

## **Textual Adaptation: Transforming Nirat Hariphunchai into Contemporary Lanna Drama<sup>1</sup>**

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### **Abstract**

This study examined and analyzed Nirat Hariphunchai to develop a contemporary Lanna dance drama script, emphasizing the central theme of Buddhist moral philosophy (kathidham). The research aimed to bridge classical literature with performing arts, reflecting cultural values and Buddhist teachings. A qualitative approach was employed, incorporating textual analysis of the original poem, expert interviews, and field observations.

The findings revealed that: (1) Narrative Structure – Nirat Hariphunchai follows a chronological travelogue format, whereas the contemporary Lanna dance drama adopts a more intricate structure, interwoven with Buddhist philosophy and a focus on the emotional development of the characters, (2) Character Transformation – The original poem primarily expresses the poet's personal emotions, whereas the adapted performance reinterprets these into symbolic characters representing *tanhā* (craving) and letting go, in accordance with Buddhist philosophy, and (3) Language – The transition from archaic Lanna to contemporary Lanna vernacular, through dialogues and *Soh* verses to enhance the aesthetic appeal and accessibility for modern audiences. This research integrates literature and performing arts, revitalizing classical works through contemporary Lanna dance drama. Beyond preserving Lanna's cultural heritage, it offers audiences an immersive experience of Buddhist philosophical themes, harmonized with contemporary sensibilities.

**Keywords:** Literature, Lanna Drama, Contemporary, Narrative, Nirat Hariphunchai

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## บทคัดย่อ

งานวิจัยนี้มุ่งศึกษาและวิเคราะห์โคลงนิราศหริภุญชัย เพื่อนำมาสู่การสร้างสรรค์ตัวบทนาฏกรรมล้านนาร่วมสมัย นำเสนอแก่นหลักของปรัชญาจริยธรรมในพุทธศาสนา เรื่องคติธรรม โดยมีเป้าหมายในการเชื่อมโยงวรรณกรรมโบราณเข้ากับศิลปะการแสดง เพื่อสะท้อนคุณค่าทางวัฒนธรรมและหลักคำสอนทางพุทธศาสนา งานวิจัยดำเนินการผ่านกระบวนการวิเคราะห์เชิงคุณภาพ ประกอบด้วยการศึกษาตัวบทต้นฉบับ การสัมภาษณ์ผู้เชี่ยวชาญ และการสังเกตการณ์ภาคสนาม

ผลการศึกษาพบว่า 1) โครงสร้างเรื่องของโคลงนิราศหริภุญชัย มีลักษณะเป็นการบันทึกการเดินทางตามลำดับเวลา นาฏกรรมล้านนาร่วมสมัยได้รับการพัฒนาให้มีโครงสร้างที่ซับซ้อนขึ้น โดยแฝงปรัชญาพุทธศาสนาและเน้นพัฒนาการทางอารมณ์ของตัวละคร 2) ตัวละคร มีการเปลี่ยนแปลงจากการสะท้อนอารมณ์ส่วนตัวของผู้ประพันธ์ในบทกวีดั้งเดิม ไปสู่การเป็นตัวละครเชิงสัญลักษณ์ที่สื่อถึงแนวคิดเรื่อง ตัณหา และการปล่อยวาง ตามหลักพุทธปรัชญา 3) ภาษา ได้รับการปรับเปลี่ยนจาก ภาษาล้านนาโบราณ เป็น ล้านนาร่วมสมัย ผ่านบทพูดและบทขอ เพื่อเสริมสร้างอารมณ์และทำให้สามารถเข้าถึงผู้ชมยุคปัจจุบันได้อย่างมีประสิทธิภาพ ดังนั้น งานวิจัยนี้จึงเป็นการบูรณาการศาสตร์ของวรรณกรรมและศิลปะการแสดง โดยนำเสนอการดัดแปลงวรรณกรรมโบราณให้มีชีวิตผ่านนาฏกรรมล้านนาร่วมสมัย ซึ่งไม่เพียงช่วยอนุรักษ์รากเหง้าทางวัฒนธรรมล้านนา แต่ยังเปิดโอกาสให้ผู้ชมได้สัมผัสแก่นแท้ของพุทธปรัชญาในรูปแบบที่สอดคล้องกับยุคสมัย

