

Thesis Title	Music of the Blind in Thailand : Learning and Practice.
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Degree	Master of Arts (Cultural Studies)
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Date of Graduation	9 December B.E. 2536 (1993)

ABSTRACT

Some blind people in Thailand utilize music either as their main primary and secondary job. Others utilize it to earn their income as minstrel beggars. This study was conducted in order to investigate several questions concerning the blind and their music activity : how they learn music, how they utilize music in daily life, and what problems they have while studying music and working.

The methodology use was anthropological research of the qualitative type. This study collected data from the field by using observation, interviews with experienced persons such as, music instructors, blind students, and blind musicians. The population sample is limit only to blind musicians who resided in Bangkok.

The results of the study shows that, most blind have two ways of learning music : learning by themselves or learning in schools. The self-taught learn by listening and imitating their friends or relatives. Although these self taught blind musicians have practiced

unsystematically by virtue of their own resources, they are able to play music and sing.

Most of the blind are self-taught musicians because they had no opportunity to attend the school where they could have learned music systematically.

To learn music systematically in school the blind could practice according to the curriculums which are licensed by the Ministry of Education. These curriculums are the same for sighted persons, but have been adapted for the blind such as the use of the braille music notation. Music has been taught in school as an extra-activity for student who interested in this subject. However, music has not been taught in school to such an extent that students could utilize it to become professional musicians.

The blind in Thailand think of music as their friend, regarding it as part of their daily life and as a tool to earn their living. However, music has not actually been their main profession because most of the blind could not play music well enough to receive recognition and admiration from the general public. The quality of their music has been low because of their lack of instructors, skills and technique.

In order to develop successful blind musicians whose knowledge and skills are sufficient to allow them to earn a living, we need to provide assistance in several areas. We need to give them the opportunity to learn music in school, support them with plenty of music materials and instruments and provide good music instructors. Blind musicians should also have the opportunity to demonstrate their ability in public concerts to promote more understanding and recognition for them in society.