on the ground of Sala Loy Buddhist temple. In the past, temporary Rong Pleng were stages raised 1 meter above the ground and rested on four posts with coconut-leaf roofing. On the stage was a bucket of drinking water for singers, placed on top of an overturned rice mortar during a performance. With such simple stage, Pleng Korat could be performed at all times in all places wherever villagers congregated or at a courtyard of a house.

4.9 Light, sound and musical instruments. Unlike present-day performance, no musical instrument, hand clapping or Ching (small cymbal for rhythmic instrument) was used in a traditional Pleng Korat performance of the past. Light and sound instruments were improvised locally by villagers. In the past, Tai Chang (Tai Rung) torches were used to provide lighting and were subsequently replaced by lamps. Since no loud-speaker was available, loud and clear voices were a must for Mor Pleng. At a later period, microphones were hung from a roof beams to amplify singing voices. Modern Pleng Korat performance uses the light and sound equipment and musical instrument of the Luk Thung and String music bands. Tom-tom drums, Bongo drums, drum sets, electronic organs and keyboards are used to provide lively, entertaining rhythms. Sometime musical instruments for Mor Lam bands and Likay troupes such as guitars and base guitars

are also used. The research found modern Pleng Korat performance to modify its prosodic elements to suit these musical instruments.

4.10 Performing occasion. Modern Pleng Korat can be found performing at various places as requested by an employer. Performance expenses include costs of the setting up of a large stage, musical instruments, light and sound equipment and performer wages which vary with performer numbers. A modern Pleng Korat performance lasts approximately six hours and is suitable for people of all ages from children to teenagers and adults. There are two main occasions for traditional Pleng Korat performance. One is on the occasions of auspicious or inauspicious functions. Pleng Korat are popular with functions of religious nature, such as a Kaebon (a promised offering given to sacred beings for their blessing) ritual to Thao Suranaree, monk ordination or household merit-making ceremony. The other is on the occasions of entertaining functions without fixed schedule but focus on entertaining audiences and employers.

4.11 Performance steps. A traditional Pleng Korat performance usually begins with one singer being invited to sing to an Oh melody as a means to calibrate a singer's voice. This tune is a symbolic announcement of the beginning of a Pleng Korat performance at a specific venue. The next step is the singing of verses and Yieb Plai Pleng melody upon the start of a new verse. The other singer will then start singing with a Yieb Plai Pleng melody, followed by a new verse which can immediately stop at a verse end with no ending melody required. There is no set procedures for the performance of modern Pleng Korat as it can be performed in any

manner that is agreed upon and practiced for. An opening announcement to introduce singers (Mor Pleng) or to notify employer's message may be executed, followed by the singing of the agreed songs. It can be said that modern Pleng Korat is a prepared performance while traditional Pleng Korat is primarily based on the singers' expertise and impromptu improvisation, especially when there is an on-spot song request.

4.12 Beliefs related to Pleng Korat. The beliefs observed by traditional Pleng Korat singers are mostly related to the teacher-student relationship with the primary goal of enhancing the singing skills of Pleng Korat. For example, the belief of the partaking of sacred peppers requires Pleng Korat students to consume sacred peppers on certain days to improve their memory of the song lyrics and melodies. The Krob Khru or Yok Khru ritual that all students have to undergo before the initial training is held with the goals of creating prosperity, morale and esprit de corp for students. Moreover, many of the dance patterns that accompany Pleng Korat reflect some of these beliefs. For example, Krob Khru is the dance pattern that represent the belief in Wai Khru (paying respect to one's teachers) ritual. Teachers usually ask for the blessing of one's teachers and deities before a student's singing performance. A belief in the power of sacred mantra helps invigorate student singers. The Tham Nam Mon (making holy water) dance pattern reflects the sprinkling of holy water by a teacher to bring blessings and good fortunes to students. Unlike traditional Pleng Korat, there is no distinct form of such belief among modern Pleng Korat performers. They only observe the practice of incense and candle lighting to pay respect to teachers,

to ask for blessing and forgiveness from one's singing teachers and deity teachers before a performance to ensure a smooth and successful performance. These beliefs are similar to the general beliefs and practices observe in other fields of performing arts.

