

Ram Wong Ban Mon (Wat Pradittharam): Integrating Cultural Capital into Contemporary Thai-Mon Composition

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Abstract

This creative work article is the creation of *the Ram Wong Ban Mon (Wat Pradittharam)* song. Its aim is to promote cultural tourism based on cultural capital. This creative work employs a creative music process. The creative process begins with the collection of preliminary data and related literature to establish a conceptual framework. Data on the Mon community at Wat Pradittharam were gathered through document research and interviews with community members and key informants. In addition, theoretical concepts in song composition—including melody writing for voice, Thai song composition, and lyric writing—were studied to guide the creative process. The inspiration for this creative work originates from the community's use of cultural capital to express the unique identity of Mon culture in the area surrounding Wat Pradittharam. The Mon community has preserved its cultural heritage through long-standing beliefs, traditions, and ritual practices that are continuously observed and passed down across generations. These cultural expressions demonstrate a strong connection between people, place, and spiritual belief systems, forming a core element of the community's identity. Recognizing the richness and cultural significance of these traditions, the composer sought to reinterpret and communicate them through music. This approach not only enhances awareness within the local community but also supports the promotion of cultural tourism in a way that is both sustainable and culturally respectful.

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The composition, titled *the Ram Wong Ban Mon (Wat Pradittharam)*, was developed as a traditional *Ram Wong* song while incorporating modern musical elements to increase its appeal to contemporary audiences. The lyrical content was carefully designed to reflect important aspects of Mon cultural capital. These include references to traditional cuisine such as Khao Chae, local recreational activities like Mon-style Saba games, and deeply rooted religious beliefs and ritual practices that shape everyday life within the community. Rather than merely describing these elements, the lyrics integrate them into a cohesive narrative, allowing listeners to experience and understand the cultural identity of the Mon people in a meaningful and engaging way. Following the composition and refinement process, the song was disseminated through multiple channels, including online media platforms and live community events. It was also incorporated into cultural tourism promotion activities, serving as a medium for storytelling and cultural communication. The use of music in this context allows for a more immersive and emotionally engaging experience for audiences, helping to bridge the gap between cultural knowledge and public perception.

The music is created using the pentatonic scale for the main melody and Thai instruments, namely Khluy (Thai Bamboo Flute), Ranat-Ek (Thai Xylophone), and Cha-Khe (Thai Zither), as the primary instruments for the melodic accompaniment. Various techniques and nuances are employed to create a clear Thai and Mon sound, which can be played well with Western instruments. Furthermore, the composition is structured in an A-B-A-B-A-B-C pattern, similar to the rondo form in classical music. Section A acts as the recurring theme (the refrain), which defines the Rondo-like quality. The composition utilizes a 2/4 time signature at a tempo of 65 BPM, providing a moderate, danceable rhythm characteristic of *Ram Wong* music. This rhythmic structure supports group dancing and social interaction, which are essential elements of traditional *Ram Wong* performance. The melodic framework is built upon a pentatonic minor scale, ensuring a comfortable vocal range for both male and female performers.

The findings of this creative work demonstrate its multifaceted benefits across several dimensions. From a cultural perspective, the project contributes to the preservation, revitalization, and dissemination of Mon heritage. It presents traditions, beliefs, language, and ways of life in a format that is accessible, engaging, and suitable for audiences of all ages. Socially, the project fosters a sense of pride in local identity, encourages active participation

in cultural preservation, and strengthens unity within the community. In terms of cultural tourism, the song serves as an effective promotional tool, helping to attract visitors, increase awareness of local cultural knowledge, and enhance the image of the Mon community at Wat Pradittharam as a distinctive and meaningful destination. From an educational standpoint, the composition can be utilized as a learning resource in both formal and informal educational settings. It supports the study of music, culture, and local wisdom, offering an interdisciplinary approach to learning. Economically, the project contributes to income generation by supporting tourism-related activities, including cultural performances and the sale of locally produced goods. Finally, this creative work provides a valuable model for integrating music with cultural heritage. It demonstrates how creative arts can play a crucial role in sustaining and promoting community identity while also offering a foundation for future developments in music and cultural expression.

Keywords: Thai-Mon Music Composition / Cultural Tourism / Heritage Preservation /
Local Wisdom

Ram Wong Ban Mon (Wat Pradittharam) song aims to promote cultural tourism based on cultural capital. The content incorporates the cultural capital of the Ban Mon community (Wat Pradittharam) as a representative of the community, aiming to tell the story of the community's traditions, history, and lifestyle. This piece seeks to highlight and share the unique cultural heritage of the Ban Mon community, with the intention of preserving and showcasing its local identity. This idea aligns with Wansa Kootragoon¹ who noted that beliefs and values are an integral part of Thai society and have been passed down through generations. They are reflected in various forms of media, with music being a significant medium for conveying them.

