

# Thai Government's Promotion of National Culture *that Affected Thai Traditional Music Research During 1982-2012*

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## Abstract

This article reports on a study of the state of knowledge and other factors affecting Thai music research from 1982 to 2012. Since 1982, problems of stability and deterioration of national culture led the government to promote national culture through a “conservation approach” to Thai traditional music in accordance with the customs of the Royal Court. This received governmental support for promotion as national cultural heritage to be passed down to posterity. This involved, for example, securing the involvement of various relevant government agencies, opening Thai music education curricula in higher education institutions, creating criteria for what constitutes “Thai traditional music” and allocating funds to support research on this art form. This support meant that most of the research in the field of Thai music from this time period was fundamental in nature and studied Thai music within the framework of Thai music theory. It examined the components of Thai music with a conservational approach following the prevailing understanding of “Thai traditional music.”

**Keywords:** *Thai Culture, Thai Government, Thai National Culture, Thai Traditional Music, Thailand*

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## Introduction

“Traditional Thai music” is a cultural element that has been a part of the way of life in Thai society, both at the Royal Court and among the people, for centuries. This music used to play a role in traditional ceremonies, the performing arts, pantomime, puppetry, movies, dramas, and other forms of entertainment. Thai musicians were encouraged by the Royal Court and the elite in society to refine their compositions until they developed into high art. After the change of the country's government to a democratic system in 1932, the Thai music customs of the Royal Court were promoted by the government to be preserved by the Thai Music Division of the Fine Arts Department in the Ministry of Culture, which was the arm of the government responsible for transmitting national arts and culture. In addition, the School of Dramatic Arts, the country's first Thai music academy, also had the mission to conserve Thai traditional music. Despite these efforts to promote Thai cultural heritage, the popularity of Western music and culture in Thai society led to the adaptation and mixing of Thai and Western styles of composition and performance. This has included arranging Thai and international bands to play Thai music together using melodies with universal appeal. This east-west integration became widely popular, and has been a part of standard entertainment since the 1940s. Examples include the “Sangkheat Prayukt Band” and the “Sangkheat Samphan Band.” Later in the 1970s, there emerged new creative applications in the style of “Thai contemporary music” by combining Thai music with modern music, producing a new genre. This was exemplified by the band “Fong Naam,” which employed novel techniques of performance, composition, ensemble arrangement, and combination of traditional Thai instruments and modern music. After that, many contemporary Thai music bands emerged, following various market strategies. One example was “Boy Thai Band” founded in 1993, which used Thai music as a central motif for collaborations with international bands playing popular music at that time such as pop music and fusion jazz, for example using the chromatic scale. However, although contemporary Thai music became a popular part of the entertainment industry, the government was still concerned about the legacy of traditional Thai music that followed the customs of the Royal Court as part of the nation's cultural heritage. Thus, the application of contemporary music characteristics to traditional Thai music was not supported in the field of formal Thai music education. Furthermore, the government defined criteria for music to be considered “traditional Thai music” in order to prevent dilution of the art form and establish a clear structure for its transmission.

## Discussion

### State Promotion and Transmission of Thai Music as Cultural Heritage

The country's economic and social development strategy has followed the Western model ever since the first multi-year development plan (1961–1966). This mode of planning helped the country to accelerate development in many areas. However, the wholesale acceptance of Western culture as “good” occurred without the necessary screening and selection of the appropriate elements led to a decline in the role of traditional culture. At the same time, the Thai government was concerned about national security, given the festering communist insurgency. This led to a policy to promote Thai traditional culture to boost a national identity and sol-

identity under a common theme and vision. This policy was codified by the establishment of the Office of the National Culture Commission under the Ministry of Education in 1979 as the agency responsible for the promotion and conservation of national arts and culture. Later in 1981, the government announced a "National cultural policy" as a guideline to strengthen unity and national security through the promotion of the national culture as equivalent to "Thai identity." That policy provided the foundation for creating unity and national security centered around Thai people's sense of dignity and pride. The populace was called upon to maintain and promote Thai culture seriously and widely. At that time, the constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand stated that "The State should promote and preserve the national culture." (Royal Thai Government Gazette, 8 December, 1981). Coupled with the celebration of the 200th anniversary of Rattanakosin in 1982, in which Thai traditional music performances were part of the celebration, interest in the origins of Thai music culture increased. As a result, government agencies and the private sector cooperated to promote Thai traditional music through performances on various occasions. For example, in 1986, the Bangkok Bank and the Department of Children and Youth Affairs first jointly organized a Thai traditional music contest at the secondary school level, called "Pralong phleng praleng mahori," and in 1987, the Luang Pradit Phairo Foundation organized the "Sornthong" Thai music contest, among other examples.

