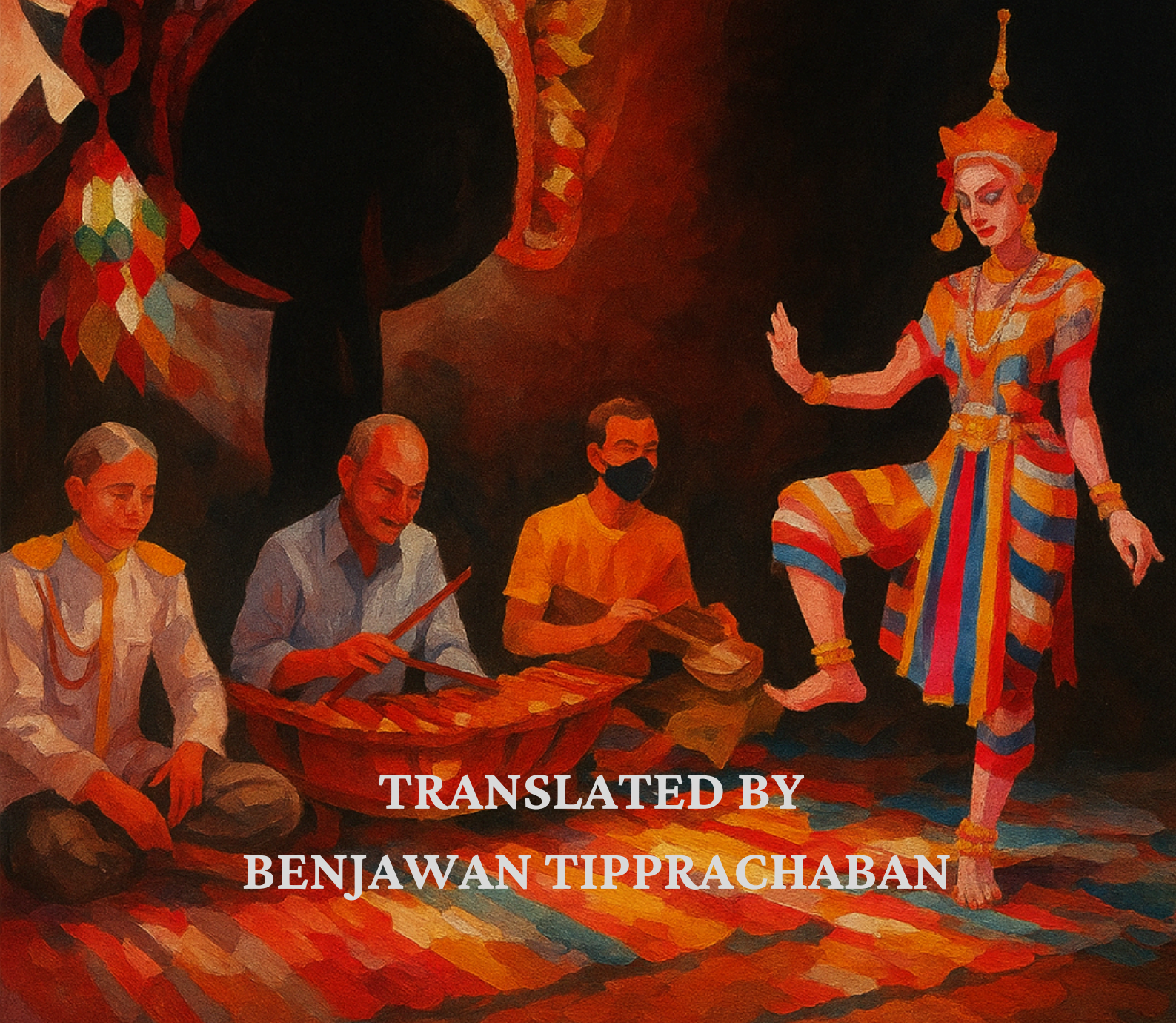


NORA

IN TRANG PROVINCE :BELIEFS AND RITUALS

BY SANTICHA YAMMAI



TRANSLATED BY
BENJAWAN TIPPRACHABAN

The goodness from this book is dedicated to
Nang Nual Thong Samlee, the origin of Nora,
Manora Longnoi Sor Pan Trang, the Nora teacher, the pioneering artists, and
the ancestors of the South, who have preserved the Nora tradition.

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Preface

On December 15, 2021, UNESCO declared “Nora” as an Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, news that brought joy to all Thai people, especially Nora artists and those involved in preserving this art form for Thailand.

As a descendant of Nora performers and a southerner, upon hearing this news, I felt proud and inspired to honor Nora by sharing its stories more widely with society. Therefore, I have compiled and edited the book “Nora in Trang Province: Beliefs and Rituals.” This book has been developed and improved from “Andaman Nora: Beliefs and Rituals,” which was previously published in 2017. For this new edition, I have made the following improvements:

The title has been changed from “Andaman Nora: Beliefs and Rituals” to “Nora in Trang Province: Beliefs and Rituals” to more accurately specify the geographical area of study consistent with the book’s content.

The content of the original book “Andaman Nora: Beliefs and Rituals” consisted of four chapters: Chapter 1: The Appearance of Nora, Chapter 2: The Grand Nora Rong Khru Ceremony, Chapter 3: Beliefs in the Grand Nora Rong Khru Ritual, and Chapter 4: Great Nora Masters of the Andaman Coast. I have revised the content in “Nora in Trang Province: Beliefs and Rituals” to include five chapters. Chapter 1: The Form and Elements of Nora, Chapter 2: The Grand Nora Rong Khru Ritual, Chapter 3: Beliefs in Nora Rong Khru Rituals, Chapter 4: The Shrine of Khru Mo Nora and the Worship, and Chapter 5: A New Era for Nora in the Future. These changes provide readers with knowledge and practical guidelines according to Nora traditions. For this revision, I have incorporated data from my research study on *Khru Mo Nora Worship Ritual in Trang Province* and my article *Tiny Hunter’s Face and Tiny Headdress: Cultural Capital Development to Cultural Products* to enhance the book's comprehensiveness.

Regarding the key terms “beliefs” and “rituals” that appear in this book, I would like to explain them to ensure readers have a common understanding, which will serve as an important key to better comprehend the content:

Beliefs are what individuals think and hold in their minds. These may rely on knowledge or experience as information for thinking and decision-making. Beliefs may be “true” or “not true”; however, beliefs have the power to compel individuals or groups to willingly perform certain actions. When these practices aim to purify the spirit and uphold society and follow structured patterns,

they are called “rituals.” Rituals function to embrace beliefs and keep them within society, cycling endlessly, just like the beliefs and rituals of Nora presented in this book.

Finally, I would like to thank my parents, teachers, Nora masters, the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences at Suratthani Rajabhat University, as well as fellow Nora artists, including *Manora James Sanaesilp Troupe*, *Manora Song Thamnongsilp Troupe*, and *Manora Phaeng Noi Khwan Jai Chao Tai Troupe* for their help and support in successfully completing this book.

Santichai Yammai

Translator's Preface

The recognition of Nora as UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity on December 15, 2021, marked a pivotal moment not only for Thailand but for the global preservation of traditional performing arts. This momentous achievement underscores the profound cultural value embedded within this ancient art form that has flourished in southern Thailand for centuries. It is with great honor and responsibility that I present this English translation of “Nora in Trang Province: Beliefs and Rituals,” making this invaluable scholarly work accessible to international readers for the first time.

This book represents far more than a documentation of performance techniques or historical accounts. It serves as a comprehensive ethnographic study that illuminates the intricate relationship between artistic expression, spiritual beliefs, and community identity in Thai culture. The author's meticulous research reveals how Nora functions as a living repository of indigenous knowledge, preserving not only aesthetic traditions but also complex systems of beliefs, ritual practice and social organizations that have sustained communities across generations. My decision to undertake this translation stems from a deep conviction that cultural knowledge transcends linguistic boundaries and belongs to humanity as a whole. In our increasingly globalized world, where traditional cultures face unprecedented challenges, the preservation and dissemination of such knowledge becomes not merely an academic exercise but a moral imperative. The detailed examination of beliefs and rituals presented in this work offers invaluable insights into the ways traditional societies construct meaning, maintain social cohesion, and navigate the relationship between the sacred and secular realms.

For the international academic community, this translation opens new avenues for comparative cultural studies, anthropological research, and performance studies. Scholars specializing in Southeast Asian cultures, ritual studies, traditional theater, and intangible heritage preservation will find in these pages rich material for understanding how cultural practices adapt and persist in contemporary contexts. The book's exploration of the Nora Rong Khru ceremony, the veneration of Khru Mo Nora, and the intricate belief systems surrounding Nora performance provides a rare window into the spiritual dimensions of artistic practice that are often overlooked in purely aesthetic analyses. Furthermore, this work contributes significantly to the broader discourse on cultural sustainability and heritage preservation. As UNESCO's recognition of Nora demonstrates, traditional arts are not museum pieces but dynamic, evolving practices that continue to serve vital social functions. The author's vision of “A New Era for Nora in the Future” offers valuable

perspectives on how traditional cultures can maintain their authenticity while adapting to contemporary realities—a challenge faced by indigenous communities worldwide.

For Thailand, this English translation serves as an important tool for cultural diplomacy and international understanding. It enables the nation to share its rich cultural heritage with global audiences, fostering cross-cultural dialogue and appreciation. In an era where soft power increasingly depends on cultural authenticity and distinctiveness, works like this help position Thailand as a custodian of irreplaceable human traditions worthy of international respect and study. The translation also serves educational institutions both within Thailand and abroad. Universities offering programs in cultural studies, anthropology, theater arts, and Southeast Asian studies now have access to primary source material that can enrich their curricula and research programs. This is particularly valuable for Thai students studying abroad and international students seeking to understand Thai culture beyond surface-level representations. As we face an uncertain future where traditional knowledge systems are rapidly disappearing, the preservation of works like this becomes increasingly urgent. This translation ensures that the wisdom embedded in Nora traditions—its sophisticated understanding of community, spirituality, and artistic excellence—remains available to future generations of scholars, artists, and cultural practitioners worldwide.

In presenting this translation, I am deeply grateful to the author for creating such a comprehensive and insightful work, and to the Nora masters, performers, and communities who have kept this tradition alive through their dedication and practice. May this English edition serve as a bridge between cultures, fostering greater appreciation for the remarkable diversity of human creative expression and the enduring power of traditional arts to enrich our collective understanding of what it means to be human.

Assistant Professor Dr. Benjawan Tipprachaban

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บทวิเคราะห์ทางวิชาการในการแปล
หนังสือ "โนราจังหวัดตรัง: ความเชื่อและพิธีกรรม"
(ภาษาไทย)

1. วัตถุประสงค์ของการแปลเรื่อง "โนราจังหวัดตรัง: ความเชื่อและพิธีกรรม"

การแปลหนังสือ "โนรา จังหวัดตรัง: ความเชื่อและพิธีกรรม" จากภาษาไทยเป็นภาษาอังกฤษมีวัตถุประสงค์หลักเพื่อเผยแพร่องค์ความรู้เกี่ยวกับศิลปะการแสดงพื้นบ้านโนราให้แก่ผู้อ่านนานาชาติโดยเฉพาะในแวดวงวิชาการ ด้านมานุษยวิทยา คติชนวิทยา และการศึกษาศิลปะการแสดง งานแปลนี้มีความสำคัญอย่างยิ่งในยุคที่วัฒนธรรมท้องถิ่นต้องเผชิญหน้ากับความเปลี่ยนแปลงอย่างรวดเร็ว ทั้งจากกระแสโลกาภิวัตน์และเทคโนโลยีสมัยใหม่ การที่ยูเนสโกประกาศขึ้นทะเบียน "โนรา" ให้เป็นมรดกทางวัฒนธรรมที่จับต้องไม่ได้ของมนุษยชาติ เมื่อวันที่ 15 ธันวาคม พ.ศ. 2564 ไม่เพียงแต่เป็นหมุดหมายสำคัญของประเทศไทยเท่านั้น แต่ยังสะท้อนคุณค่าทางวัฒนธรรมอันลึกซึ้งที่ฝังแน่นอยู่ในศิลปะการแสดงพื้นบ้านแขนงนี้อย่างชัดเจน ผู้แปลจึงเห็นว่าการแปลหนังสือเล่มนี้ไม่ใช่เพียงการถ่ายทอดเนื้อหาจากภาษาไทยเป็นภาษาอังกฤษแต่เป็นการเปิดพื้นที่ใหม่ให้ศิลปะโนราได้ส่งเสียงในเวทีนานาชาติ

ผู้แปลเชื่อว่าองค์ความรู้ทางวัฒนธรรมควรถูกถ่ายทอดข้ามพรมแดนภาษาเพราะวัฒนธรรมไม่ใช่สมบัติของชาติใดชาติหนึ่งแต่เป็นสมบัติร่วมของมนุษยชาติ การแปลจึงเป็นมากกว่ากระบวนการทางภาษาแต่เป็นเครื่องมือในการอนุรักษ์ ส่งเสริม และสร้างความเข้าใจระหว่างวัฒนธรรมอย่างแท้จริง ดังที่ Venuti (2018) กล่าวว่า การแปลสามารถทำหน้าที่เชื่อมโยงโลก และดังที่ Bassnett (2014) ชี้ว่า การแปลคือสะพานที่ทำให้เราข้ามจากโลกหนึ่งไปสู่อีกโลกหนึ่งเพื่อเรียนรู้ เข้าใจและเคารพซึ่งกันและกัน หนังสือเล่มนี้จึงไม่ได้เป็นเพียงการบันทึกประวัติศาสตร์หรือเทคนิคการแสดง แต่เป็นการเปิดเผยระบบความเชื่อที่ซับซ้อนซึ่งเป็นรากฐานของโนรา ไม่ว่าจะเป็นความเชื่อเรื่องผีบรรพบุรุษ ผีแข่ง ผีชิน สิ่งศักดิ์สิทธิ์ และพลังของอาวุธในพิธีกรรม ทั้งหมดนี้ผสมผสานกันอย่างแนบแน่นกับวิถีชีวิตของผู้คนในภาคใต้ของประเทศไทย เป็นภาพสะท้อนของความสัมพันธ์ระหว่างศิลปะ จิตวิญญาณ และอัตลักษณ์ของชุมชนที่ยังคงดำรงอยู่ท่ามกลางโลกที่เปลี่ยนไป การแปลนี้ยังมีเป้าหมายเพื่อสร้างฐานข้อมูลความรู้ทางวัฒนธรรมที่เข้าถึงได้ในระดับสากล สนับสนุนการศึกษาวิจัยเชิงเปรียบเทียบในภูมิภาคเอเชียตะวันออกเฉียงใต้และเปิดพื้นที่ให้กับนักวิชาการและนักศึกษาทั้งไทยและต่างชาติได้ศึกษาโนราในเชิงลึกโดยเฉพาะในบริบทของการเปลี่ยนแปลงทางสังคม เทคโนโลยี และการเจรจาระหว่างอดีตกับปัจจุบัน

ผู้แปลเห็นว่าการแปลหนังสือเล่มนี้จะเป็นการร่วมอนุรักษ์มรดกวัฒนธรรมไทยในรูปแบบที่ยังมีชีวิต เป็นการส่งต่อเสียงของครูโนรา ศิลปิน และชุมชนผู้สืบสานศิลปะนี้ให้ดังก้องไปไกลกว่าขอบเขตของภาษาและดินแดน หนังสือเล่มนี้ในฉบับภาษาอังกฤษจะเป็นสะพานเชื่อมวัฒนธรรมที่จะช่วยให้ผู้คนจากหลากหลายเชื้อชาติได้เห็น ได้เข้าใจ และได้สัมผัสถึงพลังของศิลปะพื้นบ้านไทยที่งดงามและยังคงเปล่งประกายอยู่ในโลกยุคใหม่

2. การเลือกต้นฉบับหนังสือ “โนรา จังหวัดตรัง: ความเชื่อและพิธีกรรม”

หนังสือ “โนราจังหวัดตรัง: ความเชื่อและพิธีกรรม” ของสันติชัย แย้มใหม่ เป็นผลงานทางวิชาการที่มีคุณค่าอย่างยิ่งในการศึกษาศิลปะการแสดงพื้นบ้านของภาคใต้ของไทย และมีคุณค่าแก่การแปลเพื่อเผยแพร่ในระดับสากล เพื่อเติมเต็มช่องว่างทางวิชาการและนำเสนอข้อมูลเชิงลึกเกี่ยวกับวัฒนธรรมพื้นบ้านของไทยสู่วงวิชาการนานาชาติ

หนังสือ “โนราจังหวัดตรัง: ความเชื่อและพิธีกรรม” มีคุณค่าทางวิชาการด้านมานุษยวิทยาวัฒนธรรมและศิลปะการแสดงพื้นบ้านที่โดดเด่นเนื่องจากโนราเป็นศิลปะการแสดงพื้นบ้านที่มีประวัติศาสตร์ยาวนานกว่า 1,000 ปี ตามหลักฐานทางโบราณคดีที่ปรากฏ (สันติชัย แย้มใหม่, 2556) และยังคงมีบทบาทสำคัญในวิถีชีวิตของผู้คนในภาคใต้ของไทยจนถึงปัจจุบัน เนื้อหาของหนังสือครอบคลุมทั้งนิยาม ประวัติความเป็นมา ตำนาน พิธีกรรมความเชื่อ และการปรับตัวของโนราในยุคสมัยที่เปลี่ยนแปลงไป การศึกษาโนราไม่เพียงแต่เป็นการเรียนรู้เกี่ยวกับศิลปะการแสดงเท่านั้น แต่ยังเชื่อมโยงกับระบบความเชื่อที่ซับซ้อนซึ่งผสมผสานระหว่างความเชื่อดั้งเดิม พราหมณ์-ฮินดู พุทธศาสนา และในบางพื้นที่ยังได้รับอิทธิพลจากศาสนาอิสลามอีกด้วย

หนังสือมีเนื้อหาที่มีคุณค่าทางวิชาการและสมควรได้รับการแปลเป็นภาษาอังกฤษเพื่อเผยแพร่ในระดับสากล โดยผู้แปลพิจารณาถึงประเด็นสำคัญดังต่อไปนี้

1. เนื้อหาในหนังสือนำเสนอข้อมูลเชิงลึกเกี่ยวกับโนราในบริบทเฉพาะของจังหวัดตรังซึ่งมีลักษณะเฉพาะและอาจแตกต่างจากโนราในพื้นที่อื่น ๆ ของภาคใต้ การศึกษาความหลากหลายของโนราในแต่ละท้องถิ่นมีคุณค่าทางวิชาการในการศึกษาเชิงเปรียบเทียบ
2. หนังสือให้รายละเอียดเกี่ยวกับพิธีกรรมโนราโรงครูซึ่งเป็นพิธีกรรมที่มีความซับซ้อนและมีความสำคัญสูงสุดของการแสดงโนรา เนื้อหาเกี่ยวกับการปฏิบัติพิธีกรรมการเชื้อเชิญครูหมอโนรา การประทับทรงและพิธีกรรมการสถาปนาบุคคลให้เป็นศิลปินโนรา ล้วนเป็นองค์ความรู้สำคัญในการศึกษาเกี่ยวกับศิลปะการแสดงพื้นบ้านของไทย
3. หนังสือบันทึกประวัติศาสตร์และบอกเล่าประสบการณ์ของศิลปินพื้นบ้านที่มีบทบาทสำคัญในการสืบทอดศิลปะการแสดงโนราในจังหวัดตรัง เช่น โนราศรีจันทร์ (นายจันทร์ ทดแทน) ซึ่งมีคุณค่าในการศึกษาด้านคติชนวิทยา (folklore studies) และการบันทึกมุขปาฐะ (oral tradition)
4. หนังสือวิเคราะห์การเปลี่ยนแปลงของโนราในบริบทของการเปลี่ยนแปลงทางสังคมและเทคโนโลยีซึ่งสะท้อนให้เห็นถึงพลวัตของวัฒนธรรมพื้นบ้านในยุคปัจจุบัน ประเด็นเรื่องการปรับตัวและการต่อรองทางวัฒนธรรม การเปลี่ยนแปลงความเชื่อและพิธีกรรม รวมถึงการปรับเปลี่ยนรูปแบบการแสดงให้เข้ากับรสนิยมของผู้ชมในยุคปัจจุบัน เป็นประเด็นที่มีความสำคัญในการศึกษาเปรียบเทียบเกี่ยวกับการเปลี่ยนแปลงทางวัฒนธรรมในระดับโลก (นพพร ประชากุล, 2550)
5. หนังสือให้ข้อมูลเกี่ยวกับการขึ้นทะเบียนโนราเป็นมรดกวัฒนธรรมที่จับต้องไม่ได้ (Intangible Cultural Heritage) ของมนุษยชาติ โดยนำเสนอรายละเอียดเกี่ยวกับกระบวนการขึ้นทะเบียนและแนวทางการ

อนุรักษสืบสานโนราอย่างยั่งยืนซึ่งมีความสำคัญในการเผยแพร่ข้อมูลเชิงลึกเกี่ยวกับกระบวนการอนุรักษ์มรดกวัฒนธรรมไทยในระดับสากล (ศูนย์มานุษยวิทยาสิรินธร, 2564)

การแปลหนังสือ "โนรา จังหวัดตรัง: ความเชื่อและพิธีกรรม" มีความสำคัญในเชิงวิชาการหลายประการ ทั้งในแง่ของการบันทึกและเผยแพร่ข้อมูลเชิงลึกเกี่ยวกับศิลปะการแสดงพื้นบ้านไทย การศึกษาระบบความเชื่อและพิธีกรรมที่ซับซ้อน การนำเสนอการเปลี่ยนแปลงและการปรับตัวของวัฒนธรรมพื้นบ้านในยุคสมัยที่เปลี่ยนแปลงไป ตลอดจนการให้ข้อมูลการอนุรักษ์มรดกทางวัฒนธรรมที่จับต้องไม่ได้ การแปลเนื้อหาเหล่านี้จะช่วยเติมเต็มช่องว่างทางวิชาการและทำให้นักวิชาการนานาชาติสามารถเข้าถึงข้อมูลเชิงลึกเกี่ยวกับวัฒนธรรมพื้นบ้านไทยได้อย่างลึกซึ้งยิ่งขึ้น

3. กลวิธีการแปลที่ใช้ในการแปลหนังสือ

การแปลผลงานทางวัฒนธรรมจากภาษาไทยเป็นภาษาอังกฤษเป็นภารกิจที่ทำหายอย่างมากเนื่องจากผู้แปลต้องเผชิญกับความซับซ้อนในหลายมิติ ทั้งในด้านความแตกต่างของโครงสร้างภาษา ระบบความเชื่อ และบริบททางสังคม โดยเฉพาะอย่างยิ่งเมื่อเป็นงานที่เกี่ยวข้องกับศิลปะการแสดงพื้นบ้านที่มีรากฐานทางจิตวิญญาณที่ลึกซึ้งอย่างโนรา ซึ่งแฝงไปด้วยพิธีกรรม ความเชื่อและภูมิปัญญาท้องถิ่นที่สั่งสมมายาวนาน หนังสือ "โนรา จังหวัดตรัง: ความเชื่อและพิธีกรรม" นำเสนอเนื้อหาในสองรูปแบบการเขียนที่แตกต่างกัน ได้แก่ บทร้อยแก้ว ที่ใช้อธิบายข้อมูลทางวิชาการและพิธีกรรม และบทร้อยกรอง ที่เป็นบทกลอนในการแสดงโนรา ความแตกต่างของรูปแบบการเขียนทั้งสองนี้ทำให้ผู้แปลต้องปรับเปลี่ยนกลวิธีการแปลให้เหมาะสมกับลักษณะเฉพาะของแต่ละส่วนโดยคำนึงถึงทั้งความแม่นยำของเนื้อหา การรักษาคุณค่าทางวัฒนธรรม และความเข้าใจของผู้อ่านเป็นสำคัญ เพื่อให้สามารถถ่ายทอดทั้งความถูกต้องทางวิชาการและความงดงามทางศิลปะไปสู่ผู้อ่านภาษาอังกฤษได้อย่างครบถ้วน

การแปลบทร้อยแก้ว

การแปลเอกสารทางวัฒนธรรมจากภาษาไทยเป็นภาษาอังกฤษเป็นกระบวนการที่ซับซ้อนและต้องอาศัยทักษะหลากหลาย จากการวิเคราะห์งานแปล "โนรา จังหวัดตรัง: ความเชื่อและพิธีกรรม" ผู้แปลได้ใช้กลวิธีการแปลที่หลากหลายเพื่อถ่ายทอดความหมายและคุณค่าทางวัฒนธรรมจากภาษาต้นทางสู่ภาษาปลายทางให้ได้ครบถ้วน โดยสามารถจำแนกกลวิธีได้ดังนี้

1. การแปลแบบตรงตัว (Literal Translation)

การแปลแบบตรงตัวเป็นกลวิธีที่ผู้แปลใช้เมื่อต้องการรักษาความแม่นยำและความถูกต้องของข้อมูลในระดับสูงสุด ตามแนวคิดของ Newmark (1988) ที่ผู้แปลได้ศึกษาและนำมาประยุกต์ใช้ การแปลแบบตรงตัวไม่ได้หมายถึงการแปลคำต่อคำอย่างไ้ไร้การขยาดแต่เป็นการรักษาความหมายและโครงสร้างของต้นฉบับให้มากที่สุดโดยที่ผลลัพธ์ยังคงมีความเป็นธรรมชาติในภาษาปลายทาง หลักการสำคัญที่ผู้แปลยึดถือปฏิบัติคือ การประเมินอย่างระมัดระวังว่า

เมื่อให้ใคร่ครวญการใช้การแปลแบบตรงตัว การตัดสินใจนี้ขึ้นอยู่กับลักษณะของเนื้อหา จุดประสงค์ของการแปล และความคาดหวังของผู้อ่าน ในงานแปลเอกสารเชิงวิชาการเกี่ยวกับวัฒนธรรมโนรา ผู้แปลพบว่าการแปลแบบตรงตัวมีความเหมาะสมเป็นพิเศษในบางบริบทโดยเฉพาะเมื่อต้องการรักษาความถูกต้องของข้อมูลและสร้างมาตรฐานที่สอดคล้องกันตลอดทั้งเอกสาร

การวิเคราะห์การแปลจากตัวอย่างในหนังสือ

1) การแปลการอ้างอิงทางวิชาการ

ตัวอย่างจากบทที่ 1:

ต้นฉบับภาษาไทย (หน้า 2): (ส.พลายน้อย, 2544)

ฉบับแปลภาษาอังกฤษ (หน้า 2): (Playnoi, 2001)

ในการแปลการอ้างอิง "(ส.พลายน้อย, 2544)" เป็น "(Playnoi, 2001)" ผู้แปลได้ใช้หลักการของการแปลแบบตรงตัวอย่างมีระบบ การตัดสินใจนี้มาจากการวิเคราะห์ว่าการอ้างอิงทางวิชาการต้องการความสอดคล้องและความแม่นยำสูง ผู้แปลจึงรักษารูปแบบของการอ้างอิงไว้เหมือนเดิม โดยมีการปรับเปลี่ยนเพียงระบบปฏิทินจาก พ.ศ. เป็น ค.ศ. เพื่อให้สอดคล้องกับมาตรฐานสากล ผู้แปลไม่ได้แปลอย่างไร้วิจารณ์แต่ได้ปรับระบบการอ้างอิงให้เหมาะสมกับบรรทัดฐานของวงวิชาการระหว่างประเทศ ขณะเดียวกันก็รักษาข้อมูลสำคัญทั้งหมดไว้ครบถ้วน การปรับเปลี่ยนปี พ.ศ. เป็น ค.ศ. เป็นการแปลงข้อมูลที่จำเป็นเพื่อให้ผู้อ่านสามารถเข้าใจและใช้ประโยชน์จากการอ้างอิงได้อย่างมีประสิทธิภาพ

2) การแปลหัวข้อและชื่อเรื่อง

ตัวอย่างจากบทที่ 2:

ต้นฉบับภาษาไทย (หน้า 46): ความสำคัญของพิธีกรรมโนราโรงครู

ฉบับแปลภาษาอังกฤษ (หน้า 29): Importance of Nora Rong Khru rituals

ตัวอย่างจากบทที่ 2:

ต้นฉบับภาษาไทย (หน้า 47): ประเภทของพิธีกรรมโนราโรงครู

ฉบับแปลภาษาอังกฤษ (หน้า 29): Types of Nora Rong Khru Rituals

ในการแปลหัวข้อ "ความสำคัญของพิธีกรรมโนราโรงครู" เป็น "Importance of Nora Rong Khru rituals" ผู้แปลได้ประยุกต์ใช้การแปลแบบตรงตัวในลักษณะที่รักษาโครงสร้างทางความหมายไว้อย่างสมบูรณ์ "ความสำคัญ" ได้รับการแปลเป็น "Importance" ซึ่งเป็นการแปลตรงตัวที่รักษาความหมายหลักไว้ได้อย่างครบถ้วน คำว่า "ของ" ซึ่งทำหน้าที่เป็นคำบุพบทแสดงความเป็นเจ้าของหรือความสัมพันธ์ได้รับการแปลเป็น "of" ซึ่งมีหน้าที่ทางไวยากรณ์ที่เทียบเคียงได้ในภาษาอังกฤษ ส่วน "พิธีกรรม" ได้รับการแปลเป็น "rituals" ซึ่งเป็นคำศัพท์ที่มีความหมายใกล้เคียงและเหมาะสมในบริบททางวิชาการ สำหรับ "โนราโรงครู" ผู้แปลตัดสินใจใช้การทับศัพท์เป็น "Nora Rong Khru" ซึ่งแม้จะไม่ใช้การแปลตรงตัวแต่เป็นการรักษาความเป็นเอกลักษณ์ของคำศัพท์เฉพาะทางวัฒนธรรม การแปลนี้รักษาโครงสร้าง

หลักของหัวข้อไว้ ขณะเดียวกันก็คำนึงถึงความเฉพาะทางวัฒนธรรมที่ไม่สามารถแปลได้อย่างตรงตัว เช่นเดียวกันกับการแปล "ประเภทของพิธีกรรมโนราโรงครู" เป็น "Types of Nora Rong Khru Rituals" ที่ใช้หลักการเดียวกันอย่างสม่ำเสมอ

สรุป

การแปลแบบตรงตัวเป็นกลวิธีที่มีคุณค่าและความสำคัญในงานแปลเชิงวิชาการ โดยเฉพาะเมื่อใช้ในบริบทที่เหมาะสม จากประสบการณ์การแปลหนังสือเล่มนี้ ผู้แปลพบว่าการแปลแบบตรงตัวมีข้อดีหลายข้อที่สำคัญต้องงานแปลเชิงวิชาการ ข้อดีแรกคือความแม่นยำและความถูกต้อง เมื่อใช้การแปลแบบตรงตัวในบริบทที่เหมาะสม ผู้อ่านสามารถมั่นใจได้ว่าจะได้รับข้อมูลที่ใกล้เคียงกับต้นฉบับมากที่สุด สิ่งนี้มีความสำคัญในเอกสารทางวิชาการที่ความผิดพลาดเล็กน้อยอาจนำไปสู่ความเข้าใจผิดที่สำคัญ ข้อดีที่สองคือ ความเป็นระบบและความสม่ำเสมอ การใช้การแปลแบบตรงตัวช่วยสร้างรูปแบบที่ผู้อ่านสามารถติดตามได้โดยเฉพาะในกรณีของหัวข้อและโครงสร้างที่คล้ายกัน ความสม่ำเสมอช่วยให้ผู้อ่านอ่านเอกสารได้ง่ายขึ้นและมีความเชื่อมั่นในความน่าเชื่อถือของงานแปล ข้อดีที่สามคือประสิทธิภาพในการทำงาน การแปลแบบตรงตัวใช้เวลาน้อยกว่าการแปลที่ต้องใช้การตีความหรือการปรับเปลี่ยนที่ซับซ้อน ซึ่งเป็นข้อดีสำหรับงานแปลที่มีข้อจำกัดด้านเวลาหรือมีปริมาณงานมาก โดยเฉพาะเมื่อต้องรักษาคุณภาพในระดับสูง