¹ Wansa Kootragoon, "The Analysis of Lyrics with the Reflection of Belief and Values: A Case Study of the Awarded Songs in the PechtNaiPleng Project," *Journal of Chandrakasem Sarn* 21, 40 (2015): 54, <https://i01.tci-thaijo.org/index.php/crujournal/article/view/38706/32023>.

The creative concept is inspired by how the community utilizes its cultural capital to express the Mon cultural identity. The Mon people of Wat Pradittharam have preserved their beliefs through annual traditions and rituals, which are integral to their heritage. This inspired the composer to interpret these cultural elements through music, aiming to raise awareness among the local community and promote cultural tourism. To share this heritage with a broader audience, the composer chose to convey the story through a *Ram Wong* song, resulting in the composition *Ram Wong Ban Mon (Wat Pradittharam)*.

The structure was chosen to reflect both the narrative and cultural identity of the song through a call and response form, which represents the dialogue and emotional interaction between the Phra Nakhon man and the Mon girl during the Songkran festival. The “call” and “response” symbolize their communication and growing affection while also reflecting the participatory nature of Mon musical traditions. The use of the minor pentatonic scale supports the emotional atmosphere and blends effectively with Thai and Western musical elements. In addition, the lyrics were composed according to Thai poetic conventions to maintain rhyme, melodic flow, and linguistic beauty, while cultural elements such as Khao Chae, the Mon Saba game, traditions, and religious beliefs were incorporated to express community identity. The arrangement combining Thai and Western instruments, harmonization, and vocal textures creates a contemporary yet culturally rooted musical style that supports cultural tourism and public dissemination.

The Creative Process

Phase 1: Exploration and Foundational work

1. Ethnographic Study of Ban Mon (Wat Pradittharam): Data was triangulated through documentary research (textbooks, theses, and articles) and qualitative field research. Additionally, interviews were conducted with community members and key informants to explore cultural capital. The interview instruments were reviewed by experts before implementation.

2. Theoretical Framework for Composition: The creative process integrated three core Thai musicological pillars:

2.1 Vocal Writing: Applied Somchai Rassamee’s principles for melodic phrasing.

2.2 Song Structure: Followed Piyaphan Santaveesuk's methods for traditional Thai song forms.

2.3 Lyricism and Prosody: Utilized Khettarun Lertpipat's "The Art of Composing Thai Lyrics" to ensure poetic rhyming and linguistic grace.

Phase 2: Analysis, Synthesis, and Conceptualization

The raw data from field observations and interviews was synthesized to identify "Key Cultural Signifiers" (e.g., Khao Chae, Saba). This synthesis informed the Creative Brief, determining how traditional beliefs would be translated into a narrative arc.

Phase 3: Creative Composition and Drafting

1. Narrative Structuring: Defining the storyline of the Phra Nakhon visitor to serve as the song's emotional anchor.

2. Simultaneous Composition: Unlike a linear process, the melody and lyrics were developed interdependently. This ensured that the tonal requirements of the Thai language (tonal inflections) remained perfectly aligned with the musical pitches of the minor pentatonic scale.

Phase 4: Arrangement and Technical Production

1. Orchestration and Scoring: Instrumentation was selected to represent the "Thai-Western Fusion" concept. Digital Audio Workstation (DAW) software was used to create a MIDI mockup and a formal musical score for live performers.

2. Tracking and Engineering: Instrumental and vocal tracks were recorded in a controlled environment.

3. Mixing and Mastering: Using Logic Pro, the tracks underwent signal processing (EQ, compression, and spatial balancing) to achieve a "rich and dense" texture, ensuring the final output met professional broadcasting standards.

Creative Result

1. A Creative Concept

The composition is a vibrant synthesis of traditional Thai heritage and Western classical structure, designed to evoke a sense of cultural synergy and joy. By weaving the pentatonic minor scale through both indigenous and orchestral textures, the piece creates a melodic

bridge between worlds. The core of the ensemble features a trio of traditional Thai instruments, each bringing a specific tonal character to the arrangement:

- Khлуй (Thai Bamboo Flute): Providing ethereal, breathy melodic lines.
- Ranat-Ek (Thai Xylophone): Delivering percussive clarity and rapid-fire embellishments.
- Cha-Khe (Thai Zither): Grounding the piece with resonant, plucked textures.

