

4136033 MSMS/M : MAJOR :MUSIC ; M.A. (MUSIC)

KEY WORDS : KHENG / HMONG'S MUSIC / TUNING SYSTEM ANALYSIS /

WASUNSHINE IM-OTE: KHENG: HMONG'S MUSIC. THESIS ADVISORS: NARONGCHAI PIDOKRAJT. B.Ed., M.Ed., M.A.. ANAK CHARUNYANANT. B.Ed., M.M.. KITTI SRIPOURAYA. M.A. (Ethnomusicology). 171p. ISBN 974-664-464-5

This study explored the role of the Kheng in Hmong beliefs and traditional rituals, the organology and the tuning system of the Kheng. This study was conducted by evaluating different written documents and interviewing experts in playing and making Khengs.

The ethnological methodology was applied to form the process, concept and analysis in this research. Data was collected from a review of relevant literature verified by field work data, and interviews with an expert, artist and maker of Kheng instruments. Advice and verification was sought from various other experts and artists in the field. The methodology involved four steps: (1) collecting data, (2) organizing the data, (3) analysis of the data, (4) submission of the product of the research. John Ellis's theory for measuring musical tones was used. For purposes of analysis the Kheng sounds were compared with five steps on the Equal Temperament scale, which are comparative symbols without equivalent to Western notation.

This research revealed that the Kheng is a very important instrument in Hmong society, especially in communications with spirits and in religious rituals. The Hmong belief in life after death, so a funeral is a important, in asking for ancestor protection (*Suu*), in birth celebration (*Tchawphlee*) and in seeking protection from bad luck (Such as a cow to appease the spirits). Different music pieces that use the Kheng are played in the morning, noon and early evening. There is a prohibition against playing the songs at the wrong time of day, and there is a prohibition against females blowing the Kheng in a funeral ceremony. The kheng may be used for entertainment, courting and in special occasions. The Hmong believe that their goddess is the Kheng teacher.

The Kheng is in the family of Aerophones, has 6 tones with the first and the sixth being one octave apart.

This research suggests The Kheng is an essential instrument in Hmong society.