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## Introduction

Nirat Hariphunchai, composed in the form of ancient Thai quatrains called “khlong dan” or “khlong si suphap,” is a classical poetic work that has endured for over five centuries. It is celebrated for its profound literary and artistic value from being written in ancient Lanna language (Na Nakhon, 1973). This masterpiece of Lanna literature, deeply reflects the emotions, feelings, and perspectives of the author and serves two main purposes. It becomes a medium for conveying the author’s emotions through poetic and artistic language of which each stanza is full of sorrow, longing, and nostalgia representing the lament of the heart. Moreover, it also functions as a travelogue describing the author’s journey from Chiang Mai to Wat Phra That Hariphunchai in Lamphun Province. With the primary aim for a religious pilgrimage, this journey also intricately depicts natural beauty, significant landmarks, and local culture. Moreover, the author’s profound longing for his beloved woman is implicitly expressed throughout every stanza. Nirat Hariphunchai is likened to a travel chronicle of the past, commencing at Wat Phra Singh in Chiang Mai and culminating at Phra That Hariphunchai in Lamphun. This work not only highlights artistic excellence but also depicts the culture, beliefs, and spirit of the Lanna people, illustrating it a valuable cultural heritage worthy of preservation and appreciation across generations.

Performing arts, rooted in the beliefs, faith, religion, way of life, language, traditions, and culture of communities or societies in specific regions, serve as a cultural medium for conveying meaning, emotion, and narratives that reflect lives through the art of performance. To convey messages from the performer to the audience, diverse elements such as dance, movements, music, and dialogue are incorporated. Hence, performing arts are not only a form of entertainment but also a symbol of cultural identity, lifestyle, beliefs, and history of a

community, particularly in a region with unique identity like Northern Thailand, known as “Lanna.” Acting as a vital cultural medium that connects the spirit of performers and audiences through the powerful performance, the performing arts in Lanna characterize emotional depth and aesthetic richness through its unique characteristics, a combination of narratives and in-depth emotional expressions. This form of art showcases its evolution in preserving, adapting, and innovating to align with changing social dynamics over time. Lanna performing arts are both a valuable cultural legacy and a creative medium that connect the past, present, and future in a meaningful and beautiful manner.

Adapting Lanna literature into Lanna performing arts represents a creative process that bridges literary narratives with performative arts of the community. Starting with interpreting the content, emotions, and central themes of the original literature for them to be expressed through physical movements, such as dance, music, stage design, and dialogue, these can create a dynamic and tangible experience. This adaptation helps clarify and enhance the appeal of Lanna literature, which is usually complex in meaning and language, making it clearer and more appealing. Moreover, the transformation offers an opportunity for creators to reinterpret the content in an innovative manner, i.e., presenting contemporary issues or restructuring the storyline to resonate with modern audiences through different elements like music, lighting, colors, and costumes which increase the emotional depth and atmosphere of the performances. Meanwhile, Lanna performing arts also serve as a mechanism preserving the original literature by increasing engagement of younger generations and broaden its reach to diverse audiences. Therefore, the process of Lanna literature adaptation is not merely presenting stories but also revitalizing and adding new value to the literature through living, spirited performances.

This research aims to investigate and examine the adaptation of Nirat Hariphunchai into a contemporary Lanna dance drama script, focusing on its moral themes. The research process emphasizes examining the narrative structure, characters, and linguistic elements to create new knowledge applicable to the study of Lanna art and culture in the future.