These instruments utilize traditional Mon-influenced ornaments and techniques, allowing them to maintain their authentic “soul” even when integrated with a Western instrumental backdrop.

The ensemble also includes instruments such as violin, viola, violoncello, piano, electric guitar, electric bass, drums, conga, and cymbals. The composer arranged the piano harmonies to blend the tonal characteristics of Thai music with Western sounds by selecting melodies and chords that minimize pitch conflicts. The key was also chosen to facilitate a harmonious interplay between Thai and Western instruments, aiming to achieve maximum sonic balance while maintaining the identity of Thai music and the overall balance of the ensemble performance.

Table 1 Technical Specifications

Features	Details
Scale & Tonality	Pentatonic Minor (Optimized for male and female vocal ranges)
Rhythmic Foundation	2/4 Time Signature at 65 BPM (Largo/Adagio tempo with a joyful lilt)
Structure	A-B-A-B-A-B-C (A modified Rondo form)
Dynamic Range	Moderato (Balanced volume to ensure vocal clarity and instrumental blend)

Table 2 Structure of the Composition, Concept, and Presentation Sequence

Sections	Bars
Introduction	12
A (Refrain)	8
B1 (Verse1)	26
A (Refrain)	8
B2 (Verse2)	26
Interlude	20
A (Refrain)	8
B3 (Verse3)	26
C (Finale)	14
Ending	8

2. Composition of Melody and Lyrics

The composer structured the melody as a narrative, arranging musical ideas from beginning to the end to mirror a natural dialogue. The composition is organized into clear sections, which are further divided into verses and individual phrases. By aligning this musical structure closely with the lyrics, the composer ensures the message is clear and easily understood by the listener.

2.1 Section A, in the structure of the melody, is a repeated section that appears at the beginning of the song and alternates with other sections in traditional Thai songs. In the structure of traditional Thai songs, the *Soi* is a recurring section that often appears at the beginning and alternates throughout the piece. Similar in importance to a modern chorus, the *Soi* is typically the shortest section and maintains consistent melody and lyrics throughout the song. The melody within this section is built on a call-and-response framework. It is composed of concise, distinct phrases that allow each part of the song to stand out. Furthermore, the

melodic contour is thoughtfully designed with appropriate pauses, ensuring the vocalist has sufficient intervals to breathe while maintaining the song's momentum.

Example 1 Melody Construction and Lyrics of Section A

The musical notation for Example 1 is presented in two staves. The top staff, labeled 'call', begins with a pick-up note (quarter rest followed by a quarter note) and is marked with a box 'A'. The melody consists of a series of quarter notes and eighth notes, with a long horizontal line above it indicating a sustained or breath-held phrase. The lyrics below are: Oh Mae Ngam Ngon Mae Sao Mon Khon Ngam Fang. The bottom staff, labeled 'response', also begins with a pick-up note and features a similar melodic pattern of quarter and eighth notes. Its lyrics are: Thon Oh Pho Na Mon Num Khon Fang Phra Na Khon. Both staves are in 2/4 time, indicated by the time signature at the beginning of each staff.

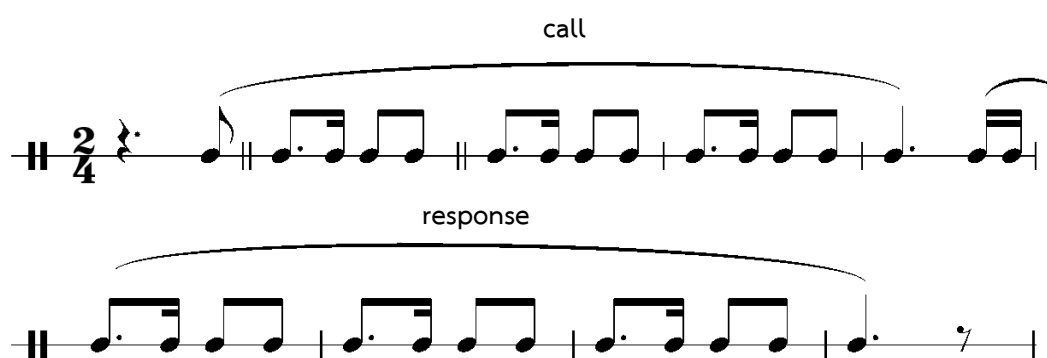
As shown in Example 1, the composer highlights the melody in each section by beginning with a pick up note that smoothly transitions into the first beat. This technique adds agility to the rhythm. The melodic movement maintains a balanced rise-and-fall pattern—when the melody moves in one direction, it appropriately returns in the opposite direction. The pitch incorporates a variety of intervals, combining sequential notes with leaps across intervals to keep the song’s mood dynamic and prevent it from feeling too flat.

