

Chamlong Wongyee 2009: Thai Country Songs (1994-2004): A Study of the Social and Culture Roles and Functions. Master of Arts (Thai Literature), Major Field: Thai Literature, Department of Literature. Thesis Advisor: Associate Professor Yuporn Sangtaksin, M.A. 240 pages.

This research is a study of the lyrics of Thai country songs broadcast between the years 1994 – 2004, focusing on their social and cultural roles. The researcher has learned that Thai country songs primarily evolved from local folk songs and classical songs and were later influenced by songs and music from the West. During the years 1994 – 2004, Thai society and culture were changed from agricultural to industrial, or to a modern phase. The causes of these changes were economy system, advanced technology, and western culture.

The study finds that the lyrics of Thai country songs depict various aspects of Thai society, both in the urban and suburban areas: politics, economics, education, religion, domestic life, recreation and culture. The songs played outstanding roles. Socially, they entertained, educated, and maintained social norms. Through their expression of emotions and feelings, they provided consolation, distributed policies and information from the government to the audience. The songs also record social affairs and events taking place during the period. Another important role they played is they promoted understanding and affection among Thai people, thus peacefulness in Thai society was sustained.

Culturally, Thai country songs broadcast between the years 1994 – 2004 performed two functions. Firstly, they aroused the people's adoration of their nation, religion and monarch. Secondly, they promote the conservation of Thai customs and traditions.

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