### **Objectives**

To investigate and examine the adaptation of Nirat Hariphunchai into a contemporary Lanna dance drama script presenting moral values as the theme.

### **Literature Review**

#### **1. Narratology**

Narratives have been coexisting with human societies and become an integral part of humanity. To elaborate, narratives serve as innately fundamental constructs, deeply rooted in human culture. Evidence of this can be observed across eras, where humans have consistently engaged with narratives in various forms, such as cave paintings, short stories, novels, documentaries, films, myths, works of art, and even dreams, which often embody stories that can be narrated. Tailangka (2017) summarizes the science and art of narratives, revealing its multifaceted meanings across different periods. Based on structuralism, narratives involve complexity, requiring a distinction between the story and the plot. Since a story refers to events in chronological order and a plot represents the method of presenting the story. A single story can be narrated in numerous ways, adding depth and enabling diverse interpretations. Generally, narratives follow two main approaches: 1) linking actions or events sequentially or

through cause-and-effect relationships, and 2) incorporating additional elements like characters, settings, etc. to enhance the intensity or coherence of the narrative. Therefore, narratives serve as essential tools for knowledge management, facilitating the exploration of lessons learned and the identification of success factors embedded within each story. Narratives can enable the extraction of implicit knowledge known as tacit knowledge and transforming it into explicit knowledge that is easily restored, archived and transferable. Stories of success are often narrated to inspire, foster positive thinking, and stimulate knowledge sharing while creating added value.

## **2. Literary Adaptation**

Literary adaptation is both a product and a creative process arising from interpretation and transformation of the original text to suit a new medium or context. Hutcheon (2006) asserts that adaptation is not merely an imitation of the original work, but a creative process involving reinterpretation and presentation of narratives to be aligned with the limitations and potential of new media. Transcoding, both the medium and meaning, is an essential process in literary adaptation, characterized by three principal features including 1) Adaptation as Product referring to transformation of the original work into a new product such as converting poetry into film through modifications of content, structure, and symbols, etc. to align with the limitations of the new medium, 2) Adaptation as Process involving creative reinterpretation of the original text by the adapter to recreate narratives that resonates with the new context, and 3) Adaptation as Reception involving encouragement of the audience's perception and interpretation of the newly created narratives allowing them to compare the adapted work with the original through an interactional process known as intertextuality, which bridges the past and present. Literary adaptation should be seen as transformation rather than translation of which the focus should be on creativity that reinterprets the original work to address the needs of contemporary audience and artistically preserve a connection to the source text instead of prioritizing fidelity to the original. The primary aim is to reconstruct meanings or to engage with the audience in a new context or a different era. Prior to literary adaption, it is crucial for an adapter to thoroughly understand the original narratives to identify its essence before commencing the adaptation to ensure the new form is both appropriate and meaningful (Duangpatra, 2001).

Retaining the storyline and characters from Nirat Hariphunchai, this study employed narratology and literary adaptation to examine meaning creation techniques and presentation of moral values so that the adapted script integrated Lanna cultural foundations and language with distinctive character expressions in unique manners to ensure its relevance to contemporary audiences.

## **Research Methodology**

This study employed a mixed-methods approach, integrating qualitative research and creative research. Data collection involved documentary research and in-depth interviews with key informants. Narratology and literary adaptation were incorporated as a research framework.

## **Research Instruments**

The research instruments included participant and non-participant observations aimed at recording general contexts and behavioral data during the development of the performance. Moreover, in-depth interviews were conducted with local philosophers, artists, and academics specializing in Lanna performing arts and Nirat Hariphunchai literature. Finally, focus group discussions with performers and musicians involved in the experiment were utilized to develop contemporary Lanna performing arts in this study.

## **Research Process**

### **1. Literature Review**

This referred to the examination of Nirat Hariphunchai, focusing on its structure, poetic style, key themes, and emotional expressions the author aimed to convey. Before connecting the literature with Lanna arts and culture, including history, beliefs, rituals, symbols, and significant locations mentioned in the literature, additional sources including books, research papers, articles, and other relevant documents were also reviewed.