Once the melody for Section A was finalized, lyrics were added based on the intended concept and content. Words were carefully selected to convey the desired meaning, ensuring they fit naturally for alternating singing with other sections or serving as the refrain of the song. The lyrics incorporate a call-and-response style between male and female singers. Additionally, wordplay techniques were used to enhance the beauty and elegance of the lyrics, such as pairing “*Oh Mae Ngam Ngon*” (an exclamation used to describe a woman who is beautiful, graceful, or charming) with “*Oh Pho Na Mon*” (an exclamation used to describe a charming or handsome young man). or “*Fang Thon*” with “*Fang Phra Nakhon*” Moreover, the

lyrics were structured with internal and external rhyming patterns, as well as ending words that share the same sound and final consonant as “*Mon*”. The word “*Khon*” was used to create a rhyme in the following section.

2.2 Section B serves as the narrative core of the song, where the story or background gradually unfolds to maintain listener engagement, and is also known as the verse. As a result, this section is designed to be longer than the others to provide more space for storytelling. It is divided into 3 parts: B1, B2, and B3, all of which share the same melodic structure but feature different lyrics. The melodic structure is divided into 6 major phrases, and the composer has created a rhythmic pattern with 2 initial phrases in a call-and-response form, similar to section A, while allowing flexibility in the pitch of each phrase.

Example 2 The Melodic Rhythm of the First 2 Phrases of Section B



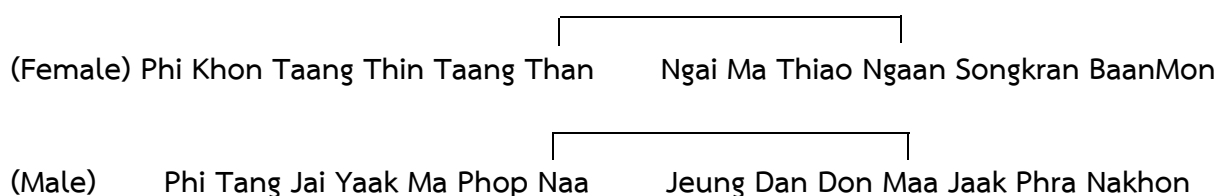
Example 3 The Melodic Rhythm of the Melody in the Final Phrase of Section B



The composer repeated the rhythm of these two phrases to develop and extend the length of the section. The rhythm of the melody in the 6th or final phrase was adjusted by adding an additional rhythmic refrain to signal the complete conclusion of the section.

The lyrics follow a single-line verse format rooted in Thai folk traditions, where every line concludes with the same terminal sound. This persistent rhyme scheme mirrors the percussive and repetitive lyrical patterns often found in Western hip-hop.

Figure 1 English Pronunciation Lyrics



It can be seen that the lyrics involve a call-and-response between the female and male voices. The last word of the second line rhymes with the first line. The composer chose to use the final word of the second line, which rhymes with the word 'Mon,' and employed this technique as a gimmick to create emphasis and make the song's content more engaging and interesting.

The song “*Ram Wong Ban Mon (Wat Pradittharam)*” portrays a joyful and flirtatious conversation between a young man from Phra Nakhon and a Mon girl from the Thonburi riverside community during the Songkran festival. Through playful call-and-response lyrics, the song reflects romance, courtship, and cultural interaction within the traditional Mon community. The male character expresses his sincere intention to meet the Mon girl, while the female character teasingly questions his honesty and loyalty. The lyrics also highlight cultural traditions and local identity through references to Songkran celebrations, water splashing, Mon games, and traditional foods such as khao chae. Overall, the song conveys themes of love, cultural pride, community bonding, and the preservation of Mon cultural heritage in a lively and entertaining musical style.