In the 1980s, the United Nations announced the "World Decade for Cultural Development," and the Thai government attached great importance to the promotion of national culture through special activities, education, research, and dissemination of public information. These advocacy efforts continued into the 1990s, with the encouragement of people to recognize the value of the Thai identity and to take part in the passing on of Thai cultural heritage to the next generation. Accordingly, Thai traditional music was supported by relevant government and private organizations. For example, in 1994, the Imperial Queen's Park Hotel and the Pisces Music Co. organized the *Piphat Mai Khaeng Prakob Sapha* competition as part of the program "Siam Wichitsilpa No. 5. In 1997, the College of Music at Mahidol University organized the "Youth Musician Competition."

The government's promotion of Thai traditional music made Thai society more aware and interested in this art form. In addition, entertainment media played an important role in resurrecting Thai traditional music as popular media content. For example, in 1990, the novel "Khu Kam" was made into a weekly television drama series which enjoyed universal popularity among the Thai viewing public ([http://th.wikipedia.org/wiki/Khu\\_Kam](http://th.wikipedia.org/wiki/Khu_Kam)), and the show's use of "khim" (Thai hammered dulcimer) for the theme song led to greater appreciation of the instrument. Another example was the success of the 2004 film "The Overture," which drew its plot from life story of Luang Pradit Phairo (Sorn Silpabanleng), the head of an important Thai music school in the past. This film inspired many Thais in the younger generation to learn how to play traditional Thai music and instruments. There were also numerous entertainment programs that promoted Thai traditional music performances, such as "Khun Phra Chuay" a TV program premiering in 2004 that promoted Thai identity. In addition, "Atsachan Kanthonrap," which first aired

in 2008, was a program promoting Thai arts and culture. There have been numerous Thai music competitions over the past 20 years.

Thus, it can be said that the government's national cultural heritage promotion has awakened interest by large segments of the population young and old in supporting Thai traditional music. This heightened awareness is an important foundation for creating a systematic approach to preserving Thai traditional music heritage for subsequent generations of Thais, and the music world in general. One step in this direction is the creation of formal academic Thai music courses in institutions of higher education, the definition of criteria for classifying a composition as genuine "traditional Thai music," and the provision of research funding into traditional Thai music.

#### ***Academic Courses in Traditional Thai Music in Higher Education Institutions***

The government's conservation-oriented approach to promoting national culture caused many colleges and universities to create courses in traditional Thai music at the undergraduate and graduate levels. For example, Kasetsart University opened a Thai Classical Music program in its Department of Music of the Faculty of Humanities in 1981, and in 1983, Chulalongkorn University's Faculty of Fine and Applied Arts opened its bachelor's degree program of Fine and Applied Arts in Thai Music in 1983, among many others.

In this way, the government's policy to promote Thai traditional culture as part of the country's national heritage through education and research support has led to serious study of traditional Thai music as an academic discipline in the education system. One of the objectives of the 7th National Economic and Social Development Plan (1992-1996) was "To develop higher education institutions, both public and private, to be able to perform their main mission with excellence in production of graduates, research, academic service, and preserving the arts and culture." ([http://www.nesdb.go.th/ewt\\_dl\\_link.php?nid=3782](http://www.nesdb.go.th/ewt_dl_link.php?nid=3782)). This policy led educational institutions to open research-related curricula in Thai music culture at the graduate level, starting in 1989 with the Master of Arts Program in Cultural Studies (Music) of Mahidol University's Research Institute for Languages and Cultures for Rural Development (now called the Research Institute for Languages and Cultures of Asia). Since then, other higher education institutions have launched master's degree programs in music. For example, in 1992, Srinakharinwirot University opened a Master of Arts Program in Ethnomusicology; in 1993, Mahidol University opened Master of Arts Program in music; and, in 1994, Chulalongkorn University opened a Master of Arts program in Thai Music, for instance. However, the government's policy on conservation of cultural heritage has steered Thai music education programs toward the patterns that were practiced in the Royal Court. For example, the Master of Arts program in Thai Music of Chulalongkorn University cites as one of its objectives "To produce graduates with knowledge, skills, and ability in Thai music through creative initiatives to conserve Thai music, as well as to promote cultural transmission through educational institutions as national cultural heritage." (Master of Arts Program in Thai Music, n.d.). Similarly, the Master of Arts Program in Ethnomusicology of Kasetsart University (revised 2005) has the