### **2. Field Data Collection**

This was conducted through in-depth interviews with local philosophers, Lanna artists, and cultural academics to explore perspectives on Nirat Hariphunchai and its adaptation into performing arts. In the meantime, the researcher performed observations of rituals, traditional performances, and local Lanna music performance to understand styles and movement in the literature. These observations informed the development of performance scripts and was beneficial to musicians as well as performers.

### **3. Data Analysis**

The content and themes were analyzed, and interpreted to recreate Nirat Hariphunchai to suit a contemporary performance context.

### **4. Designing Process**

This involves plot structuring, dialogue writing, choreographic designing to align with the storyline and cultural elements, including music and sound designing.

### **5. Experimentation and Revision**

This referred to the rehearsal of the dance by performers and musicians before recording it to evaluate dialogue, choreography, and other components. Feedback from performers, musicians, and art experts was collected through focus group discussions which informed script revisions.

### **6. Presentation and Evaluation**

This involved performing the dance live on stage with feedback collected from the audience to evaluate the reception of the show.

## **Data Validation**

To ensure the accuracy of the findings, researcher triangulation was employed by continuously examining the data, procedures, and research outcomes throughout the study. This process involved systematic analysis of the collected data, reviewed by relevant experts. The data was verified from three perspectives as follows:

### **1. Methodological Triangulation**

Data were collected from various sources, using observation, in-depth interviews, and documentary studies to cross-validate the findings.

### **2. Data Triangulation**

Data consistency verification and accuracy were examined across different sources.

### **3. Researcher Triangulation**

The consistency of data collection and analysis were assessed among researchers and data collectors until reaching consensus.

## **Findings**

The researcher studied and analyzed Nirat Hariphunchai to create a contemporary Lanna drama script, entitled “The (Rocky) Path of Love and Desire.” The details are as follows:

### **1. The Narrative Structure**

Nirat Hariphunchai, a literary work presented in prose and verse of which the aim is to recount the author’s journey from Chiang Mai to Lamphun to worship Phra That Hariphunchai. Beginning with a homage to the Triple Gem, the author describes his departure from a beloved woman to join a sacred procession to the stupa. During the journey, the locations along the route are described, beginning at Wat Phra Singh, followed by Wat Thung Yu, Wat Si Koet, Wat Pha Kiat (Chai Phra Kiat), and Wat Ub Pan (abandoned). Upon reaching Klang Wiang intersection, the author recounts paying homage to the Phaya Mangrai Statue before stopping at Wat Chedi Luang to worship Phra Assadarod, Phra Kaew Morakot, and Ratcha Phummaphan. The journey then continues to Wat Fon Soi, passing through the city gate (Chiang Mai Gate), Wat Phan-ngom (abandoned), Wat Kudi Kam (Wat That Kam), and Wat Nang Rua before reaching the second gate (Kua Kom), Wiang Kum Kam, and Wat Ku Kam (Wat Chedi Liam). After passing Phra Non Nhong Phueng, Yang Num (Wat Kong Sai), Wat Hua Fai, and Ton Rai Market (Ton Sai), the author spends the night there. Early the next morning, the journey continues to Lamphun to worship the Phra That Hariphunchai. Later that night, after attending a traditional dance performance, he pays respects to a standing Buddha image and stays another night. The following day, he bids farewell to the stupa before traveling back to Chiang Mai.