Table 3 The Full Set of Lyrics

Sections	Lyrics
A (Refrain)	Oh mae ngam-ngon, mae sao Mon khon ngam fang Thon Oh pho na-mon, num khon fang Phra Nakhon
B1 (Verse1)	Phi khon tang-thin tang-than, ngai ma thueng ngan Songkran Ban Mon Phi tang-jai yak ma phop na, chueng dan-don ma chak Phra Nakhon Nae rue tang-jai ma ha, laeo yai suea-pha phi chueng piak-pon Phi lat-lo tam trok sok-soi, nguea lai khlai-yoi tong khoi sok-son Chai phloen len nam kap sao, thi ban Khaek ban Lao kon thueng Ban Mon Mai dai pen muean chen dang wa, phi tang-jai yak ma phop na ma len saba kap mae ngam-ngon
A (Refrain)	Oh mae ngam-ngon, mae sao Mon khon ngam fang Thon Oh pho na-mon, num khon fang Phra Nakhon
B2 (Verse2)	Sao ban uen phi mai fai ha, phi pratthana tae sao Ban Mon Thiao ma chap mai chap mue, khon Ban Mon khao thue na phu-chai mue-bon Phi tang-jai chuan mae khon ngam ma len sat nam wai phra kho phon Boran Ban Mon son wai, khao wa num Thai chai mai nae-non An num Thai si chai naeo-nae, tha mai chuea pha pai ha mae pai kin khao chae ban mae ngam-ngon
A (Refrain)	Oh mae ngam-ngon, mae sao Mon khon ngam fang Thon Oh pho na-mon, num khon fang Phra Nakhon
B3 (Verse3)	Sin ngan Songkran muea-dai, nong klua phi-chai cha klai chak chon Phi khong klai mai nan rok na, cha rip klap ma yok-yao wao-won Sao sao ban uen makmai, mai nan phi-chai ko luem sao Mon Mai wa phi cha yu haeng nai, rap-rong hua-jai cha mai san-khlon Sanya Luang Pu To than wai, kho won phi-chai cham hai nae-non Phi cha cham thoi-kham dang wa, thetsakan Ban Mon khrang na len Mon Son Pha kan na ngam-ngon
C (Finale)	Mon Son Pha tukkata nan yu thi dai Mon Son Pha tukkata nan yu thi dai Tukkata mai ru yu nai Tukkata mai ru yu nai Ru tae hua-jai phi yu Ban Mon

2.3 Section C

Section C is the bridge, a section that helps to expand and provide contrast to the melody. This section appears only once in the song and is not repeated, serving to create a brighter and more cheerful mood compared to the other sections. The melody is composed with a full set of notes, differing from Sections A and B. Additionally, the composer emphasizes the technique of melodic expansion through repetition in phrases 1-2 and 3-4, where the same melody is repeated exactly to maintain a consistent mood. The final phrase of the melody is created with a rhythmic refrain that transitions back to the original mood, leading into the conclusion of the song.

Example 4 The Melodic Structure of Section C

The musical notation for Section C, Example 4, consists of four staves of music in 2/4 time, written in treble clef with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The lyrics are in Thai. The first staff has a long melodic line spanning the entire staff, with the word 'Repetition' written below it. The second staff also has a long melodic line, with the word 'Repetition' written below it. The third staff has two melodic lines, each with the word 'Repetition' written below it. The fourth staff has a single melodic line. The lyrics are: Mon Son Pha Tuk____ Ta Nan Yoo Tee Dai; Mon Son Pha Tuk____ Ta Nan Yoo Tee Dai Tuk_; Ta Mai Roo Yoo Nai Tuk Ta Mai Roo Yoo Nai Roo Tae Hua; Jai Pai Yoo Ban Mon.

Mon Son Pha Tuk____ Ta Nan Yoo Tee Dai

Repetition

Mon Son Pha Tuk____ Ta Nan Yoo Tee Dai Tuk_

Repetition

Ta Mai Roo Yoo Nai Tuk Ta Mai Roo Yoo Nai Roo Tae Hua

Jai Pai Yoo Ban Mon

In Section C, the composer took lyrics from the traditional Thai folk play “Mon Son Pha,” a performance created by the Thai people to tease the Mon people, as the Thai

and Mon cultures are very familiar with each other and enjoy playful banter. Since the Mon people do not play with dolls, the composer adapted the lyrics of this song to link it with the main theme of the song, which humorously reflects the love story between a Thai man and a Mon woman, creating a cheerful and charming atmosphere.

3. Harmonization and Orchestration Techniques

3.1 Chord Progression

Once the melody is finalized, the composer builds a harmonic foundation by selecting chords derived from the set scale. By focusing on chord tones and the principles of voice leading, they ensure that the movement between harmonies is fluid and cohesive. This careful management of note direction creates smooth transitions, transforming individual chords into a seamless progression that complements the melody.

