



A Study of Suwit Bawonwattana's Solo Organ on Khaek-Mon Sam Chan

Wandee Puttakunraksa

MFA Candidate, Faculty of Fine Arts, Srinakharinwirot University, Bangkok, Thailand

Manop Wisuttiapat

Faculty of Fine Arts, Srinakharinwirot University, Bangkok, Thailand

Abstract

A study on solo organ Khaek-Mon Sam Chan by Master Suwit Bawonwattana has the objective of studying the background of string instrument concurrently with the organ mixed musical ensemble of Vacharabanleng Ensemble, as well as the biography of Master Suwit Bawonwattana and analysis of his solo organ music along with string instrument ensemble called Vacharabanleng Ensemble (formerly "Techasenee Ensemble"). During the World War II, the string musical instrument synchronized with organ ensemble called Techasenee was organized and run by Master Juar Seniwongse Na Ayudhaya, who is the first ensemble supporter during the time from A.D. 1954 - 1957, the following supporter is Khun Suwit Bawonwattana who managed the ensemble during the year of 1957- 1999, and the next successor is Khun Yubha Vacharanak, who subsequently changed the musical ensemble from Techaseni to Vacharabanleng.

The biography of Master Suwit Bawonwattana is that he was born from a family with the father who was an ardent musician in string musical instrument, a well-trained in Saw-duang (treble fiddle) and violin. Khun Suwit has inherited the musical talent from his father, he was interested in music since the age of 7, he was trained to play treble fiddle by Master Pew and at the age of 11, he was trained to play Khim (Chinese cembalo) by Master Prom and when at teenage he was trained by Master Phut Nanathaphol to play Khim solo for the song of Lao Pan, Phya Soke, Nok Khamin, Saradhi and so on. Khun Suwit was also accepted by the great Thai musical master, Phya Prasan Duriyasap, the Chief of Musical Department under the King Rama VI reign. He has also trained on Saw Ou (alto fiddle) by Master Luang Phailoa Siang Saw, trained on Saw Sam Sai (three-string fiddle) by Master Devaprasit Pathayakosol, trained on organ by Master Juar Seniwong Na Ayudhaya. Master Devaprasit was the successor chief of the Thai musical band Techaseni following Master Juar Seniwong Na Ayudhaya.

In regard of the solo organ for Khaek Mon song, it needs to play organ musical instrument by flicking and striking organ, there is also other technique that the player should practice to play with eight tone movement in concurrent with using the feet to produce sound through the organ valve. Playing musical organ with the eight tone movement is one of the technique, there are other tactics such as flicking, striking for example, which is lesser used than the eight tone movement, particularly for those who wants to use these techniques must be good at music lingering, one of frequently used tactic of playing musical organ.

Key words: Suwit Bawonwattana's solo organ, Khaek-Mon Sam Chan, biography

Introduction

Nature does inspire human being to live in harmony with the environment where they live, we can adapt ourselves to live our daily life and create our own culture in line with the environments, and also music creation. Thai music represents the vivacity, the softness, the wisdom of our predecessor who invent and adapt the music in harmony with our long lasting culture, and also characterize our national civilization.

Thai music has become the cultural art that is developed for a long time in parallel with Thai society, representing the glory of ancient civilization and national heritages. Thais has invented music instrument from the surrounding nature, and also created melody that is applicable with each kind of the invented music instrument. It is believed that Thai music has been existed for at least 4000 years (Panya Rungruang 2517:24), he has mentioned normally human being of any corner of this world has wisdom and intellect to create their own culture that are unique. In ancient times, transport and communications are underdeveloped, thus our first educator is the nature, nature gives us the lesson to live up in this world and also inspire us to invent the music instrument of our own. Whereas Poonpis Amatayakul (2527:81) has mentioned about the Thai culture that Thais are the ancient nation with development of our own culture, art for several thousand years, for we have our own spoken, written language and music substantially. In regard of the Thai musical heritage, we have invented our own musical instrument from the very beginning and later on exchange creation and invention of various music instrument with the neighbor countries.