The narrative analysis revealed that the narrative followed linear time progression style with minimal conflict or dramatic tension. In response, the researcher reinterpreted the literature, carefully introducing potential conflicts while preserving the author’s original intention to tell the story. It was found that throughout each quatrain in the literature, the central theme revolved around the author’s lamentation for love. Efforts to connect the narrative to



Buddhist beliefs were evident, particularly in relation to the teaching that “where there is love, there is suffering.” As a result, a new thematic focus emerged, centering on love as the root of desire and expectation, interwoven with religious and cultural significance. Thus, the plot is a narrative that sequences events according to the actual journey and situations from Chiang Mai to Lamphun as described in the Nirat Hariphunchai, while the character’s lamentation for love was further connected to three aspects of “craving” (tanha) referring to sources of suffer. This aimed to resonate the adapted version with contemporary audiences, the intended target of this creative performing arts. Narratology and Literary Adaptation were employed to create new meanings through interpretation while preserving the core themes of the original poem and expanding its ideas. Additionally, temporal techniques were employed to enhance complexity and add depth to the characters through nonlinear time progression. This approach encourages contemporary audiences to reflect on and question the characters’ experiences of love. The revised narrative structure follows a five-step sequence, as outlined in Table 1 below.

**Table 1**  
*The Treatment of the (Rocky) Path of Love and Desire*

Treatment	Content
Opening (The origin of the story)	A young woman inherits a family legacy, discovering an unopened love letter in an old chest. She then opens the letter.
Conflict (Inner struggle)	The protagonist falls deeply in love, vividly describing the woman’s features and allure including her appearances, smell, voice, and touch.
Development (Intensifying the inner struggle)	The protagonist struggles with desires, seeking to elevate his status to win her love.
Climax (Culmination of longing through complete sacrifice)	The protagonist is consumed by his longing, ready to sacrifice everything.
Ending (Inability to attain liberation.)	Despite his faith and adherence to Buddhist teachings, the protagonist remains trapped in desire, unable to attain liberation.

Source: Researcher

According to the treatment presented above, the performance was structured into three acts, aligning with Buddhist teachings on craving (*tanha*), which leads to suffering, the suffering that arises from love. The structures are as follows:

**Act 1: Kāma-taṇhā (Craving for Sensual Pleasures)**

This act explored the protagonist's obsession with the woman's physical beauty, expressed through the sensory allure of fragrance, melodious sounds, and the desire for physical closeness. This mirrors *kāma-taṇhā*, the craving for sensual experiences—sight, taste, smell, and sound. The journey unfolds along the route from Wat Phra Singh to Wat Chedi Luang, where the protagonist passes through natural surroundings, encountering trees and blooming flowers. The performance in this act incorporates fiddle and Lanna poetry with the “ue melody” (traditional Lanna melody), emphasizing tenderness and poetic descriptions of the protagonist's emotions. The lyrics depict nature's beauty as a metaphor for love i.e., “Through the vast forest, where trees stand tall, On both sides of the path, a sight so enthralling. Fragrant cananga odorata, champak, orange jasmine bloom bright, Golden petals shine, a radiant delight. The scent so sweet, like a maiden fair, Fiery red flowers burst forth in the air. Like my love, whose beauty glows, Oh, let me be a bee, drinking nectar as it flows.”

**Act 2: Bhava-taṇhā (Craving for Existence and Becoming)**

The protagonist enters a bustling marketplace, experiencing the chaos of daily life from dawn to dusk. Observing people from childhood to old age, still he desires to be with his beloved, longing for the fulfillment of love like the couples he sees around him. This mirrors *bhava-taṇhā*, the craving to exist in a desired state or escape from current suffering. This act intensifies the protagonist's inner conflict, expressed through fiddle music in two contrasting musical tones revealing how the protagonist struggles under the baking sun, comparing his turmoil to a burning forest fire, as reflected in the daytime scene: “Like a lightning strike, it pierces my soul, A searing pain, as fire takes hold. The earth splits apart, the land burns bright, A red sun glares, scorching all in sight. Smoke and dust rise, blinding my eyes, my heart consumed, as hope slowly dies.” While in the nighttime scene as darkness falls, the cold air and the sight of couples deepens the protagonist's loneliness. His sorrow is expressed in poetic verses that compare the night's isolation to his misery: “Night falls gently, a lone bird perches, misty air wraps in silent searches. The wind whispers, my heart grows weak, A love once close, now far to seek. My fate so low, left cold and apart, An empty chest, a hollow heart.”