Example 5 Chord Progression of Section A

A

The musical notation for Example 5 is presented in two staves. The first staff begins with a quarter rest, followed by a half note G4, a quarter note A4, a quarter note Bb4, a quarter note C5, and a half note Bb4. The second staff begins with a quarter note G4, a quarter note A4, a quarter note Bb4, a quarter note C5, a quarter note Bb4, a quarter note A4, a quarter note G4, and a half note F#4. Chord progressions are indicated above the notes: Dm (G4), F (A4), C (Bb4) on the first staff, and Dm (G4), Gm (A4), C (Bb4), Dm (C5) on the second staff. A box labeled 'A' is positioned above the first staff.

3.2 Introduction

The concept behind the introduction is to guide the listener into the main content of the song. The melody is designed to reflect both Mon and Thai traditional music styles. To achieve this, the composer adapted the melody from the traditional Thai-Mon piece song “*Mon Doo Dao*,” incorporating its melodic structure, rhythm, and tone.

Example 6 Creating the Introduction

Introduction

Tempo: ♩=65

Voice: [Rest]

KhLuy: *f* (trills)

Ranat-Ek: *mf*

Cha-khe: *mf*

Violin 1: *mp*

Violin 2: *mp*

Viola: *mp*

Violoncello: *mp*

A

Voice: [Notes]

KhLuy: (trills)

Ranat-Ek: *p*

Cha-Khe: [Notes]

Vln. 1: *A*

Vln. 2: [Notes]

Vla.: [Notes]

Vc.: [Notes]

The introduction is based on the melody of “*Mon Doo Dao*,” including its phrases, rhythmic patterns, and tonal characteristics. The introduction is set to last for 12 bars to ensure it conveys the intended message. Thai instruments, such as Khлуй, Ranat-Ek and Cha-Khe are used in place of Mon instruments to perform the melody. Initially, the composer created the melody for the first 6 bars. After establishing a clear structure for the introduction, the composer decided to enhance it by incorporating Western instruments. The introduction transitions smoothly, with the string section playing the melody, harmonized in four parts, creating a distinctive sound that captures the listener's attention from the very beginning.

From Example 6, the composer used Khлуй to play the main melody of the introduction, with Ranat-Ek and Cha-Khe playing harmonies to emphasize and highlight the melody. Khлуй, Ranat-Ek and Cha-Khe each express their unique characteristics through various techniques, helping to add Tone color and distinctiveness to the melody of the introduction. For the background to the melody, the composer employed a string section consisting of Violin 1, Violin 2, Viola, and Cello to provide harmonic support. The strings use four-note open-position voicing to harmonize with the main melody. The rhythmic background is created by incorporating various instruments that align with the rhythm and melody. Melodic instruments, such as piano, guitar, bass guitar, and percussion instruments like the drum kit, congas, and cymbals, are used to play chord progressions and rhythm. The rhythmic part of the drumset and bass is in Ram Wong rhythm. The piano and guitar will play chords to support the main melody in harmony. The whole idea is similar to the paraphrase technique in traditional Thai music.

The composer created a distinct melodic background for Section A by using Khлуй, Ranat-Ek and Cha-Khe, playing in harmony with the main melody to emphasize key moments. These instruments also play complementary melodies to fill the gaps in the background during short phrase-like pauses and interweave with the main melody in an imitation of the final phrase, leading into the next section.

It is accompanied by string instruments, which harmonize with the main melody and follow a modified chord structure to support it. These instruments provide harmony to fill the gaps in the background during moments when the main melody remains static. Additionally, they adjust the harmony to change the mood of the song with each verse.

Example 7 Creating a Melodic Background in the 3rd Chorus

The musical score for Example 7, titled "Creating a Melodic Background in the 3rd Chorus", is presented in two systems. The tempo is marked as 65. The score includes staves for Voice, Khloy, Ranat-Ek, Cha-khe, Violin 1, Violin 2, Viola, and Violoncello. The key signature is one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is 2/4.

System 1:

- Voice:** Melodic line starting with a quarter note, followed by eighth and quarter notes.
- Khloy:** Rests throughout the system.
- Ranat-Ek:** Melodic line starting with a quarter note, followed by eighth and quarter notes. Dynamics: *mf*, *f*, *p*.
- Cha-khe:** Melodic line starting with a quarter note, followed by eighth and quarter notes. Dynamics: *mp*.
- Violin 1, Violin 2, Viola, Violoncello:** Rests throughout the system.