อย่างไรก็ตาม ในการแปลหนังสือเล่มนี้การแปลแบบตรงตัวไม่ได้เป็นกลวิธีการแปลเดียวที่ใช้ แต่เป็นส่วนหนึ่งของระบบกลวิธีการแปลที่ผู้แปลใช้จัดการกับความซับซ้อนของการแปลข้ามวัฒนธรรม

2. การทับศัพท์ (Transliteration)

การทับศัพท์เป็นกลวิธีการแปลที่นำคำจากภาษาต้นฉบับมาใช้ในภาษาปลายทางโดยการถอดเสียงตามระบบการออกเสียงของภาษาปลายทาง โดยไม่แปลความหมาย กลวิธีนี้มีความสำคัญเป็นพิเศษในการแปลข้ามวัฒนธรรมเนื่องจากช่วยรักษาเอกลักษณ์และความเป็นต้นตอของวัฒนธรรมต้นฉบับตามที่ Newmark (1988) ได้อธิบายไว้ การทับศัพท์เป็นกลยุทธ์ที่สำคัญสำหรับการจัดการกับ "คำศัพท์เฉพาะทางวัฒนธรรม" (culture-specific items) ที่ไม่มีคำเทียบเคียงในภาษาปลายทาง เช่นเดียวกับที่ Venuti (2018) เสนอแนวคิดเรื่องการแปลแบบรักษาลักษณะความเป็นต่างชาติ (foreignization) ซึ่งมุ่งเน้นการคงความแปลกใหม่และความแตกต่างทางวัฒนธรรมไว้ในงานแปลเพื่อให้ผู้อ่านได้สัมผัสกับวัฒนธรรมอื่นอย่างแท้จริง ซึ่งกลยุทธ์นี้สอดคล้องกับ Berman (2021) ที่กล่าวว่า การแปลไม่ใช่แค่การถ่ายทอดความหมาย แต่การแปลต้องเคารพรูปแบบเดิม (form) เพื่อรักษาความเป็นต่างชาติของต้นฉบับ

การวิเคราะห์การแปลจากตัวอย่างในหนังสือ

1) ชื่อบุคคลและตัวละคร

การทับศัพท์ชื่อบุคคลและตัวละครเป็นการรักษาความเป็นไทยในระดับที่ลึกซึ้งที่สุดเนื่องจากชื่อไม่ใช่เพียงป้ายชื่อเท่านั้นแต่ยังสะท้อนความเชื่อ ค่านิยม และภูมิหลังทางสังคมของเจ้าของชื่อ

ตัวอย่างจากบทที่ 1:

ต้นฉบับภาษาไทย (หน้า 24): นางนวลทองสำลีศรีมาลา

ฉบับแปลภาษาอังกฤษ (หน้า 14): Nang Nuan Thong Samlee Sri Mala

ตัวอย่างจากบทที่ 3:

ต้นฉบับภาษาไทย (หน้า 114): พ่อศรีศรัทธา นางนวลทองสำลี แม่ศรีมาลา พ่อเทพสิงห์

ฉบับแปลภาษาอังกฤษ (หน้า 73): Pho Sri Sattha, Nang Nual Thong Samlee, Mae Sri Mala, Pho
Thep Singhon

ในการทับศัพท์ชื่อบุคคลและตัวละคร เช่น "นางนวลทองสำลีศรีมาลา" เป็น "Nang Nuan Thong Samlee Sri Mala" ผู้แปลต้องเจอกับความท้าทายหลายอย่าง ความท้าทายแรกคือการจัดการกับความยาวและความซับซ้อนของชื่อในวัฒนธรรมไทยชื่อที่ยาวและมียอดประกอบหลายส่วนมักสื่อถึงความเป็นเกียรติ สถานะทางสังคม หรือคุณลักษณะเฉพาะ การรักษาความยาวและความซับซ้อนนี้ไว้ช่วยสื่อสารลักษณะเหล่านี้ให้ผู้อ่านได้รับรู้ การทับศัพท์ "นาง" เป็น "Nang" ก็เป็นการตัดสินใจที่สำคัญ ผู้แปลสามารถเลือกแปลเป็น "Lady" หรือ "Mrs." แต่การใช้ "Nang" ช่วยรักษาความเป็นเอกลักษณ์ของคำเรียกขานในวัฒนธรรมไทยในสมัยโบราณ "นาง" ในบริบทของวรรณกรรมไทยมีความหมายที่กว้างกว่าคำเรียกขานทั่วไป มียอดของความเป็นหญิงที่มีเกียรติและสถานะ การทับศัพท์จึงช่วยรักษาความหมายเชิงวัฒนธรรมนี้ไว้ เช่นเดียวกันกับ "พ่อศรีศรัทธา" ที่ถูกทับศัพท์เป็น "Pho Sri Sattha" การใช้ "Pho" แทนการแปลเป็น "Father" หรือ "Mr." ช่วยรักษาความเป็นเอกลักษณ์ของคำเรียกขานที่มีความหมายเฉพาะในวัฒนธรรมไทย "พ่อ" ในบริบทนี้ไม่ได้หมายถึงความสัมพันธ์ทางครอบครัว แต่เป็นคำเรียกขานที่แสดงความเคารพต่อผู้ชายที่มีอายุหรือสถานะ

2) ชื่อสถานที่และภูมิศาสตร์

การทับศัพท์ชื่อสถานที่ช่วยรักษาความเชื่อมโยงกับภูมิศาสตร์และวัฒนธรรมท้องถิ่น ทำให้อ่านสามารถติดตามเส้นทางและสถานที่ในโลกแห่งความเป็นจริงได้

ตัวอย่างจากบทที่ 1:

ต้นฉบับภาษาไทย (หน้า 25): เกาะสีชัง

ฉบับแปลภาษาอังกฤษ (หน้า 14): Koh Si Chang

ตัวอย่างจากบทที่ 3:

ต้นฉบับภาษาไทย (หน้า 123): เขาพับผ้า

ฉบับแปลภาษาอังกฤษ (หน้า 79): Phab Pha mountain

การทับศัพท์ชื่อสถานที่ เช่น "เกาะสีชัง" เป็น "Koh Si Chang" และ "เขาพับผ้า" เป็น "Phab Pha mountain" เป็นกลยุทธ์ที่แตกต่างตามบริบท สำหรับ "เกาะสีชัง" ผู้แปลใช้การทับศัพท์แบบเต็มเนื่องจากเป็นชื่อเกาะที่มีชื่อเสียงและเป็นที่รู้จัก การรักษา "Koh" ไว้ช่วยให้ผู้อ่านเข้าใจว่าเป็นเกาะ ขณะเดียวกันก็รักษาความเป็นเอกลักษณ์ของชื่อไว้ในกรณีของ "เขาพับผ้า" การทับศัพท์เป็น "Phab Pha mountain" เป็นการผสมผสานระหว่างการทับศัพท์และการ

แปล ผู้แปลเลือกทับศัพท์ชื่อเฉพาะ "พับผ้า" แต่เพิ่มคำ "mountain" เพื่อให้ผู้อ่านเข้าใจลักษณะทางภูมิศาสตร์ เพื่อสร้างสมดุลระหว่างการรักษาเอกลักษณ์และการให้ข้อมูลที่จำเป็นแก่ผู้อ่าน

3) ชื่อการแสดงและศิลปวัฒนธรรม

การทับศัพท์ชื่อศิลปะการแสดงเป็นการรักษามรดกทางวัฒนธรรมที่ไม่สามารถแปลความหมายได้อย่างครบถ้วน

ตัวอย่างจากบทที่ 1:

ต้นฉบับภาษาไทย (หน้า 1): โนรา

ฉบับแปลภาษาอังกฤษ (หน้า 1): Nora

ตัวอย่างจากบทที่ 3:

ต้นฉบับภาษาไทย (หน้า 105): โนราโรงครู

ฉบับแปลภาษาอังกฤษ (หน้า 79): Nora Rong Khru

การทับศัพท์ "โนรา" เป็น "Nora" เป็นการตัดสินใจที่มีผลกระทบสูงต่อการรับรู้ของผู้อ่าน เพราะ "โนรา" เป็นชื่อของศิลปะการแสดงที่เฉพาะเจาะจงและไม่มีสิ่งที่เทียบเคียงได้ในวัฒนธรรมตะวันตก การแปลเป็น "Southern Thai folk dance-drama" หรือคำอธิบายที่คล้ายกันจะทำให้สูญเสียความเป็นเอกลักษณ์และอาจสร้างความเข้าใจผิดว่าเป็นศิลปะแบบเดียวกับที่มีในวัฒนธรรมอื่น การทับศัพท์ "โนราโรงครู" เป็น "Nora Rong Khru" เพื่อแสดงให้เห็นถึงการขยายหลักการเดียวกันไปยังชื่อเฉพาะที่ซับซ้อนกว่า "โรงครู" เป็นแนวคิดที่เฉพาะเจาะจงในบริบทของการแสดงไทย หมายถึงการแสดงหรือพิธีกรรมที่เกี่ยวข้องกับการเคารพครู การทับศัพท์ช่วยรักษาความเป็นหน่วยเดียวของแนวคิดนี้ไว้

4) คำเฉพาะทางศาสนาและวัฒนธรรม

การทับศัพท์คำเฉพาะทางศาสนาและวัฒนธรรมช่วยรักษาความศักดิ์สิทธิ์และความลึกซึ้งทางจิตวิญญาณ

ตัวอย่างจากบทที่ 3:

ต้นฉบับภาษาไทย (หน้า 123): ทวดหลักเขต

ฉบับแปลภาษาอังกฤษ (หน้า 80): Thuat Lak Khet

การทับศัพท์ "ทวดหลักเขต" เป็น "Thuat Lak Khet" เป็นการจัดการกับแนวคิดทางศาสนาและความเชื่อที่ซับซ้อน "ทวดหลักเขต" เป็นแนวคิดเฉพาะในความเชื่อพื้นบ้านไทยที่รวมเอาองค์ประกอบของความเชื่อเรื่องผีบรรพบุรุษ การปกป้องอาณาเขต และพิธีกรรมทางศาสนา การพยายามแปลหรืออธิบายด้วยคำอื่นอาจทำให้เกิดการลดทอนหรือการบิดเบือนความหมาย การทับศัพท์ในกรณีนี้ช่วยรักษาความสมบูรณ์ของแนวคิดไว้ ขณะเดียวกันก็เปิดโอกาสให้มีการอธิบายเพิ่มเติมในเนื้อหาหรือเชิงอรรถซึ่งจะช่วยให้ผู้อ่านเข้าใจความหมายและความสำคัญได้อย่างลึกซึ้งกว่าการแปลแบบย่อ ๆ

ผู้แปลมองว่าการใช้การทับศัพท์อย่างสม่ำเสมอตลอดทั้งเอกสารสร้างประสบการณ์การอ่านที่เป็นเอกลักษณ์ ผู้อ่านจะรู้สึกเหมือนได้เข้าไปสู่โลกของวัฒนธรรมไทยโดยตรงแทนที่จะอ่านเกี่ยวกับวัฒนธรรมไทยผ่านมุมมองของวัฒนธรรมตะวันตก การสะสมของคำทับศัพท์สร้างบรรยากาศและความรู้สึกของความเป็นไทยที่แท้จริง อย่างไรก็ตาม

ผู้แปลก็ตระหนักว่าการทับศัพท์อาจสร้างอุปสรรคสำหรับผู้อ่านบางกลุ่ม คำทับศัพท์อาจยากต่อการออกเสียงหรือการจำและอาจทำให้ผู้อ่านรู้สึกท้อแท้ ผู้แปลจึงต้องใชการทับศัพท์อย่างมีดุลยพินิจ และมักจะต้องสนับสนุนด้วยการอธิบายหรือบริบทเพิ่มเติม ในการแปลหนังสือเล่มนี้ผู้แปลรักษาความสม่ำเสมอโดยการทับศัพท์คำเดียวกันด้วยวิธีเดียวกันตลอดทั้งเอกสารเพื่อสร้างความคุ้นเคยและความเชื่อมั่นให้กับผู้อ่าน และผู้แปลพิจารณาความสำคัญทางวัฒนธรรมคำที่มีความสำคัญสูงต่อการเข้าใจวัฒนธรรมควรได้รับการทับศัพท์ในขณะที่คำที่มีความสำคัญน้อยกว่าอาจใช้การแปลหรือการอธิบาย

สรุป

การทับศัพท์นั้นมีความสำคัญเป็นพิเศษในการแปลเอกสารข้ามวัฒนธรรมเนื่องจากช่วยเชื่อมระหว่างสองวัฒนธรรมโดยไม่ทำลายความเป็นเอกลักษณ์ของวัฒนธรรมต้นฉบับ การทับศัพท์เป็นวิธีนำเสนอวัฒนธรรมอื่นในแง่มุมที่เป็นบวกโดยเชิญชวนให้ผู้อ่านเข้ามาเรียนรู้และเข้าใจแทนการทำให้วัฒนธรรมนั้นดูคล้ายกับวัฒนธรรมของตนเอง ในโลกที่มีความหลากหลายทางวัฒนธรรม การทับศัพท์ช่วยส่งเสริมความเข้าใจและความเคารพระหว่างวัฒนธรรม การรักษาคำเฉพาะ แนวคิดเฉพาะ และคำศัพท์เฉพาะไว้ในรูปแบบดั้งเดิมช่วยให้ผู้อ่านตระหนักถึงความซับซ้อนและความงดงามของวัฒนธรรมอื่น การทับศัพท์เป็นเครื่องมือที่มีพลังในการแปลข้ามวัฒนธรรม สามารถสร้างประสบการณ์การอ่านที่อุดมไปด้วยความหมายและความเป็นเอกลักษณ์ ในการแปลหนังสือเกี่ยวกับโนราห์ การทับศัพท์ได้ช่วยรักษาความเป็นไทยไว้ในงานแปล ทำให้ผู้อ่านได้สัมผัสกับความงดงามและความซับซ้อนของวัฒนธรรมไทยอย่างแท้จริง การทับศัพท์จึงไม่ได้เป็นเพียงเทคนิคการแปล แต่เป็นการตัดสินใจเชิงปรัชญาเกี่ยวกับวิธีการนำเสนอและเคารพวัฒนธรรมอื่นในงานแปล

3. การเทียบเคียงวัฒนธรรม (Cultural Equivalence)

การเทียบเคียงวัฒนธรรมเป็นกลวิธีการแปลที่มีความซับซ้อนและต้องอาศัยความเข้าใจลึกซึ้งในทั้งสองวัฒนธรรม ตามแนวคิดของ Newmark (1988) การเทียบเคียงวัฒนธรรมคือการแทนที่องค์ประกอบทางวัฒนธรรมในข้อความต้นฉบับด้วยองค์ประกอบที่มีผลกระทบคล้ายคลึงกันในวัฒนธรรมของผู้อ่าน ขณะที่ Baker (2018) เสนอว่าการเทียบเคียงนี้ไม่ใช่การหาความเหมือนที่สมบูรณ์แบบ แต่เป็นการหาจุดร่วมที่สามารถสื่อสารความหมายและความรู้สึกได้ใกล้เคียงกัน หลักการสำคัญของการเทียบเคียงวัฒนธรรมคือการคำนึงถึงผลกระทบทางวัฒนธรรมมากกว่าการแปลตามตัวอักษร กลวิธีการแปลนี้มุ่งเน้นให้ผู้อ่านปลายทางได้รับประสบการณ์และความเข้าใจที่ใกล้เคียงกับผู้อ่านในวัฒนธรรมต้นฉบับ

การวิเคราะห์การแปลจากตัวอย่างในหนังสือ

1) การเทียบเคียงแนวคิดทางศาสนา

การเทียบเคียงแนวคิดทางศาสนาเป็นหนึ่งในความท้าทายที่ยิ่งใหญ่ที่สุดในการแปลข้ามวัฒนธรรม เนื่องจากแนวคิดทางศาสนามักมีความซับซ้อนและเฉพาะเจาะจงสูง

ตัวอย่างจากบทที่ 1:

ต้นฉบับภาษาไทย (หน้า 3): โนราเป็นการรำเพื่อบูชาเทพเจ้าคือ พระอิศวร พระนารายณ์ และพระพรหมในศาสนาพราหมณ์

ฉบับแปลภาษาอังกฤษ (หน้า 2): Nora is a traditional dance performed to honor the gods Shiva, Vishnu, and Brahma in Brahmanism.

ในการแปล "โนราเป็นการรำเพื่อบูชาเทพเจ้าคือ พระอิศวร พระนารายณ์ และพระพรหมในศาสนาพราหมณ์" เป็น "Nora is a traditional dance performed to honor the gods Shiva, Vishnu, and Brahma in Brahmanism" ผู้แปลได้ใช้กลวิธีการเทียบเคียง จากอาศัยความเข้าใจว่าผู้อ่านภาษาอังกฤษส่วนใหญ่คุ้นเคยกับชื่อเทพเจ้าเหล่านี้ในรูปแบบภาษาสันสกฤตมากกว่าการทับศัพท์จากภาษาไทย การแปล "พระอิศวร" เป็น "Shiva" แม้ว่า "พระอิศวร" จะเป็นการเรียกขานแบบไทยที่มีความเคารพและความเป็นทางการ แต่ "Shiva" เป็นชื่อที่ผู้อ่านสากลรู้จักและเข้าใจ การใช้ชื่อนี้ช่วยให้ผู้อ่านสามารถเชื่อมโยงกับความรู้ที่มีอยู่เกี่ยวกับเทพเจ้าองค์นี้และเข้าใจบทบาทและความสำคัญในบริบทของการแสดงโนรา เช่นเดียวกันกับ "พระนารายณ์" และ "พระพรหม" ที่ผู้แปลแปลเป็น "Vishnu" และ "Brahma" การแปลแบบนี้ไม่เพียงแต่ช่วยให้ผู้อ่านเข้าใจได้ง่าย แต่ยังช่วยให้เข้าใจถึงความเชื่อมโยงระหว่างโนราและระบบความเชื่อที่กว้างขวางกว่า ซึ่งอาจไม่ชัดเจนหากใช้การทับศัพท์ คำว่า "ศาสนาพราหมณ์" ก็ถ่ายทอดเป็น "Brahmanism" ซึ่งคำนี้เป็นการใช้การเทียบเคียงที่ต้องใช้ความระมัดระวัง เพราะคำว่า "Brahmanism" ในภาษาอังกฤษมีความหมายเฉพาะเจาะจงและอาจแตกต่างจากความเข้าใจของ "ศาสนาพราหมณ์" ในบริบทไทย อย่างไรก็ตาม การเลือกคำนี้ช่วยให้ผู้อ่านเข้าใจว่าเป็นระบบความเชื่อที่เกี่ยวข้องกับธรรมเนียมปฏิบัติของชนชั้นพราหมณ์

ตัวอย่างจากบทที่ 4:

ต้นฉบับภาษาไทย (หน้า 155): วันพระหรือวันธรรมะสวณะ

ฉบับแปลภาษาอังกฤษ (หน้า 98): Buddhist holy days

การแปล "วันพระหรือวันธรรมะสวณะ" เป็น "Buddhist holy days" เป็นการใช้การเทียบเคียงวัฒนธรรมในระดับที่ซับซ้อนเพราะผู้แปลต้องจัดการแนวคิดที่มีความเฉพาะเจาะจงในพุทธศาสนาไทยและหาวิธีสื่อสารให้ผู้อ่านที่อาจมีพื้นฐานทางศาสนาที่แตกต่างกันเข้าใจ การใช้ "Buddhist holy days" เป็นการเทียบเคียงที่กว้างและปลอดภัย ช่วยให้ผู้อ่านเข้าใจว่าเป็นวันที่มีความสำคัญทางศาสนา

2) การเทียบเคียงสถานะทางสังคม

การเทียบเคียงสถานะทางสังคมเป็นความท้าทายสำคัญเนื่องจากโครงสร้างทางสังคมแต่ละวัฒนธรรมมีความแตกต่างกัน

ตัวอย่างจากบทที่ 1:

ต้นฉบับภาษาไทย (หน้า 29): สถานะทางสังคมของโนราใหญ่ จัดว่าเป็น "ผู้นำที่ไม่เป็นทางการของชุมชน"

ฉบับแปลภาษาอังกฤษ (หน้า 17): The social status of a chief Nora is regarded as an
"informal leader of the community."

จากแนวคิดเรื่องภาวะผู้นำที่มีลักษณะเฉพาะในสังคมไทย การแปล "โนราใหญ่" เป็น "chief Nora" เป็นการเทียบเคียงที่ช่วยให้ผู้อ่านเข้าใจลำดับชั้นและความสำคัญทางสังคม คำว่า "Chief" ในภาษาอังกฤษสื่อถึงผู้นำที่มีอำนาจและความรับผิดชอบซึ่งสอดคล้องกับบทบาทของ "โนราใหญ่" ในชุมชน การรักษาวลี "ผู้นำที่ไม่เป็นทางการของชุมชน" เป็น "informal leader of the community" ช่วยให้อ่านเข้าใจความซับซ้อนของบทบาทนี้ แนวคิดของ "informal leader" เป็นที่เข้าใจในวัฒนธรรมตะวันตก หมายถึงผู้มีอิทธิพลและความเคารพจากชุมชนแต่ไม่ได้รับการแต่งตั้งอย่างเป็นทางการจากรัฐบาลหรือสถาบันอื่น

3) การเทียบเคียงหน่วยวัด: การรักษาสัดส่วนและความหมาย

การเทียบเคียงหน่วยวัดเป็นกรณีที่ดีเหมือนจะง่ายแต่จริง ๆ แล้วมีความซับซ้อนในเรื่องของบริบททางวัฒนธรรม

ตัวอย่างจากบทที่ 2:

ต้นฉบับภาษาไทย (หน้า 62): เขตเมืองอุดรพิญจากว้างถึงห้าร้อยพันวา

ฉบับแปลภาษาอังกฤษ (หน้า 38): a city called Udon Binja, which stretched five hundred
thousand fathoms in width.

การแปล "เขตเมืองอุดรพิญจากว้างถึงห้าร้อยพันวา" เป็น "a city called Udon Binja, which stretched five hundred thousand fathoms in area" เป็นความท้าทายในการจัดการกับหน่วยวัดที่เฉพาะเจาะจง ผู้แปลตัดสินใจระหว่างการแปลงเป็นหน่วยวัดสากล การทับศัพท์ หรือการหาหน่วยวัดที่เทียบเคียงได้ ผู้แปลตัดสินใจแปล "วา" เป็น "fathoms" เพราะ "fathom" เป็นหน่วยวัดแบบดั้งเดิมที่ใช้วัดความลึกหรือความยาวโดยเฉพาะในบริบททางทะเล มีค่าเท่ากับประมาณ 6 ฟุตหรือใกล้เคียงกับ "วา" ที่มีค่าประมาณ 2 เมตร การใช้ "fathoms" แทนการแปลงเป็น "meters" หรือ "yards" จะช่วยรักษาความรู้สึกของการวัดแบบดั้งเดิมและเหมาะสมกับบริบทของวรรณกรรมไทย และยังช่วยรักษาความรู้สึกของความยิ่งใหญ่และความเป็นนิทานที่อยู่ในต้นฉบับ "Five hundred thousand fathoms" ฟังดูยิ่งใหญ่และน่าประทับใจ เหมาะสมกับลักษณะของวรรณกรรมที่มีการพรรณนาถึงเมืองในนิทาน

สรุป

การใช้การเทียบเคียงวัฒนธรรมมีข้อดีหลายอย่าง อย่างแรก ผู้อ่านสามารถเข้าใจเนื้อหาได้อย่างรวดเร็วและมีประสิทธิภาพมากขึ้นเนื่องจากสามารถเชื่อมโยงกับความรู้และประสบการณ์ที่มีอยู่แล้ว การที่ผู้อ่านเข้าใจว่า "Shiva" เป็นใครจะช่วยให้พวกเขาเข้าใจบทบาทและความสำคัญของการบูชาในโนราได้ดีขึ้น อย่างที่สอง การเทียบเคียงช่วยสร้างสะพานเชื่อมระหว่างสองวัฒนธรรม ผู้อ่านจะเริ่มเห็นความคล้ายคลึงและจุดเชื่อมต่อระหว่างวัฒนธรรมไทยและวัฒนธรรมที่พวกเขาคุ้นเคย สิ่งนี้ช่วยลดความรู้สึกแปลกแยกและเพิ่มความสนใจในการเรียนรู้เพิ่มเติม อย่างที่สาม การเทียบเคียงที่เหมาะสมช่วยให้ผู้อ่านเข้าใจบริบททางสังคมและวัฒนธรรมที่กว้างขวางขึ้น เมื่อเข้าใจว่า "โนราใหญ่" เป็น

"informal leader" ผู้อ่านจะเข้าใจโครงสร้างทางสังคมและความสำคัญของศิลปะการแสดงในชุมชนไทยได้ดีขึ้น ดังนั้น การเทียบเคียงวัฒนธรรมเป็นเครื่องมือที่มีค่าในการแปลข้ามวัฒนธรรมเพราะสามารถสร้างความเข้าใจระหว่าง วัฒนธรรมและทำให้นึกหาเข้าถึงผู้อ่านได้ดีขึ้น

4. การปรับโครงสร้างภาษา/การเปลี่ยนชนิดคำ (Transposition)

การปรับโครงสร้างภาษาเป็นกลวิธีที่ต้องอาศัยความเข้าใจลึกซึ้งเกี่ยวกับธรรมชาติของทั้งภาษาต้นฉบับและ ภาษาปลายทาง ในการแปลหนังสือเกี่ยวกับโนราเล่มนี้ ผู้แปลได้ประยุกต์ใช้แนวคิดของ Vinay and Darbelnet (2000) โดยตระหนักว่าการปรับโครงสร้างไม่ได้เป็นเพียงการจัดการกับปัญหาไวยากรณ์แต่เป็นการสร้างสรรค์วิธีการ สื่อสารที่เป็นธรรมชาติและมีประสิทธิภาพในภาษาปลายทาง หลักการสำคัญที่ผู้แปลใช้ในการตัดสินใจปรับโครงสร้าง คือ การเข้าใจว่าภาษาไทยและภาษาอังกฤษมีแบบแผนในการจัดระเบียบข้อมูลและการแสดงความสัมพันธ์ระหว่าง แนวคิดที่แตกต่างกัน การยึดติดกับโครงสร้างของภาษาไทยอาจจะทำให้งานแปลออกมาดูไม่เป็นธรรมชาติ หรือถ้า ปรับเปลี่ยนมากเกินไปก็อาจทำให้สูญเสียลีลาหรือความหมายเชิงลึกของต้นฉบับ การปรับโครงสร้างต้องมีเป้าหมายที่ ชัดเจนคือการทำให้การสื่อสารมีประสิทธิภาพมากขึ้นโดยไม่เปลี่ยนแปลงความหมายหลักหรือเจตนาของผู้เขียน

การวิเคราะห์การแปลจากตัวอย่างในหนังสือ

1) การปรับเปลี่ยนตำแหน่งของคำขยายและโครงสร้างประโยค

การปรับเปลี่ยนตำแหน่งของคำขยายเป็นการปรับโครงสร้างที่พบได้บ่อยในการแปลระหว่างภาษาไทยและ ภาษาอังกฤษเนื่องจากทั้งสองภาษามีรูปแบบการวางคำขยายที่ต่างกัน

ตัวอย่างจากบทที่ 1:

ต้นฉบับภาษาไทย (หน้า 23): ฝ่ายนายไชยกระทาเมื่อรู้ความว่าจะต้องราชทัณฑ์จึงไหวตัวทันเลยหนีไปเสีย

ฉบับแปลภาษาอังกฤษ (หน้า 14): Mr. Chai Chay Kratha, realizing he was about to face punishment, quickly escaped.

ในต้นฉบับภาษาไทย โครงสร้างเป็นไปตามรูปแบบ [ประธาน] + [เหตุการณ์แทรก] + [กริยาหลัก]

"ฝ่ายนายไชยกระทา" (ประธาน)

"เมื่อรู้ความว่าจะต้องราชทัณฑ์" (อนุประโยคแสดงเหตุ)

"จึงไหวตัวทันเลยหนีไปเสีย" (กริยาหลัก)

ในฉบับแปลภาษาอังกฤษ โครงสร้างเป็นไปตามรูปแบบ [ประธาน] + [participle phrase] + [กริยาหลัก]

"Mr. Chai Chay Kratha" (ประธาน)

"realizing he was about to face punishment" (participle phrase)

"quickly escaped" (กริยาหลัก)

ในการแปล "ฝ่ายนายไชยกระหาเมื่อรู้ความว่าจะต้องราชทัณฑ์จึงไหวตัวทันเลยหนีไปเสีย" เป็น "Mr. Chai Chay Kratha, realizing he was about to face punishment, quickly escaped" ผู้แปลใช้การปรับโครงสร้างในหลายระดับเพื่อให้งานแปลมีความชัดเจนและเป็นธรรมชาติในภาษาอังกฤษ การปรับเปลี่ยนที่สำคัญคือการจัดระเบียบข้อมูลใหม่ในต้นฉบับ การกล่าวถึง "ฝ่ายนายไชยกระหา" มาก่อน ตามด้วยสาเหตุ "เมื่อรู้ความว่าจะต้องราชทัณฑ์" และผลลัพธ์ "จึงไหวตัวทันเลยหนีไปเสีย" ในงานแปล ผู้แปลได้จัดระเบียบใหม่โดยเริ่มต้นด้วยตัวละคร ตามด้วยสาเหตุ ในรูปแบบ participial phrase และจบด้วยการกระทำ การใช้ "realizing he was about to face punishment" แทนการแปลตรงตัวว่า "when he knew that he would be punished" ช่วยทำให้ประโยคกระชับและมีความเป็นธรรมชาติมากขึ้น การใช้ participial phrase เป็นรูปแบบที่นิยมในภาษาอังกฤษเพื่อแสดงความสัมพันธ์เชิงเหตุผลและช่วยให้การอ่านลื่นไหล การแปล "ไหวตัวทันเลยหนีไปเสีย" เป็น "quickly escaped" ก็เป็นการปรับโครงสร้างที่สำคัญ เพราะแทนที่จะพยายามรักษาทุกองค์ประกอบของต้นฉบับ ผู้แปลเอาแต่แก่นใจของการกระทำมาใช้ "quickly escaped" ที่สื่อถึงความรวดเร็วและการหลบหนีซึ่งครอบคลุมความหมายของ "ไหวตัวทัน" (ตอบสนองอย่างรวดเร็ว) และ "หนีไปเสีย" (หลบหนีไป)

2) การรวมและแยกประโยคเพื่อประสิทธิภาพการสื่อสาร

การรวมและแยกประโยคเป็นกลวิธีที่ผู้แปลใช้เพื่อปรับให้เหมาะกับบรรทัดฐานการเขียนของภาษาปลายทาง

ตัวอย่างจากบทที่ 2:

ต้นฉบับภาษาไทย (หน้า 60): การประกอบพิธีกรรมตั้งบ้านตั้งเมืองใช้พื้นที่กลางโรงโนรา โดยโนราใหญ่ นั่งบนสาตคล้า

ฉบับแปลภาษาอังกฤษ (หน้า 37): The Announcement ritual takes place in the center of the Nora pavilion. The chief Nora sits on Sad Khla (a mat)

การแปล "การประกอบพิธีกรรมตั้งบ้านตั้งเมืองใช้พื้นที่กลางโรงโนรา โดยโนราใหญ่นั่งบนสาตคล้า" เป็นการปรับโครงสร้างในรูปแบบการแยกประโยค ต้นฉบับนำเสนอข้อมูลในประโยคเดียวที่มีข้อมูลหลายชั้น ส่วนงานแปลแยกเป็นสองประโยคคือ "The Announcement ritual takes place in the center of the Nora pavilion. The chief Nora sits on Sad Khla (a mat)" การตัดสินใจแยกประโยคมาจากการวิเคราะห์ว่าข้อมูลในต้นฉบับมีสองประเด็นหลัก คือ สถานที่จัดพิธีและตำแหน่งของโนราใหญ่ ในภาษาอังกฤษการนำเสนอข้อมูลสองประเด็นในประโยคเดียวอาจทำให้เกิดความสับสนโดยเฉพาะเมื่อมีการใช้ preposition และ participial phrases หลายตัว ประโยคแรก "The Announcement ritual takes place in the center of the Nora pavilion" ให้ข้อมูลหลักเกี่ยวกับสถานที่จัดพิธี ประโยคที่สอง "The chief Nora sits on Sad Khla (a mat)" ให้รายละเอียดเกี่ยวกับการจัดตำแหน่งของบุคคลสำคัญ การแยกนี้ช่วยให้ผู้อ่านสามารถประมวลข้อมูลได้ง่ายขึ้นและสร้างภาพในใจได้ชัดเจนกว่า การแปล "ตั้งบ้านตั้งเมือง" เป็น "Announcement ritual" เป็นการปรับโครงสร้างที่สำคัญเช่นกัน ผู้แปลเลือกใช้ชื่อที่สามารถอธิบายหน้าที่และลักษณะของพิธีกรรมแทน ที่จะแปลตรงตัวซึ่งอาจไม่มีความหมายในภาษาอังกฤษ

3) การเปลี่ยนประเภทคำเพื่อความเป็นธรรมชาติ

การแปล "โนราในสมัยก่อนนิยมเล่นเรื่องนี้กันมาก จึงเรียกตัวละครที่เล่นเป็นพรานว่า 'พรานบุญ'" เป็น "It is presumed that the traditional Nora previously included many performances of this story, leading to the character being called 'Pran Boon'" เป็นการปรับโครงสร้างที่ซับซ้อนและมีหลายมิติ การเปลี่ยนจาก "นิยมเล่น" (กริยา) เป็น "included many performances" (คำนาม + คำนาม) เป็นการปรับโครงสร้างที่สำคัญ ในภาษาไทย คำว่า "นิยมเล่น" สื่อถึงความชื่นชอบในการแสดง แต่ในภาษาอังกฤษการใช้ "included many performances" สื่อสารความหมายเดียวกันได้อย่างเป็นธรรมชาติและมีความเป็นทางการมากกว่า และการใช้ "It is presumed that..." แทนการเริ่มต้นด้วย "โนราในสมัยก่อน" เป็นการปรับโครงสร้างเพื่อให้สอดคล้องกับรูปแบบการเขียนเชิงวิชาการในภาษาอังกฤษ รูปแบบนี้ช่วยแสดงให้เห็นว่าข้อมูลที่นำเสนอเป็นการอนุมานจากหลักฐานที่มี ไม่ใช่ข้อเท็จจริงที่แน่นอน

ตัวอย่างจากบทที่ 3:

ต้นฉบับภาษาไทย (หน้า 190): ในปัจจุบันมีการพัฒนาปรับปรุงการรำเป็นแบบหมู่คณะเรียกว่า 'การรำชุด' โดยใช้นางรำจำนวน 5-9 คน ต่อการแสดง 1 ฉาก

ฉบับแปลภาษาอังกฤษ (หน้า 120): In the present day, the Nora dance has evolved into a group performance known as "Group Dance," which 5-9 dancers perform together in each scene.