**Act 3: Vibhava-taṇhā (Craving for Non-Existence or Release from Suffering)**

The final act marks the conclusion of the protagonist's journey, as he reaches his ultimate destination. Here, his greatest desire to be with his beloved is paralleled by grand Lanna rituals and acts of devotion. Overwhelmed by longing, he is willing to sacrifice everything to attain the life he craves, embodying *vibhava-taṇhā*, the desperation to achieve a desired state. The performance showcases the protagonist pray to sacred relics, participating in a grand Lanna procession, and making offerings that reflect his willingness to surrender everything for love. The example includes, “Arahant Samma, Arahant Samma, I bow before the sacred stupa. With a pure heart, I seek your grace, Grant me blessings, protect my fate. May wealth and fortune come my way, may love and joy forever stay. Let my beloved stand



by my side, together we remain, till the end of time.” In this act, the protagonist’s request is conveyed through Lanna fiddle music in “Lao Kaw” style, a Lanna poetic verse to encourage questions from the audience and provoke their thoughts.

The comparison between the narrative structure of the original literature and the adapted version, the (Rocky) Path of Love and Desire is summarized in Table 2 below.

**Table 2**

*The Comparison Between the Narrative Structure of the Nirat Hariphunchai and the (Rocky) Path of Love and Desire*

<b>Narrative Structure</b>	<b>Nirat Hariphunchai</b>	<b>The (Rocky) Path of Love and Desire</b>
Beginning	Beginning with worship at sacred sites starting from Wat Phra Singh, before heading to Hariphunchai Stupa while lamenting for a beloved woman.	The story starts with messages in a letter expressing the protagonist's sorrow due to separation.
Middle	Narrating the journey by describing encountered sites, feelings of longing, and loneliness.	The protagonist faces changes, including moving to a big city, confronting love conflicts, relationships, and life aspirations.
Climax	Reaching Hariphunchai Stupa, a symbol of faith, where the poet attains inner peace and inspiration, accepting life’s truths.	The protagonist confronts inner turmoil, makes critical decisions, and resolves love conflicts or personal expectations.
Ending	Returning to Chiang Mai with a peaceful heart, embracing faith while still slightly longing for the beloved, concluding with the purpose of writing the poem.	The protagonist discovers life’s meaning, accepting roots or embarking on a new life with self-awareness and mature relationships.

Source: Researcher

As shown in Table 2, both narratives utilize the metaphor of a journey as a symbol of growth, learning, and the search for meaning of life. The difference can be seen in that Nirat Hariphunchai emphasizes faith and spiritual realization through a quest for truth, culminating in inner peace. In contrast, in the (Rocky) Path of Love and Desire, the protagonist's struggles with love and self-aspiration within evolving contexts, portraying conflict and resolution through a theatrical structure focused on personal dilemmas.

## **2. Character Transformation**

In the adapted narrative, the protagonist serves as a medium to convey the central theme of love using Buddhist teachings on craving (*tanha*), depicted through actions, dialogue, emotions, and supporting elements such as settings, lighting, and sound. The protagonist undergoes significant internal growth and transformation, emphasizing the conflict and eventual liberation from the overwhelming influence of desire across various dimensions of life. The details of the characters are as follows:

### ***2.1 The Main Character Traits***

The protagonist begins with intense desires and cravings (sensual craving), such as deep love or possessive longing, which reveal emotional vulnerability and inner instability. Lacking self-control, he becomes irresistibly drawn into the allure of his desires, responding solely to his own impulses. For instance, the protagonist lamentingly admires the beauty of his beloved, possessing uncertainty, waiting endlessly, and making excessive sacrifices.