Conclusion and Discussion

The singing methods of traditional and modern Pleng Korat are related in term of their creative evolution which are closely related to the existing social and cultural contexts. Both types of Pleng Korat put an emphasis on the entertainment and the musical wisdom of Pleng Korat. There are four elements in the singing method of Khru Gamphan Khoinok: prosodic elements, melodies, rhythms and performance elements. The essence of Thai music was identified through an analysis and synthesis of the research results as follows:

Part 1 Prosodic elements. The research has reached many interesting conclusions and new knowledge on the lyric composition method of Khru Gamphan Khoinok. 1) The song elements refer to the contexts of Pleng Korat singing. Both traditional and modern Pleng Korat share ten identical song elements, namely, the use of secondary and primary contents – modern Pleng Korat place more emphasis on the primary content for entertainment and ease of understanding purposes while traditional Pleng Korat place equal emphasis on both types of contents; the use of double words – modern Pleng Korat use more diverse types of double words than traditional Pleng Korat to attract the interest of the general public and make Pleng Korat more accessible to them. This finding is consistent with Sanong Klangprasri's statement that modern Pleng

Korat are more modern form of Pleng Korat (2012, 196) and Podchara Suwannapart's idea that modern Pleng Korat were modified to increase their appeal and acceptability among today's audiences (2001, 143); the use of rhymes – beside the rhyming words and phrases and the word numbers, modern Pleng Korat was empirically found to have used rhyming technique to enhance the linguistic and rhythmic aesthetics of Pleng Korat while allowing listeners to sing and dance to Pleng Korat songs and music. This finding is consistent with Podchara's suggestion that modern Pleng Korat have improved their musical prosody through the introduction of rhythms (2001, 146); both types of Pleng Korat are found to retain the use of Sadur Pleng, Yieb Plai Pleng, Oh singing, Sroi singing, Euan singing, and Korat dialect, which are the essential elements of Pleng Korat. However, the use of Sadur Pleng, Yieb Plai Pleng, Oh singing and Euan singing are not distinctive in the modern Pleng Korat that were originated from a combination of the original Pleng Korat, Pleng Gom and Hua Diew verses. It is the researcher's opinion that the evolution of modern Pleng Korat through melodic improvement to simplify the complex and subtle melodies of traditional Pleng Korat aims to create more concise and entertaining melodies that appeal to and are accessible to the new generation of listeners. This opinion is consistent with Khru Gamphan's explanation that the modification of traditional Pleng Korat into modern Pleng Korat was initiated to make Pleng Korat more accessible to the new generation while retaining the characteristic features of Pleng Korat. Such modifications are, for example, the introduction of more concise words and the shortening their musical prosody. However, the use of Thai Korat

dialect and double words still appear in modern Pleng Korat (interviewed on October 9, 2018). 2) Prosodic structure. The research found the singing method of traditional Pleng Korat as perceived by Khru Khampun Khoinok to contain a variety of subtle internal structures. These structures are: Part 1 – Oh singing; Part 2 – Klom Pleng (the song verses) consisting of four sections, including the introduction section, primary heading section, last heading section and final section; Part 3 – Sroi melody; Part 4 – Euan melody. These findings represent a comprehensive analysis of the traditional structures of Pleng Korat. The Office of Art and Culture of Nakhon Ratchasima Rajabhat University (2012, 19) explained that the prosodic structures of Pleng Korat, excluding Oh singing, consist of five sections – the first section, rhythm section, the verse section with clapping in the middle, pre-final section and final section. Some Mor Pleng suggested that traditional Pleng Korat consist of three sections: the primary heading section, verse section and final section. There is nothing wrong with these suggestions but Khru Khamphan Khoinok's idea is based on the analysis of the melodies that are specific to the singing method of each singer. Regarding the origin of Pleng Korat, it was found that although Pleng Korat evolved from Pleng Gom, they eventually formed the unique structure of traditional Pleng Korat. Pleng Korat have also been modified into the prosodic structures of exquisite beauty that cannot be found in the prosody of any other types of folk songs. The researcher found Pleng Korat to have subtle internal structures, especially the internal rhymes, the impromptu rhyming of the Sadur Pleng words with the last word of a verse, the clever singing technique that can be highly entertaining through the