การแปล "ในปัจจุบันมีการพัฒนาปรับปรุงการรำเป็นแบบหมู่คณะเรียกว่า 'การรำชุด' โดยใช้นางรำจำนวน 5-9 คน ต่อการแสดง 1 ฉาก" เป็น "In the present day, the Nora dance has evolved into a group performance known as 'Group Dance,' where 5-9 dancers perform together in each scene" เป็นการปรับโครงสร้างเพื่อความชัดเจนและความเป็นธรรมชาติ ซึ่งมีการปรับโครงสร้างดังนี้

การเปลี่ยนโครงสร้างประธาน

ต้นฉบับ: "มีการพัฒนาปรับปรุง" (โครงสร้างไม่มีประธานชัดเจน)

งานแปล: "the Nora dance has evolved" (ประธานชัดเจน + กริยา active voice)

การเปลี่ยนประเภทคำสำคัญ

"การพัฒนาปรับปรุง" (คำนามแสดงการกระทำ) → "has evolved" (กริยาแสดงการเปลี่ยนแปลง)

"การรำ" (คำนาม) → "dance" (คำนามที่ใช้เป็นประธาน)

"โดยใช้" (วิธีการ) → "where" (อนุประโยคคุณศัพท์)

การปรับโครงสร้างข้อมูล

- ต้นฉบับแยกข้อมูลเป็นหลายส่วน
- งานแปลรวมข้อมูลให้เป็นประโยคที่มีความต่อเนื่อง

การเปลี่ยนจาก "มีการพัฒนาปรับปรุง" เป็น "has evolved" เป็นการปรับโครงสร้างที่สำคัญเพราะการใช้ "has evolved" เป็นการใช้ present perfect tense ที่เหมาะสมกับการอธิบายการเปลี่ยนแปลงที่เกิดขึ้นในอดีตและมีผลต่อปัจจุบัน นอกจากนี้ "evolved" ยังมีนัยของการพัฒนาอย่างเป็นธรรมชาติและต่อเนื่อง นอกจากนี้ การจัดระเบียบข้อมูลใหม่โดยใช้ "where" clause ก็ช่วยให้รายละเอียดเกี่ยวกับจำนวนนักแสดงมีความเชื่อมโยงที่ชัดเจนกับแนวคิดหลัก และการใช้ "where 5-9 dancers perform together in each scene" ช่วยให้ผู้อ่านเข้าใจความสัมพันธ์ระหว่างจำนวนนักแสดงและรูปแบบการแสดงได้ดีกว่าการแปลตรงตัว

สรุป

การใช้การปรับโครงสร้างช่วยให้งานแปลมีความเป็นธรรมชาติและลื่นไหลในภาษาอังกฤษ ผู้อ่านอ่านได้อย่างต่อเนื่องโดยไม่รู้สึกรู้ว่าเป็นงานแปลซึ่งช่วยให้การสื่อสารมีประสิทธิภาพมากขึ้นและช่วยให้ผู้อ่านเข้าใจเนื้อหาได้ง่ายและรวดเร็วขึ้น การจัดระเบียบข้อมูลใหม่และการใช้โครงสร้างที่เหมาะสมกับภาษาอังกฤษช่วยลดภาระในการประมวลผลของผู้อ่านและช่วยรักษาเจตนาและความหมายของต้นฉบับไว้แม้ว่ารูปแบบจะเปลี่ยนไปแต่แก่นใจของข้อมูลและความสัมพันธ์ระหว่างแนวคิดต่าง ๆ ยังคงถูกถ่ายทอดได้อย่างครบถ้วน การปรับโครงสร้างภาษาเป็นเครื่องมือที่มีพลังในการแปลข้ามวัฒนธรรมเพราะช่วยสร้างงานแปลที่เป็นธรรมชาติ ชัดเจนและมีประสิทธิภาพ

5. การขยายความ (Amplification)

การขยายความเป็นการเพิ่มรายละเอียดที่ไม่ได้ระบุในต้นฉบับเพื่อช่วยให้ผู้อ่านในภาษาปลายทางเข้าใจได้ดียิ่งขึ้น เป็นกลวิธีที่ต้องอาศัยความรอบคอบและดุลยพินิจสูง ในการแปลหนังสือเล่มนี้ผู้แปลได้ประยุกต์ใช้แนวคิดของ Vinay & Darbelnet (2000) โดยตระหนักว่าการขยายความไม่ได้เป็นการเพิ่มข้อมูลโดยพลการแต่เป็นการเติมเต็มช่องว่างความเข้าใจที่เกิดขึ้นจากความแตกต่างทางวัฒนธรรมและบริบท หลักการสำคัญที่ผู้แปลใช้เพื่อตัดสินใจขยายความ คือการประเมินระดับความรู้และความคาดหวังของผู้อ่านเป้าหมาย ผู้อ่านภาษาอังกฤษที่อ่านเกี่ยวกับวัฒนธรรมไทยมักไม่มีความรู้พื้นฐานเกี่ยวกับแนวคิด วัตถุ หรือพิธีกรรมที่เฉพาะเจาะจง การขยายความจึงเป็นเครื่องมือสำคัญในการทำให้เนื้อหาเข้าถึงได้และมีความหมาย การขยายความต้องมีเป้าหมายที่ชัดเจนไม่ใช่การอธิบายทุกสิ่งอย่างละเอียด แต่เป็นการเลือกสรรข้อมูลที่สำคัญเพื่อให้ผู้อ่านเข้าใจบริบท ความสำคัญ และบทบาทของสิ่งที่กำลังกล่าวถึง

การวิเคราะห์การแปลจากตัวอย่างในหนังสือ

1) การเพิ่มเชิงอรรถ: การอธิบายเชิงลึกโดยไม่รบกวนเนื้อหาหลัก

การใช้เชิงอรรถเป็นเครื่องมือที่มีประสิทธิภาพในการให้ข้อมูลเพิ่มเติมโดยไม่ทำให้เนื้อหาหลักขาดความลื่นไหล ผู้แปลสามารถคงคำเฉพาะทางวัฒนธรรมไว้ในข้อความหลักแล้วอธิบายรายละเอียดในเชิงอรรถ

ตัวอย่างจากบทที่ 1:

ต้นฉบับภาษาไทย (หน้า 2): นาง

ฉบับแปลภาษาอังกฤษ (หน้า 2): Nang

เชิงอรรถ: Nang in Thai is used as an honorific or a formal title, primarily to refer to a woman of nobility, beauty, or importance.

ในการแปลคำว่า "นาง" ผู้แปลเลือกใช้การทับศัพท์เป็น "Nang" แล้วเพิ่มเชิงอรรถว่า "Nang in Thai is used as an honorific or a formal title, primarily to refer to a woman of nobility, beauty, or importance" การใช้เชิงอรรถในกรณีนี้มีเหตุผลหลายประการ ประการแรก "นาง" เป็นคำที่มีความซับซ้อนทางวัฒนธรรมและไม่สามารถแปลได้ด้วยคำเดียวในภาษาอังกฤษ การแปลเป็น "Lady" หรือ "Mrs." จะทำให้สูญเสียความหมายเชิงวัฒนธรรมที่สำคัญ ประการที่สอง การทับศัพท์โดยไม่มีการอธิบายจะทำให้ผู้อ่านสับสน ประการที่สาม การอธิบายในเชิงอรรถช่วยให้ผู้อ่านเข้าใจบริบทการใช้งานและความสำคัญของคำนี้ เชิงอรรถนี้ให้ข้อมูลสามอย่างสำคัญ คือลักษณะการใช้งาน (คำยกย่องหรือคำนำหน้าที่เป็นทางการ) กลุ่มเป้าหมาย (ผู้หญิง) และคุณลักษณะที่เกี่ยวข้อง (ความสูงศักดิ์ ความงาม หรือความสำคัญ) ข้อมูลเหล่านี้ช่วยให้ผู้อ่านเข้าใจว่าเมื่อเห็นคำ "Nang" ในเนื้อหา พวกเขาจะเข้าใจว่าเป็นการอ้างถึงสตรีที่มีความสำคัญหรือสถานะพิเศษ

ตัวอย่างจากบทที่ 2:

ต้นฉบับภาษาไทย (หน้า 63): เบญจางคประดิษฐ์

ฉบับแปลภาษาอังกฤษ (หน้า 39): The Benjangkhapradit bow

เชิงอรรถ: The Benjangkhapradit bow is a special type of bow that is more beautiful and intricate than a regular bow...

การแปล "เบญจางคประดิษฐ์" เป็นการขยายความในรูปแบบที่แตกต่าง ผู้แปลเลือกแปลเป็น "The Benjangkhapradit bow" และเพิ่มเชิงอรรถว่า "The Benjangkhapradit bow is a special type of bow that is more beautiful and intricate than a regular bow..." การแปลนี้ก็เพื่อสร้างสมดุลระหว่างการรักษาเอกลักษณ์และการให้ข้อมูล

2) การเพิ่มข้อมูลในวงเล็บเพื่อชี้แจงทันที

ตัวอย่างจากบทที่ 2:

ต้นฉบับภาษาไทย (หน้า 53): จากนั้นโนราใหญ่ นำ "สาตคล้า" มาปูหน้าโรงโนรา

ฉบับแปลภาษาอังกฤษ (หน้า 33): Following this, the chief Nora will use "Sad Khla (a mat)" to lay out in front of the Nora stage

ตัวอย่างจากบทที่ 3:

ต้นฉบับภาษาไทย (หน้า 101): ฉี่ยนครุ

ฉบับแปลภาษาอังกฤษ (หน้า 47): Chian Khru (a ceremonial object used for rituals)

การจัดการกับ "สาตคล้า" ในประโยค " จากนั้นโนราใหญ่ นำ 'สาตคล้า' มาปูหน้าโรงโนรา " ผู้แปลเลือกใช้รูปแบบ "Sad Khla (a mat)" แทนการใช้เชิงอรรถเพราะเหตุผลจากลักษณะของการใช้งาน กล่าวคือ เมื่อข้อมูลที่ต้องเพิ่มความสั้นและตรงไปตรงมา การใส่ในวงเล็บจะมีประสิทธิภาพมากกว่าการใช้เชิงอรรถ "(a mat)" ให้ข้อมูลพื้นฐาน

ที่จำเป็นในการเข้าใจการกระทำ ผู้อ่านสามารถเข้าใจทันทีว่า "สาตคล้า" เป็นอะไรและใช้ทำอะไร การอธิบายนี้ช่วยให้ผู้อ่านสามารถจินตนาการถึงการกระทำและเข้าใจขั้นตอนในพิธีกรรมได้ดีขึ้น เช่นเดียวกันกับ "ฉีเยนครู" ที่ผู้แปลอธิบายเป็น "Chian Khru (a ceremonial object used for rituals)" การอธิบายให้ข้อมูลสองอย่างสำคัญคือ ลักษณะของวัตถุและการใช้งาน ข้อมูลนี้ช่วยให้ผู้อ่านเข้าใจบริบทและความสำคัญของวัตถุนั้นในพิธีกรรม

ตัวอย่างจากบทที่ 3:

ต้นฉบับภาษาไทย (หน้า 108): วิสุทธิเทวดา ได้แก่ พระปัจเจกพุทธเจ้า

ฉบับแปลภาษาอังกฤษ (หน้า 69): Sublime Deities, this group includes the Paccekabuddhas
(solitary enlightened ones)

การแปลกับ "วิสุทธิเทวดา ได้แก่ พระปัจเจกพุทธเจ้า" เป็น "Sublime Deities, this group includes the Paccekabuddhas (solitary enlightened ones)" เป็นการให้การขยายความในระดับที่ซับซ้อน ผู้แปลต้องแปลแนวคิดทางศาสนาที่มีความเฉพาะเจาะจงสูง การแปล "พระปัจเจกพุทธเจ้า" เป็น "Paccekabuddhas" เป็นการใช้ศัพท์เทคนิคที่ยอมรับในการศึกษาพุทธศาสตร์ แต่การเพิ่ม "(solitary enlightened ones)" ช่วยให้ผู้อ่านที่ไม่คุ้นเคยกับศัพท์เทคนิคสามารถเข้าใจแก่นใจของแนวคิดได้ "Solitary enlightened ones" สื่อถึงลักษณะเฉพาะของปัจเจกพุทธะที่บรรลุนิพพานด้วยตนเองและไม่สอนผู้อื่น

3) การเพิ่มข้อมูลภูมิศาสตร์

การเพิ่มข้อมูลภูมิศาสตร์เป็นรูปแบบการขยายความที่ช่วยให้ผู้อ่านเข้าใจบริบทเชิงพื้นที่และสามารถเชื่อมโยงกับความรู้ที่มีอยู่

ตัวอย่างจากบทที่ 3:

ต้นฉบับภาษาไทย (หน้า 123): ทวดอ่างทอง มีรูปร่างเป็นจระเข้ สิงสถิตอยู่ที่น้ำตกอ่างทอง อำเภอ

สิเกา จังหวัดตรัง

ฉบับแปลภาษาอังกฤษ (หน้า 79): Thuat Ang Thong, he appears as a crocodile, dwelling at
Ang Thong Waterfall in Sikao District, Trang Province,
southern Thailand.

การแปล "ทวดอ่างทอง" เป็นการให้การขยายความเพื่อให้ข้อมูลบริบทที่สำคัญ ต้นฉบับระบุว่า "ทวดอ่างทอง มีรูปร่างเป็นจระเข้ สิงสถิตอยู่ที่น้ำตกอ่างทอง อำเภอสิเกา จังหวัดตรัง" ผู้แปลขยายเป็น "Thuat Ang Thong, he appears as a crocodile, dwelling at Ang Thong Waterfall in Sikao District, Trang Province, southern Thailand" การเพิ่ม "southern Thailand" เป็นการขยายความเพื่อเพิ่มความเข้าใจให้ผู้อ่านต่างชาติเพราะการทราบว่า "ตรัง" อยู่ในภาคใต้ของประเทศไทยจะช่วยให้พวกเขาเข้าใจบริบทภูมิศาสตร์และอาจเชื่อมโยงกับความรู้อื่น ๆ ที่พวกเขามีเกี่ยวกับภาคใต้ของไทย การเพิ่มข้อมูลนี้ไม่ทำให้เนื้อหาหนักขึ้นมากมายแต่ให้บริบทที่จำเป็นสำหรับการเข้าใจ การรักษาโครงสร้างของที่อยู่ "Ang Thong Waterfall in Sikao District, Trang Province" ช่วยให้ผู้อ่านเข้าใจระบบการปกครองและการแบ่งเขตของไทยซึ่งอาจเป็นประโยชน์ในการเข้าใจเนื้อหาส่วนอื่น ๆ

สรุป

การขยายความเป็นเครื่องมือที่มีค่าในการแปลข้ามวัฒนธรรม ช่วยสร้างสะพานความเข้าใจระหว่างวัฒนธรรม และทำให้เนื้อหาเข้าถึงผู้อ่านได้ง่ายขึ้น ในการแปลหนังสือเล่มนี้การขยายความจึงช่วยให้ผู้อ่านเข้าใจและชื่นชมความซับซ้อนและความงดงามของวรรณกรรมไทยได้อย่างลึกซึ้ง

6. การแปลแบบตีความ (Interpretive Translation)

การแปลแบบตีความเป็นกลวิธีการแปลที่ทำทลายและซับซ้อนที่สุดในบรรดาวิธีต่าง ๆ เนื่องจากต้องอาศัยความเข้าใจลึกซึ้งไม่เพียงแคในระดับคำศัพท์และโครงสร้างไวยากรณ์ แต่รวมถึงบริบททางวัฒนธรรม สังคมและความหมายแฝงที่อยู่เบื้องหลังข้อความ ตามแนวคิดของ Lederer (2014) การแปลแบบตีความมีพื้นฐานมาจาก "Interpretive Model" ซึ่งเสนอว่าการแปลที่มีประสิทธิภาพไม่ใช้การถ่ายทอดคำหรือโครงสร้างภาษา แต่เป็นการถ่ายทอด "ความหมาย" (sense) ที่ผู้เขียนต้องการสื่อสาร

การวิเคราะห์การแปลจากตัวอย่างในหนังสือ

1) การตีความสำนวนและการแสดงลักษณะนิสัย

ตัวอย่างจากบทที่ 2:

ต้นฉบับภาษาไทย (หน้า 48): เป็นคนสับปรับ

ฉบับแปลภาษาอังกฤษ (หน้า 30): someone who is unreliable," which means they are fickle, untrustworthy.

คำว่า "สับปรับ" เป็นสำนวนภาษาไทยที่มีความซับซ้อนและไม่มีคำเทียบเคียงตรง ๆ ในภาษาอังกฤษ การแปลแบบตีความในกรณีนี้ ผู้แปลมีกระบวนการคิดผ่านขั้นตอนต่าง ๆ ดังนี้

ขั้นที่ 1: การทำความเข้าใจความหมาย คำว่า "สับปรับ" ในบริบทไทยหมายถึงคนที่มีพฤติกรรมไม่นั่นนอน เปลี่ยนใจเปลี่ยนความคิดง่าย ไม่สามารถไว้วางใจได้ ขาดความมั่นคงในการตัดสินใจ

ขั้นที่ 2: การคลายออกจากรูปแบบภาษาไทย ผู้แปลต้องหลุดพ้นจากคำว่า "สับปรับ" และมองไปที่แก่นแท้ของความหมาย คือ ลักษณะนิสัยของคนที่ไม่น่าเชื่อถือ

ขั้นที่ 3: การแสดงออกในภาษาอังกฤษ ผู้แปลเลือกใช้ "unreliable" เป็นคำหลัก แล้วขยายความด้วย "fickle, untrustworthy" เพื่อให้ครอบคลุมความหมายทั้งหมด ผู้แปลใช้คำว่า "unreliable" เป็นคำที่สื่อแก่นใจของ "สับปรับ" แล้วขยายความเพิ่มเติมด้วยคำว่า "fickle, untrustworthy" เพื่อช่วยให้ผู้อ่านเข้าใจมิติต่าง ๆ ของลักษณะนิสัยนี้โดยไม่ได้พยายามหาคำที่แปลว่า "สับปรับ" โดยตรง

2) การตีความแนวคิดที่เกี่ยวข้องกับปรากฏการณ์ธรรมชาติ

ตัวอย่างจากบทที่ 2:

ต้นฉบับภาษาไทย (หน้า 49): เดือน 3 ไฟกา เดือน 5 ไฟลามทุ่ง

ฉบับแปลภาษาอังกฤษ (หน้า 30): Month 3 is fire from the earth, Month 5 is fire burning fields.

ตัวอย่างนี้ผู้แปลต้องตีความแบบที่ต้องอาศัยความเข้าใจเรื่องวัฒนธรรมเกษตรกรรมและความเชื่อเรื่องธรรมชาติ ผู้แปลทำความเข้าใจบริบทด้วยการหาข้อมูลก่อนว่า "ไฟกา" เป็นปรากฏการณ์ที่เกิดขึ้นในช่วงฤดูแล้งเมื่อดิน

แห่งแตกจนเกิดแสงไฟหรือความร้อนขึ้นจากดิน ส่วน "ไฟลุ่มทุ่ง" เป็นการเผาทุ่งนาหลังการเก็บเกี่ยวหรือไฟป่าที่ลุกลามไปตามทุ่งหญ้า ผู้แปลตีความ "ไฟกา" → "fire from the earth" การตีความจะช่วยให้ผู้อ่านเข้าใจว่าเป็นไฟที่เกิดจากธรรมชาติของดิน และตีความ "ไฟลุ่มทุ่ง" → "fire burning fields" เพราะการตีความนี้สื่อถึงไฟที่แพร่กระจายไปตามพื้นที่เกษตร การตีความช่วยให้ผู้อ่านที่ไม่คุ้นเคยกับวัฒนธรรมเกษตรกรรมไทยเข้าใจปรากฏการณ์เหล่านี้ ทั้งช่วยรักษาความเชื่อมโยงกับฤดูกาลและวัฏจักรการเกษตรและยังแสดงให้เห็นถึงความรู้เรื่องธรรมชาติของคนไทยโบราณ

3) การตีความแนวคิดทางจิตวิญญาณและความเชื่อ

ตัวอย่างจากบทที่ 2:

ต้นฉบับภาษาไทย (หน้า 71): การประทับทรง หรือ "การจับลง" คือ ภาวะที่มนุษย์ถูกวิญญาณ

ประเภทใดประเภทหนึ่งเข้าสิงร่าง

ฉบับแปลภาษาอังกฤษ (หน้า 44): Possession, or "spirit entry," refers to the state where a human body is inhabited by a particular type of spirit.

ตัวอย่างนี้เป็นการตีความที่ซับซ้อนเนื่องจากเกี่ยวข้องกับแนวคิดทางจิตวิญญาณที่มีความแตกต่างกันระหว่างวัฒนธรรม ผู้แปลวิเคราะห์คำศัพท์เฉพาะ "การประทับทรง" ได้ว่าเป็นคำที่มีความเป็นทางการและสื่อถึงความศักดิ์สิทธิ์ มีรากศัพท์มาจาก "ประทับ" (การสถิตอยู่ของพระมหากษัตริย์) และ "ทรง" (การกระทำของพระมหากษัตริย์) ผู้แปลจึงตีความเป็น "possession" ซึ่งเป็นคำที่ใช้ในการศึกษาเรื่องจิตวิญญาณในวัฒนธรรมตะวันตก ส่วน "การจับลง" เป็นคำพื้นบ้านที่อธิบายปรากฏการณ์เดียวกัน สื่อถึงการ "จับ" หรือการครอบงำจากเบื้องบน "ลง" มา ผู้แปลจึงตีความเป็น "spirit entry" ซึ่งเน้นการเข้ามาของวิญญาณ คำว่า "possession" เป็นคำศัพท์สากลที่ใช้ในการศึกษาเปรียบเทียบเรื่องศาสนาและจิตวิญญาณ ส่วน "spirit entry" ก็ช่วยรักษาความหมายของ "การจับลง" ไว้ และอธิบายให้ชัดเจนขึ้นด้วยการแปลว่า "inhabited by a particular type of spirit" อธิบายสถานะได้อย่างชัดเจน

สรุป

การแปลแบบตีความเป็นศิลปะและวิทยาศาสตร์ที่ต้องอาศัยความเชี่ยวชาญสูง ผู้แปลต้องเป็นทั้งนักภาษาศาสตร์ นักมานุษยวิทยา และนักสื่อสาร การใช้กลวิธีอย่างมีประสิทธิภาพจะช่วยสร้างงานแปลที่ไม่เพียงแค่ถูกต้องในระดับคำศัพท์ แต่ยังสื่อสารความหมาย ความรู้สึก และเจตนาของต้นฉบับได้อย่างครบถ้วน

7. การแปลแบบเทียบเท่าเชิงหน้าที่ (Functional Equivalence)

การแปลแบบเทียบเท่าเชิงหน้าที่เป็นหนึ่งในกลวิธีการแปลที่มีอิทธิพลมากที่สุดในการแปลสมัยใหม่ ตามแนวคิดของ Eugene Nida (2021) การแปลแบบนี้ไม่ได้มุ่งเน้นการรักษารูปแบบหรือโครงสร้างของต้นฉบับแต่มุ่งเน้นการสร้าง "ผลกระทบที่เทียบเท่า" (equivalent effect) ระหว่างผู้อ่านในวัฒนธรรมต้นฉบับและผู้อ่านในวัฒนธรรม

ปลายทาง หลักการสำคัญของการแปลแบบเทียบเท่าเชิงหน้าที่คือการมุ่งเน้นผู้รับสาร การสร้างความเข้าใจที่เท่าเทียม การปรับให้เหมาะกับบริบท และการรักษาหน้าที่การสื่อสาร ผู้แปลต้องคำนึงถึงผู้อ่านในวัฒนธรรมปลายทางเป็นหลัก โดยผู้อ่านควรได้รับความเข้าใจและความรู้สึกที่ใกล้เคียงกับผู้อ่านต้นฉบับ

การวิเคราะห์การแปลจากตัวอย่างในหนังสือ

1) การจัดการกับแนวคิดทางศาสนาที่ซับซ้อน

ตัวอย่างจากบทที่ 3:

ต้นฉบับภาษาไทย (หน้า 108): วิสุทธิเทวดา ได้แก่ พระพุทธเจ้า พระปัจเจกพุทธเจ้า และพระอรหันต

ชีณาสพผู้ได้บรรลุนิพพาน

ฉบับแปลภาษาอังกฤษ (หน้า 69): Sublime Deities, this group includes the Buddha, the

Paccekabuddhas (solitary enlightened ones), and the

Arahants (those who have attained Nirvana)

ตัวอย่างจากบทที่ 3 เป็นความท้าทายในการแปลแนวคิดทางศาสนาที่มีความซับซ้อน ผู้แปลแปลคำว่า "วิสุทธิเทวดา" ซึ่งประกอบด้วย "วิสุทธิ" หมายถึงความบริสุทธิ์ และ "เทวดา" หมายถึงสิ่งศักดิ์สิทธิ์ โดยแปลเป็น "Sublime Deities" เพื่อสื่อถึงความสูงส่งและบริสุทธิ์ทางจิตวิญญาณ การเลือกใช้คำว่า "Sublime" แทนการแปลตรงตัวเพราะพิจารณาผลกระทบทางความรู้สึกที่จะเกิดขึ้นกับผู้อ่านภาษาอังกฤษ ในส่วนของศัพท์เทคนิคทางพุทธศาสนา ผู้แปลใช้วิธีการผสมผสานระหว่างการคงศัพท์เดิมและการอธิบายเพิ่มเติม สำหรับ "พระปัจเจกพุทธเจ้า" ผู้แปลเลือกใช้ "Paccekabuddhas" ตามศัพท์เทคนิคในพุทธศาสน์สากล แต่เพิ่มคำอธิบาย "(solitary enlightened ones)" เพื่อให้ผู้อ่านที่ไม่คุ้นเคยกับพุทธศาสนาสามารถเข้าใจลักษณะเฉพาะของพระปัจเจกพุทธเจ้าที่บรรลุนิพพานด้วยตนเองแต่ไม่สอนผู้อื่น การจัดการกับคำว่า "พระอรหันตชีณาสพ" ผู้แปลก็ตัดสินใจแปลโดยใช้ "Arahants" ซึ่งเป็นศัพท์มาตรฐานในพุทธศาสตร์ และเพิ่มคำอธิบาย "(those who have attained Nirvana)" เพื่ออธิบายสถานะทางจิตวิญญาณ คำว่า "ชีณาสพ" ซึ่งมีความหมายเฉพาะเจาะจงในพุทธศาสนาได้ถูกรวมเข้าในแนวคิดของการบรรลุนิพพานทำให้ผู้อ่านภาษาอังกฤษสามารถเข้าใจแก่นแท้ของความหมายได้โดยไม่ต้องศึกษาศัพท์เทคนิคที่ซับซ้อน

2) การแปลรายการวัตถุพิธีกรรมให้เข้าใจได้

ตัวอย่างจากบทที่ 3:

ต้นฉบับภาษาไทย (หน้า 101): สิ่งของที่จำเป็นต้องใช้ในพิธีกรรมการเหยียบเสน ได้แก่ เขียนครุ ชัน

น้ำมันต์ รวงข้าว หินลับมีด แหวนแบบมีหัว เงินและทอง

ฉบับแปลภาษาอังกฤษ (หน้า 64): The items necessary for the Sen treatment ritual

include: Chian Khru (a ceremonial object used for

rituals), holy water bowl, ears of rice, knife sharpening
stone, ritual ring with a gemstone, silver and gold.