objective “To promote research and study in the field of ethnographic music both domestically and internationally, and to benefit the preservation of Thai music.” (<http://music.human.ku.ac.th>).

In addition, the 8th National Economic and Social Development Plan (1997-2001) focuses on promoting culture for social and community development, improving the quality of education at all levels, and establishing a mechanism for quality assurance. The plan calls for developing a curriculum to meet the standards. The 9th National Economic and Social Development Plan (2002-2006) emphasized education reform and lifelong learning. It placed emphasis on the development of curricula and personnel through the educational quality assurance system (<http://www.nesdb.go.th/Default.aspx?tabid=91>), leading to the development of higher education covering Thai music education. The first doctor of arts program in music education was launched in 2005 at the College of Music at Mahidol University, under the Doctor of Philosophy Program in Musicology and the Doctor of Philosophy Program in Music Education (<http://www.music.mahidol.ac.th/th/history>). These developments made the production of research on Thai music more open to new perspectives, issues, and concepts. However, most of these programs still focused on education and research to increase academic knowledge of Thai music rather than research studies to apply research findings to society at large.

#### *The Construction of Traditional Thai Music Criteria*

Thai music education in the past was through a music “house,” a music school, or individually by a teacher whose skills were recognized and respected. This fractured approach led to different teaching patterns and content. Therefore, when Thai music education programs were launched at the higher education level, it soon became clear that there would need to be standard criteria for what constitutes “traditional Thai music.” The Ministry of University Affairs has the main role in regulating and managing educational standards at the higher education level of Thailand. Accordingly, a Cabinet resolution assigned the Ministry of University Affairs to oversee the Thai Music Promotion Project during 1987–2001. This project had the objective of promoting the sustainability of Thai traditional arts and culture as an invaluable part of the cultural heritage of the Thai people. The project applied criteria for traditional Thai music, starting from pre-primary school to tertiary education for use in teaching and learning management, and personnel management (Traditional Thai music criteria, 2002).

The first set of criteria for what constitutes “traditional Thai music criteria” was drafted in 1993 as a guideline for preparation of academic courses at various levels. The criteria cover the study of Thai music both in theory and in practice. This led to the creation of a framework and set the direction for Thai music education in the formal education system at all levels. The criteria established by the Ministry of University Affairs adopted the conventions of the Fine Arts Department, which were sourced from the Thai music education and transmission customs of the Royal Court—customs (both in theory and practice) that had long been accepted in academia. However, these Thai music benchmarks were set up in circumstances where there were not yet concrete research results that would stand

up under current conventions for academic research—meaning that the various actions taken to formulate the criteria and requirements had to be based on professional experience. The academic criteria for music education thus date back approximately 60 years, with the Fine Arts Department as its core (Ibid, 2002).

In 1993, official criteria for calling a composition “traditional Thai music” were approved by the Cabinet. These criteria were proposed by a consortium of the agencies involved in Thai music education, namely the Ministry of Education, Ministry of University Affairs, and other related agencies. These criteria were then used as a guideline for the preparation of curricula and teaching of Thai music. In addition, relevant agencies such as the Office of the Civil Service Commission, the University Civil Service Commission, and the Office of the Teacher Civil Service Commission applied the official traditional Thai music criteria when deciding to appoint persons to serve as teachers or instructors of Thai music. In this way, the understanding of Thai traditional music based on the model endorsed by the Royal Court has been transmitted as the standard for the country. This has also led to a number of research papers that studied the academic and professional standards of Thai music, such as Bussaya Chittuam’s 1997 study of the *krap-sepha* standard pattern, and the master’s degree thesis of Prayuth Kong (2001), which studied the main traditional Thai melodies in *piphat* music according to academic and professional standards among other research studies.