use of regular rhythms with no musical accompaniment or the use of a singing method to produces sweet melody of floating rhythms for Section 1, 3 and 4 of a song. Such singing techniques reflect the subtlety and diversity of Pleng Korat's wisdom which are consistent with the findings of Thavorn Subongkot et al (1993, 28) that today's traditional Pleng Korat are longer than those of past periods and it follows that singing at slow might create irregular rhythms. Therefore, suitable singing technique depends on a singer's experience and creativity. It was also found that modern Pleng Korat were originated from two sources. First, they were originated from traditional Pleng Korat where there are six sentences in one verse. Second, they were originated from a combination of traditional Pleng Korat, Pleng Gom as well as Hua Diew verses where there are four phrases (Sadub, Rub, Rong and Song) in one verse which make up two sentences. The evolution began with the evolvment of Pleng Gom into traditional Pleng Korat which had further evolved into modern Pleng Korat and to combined Pleng Korat. It is increasingly apparent that the prosodic structures of Pleng Korat have evolved under the concept of "a hundred lyrics with the same melody". Modern Pleng Korat have become more interesting, more diverse and easier to understand in the same manner as the folk songs of the central region. This finding is consistent with the Documents and Records Compilation Committee (1999, 293) which stated that modern Pleng Korat have been modified in terms of content and structure with the goal of changing the singing atmosphere. Modified Pleng Korat share the similar characteristics of Pleng Choi folk songs of the central region.

Part 2 Melodies. The singing method of Pleng Korat consists of 1) the Oh melody. Both types of Pleng Korat use exactly the same Oh melody. The researcher is of the opinion that the reason for this similarity is caused by the uniqueness of Oh melody. According to Weera Lertjuntuek (1998, 151-154), Pleng Korat have adapted to international music by adding words and phrases to the song to comply with modern rhythms while retaining Oh singing as a prelude to verse singing which is the unique identity of Pleng Korat. They use FGAXCDx scale with no vocal bridge. This finding is consistent with Somkij Padungsoontorn (2013, a-b) who stated that Oh melody is used in Oh singing as a means to calibrate a singer's voice and to identify the scale to be used in the ensuing singing in which a 5-note scale is preferred. 2) Verse melodies. Similar melodies are used with modern Pleng Korat use more notes of short intervals and repeated syncopated notes to create concise and lively tunes. This is consistent with Weera Lertjuntuek's (1998, 151-154) and Somkij Padungsoontorn's (2013, 144-147) opinions that modified notes are used more frequently in modern Pleng Korat. 3) Sroi melodies. The research found both types of Pleng Korat to have more creative forms of Sroi melody in which the melodies are increasingly extended through the evolutionary steps. Modern Pleng Korat have more diverse Sroi melodies than traditional Pleng Korat. This finding is consistent with Bunsom Sungsook (interviewed on August 14, 2017), who stated that modern Pleng Korat tend to use diverse forms of Sroi melodies as the traditional Sroi melodies are extended the first three notes of a music scale are used to create different melodies. 4) Euan melodies. The research found short Euan melodies in modern Pleng Korat

which is consistent with Gamphan Khoinok's idea that there is no fixed Euan melody for Pleng Kora (interviewed on August 14, 2017). Short sounds are freely used to match the mood of the song and the singer. The researcher agrees with Gawao Chokchai (interviewed on October 9, 2018) that a comparison of the phrases "Dok Na Nong Na" or "Cha Cha Chai" in modern Pleng Korat with traditional Pleng Korat revealed that the Euan melody of modern Pleng Korat appears at the same position as in the Euan melody for the phrase "Er Er Er" of traditional Pleng Korat.