ตัวอย่างนี้จากบทที่ 3 เป็นการแปลรายการวัตถุที่ใช้ในพิธีกรรม ซึ่งมีท้าทายในการทำให้ผู้อ่านเข้าใจวัตถุที่อาจไม่คุ้นเคยในวัฒนธรรมของตน เมื่อต้นฉบับภาษาไทยระบุว่า "สิ่งของที่จำเป็นต้องใช้ในพิธีกรรมการเหยียบเสน ได้แก่ ฉี่ยนครุ ชันน้ำมัน รวงข้าว หินลับมีด แหวนแบบมีหัว เงินและทอง" ผู้แปลได้จัดการกับแต่ละวัตถุด้วยกลยุทธ์ที่แตกต่างกันตามความเหมาะสม

ผู้แปลแปล "ฉี่ยนครุ" เป็น "Chian Khru (a ceremonial object used for rituals)" ผสมผสานระหว่างการทับศัพท์และการอธิบาย โดยเลือกคงชื่อเดิมไว้เพื่อรักษาความเป็นเอกลักษณ์และความศักดิ์สิทธิ์ของวัตถุพิธีกรรม แต่เพิ่มคำอธิบายในวงเล็บเพื่อให้ผู้อ่านเข้าใจหน้าที่และความสำคัญของวัตถุนี้ในบริบทพิธีกรรม สำหรับ "ชันน้ำมัน" ผู้แปลใช้วิธีการแปลเทียบเท่าเป็น "holy water bowl" โดยวิเคราะห์ความหมายของแต่ละส่วน "ชัน" ซึ่งหมายถึงภาชนะ และ "น้ำมัน" ซึ่งหมายถึงน้ำที่มีความศักดิ์สิทธิ์ การแปลนี้ช่วยให้ผู้อ่านเข้าใจทั้งรูปร่างและหน้าที่ของวัตถุได้ทันทีโดยไม่ต้องอธิบายเพิ่มเติม ผู้แปลแปล "รวงข้าว" เป็น "ears of rice" เพราะพยายามเลือกใช้คำศัพท์ที่ผู้อ่านตะวันตกคุ้นเคยในบริบทของการเกษตร แม้ว่า "รวง" อาจมีความหมายที่เฉพาะเจาะจงในภาษาไทย แต่การใช้ "ears of rice" ช่วยให้ผู้อ่านสามารถจินตนาการถึงรูปร่างและลักษณะของวัตถุได้ ขณะเดียวกันก็รักษาความหมายเชิงสัญลักษณ์ของข้าวในฐานะสัญลักษณ์ของความอุดมสมบูรณ์ "หินลับมีด" ได้ถูกแปลเป็น "knife sharpening stone" ซึ่งเป็นการอธิบายหน้าที่ของวัตถุให้ผู้อ่านเข้าใจได้ชัดเจน การแปลแบบนี้ช่วยให้ผู้อ่านเข้าใจทั้งลักษณะทางกายภาพและการใช้งานของวัตถุ ขณะเดียวกันก็รักษาความหมายเชิงสัญลักษณ์ของความคมกริบที่อาจมีในบริบทพิธีกรรม แปล "แหวนแบบมีหัว" เป็น "ritual ring with a gemstone" เพื่อให้เข้าใจง่ายขึ้น และผู้แปลเพิ่มคำว่า "ritual" เพื่อบ่งบอกถึงการใช้งานในพิธีกรรม และใช้ "with a gemstone" เพื่อแปลคำว่า "มีหัว" ให้ผู้อ่านสามารถเข้าใจได้ว่าหมายถึงแหวนที่มีอัญมณีประดับ สำหรับ "เงินและทอง" ผู้แปลใช้การแปลตรงตัวเป็น "silver and gold" เนื่องจากเป็นวัตถุที่มีความหมายและค่านิยมที่คล้ายคลึงกันในทั้งสองวัฒนธรรม ไม่จำเป็นต้องมีการปรับเปลี่ยนหรืออธิบายเพิ่มเติม

ในการแปลวัตถุเหล่านี้ ผู้แปลความพยายามทำให้ผู้อ่านเข้าใจภาพรวมของพิธีกรรมและความสำคัญของแต่ละวัตถุโดยใช้กลยุทธ์ที่หลากหลายตามความเหมาะสมตามแต่กรณี เพื่อให้ผู้อ่านสามารถเข้าใจหน้าที่และความศักดิ์สิทธิ์ของวัตถุเหล่านี้ในบริบทพิธีกรรมในขณะเดียวกันก็สามารถจินตนาการถึงการใช้งานจริงได้อย่างชัดเจน ข้อดีของกลวิธีการแปลนี้คือภาษาปลายทางเข้าใจง่าย รักษาจุดประสงค์และความเป็นธรรมชาติของงานแปล ผู้อ่านสามารถเข้าใจได้ทันทีโดยไม่ต้องค้นคว้าเพิ่มเติมและงานแปลดูเป็นธรรมชาติในภาษาปลายทาง

สรุป

การแปลแบบเทียบเท่าเชิงหน้าที่เป็นกลวิธีที่มีประสิทธิภาพสูงในการแปลข้ามวัฒนธรรม โดยเฉพาะเมื่อจุดประสงค์หลักคือทำให้ผู้อ่านเข้าใจและได้รับผลกระทบที่ใกล้เคียงกับผู้อ่านต้นฉบับ กลวิธีนี้ต้องอาศัยความเข้าใจลึกซึ้งในทั้งสองวัฒนธรรม ความสามารถในการวิเคราะห์ผู้อ่าน และทักษะในการสร้างสมดุลระหว่างความถูกต้องและความเข้าใจได้ การใช้กลวิธีนี้อย่างมีประสิทธิภาพจะช่วยสร้างงานแปลที่ไม่เพียงแต่ถ่ายทอดข้อมูลแต่ยังสร้างประสบการณ์และความเข้าใจที่มีความหมายสำหรับผู้อ่านในวัฒนธรรมปลายทาง

8. การแปลสื่อความ (Communicative Translation)

การแปลสื่อความเป็นกลวิธีการแปลที่ผู้แปลใช้เมื่อต้องการให้ผู้อ่านในภาษาปลายทางเข้าใจความหมายและเจตนาของต้นฉบับได้อย่างชัดเจนและแม่นยำ ตามแนวคิดของ Peter Newmark (1988) การแปลสื่อความมุ่งเน้นการถ่ายทอด "ผลกระทบ" (effect) ของข้อความมากกว่าการรักษา "รูปแบบ" (form) ของต้นฉบับ หลักการสำคัญของการแปลสื่อความคือการให้ความสำคัญกับการสื่อสารที่มีประสิทธิภาพ ผู้แปลจะปรับเปลี่ยนโครงสร้าง คำศัพท์ หรือแม้กระทั่งเนื้อหาบางส่วนเพื่อให้ผู้อ่านในวัฒนธรรมปลายทางสามารถเข้าใจได้อย่างถูกต้องและครบถ้วน กลวิธีนี้มีความเหมาะสมเป็นพิเศษเมื่อต้นฉบับมีสำนวน แนวคิดเชิงนามธรรม หรือบริบททางวัฒนธรรมที่ซับซ้อน การแปลสื่อความต้องอาศัยความเข้าใจลึกซึ้งทั้งในระดับภาษาและวัฒนธรรม ผู้แปลต้องวิเคราะห์ความหมายแฝง เจตนาของผู้เขียน และปรับการสื่อสารให้เหมาะสมกับผู้รับสารในวัฒนธรรมปลายทาง ความท้าทายหลักอยู่ที่การรักษาสมดุลระหว่างความซื่อสัตย์ต่อต้นฉบับและประสิทธิภาพการสื่อสาร

การวิเคราะห์การแปลจากตัวอย่างในหนังสือ

1) การถ่ายทอดแนวคิดเรื่องความศักดิ์สิทธิ์และข้อห้าม

ตัวอย่างจากบทที่ 5:

ต้นฉบับภาษาไทย (หน้า 181): ความเชื่อเรื่องครุหมอโนราได้ตอกย้ำให้ผู้คนเข้าใจว่าครุหมอโนราเป็น "สิ่งที่ถูกหวงห้าม"

ฉบับแปลภาษาอังกฤษ (หน้า 116): This discourse reinforced the understanding that Khru Mo Nora was "something forbidden."

ตัวอย่างจากบทที่ 5 แสดงให้เห็นถึงความซับซ้อนในการแปลแนวคิดเรื่องความศักดิ์สิทธิ์ในบริบทไทย เมื่อต้นฉบับกล่าวว่า "ความเชื่อเรื่องครุหมอโนราได้ตอกย้ำให้ผู้คนเข้าใจว่าครุหมอโนราเป็น 'สิ่งที่ถูกหวงห้าม'" ผู้แปลตระหนักว่าการแปลตรงตัวจะไม่สามารถสื่อสารความหมายที่แท้จริงได้อย่างครบถ้วน คำว่า "ตอกย้ำ" ในบริบทนี้มีความหมายมากกว่าการเน้นย้ำธรรมดาแต่เป็นการกระทำที่มีจุดประสงค์เฉพาะในการสร้างความเข้าใจและการยอมรับในสังคม ผู้แปลจึงเลือกใช้ "reinforced the understanding" ซึ่งสื่อถึงการเสริมสร้างความเข้าใจอย่างเป็นระบบและมีประสิทธิภาพ คำว่า "reinforced" มีนัยของการทำให้แข็งแกร่งขึ้นและยั่งยืนซึ่งตรงกับเจตนาของการ "ตอกย้ำ" ในต้นฉบับ สำหรับวลี "สิ่งที่ถูกหวงห้าม" ก็เป็นอีกหนึ่งความท้าทายเนื่องจากแนวคิดนี้มีความซับซ้อนทางวัฒนธรรมไทย "หวงห้าม" ไม่ได้หมายถึงการห้ามในความหมายทั่วไปแต่เป็นการรักษาไว้อย่างระมัดระวังเพราะความศักดิ์สิทธิ์ มีทั้งการปกป้องและการจำกัดการเข้าถึง ผู้แปลตัดสินใจเลือกใช้ "something forbidden" เพื่อสื่อสารแก่นใจของความหมาย แม้ว่าคำว่า "forbidden" อาจไม่สามารถครอบคลุมความหมายทั้งหมดของ "หวงห้าม" แต่ก็สามารถสื่อสารถึงการจำกัดการเข้าถึงที่มีเหตุผลเฉพาะได้ และผู้แปลเลือกใช้ "discourse" แทน "ความเชื่อ" เพื่อปรับระดับการวิเคราะห์ให้เหมาะกับบริบททางวิชาการ "ความเชื่อ" ในภาษาไทยอาจหมายถึงความเชื่อในระดับปัจเจกบุคคล แต่ใน

บริบทนี้หมายถึงระบบความคิดที่มีอิทธิพลต่อสังคม การใช้ "discourse" จึงสื่อถึงการสนทนา การอภิปราย และการสร้างความหมายในระดับสังคมได้ดีกว่า

2) การสื่อสารแนวคิดเชิงนามธรรมเกี่ยวกับสังคมร่วมสมัย

ตัวอย่างจากบทที่ 5:

ต้นฉบับภาษาไทย (หน้า 180): กล่าวอีกนัยคือ สังคมในปัจจุบันเป็นสังคมที่ไร้แก่น ไม่ยึดติดในอุดมการณ์ใด ๆ

ฉบับแปลภาษาอังกฤษ (หน้า 115): In other words, the contemporary Thai society is fluid and lacks adherence to any single ideology.

ตัวอย่างจากบทที่ 5 เป็นการแปลที่ท้าทายมากเช่นกัน เนื่องจากเกี่ยวข้องกับการวิเคราะห์สังคมในเชิงนามธรรม เมื่อต้นฉบับระบุว่า "กล่าวอีกนัยคือ สังคมในปัจจุบันเป็นสังคมที่ไร้แก่น ไม่ยึดติดในอุดมการณ์ใด ๆ" การแปลข้อความนี้ต้องอาศัยความเข้าใจลึกซึ้งเกี่ยวกับแนวคิดทางสังคมวิทยาและปรัชญา ต้นฉบับเริ่มต้นด้วย "กล่าวอีกนัยคือ" ซึ่งเป็นสำนวนไทยที่ใช้เพื่อแสดงการอธิบายเพิ่มเติมหรือการมองในมุมอื่น ผู้แปลเลือกใช้ "In other words" ซึ่งเป็นสำนวนที่มีหน้าที่ใกล้เคียงกันในภาษาอังกฤษ วิธีนี้ช่วยรักษาความต่อเนื่องของการอภิปรายและสร้างความเชื่อมโยงกับเนื้อหาก่อนหน้านี้ คำว่า "ไร้แก่น" เป็นสำนวนไทยที่มีความหมายลึกซึ้งและซับซ้อน "แก่น" ในบริบทนี้หมายถึงแก่นแท้ หลักการ หรือค่านิยมหลักที่เป็นศูนย์กลางของสังคม การที่สังคม "ไร้แก่น" จึงหมายถึงการขาดจุดยึดเหนี่ยวหรือหลักการคงที่ ในฐานะผู้แปล ผู้แปลคิดว่าการแปลตรงตัวเป็น "lacking core" หรือ "without essence" จะไม่สามารถสื่อความหมายได้อย่างมีประสิทธิภาพในภาษาอังกฤษ จึงตัดสินใจใช้ "fluid" เป็นคำหลักในการแปลเพื่อแสดงให้เห็นถึงการใช้การแปลสื่อความ และ "fluid" ในบริบททางสังคมวิทยาหมายถึงสภาพที่เปลี่ยนแปลงได้ง่าย ไม่มีรูปแบบคงที่ และสามารถปรับตัวตามสถานการณ์ได้ ความหมายนี้สอดคล้องกับแนวคิดของการ "ไร้แก่น" ที่ต้องการการสื่อ โดยเฉพาะในบริบทของสังคมหลังสมัยใหม่ที่มีลักษณะไหลเหวและเปลี่ยนแปลงตลอดเวลา ส่วนวลี "ไม่ยึดติดในอุดมการณ์ใด ๆ" ผู้แปลแปลเป็น "lacks adherence to any single ideology" เพื่อแสดงให้เห็นถึงการเลือกใช้คำศัพท์ที่เหมาะสมกับบริบททางวิชาการ คำว่า "adherence" สื่อถึงการยึดมั่นหรือการผูกพันอย่างแน่นแฟ้นซึ่งตรงกับความหมายของ "ยึดติด" ส่วนการเพิ่ม "single" ก่อน "ideology" ช่วยเน้นย้ำว่าไม่ใช่ว่าไม่มีอุดมการณ์เลยแต่เป็นการไม่ยึดติดกับอุดมการณ์ใดอุดมการณ์หนึ่งเป็นการเฉพาะ การแปลนี้ยังมีการเพิ่ม "contemporary Thai society" แทนการใช้ "สังคมในปัจจุบัน" เพียงอย่างเดียว การเพิ่ม "Thai" ช่วยให้ผู้อ่านเข้าใจว่าการวิเคราะห์นี้เฉพาะเจาะจงกับบริบทของสังคมไทยไม่ใช่อ้างอิงถึงสังคมโดยทั่วไป ซึ่งช่วยเพิ่มความชัดเจนและความแม่นยำในการสื่อสาร

สรุป

การแปลสื่อความในตัวอย่างทั้งสอง ผู้แปลต้องทำความเข้าใจบริบทในหลายมิติ ในตัวอย่างแรก ผู้แปลต้องเข้าใจบริบททางศาสนาและวัฒนธรรมไทยเกี่ยวกับแนวคิดของความศักดิ์สิทธิ์และการหวงห้าม ขณะเดียวกันก็ต้องพิจารณาว่าผู้อ่านในวัฒนธรรมตะวันตกจะเข้าใจแนวคิดเหล่านี้ได้อย่างไร ในตัวอย่างที่สอง การเข้าใจบริบททางสังคมและการเปลี่ยนแปลงของสังคมไทยร่วมสมัยเป็นสิ่งจำเป็น ผู้แปลต้องสามารถถ่ายทอดการวิเคราะห์เชิงวิชาการเกี่ยวกับลักษณะของสังคมหลังสมัยใหม่ให้ผู้อ่านที่อาจไม่คุ้นเคยกับบริบทไทยเข้าใจได้ ความท้าทายในการแปลสื่อความคือ

การรักษาสมดุลระหว่างความซื่อสัตย์ต่อต้นฉบับและประสิทธิภาพการสื่อสาร ผู้แปลต้องตัดสินใจว่าเมื่อไหร่ควรยืนยันการแปลตรงตัว และเมื่อไหร่ควรปรับเปลี่ยนเพื่อความชัดเจนในการสื่อสาร และต้องหลีกเลี่ยงการตีความมากเกินไป การแปลสื่อความให้อิสระกับผู้แปลในการปรับเปลี่ยนแต่การเปลี่ยนแปลงมากเกินไปอาจนำไปสู่การบิดเบือนความหมายหรือการสูญเสียเจตนาของผู้เขียน และผู้แปลต้องประเมินระดับความรู้และความเข้าใจของผู้อ่านเป้าหมาย ต้องคาดการณ์ว่าผู้อ่านมีความรู้พื้นฐานเกี่ยวกับหัวข้อที่กล่าวถึงมากน้อยแค่ไหน และควรให้ข้อมูลเพิ่มเติมหรือการอธิบายในระดับใด

9. การแปลครบความ (Semantic Translation)

การแปลแบบครบความเป็นกลวิธีการแปลที่มุ่งเน้นการรักษาความถูกต้องและความแม่นยำของความหมายในระดับสูงตามแนวคิดของ Peter Newmark (1988) กลวิธีนี้แตกต่างจากการแปลเชิงสื่อสารตรงที่ให้ความสำคัญกับความซื่อสัตย์ต่อต้นฉบับมากกว่าการปรับให้เข้ากับผู้อ่านในวัฒนธรรมปลายทาง หลักการสำคัญของการแปลแบบครบความคือการรักษาโครงสร้างความหมายของต้นฉบับไว้ให้มากที่สุด ผู้แปลจะหลีกเลี่ยงการตีความหรือการปรับเปลี่ยนที่อาจทำให้ความหมายเบี่ยงเบนไปจากเจตนาเดิมแต่จะมุ่งเน้นการถ่ายทอดความหมายที่แท้จริงและครบถ้วน การแปลแบบนี้เหมาะสมเป็นพิเศษกับเอกสารทางวิชาการ เอกสารทางกฎหมาย หรือข้อความที่ต้องการความแม่นยำสูง การแปลแบบครบความต้องอาศัยความเข้าใจลึกซึ้งเกี่ยวกับความหมายในหลายระดับ ทั้งความหมายตามตัวอักษร ความหมายเชิงความคิด และความหมายเชิงสัญลักษณ์ ผู้แปลต้องสามารถจับความหมายที่ซับซ้อนและนำเสนอในภาษาปลายทางโดยไม่สูญเสียองค์ประกอบสำคัญใด

การวิเคราะห์การแปลจากตัวอย่างในหนังสือ

1) การแปลการวิเคราะห์ความก้าวหน้าทางสังคม

ตัวอย่างจากบทที่ 5:

ต้นฉบับภาษาไทย (หน้า 180): ในปัจจุบันสังคมไทยได้เจริญรุดหน้าก้าวสู่ยุคข้อมูลข่าวสารและเทคโนโลยีสารสนเทศ

ฉบับแปลภาษาอังกฤษ (หน้า 115): At present, Thai society has advanced into the era of information and communication technology.

ตัวอย่างนี้เป็นความท้าทายในการแปลการวิเคราะห์ความเปลี่ยนแปลงทางสังคม เมื่อต้นฉบับระบุว่า "ในปัจจุบันสังคมไทยได้เจริญรุดหน้าก้าวสู่ยุคข้อมูลข่าวสารและเทคโนโลยีสารสนเทศ" ผู้แปลตระหนักถึงความสำคัญของการรักษาความหมายแต่ละส่วนไว้ให้ครบถ้วน การเริ่มต้นด้วย "ในปัจจุบัน" ได้รับการแปลเป็น "Currently" ซึ่งเป็นการแปลตรงตัวที่รักษาความหมายของการอ้างอิงเวลา ผู้แปลเลือกใช้ "Currently" แทนคำอื่น ๆ เช่น "Nowadays" หรือ "At present" เพราะ "Currently" มีความเป็นทางการและความแม่นยำในการระบุช่วงเวลาที่สุดคล้อยกับลักษณะของข้อความวิชาการ สำหรับ "สังคมไทย" การแปลเป็น "Thai society" เป็นการแปลตรงตัวที่ไม่มีความซับซ้อนแต่

สำคัญในการระบุขอบเขตของการวิเคราะห์ให้ชัดเจน การคงคำว่า "Thai" ไว้ช่วยให้ผู้อ่านเข้าใจว่าการอภิปรายนี้เฉพาะเจาะจงกับบริบทของประเทศไทย คำว่า "เจริญรุดหน้า" เป็นสำนวนไทยที่มีความหมายซับซ้อน ประกอบด้วย "เจริญ" ซึ่งหมายถึงการพัฒนาหรือการขยายตัวในเชิงบวก และ "รุดหน้า" ซึ่งหมายถึงการเคลื่อนไปข้างหน้าอย่างรวดเร็วและแข็งแกร่ง ผู้แปลเลือกใช้ "advanced" ซึ่งสามารถครอบคลุมความหมายของทั้งการพัฒนาและการก้าวหน้าไปข้างหน้า คำนี้ยังมีนัยของการเปลี่ยนแปลงในเชิงคุณภาพ ไม่ใช่เพียงการเปลี่ยนแปลงเชิงปริมาณ วลี "ก้าวสู่ยุคข้อมูลข่าวสารและเทคโนโลยีสารสนเทศ" ต้องแปลอย่างระมัดระวัง "ก้าวสู่" แสดงถึงการเคลื่อนไหวที่มีทิศทางและจุดหมาย ผู้แปลใช้ "into the era of" ซึ่งสื่อถึงการเข้าสู่ช่วงเวลาใหม่อย่างชัดเจน สำหรับ "ยุค" ผู้แปลแปลเป็น "era" ซึ่งมีความหมายของช่วงเวลาที่มัลักษณะเฉพาะและความสำคัญทางประวัติศาสตร์ การจัดการกับวลี "ข้อมูลข่าวสารและเทคโนโลยีสารสนเทศ" ผู้แปลพยายามรักษาความหมายที่แม่นยำ ผู้แปลใช้ "information and communication technology" ซึ่งเป็นศัพท์เทคนิคที่ยอมรับในระดับสากล แม้ว่าต้นฉบับจะแยก "ข้อมูลข่าวสาร" และ "เทคโนโลยีสารสนเทศ" ออกจากกัน แต่ในความเป็นจริงทั้งสองแนวคิดมีความเชื่อมโยงกันอย่างแนบแน่นในบริบทของเทคโนโลยีสมัยใหม่

2) การแปลแนวคิดทางวิทยาศาสตร์และปรัชญา

ตัวอย่างจากบทที่ 5:

ต้นฉบับภาษาไทย (หน้า 182): กระบวนการคิดทางวิทยาศาสตร์ยึดถือเรื่องความมีเหตุมีผลเป็นหัวใจ

สำคัญ

ฉบับแปลภาษาอังกฤษ (หน้า 116): The scientific method, which prioritizes rationality.

ตัวอย่างจากบทที่ 5 เป็นการแปลที่ซับซ้อนเนื่องจากเกี่ยวข้องกับแนวคิดทางวิทยาศาสตร์และปรัชญา ต้นฉบับกล่าวว่า "กระบวนการคิดทางวิทยาศาสตร์ยึดถือเรื่องความมีเหตุมีผลเป็นหัวใจสำคัญ" การแปลข้อความนี้ต้องอาศัยความเข้าใจลึกซึ้งซึ่งเกี่ยวกับปรัชญาวิทยาศาสตร์ คำว่า "กระบวนการคิดทางวิทยาศาสตร์" ผู้แปลแปลเป็น "The scientific method" ซึ่งเป็นตัดสินใจที่สำคัญของผู้แปล แม้ว่า "กระบวนการคิด" อาจแปลได้ตรงตัวเป็น "thinking process" แต่ในบริบทของวิทยาศาสตร์ "scientific method" เป็นศัพท์เทคนิคที่มีความหมายเฉพาะเจาะจงและเป็นที่ยอมรับในวงวิชาการสากล การเลือกใช้ศัพท์นี้ช่วยให้การสื่อสารมีความแม่นยำและเป็นมาตรฐานทางวิชาการ การแปล "ยึดถือเรื่องความมีเหตุมีผลเป็นหัวใจสำคัญ" ก็เป็นความท้าทายที่สำคัญเพราะ "ยึดถือ" มีความหมายของการถือเป็นหลักหรือการให้ความสำคัญอย่างแน่วแน่ ผู้แปลเลือกใช้ "prioritizes" ซึ่งสื่อถึงการให้ความสำคัญเป็นอันดับแรก แต่อาจไม่ครอบคลุมความหมายของความมั่นคงและความต่อเนื่องที่อยู่ใต้น้ำว่า "ยึดถือ" สำหรับ "ความมีเหตุมีผล" ผู้แปลแปลเป็น "rationality" เพื่อแสดงให้เห็นถึงการเลือกแนวคิดหลัก คำว่า "ความมีเหตุมีผล" ในภาษาไทยสื่อถึงหลักการของการเชื่อมโยงเหตุและผลซึ่งเป็นพื้นฐานของการคิดเชิงตรรกะ และคำว่า "Rationality" ครอบคลุมแนวคิดนี้และยังมีความหมายในเชิงการใช้เหตุผลในการตัดสินใจและการวิเคราะห์

สรุป

การแปลแบบครบความมีความท้าทายหลายอย่าง ความท้าทายแรกคือการจัดการกับแนวคิดที่มีความซับซ้อนและอาจไม่มีคำเทียบเคียงที่แม่นยำในภาษาปลายทาง ผู้แปลต้องหาวิธีถ่ายทอดความหมายให้ครบถ้วนโดยไม่สูญเสียความแม่นยำ ความท้าทายที่สองคือการรักษาสมดุลระหว่างความซื่อสัตย์ต่อต้นฉบับและความเข้าใจได้ของผู้อ่าน การแปลแบบครบความต้องรักษาความซับซ้อนของความหมายไว้แต่ยังต้องทำให้ผู้อ่านในวัฒนธรรมปลายทางเข้าใจได้ ความท้าทายที่สามคือการจัดการกับความแตกต่างของระบบความคิดและโครงสร้างภาษาระหว่างสองวัฒนธรรม บางครั้งความหมายที่ชัดเจนในภาษาหนึ่งอาจต้องการการอธิบายเพิ่มเติมในอีกภาษาหนึ่ง

10. การปรับให้เข้ากับวัฒนธรรมปลายทาง (Domestication)

การปรับให้เข้ากับวัฒนธรรมปลายทางเป็นกลวิธีการแปลที่ต้องอาศัยความประณีตและความเข้าใจลึกซึ้งในทั้งสองวัฒนธรรม ตามแนวคิดของ Lawrence Venuti (2018) การปรับให้เข้ากับวัฒนธรรมปลายทางไม่ได้หมายถึงการทำลายเอกลักษณ์ของวัฒนธรรมต้นฉบับแต่เป็นการสร้างสะพานเชื่อมระหว่างสองวัฒนธรรมให้ผู้อ่านสามารถเข้าใจและเข้าถึงได้ หลักการสำคัญของกลวิธีนี้คือการหาจุดสมดุลที่เหมาะสม ผู้แปลต้องตัดสินใจอย่างรอบคอบว่าเมื่อไหร่ควรใช้คำศัพท์หรือแนวคิดที่ผู้อ่านในวัฒนธรรมปลายทางคุ้นเคยและเมื่อไหร่ควรคงความเป็นต่างชาติไว้เพื่อให้ผู้อ่านได้สัมผัสกับความแตกต่างทางวัฒนธรรม กระบวนการนี้ต้องคำนึงถึงจุดประสงค์ของการแปล ระดับความรู้ของผู้อ่านและความสำคัญทางวัฒนธรรมของแนวคิดที่กำลังแปล ความท้าทายหลักของการปรับให้เข้ากับวัฒนธรรมปลายทางอยู่ที่การหลีกเลี่ยงการเป็นอาณานิคมทางวัฒนธรรม ผู้แปลต้องระวังไม่ให้เกิดการปรับเปลี่ยนเหล่านั้นทำให้วัฒนธรรมต้นฉบับดูเหมือนวัฒนธรรมปลายทางหรือสูญเสียความเป็นเอกลักษณ์ไปแต่ในขณะเดียวกันก็ต้องทำให้ผู้อ่านเข้าใจและสามารถเชื่อมโยงกับประสบการณ์ของตนได้

การวิเคราะห์การแปลจากตัวอย่างในหนังสือ

1) การจัดการกับแนวคิดเรื่องเครื่องรางและของขลัง

ตัวอย่างจากบทที่ 1:

ต้นฉบับภาษาไทย (หน้า 78): การประกอบพิธีกรรมนี้ผู้ขอรับการประกอบพิธีกรรมจะต้องนั่งบนชั้นทองเหลือง ซึ่งมี 2 ใบ ใบเล็กจะวางหงาย ภายในบรรจุเครื่องรางของขลัง ได้แก่ เขี้ยววู เขี้ยวเสือ เขี้ยวหมี หนังสือ หนังสือ

ฉบับแปลภาษาอังกฤษ (หน้า 48): In this ceremony, the participant must sit on a pair of brass bowls. One smaller bowl is placed upright and contains amulets such as snake fangs, tiger fangs, bear fangs, tiger skin, and bear skin.

ตัวอย่างจากบทที่ 1 ผู้แปลคำว่า "เครื่องรางของขลัง" ในบริบทพิธีกรรมไทย ซึ่งบรรจุวัตถุอย่างเชี้ยวเสื่อหรือหนังหมี่เป็นคำว่า "amulets" ในภาษาอังกฤษ คำว่า amulet ถือเป็นการสร้างสะพานเชื่อมทางวัฒนธรรม เพราะสื่อถึงวัตถุดีลสิทธ์ที่มีหน้าที่ป้องกันอันตรายและขจัดเพชฌกัย ซึ่งเป็นกรอบความเข้าใจที่ชาวตะวันตกคุ้นเคยดีอยู่แล้ว การใช้กลยุทธ์นี้ช่วยให้ผู้อ่านต่างชาติเข้าใจบทบาทหน้าที่ของวัตถุพิธีกรรมได้ทันทีโดยไม่ต้องเผชิญกับอุปสรรคทางการสื่อสาร อีกทั้งยังมีการปรับโครงสร้างประโยค เช่น แปล "ขันทองเหลือง 2 ใบ" เป็น "a pair of brass bowls" เพื่อให้เป็นธรรมชาติและสละสลวยตามขนบภาษาอังกฤษ การแปลแบบ Domestication ในลักษณะนี้จึงช่วยรักษาจุดสมดุลระหว่างการถ่ายทอดสาระสำคัญของพิธีกรรมไทย กับการทำให้ผู้อ่านปลายทางเข้าถึงความหมายได้อย่างแม่นยำและราบรื่น

2) การแปลชื่อพืชและวัสดุธรรมชาติ

ตัวอย่างจากบทที่ 3:

ต้นฉบับภาษาไทย (หน้า 127): แขงทำมาจากใบไม้ เช่น ใบจาก ใบสาคุหรือใบเตยน้ำ

ฉบับแปลภาษาอังกฤษ (หน้า 81): Chaeng was made from leaves, such as palm leaves, sago palm leaves, or pandan leaves,

ตัวอย่างจากบทที่ 3 เป็นการแปลชื่อพืชและวัสดุธรรมชาติที่เฉพาะในวัฒนธรรมไทย ต้นฉบับระบุว่า "แขงทำมาจากใบไม้ เช่น ใบจาก ใบสาคุหรือใบเตยน้ำ" การแปลนี้จึงต้องอาศัยความรู้ทางพฤกษศาสตร์และความเข้าใจเกี่ยวกับการใช้พืชในวัฒนธรรมไทย คำว่า "แขง" ผู้แปลคงไว้เป็น "Chaeng" เพราะเป็นชื่อสิ่งของเฉพาะที่ไม่มีคำเทียบเคียงโดยตรงในภาษาอังกฤษ การพยายามแปลอาจทำให้สูญเสียความเฉพาะเจาะจงของวัตถุ สำหรับชื่อพืช ผู้แปลใช้การปรับให้เข้ากับวัฒนธรรมปลายทางอย่างระมัดระวัง "ใบจาก" แปลเป็น "palm leaves" ซึ่งเป็นการใช้ชื่อที่ผู้อ่านตะวันตกคุ้นเคยและสามารถเข้าใจได้ทันที แม้ว่า "จาก" จะเป็นชื่อเฉพาะของต้นไม้ชนิดหนึ่ง แต่การใช้ "palm leaves" ช่วยให้ผู้อ่านสามารถจินตนาการถึงลักษณะและคุณสมบัติของวัสดุได้ "ใบสาคุ" แปลเป็น "sago palm leaves" ซึ่งเป็นการผสมผสานระหว่างความแม่นยำและความเข้าใจได้ "Sago" เป็นคำที่ใช้ในภาษาอังกฤษแล้วแต่อาจไม่เป็นที่รู้จักของผู้อ่านทั่วไป ผู้แปลเพิ่ม "palm" ใสไปด้วยเพื่อช่วยให้ผู้อ่านเข้าใจว่าเป็นพืชประเภทเดียวกับ "palm leaves" ที่กล่าวถึงก่อนหน้านี้ ส่วน "ใบเตยน้ำ" ผู้แปลแปลเป็น "pandan leaves" ซึ่งเป็นการใช้ชื่อที่ยอมรับในระดับสากล "pandan" เป็นคำที่ใช้ในการค้าสากลและการทำอาหารนานาชาติทำให้ผู้อ่านที่มีความรู้เกี่ยวกับการทำอาหารเอเชียสามารถเชื่อมโยงได้

3) การแปลแนวคิดเรื่องสถานที่ศักดิ์สิทธิ์

ตัวอย่างจากบทที่ 4:

ต้นฉบับภาษาไทย (หน้า 143): "หิ้งครุหมอโนรา" คือที่สถิตของครุหมอโนรา

ฉบับแปลภาษาอังกฤษ (หน้า 91): The "Khru Mo Nora shrine" is the residence of Khru Mo Nora.