#### **Support for Research on Traditional Thai Music**

Promoting the transmission of Thai music through the education system has resulted in the provision of research grants from relevant agencies such as the Cultural Promotion Fund, an agency in the Office of the National Culture Commission, with the objective to promote and support arts and culture through research studies, conservation, and dissemination (Ministry of Education, 1993). Examples of Thai music research projects funded included the thesis such of Phaisal Wongsiri, a student in the Faculty of Education, Chulalongkorn University, entitled “An Analytical Study of Sepha for Thai Literature Instruction” (1982), and Janporn Nounpang’s 1998 study on *sepha*.

In the 1980s, the focus was on the application of research to national development. This also heightened government awareness of the need for funding research grants. Accordingly, the “Thailand Research Fund” was established to address this and other needs. However, at that time, there was scant academic work in the field of Thai traditional music that were supported by the fund. One study was conducted by Sugree Charoensook, et al (1995) entitled “Research for Standard Pitch and Scale of Thai Music,” among others.

However, after the establishment of academic departments and programs on Thai traditional music, higher education institutions and nongovernmental organizations had a mandate to provide cultural research scholarships in accordance with government policy. For example, in 1982, Chulalongkorn University provided grants to Oravan Kamawatana and Kattika Kangdhanakanond for their research “Opinions concerning music education in the demonstration schools in central

Thailand.” In addition, the King Prajadhipok and Queen Rambhai Barni Memorial Foundation and Srinakharinwirot University (Prasarnmit) provided a scholarship to Anong Phawaphutanon Na Mahasarakham, a student in the field of Educational Technology, to write a thesis (1988) “On the effects of a video presentation containing computer graphics as a supplement to regular classroom teaching on mat-thayom 3 students’ attitudes and skills in Thai music.”

Research grants became an important task of educational institutions after the passage of the National Education Act in 1999. This launched major educational reforms in the country, which placed importance on the implementation of educational standards for the development of society and the country, as well as on the encouragement of teachers to develop curricula suitable for learners at each level of education (Royal Thai Government Gazette, 1999) through controls on personnel and teaching development standards based on educational quality assurance criteria. Therefore, educational institutions were motivated to have systems and mechanisms to support full-time instructors in conducting research to improve teaching and learning under research grants (Office of the Higher Education Commission, 2008). For example, Chulalongkorn University provided research grants for faculty members through such facilities as the Thai Music Culture Research Unit of the Faculty of Fine and Applied Arts (established in 2004). This unit has the aims of promoting the research of faculty in the Department of Thai Music and building a cultural research database of Thai traditional music to serve teachers, students and researchers from various institutions both domestic and abroad (Honors and Awards for Teaching and Research, 2011). The Department of Music, Faculty of Humanities, Kasetsart University supported lecturer Rajan Sornchai to do research on Thai music research in classrooms (2010) for the development of Thai music teaching and learning. The Faculty of Arts of Silpakorn University supported research funding for faculty members of the Faculty of Music, including Boondarika Kongphet for her research “Methods of Khim Production and Performance: A case study of Mr. Winit Puksawat.” (2010). Khon Kaen University funded a study by Tharanat Hin-on “On the culture of *mukhapatha* oral transmission of *so u* playing by Khru Luang Phairoh Siang Saw (Oun Duriyacheewin)” (2009). Burapha University provided a grant to Chuchart Pinpart titled “Surveying Thai Musicians in the Eastern Region of Thailand” (1996).

### **Impact of Promoting Thai Traditional Music through a Conservation Approach and Thai Music Research**

The promotion of traditional Thai music focusing on educational institutions both the offering of courses related to traditional Thai music and the administration of research grants and educational quality assurance led to an increase in the number of research studies on topics related to traditional Thai music. Since the 1990s, there has been more attention to how research findings are utilized for the benefit of society. This had led to an increase in research on traditional Thai music across a wider range of disciplines than before.