System 2 (B1):

- Voice:** Melodic line starting with a quarter note, followed by eighth and quarter notes.
- Khloy:** Melodic line starting with a quarter note, followed by eighth and quarter notes. Dynamics: *tr*.
- Ranat-Ek:** Melodic line starting with a quarter note, followed by eighth and quarter notes. Dynamics: *mf*, *p*.
- Cha-khe:** Melodic line starting with a quarter note, followed by eighth and quarter notes.
- Violin 1, Violin 2, Viola, Violoncello:** Melodic lines starting with a quarter note, followed by eighth and quarter notes. Dynamics: *mp*, *mf*, *p*.

Example 8 Creating an Interlude

Interlude

$\text{♩} = 65$

Voice

Khloy

Ranat-Ek

Cha-khe

$\text{♩} = 65$

Violin 1

Violin 2

Viola

Violoncello

==

Voice

Khloy

Ranat-Ek

Cha-Khe

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vc.

3.3 Musical/Melodic Backgrounds

The instrumental background was designed to complement the main melody rhythmically, with piano, guitar, electric bass, and percussion instruments playing chords and rhythms. This arrangement emphasizes the sound, enhancing the intensity during this section.

3.4 Interlude and Ending

The composer's concept in creating alternating musical passages serves to provide a contrast in mood after the first half of the piece, which is played continuously in the same emotional tone for a long period. This section allows for the instrumental roles to stand out. The composer incorporated the melody of the Thai folk song “*Mon Doo Dao*” in the first part as the main theme for the alternating passage. The Thai ensemble plays the melody in the first round, and the string orchestra repeats the theme in the second round. Afterward, the piece transitions back to the following section, which maintains a similar mood to the opening passage. The closing section also incorporates the opening theme, decorated and used to conclude the piece.

Conclusion and Discussion

The discussion section is categorized into three main themes: 1) Musical Composition and Melodic Development, 2) Lyricism, Narrative, and Poetic Structure, and 3) Cultural Capital and Community Identity. Additionally, a section addressing creative work limitations and challenges is included, along with recommendations and perspectives for future studies.

In terms of composition, the creation of *Ram Wong Ban Mon (Wat Pradittharam)* prioritizes melodic development specifically tailored for the human voice. The composer utilizes short phrasing to establish clear breathing points, ensuring the singer can maintain vocal quality throughout the performance. To achieve this, the melody avoids extreme registers—staying within a range that is neither too high nor too low—and focuses on smooth movement rather than wide melodic leaps. This approach aligns with the principles of Somchai Rassamee, who noted that while certain complex melodies are suitable for instruments, they may be impractical for vocalists. Consequently, the vocal composition for this piece is guided by three essential criteria: 1) Appropriate Intervals: Utilizing melodic steps and pairs that are easy for the voice to track and intonate. 2) Strategic Rests: Incorporating

clear rhythmic breaks to allow for natural breathing. 3) Vocal Range: Restricting the melody to a comfortable tessitura that avoids vocal strain. For lyrics composition and narrative design, the design was made by laying down the plot to be consistent with the specified content. The nature of creating a situation and story as a scene or episode to make the story progress continuously, which the researcher believes that plot planning is very important. In planning or setting the direction of the composition of the lyrics, the plot will help arrange the events logically and have a purpose to communicate to the listener to understand the story and the meaning of the song easily and deeply. This is consistent with the concept of Khettarun Lertpipat² who mentioned the characteristics of good lyrics that good lyrics should have a good plot, i.e., be able to clearly convey the meaning of what emotions the singer is expressing, such as happiness, excitement, cheerfulness, brightness, sadness, loneliness, etc., have different aspects from old songs, have truths conveyed in the song, and have emotional development. In addition, the researcher composed the lyrics to enforce the rhyming of words like poetry, making each line of the lyrics sound beautiful and rhyming beautifully. The researcher believes that the composition of Thai song lyrics should give importance to the skill of language use, using aspects that touch the heart and stimulate the emotions of the listener at every point, as the concept of Piyaphan Santaveesuk³ explained the principles of writing lyrics in Thai songs today to be beautiful, by enforcing the rules of Thai poetry into the song, which uses rhyming words that blend harmoniously and beautifully with the language used. This is consistent with the concept of Khettarun Lertpipa⁴ who mentioned compositional forms in musical literature that language is crucial in literary composition, as authors use it to convey the stories they wish to tell. The language employed should reflect that of society, and since language evolves according to social context, it allows us to analyze the historical period of a literary work through its use. In addition to the relationship between language and