### ***2.2 The Turning Point***

Initially, the protagonist faces consequences of his desire, such as disappointment or loss from losing his beloved one, the protagonist questions life's meaning and the impact of craving inner peace, leading to an awakening of truth and detachment.

### ***2.3 Inner Transformation***

Realizing that desire is the genuine cause of his suffering, the protagonist seeks liberation through self-awareness, detachment, and mindfulness, exploring spiritual teachings for inner peace.

### ***2.4 Climax of Growth***

In a final test, the protagonist once again faces a challenge from his cravings, whether through the reappearance of deceptive *tanha* or a situation that stirs his desires. Ultimately, he chooses to let go, marking a turning point in his personal growth and emotional release. This is depicted in a scene, where the protagonist initially struggles but gradually finds inner calm.

### ***2.5 Resolution and Growth***

The character achieves serenity, embodying kindness, understanding, and detachment, often inspiring others or serving as a spiritual guide.

Thus, the character development in this work not only reflects the human condition but also conveys Buddhist insights on the pursuit of truth. The protagonist symbolizes human struggle and inner growth that every individual must face in real life, echoing a journey through Kāma-taṇhā (craving for sensual pleasure), Bhava-taṇhā (craving for existence), and Vibhava-taṇhā (craving for non-existence craving). Each of the three acts serves as a symbol of the process of liberation from suffering and the discovery of the true meaning of life. This narrative creates a deep connection with the audience on both artistic and spiritual levels.

Furthermore, both the Nirat Hariphunchai and the contemporary Lanna dance-drama, the (Rocky) Path of Love and Desire, address the path that the character or creator embarks upon as a journey of spiritual growth. The narrative explores love and worldly desires, where the beginning of the story represents a path full of craving, ultimately leading to the discovery of ultimate truth of life. This journey serves as a metaphor for breaking free from the bonds of desire and suffering. All characters in the narratives focus on conveying the truths of life through a path marked by beauty, hardship, and self-discovery, resonating with the core principles of Buddhist philosophy and the deep aspects of human existence.

### **3. Language**

The original Khon Si Suphap, written in the ancient Lanna language, has been reassembled and creatively reinterpreted using language metaphors to enhance the communication dimension, both emotionally and interpretively. This provides a profound aesthetic experience that allows the audience to truly connect with the character's inner self. The details are as follows:

#### **3.1 Dialogue**

In the adapted version, dialogue plays a crucial role in linking the emotions of the characters, the audience, and the narrative itself. It translates the characters' feelings so that the audience can access and resonate with their own experiences. Besides, dialogue adds realism, making the characters appear vivid and natural while conveying complex emotions, building relationships among characters, and emphasizing the core themes like the process of letting go of desire. Therefore, dialogue serves as an essential tool for effectively expressing deep emotions and ideas.

#### **3.2 Bot Sor (Traditional Lanna Recitative)**

This traditional recitative reflects the unique cultural identity of Lanna, creating a rich emotional atmosphere through folk singing that reconnects the audience with their cultural roots via the language and the melody. For example, in the opening scene, it draws the audience into the Lanna setting through a description of nature and ways of life. In the meantime, it included storytelling through profound symbols and philosophical insights, while also conveying complex emotions such as the sorrow of separation or hope in times of difficulty. The integration of the recitative with traditional instruments such as Salo, Sor, and Sueng, traditional Lanna instruments, enhance the cohesion and beauty of the performance, deepening the connection between the audience and the characters, and ensuring that the essence of the narrative and its emotions are clearly remembered.