Whereas music is a division of art that has been affected by changing of the social formation and human faith since ancient times, as cited by Khaisaeng Sukhawatana (2529:1) that the mean to please and pay tribute to Gods is to sing and dance. Another reason of music creation is entertainment after the long working day, relaxation after work makes them cre-

ate songs and make music instrument from the surrounding such as wood branch, animal horn and so on. At first, they may try to blow to make the sound and then develop to be music as time passed by, and then the music has been passed on from generation to generation successively. (Srisak Walliphodom 2535:42)

Whereas the Thai society has changed in all aspects such as religion, technology, art and etc. Thai music is recognized as one division of our national cultural art that has been tremendously impacted by western culture as from the early Ratanakosin era in the reign of King Rama IV. By that time, Thailand has connected and traded with the foreign countries, and inevitably cultural exchange has also taken place. Following by increasing impact of the Western culture in the reign of King Rama V and King Rama VI, then the original Thai musical ensemble has to modify and adapt to the wave of western culture by mixing and adopting some pieces of the western musical instrument to the Thai musical ensemble such as piano, organ, violin and etc. Resultantly, several new mixed string ensembles were emerging such as Khim (Chinese cymbalo) mixed string ensemble, accordion mixed string ensemble, organ mixed string ensemble, piano mixed string ensemble and etc.

Of all the aforementioned mixed string ensemble, the organ mixed string ensemble is the most interesting one due to the fact that the said organ mixed string ensemble has become the best synchronized and most harmonized musical ensemble. This ensemble has become very active in the reign of King Rama VI successively. This phenomenon indicated Thai society at that times and also development of the new culture pattern, Thai economic change and the status of Thai musicians and Thai musical ensemble simultaneously.

The organ mixed string ensemble that is interesting for me is the one called Vacharabanleng ensemble due to its long lasting organ mixed ensemble as from the reign of King Rama VII of the Ratanakosin

Era up to present, with a large amount of creation made to the public in form of record and cassette tape. It has become well-known in the Thai musical circle for a long time, the ensemble are a gathering of both the professional and amateur musician concurrently and also some of the ensemble singers are the renowned and acknowledged among the Thai musical circle such as Yubha Wacharanak, Suwit Bawonwattana, Chareonjai Sundhornvatin, Chaleay Jiyachan, Prasit Khumsab and etc.

In regard of the solo song called Khaek-Mon is another interesting music, as several masters of Thai music have created several solo musical melody for the other kinds of musical instrument.

The synchronized music between two cultures that are the Thai culture and the Western one is an interesting phenomenon to find out the cause.

The blending of Thai and Western cultures is an interesting topic that we should study the background, its continuity and the decline of the organ mixed string ensemble, which organ musical instrument has gradually died out from Thai musical circle. Especially the song of solo Khaek-Mon, which is the musical song that shows the special technique of various organ musical play. It is a solo song that I like its special techniques that may be adapt to other musical song with the utmost usage. Besides, the study of story of Vacharabanleng Ensemble is a gathering of historical information related to Thai culture development and new wave of culture that play an active role since the reign of King Rama V, which reflects the then society substantially. Whereas the organ mixed string music of Vacharabanleng Ensemble is the musical ensemble with long continuity as from the reign of King Rama VII of Ratanakosin times up to present. The study on the history of the solo organ on Khaek-Mon Sam-Chan by Master Suwit Bawonwattana, who is talent in organ musical playing, will be beneficial to development of Thai classical music education related to organ mixed string ensemble, and that we may use and adapt the technique of organ playing to

other songs extensively.

Based on the aforementioned topic, I agree that study the background of organ mixed string ensemble as well as the story of Vacharabanleng Ensemble, which is the organ mixed string ensemble is worthwhile to do, and also to pinpoint the solo organ on Khaek-Mon Sam-Chan is very interesting and beneficial to the Thai musical song in the future.

Objectives

1. To study the history and background of the organ mixed string musical ensemble of Vacharabanleng Ensemble and the biography of Master Suwit Bawonwattana.

2. To study and evaluate the music of solo organ on Khaek-Mon Sam Chan of Khun Suwit Bawonwattana.

Research Benefits

The study is to realize the special technique and method to play organ in accompanying with Thai music as well as adapt to other musical songs. Furthermore, we can learn the story and background of the mixed string musical ensemble in particular how the organ mixed string ensemble emerge and play an important role in Thai society. It uses to gain high popularity and provide numerous production for development of Thai musical ensemble, but presently it gradually fades away that why we have to recollect and study for benefits of those who study in this area.

Scope

The study on the history of Vacharabanleng Ensemble as well as analysis the technique of solo organ on Khaek-Mon Sam-Chan of Master Suwit Bawonwattana only.