ตัวอย่างจากบทที่ 4 เป็นการจัดการกับแนวคิดเรื่องสถานที่ศักดิ์สิทธิ์ ต้นฉบับกล่าวว่า "'หิ้งครูหมอนอรา' คือที่สถิตของครูหมอนอรา" การแปลจึงเกี่ยวข้องกับแนวคิดทางศาสนาและจิตวิญญาณที่มีความซับซ้อน การแปล "หิ้ง" เป็น "shrine" เป็นการปรับให้เข้ากับวัฒนธรรมปลายทางอย่างเหมาะสม คำว่า "หิ้ง" ในบริบทไทยมีความหมายกว้างกว่า "shrine" ในวัฒนธรรมตะวันตก แต่การใช้ "shrine" ช่วยให้ผู้อ่านเข้าใจทันทีว่าเป็นสถานที่ศักดิ์สิทธิ์ที่ใช้สำหรับการบูชาและการประกอบพิธีกรรม คำนี้มีความคุ้นเคยในวัฒนธรรมคริสเตียนและศาสนาอื่น ๆ ผู้แปลคง "Khru Mo Nora" เพื่อรักษาเอกลักษณ์ทางวัฒนธรรม ไม่แปลเป็น "Nora Teacher Spirit" หรือคำอื่นที่อาจทำให้สูญเสียความเฉพาะเจาะจง สำหรับ "ที่สถิต" ผู้แปลแปลเป็น "residence" ซึ่งเป็นการเลือกใช้คำที่นุ่มนวลและเป็นที่ยอมรับ "สถิต" มีความหมายของการอยู่อาศัยหรือการสถิตอยู่ของสิ่งศักดิ์สิทธิ์ คำว่า "residence" สื่อถึงที่อยู่อาศัยในลักษณะที่เป็นทางการและมีเกียรติซึ่งเหมาะสมกับบริบทของสิ่งศักดิ์สิทธิ์

4) การแปลแนวคิดเกี่ยวกับการแลกเปลี่ยนและพิธีกรรม

ตัวอย่างจากบทที่ 4:

ต้นฉบับภาษาไทย (หน้า 172): อาจใช้วิธีการ "ทอน"

ฉบับแปลภาษาอังกฤษ (หน้า 110): the "ceremonial exchange" method can be used,

ตัวอย่างจากบทที่ 4 เป็นการแปลที่ท้าทายเช่นกัน ต้นฉบับระบุว่า "อาจใช้วิธีการ 'ทอน' ในการแปลคำว่า 'ทอน' ต้องอาศัยความเข้าใจลึกซึ้งเกี่ยวกับประเพณีและวัฒนธรรมการแลกเปลี่ยนในสังคมไทย 'ทอน' ในบริบทนี้ไม่ได้หมายถึงการลดราคาในความหมายทางการค้า แต่เป็นการแลกเปลี่ยนที่มีมิติทางจิตวิญญาณและสังคม เป็นการให้และรับที่มีความหมายเชิงสัญลักษณ์ การ 'ทอน' วัตถุศักดิ์สิทธิ์เป็นการแสดงความเคารพและการรักษาความสัมพันธ์ทางสังคม ผู้แปลเลือกใช้ "ceremonial exchange" ซึ่งเป็นการปรับให้เข้ากับแนวคิดที่ผู้อ่านตะวันตกสามารถเข้าใจได้ คำว่า "ceremonial" เน้นถึงลักษณะที่เป็นพิธีกรรมและความศักดิ์สิทธิ์ ในขณะที่ "exchange" สื่อถึงการแลกเปลี่ยนที่มีผู้ให้และผู้รับ การรวมกันของสองคำนี้ช่วยสื่อสารถึงความซับซ้อนของการ 'ทอน' ที่เป็นมากกว่าการซื้อขายธรรมดา

สรุป

ในการปรับให้เข้ากับวัฒนธรรมปลายทางผู้แปลต้องเผชิญความท้าทายหลายประการ ความท้าทายหลักคือการหลีกเลี่ยงการทำให้วัฒนธรรมต้นฉบับดูเหมือนวัฒนธรรมปลายทาง ผู้แปลต้องระวังไม่ให้เกิดการปรับเปลี่ยนมากเกินไปจนสูญเสียความเป็นต้นตอและความท้าทายเรื่องการรักษาความสมดุลระหว่างการอธิบายและการให้ผู้อ่านเรียนรู้สิ่งใหม่ การปรับมากเกินไปอาจทำให้ผู้อ่านไม่ได้เรียนรู้เกี่ยวกับวัฒนธรรมอื่น แต่การปรับน้อยเกินไปอาจทำให้เข้าใจยาก ดังนั้น การปรับให้เข้ากับวัฒนธรรมปลายทางจึงเป็นศิลปะที่ต้องอาศัยความเข้าใจอย่างลึกซึ้งของทั้งสองวัฒนธรรมและความสามารถในการสร้างสมดุลที่เหมาะสม ความสำเร็จของกลวิธีนี้อยู่ที่การทำให้ผู้อ่านเข้าใจและเข้าถึงวัฒนธรรมต้นฉบับได้โดยไม่สูญเสียความเป็นเอกลักษณ์ การปรับให้เข้ากับวัฒนธรรมปลายทางจึงเป็นเครื่องมือสำคัญในการสร้างความเข้าใจระหว่างวัฒนธรรมและการส่งเสริมการเรียนรู้ข้ามขอบเขตภาษาและวัฒนธรรม กลวิธีนี้จะช่วยทำให้การแปลเป็นประตูสู่ความเข้าใจและความเคารพระหว่างวัฒนธรรมที่แตกต่างกัน

11. การปรับโครงสร้างและการจัดระเบียบเนื้อหา (Restructuring and Reorganization)

การปรับโครงสร้างและการจัดระเบียบเนื้อหาเป็นกลวิธีการแปลที่มีความสำคัญในยุคสมัยที่ข้อมูลมีมากมาย และผู้อ่านต้องการความชัดเจนและการเข้าถึงที่รวดเร็ว ตามแนวคิดของ Nida (2021) การปรับโครงสร้างไม่ได้เป็นเพียงการเปลี่ยนแปลงรูปแบบการนำเสนอแต่เป็นการคิดใหม่เกี่ยวกับวิธีการสื่อสารที่มีประสิทธิภาพสำหรับผู้อ่านในวัฒนธรรมและบริบทใหม่ หลักการสำคัญของการปรับโครงสร้างคือการเข้าใจว่าผู้อ่านในวัฒนธรรมต่างกันมีความคาดหวังและรูปแบบการประมวลข้อมูลที่แตกต่างกันในวัฒนธรรมตะวันตก โดยเฉพาะในการเขียนเชิงวิชาการ ผู้อ่านมักคาดหวังโครงสร้างที่ชัดเจน การจัดลำดับข้อมูลอย่างเป็นระบบ และการแสดงความสัมพันธ์ระหว่างแนวคิดอย่างชัดเจน การปรับโครงสร้างต้องอาศัยความเข้าใจลึกซึ้งเกี่ยวกับจุดประสงค์ของข้อความ กลุ่มผู้อ่านเป้าหมายและบรรทัดฐานการเขียนในวัฒนธรรมปลายทาง ผู้แปลต้องสามารถวิเคราะห์ว่าข้อมูลใดสำคัญที่สุด ควรนำเสนอในลำดับใดและควรเชื่อมโยงกันอย่างไรเพื่อให้เกิดความเข้าใจที่ชัดเจนและครบถ้วน

การวิเคราะห์การแปลจากตัวอย่างในหนังสือ

1) การปรับโครงสร้างคำแนะนำและขั้นตอนปฏิบัติ

ตัวอย่างจากบทที่ 4:

ต้นฉบับภาษาไทย (หน้า 150): ขั้นตอนการจัดเครื่องเซ่นไหว้ ใช้เสื่อกระจูดปูลาดบริเวณหน้าหิ้ง วางหมอนจำนวน 1 ใบ และปูผ้าขาวทับบนหมอนและเสื่อกระจูด...

ฉบับแปลภาษาอังกฤษ (หน้า 95): Steps for arranging the offerings as follows: lay a mat

made of Lepironia in front of the shrine and place one pillow on the mat and cover it with a white cloth. Then place nine candles...

ตัวอย่างจากบทที่ 4 เป็นการแปลคำแนะนำขั้นตอนการปฏิบัติที่มีรายละเอียดมาก ต้นฉบับระบุว่า "ขั้นตอนการจัดเครื่องเซ่นไหว้ ใช้เสื่อกระจูดปูลาดบริเวณหน้าหิ้ง วางหมอนจำนวน 1 ใบ และปูผ้าขาวทับบนหมอนและเสื่อกระจูด..." ผู้แปลตระหนักได้ทันทีว่าโครงสร้างของต้นฉบับนี้ไม่เหมาะสมกับความคาดหวังของผู้อ่านภาษาอังกฤษ ปัญหาหลักของต้นฉบับคือการนำเสนอข้อมูลที่ไหลต่อเนื่องโดยไม่มีการแบ่งขั้นตอนที่ชัดเจน ในภาษาไทยการเขียนแบบนี้อาจเป็นที่ยอมรับได้ แต่สำหรับผู้อ่านภาษาอังกฤษโดยเฉพาะในบริบทของคำแนะนำปฏิบัติ ผู้อ่านคาดหวังการจัดระเบียบที่ชัดเจนและง่ายต่อการปฏิบัติตาม ผู้แปลจึงตัดสินใจปรับโครงสร้างโดยการเริ่มต้นด้วยการระบุชัดเจนว่านี่คือ "Steps for arranging the offerings as follows:" การเพิ่มคำว่า "Steps" และ "as follows:" ช่วยให้ผู้อ่านเตรียมใจสำหรับรายการขั้นตอนที่จะตามมา ซึ่งสอดคล้องกับแบบแผนการเขียนคำแนะนำในภาษาอังกฤษ จากนั้น ผู้แปลแบ่งข้อมูลออกเป็นขั้นตอนย่อย ๆ ที่ชัดเจน ขั้นตอนแรกคือ "lay a mat made of Lepironia in front of the shrine

and place one pillow on the mat and cover it with a white cloth" ซึ่งรวมกิจกรรมที่เกี่ยวข้องกับการเตรียม พื้นฐานไว้ด้วยกัน การรวมนี้ไม่ได้เป็นการละเอียดละเอียด แต่เป็นการจัดกลุ่มกิจกรรมที่เกี่ยวข้องกันให้เป็นหน่วย เดียว การใช้คำเชื่อม "Then" ในประโยคต่อไป "Then place nine candles..." เป็นการสร้างความชัดเจนเกี่ยวกับ ลำดับเวลา ในต้นฉบับภาษาไทยลำดับเวลานี้อาจจะไม่ชัดเจนนัก แต่ในภาษาอังกฤษการใช้คำเชื่อมแสดงลำดับเป็นสิ่ง สำคัญที่ช่วยให้ผู้อ่านสามารถปฏิบัติตามได้อย่างถูกต้อง และการเลือกใช้ "Lepironia" แทนการแปลง "กระจุต" เป็น คำอธิบายทั่วไป เช่น "reed mat" เพื่อคำนึงถึงความแม่นยำ ขณะเดียวกันการเพิ่มคำอธิบาย "made of Lepironia" ก็ ช่วยให้ผู้อ่านที่ไม่คุ้นเคยกับคำนี้เข้าใจว่าเป็นวัสดุจากธรรมชาติ

สรุป

การปรับโครงสร้างและการจัดระเบียบเนื้อหาจะทำให้ผู้อ่านสามารถเข้าใจและปฏิบัติตามคำแนะนำได้ง่ายขึ้น การแบ่งขั้นตอนอย่างชัดเจนและการใช้คำเชื่อมที่เหมาะสมช่วยลดความสับสนและเพิ่มความมั่นใจในการปฏิบัติ นอกจากนี้ ยังช่วยให้งานแปลมีความเป็นมืออาชีพและสอดคล้องกับมาตรฐานการเขียนในภาษาอังกฤษ ผู้อ่านจะรู้สึก คุ้นเคยกับรูปแบบการนำเสนอและสามารถประมวลข้อมูลได้รวดเร็วขึ้น

12. การเลือกใช้คำศัพท์เฉพาะทาง (Terminology Selection)

การเลือกใช้คำศัพท์เฉพาะทางเป็นหนึ่งในกลวิธีการแปลที่มีความสำคัญมากในการแปลเอกสารเชิงวิชาการ โดยเฉพาะเมื่อต้องจัดการกับเนื้อหาที่เกี่ยวข้องกับศาสนา ความเชื่อ และศิลปวัฒนธรรม ตามแนวคิดของ Teresa Cabré (2010) การเลือกใช้คำศัพท์เฉพาะทางไม่ได้เป็นเพียงการหาคำที่ความหมายเหมือนกัน แต่เป็นการสร้างระบบ ความหมายที่สอดคล้องกับบริบททางวิชาการและวัฒนธรรมของภาษาปลายทาง หลักการสำคัญของการเลือกใช้คำ ศัพท์เฉพาะทางคือการเข้าใจว่าคำศัพท์แต่ละคำไม่ได้แยกเดี่ยวแต่เป็นส่วนหนึ่งของระบบคำศัพท์ที่ใหญ่กว่า ในฐานะผู้ แปล ผู้แปลจะพิจารณาว่าคำศัพท์ที่เลือกใช้จะสื่อสารได้อย่างถูกต้องในบริบทของสาขาวิชาที่เกี่ยวข้องและจะเป็นที่ เข้าใจสำหรับผู้อ่านที่มีความรู้พื้นฐานในสาขานั้น ๆ หรือไม่ ความท้าทายหลักในการเลือกใช้คำศัพท์เฉพาะทางคือการ รักษาสมดุลระหว่างความแม่นยำทางเทคนิคและความเข้าใจได้ ผู้แปลต้องเลือกคำศัพท์ที่แม่นยำพอที่จะสื่อสารความ หมายที่ถูกต้องแต่ในขณะเดียวกันก็ต้องไม่ซับซ้อนจนเกินไปสำหรับผู้อ่านเป้าหมาย นอกจากนี้ยังต้องคำนึงถึงการสร้าง ความสอดคล้องในการใช้คำศัพท์ตลอดทั้งเอกสารเพื่อหลีกเลี่ยงความสับสน

การวิเคราะห์การแปลจากตัวอย่างในหนังสือ

1) คำศัพท์ทางศาสนศึกษา

ตัวอย่างจากบทที่ 3:

ต้นฉบับภาษาไทย (หน้า 108): ศาสนาพุทธแม้จะเป็นศาสนาแบบอเทวนิยม แต่ไม่ได้ปฏิเสธการมีอยู่ของ เทวดา

ฉบับแปลภาษาอังกฤษ (หน้า 69): In Buddhism, although it is an atheistic religion, it does not deny the existence of deities.

ตัวอย่างจากบทที่ 3 คือการแปลแนวคิดทางศาสนาที่มีความซับซ้อนและอาจเป็นที่ถกเถียงกันในวงวิชาการ ต้นฉบับระบุว่า "ศาสนาพุทธแม้จะเป็นศาสนาแบบอเทวนิยม แต่ไม่ได้ปฏิเสธการมีอยู่ของเทวดา" การแปลประโยคนี้ต้องอาศัยความเข้าใจลึกซึ้งซึ่งเกี่ยวกับปรัชญาศาสนาและศัพท์เทคนิคที่ใช้ในการศึกษาศาสนาเปรียบเทียบ ผู้แปลต้องเผชิญกับคำว่า "อเทวนิยม" ซึ่งเป็นศัพท์เทคนิคที่มีความหมายเฉพาะ ในการศึกษาศาสนา "อเทวนิยม" หมายถึงระบบความเชื่อที่ไม่ยอมรับการมีอยู่ของพระเจ้าสูงสุดหรือเทพเจ้าที่เป็นผู้สร้างและควบคุมจักรวาลแต่อาจยอมรับการมีอยู่ของสิ่งเหนือธรรมชาติในรูปแบบอื่น การตัดสินใจแปลเป็น "atheistic religion" เป็นการเลือกที่ต้องพิจารณาอย่างรอบคอบ ในทางเทคนิค "atheistic" และ "อเทวนิยม" ไม่ได้มีความหมายเหมือนกันทุกประการ "atheistic" ในภาษาอังกฤษมักหมายถึงการปฏิเสธการมีอยู่ของพระเจ้าหรือเทพเจ้าทุกรูปแบบ ในขณะที่ "อเทวนิยม" มีความหมายที่เฉพาะเจาะจงกว่า อย่างไรก็ตาม ผู้แปลเลือกใช้ "atheistic" เพราะในบริบทของการศึกษาศาสนาเปรียบเทียบ คำนี้ได้รับการยอมรับให้ใช้เพื่ออธิบายลักษณะของพุทธศาสนาที่ไม่มีแนวคิดเรื่องพระเจ้าผู้สร้าง และประโยคที่ตามมาก็ได้อธิบายเพิ่มเติมว่า "it does not deny the existence of deities" ซึ่งช่วยชี้แจงความแตกต่างและป้องกันความเข้าใจผิด ผู้แปลเลือกใช้ "deities" แทน "เทวดา" เพราะเป็นคำศัพท์ที่เหมาะสมในบริบททางวิชาการ "deities" เป็นศัพท์เทคนิคที่ใช้ในการศึกษาศาสนาเปรียบเทียบและมานุษยวิทยา มีความหมายที่กว้างขวางและไม่จำกัดอยู่เพียงวัฒนธรรมใดวัฒนธรรมหนึ่ง

ตัวอย่างจากบทที่ 3:

ต้นฉบับภาษาไทย (หน้า 108): เทวดา คือกลุ่มของกายทิพย์ เชื่อกันว่าอยู่บนสรวงสวรรค์ ตามความเชื่อของศาสนาพราหมณ์

ฉบับแปลภาษาอังกฤษ (หน้า 68): Deities are celestial beings believed to reside in heaven according to Brahmanical beliefs.

ตัวอย่างนี้เป็นการต่อยอดการใช้คำศัพท์เฉพาะทาง ต้นฉบับกล่าวว่า "เทวดา คือกลุ่มของกายทิพย์ เชื่อกันว่าอยู่บนสรวงสวรรค์ ตามความเชื่อของศาสนาพราหมณ์" การแปลนี้ต้องจัดการกับศัพท์เทคนิคหลายคำที่เชื่อมโยงกัน การแปล "กายทิพย์" เป็น "celestial beings" ผู้แปลเห็นว่าเป็นคำศัพท์ที่แม่นยำและเหมาะสมกับบริบททางวิชาการ "celestial beings" เป็นศัพท์ที่ใช้ในการศึกษาศาสนาและมานุษยวิทยาเพื่ออธิบายสิ่งมีชีวิตที่มีธรรมชาติเหนือมนุษย์และเกี่ยวข้องกับโลกแห่งสวรรค์ คำนี้มีความกว้างขวางพอที่จะครอบคลุมแนวคิดของ "กายทิพย์" ซึ่งรวมถึงเทวดา นางฟ้าและสิ่งมีชีวิตศักดิ์สิทธิ์อื่น ๆ และการเลือกใช้ "Brahmanical beliefs" แทน "ศาสนาพราหมณ์" ก็เพื่อแสดงให้เห็นถึงความละเอียดในการเลือกคำศัพท์ คำว่า "Brahmanical" เป็นศัพท์เทคนิคที่เฉพาะเจาะจงกว่า "Hindu" ในบริบทนี้ คำว่า "ศาสนาพราหมณ์" หมายถึงรูปแบบเฉพาะของความเชื่อที่เน้นบทบาทของชนชั้นพราหมณ์และพิธีกรรม ไม่ใช่ศาสนาฮินดูในความหมายกว้าง

2) คำศัพท์ทางมานุษยวิทยาและศาสนศึกษา

ตัวอย่างจากบทที่ 3:

ต้นฉบับภาษาไทย (หน้า 123): ทวดหลักเขต เชื่อกันว่ามีอยู่หลายองค์ มีรูปร่างเป็นคน เสือและงู

ฉบับแปลภาษาอังกฤษ (หน้า 79): Thuat Lak Khet, it is believed to be multiple entities with the forms of humans, tigers, and snakes

การแปลเรื่อง "ทวดหลักเขต" เป็นความท้าทายในการเลือกคำศัพท์สำหรับแนวคิดที่ไม่มีคำเทียบเคียงตรงในวัฒนธรรมปลายทาง เมื่อต้นฉบับระบุว่า "ทวดหลักเขต เชื่อกันว่ามีอยู่หลายองค์ มีรูปร่างเป็นคน เสือและงู" การแปลนี้ต้องจัดการกับแนวคิดเรื่องสิ่งศักดิ์สิทธิ์ในความเชื่อพื้นบ้าน การตัดสินใจเลือกใช้ "entities" แทนคำอื่น ๆ เช่น "spirits," "beings," หรือ "deities" ผู้แปลได้พิจารณาอย่างรอบคอบแล้ว "entities" เป็นศัพท์เทคนิคที่ใช้ในมานุษยวิทยาและการศึกษาความเชื่อพื้นบ้าน มีความหมายกว้างขวางและไม่จำกัดรูปแบบหรือลักษณะสิ่งที่อธิบาย ส่วนคำว่า "spirits" อาจมีนัยของสิ่งที่ไม่มียาร่างกายซึ่งไม่สอดคล้องกับการอธิบายว่า "มีรูปร่างเป็นคน เสือและงู" และคำว่า "beings" อาจเหมาะสมแต่มักใช้กับสิ่งมีชีวิตที่มีสติปัญญา ส่วน "deities" อาจมีนัยของการเป็นเทพเจ้าที่สูงเกินไป การใช้ "entities" จึงเป็นการเลือกที่สามารถครอบคลุมความซับซ้อนของแนวคิด "ทวดหลักเขต" ได้ดีที่สุด และการใช้ "multiple entities" แทน "มีอยู่หลายองค์" เป็นการปรับใช้คำศัพท์เทคนิคให้เหมาะสมกับโครงสร้างภาษาอังกฤษ "multiple entities" สื่อถึงการมีอยู่ของสิ่งเดียวกันในรูปแบบหลายรูปแบบ ซึ่งสอดคล้องกับแนวคิดที่ว่า "ทวดหลักเขต" สามารถปรากฏในรูปแบบต่าง ๆ ได้

3) คำศัพท์ทางไสยศาสตร์และความเชื่อ

ตัวอย่างจากบทที่ 3:

ต้นฉบับภาษาไทย (หน้า 103): เพตหรืออาเพศ คือสิ่งที่เป็นมูลเหตุให้เกิดความเจ็บป่วยของบุคคล อาจเกิดจากทั้งวิญญาณฝ่ายดีและวิญญาณฝ่ายชั่วร้าย

ฉบับแปลภาษาอังกฤษ (หน้า 66): "Phet" or "Aphet (bad omen)" refers to the cause of an individual's illness, which may stem from either benevolent or malevolent spirits

ตัวอย่างนี้เป็นความท้าทายในการเลือกคำศัพท์สำหรับแนวคิดที่เกี่ยวข้องกับไสยศาสตร์และความเชื่อเรื่องสาเหตุของความเจ็บป่วย ต้นฉบับกล่าวว่า "เพตหรืออาเพศ คือสิ่งที่เป็นมูลเหตุให้เกิดความเจ็บป่วยของบุคคล อาจเกิดจากทั้งวิญญาณฝ่ายดีและวิญญาณฝ่ายชั่วร้าย" การแปลต้องจัดการกับแนวคิดที่ซับซ้อนและอาจก่อให้เกิดการเข้าใจผิดได้ง่าย ผู้แปลตัดสินใจคง "Ped" และ "Apet" ไว้ในการทับศัพท์แล้วเพิ่มคำอธิบาย "(bad omen)" สำหรับ "Apet" เพื่อเป็นการสร้างสมดุลระหว่างการรักษาความเป็นเอกลักษณ์และการให้ความเข้าใจ การใช้ "bad omen" เป็นการเลือกคำศัพท์ที่มีความหมายใกล้เคียงและเป็นที่ยอมรับในวัฒนธรรมตะวันตก การแปล "วิญญาณฝ่ายดีและวิญญาณฝ่าย

ชั่วร้าย" เป็น "benevolent or malevolent spirits" คือการใช้คำศัพท์เฉพาะทาง เพราะ "benevolent" และ "malevolent" เป็นศัพท์เทคนิคที่ใช้ในการศึกษาเรื่องจิตวิญญาณและความเชื่อเหนือธรรมชาติ คำเหล่านี้มีความหมายที่ชัดเจนและเป็นที่ยอมรับในวงวิชาการ "benevolent" สื่อถึงความปรารถนาดีและการให้ความช่วยเหลือ ในขณะที่ "malevolent" สื่อถึงความต้องการทำร้ายหรือก่อให้เกิดความทุกข์ การใช้คำทั้งสองนี้ช่วยให้ผู้อ่านเข้าใจว่าในแนวคิดของ "เพต" หรือ "อาเพต" สาเหตุของความเจ็บป่วยไม่ได้มาจากสิ่งชั่วร้ายเท่านั้นแต่อาจมาจากสิ่งที่ดีด้วย ซึ่งเป็นแนวคิดที่ซับซ้อนและน่าสนใจในการศึกษาระบบความเชื่อ

สรุป

การเลือกใช้คำศัพท์เฉพาะทางส่งผลต่อความน่าเชื่อถือและความแม่นยำทางวิชาการ การใช้คำศัพท์ที่เป็นมาตรฐานในวงวิชาการช่วยให้งานแปลสามารถเชื่อมโยงกับงานวิจัยและการศึกษาอื่น ๆ ในสาขาเดียวกันได้ นอกจากนี้ การเลือกใช้คำศัพท์เฉพาะทางยังช่วยสร้างความสอดคล้องภายในเอกสาร เมื่อผู้แปลใช้ระบบคำศัพท์ที่สอดคล้องกันตลอดทั้งเอกสาร ผู้อ่านจะสามารถติดตามการอภิปรายได้ง่ายขึ้นและไม่เกิดความสับสนจากการใช้คำที่แตกต่างกันสำหรับแนวคิดเดียวกัน การเลือกใช้คำศัพท์เฉพาะทางเป็นกลวิธีการแปลที่ต้องอาศัยความรู้เฉพาะทางและความเข้าใจลึกซึ้งเกี่ยวกับระบบคำศัพท์ในสาขาต่าง ๆ การใช้คำศัพท์เฉพาะทางจึงเป็นเครื่องมือสำคัญในการยกระดับคุณภาพของงานแปลและทำให้เกิดการสื่อสารที่มีประสิทธิภาพในวงวิชาการ

13. การเทียบเคียงแนวคิด (Conceptual Equivalence)

การเทียบเคียงแนวคิดเป็นหนึ่งในกลวิธีการแปลที่มีความซับซ้อนและท้าทายมากเนื่องจากเกี่ยวข้องกับการถ่ายทอดแนวคิดที่อาจไม่มีความเท่าเทียมกันโดยตรงระหว่างสองวัฒนธรรม ตามแนวคิดของ Eugene Nida (2021) และ Peter Newmark (1988) การเทียบเคียงแนวคิดไม่ได้เป็นเพียงการหาคำที่มีความหมายคล้ายกัน แต่เป็นการสร้างความเข้าใจที่เท่าเทียมกันเกี่ยวกับแก่นแท้ของความหมายและหน้าที่ของแนวคิดนั้น ๆ หลักการสำคัญของการเทียบเคียงแนวคิดคือการเข้าใจว่าแนวคิดแต่ละแนวคิดมีมิติหลายประการ ไม่ว่าจะเป็นมิติเชิงความหมาย มิติเชิงหน้าที่ มิติเชิงอารมณ์ และมิติเชิงวัฒนธรรม ในการแปล ผู้แปลต้องวิเคราะห์แนวคิดในภาษาต้นฉบับในทุกมิติเหล่านี้แล้วจึงหาวิธีสร้างความเข้าใจที่ใกล้เคียงที่สุดในภาษาปลายทาง ความท้าทายหลักของการเทียบเคียงแนวคิดอยู่ที่การจัดการกับความแตกต่างทางวัฒนธรรม แนวคิดหนึ่งอาจมีความสำคัญหรือความหมายเฉพาะในวัฒนธรรมหนึ่งแต่อาจไม่มีสิ่งที่เทียบเคียงได้ในอีกวัฒนธรรมหนึ่ง ผู้แปลจึงต้องสร้างสรรค์วิธีการถ่ายทอดแก่นของแนวคิดโดยใช้องค์ประกอบที่มีอยู่ในวัฒนธรรมปลายทาง

การวิเคราะห์การแปลจากตัวอย่างในหนังสือ

1) การแปลแนวคิดเรื่องการตกแต่งร่างกายในพิธีกรรม

ตัวอย่างจากบทที่ 2:

ต้นฉบับภาษาไทย (หน้า 79): การแต่งพอก

ตัวอย่างจากบทที่ 2 เป็นแนวคิดที่เกี่ยวข้องกับการเตรียมตัวสำหรับพิธีกรรมการแต่งพอก ต้นฉบับใช้คำว่า "การแต่งพอก" การแปลคำนี้ต้องอาศัยความเข้าใจลึกซึ้งเกี่ยวกับความหมายและบริบทของการกระทำนี้ในวัฒนธรรมไทย ผู้แปลได้วิเคราะห์ว่า "การแต่งพอก" หมายถึงอะไรในบริบทของการแสดงโนรา คำว่า "แต่ง" หมายถึงการตกแต่งหรือการเตรียม ส่วน "พอก" หมายถึงการเอาสิ่งต่าง ๆ มาใส่หรือมาประดับ เมื่อรวมกันแล้ว "การแต่งพอก" หมายถึงกระบวนการตกแต่งร่างกายและการแต่งกายเพื่อเตรียมตัวสำหรับการแสดง อย่างไรก็ตาม การแปลตรงตัวว่า "dressing up" หรือ "putting on makeup" จะไม่สามารถสื่อสารความสำคัญและความศักดิ์สิทธิ์ของกระบวนการนี้ได้ ในบริบทของโนรา "การแต่งพอก" ไม่ใช่เพียงการแต่งหน้าแต่งตัวธรรมดา แต่เป็นส่วนหนึ่งของพิธีกรรมการเปลี่ยนแปลงจากคนธรรมดาเป็นนักแสดงที่มีพลังศักดิ์สิทธิ์ การตัดสินใจแปลเป็น "Adornment Ritual" จึงเป็นการใช้กลยุทธ์การเทียบเคียงแนวคิดอย่างลึกซึ้ง คำว่า "Adornment" มีความหมายกว้างกว่าการแต่งตัวธรรมดา หมายถึงการประดับตกแต่งด้วยความเคารพและความระมัดระวัง มักใช้ในบริบทของศิลปะ ศาสนา และพิธีกรรม การเพิ่มคำว่า "Ritual" เป็นสิ่งสำคัญที่ช่วยสื่อสารมิติทางจิตวิญญาณและความศักดิ์สิทธิ์ของกระบวนการนี้ คำว่า "Ritual" ในภาษาอังกฤษสื่อถึงการกระทำที่มีความหมายเชิงสัญลักษณ์ มีขั้นตอนที่กำหนดไว้ และมักเกี่ยวข้องกับการเปลี่ยนแปลงสถานะหรือการเชื่อมต่อกับสิ่งศักดิ์สิทธิ์ การรวมกันของ "Adornment" และ "Ritual" จึงสามารถสื่อสารแก่นใจของ "การแต่งพอก" ได้อย่างครบถ้วน ผู้อ่านภาษาอังกฤษจะเข้าใจว่าไม่ใช่การแต่งตัวธรรมดา แต่เป็นพิธีกรรมที่มีความหมายและความสำคัญเฉพาะที่เกี่ยวข้องกับการเตรียมตัวทั้งทางกายและทางใจสำหรับการแสดงที่มีมิติทางจิตวิญญาณ