² Khettaran Lertpipat, *Thinking Words, Composing Songs: The Art of Writing Thai Song Lyrics* (Bangkok: The Composers' Club, 2002), 43-57. (in Thai)

³ Piyaphan Santaveesuk, *Song Composition* (Kalasin: Prasan Printing House, 2003), 17. (in Thai)

⁴ Katsamaporn Boonsri, "Authorship Pattern and the Use of Words in the Literature of Sao Sao Sao Band," *Humanities Journal (Graduate School), Ramkhamhaeng University* 9, 1 (2022): 4, <https://so08.tci-thaijo.org/index.php/ghuru/article/view/233/173>.

society, the style of writing is equally important. The composed *Ram Wong* song has applied the cultural capital of the Mon temple community through creativity and musical techniques, whether it is the principles of composition and arranging that is appropriate for the atmosphere of the festival in the community, which allows the song to be used on various occasions.

The cultural capital used as the main concept of the song includes Khao Chae, a summer dish that reflects the identity of the Mon community, the Mon Saba game, a local game that is often played during important festivals, traditions, and religious beliefs that are the essence of the way of life of people in the community. When these elements are strung together into a *Ram Wong* song, the song becomes more than just entertainment but also acts as a medium to publicize the identity of the Mon temple community to be widely known, promote pride in the community, and be able to pass on this cultural capital to the next generation. This is consistent with the concept of Pierre Bourdieu⁵ who mentioned the cultural capital that the cultural capital refers to what individuals acquire through the process of social conditioning, becoming inherent qualities that enable them to enhance their value. This is often something ingrained in an individual and expressed through behavior, such as knowledge, taste, and manners. It also includes various assets of non-economic value, but which can potentially have economic value, such as works of art, books, and academic certificates. This idea aligns with Pavinee Teeravut Surasak Jamnongsarn & Tepika Rodsakan⁶ that Tai Phake music can be seen as a form of cultural capital that supports and expresses ethnic identity through language, dress, beliefs, and traditions. It helps create a shared sense of belonging within the community. Tai Phake identity is expressed through singers, musicians, dancers, traditional costumes, melodies, and the use of the Tai Phake language in song lyrics. Through ritual performances, entertainment, and traditional practices, this music helps maintain and pass on ethnic identity. The findings show that both traditional and modern Tai Phake music play an important role in preserving local identity, strengthening community ties,

⁵ Pierre Bourdier, *Outline of a Theory of Practice* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 79.

⁶ Pavinee Teeravut, Surasak Jamnongsarn, and Tepika Rodsakan, "The Musical Heartbeat of the Tai Phake: Culture and Identity Construction in Assam State, India," *The International Journal of Diverse Identities* 22, 2 (2022): 1, <https://doi.org/10.18848/2327-7866/CGP/v22i02/1-14>.

and building connections between Tai Phake people and other Tai groups in Southeast Asia. And this idea aligns with Kornchanok Sanitwong⁷ that The Sob Som-Hat Krai Old Town in the Chiang Khong District of Chiang Rai was originally established from early settlements along the Khong River. Its cultural assets consist of long-standing traditional elements as well as some recently created cultural features. Therefore, the promotion and support of community participation are essential. This includes the development of tourist attractions and local products to strengthen community-based tourism. Such initiatives can enhance cultural capital and ultimately improve the quality of life of local residents.

Additionally, this study faced several limitations and challenges, including limited historical documentation, reliance on oral narratives, and the difficulty of balancing traditional Mon cultural elements with contemporary musical styles while maintaining authenticity. The study was also limited to a specific community context, which may not fully represent other Mon communities. For future studies, researchers may conduct comparative studies among different ethnic communities, explore audience perceptions, and examine the use of music as a tool for cultural preservation and education. Interdisciplinary approaches may also provide broader perspectives on the development and sustainability of cultural capital through music.

Declaration of Generative Artificial Intelligence in the Writing Process

During the preparation of this manuscript, the author used ChatGPT-5.5 (OpenAI) solely to improve language clarity and grammar. All scientific content, interpretations, analyses, and conclusions were developed by the author. The author reviewed and edited the AI-generated output as necessary and takes full responsibility for the accuracy and integrity of the manuscript.

⁷ Kornchanok Sanitwong, "Quality of Life Upgrading Via Cultural Capital: A Case Study of Sob Som-Hat Krai Old Town, Chiang Khong District, Chiang Rai Province," *Journal of Social Research and Review* 45, 2 (2023): 97, <https://so04.tci-thaijo.org/index.php/socialresearchjournal/article/view/268771/181718>.

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