### ***Research in the Field of Traditional Thai Music***

Thai music research output, as the product of academic courses that shape professors or academics in the field of traditional Thai music or other relevant fields,

at first took the form of historical data collection and archiving. One example is the research of Poonpit Amatayakul, et al. (1989) titled “Alphabetical list of names of Thai musicians, song writers and composers of the first 200 years of the City of Ratanakosin,” which includes a collection of biographies and pictures of Thai musicians of the Rattanakosin Era (Amatayakul, et al., 1989). Another example is Phaisal Wonksiri’s 1982 thesis titled “An analytical study of “Sepha” for Thai literature instruction.” This research described the history of the *sepha*, how to conduct prosody analysis of the use of words and style, and the opinions of academics and lecturers on the challenges of teaching and the classic *sepha* works (Wonksiri, 1982). Some researchers also focused on the creation of new forms of Thai music; for example, Kovit Kantasiri et al. (1991) conducted research on “Computer analysis of Thai traditional songs.”

Besides the research focusing on collecting and compiling data, most research in Thai music would have a similar academic framework and methodology. Although the production of research for each course would have a specific purpose, most of the research studies were within the framework of Thai music theory, took an approach from ethnomusicology, or focused on innovative, creative, or inventive elements. Still, most of the research remained on the topic of traditional Thai music, and there was little research on Thai contemporary music, despite its widespread popularity.

#### **Research in the Framework of Thai Music Theory**

The research analyzes musical elements such as song structure, scale, playing style, lyrical content, and special techniques. An example of an academic program that focuses on these elements is the Master of Arts Program in Thai Music at Chulalongkorn University. One study that came out of that program in 2009 was titled “A musical analysis of *krao nai* for *ranat thum* solo: A case study of Kru Uthai Keolaiaad,” by Nottanunti Charoen. This study of *krao nai* music for solo *ranat thum* analyzed special techniques and melodic features in musical elements of *krao nai* music for solo *ranat thum* within the framework of Thai music theory (Charoen, 2009). Research that adheres to an ethnomusicological approach uses the framework of Thai music theory as well as anthropological methodologies to collect data in order to study the music’s sociocultural relationships. An example of this is the Master’s Program in Cultural Studies at Mahidol University, and the 2002 study of Yuthana Chittuam titled “Changwang Suan: Ban Pephath of Prapadang District, Samut Prakan Province. This study looked at historical dimensions and the transmission of *piphath* ensemble music from a perspective of ethnomusicology, with an analysis of the composition of *thao* songs by Changwang Suan Chittuam according to Thai music theory.

#### **Research on Innovative, Creative or Inventive Elements in Thai Music**

This research concerns developments such as the creation of new compositions and the creation of Thai musical instruments. This format started to get attention in 1994 when the Cabinet resolved to make February 2 of every year Inventor’s Day, in order to honor His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej, who invented the “Chaipattana Aerator.” One of the objectives of this resolution was to support innovative research covering creative work in Thai music. For example, Chul-



alongkorn University supported the Ratchadaphiseksomphot Endowment Fund, established in 1997, with the aim of promoting and supporting useful inventions that can be used in teaching to produce tools or equipment that are beneficial to society and creative works. (i.e., art) (<https://www.research.chula.ac.th/project/grant-for-invention-th>). In addition, a new academic course was created to support production of creative musical works, resulting in more creative works in Thai traditional music. Two such programs are the Doctor of Philosophy curricula in Musicology, and Music Education, both offered by the College of Music at Mahidol University. The objective of the program is “to create a repository of knowledge, ideas, and creativity of music researchers and music scholars in Thailand.” (<http://www.music.mahidol.ac.th/history>). Another curriculum is the Doctor of Fine and Applied Arts program at the Faculty of Fine and Applied Arts of Chulalongkorn University (2007). This program aims “to produce graduates with knowledge and competence in fine arts research, and to produce research and creative work that contributes to the body of knowledge in fine arts.” (Doctor of Fine and Applied Arts Program, 2007).