Methodology

1. Data Gathering

1.1 Data/information from the textbooks/

academic papers such as

- Information on the history of organ mixed string ensemble;
- The Story of Vacharabanleng Musical Ensemble

Ensemble

1.2 Document and articles gathered by the student from publication and printing such as bulletin, magazine, articles from the books as well as any relevant research papers from various sources such as

1.3 The Central Library of Srinakarinwirot University (Prasarnmit Campus)

- The National Library
- The Library of Thailand Cultural Center
- The Library of Mahidol University (Salaya Campus)

2. Data Analysis

2.1 Arrange and prioritize data gathered from various sources, consider all the collected articles, research papers, textbooks;

2.2 Make a record of the musical song - Solo Khaek-Mon played by Master Suwit Bawonwattana in form of international musical notes and Thai musical notes.

3. Data Research

Regarding this study, I have arranged the topic of research as follows:

3.1 The background of organ mixed string music of Vacharabanleng Ensemble and the biography of Master Suwit Bawonwattana:

- Study the background of organ mixed string musical ensemble;
- Study the history of Vacharabanleng Musical Ensemble;
- Study the biography of Master Suwit Bawonwattana.

3.2. The solo music of Khaek Mon Sam-Chan by Master Suwit Bawonwattana

- Analyze the structure of core melody an solo melody

- Pattern of the melody composition

- Musical intervals and scales

- Linkage of musical movement and melody change

- Movement of melody

4. Presentation, Conclusion, discussion and recommendations

4.1 Arrange and devise conclusion

4.2 Prepare discussion and recommendations.

Resulta and Discussion

The background of organ mixed string musical ensemble was originated in the reign of King Rama VI of the Ratanakosin era and gained high popularity in the reign of King Rama VII, meanwhile the organ mixed string ensemble named Vacharabanleng was originated as well. Resulting from the influence of occidental culture that flows into Thailand by that time, organ musical instrument has been accepted as a vital role in the Thai musical ensemble. Initially, the synchronized music is to adjust Thai music to be in harmony with the western musical instrument, organ, such as the organ mixed string ensemble of Mr. Noree. But some other musicians like Master Prom Sundhornnat and Master Puth Nandhaphol do attune the organ sound to be in harmony with Thai musical system. This newly adjusted sound system has been succeeded by Master Juar Seniwongse Na Ayudhya. Meanwhile, Master Juar Seniwongse Na Ayudhaya has improvised and widely played by Techasenee Ensemble and passed on to Vacharabanleng Ensemble accordingly.

The biography of Master Suwit Bawonwattana, as he was born in the musician family, Master Suwit's father is an avid string musician who played treble fiddle and violin; thus Khun Suwit Bawonwattana is interested in music and started learning Thai musical song since the age of 7. He has learnt treble fiddle from Master Pew, and at the age of 11, he has learnt Chinese cymbalo (zither) from Master Prom. At his

teenage, he has learnt to play solo Chinese cymbalo from Master Puth Nandhaphol for the song called Lao Pan, Phya Soke, Nok Khamin and Saradhi. Meanwhile, he was accepted as a disciple of Thai musical class by Phya Prasarn Duriyasap, the Chief of Music Department in the reign of King Rama VI. He has also learnt to play alto fiddle from Khun Luang Pairoah Siangsaw, three strings fiddle from Master Devaprasit Padhayakosol; and organ from Master Juar Seneewongse Na Ayudhya. Master Devaprasit has succeeded Master Juar Senewongse Na Ayudhya as the chief of Techasenee Thai musical ensemble sub-

sequently.

Regarding organ musical instrument, there is a technique that the player should practice to play with eight tone movement in concurrent with using the feet to produce sound through the organ valve. Playing musical organ with the eight tone movement is one of the technique, there are other tactics such as flicking, striking for example, which is lesser used than the eight tone movement, particularly for those who wants to use these techniques must be good at music lingering, one of frequently used tactic of playing musical organ.

References

- Panya Rung-reuang. (1974). History of Thai Music. Bangkok : Thaiwattana panit publisher.
- Punwit Amatayakul. (1984). Muaic Appreciation. Bangkok : Kiatturakit publisher.
- Kaisaeng Sukwattana. (1986). Western Music Theory. Bangkok : Thaiwattana panit publisher.
- Srisak Walliphodom. (1992). Music and Dance in Court. Bangkok Bank.