Part 3 Rhythms. The rhythms used in Pleng Korat singing consist of 1) Oh melody. Floating rhythms are used with Oh melody, but in modern Pleng Korat they can be accompanied by Luk Thung String music for harmonious singing. 2) Verse melodies. Floating and regular rhythms are found in traditional Pleng Korat with the regular rhythms provide background to the primary heading section lyrics. The regular rhythms are deduced from the rhythmic composition of traditional Pleng Korat. This finding is consistent with the opinion of Songrit Radomchinda (2555, 197-198) who stated that traditional Pleng Korat use free rhythms that a singer improvises without any musical accompaniment while only concise regular rhythms are found in modern Pleng Korat. This is also consistent with the opinion of Somkij Padungsoontorn's (2013, 144-147) who stated that modern Pleng Korat uses modern musical instruments to create provoking rhythms that appeal to today's audiences. They also use Fast tempos and rhythmic patterns at the sixteenth note. Korat Zing was found to use one beat for the singing of 4 notes. 3) Sroi melodies. Both types of Pleng Korat use the same regular rhythms but different

singing methods which appear in two forms. The first form is the harmonious singing method similar to a regular rhythm found in the primary heading section of traditional Pleng Korat while the second form is the singing between verses of modern Pleng Korat. These are consistent with the opinion of Somkij Padungsoontorn's (2013, 144-147) who stated that modern Pleng Korat is a monophony. The researcher deems tradition Pleng Korat to be a homophony in the folk song style of harmonious melodies. 2) Euan melodies. Modern Pleng Korat use both regular and syncopated rhythms while no rhythm is used with traditional Pleng Korat as they are sung to a single short note to the lyric of "Er Er Er Er".

Part 4 A study of performance elements of the singing method of Khru Gamphan Khoinok led to more comprehensive conclusions. From the literature review, the researcher found that most works on this topic were carried out from the composition and singing aspects of Pleng Korat. According to the Office of Art and Culture, Nakhon Ratchasima Rajabhat University (2013, 19) the singing elements of Pleng Korat are: the use of external and internal rhymes, double words and mandatory words. Preecha Uitrakoon (1978, 36) and Thavorn Subongkot, et al (1993, 32) share a similar view that the singing elements of Pleng Korat consist of the use of Korat dialect, voices and meanings. The case study of Khru Gamphan Khoinok's conception of Pleng Korat singing found 12 performance elements of Pleng Korat: 1) Mor Phleng – professional singers masters should be knowledgeable in Pleng Korat; 2) Audience – listeners should have basic understandings of Pleng Korat; 3) Lyrics – the song content should match the occasion; 4) Melody – the use of diverse and

specific melodies; 5) Rhythm – should be lively and entertaining; 6) Dance – the singing is accompanied by the folk-song styles of dance; 7) Costumes - the costumes should reflect local cultures; 8) Venue – the performance should reflect local wisdom and local society; 9) Light and sound – should enhance listening aesthetics; 10) Occasion – the performance occasions should reflect the local ways of life; 11) Performance procedures – should reflect the wisdom of Pleng Korat; 12) Pleng Korat and related beliefs should reflect teacher-student relationship. These 12 elements are the research findings of Part 4 – Singing Elements, which are consistent with the data of Parts 1-3 which were obtained from Khru Gamphan Khoinok’s interviews (interviewed on December 23, 2018). All four parts of the above-mentioned research data on the prosodic elements, melodies, rhythms and performance elements of Pleng Korat provided the underlying concepts for the subsequent creation of a Pleng Korat suite.

Recommendations

This study focuses on the singing method of Khru Gamphan Khoinok (Ban Taen Band) by making a comparative study and analysis of the musical evolution of the famous songs of traditional and modern Pleng Korat as well as the distinctive identity of Pleng Korat according to Khru Gamphan Khoinok. Interested persons can expand on the findings of this study to include other aspects of Pleng Korat as follows:

1. Analyze specific aspects of the songs of similar characteristics.

2. Study Pleng Korat identity from other case studies on various folk song artists in Nakhon Ratchasima.
3. Study the transmission method of traditional and modern Pleng Korat.
4. Identify the knowledge derived from different aspects of Pleng Korat singing according to the interests of each researcher.
5. Study guidelines on the forming of Pleng Korat composition theories, especially in the case of Klon Pleng Korat (Pleng Korat verses).

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