2) การแปลแนวคิดเรื่องการเคลื่อนไหวในพิธีกรรม

ตัวอย่างจากบทที่ 2:

ต้นฉบับภาษาไทย (หน้า 85): การเวียนแวน

ฉบับแปลภาษาอังกฤษ (หน้า 53): Sacred circling

ตัวอย่างจากบทที่ 2 เป็นการแปลที่มีความซับซ้อนเพราะแนวคิดเรื่องการเคลื่อนไหวที่มีความหมายเชิงพิธีกรรม ต้นฉบับใช้คำว่า "การเวียนแวน" การแปลคำนี้ต้องอาศัยความเข้าใจความหมายทั้งในระดับการกระทำและในระดับสัญลักษณ์ ผู้แปลได้วิเคราะห์หาคำประกอบของคำว่า "เวียนแวน" คำว่า "เวียน" หมายถึงการเคลื่อนไหวเป็นวงกลม หรือการหมุนรอบจุดศูนย์กลาง ส่วน "แวน" ในบริบทนี้ไม่ได้หมายถึงแวนตาแต่มีความหมายเกี่ยวกับการส่องดูหรือการตรวจสอบ เมื่อรวมกันแล้ว "การเวียนแวน" หมายถึงการเคลื่อนไหวเป็นวงกลมที่มีจุดประสงค์เฉพาะ อย่างไรก็ตาม ความหมายของ "การเวียนแวน" ไม่ได้หยุดอยู่เพียงการเคลื่อนไหวทางกายภาพ ในบริบทของพิธีกรรมโนรา การเคลื่อนไหวนี้มีความหมายเชิงสัญลักษณ์ที่ลึกซึ้ง เป็นการสร้างพื้นที่ศักดิ์สิทธิ์ การเชื่อมต่อกับพลังเหนือธรรมชาติ และการปกป้องหรือการเสริมพลัง ผู้แปลตัดสินใจแปลเป็น "Sacred circling" โดยใช้กลยุทธ์การเทียบเคียงแนวคิดที่ต้องการความสร้างสรรค์และความเข้าใจลึกซึ้ง คำว่า "Sacred" เป็นคำหลักที่สื่อสารมิติทางจิตวิญญาณและความศักดิ์สิทธิ์ของการกระทำนี้ ผู้แปลเลือกใช้ "Sacred" แทนคำอื่น ๆ เช่น "Holy" หรือ "Religious" เพราะคำนึงถึง

ความหมายที่กว้างและไม่จำกัดอยู่ในกรอบศาสนาใดศาสนาหนึ่ง คำว่า "Circling" สื่อถึงการเคลื่อนไหวเป็นวงกลมอย่างมีจุดประสงค์ ในหลายวัฒนธรรมการเคลื่อนไหวเป็นวงกลมมีความหมายเชิงพิธีกรรมและจิตวิญญาณ เช่น การสร้างพื้นที่ศักดิ์สิทธิ์ การเรียกพลัง หรือการปกป้อง ผู้อ่านที่มีความรู้เกี่ยวกับพิธีกรรมในวัฒนธรรมต่าง ๆ จะสามารถเชื่อมโยงและเข้าใจความหมายได้ การรวมกันของ "Sacred" และ "Circling" จึงสามารถสื่อสารแก่นใจของ "การเวียนวน" ได้อย่างมีประสิทธิภาพ แม้ว่าจะไม่ใช่การแปลตรงตัวแต่ก็สามารถสร้างความเข้าใจที่ใกล้เคียงเกี่ยวกับความหมายและความสำคัญของการกระทำนี้ในบริบทของพิธีกรรมโนรา

สรุป

การเทียบเคียงแนวคิดเป็นกลวิธีการแปลที่ต้องอาศัยความคิดสร้างสรรค์ ความเข้าใจที่ลึกซึ้งทั้งสองวัฒนธรรมและความสามารถในการวิเคราะห์แนวคิดในหลายมิติ ความสำเร็จของกลวิธีนี้ขึ้นอยู่กับความสามารถของผู้แปลในการจับจิตวิญญาณของแนวคิดและสร้างสิ่งที่เทียบเคียงได้ในวัฒนธรรมปลายทาง การเทียบเคียงแนวคิดจึงเป็นอีกหนึ่งเครื่องมือสำคัญในการสร้างเข้าใจระหว่างวัฒนธรรมและการทำให้ผู้อ่านสามารถเข้าถึงและซาบซึ้งในความหมายและความงดงามของแนวคิดจากวัฒนธรรมอื่น

14. การปรับเปลี่ยนทางวัฒนธรรม (Cultural Adaptation)

การปรับเปลี่ยนทางวัฒนธรรมเป็นกลวิธีการแปลที่มีความซับซ้อนและต้องอาศัยความไวทางวัฒนธรรมสูงตามแนวคิดของ Katan and Taibi (2021) ผู้แปลในบริบทนี้ไม่ได้เป็นเพียงผู้ถ่ายทอดความหมายจากภาษาหนึ่งไปยังอีกภาษาหนึ่งแต่ต้องทำหน้าที่เป็น "คนกลางทางวัฒนธรรม" (cultural mediator) ที่ช่วยเชื่อมโยงและอธิบายความแตกต่างทางวัฒนธรรมให้ผู้อ่านเข้าใจ หลักการสำคัญของการปรับเปลี่ยนทางวัฒนธรรมคือการเข้าใจว่าความหมายของคำหรือแนวคิดไม่ได้อยู่ในตัวของมันเองเพียงอย่างเดียวแต่ถูกสร้างขึ้นและกำหนดโดยบริบททางวัฒนธรรม สังคม และประวัติศาสตร์ ผู้แปลต้องตระหนักว่าการถ่ายทอดแนวคิดจากวัฒนธรรมหนึ่งไปยังอีกวัฒนธรรมหนึ่งต้องคำนึงถึงกรอบการทำความเข้าใจและประสบการณ์ของผู้อ่านในวัฒนธรรมปลายทาง ความท้าทายของการปรับเปลี่ยนทางวัฒนธรรมอยู่ที่การสร้างสมดุลระหว่างการอธิบายและการปล่อยให้ผู้อ่านเรียนรู้ การปรับเปลี่ยนมากเกินไปอาจทำให้สูญเสียความเป็นเอกลักษณ์ของวัฒนธรรมต้นฉบับแต่การปรับเปลี่ยนน้อยเกินไปอาจทำให้ผู้อ่านไม่เข้าใจหรือเข้าใจผิด ผู้แปลจึงต้องใช้ดุลยพินิจในการตัดสินใจว่าควรปรับเปลี่ยนในระดับใด

การวิเคราะห์การแปลจากตัวอย่างในหนังสือ

1) การปรับบริบทเพื่อความเข้าใจที่ดีขึ้น

ตัวอย่างจากบทที่ 5:

ต้นฉบับภาษาไทย (หน้า 199): ปัจจุบันความนิยมวงดนตรีลูกทุ่งและละครโนราลดลง

ฉบับแปลภาษาอังกฤษ (หน้า 125): Currently, the popularity of Thai folk music and Nora drama has decreased.

ตัวอย่างจากบทที่ 5 แสดงให้เห็นถึงการปรับเปลี่ยนทางวัฒนธรรมในลักษณะที่ต่างออกไป เมื่อต้นฉบับกล่าวว่า "ปัจจุบันความนิยมดนตรีลูกทุ่งและละครโนราลดลง" การแปลประโยคนี้นี้ต้องจัดการกับศัพท์เฉพาะทางวัฒนธรรมที่ผู้อ่านต่างชาติอาจไม่คุ้นเคย ผู้แปลพิจารณาว่า "ลูกทุ่ง" เป็นแนวเพลงที่เฉพาะเจาะจงของไทยและการแปลตรงตัวเป็น "country music" อาจทำให้เกิดความเข้าใจผิดว่าเป็นแนวเพลงคันทรี่แบบอเมริกันซึ่งแม้จะมีลักษณะบางอย่างคล้ายกันแต่ก็มีความแตกต่างที่สำคัญทั้งในเรื่องของดนตรี เนื้อหา และบริบททางสังคม การแปลเป็น "Currently, the popularity of Thai folk music and Nora drama has decreased" เป็นการปรับเปลี่ยนทางวัฒนธรรมที่รับได้ ผู้แปลเพิ่ม "Thai" หน้า "folk music" เพื่อช่วยให้ผู้อ่านเข้าใจว่าเป็นแนวเพลงพื้นบ้านของไทยโดยเฉพาะ ไม่ใช่แนวเพลงพื้นบ้านทั่วไปหรือแนวเพลงจากประเทศอื่น การใช้ "folk music" แทน "country music" เป็นการเลือกคำศัพท์ที่กว้างขวางและไม่สร้างความสับสน "folk music" มีความหมายที่ครอบคลุมแนวเพลงที่มีรากฐานมาจากประชาชนและสะท้อนวิถีชีวิตของผู้คนซึ่งสอดคล้องกับลักษณะของเพลงลูกทุ่งมากกว่า "country music" ที่มีความหมายเฉพาะเจาะจงในบริบทของดนตรีอเมริกัน การปรับเปลี่ยนนี้ช่วยให้ผู้อ่านเข้าใจบริบทของการเปลี่ยนแปลงทางวัฒนธรรมในประเทศไทยโดยไม่ต้องเข้าใจรายละเอียดเฉพาะเจาะจงของแนวเพลงลูกทุ่ง ขณะเดียวกันก็ยังคงรักษาความหมายหลักของประโยคไว้ คือการลดลงของความนิยมในรูปแบบบันเทิงแบบดั้งเดิม และการคง "Nora drama" ก็เพื่อแสดงให้เห็นถึงการสร้างสมดุลระหว่างการปรับเปลี่ยนและการรักษาเอกลักษณ์ เนื่องจาก "โนรา" เป็นศิลปะการแสดงที่เฉพาะเจาะจงและไม่มีสิ่งที่เทียบเคียงได้ในวัฒนธรรมตะวันตก การใช้ "Nora drama" ช่วยรักษาความเป็นเอกลักษณ์ขณะเดียวกันก็ให้ข้อมูลพื้นฐานว่าเป็นรูปแบบหนึ่งของการแสดงละคร

สรุป

การปรับเปลี่ยนทางวัฒนธรรมสร้างผลกระทบที่สำคัญต่อความเข้าใจและการเรียนรู้ของผู้อ่าน ตามในตัวอย่าง ผู้อ่านได้รับความเข้าใจเกี่ยวกับการเปลี่ยนแปลงทางวัฒนธรรมในประเทศไทยในบริบทที่พวกเขาสามารถเข้าใจได้ การใช้ "Thai folk music" ช่วยให้ผู้อ่านสามารถเชื่อมโยงกับแนวคิดเรื่องดนตรีพื้นบ้านในวัฒนธรรมของตนเอง และเข้าใจถึงความสำคัญและความหมายของการเปลี่ยนแปลงที่เกิดขึ้น ดังนั้น การปรับเปลี่ยนทางวัฒนธรรมเป็นกลวิธีการแปลที่มีความสำคัญและความซับซ้อนสูง จะต้องอาศัยความเข้าใจที่ลึกซึ้งของทั้งสองวัฒนธรรมและความสามารถในการสร้างสมดุลระหว่างความซื่อสัตย์ต่อต้นฉบับและความเข้าใจได้ของผู้อ่านปลายทาง ผู้แปลเชื่อว่าการแปลโดยมีกลวิธีการปรับเปลี่ยนทางวัฒนธรรมที่เหมาะสมจะช่วยสร้างความเข้าใจ ความเคารพ และความสนใจในวัฒนธรรมต้นฉบับ ขณะเดียวกันก็ช่วยให้ผู้อ่านในวัฒนธรรมปลายทางเข้าถึงและเรียนรู้จากความรู้และประสบการณ์ของวัฒนธรรมอื่น การปรับเปลี่ยนทางวัฒนธรรมจึงเป็นอีกเครื่องมือสำคัญในการส่งเสริมความเข้าใจและความร่วมมือระหว่างวัฒนธรรมและการสร้างโลกที่มีความหลากหลายและเข้าใจซึ่งกันและกัน

15. การปรับเปลี่ยนโครงสร้างทางภาษา (Structural Adaptation)

การปรับเปลี่ยนโครงสร้างทางภาษาเป็นกลวิธีการแปลที่มีความจำเป็นสูงเมื่อต้องจัดการกับความแตกต่างทางไวยากรณ์และรูปแบบการสื่อสารระหว่างภาษาต้นฉบับและภาษาปลายทาง ตามแนวคิดของ J.C. Catford (1965) การปรับเปลี่ยนโครงสร้างไม่ได้เป็นเพียงการเปลี่ยนแปลงรูปแบบเพื่อให้ถูกต้องตามไวยากรณ์ แต่เป็นการสร้างสรรค์

โครงสร้างใหม่ที่สามารถสื่อสารความหมายได้อย่างมีประสิทธิภาพและเป็นธรรมชาติในภาษาปลายทาง หลักการสำคัญของการปรับเปลี่ยนโครงสร้างทางภาษาคือการเข้าใจว่าภาษาแต่ละภาษามีธรรมชาติและรูปแบบการจัดระเบียบข้อมูลที่แตกต่างกัน ผู้แปลตระหนักว่าการยึดติดกับโครงสร้างของภาษาต้นฉบับอาจทำให้งานแปลไม่เป็นธรรมชาติหรือยากต่อการเข้าใจ การปรับเปลี่ยนโครงสร้างจึงเป็นเครื่องมือสำคัญในการสร้างงานแปลที่มีคุณภาพ ความท้าทายของการปรับเปลี่ยนโครงสร้างอยู่ที่การรักษาความหมายและเจตนาของต้นฉบับไว้ในขณะที่ปรับเปลี่ยนรูปแบบการนำเสนอ ผู้แปลต้องมีความเข้าใจลึกซึ้งเกี่ยวกับข้อมูลที่สำคัญ ความสัมพันธ์ระหว่างแนวคิดต่าง ๆ และวิธีการที่จะจัดระเบียบข้อมูลเหล่านี้ให้มีความชัดเจนและง่ายต่อการติดตามในภาษาปลายทาง

การวิเคราะห์การแปลจากตัวอย่างในหนังสือ

1) การปรับโครงสร้างประโยคเพื่อความชัดเจนและการจัดระเบียบ

ตัวอย่างจากบทที่ 2:

ต้นฉบับภาษาไทย (หน้า 86): ฉากแรกของบทจะเข้าสู่ชาละวัน กล่าวถึงตอนจะเข้าสู่ชาละวันนอนหลับและฝันเป็นลางร้ายว่ามีแรงกามาจिर่างกาย มีไฟไหม้ถ้ำทองที่อยู่อาศัย หินในถ้ำหล่นลงมาทับร่างกายและเขี้ยวแก้วทั้งสองข้างหักออกมา

ฉบับแปลภาษาอังกฤษ (หน้า 54): The first scene of the Chalawan Crocodile story describes how the Chalawan Crocodile is sleeping and dreams of ominous signs. The dream involves vultures attacking its body, a fire burning down its golden cave, falling rocks crushing its body, and the breaking of its precious fangs.

ตัวอย่างจากบทที่ 2 เป็นการจัดการกับประโยคที่มีข้อมูลหนาแน่นและซับซ้อน ต้นฉบับระบุว่า "ฉากแรกของบทจะเข้าสู่ชาละวัน กล่าวถึงตอนจะเข้าสู่ชาละวันนอนหลับและฝันเป็นลางร้ายว่ามีแรงกามาจिर่างกาย มีไฟไหม้ถ้ำทองที่อยู่อาศัย หินในถ้ำหล่นลงมาทับร่างกายและเขี้ยวแก้วทั้งสองข้างหักออกมา" การแปลประโยคยาวและซับซ้อนนี้ต้องอาศัยการวิเคราะห์และจัดระเบียบข้อมูลอย่างรอบคอบ ผู้แปลวิเคราะห์ว่าประโยคนี้ประกอบด้วยองค์ประกอบหลักสามส่วนคือ การระบุฉากที่กำลังพูดถึง การอธิบายสถานการณ์หลัก (การนอนหลับและฝันร้าย) และรายละเอียดของเนื้อหาในความฝัน การนำเสนอข้อมูลทั้งหมดในประโยคเดียวในภาษาอังกฤษจะทำให้ผู้อ่านรู้สึกท่วมท้นและยากต่อการประมวลผล จึงตัดสินใจแยกเป็นสองประโยคในงานแปล โดยประโยคแรก "The first scene of the Chalawan Crocodile story describes how the Chalawan Crocodile is sleeping and dreams of ominous signs" เป็นการตั้งโครงสร้างและอธิบายสถานการณ์หลัก ประโยคนี้ช่วยให้ผู้อ่านเข้าใจบริบทและเตรียมใจสำหรับรายละเอียดที่จะตามมา ประโยคที่สอง "The dream involves vultures attacking its body, a fire burning down its golden cave, falling rocks crushing its body, and the breaking of its precious fangs" เป็นการจัดระเบียบรายละเอียดของความฝันในรูปแบบของรายการที่ชัดเจน การใช้โครงสร้าง "The dream involves..." ช่วยสร้างความเชื่อมโยงที่ชัดเจน

กับประโยคก่อนหน้า และการใช้รูปแบบโครงสร้างคู่ขนาน (Parallel structure) ในการนำเสนอเหตุการณ์ต่าง ๆ ทำให้ผู้อ่านสามารถติดตามและจำรายละเอียดได้ง่ายขึ้น การปรับเปลี่ยนนี้ยังคำนึงถึงจังหวะและการไหลของการอ่านในภาษาอังกฤษ การแยกข้อมูลเป็นสองส่วนช่วยสร้างจังหวะที่เหมาะสม ไม่เร่งรีบเกินไปและไม่ช้าเกินไป ผู้อ่านมีเวลาในการประมวลผลข้อมูลแต่ละส่วนก่อนที่จะไปยังส่วนถัดไป และการเลือกใช้คำศัพท์เช่น "ominous signs" แทนการแปลตรงตัวว่า "bad dream" หรือ "nightmare" เพื่อคำนึงถึงบรรยากาศและความหมายเชิงลึกลับ เพราะ "ominous signs" สื่อถึงลางร้ายที่มีนัยสำคัญและอาจส่งผลกระทบต่ออนาคตซึ่งสอดคล้องกับลักษณะของความฝันในวรรณกรรมไทย

2) การรวมและแยกประโยคเพื่อประสิทธิภาพการสื่อสาร

ตัวอย่างจากบทที่ 2:

ต้นฉบับภาษาไทย (หน้า 56): การตั้งเครื่องคือการบรรเลงดนตรีเพื่อแสดงความเคารพและบอกกล่าวแก่ครูหมอโนราของเจ้าภาพให้รับรู้ถึงการมาของคณะโนรา และเป็นการประชาสัมพันธ์ให้ผู้คนที่มาชมรับทราบด้วย

ฉบับแปลภาษาอังกฤษ (หน้า 35): Performing the instruments involves performing music to show respect and inform Khru Mo Nora of the host about the arrival of the Nora troupe. It also serves to publicize the event to the community.

ตัวอย่างจากบทที่ 2 การแสดงแนวทางที่แตกต่างในการปรับโครงสร้างเมื่อต้นฉบับมีประโยคยาวที่มีข้อมูลหลายประเด็น "การตั้งเครื่องคือการบรรเลงดนตรีเพื่อแสดงความเคารพและบอกกล่าวแก่ครูหมอโนราของเจ้าภาพให้รับรู้ถึงการมาของคณะโนรา และเป็นการประชาสัมพันธ์ให้ผู้คนที่มาชมรับทราบด้วย" การจัดการกับประโยคนี้ต้องอาศัยการวิเคราะห์ข้อมูลที่ซับซ้อน ผู้แปลวิเคราะห์ว่าประโยคนี้มีโครงสร้างที่ซับซ้อน ประกอบด้วยคำนิยาม (การตั้งเครื่องคือ...) จุดประสงค์หลัก (แสดงความเคารพและแจ้งข่าว) และจุดประสงค์รอง (การประชาสัมพันธ์) การนำเสนอข้อมูลทั้งหมดในประโยคเดียวอาจทำให้ผู้อ่านสับสนเกี่ยวกับความสำคัญสัมพัทธ์ของแต่ละจุดประสงค์ จึงตัดสินใจแยกเป็นสองประโยคในงานแปล ประโยคแรก "Performing the instruments involves performing music to show respect and inform Khru Mo Nora of the host about the arrival of the Nora troupe" เน้นที่จุดประสงค์หลักและสำคัญที่สุดของการปฏิบัติ การใช้ "involves" แทน "คือ" ช่วยสร้างความรู้สึกของกระบวนการที่มีหลายองค์ประกอบ ประโยคที่สอง "It also serves to publicize the event to the community" เป็นการอธิบายจุดประสงค์เพิ่มเติมอย่างชัดเจน การใช้ "It also serves to..." ช่วยแสดงให้เห็นว่าเป็นหน้าที่รองที่เกิดขึ้นควบคู่กันไปแต่ไม่ใช่จุดประสงค์หลัก การแยกนี้ช่วยให้ผู้อ่านเข้าใจลำดับความสำคัญและสามารถจดจำข้อมูลได้ดีขึ้น การปรับเปลี่ยนนี้ยังคำนึงถึงรูปแบบการเขียนเชิงวิชาการในภาษาอังกฤษที่นิยมการแยกแนวคิดที่แตกต่างกันออกเป็นประโยคที่ชัดเจน และการใช้คำเชื่อม "also" ช่วยสร้างความต่อเนื่องและแสดงความสัมพันธ์ระหว่างสองแนวคิด

การปรับเปลี่ยนโครงสร้างทางภาษาช่วยการสื่อสารที่มีประสิทธิภาพมากขึ้น ในตัวอย่างแรก ผู้อ่านสามารถติดตามเรื่องราวและจินตนาการถึงฉากในความฝันได้อย่างชัดเจน การจัดระเบียบข้อมูลช่วยให้ผู้อ่านสามารถสร้างภาพ

ในใจและเข้าใจความสำคัญของความผันในโครงเรื่อง ในตัวอย่างที่สอง ผู้อ่านได้รับความเข้าใจที่ชัดเจนเกี่ยวกับจุดประสงค์และความสำคัญของ "การตั้งเครื่อง" การแยกจุดประสงค์ออกเป็นสองส่วนช่วยให้ผู้อ่านเข้าใจทั้งมิติทางจิตวิญญาณ (การแสดงความรัก) และมิติทางสังคม (การประชาสัมพันธ์) ของพิธีกรรมนี้ การปรับเปลี่ยนโครงสร้างยังช่วยให้งานแปลมีความเป็นมืออาชีพและสอดคล้องกับบรรทัดฐานการเขียนในภาษาอังกฤษ ผู้อ่านจะรู้สึกคุ้นเคยกับรูปแบบการนำเสนอและสามารถประมวลข้อมูลได้รวดเร็วขึ้น การปรับเปลี่ยนโครงสร้างทางภาษาจึงเป็นกลวิธีการแปลที่มีความสำคัญสูงในการสร้างงานแปลที่มีคุณภาพ การปรับเปลี่ยนโครงสร้างที่เหมาะสมจะช่วยให้งานแปลมีความชัดเจน เข้าใจง่าย และเป็นธรรมชาติ ซึ่งจะส่งผลให้เกิดการสื่อสารที่มีประสิทธิภาพระหว่างผู้เขียนและผู้อ่านข้ามขอบเขตภาษาและวัฒนธรรม และสามารถเป็นเครื่องมือสำคัญในการยกระดับคุณภาพของงานแปลและทำให้เกิดประสบการณ์การอ่านที่ดีสำหรับผู้อ่านในวัฒนธรรมปลายทาง

สรุป

การแปลข้ามวัฒนธรรมเป็นกระบวนการที่ซับซ้อนและต้องอาศัยทักษะหลากหลาย การแปลที่มีประสิทธิภาพต้องคำนึงถึงทั้งมิติทางภาษาและมิติทางวัฒนธรรม ในการแปลหนังสือ "โนราจังหวัดตรัง: ความเชื่อและพิธีกรรม" ผู้แปลมุ่งมั่นรักษาสมดุลระหว่างความซื่อสัตย์ต่อต้นฉบับภาษาไทยกับการทำให้งานแปลเป็นที่เข้าใจได้สำหรับผู้อ่านในวัฒนธรรมปลายทาง ในการแปลตัวบทร้อยแก้ว ผู้แปลได้ใช้กลวิธีการแปลทั้งหมด 15 กลวิธีซึ่งแต่ละกลวิธีก็มีหน้าที่และความเหมาะสมเฉพาะตัวในการจัดการกับความท้าทายที่แตกต่างกัน

การแปลแบบตรงตัวและการทับศัพท์เป็นเครื่องมือสำคัญในการรักษาความเป็นเอกลักษณ์ของวัฒนธรรมไทย โดยเฉพาะการทับศัพท์ชื่อบุคคล สถานที่ และแนวคิดเฉพาะทางวัฒนธรรมช่วยให้ผู้อ่านได้สัมผัสกับความเป็นไทยอย่างแท้จริง ขณะเดียวกัน การเทียบเคียงวัฒนธรรมและการแปลแบบเทียบเท่าเชิงหน้าที่ช่วยสร้างสะพานเชื่อมต่อระหว่างสองวัฒนธรรมทำให้ผู้อ่านสามารถเข้าใจและเชื่อมโยงกับประสบการณ์ของตนเองได้

การขยายความผ่านเชิงอรรถและการอธิบายในวงเล็บเป็นกลวิธีสำคัญที่ช่วยเติมเต็มช่องว่างความรู้ทางวัฒนธรรมโดยไม่ทำลายความลื่นไหลของเนื้อหาหลัก กลวิธีนี้ช่วยให้ผู้อ่านได้รับข้อมูลที่จำเป็นสำหรับการเข้าใจบริบทโดยไม่รู้สึกถูกขัดจังหวะการอ่าน การปรับโครงสร้างภาษาและการจัดระเบียบเนื้อหาแสดงให้เห็นถึงความเข้าใจลึกซึ้งของผู้แปลเกี่ยวกับความแตกต่างในรูปแบบการสื่อสารระหว่างภาษาไทยและภาษาอังกฤษ

การแปลแบบตีความและการแปลสื่อความเป็นกลวิธีที่ต้องอาศัยทักษะระดับสูงในการจับใจความที่แท้จริงของต้นฉบับและถ่ายทอดไปยังผู้อ่านในรูปแบบที่เหมาะสม ขณะที่การเลือกใช้คำศัพท์เฉพาะทางและการเทียบเคียงแนวคิดช่วยรักษาความแม่นยำทางวิชาการและสร้างความเชื่อมโยงกับองค์ความรู้ที่มีอยู่ในวัฒนธรรมปลายทาง

การปรับให้เข้ากับวัฒนธรรมปลายทางและการปรับเปลี่ยนทางวัฒนธรรมเป็นการแสดงให้เห็นถึงบทบาทของผู้แปลในฐานะคนกลางทางวัฒนธรรมที่ต้องสร้างสมดุลระหว่างการรักษาความเป็นต้นตอของวัฒนธรรมต้นฉบับและการทำให้เข้าถึงได้สำหรับผู้อ่านในวัฒนธรรมปลายทาง

โดยสรุป การแปลต้องอาศัยการผสมผสานกลวิธีหลากหลายอย่าง ไม่มีกลวิธีใดที่สามารถใช้เพียงอย่างเดียวได้ แต่ต้องมีการเลือกใช้ให้เหมาะสมกับบริบทและจุดประสงค์เฉพาะ เพราะความสำเร็จของการแปลไม่ได้วัดจากความถูก

ต้องทางภาษาเพียงอย่างเดียว แต่วัดจากความสามารถในการสร้างความเข้าใจ เคารพ และชื่นชมวัฒนธรรมต้นฉบับในผู้อ่านปลายทาง

การแปลทร้อยกรอง

การแปลทร้อยกรองเป็นศิลปะที่ทำหายและซับซ้อนโดยเฉพาะเมื่อต้องถ่ายทอดผลงานที่มีรากฐานทางวัฒนธรรมลึกซึ้งข้ามขอบเขตภาษาและวัฒนธรรม ในการแปลบทกวีในเรื่อง "โนรา จังหวัดตรัง: ความเชื่อและพิธีกรรม" ผู้แปลต้องเผชิญกับความท้าทายในการถ่ายทอดบทกลอนและเนื้อหาทางพิธีกรรมที่เป็นแก่นแท้ของศิลปะการแสดงโนราภาคใต้ ผู้แปลใช้กลวิธีการแปลที่หลากหลายและมีการพิจารณาอย่างรอบคอบ ตั้งแต่การแปลแบบตรงตัวเพื่อรักษาความแม่นยำของข้อมูลทางพิธีกรรม การทับศัพท์เพื่อคงเอกลักษณ์ทางวัฒนธรรม ไปจนถึงการแปลแบบเทียบเคียงเพื่อสร้างบทร้อยกรองที่สามารถสื่อสารความงามและจิตวิญญาณของต้นฉบับได้ การวิเคราะห์กลวิธีการแปลจะช่วยให้ผู้อ่านเข้าใจถึงความซับซ้อนและความประณีตของการแปลงานศิลปะที่ต้องสร้างสมดุลระหว่างความถูกต้องทางเนื้อหา ความงามทางศิลปะ และความสามารถในการสื่อสารข้ามพรมแดนวัฒนธรรมโดยมุ่งหวังให้ผู้อ่านภาษาอังกฤษได้รับประสบการณ์การอ่านที่สมบูรณ์และมีความหมายเท่าเทียมกับผู้อ่านต้นฉบับ กลวิธีการแปลที่ใช้ในการแปลบทร้อยกรองหนังสือเล่มนี้มีดังนี้

1. การแปลแบบตรงตัว (Literal Translation)

ตัวอย่าง:

ต้นฉบับภาษาไทย (หน้า 228): บทบาลีหน้าศาล

ฉบับแปลภาษาอังกฤษ (หน้า 141): The Pali Verse in Front of the Shrine

ในตัวอย่าง "บทบาลีหน้าศาล" ผู้แปลแปลเป็น "The Pali Verse in Front of the Shrine" ผู้แปลได้ใช้การแปลแบบตรงตัวโดยแปลแต่ละองค์ประกอบตามความหมายโดยตรง "บทบาลี" เป็น "The Pali Verse" และ "หน้าศาล" เป็น "in Front of the Shrine" การแปลนี้เพื่อรักษาความชัดเจนและความแม่นยำของชื่อหัวข้อไว้โดยไม่มีการตีความหรือปรับเปลี่ยนความหมาย ให้ผู้อ่านเข้าใจได้ทันทีว่าเป็นบทกลอนภาษาบาลีที่ใช้ในพิธีกรรมหน้าแท่นบูชา การใช้กลวิธีการแปลแบบตรงตัวในตัวอย่างนี้เพื่อรักษาความถูกต้องและความแม่นยำของข้อมูลทางวัฒนธรรมโดยเฉพาะในบริบทของพิธีกรรมและการปฏิบัติทางศาสนาที่ต้องการความแม่นยำสูง แม้ว่าจะมีการปรับเปลี่ยนบางส่วนเพื่อให้เกิดความเป็นธรรมชาติในภาษาอังกฤษแต่แก่นแท้ของความหมายยังคงถูกรักษาไว้

2. การทับศัพท์ (Transliteration)

ตัวอย่างที่ 1:

ต้นฉบับภาษาไทย (หน้า 238): โนรา

ฉบับแปลภาษาอังกฤษ (หน้า 141): Nora

ตัวอย่างที่ 2:

ต้นฉบับภาษาไทย (หน้า 236): เมขลา

ฉบับแปลภาษาอังกฤษ (หน้า 152): Mekhala

ตัวอย่างที่ 3:

ต้นฉบับภาษาไทย (หน้า 228): บอกบาลีขานเอ ว่าโนเนโนโน

ฉบับแปลภาษาอังกฤษ (หน้า 142): The sacred Pali verse I proclaim, With "No-Ne-No-Nai" I
exclaim

ในการแปลคำศัพท์เฉพาะทางวัฒนธรรมตามตัวอย่างนี้ ผู้แปลเลือกใช้กลวิธีการทับศัพท์เช่นเดียวกับการแปลบทร้อยแก้ว เนื่องจากคำเหล่านี้มีความสำคัญทางวัฒนธรรมและเป็นเอกลักษณ์เฉพาะที่ไม่อาจหาคำเทียบเคียงที่แท้จริงในภาษาอังกฤษได้ สำหรับคำว่า "โนรา" ที่ถูกทับศัพท์เป็น "Nora" ผู้แปลตัดสินใจรักษาชื่อเฉพาะนี้ไว้เพราะเป็นชื่อของศิลปะการแสดงที่มีเอกลักษณ์เฉพาะของภาคใต้ การแปลเป็นคำอื่น เช่น "Southern Thai Dance" หรือ "Traditional Performance" จะทำให้สูญเสียความเป็นเอกลักษณ์และอาจสร้างความเข้าใจผิดว่าเป็นการแสดงทั่วไป การใช้ "Nora" ช่วยให้ผู้อ่านรับรู้ว่าเป็นศิลปะการแสดงที่เฉพาะเจาะจงและมีชื่อเสียง

สำหรับ "เมขลา" ที่กลายเป็น "Mekhala" ผู้แปลเห็นว่านี่คือชื่อของตัวละครในวรรณกรรมไทยที่มีบทบาทสำคัญ เพื่อไม่ให้สูญเสียการเชื่อมโยงกับวรรณกรรมต้นฉบับ ผู้แปลเลือกที่จะให้ผู้อ่านได้สัมผัสกับความแปลกใหม่และเรียนรู้เกี่ยวกับวัฒนธรรมอื่นแทนที่จะปรับทุกอย่างให้คุ้นเคยกับวัฒนธรรมตะวันตก การตัดสินใจนี้เพื่อช่วยรักษาความถูกต้องทางวิชาการและเปิดโอกาสให้ผู้อ่านได้เรียนรู้คำศัพท์และแนวคิดใหม่ ๆ ที่เกี่ยวข้องกับวัฒนธรรมไทย

ตัวอย่างที่ 3 มีความท้าทายเป็นพิเศษเพราะต้องจัดการกับองค์ประกอบที่มีทั้งความหมายทางภาษาและความสำคัญทางดนตรี ในวรรคแรก "บอกบาลีขานเอ" ผู้แปลเลือกใช้การแปลความหมายเป็น "The sacred Pali verse I proclaim" ซึ่งสื่อความหมายของความศักดิ์สิทธิ์ของบทสวดภาษาบาลีอย่างเข้าใจง่าย สำหรับ "โนเนโนโน" ในบรรทัดที่สอง ผู้แปลเลือกใช้การทับศัพท์เป็น "No-Ne-No-Nai" โดยครอบด้วยเครื่องหมายคำพูด เพราะ "โนเนโนโน" เป็นเสียงขับหรือท่วงทำนองที่เฉพาะเจาะจงในการแสดงโนรา ไม่มีความหมายที่แน่นอนในระดับคำศัพท์แต่มีหน้าที่สำคัญในการสร้างจังหวะและบรรยากาศของการแสดง การทับศัพท์จะช่วยรักษาลักษณะเสียงและจังหวะดั้งเดิมไว้ซึ่งมีความสำคัญต่อการเข้าใจลักษณะของการแสดงโนรา และเครื่องหมายคำพูดช่วยบ่งบอกว่าเป็นการออกเสียงโดยตรง ไม่ใช่คำศัพท์ที่มีความหมายในลักษณะทั่วไป การใช้คำว่า "exclaim" เพื่อสัมผัสกับ "proclaim" ในบรรทัดแรกเพื่อรักษาโครงสร้างทางเสียงของบทกวีแม้ว่าการสัมผัสจะไม่เหมือนกับต้นฉบับแต่การสร้างการเชื่อมโยงทางเสียงในภาษาอังกฤษช่วยให้บทแปลมีลักษณะเป็นบทกวีมากกว่าการแปลร้อยแก้ว การแปลนี้ใช้กลวิธีผสมผสานระหว่างการแปลความหมายและการทับศัพท์โดยใช้วิธีการแปลสำหรับส่วนที่มีความหมายสำคัญและใช้การทับศัพท์สำหรับส่วนที่มีความสำคัญทางเสียงและจังหวะ

3. การเทียบเคียงวัฒนธรรม (Cultural Equivalence)

ตัวอย่าง:

ต้นฉบับภาษาไทย (หน้า 228): จะไหว้ครูเสียก่อน

ฉบับแปลภาษาอังกฤษ (หน้า 141): To honor teachers with a bow

การแปล "จะไหว้ครูเสียก่อน" เป็น "To honor teachers with a bow" เป็นการใช้การเทียบเคียงวัฒนธรรมในบริบทของบทร้อยกรองที่ซับซ้อน ผู้แปลต้องจัดการกับแนวคิด "การไหว้ครู" ซึ่งเป็นพิธีกรรมที่มีความสำคัญซึ่งในวัฒนธรรมไทยโดยเฉพาะในบริบทของศิลปะการแสดงโนรา การตัดสินใจแปล "ไหว้ครู" เป็น "honor teachers" แทนที่จะใช้การทับศัพท์เป็น "wai Khru" ก็เพื่อสร้างความเข้าใจที่กว้างขวางสำหรับผู้อ่านสากล ส่วนคำว่า "honor" ในภาษาอังกฤษสื่อถึงการแสดงความเคารพ การยกย่องและการให้เกียรติ ซึ่งครอบคลุมความหมายหลักของ "การไหว้" ที่ไม่ใช่เพียงการกระทำทางกายภาพแต่เป็นการแสดงออกถึงความเคารพจากใจจริง การเพิ่ม "with a bow" ก็เพื่อช่วยให้ผู้อ่านเข้าใจว่ามีการกระทำทางกายภาพที่เกี่ยวข้อง คำว่า "bow" ในวัฒนธรรมตะวันตกเป็นการแสดงความเคารพที่ผู้อ่านส่วนใหญ่เข้าใจแม้ว่าจะไม่เหมือนกับ "การไหว้" แบบไทยที่มีการประนมมือและก้มศีรษะแต่ก็สื่อถึงความหมายพื้นฐานของการแสดงความเคารพด้วยการเคลื่อนไหวของร่างกาย ในบริบทของบทร้อยกรองและการแสดงโนรา "การไหว้ครู" มีความหมายที่ลึกซึ้งกว่าการแสดงความเคารพทั่วไปเพราะเป็นพิธีกรรมที่เชื่อมโยงนักแสดงกับประเพณีและภูมิปัญญาที่สืบทอดมาจากอดีต เป็นการขอพรและการแสดงความกตัญญูต่อครูบาอาจารย์ที่ถ่ายทอดศิลปะ การแปลเป็น "honor teachers" ช่วยถ่ายทอดมิติทางจิตวิญญาณนี้เพราะคำว่า "honor" มีความหมายที่ลึกซึ้งกว่า "respect" การใช้ "teachers" แทน "masters" หรือ "mentors" ก็เป็นการเลือกเพื่อให้เหมาะสมกับผู้อ่านทั่วไป แม้ว่า "ครู" ในบริบทของศิลปะการแสดงไทยจะมีความหมายที่กว้างกว่า "teacher" แต่คำนี้ยังคงสื่อถึงบทบาทของผู้ถ่ายทอดความรู้และภูมิปัญญาได้อย่างชัดเจน และผู้แปลก็คำนึงถึงจังหวะและความไหลลื่นของบทกวีด้วย โดยให้ "To honor teachers with a bow" มีจำนวนพยางค์และจังหวะที่เหมาะสมกับลักษณะของบทร้อยกรอง ไม่ยืดเยื้อเกินไปจนทำลายความสวยงามของบทกวีแต่ก็ไม่สั้นเกินไปจนสูญเสียความหมายที่สำคัญ

4. การปรับโครงสร้างภาษา/การเปลี่ยนชนิดคำ (Transposition)

ตัวอย่างที่ 1:

ต้นฉบับภาษาไทย (หน้า 228): กรกรายไหววอน นั่งขอพรเทวา

ฉบับแปลภาษาอังกฤษ (หน้า 141): I offer prayers with graceful stance, And ask the gods to guide my dance.

ตัวอย่างที่ 2:

ต้นฉบับภาษาไทย (หน้า 229): มาชุมนุมพร้อมกัน อรหันต์ทั้งหลาย

ฉบับแปลภาษาอังกฤษ (หน้า 142): The holy devas then gathered near, Arhats rose to set things right.

ในการแปลตัวอย่างแรก "กรกรายไหววอน นั่งขอพรเทวา" เป็น "I offer prayers with graceful stance, And ask the gods to guide my dance." ผู้แปลได้ปรับโครงสร้างประโยคเพื่อให้สอดคล้องกับรูปแบบการสื่อสารในภาษาอังกฤษ ในต้นฉบับภาษาไทย คำว่า "กรกราย" เป็นคำกริยาที่บ่งบอกถึงลักษณะการเคลื่อนไหวอย่างสง่างาม ผู้แปลเปลี่ยนชนิดคำจากกริยาเป็นวลีคุณศัพท์ "with graceful stance" เพื่อให้ความหมายเดียวกันแต่ในรูปแบบที่เป็นธรรมชาติมากขึ้นในภาษาอังกฤษ การเปลี่ยนแปลงนี้ทำให้การไหลของประโยคดีขึ้นและสร้างจังหวะที่เหมาะสมกับบท

กวี นอกจากนี้ ผู้แปลได้ปรับโครงสร้างโดยเพิ่มสรรพนาม "I" แม้ว่าในภาษาไทยจะไม่ระบุประธานอย่างชัดเจน และเปลี่ยนจาก "ขอพรเทวา" ซึ่งเป็นการกระทำทั่วไปของการขอพร เป็น "ask the gods to guide my dance" ซึ่งเฉพาะเจาะจงมากขึ้นและเชื่อมโยงกับบริบทของการแสดงโนรา

ในตัวอย่างที่สอง "มาชุมนุมพร้อมกัน อรหันต์ทั้งหลาย" ผู้แปลแปลเป็น "The holy devas then gathered near, Arhats rose to set things right." ผู้แปลปรับโครงสร้างที่สำคัญสองส่วน ส่วนแรกเปลี่ยนจากโครงสร้างที่เน้นการกระทำ "มาชุมนุม" เป็นโครงสร้างที่เน้นผู้กระทำ "The holy devas then gathered near" ทำให้ประโยคมีความชัดเจนและง่ายต่อการติดตามในภาษาอังกฤษ ส่วนที่สอง ผู้แปลเพิ่มข้อมูลเกี่ยวกับเจตนาของการกระทำ "rose to set things right" ซึ่งไม่ได้ปรากฏในต้นฉบับโดยตรงแต่เป็นการตีความจากบริบทของเรื่องราว การปรับเปลี่ยนเหล่านี้เพื่อทำให้งานแปลมีความสมบูรณ์และเข้าใจง่ายขึ้นสำหรับผู้อ่านภาษาอังกฤษ

5. การขยายความ (Amplification)

ตัวอย่าง:

ต้นฉบับภาษาไทย (หน้า 228): ในทวีปชมพู ตรัสรู้ถ้วนถึ

ฉบับแปลภาษาอังกฤษ (หน้า 141): In old Jambudvipa's hallowed ground, Where enlightenment was truly found.

ในการแปล "ในทวีปชมพู ตรัสรู้ถ้วนถึ" เป็น "In old Jambudvipa's hallowed ground, Where enlightenment was truly found." ผู้แปลใช้วิธีการขยายความเพื่อให้ผู้อ่านภาษาอังกฤษสามารถเข้าใจบริบททางวัฒนธรรมและศาสนาได้อย่างลึกซึ้ง การขยายความที่สำคัญที่สุดคือการเพิ่มคำว่า "old" และ "hallowed ground" เพื่ออธิบายลักษณะของทวีปชมพู ในต้นฉบับภาษาไทย "ทวีปชมพู" เป็นเพียงชื่อของสถานที่ที่ผู้อ่านไทยซึ่งมีพื้นฐานทางพุทธศาสนาจะเข้าใจทันทีว่าหมายถึงทวีปโลกในศาสนาพุทธที่เป็นสถานที่ศักดิ์สิทธิ์ แต่สำหรับผู้อ่านต่างชาติ คำว่า "Jambudvipa" อาจเป็นเพียงชื่อสถานที่ที่แปลก ๆ ผู้แปลจึงเพิ่มคำว่า "old" เพื่อบ่งบอกถึงความเก่าแก่และประวัติศาสตร์อันยาวนาน และ "hallowed ground" เพื่อสื่อความหมายเรื่องความศักดิ์สิทธิ์ของสถานที่แห่งนี้ นอกจากนี้ ผู้แปลยังได้ขยายความคำว่า "ตรัสรู้" ซึ่งในภาษาไทยมีความหมายเฉพาะทางพุทธศาสนาที่ลึกซึ้ง โดยแปลเป็น "enlightenment was truly found" การเพิ่มคำว่า "truly" ไม่เพียงแต่เน้นความแท้จริงของการตรัสรู้ แต่ยังช่วยสร้างความเข้าใจให้ผู้อ่านว่าไม่ใช่การรู้แจ้งธรรมดาแต่เป็นการบรรลุธรรมในระดับสูงสุด การใช้โครงสร้าง "Where enlightenment was truly found" แทนการแปลตรงไปตรงมาเป็น "gained complete enlightenment" เป็นการขยายความในด้านการสร้างบรรยากาศและความรู้สึก โดยการใช้ "was found" สื่อถึงการค้นพบที่มีคุณค่าและความสำคัญซึ่งสอดคล้องกับความเชื่อทางพุทธศาสนาที่ว่า การตรัสรู้เป็นสิ่งที่ต้องแสวงหาและบรรลุถึง การขยายความในตัวอย่างนี้เพื่อปิดช่องว่างทางวัฒนธรรมระหว่างผู้อ่านไทยและผู้อ่านตะวันตก ผู้แปลตระหนักว่าการแปลตรงตัวอาจทำให้ผู้อ่านเข้าใจเพียงผิวเผินจึงเลือกที่จะเติมเต็มข้อมูลที่จำเป็นเพื่อให้ผู้อ่านได้รับประสบการณ์การอ่านที่สมบูรณ์และมีความหมายเท่าเทียมกับผู้อ่านต้นฉบับ

6. การแปลแบบตีความ (Interpretive Translation)

ตัวอย่างที่ 1:

ต้นฉบับภาษาไทย (หน้า 228): เรื่องราวยาวรี บาลีสักลับ

ฉบับแปลภาษาอังกฤษ (หน้า 141): These lengthy tales of mystery deep, In Pali texts their secrets keep.

ตัวอย่างที่ 2:

ต้นฉบับภาษาไทย (หน้า 228): อย่าฟังแต่เพราะ นุเคราะห์ตามฉบับ

ฉบับแปลภาษาอังกฤษ (หน้า 141): Don't merely listen for the sound, But seek the wisdom to be found.

ในการแปลตัวอย่างแรก "เรื่องราวยาวรี บาลีสักลับ" เป็น "These lengthy tales of mystery deep, In Pali texts their secrets keep." ผู้แปลใช้การตีความเพื่อถ่ายทอดทั้งความหมายตามตัวอักษร ความหมายแฝงและบรรยากาศของบทกลอนด้วย การตีความที่สำคัญที่สุดคือการเปลี่ยนจาก "บาลีสักลับ" ซึ่งในภาษาไทยหมายถึงภาษาบาลีที่มีความลึกลับ เป็น "In Pali texts their secrets keep" ผู้แปลได้ตีความความหมายของ "ลึกลับ" ไม่ใช่เป็นความซับซ้อนของภาษาแต่เป็นความลึกซึ้งของเนื้อหาและภูมิปัญญาที่ซ่อนอยู่ในบทบาลีเหล่านั้น การใช้ "their secrets keep" สร้างภาพลักษณ์ของตำราบาลีว่าเป็นผู้เก็บรักษาความลับและภูมิปัญญาโบราณซึ่งเป็นการตีความที่สะท้อนความเชื่อและความเคารพต่อคัมภีร์ในวัฒนธรรมไทย นอกจากนี้ การใช้ "These lengthy tales of mystery deep" แทน "เรื่องราวยาวรี" ก็เป็นการตีความที่เพิ่มมิติความหมาย โดย "mystery deep" ไม่เพียงแต่สื่อถึงความยาวของเรื่องราวแต่ยังบ่งบอกถึงความลึกซึ้งและความน่าค้นหาของเนื้อหา

ในตัวอย่างที่สอง "อย่าฟังแต่เพราะ นุเคราะห์ตามฉบับ" ผู้แปลแปลเป็น "Don't merely listen for the sound, But seek the wisdom to be found." ผู้แปลใช้การตีความเพื่อถ่ายทอดปรัชญาลึกซึ้งที่อยู่เบื้องหลังคำสอนนี้ การตีความที่ชัดเจนคือการเปลี่ยนจาก "อย่าฟังแต่เพราะ" ซึ่งหมายถึงการไม่ฟังเพียงเพราะเสียงไพเราะ เป็น "Don't merely listen for the sound" ผู้แปลได้ตีความว่าคำสอนนี้เป็นการเตือนไม่ให้หลงใหลในรูปแบบภายนอกหรือความไพเราะของเสียงแต่ให้มุ่งไปที่แก่นแท้ของความหมาย ส่วน "นุเคราะห์ตามฉบับ" ซึ่งมีความหมายค่อนข้างคลุมเครือในต้นฉบับ ผู้แปลได้ตีความเป็น "But seek the wisdom to be found" ซึ่งเป็นการแยกแยะความแตกต่างระหว่างการฟังเพื่อความบันเทิงกับการแสวงหาปัญญาและความรู้แจ้ง การตีความนี้สะท้อนแนวคิดทางพุทธศาสนาเรื่องการแยกแยะระหว่างรูปกับนาม หรือสิ่งที่ปรากฏกับแก่นแท้

7. การแปลแบบเทียบเท่าเชิงหน้าที่ (Functional Equivalence)

ตัวอย่างที่ 1:

ต้นฉบับภาษาไทย (หน้า 229): ร้องเพลงโอชา สวรรค์สัดโต

ฉบับแปลภาษาอังกฤษ (หน้า 143): To sing with joy in every town.

ตัวอย่างที่ 2:

ต้นฉบับภาษาไทย (หน้า 229): อะโหพุทโธ อะโหธัมโม อะโหสังฆโม ชัยโยยันตัง

ฉบับแปลภาษาอังกฤษ (หน้า 143): O Blessed Buddha! Dharma true! The Sangha pure! We
praise your might!

ในการแปลตัวอย่างแรก "ร้องเพลงโอชา สวัสดิ์สัตโต" เป็น "To sing with joy in every town." ผู้แปลใช้
กลวิธีการแปลแบบเทียบเท่าเชิงหน้าที่โดยมุ่งเน้นการสร้างผลกระทบที่เทียบเท่ากันระหว่างผู้อ่านต้นฉบับและผู้อ่าน
ปลายทางแทนที่จะยึดติดกับความหมายตามตัวอักษร การตัดสินใจที่สำคัญคือการละทิ้งคำบาลี "โอชา" และ "สวัสดิ์สัต
โต" ซึ่งเป็นคำศัพท์เฉพาะทางศาสนาที่ผู้อ่านตะวันตกส่วนใหญ่ไม่คุ้นเคย แทนที่จะแปลเป็น "Ocha Sawattisatto" ที่
จะทำให้ผู้อ่านงงงเงงและไม่เข้าใจ ผู้แปลเลือกถ่ายทอดหน้าที่การสื่อสารหลักของวลีนี้ ซึ่งคือการแสดงออกถึงความปิติ
ความสุขและการสรรเสริญในบริบทของการแสดงศิลปะ เป็น "To sing with joy in every town" ซึ่งสร้างภาพลักษณ์
ของการแสดงที่เต็มไปด้วยความสุข การเผยแพร่ศิลปะไปทั่วทุกหนแห่งและควมมีชีวิตชีวาของการแสดงโนรา ผู้อ่าน
ภาษาอังกฤษจะสามารถเข้าใจและรู้สึกถึงอารมณ์เดียวกันกับผู้ฟังต้นฉบับ ได้แก่ ความปิติยินดีและการเฉลิมฉลองทาง
จิตวิญญาณ

ในตัวอย่างที่สอง "อะโหพุทโธ อะโหธัมโม อะโหสังฆโม ชัยโยยันตัง" ผู้แปลแปลเป็น "O Blessed Buddha!
Dharma true! The Sangha pure! We praise your might!" ซึ่งเป็นความท้าทายมากที่ต้องแปลมนต์บาลีที่มีความ
ศักดิ์สิทธิ์สูง การแปลแบบเทียบเท่าเชิงหน้าที่ในที่นี้เกี่ยวข้องกับการสร้างประสบการณ์การสวดมนต์ที่คล้ายคลึงกันใน
วัฒนธรรมปลายทาง ผู้แปลเลือกที่จะรักษาคำบาลี "Dharma" และ "Sangha" เนื่องจากเป็นคำศัพท์ที่ผู้อ่านตะวันตกที่
สนใจพุทธศาสนาค่อนข้างคุ้นเคย แต่ได้แปลคำอื่น ๆ ให้เป็นภาษาอังกฤษที่สร้างผลกระทบทางอารมณ์ที่เท่าเทียม แปล
"อะโหพุทโธ" (สาธุการแด่พระพุทธเจ้า) เป็น "O Blessed Buddha!" ผู้แปลใช้คำอุทานและคำคุณศัพท์ที่สร้าง
ความรู้สึกเคารพและสรรเสริญ แปล "อะโหธัมโม" และ "อะโหสังฆโม" เป็น "Dharma true!" และ "The Sangha pure!"
ผู้แปลใช้คำคุณศัพท์ที่เน้นคุณสมบัติอันบริสุทธิ์และแท้จริง ส่วน "ชัยโยยันตัง" ซึ่งเป็นคำสรรเสริญถูกแปลเป็น "We
praise your might!" ที่สื่อถึงการยกย่องพลังอำนาจอันศักดิ์สิทธิ์ การใช้เครื่องหมาย "!" ตลอดทั้งประโยคช่วย
สร้างจังหวะและความเร่งรีบที่คล้ายคลึงกับการสวดมนต์ ทำให้ผู้อ่านได้รับประสบการณ์ทางจิตวิญญาณที่ใกล้เคียงกับ
ผู้ที่สวดบทบาลีต้นฉบับ แม้ว่าไม่ได้ใช้คำเดียวกันแต่หน้าที่การสื่อสารในด้านการสรรเสริญและการแสดงความเคารพ
ต่อพระรัตนตรัยได้ถูกรักษาไว้

8. การแปลสื่อความ (Communicative Translation)

ตัวอย่างที่ 1:

ต้นฉบับภาษาไทย (หน้า 230): สั่งให้จับตัว เชี่ยนส่งลงแพ

ฉบับแปลภาษาอังกฤษ (หน้า 143): The king commanded she be seized, They whipped her,
placed her on a raft

ตัวอย่างที่ 2:

ต้นฉบับภาษาไทย (หน้า 249): เดือนสี่มาต่อเดือนห้า เสือมันมาล่าริมคลอง

ฉบับแปลภาษาอังกฤษ (หน้า 172): When fourth month turns to the fifth in time, Tigers hunt
by the canal's line.

ตัวอย่างนี้เป็นการเล่าเรื่องที่มีเนื้อหาหยาบและอารมณ์เข้มข้น ในการแปลบทร้อยกรอง "สั่งให้จับตัว เชียนส่งลงแพ" เป็น "The king commanded she be seized, They whipped her, placed her on a raft" ผู้แปลต้องถ่ายทอดไม่เพียงแต่เนื้อหาเชิงพรรณนาแต่ยังต้องรักษาแรงกระทบทางอารมณ์และจังหวะของการดำเนินเรื่องให้ผู้อ่านสามารถสัมผัสได้ในต้นฉบับ "สั่งให้จับตัว เชียนส่งลงแพ" มีลักษณะการเล่าที่กระชับและรวดเร็ว สะท้อนถึงการดำเนินเหตุการณ์ที่ต่อเนื่องกันอย่างไม่ปราณี สลีการเล่าแบบนี้เป็นเอกลักษณ์ของบทร้อยกรองโนราที่มีกบรยายเหตุการณ์สำคัญด้วยคำกระชับแต่ทรงพลัง โครงสร้างของต้นฉบับมีการจัดลำดับการกระทำที่ชัดเจนคือ การสั่ง → การจับตัว → การลงโทษ → การขับไล่ แต่ละขั้นตอนถูกบีบอัดไว้ในประโยคสั้น ๆ ที่สร้างความรู้สึกเร่งรีบและความไร้ความปราณี การแปลบทรบัตนี้เป็นการรักษาทั้งเนื้อหาและอารมณ์ของต้นฉบับ ท่อน "สั่งให้จับตัว" ผู้แปลขยายเป็น "The king commanded she be seized" ซึ่งเป็นการเพิ่มข้อมูลที่สำคัญคือการระบุผู้ออกคำสั่ง แม้ว่า "กษัตริย์" จะไม่ปรากฏในต้นฉบับอย่างชัดเจนแต่ผู้แปลตีความจากบริบทของเรื่องว่าการมีอำนาจในการสั่งจับและลงโทษย่อมต้องมาจากผู้มีอำนาจสูงสุด การเพิ่ม "The king" ช่วยให้ผู้อ่านเข้าใจโครงสร้างอำนาจและความรุนแรงของการกระทำได้ชัดเจนขึ้น การใช้ "commanded" แทนการแปลตรงตัวเป็น "ordered" เป็นการเลือกคำที่มีน้ำหนักและความเป็นทางการมากกว่า คำว่า "commanded" สื่อถึงอำนาจที่ไม่อาจขัดขืนได้และความเด็ดขาดของการตัดสินใจซึ่งสอดคล้องกับบรรยากาศของความไร้ความปราณีที่ต้องการสื่อสาร โครงสร้าง "commanded she be seized" ยังใช้รูปแบบ subjunctive ที่เป็นทางการและมีพลังในภาษาอังกฤษด้วย ส่วน "เชียนส่งลงแพ" ผู้แปลแยกและขยายเป็น "They whipped her, placed her on a raft" เพื่อสร้างความชัดเจนสำหรับผู้อ่าน การแยก "เชียน" และ "ส่งลงแพ" เป็นสองการกระทำช่วยให้ผู้อ่านเข้าใจลำดับของการลงโทษได้ดีขึ้นแทนที่จะเป็นการกระทำเดียวที่ไม่ชัดเจน "เชียน" ถูกแปลเป็น "whipped" ซึ่งเป็นคำที่มีความหมายตรงตัวและสื่อถึงความเจ็บปวดทางกายได้อย่างชัดเจน การแปล "ส่งลงแพ" เป็น "placed her on a raft" เป็นการเลือกเพื่อสร้างสมดุลระหว่างความชัดเจนและความเป็นกวี "ส่งลงแพ" ในบริบทไทยมีนัยของการขับไล่หรือการส่งให้ไปไกล มักจะใช้เป็นการลงโทษที่ให้ผู้กระทำผิดลอยลงแม่น้ำหรือทะเล การใช้ "placed her on a raft" แทนการใช้ "banished her by raft" หรือ "sent her away on a raft" ช่วยให้การแปลมีความกระชับและรักษาจังหวะของบทกวี ผลลัพธ์ของการแปลข้อความในตัวอย่างนี้คือผู้อ่านภาษาอังกฤษได้รับประสบการณ์ที่ใกล้เคียงกับผู้ฟังต้นฉบับในแง่ของความรู้สึกตกใจ ความเห็นใจ และความเข้าใจถึงความรู้สึกปราณีของการลงโทษ แม้ว่าผู้อ่านจะไม่คุ้นเคยกับวัฒนธรรมการลงโทษแบบไทยโบราณแต่พวกเขาสามารถเข้าใจแรงกระทบทางอารมณ์และความสำคัญของเหตุการณ์ได้ กลวิธีการแปลข้อความที่ใช้กับบริบทนี้สามารถรักษาลักษณะของการเล่าเรื่องและถ่ายทอดประสบการณ์ทางอารมณ์ข้ามขอบเขตวัฒนธรรมได้อย่างดี

ในตัวอย่างที่สอง "เดือนสี่มาต่อเดือนห้า เสือมันมาล่าริมคลอง" ผู้แปลแปลเป็น "When fourth month turns to the fifth in time, Tigers hunt by the canal's line." ผู้แปลได้ใช้การแปลข้อความเพื่อสร้างภาพลักษณ์และบรรยากาศที่ผู้อ่านภาษาอังกฤษสามารถเข้าใจและรู้สึกได้ การแปล "เดือนสี่มาต่อเดือนห้า" เป็น "When fourth month turns to the fifth in time" ผู้แปลได้เพิ่มคำว่า "in time" เพื่อสร้างจังหวะที่เหมาะสมกับบทกวี และใช้ "turns to" แทนคำว่า "มาต่อ" ซึ่งสร้างภาพลักษณ์ของการเปลี่ยนแปลงของกาลเวลาอย่างเป็นธรรมชาติ ส่วน "เสือมันมาล่าริมคลอง" ถูกแปลเป็น "Tigers hunt by the canal's line" ผู้แปลได้เลือกใช้ "hunt" แทน "ล่า" เนื่องจากเป็นคำที่สื่อถึงพฤติกรรมของสัตว์ป่าได้ชัดเจนกว่า และ "by the canal's line" แทน "ริมคลอง" เพื่อสร้างภาพลักษณ์ของพื้นที่และสร้างจังหวะสัมผัสที่เหมาะสมกับบทกวี

ผู้แปลใช้กลวิธีการแปลสื่อความในทั้งสองตัวอย่างนี้เพื่อสร้างประสบการณ์การอ่านที่มีประสิทธิภาพและน่าสนใจสำหรับผู้อ่านภาษาอังกฤษโดยไม่ยึดติดกับรูปแบบต้นฉบับจนเกินไป แต่มุ่งเน้นการสื่อสารความหมาย อารมณ์ และบรรยากาศของบทกลอนให้ผู้อ่านสามารถเข้าถึงและซาบซึ้งได้อย่างเต็มที่

9. การเลือกใช้คำศัพท์เฉพาะทาง (Terminology Selection)

ตัวอย่างที่ 1:

ต้นฉบับภาษาไทย (หน้า 229): พระไตรโลก

ฉบับแปลภาษาอังกฤษ (หน้า 142): Three Worlds Deity

ตัวอย่างที่ 2:

ต้นฉบับภาษาไทย (หน้า 230): ธรรมยุต

ฉบับแปลภาษาอังกฤษ (หน้า 144): Dhammayut tradition

ในการแปลตัวอย่างแรก "พระไตรโลก" เป็น "Three Worlds Deity" ผู้แปลต้องเจอกับความท้าทายในการเลือกใช้คำศัพท์เฉพาะทางที่สามารถสื่อสารแนวคิดทางศาสนาและปรัชญาที่ซับซ้อนได้ ผู้แปลตัดสินใจใช้ "Three Worlds" แทนการทับศัพท์ "Triloka" หรือการใช้คำอื่น โดยพิจารณาจากเหตุผลหลายประการ ประการแรก ผู้อ่านตะวันตกส่วนใหญ่จะคุ้นเคยกับแนวคิดเรื่อง "worlds" มากกว่าคำศัพท์บาลีหรือสันสกฤต ประการที่สอง "Three Worlds" สามารถสื่อสารภาพรวมของแนวคิดทางจักรวาลวิทยาในพุทธศาสนาได้อย่างชัดเจน คือการแบ่งจักรวาลออกเป็นสามระดับ ได้แก่ กามโลก รูปโลก และอรุโลก การเพิ่มคำว่า "Deity" เป็นการตัดสินใจที่สำคัญเช่นกัน เพื่อระบุว่านี่ไม่ใช่เพียงแนวคิดทางภูมิศาสตร์หรือจักรวาลวิทยาแต่เป็นสิ่งศักดิ์สิทธิ์ที่มีบทบาทในการปกป้องและดูแลโลกทั้งสาม ผู้แปลเลือกใช้ "Deity" แทน "God" หรือ "Spirit" เพราะคำนี้เป็นคำศัพท์ที่เป็นกลางทางศาสนามากกว่าและสามารถรองรับความหลากหลายทางความเชื่อของผู้อ่านได้ดีกว่า

ในตัวอย่างที่สอง "ธรรมยุต" ผู้แปลแปลเป็น "Dhammayut tradition" โดยเลือกใช้กลยุทธ์ที่แตกต่างออกไป คือการรักษาคำศัพท์เฉพาะทางไว้และเพิ่มคำอธิบายเพื่อให้ผู้อ่านเข้าใจบริบท การตัดสินใจรักษา "Dhammayut" ไว้แทนการแปลเป็น "Dharma-holding" หรือ "Orthodox sect" เพราะเป็นคำศัพท์เฉพาะทางที่มีความสำคัญทางประวัติศาสตร์และเป็นเอกลักษณ์เฉพาะของพุทธศาสนาไทย การใช้คำทับศัพท์ "Dhammayut" ช่วยรักษาความเป็นเอกลักษณ์และความแม่นยำ ในขณะเดียวกันก็ทำให้ผู้อ่านที่สนใจศึกษาลึกซึ้งสามารถค้นหาข้อมูลเพิ่มเติมได้ การเพิ่มคำว่า "tradition" ก็เป็นการให้บริบทที่สำคัญเนื่องจากช่วยให้ผู้อ่านเข้าใจทันทีว่านี่คือระบบความเชื่อหรือการปฏิบัติที่ถูกสืบทอดมา ไม่ใช่เพียงแนวคิดหรือหลักการเดียว คำว่า "tradition" ยังสื่อถึงความต่อเนื่อง ความเคารพในอดีตและความสำคัญทางวัฒนธรรม

10. การแปลบทร้อยกรอง - การเทียบเคียง (Analogical Form)

ตัวอย่างที่ 1:

ต้นฉบับภาษาไทย (หน้า 228): ยกหัตถ์ถึงตั้งนะโม จะไหว้ครูเสียก่อน กรกรายไหวว่อน นั่งขอพรเทวา

ฉบับแปลภาษาอังกฤษ (หน้า 141): I raise my hands in reverence now,

To honor teachers with a bow.