Thai institutions’ research grants for innovation and invention, as well as the opening of academic courses that place importance on creative innovation, has caused the amount of research in this area to increase both creative works of music composition and research related to innovation in Thai musical instrument creations. For instance, the research study “Thayoi Deow for Jakhey solo,” by Pakorn Rodchangphuen (2006) created a new Thai composition in the melodic form of a Thai classical solo. As for music research that studies innovation in creating traditional Thai musical instruments, most studies focus on production data, processes, and procedural techniques that are characteristic of famous craftsmen in producing quality musical instruments. Examples include the thesis of Anong Jitmanee's (2000) titled “Production methods of Peenai” Poomjai Ruenroeng's thesis (2008) “Making procedures of Klongkhaek by Khru Sanae Phakphong,” and Veerawat Senchanthichai's thesis (1969) “Process of making the musical instrument *saw sam sai* by Master Vinij Puksawa,” among others.

#### *Interdisciplinary Research on Traditional Thai Music with Content Related to Other Sciences*

This approach has gained attention in academic circles, starting in the 1980s. This type of music research has appeared in Thai music education, which studies issues related to the principles of music arrangement, music psychology, evaluation, and development of musical learning, including musical skills for teaching. Research in this field is, therefore, diverse. This field includes the use of research methods in social sciences, such as applying the hypotheses of important theorists as a guideline for the use of statistical data. For example, there was a study of factors which lead to the development of teaching innovations, including the application of Thai music theory in analyzing relevant data, such as Athaporn Tassana's (2003) study titled “Opinions of Thai music teachers in the secondary schools in Bangkok area concerning the standardization in Thai music occupations.” Another study was conducted by Jiraporn Sinsombat (2004) and was titled “The condition of teaching and learning Thai music by local experts at schools under the Ratchaburi Provincial Primary Education Office.”

### ***Thai Music Research Aimed at Bringing Benefits to the Community and Society***

This research has received some interest in the use of music for healing and conservation of music in the community. An example is the research titled “The use of Thai musical instruments as tool in music therapy with reference to Akaboshi method,” by Bussakorn Sumrongthong, et al. (1999). That study looked at Akaboshi music therapy patterns and methods to consider the possibility of using Thai music as a replacement for Akaboshi therapy devices. The study tried to identify the appropriate pattern in the use of Thai music for therapy in groups of people with disabilities (Sumrongthong, et al., 1999). Research entitled “Participation action research to encourage and conservation for solving the problem of Thai classical music decline in Mae Klong River Basin,” was conducted by Peerachai Leesomboonphon (2011). This study aimed at mitigating the risk of losing Thai traditional music traditions in the Mae Klong River Basin.

### ***Thai Music Research in Other Disciplines***

Since the 1990s, the government has continued to promote the transmission of Thai cultural heritage. The 2005 Graduate Program Standards emphasize the development of academics and professionals with high-level competence in a range of disciplines through a research process that includes creating, connecting, and integrating one’s own area of expertise with other sciences (Royal Thai Government Gazette, 2005). This led other academic fields to take an interest in studying Thai music by integrating data from across disciplines. This includes basic research for knowledge creation, as well as applied research.

### ***Research to Build Basic Knowledge***

Most of the basic research uses an educational framework or theory in their respective science or academic field. There are studies on topics related to Thai music, such as the research entitled “Bang Khlo Neighborhood and Thai Traditional Music Conservation,” by Punnee Buale (2007), using historical methodology to analyze data on the formation and transformation of the Bang Khlo community from a historical lens. This study shows how change in a community can affect the transmission of Thai music cultural heritage (Buale, 2007). The thesis by Suphat Thongchawee (2011) titled “Information Behavior of Students in the Field of Music at Tertiary Institutions,” in library and information science involved a study of behavior of music students at tertiary institutions.

### ***Applied Research for Use in Higher Education Institutions***

Applied research includes studies to develop practical innovations. These involve integrating knowledge across disciplines, such as science, social science, and humanities, as applied to traditional Thai music in terms of development and evolution of the art form. This has resulted in more research in different fields that study issues related to Thai music in a cross-disciplinary manner. These studies are useful for academic purposes, as well as for their benefit to communities, businesses, and society at large.