The analysis of the Nirat Hariphunchai for adaptation as a performance script involves a process of reworking a literary work rich in aesthetic value into a form that reflects moral teachings within the framework of a contemporary Lanna performative arts, *The (Rocky) Path of Love and Desire*. The goal is to convey the narrative's core and its emotional depth in both artistic and philosophical manners by reinterpreting the text and incorporating elements of traditional Lanna culture with creative narratives to resonate contemporary audience. This process not only preserves the original beauty of the Nirat poetry but also enhances its accessibility across multiple dimensions including artistic, emotional, and spiritual. Additionally, integrating Lanna folk culture, such as "Bot Sor" (traditional Lanna recitative), local music, and dance, into the narrative enriches the performance, allowing for a profound connection with the audience. This reinterpretation process effectively conveys the core themes of desire and detachment in a contemporary, comprehensible manner, while authentically expressing the beauty of life and spirituality.

### **Conclusion and Discussion**

Narratives provide a deeper understanding of the themes, emotions, and intrinsic values embedded within literature, which encompasses multiple dimensions such as symbolic meanings, literary structures, and their relationship with historical, social, and cultural contexts. It also offers insight into the author's perspectives, beliefs, and influences on literary composition. Thus, textual analysis serves as a crucial tool for interpretation and adaptation of literature and adapting it into other forms, such as performative arts or contemporary arts creation. Moreover, it enables scholars and enthusiasts to preserve, convey, and promote the literary heritage, particularly through bridging the past with the present. This fosters a more profound and holistic understanding of culture and human spirituality across eras.

With regards to the textual adaptation of Nirat Hariphunchai into the contemporary Lanna dance drama script, *the (Rocky) Path of Love and Desire*, involves deconstructing the original structure and reinterpreting it into a new creative plot. The performance embodies philosophical reflections on suffering caused by love, conceptualized through the three states of craving (*taṇhā*), which represent the path of love's suffering. These themes are conveyed to modern audiences through an innovative communication process that integrates the science and art of contemporary Lanna performing arts. This approach aligns with the notion proposed by Koedarunsuksi (2009), who emphasizes that ancient literature serves as a repository of human experiences and intellectual or aesthetic endeavors. The reproduction of literary works in various forms, whether by reinterpreting original themes or retelling stories in a new context, aims to communicate with contemporary audiences. Such reinterpretation creates a connection between the literary work and current societal events. Beyond adaptation, an essential aspect is the new interpretation that encourages audiences to engage in critical thinking and self-reflection, leading to diverse personal conclusions. Furthermore, it illustrates how artists unconsciously or consciously absorb ideas from original works. Naknual (2021) also highlights how adaptation involves modifying narratives or characters by altering or expanding their backgrounds to present fresh perspectives, sometimes revealing character flaws that lead to their downfall.

The adaptation of this performance aligns with target market and contemporary audience preferences by incorporating new interpretations and complex plot into connecting circumstances, characters, and other elements relating real-world issues, enhancing its moral value. The contemporary Lanna theatrical performance, in this research aims to 1) convey the core themes through the emotions and experiences of the main characters, 2) highlight significant locations in Chiang Mai and Lamphun where the events occur, and 3) develop contemporary Lanna drama script through application of narrative strategies and creative presentation methods. The adapted literary work effectively reflects Lanna identity through a contemporary theatrical expression, integrating performing arts concepts to construct a cohesive artistic and cultural representation. The combination of Lanna culture, literature, and modern theatrical techniques highlights the enduring beauty and significance of cultural heritage. Consequently, this research serves as a model for adaptation of classical literature into contemporary performing arts. The analysis of narrative structures, characters, and language informs the development of a play with dynamic conflicts and character progression, while Buddhist philosophical concepts, such as *Kāmatanḥā* (sensual craving), *Bhavatanḥā* (craving for existence), and *Vibhavatanḥā* (craving for non-existence), are the themes of the performance. This integration of literature, performance, and Buddhist philosophy provides a framework for creating spiritually reflective theatrical works that effectively communicate philosophical ideas.

### **Suggestions for Further Studies**

To further enhance this research, it is recommended to explore more complex narrative structures by elements such as heightened conflicts and turning points through techniques like nonlinear storytelling, such as flashbacks or parallel narratives. These approaches would allow for a comparative perspective among different audience interpretations.

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