### ***Research for Academic Benefit in Teaching and Learning***

This includes studies such as those in the fields of higher education, elementary education, primary education, curriculum and supervision, curriculum and in-

struction, and educational psychology. Courses include the study of issues related to the teaching of Thai music in various aspects by integrating information on Thai music. An example of this type of research is the thesis of Wassana Bunyaphithak (2001) titled “Development of educational quality management strategies in accordance with education criteria of performance excellence for higher education institutions offering Thai music and drama degree programs.” This study aimed at studying the current situation and educational quality management strategies in accordance with education criteria and to study best practice in educational quality management based on the education criteria of performance excellence for higher education institutes offering Thai music and drama degree programs (Bunyaphithak, 2001). Another study, conducted by Prayut Thaithani as part of his dissertation in counseling psychology (2003), was titled “The construction and development of Thai music aptitude test.” The purpose of this study was to construct and develop a Thai music aptitude test for students between 10 and 18 years of age (Thaithani, 2003).

#### ***Research for the Benefit of the Community and Society***

One example that was intended to inform health- and psychology-related therapeutic applications was in Burapha University’s Master of Education Program in Educational Counseling by Daojai Thiansi (2001) titled “A comparison between the effect of Thai classical music and applied Thai massage on patients with post-caesarean section pain.” This study examined the effects of music therapy on post-operative pain of patients after general surgery (Thiansi, 2001). Another study was part of Srinakharinwirot University’s Master of Education Program in Guidance Psychology, conducted by Arunee Tongba (2004) and titled “The effect of systematic desensitization on the Thai music presentation anxiety of Thai music department students of Srinakharinwirot University.”

#### ***Research on Application of Technology in the Field of Science and Technology***

This research studies the use of technology to develop Thai music in various ways, such as to improve teaching and learning. A study on craftsmanship in making Thai traditional musical instruments, conducted as part of Bansomdejchaopraya Rajabhat University’s Master of Philosophy Program in Management of Information Technology by Somchai Rassamee (2012), was titled “The combination pattern of Thai and Western music by the use of computer technology,” and examined the use of computer technology to study the fixed frequencies of Thai music and its combination with Western music (Rassamee, 2012). Another study of Thai and Western music using this approach is the thesis by Khanpetch Khamsat (2008), as part of Ubon Ratchathani Rajabhat University’s Curriculum and Instruction Development program, “Computer-Assisted Instruction Development of Thai Musical Instruments and Ensembles: History of Thai Musical Instruments.” There is also a thesis in computer technology by Sureeporn Unem (2009) titled “The development and finding efficiency of computer-assisted instruction about Angkalung.”

In addition, there are also research findings in various fields that study Thai music to be useful in aspects related to business management. An example includes the thesis in interior design by Wasin Wesetsakdee (2007) titled “The influence of Thai classical music in interior design for music therapy institute,” which studies

the design of the environment inside a music therapy facility using philosophy of identity and personality of the elements of Thai music (Wesetsakdee, 2007). Another study, conducted as part of Thammasat University's Master of Arts Program in Cultural Management, was by Nantipa Chanboon (2010) titled "Thai music knowledge management: A case study of the Foundation of Luang Pradit Phairo (Sorn Silapabanleng)." This studies the modes of managing the organization and presents a direction for organizational management for the benefit of society (Chanboon, 2010).

### Conclusion

The promotion of Thai heritage by the government with a focus on passing on the national culture, is a strategy to bolster and solidify national identity and contribute to national security. As a result, there have been a number of policies and programs that support the transmission of traditional Thai music through government agencies and research studies in higher education institutions. In addition, the creation of a set of criteria which defines "traditional Thai music" has furthered the transmission of this art form as cultural heritage of the nation and has had the effect of making most of the research on Thai music focus on this conception of traditional Thai music meaning that the research output is generally fundamental in nature and aims to build the academic body of knowledge. In the 1990s, the promotion of research that can be used for benefits did cause there to be many studies that are directly applicable to instruction programs and curriculum development in music education. However, there are a large number of inter-disciplinary studies that draw on various fields to study Thai music. Nonetheless, the majority of the studies are conducted within the frame of transmitting the traditional Thai music of the Royal Court as national cultural heritage in accordance with government guidelines. This promotion of Thai music culture in the decades described above has laid a foundation for Thai music research that has continued to exert influence up to the present day.

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