I offer prayers with graceful stance,
And ask the gods to guide my dance.

ตัวอย่างที่ 2:

ต้นฉบับภาษาไทย (หน้า 228): แล้วจะตั้งสัจเค เอเตภูมิมา ขอประกาศเทวา ช่วยสดับรับฟัง
ฉบับแปลภาษาอังกฤษ (หน้า 141): I call upon the deities,
From highest realms to earth and seas.
May all divine beings hear my voice,
And in my humble plea rejoice.

ในการแปลตัวอย่างแรก "ยกหัตถ์ถึงตั้งนะโม จะไหว้ครูเสียก่อน กรกรายไหว้วอน นั่งขอพรเทวา" เป็น "I raise my hands in reverence now, To honor teachers with a bow. I offer prayers with graceful stance, And ask the gods to guide my dance." ผู้แปลได้ใช้กลวิธีการเทียบเคียงรูปแบบ (Holmes, 1988: 25 - 28) โดยสร้างโครงสร้างบทร้อยกรองที่สอดคล้องกับประเพณีการแต่งกวีในภาษาอังกฤษแทนที่จะพยายามเลียนแบบรูปแบบกลอนไทยตามตัวอักษร การตัดสินใจใช้กลอนคู่สัมผัส (rhyming couplets) เป็นรูปแบบที่เทียบเคียงได้กับกลอนไทยในแง่ของความเรียบง่าย ความไพเราะและความสามารถในการจดจำ ผู้แปลตระหนักว่าการใช้รูปแบบกวีอังกฤษแบบ AABB (now/bow, stance/dance) จะสร้างผลกระทบทางอารมณ์และความงามที่ใกล้เคียงกับผู้ฟังกลอนไทยต้นฉบับ การจัดการกับจังหวะและมาตราเป็นประเด็นสำคัญในการแปลบทร้อยกรอง ผู้แปลเลือกใช้ฉันทลักษณ์ห้าจังหวะ (Iambic pentameter) อย่างหลวม ๆ เพื่อสร้างจังหวะที่เหมาะสมกับการอ่านออกเสียง ซึ่งสอดคล้องกับลักษณะของกลอนไทยที่มักถูกขับร้องหรือท่องทำนอง และการใช้ "now" ที่ท้ายบรรทัดแรกเพื่อช่วยสร้างสัมผัสกับ "bow" และเพิ่มความเร่งด่วนและความเป็นปัจจุบันให้กับการกระทำ

ในตัวอย่างที่สอง "แล้วจะตั้งสัจเค เอเตภูมิมา ขอประกาศเทวา ช่วยสดับรับฟัง" ผู้แปลแปลเป็น "I call upon the deities, From highest realms to earth and seas. May all divine beings hear my voice, And in my humble plea rejoice." ผู้แปลใช้รูปแบบการเทียบเคียงที่ซับซ้อนมากขึ้นโดยการสร้างความสัมพันธ์ระหว่างโลกบนและโลกล่าง และใช้ "deities/seas" และ "voice/rejoice" เพื่อสร้างสัมผัสที่ให้ความไพเราะและสร้างความหมายเชิงสัญลักษณ์ แม้คำว่า "seas" ไม่ได้ปรากฏในต้นฉบับโดยตรงแต่ผู้แปลเลือกใช้เพื่อสร้างภาพลักษณ์ของการเรียกหาจากทุกแห่งหน แม้แต่มหาสมุทร ซึ่งเป็นการขยายความหมายของ "เอเตภูมิมา" (สิ่งศักดิ์สิทธิ์/ครูหมอบจากทุกภพภูมิได้เสด็จมา) ให้กว้างขวางและมีพลังมากขึ้น การใช้ "May all divine beings hear my voice" แทน "ช่วยสดับรับฟัง" เป็นการปรับโครงสร้างให้เหมาะสมกับรูปแบบการอธิษฐานในวัฒนธรรมตะวันตก โดยใช้ "May" ที่บ่งบอกถึงความหวังและการขอพร ส่วน "And in my humble plea rejoice" เป็นการเพิ่มมิติทางอารมณ์ที่ไม่ได้ปรากฏชัดเจนในต้นฉบับแต่สะท้อนถึงความเชื่อว่าเทพเจ้าจะมีความยินดีเมื่อได้รับการเรียกขาน

โดยสรุป การแปลบทร้อยกรองในหนังสือ "โนราจังหวัดตรัง: ความเชื่อและพิธีกรรม" เป็นสิ่งสะท้อนถึงความซับซ้อนและความประณีตของการแปลงงานศิลปะข้ามวัฒนธรรม ผู้แปลได้นำกลวิธีการแปลที่หลากหลายมาใช้อย่างเหมาะสมกับบริบทและลักษณะเฉพาะของเนื้อหาแต่ละส่วน ตั้งแต่การแปลแบบตรงตัวที่เน้นความแม่นยำของข้อมูลทางพิธีกรรม การทับศัพท์เพื่อรักษาเอกลักษณ์ทางวัฒนธรรม ไปจนถึงการเทียบเคียงวัฒนธรรมที่ช่วยให้ผู้อ่านเข้าใจ

แนวคิดที่แตกต่างจากวัฒนธรรมตนเอง กลวิธีที่โดดเด่นและมีความสำคัญต่องานแปลชิ้นนี้ ได้แก่ การแปลแบบเทียบเท่าเชิงหน้าที่ที่มุ่งเน้นการสร้างผลกระทบที่เท่าเทียมกันระหว่างผู้อ่านต้นฉบับและผู้อ่านปลายทาง การแปลสื่อความที่ให้ความสำคัญกับการถ่ายทอดอารมณ์และบรรยากาศและการแปลแบบเทียบเคียงรูปแบบที่สร้างบรรยากาศใหม่ในภาษาอังกฤษให้มีความไพเราะและสามารถสื่อสารความงามของต้นฉบับได้ ผู้แปลพยายามสร้างสมดุลระหว่างความถูกต้องทางเนื้อหา ความงามทางศิลปะ และความสามารถในการสื่อสารข้ามพรมแดนวัฒนธรรมเพื่อให้ผู้อ่านภาษาอังกฤษได้รับประสบการณ์การอ่านที่สมบูรณ์และมีความหมายเท่าเทียมกับผู้อ่าน ต้นฉบับทั้งในแง่ของการเข้าใจเนื้อหาทางพิธีกรรม การซาบซึ้งในความงามของบทร้อยกรอง และการรับรู้ถึงความลึกซึ้งทางจิตวิญญาณของศิลปะการแสดงโนรา ด้วยหวังว่าหนังสือแปลเล่มนี้จะเป็นสะพานเชื่อมโยงวัฒนธรรมไทยกับโลกภายนอกโดยไม่สูญเสียเอกลักษณ์และคุณค่าของต้นฉบับภาษาไทย

บทสรุป

การแปลหนังสือ "โนราจังหวัดตรัง: ความเชื่อและพิธีกรรม" ซึ่งมีเนื้อหาเกี่ยวกับศิลปะการแสดงพื้นบ้านอย่างโนรา จากภาษาไทยเป็นภาษาอังกฤษ เป็นงานที่ต้องอาศัยความเข้าใจอย่างลึกซึ้งทั้งในด้านภาษาและวัฒนธรรม ในการแปลเนื้อหารวมทั้งบทร้อยกรองในหนังสือเล่มนี้ ผู้แปลได้ประยุกต์ใช้ทฤษฎีการแปลและกลวิธีที่หลากหลายเพื่อถ่ายทอดความหมายได้อย่างมีประสิทธิภาพ โดยพยายามสร้างความสมดุลระหว่างความซื่อสัตย์ต่อต้นฉบับภาษาไทย และการสื่อสารที่เข้าถึงได้สำหรับผู้อ่านในวัฒนธรรมปลายทาง กลวิธีหลักที่ใช้ในการแปลประกอบด้วย การแปลแบบตรงตัว (Literal Translation) ในกรณีที่โครงสร้างและความหมายสามารถถ่ายทอดได้อย่างตรงไปตรงมา การทับศัพท์ (Transliteration) สำหรับคำที่ไม่มีคำเทียบเคียงในภาษาอังกฤษเพื่อรักษาความเป็นเอกลักษณ์ทางวัฒนธรรม เช่น "โนรา" เป็น "Nora" และการเทียบเคียงวัฒนธรรม (Cultural Equivalence) โดยใช้คำหรือวลีที่มีความหมายใกล้เคียงในวัฒนธรรมของผู้อ่านภาษาปลายทาง นอกจากนี้ ผู้แปลยังใช้การปรับโครงสร้างภาษา/การเปลี่ยนชนิดคำ (Transposition) เพื่อให้ประโยคในภาษาปลายทางเป็นธรรมชาติ เช่น การปรับเปลี่ยนตำแหน่งของคำขยาย และการปรับรวมหรือแยกประโยค การขยายความ (Amplification) โดยการเพิ่มคำอธิบายหรือเชิงอรรถเพื่อชี้แจงความหมายของคำศัพท์เฉพาะทางวัฒนธรรมและการแปลแบบตีความ (Interpretive Translation) ในกรณีที่ต้องถ่ายทอดความหมายที่แท้จริงของเนื้อหา สำหรับการแปลบทร้อยกรอง ผู้แปลได้ประยุกต์ใช้ทฤษฎีการแปลเชิงสื่อสาร (Communicative Translation) ของ Newmark ที่เน้นการถ่ายทอดความหมายและผลกระทบของต้นฉบับไปสู่ผู้อ่านปลายทาง ทฤษฎีความเทียบเท่าเชิงหน้าที่ (Functional Equivalence) ของ Nida ที่มุ่งสร้างผลตอบสนองในผู้อ่านฉบับแปลที่เทียบเคียงได้กับผู้อ่านต้นฉบับ และทฤษฎีการแปลเชิงวัฒนธรรม (Cultural Translation) ของ Newmark (1988) และ Baker (2018) ที่มองว่าการแปลเป็นการถ่ายทอดข้ามวัฒนธรรม และกลวิธีเทียบเคียงรูปแบบของ Holmes (1988) เพื่อรักษาองค์ประกอบทางวรรณศิลป์ เช่น จังหวะ เสียง ภาพพจน์ และความหมายในบทกวี โดยใน

การแปลทร้อยกรอง ผู้แปลได้สร้างบทกวีที่มีสัมผัสคล้องจองในภาษาอังกฤษ และขยายความเพื่อให้เข้าใจบริบททางวัฒนธรรมได้ชัดเจนยิ่งขึ้น

การแปลเอกสารที่มีเนื้อหาเกี่ยวกับวัฒนธรรมเฉพาะท้องถิ่นอย่างโนราเป็นงานที่ต้องอาศัยทั้งความรู้ด้านภาษาและความเข้าใจในบริบททางวัฒนธรรม ผู้แปลต้องรักษาสมดุลระหว่างความซื่อสัตย์ต่อต้นฉบับและการทำให้ผู้อ่านในวัฒนธรรมปลายทางเข้าใจได้โดยการผสมผสานกลวิธีการแปลที่หลากหลายเพื่อให้บรรลุวัตถุประสงค์ในการสื่อสารข้ามวัฒนธรรมอย่างมีประสิทธิภาพ กลวิธีการแปลที่ใช้ในแต่ละบทมุ่งเน้นการถ่ายทอดความหมายและคุณค่าทางวัฒนธรรมของศิลปะการแสดงโนราให้ผู้อ่านที่ใช้ภาษาอังกฤษเข้าใจได้ ในขณะเดียวกันก็ปรับการนำเสนอให้สอดคล้องกับบรรทัดฐานภาษาอังกฤษเชิงวิชาการเพื่อให้งานแปลมีความสมดุลระหว่างการรักษาความหมายและการรักษาเอกลักษณ์ทางวัฒนธรรมของต้นฉบับภาษาไทยกับการสื่อสารอย่างมีประสิทธิภาพกับผู้อ่านในวัฒนธรรมปลายทาง

4. การประยุกต์ใช้ในด้านวิชาการ

งานแปล "โนราจังหวัดตรัง: ความเชื่อและพิธีกรรม" มีคุณค่าและประโยชน์ในด้านวิชาการหลายประการ โดยเฉพาะอย่างยิ่ง หลังจากที่เราได้รับการขึ้นทะเบียนเป็นมรดกภูมิปัญญาทางวัฒนธรรมของมนุษยชาติโดยองค์การยูเนสโก การเผยแพร่ความรู้เกี่ยวกับศิลปะการแสดงพื้นบ้านที่มีความสำคัญของไทยในภาษาอังกฤษมีส่วนช่วยส่งเสริมการศึกษาและการตระหนักถึงคุณค่าของวัฒนธรรมไทยในระดับนานาชาติ

4.1 การเผยแพร่องค์ความรู้สู่ระดับสากล

งานแปลนี้เป็นการเพิ่มแหล่งข้อมูลเชิงลึกเกี่ยวกับพิธีกรรมโนราในภาษาอังกฤษซึ่งมีอยู่จำกัด ทำให้นักวิชาการและผู้สนใจที่ไม่สามารถอ่านภาษาไทยได้สามารถเข้าถึงข้อมูลสำคัญเกี่ยวกับโนรา ซึ่งสอดคล้องกับแนวคิดของ Pym (2014) ที่เน้นบทบาทของการแปลในการเคลื่อนย้ายความรู้ข้ามพรมแดนทางภาษาและวัฒนธรรม นักวิชาการต่างชาติสามารถเข้าถึงข้อมูลและนำไปใช้ในการศึกษาวิจัยเปรียบเทียบกับศิลปะการแสดงพื้นบ้านของวัฒนธรรมอื่น ๆ โดยที่ไม่จำเป็นต้องพึ่งพาลำหรือผู้แปลเอกสารเพิ่มเติม งานแปลนี้ยังมีข้อมูลเชิงลึกเกี่ยวกับประวัติศาสตร์และพัฒนาการของโนราในจังหวัดตรังซึ่งเป็นข้อมูลที่มีคุณค่าสำหรับการศึกษาด้านมานุษยวิทยาวัฒนธรรมและประวัติศาสตร์ท้องถิ่น ข้อมูลโดยละเอียดในภาษาอังกฤษช่วยให้นักท่องเที่ยวและผู้สนใจชาวต่างชาติสามารถเข้าถึงและเข้าใจวัฒนธรรมท้องถิ่นได้ลึกซึ้งยิ่งขึ้น

4.2 การศึกษาเปรียบเทียบทางวัฒนธรรม

งานแปลนี้สามารถใช้เป็นแหล่งข้อมูลสำหรับการศึกษาเปรียบเทียบระหว่างพิธีกรรมการแสดงพื้นบ้านในวัฒนธรรมต่าง ๆ ทั่วโลก โดยเฉพาะอย่างยิ่งการศึกษาเปรียบเทียบเกี่ยวกับการประทับทรงและพิธีกรรมเกี่ยวกับวิญญาณบรรพบุรุษในวัฒนธรรมต่าง ๆ ซึ่งเป็นประเด็นศึกษาที่ได้รับความสนใจในวงวิชาการมานุษยวิทยาและชาติ

พันธุวิทยา เป็นประโยชน์อย่างยิ่งในการศึกษาด้านศิลปะการแสดงพื้นบ้าน โดยเฉพาะการศึกษาเปรียบเทียบกับศิลปะการแสดงในภูมิภาคเอเชียตะวันออกเฉียงใต้และเอเชียใต้ซึ่งมีความเชื่อมโยงทางประวัติศาสตร์และวัฒนธรรม นักวิชาการสามารถนำข้อมูลนี้ไปวิเคราะห์เปรียบเทียบกับพิธีกรรมในวัฒนธรรมอื่น ๆ ได้ ข้อมูลเกี่ยวกับการผสมผสานระหว่างความเชื่อดั้งเดิม พุทธศาสนา และอิทธิพลจากศาสนาอิสลามในวัฒนธรรมโนรา มีคุณค่าสำหรับการศึกษาด้านพหุวัฒนธรรมและการผสมผสานทางวัฒนธรรมในบริบทของเอเชียตะวันออกเฉียงใต้ซึ่งเป็นประเด็นสำคัญในการศึกษาทางสังคมวิทยาและมานุษยวิทยาาร่วมสมัย

4.3 การศึกษาทางคติชนวิทยาและมานุษยวิทยา

งานแปลเป็นประโยชน์ต่อการศึกษาด้านคติชนวิทยา โดยแสดงให้เห็นโครงสร้างและองค์ประกอบของตำนานพื้นบ้าน ในสาขามานุษยวิทยาและสังคมวิทยา งานแปลเล่มนี้นำเสนอข้อมูลเชิงลึกเกี่ยวกับความเปลี่ยนแปลงในระบบการถ่ายทอดความรู้จาก "การสอนแบบไม่เป็นทางการ" ในอดีตมาสู่การเรียนรู้ในระบบสถาบันการศึกษาในปัจจุบัน ซึ่งสะท้อนให้เห็นถึงการเปลี่ยนแปลงโครงสร้างทางสังคมและการปรับตัวของวัฒนธรรมพื้นบ้าน งานแปลยังให้ข้อมูลที่มีค่าสำหรับนักวิชาการในสาขามานุษยวิทยา คติชนวิทยา และการศึกษาทางด้านความเชื่อและศาสนาพื้นบ้าน โดยเฉพาะในประเด็นเกี่ยวกับความเชื่อเรื่องโรค การรักษา และระบบวิญญูณนิยมในวัฒนธรรมท้องถิ่น ข้อมูลเกี่ยวกับโรคและโรคครุหมอนโนรา รวมถึงวิธีการรักษาตามความเชื่อพื้นบ้าน สามารถนำไปใช้ในการศึกษาด้านการแพทย์พื้นบ้านและมานุษยวิทยาการแพทย์ได้

4.4 การอนุรักษ์มรดกทางวัฒนธรรมที่จับต้องไม่ได้

ในแง่ของการอนุรักษ์มรดกทางวัฒนธรรมที่จับต้องไม่ได้ งานแปลเล่มนี้มีส่วนสำคัญในการบันทึกและถ่ายทอดองค์ความรู้ดั้งเดิมให้คงอยู่และเป็นที่รู้จักในวงกว้าง สอดคล้องกับวัตถุประสงค์ขององค์การยูเนสโกในการขึ้นทะเบียนมรดกทางวัฒนธรรมที่จับต้องไม่ได้ การบันทึกและเผยแพร่ความรู้เกี่ยวกับโนราในภาษาอังกฤษเป็นส่วนสำคัญในการอนุรักษ์มรดกทางวัฒนธรรมที่กำลังเผชิญกับความเปลี่ยนแปลงทางสังคมและกระแสโลกาภิวัตน์ การทำให้องค์ความรู้เหล่านี้เข้าถึงได้ในระดับนานาชาติจะช่วยสร้างความตระหนักและการยอมรับในคุณค่าของมรดกทางวัฒนธรรมเหล่านี้ งานแปลนี้ยังเป็นเอกสารสนับสนุนการอนุรักษ์มรดกทางวัฒนธรรมที่จับต้องไม่ได้ตามแนวทางขององค์การยูเนสโก โดยการบันทึกความรู้เกี่ยวกับความเชื่อและพิธีกรรมที่อาจเลือนหายไปในยุคโลกาภิวัตน์ให้คงอยู่ในรูปแบบที่เข้าถึงได้ในระดับสากล

4.5 การพัฒนาการศึกษาด้านการแปล

งานแปลนี้สามารถใช้เป็นกรณีศึกษาสำหรับการพัฒนาแนวทางการแปลเอกสารทางวัฒนธรรมที่มีคำศัพท์และแนวคิดเฉพาะวัฒนธรรม โดยแสดงตัวอย่างของการจัดการกับความท้าทายในการแปลศัพท์เฉพาะทางวัฒนธรรม เช่น ชื่อพิธีกรรม อุปกรณ์ และความเชื่อต่าง ๆ ที่ไม่มีคำเทียบเคียงโดยตรงในภาษาอังกฤษ และยังสามารถใช้เป็นกรณีศึกษาสำหรับการเรียนการสอนด้านการแปลวรรณกรรมชาติพันธุ์ (Ethnographic Translation) และการแปลเชิงวัฒนธรรม

(Cultural Translation) ในระดับอุดมศึกษาเนื่องจากการใช้กลวิธีการแปลที่หลากหลายและแก้ไขปัญหาการแปลข้ามวัฒนธรรม

นอกจากนี้ยังสามารถใช้เป็นกรณีศึกษาสำหรับการสอนและการวิจัยด้านภาษาศาสตร์และการแปล โดยเฉพาะการแปลคำศัพท์ทางวัฒนธรรม ในแง่ของการศึกษาทางภาษาศาสตร์และการแปล งานแปลเล่มนี้สามารถใช้เป็นตัวอย่างของการแปลคำศัพท์และแนวคิดเฉพาะทางวัฒนธรรมที่ไม่มีความเทียบเคียงโดยตรงในภาษาปลายทางรวมถึงการรักษาบริบททางวัฒนธรรมในการแปลซึ่งเป็นประเด็นสำคัญในการแปลงานทางวิชาการที่มีเนื้อหาเกี่ยวกับวัฒนธรรม

4.6 การศึกษาเกี่ยวกับการท่องเที่ยวเชิงวัฒนธรรม

ข้อมูลที่ได้จากงานแปลสามารถนำไปประยุกต์ใช้ในการพัฒนาการท่องเที่ยวเชิงวัฒนธรรมและการอนุรักษ์มรดกทางวัฒนธรรมที่จับต้องไม่ได้ งานแปลเป็นแหล่งข้อมูลสำคัญเกี่ยวกับแนวทางการพัฒนามรดกทางวัฒนธรรมให้มีมูลค่าทางเศรษฐกิจโดยที่ยังคงรักษาแก่นแท้ทางวัฒนธรรม

4.7 การปรับตัวของศิลปะการแสดงพื้นบ้านในยุคโลกาภิวัตน์

งานแปลเล่มนี้สามารถนำไปประยุกต์ใช้ในบริบททางวิชาการต่าง ๆ โดยเฉพาะในการศึกษาวิจัยเกี่ยวกับพลวัตทางวัฒนธรรม การอนุรักษ์มรดกภูมิปัญญาวัฒนธรรมและการปรับตัวของศิลปะการแสดงพื้นบ้านในยุคโลกาภิวัตน์ ผู้แปลได้นำเสนอกรณีศึกษาที่เป็นรูปธรรมเกี่ยวกับการต่อรองทางวัฒนธรรมระหว่างความเชื่อดั้งเดิมกับกระแสโลกาภิวัตน์และการเปลี่ยนแปลงทางเทคโนโลยี นอกจากนี้ยังสามารถนำไปใช้ในการศึกษาเปรียบเทียบการปรับตัวของศิลปะการแสดงพื้นบ้านในภูมิภาคต่าง ๆ ทั่วโลก เพื่อค้นหาแนวทางการอนุรักษ์และพัฒนาที่เหมาะสมกับบริบทโลกสมัยใหม่

โดยสรุป งานแปลหนังสือ "โนราจังหวัดตรัง: ความเชื่อและพิธีกรรม" มีคุณค่าและสามารถนำไปประยุกต์ใช้ในด้านวิชาการได้หลายมิติทั้งในด้านการเผยแพร่องค์ความรู้เกี่ยวกับศิลปะการแสดงพื้นบ้านของไทยในระดับสากล การศึกษาเปรียบเทียบระหว่างวัฒนธรรม การศึกษาด้านมานุษยวิทยาและคติชนวิทยา การอนุรักษ์มรดกทางวัฒนธรรมที่จับต้องไม่ได้ การพัฒนาการศึกษาด้านการแปล การศึกษาเกี่ยวกับการท่องเที่ยวเชิงวัฒนธรรม และการศึกษาการปรับตัวของศิลปะการแสดงพื้นบ้านในยุคโลกาภิวัตน์ การแปลงานวิชาการเกี่ยวกับโนราเป็นการเพิ่มพูนองค์ความรู้ทางวิชาการและยังเป็นการส่งเสริมการอนุรักษ์และสืบทอดศิลปวัฒนธรรมพื้นบ้านอันทรงคุณค่าของไทยให้เป็นที่รู้จักในระดับนานาชาติ

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Academic Analysis of the Translation of the Book

Nora in Trang Province: Beliefs and Rituals

(English)

1. Objectives of Translating *Nora in Trang Province: Beliefs and Rituals*

The translation of *Nora in Trang Province: Beliefs and Rituals* from Thai into English aims primarily to disseminate knowledge about the traditional performing art of Nora to an international readership, particularly within the academic fields of anthropology, folklore studies, and performing arts studies. This translation is especially significant in an era when local cultures are confronted with rapid changes driven by globalization and modern technology. The inscription of “Nora” on UNESCO’s Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity on 15 December 2021 marks not only a major milestone for Thailand but also highlights the profound cultural value deeply embedded in this traditional performance. The translator therefore regards this work not merely as a linguistic transfer from Thai into English, but as an opening of a new space for Nora to be heard on the global stage.

The translator believes that cultural knowledge should be transmitted across linguistic boundaries, as culture is not the property of any single nation but a shared heritage of humanity. Translation, thereby, is more than a linguistic process; it is a vital tool for preservation, promotion, and the fostering of genuine intercultural understanding. As Venuti (2018) suggests, translation can function as a means of connecting worlds, and as Bassnett (2014) argues, it serves as a bridge that allows us to cross from one world to another in order to learn, understand, and respect one another. This book is not merely a record of history or performance techniques; it reveals a complex system of beliefs that forms the foundation of Nora. These include beliefs in ancestral spirits, the Chaeng ghost, the Chin ghost, sacred entities, and the ritual power of ceremonial weapons. All of these are intricately interwoven with the way of life of people in southern Thailand, reflecting the relationship between art, spirituality, and community identity that continues to endure amid a changing world. This translation also seeks to establish an accessible body of cultural knowledge at the international level, to support comparative research within Southeast Asia, and to provide opportunities for both Thai and international scholars and students to study Nora in depth—particularly within the context of social transformation, technological change, and the ongoing negotiation between past and present.

The translator considers this translation an act of preserving Thailand’s living cultural heritage. It carries forward the voices of Nora masters, performers, and the communities that sustain this tradition, allowing them to resonate beyond linguistic and geographical boundaries. In its English version, this book serves as a cultural bridge through which people of diverse backgrounds may see,

understand, and experience the enduring beauty and vitality of Thai traditional performing arts in the modern world.

2. Selection of the Source Text: *Nora in Trang Province: Beliefs and Rituals*

Nora in Trang Province: Beliefs and Rituals by Santichai Yammai is a highly valuable academic work for the study of traditional performing arts in southern Thailand. It is particularly suitable for translation and international dissemination, as it helps fill existing academic gaps while offering in-depth insights into Thai folk culture for the global scholarly community. The book holds significant academic value in the fields of cultural anthropology and traditional performing arts studies. Nora, as documented in the work, is a traditional performance with a history spanning over 1,000 years, supported by archaeological evidence (Santichai Yammai, 2013), and it continues to play an important role in the lives of people in southern Thailand today.

The book covers a wide range of topics, including definitions, historical background, legends, belief systems, ritual practices, and the adaptation of Nora in changing times. The study of Nora is not limited to performance itself but extends to a complex system of beliefs that integrates indigenous traditions with Brahmanical-Hindu influences, Buddhism, and, in some areas, elements of Islam.

Given its scholarly value, the book merits translation into English for global dissemination. The translator has considered the following key aspects:

1. **Context-specific depth:** The book presents in-depth information about Nora within the specific context of Trang Province, which possesses distinctive characteristics that may differ from Nora traditions in other parts of southern Thailand. Such local variation is valuable for comparative academic studies.
2. **Ritual complexity and significance:** The book provides detailed accounts of the *Nora Rong Khru* ritual, one of the most complex and significant ceremonies in Nora performance. It includes descriptions of ritual practices such as the invocation of Nora masters (*Khru Mo*), spirit possession, and initiation rites that establish individuals as Nora performers. These are essential bodies of knowledge for the study of Thai traditional performing arts.
3. **Documentation of oral tradition:** The book records historical narratives and lived experiences of important folk artists involved in preserving Nora in Trang Province, such as

Nora Srichan (Mr. Chan Todtaen). This contributes significantly to folklore studies and the documentation of oral traditions.

4. **Cultural dynamics and change:** The book analyzes transformations of Nora within the context of social and technological change, reflecting the dynamic nature of folk culture in the contemporary world. Issues such as cultural adaptation, negotiation, shifts in belief systems and rituals, and modifications of performance styles to suit modern audiences are important for global comparative studies of cultural change (Nopporn Prachakul, 2007).
5. **Intangible cultural heritage and preservation:** The book provides information on the inscription of Nora as an Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, including details of the nomination process and approaches to sustainable preservation. This is significant for disseminating knowledge about cultural heritage preservation at the international level (Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn Anthropology Centre, 2021).

The translation of *Nora in Trang Province: Beliefs and Rituals* is academically significant in multiple respects. It contributes to the documentation and dissemination of in-depth knowledge about Thai traditional performing arts, the study of complex belief systems and ritual practices, and the understanding of cultural transformation and adaptation in a rapidly changing world. It also provides valuable insights into the preservation of intangible cultural heritage. Translating this work will help bridge existing academic gaps and enable international scholars to gain deeper access to and understanding of Thai folk culture.

3. Translation Strategies Used in Translating *Nora in Trang Province: Beliefs and Rituals*

Translating cultural works from Thai into English is a highly challenging task, as the translator must navigate multiple layers of complexity, including differences in linguistic structure, belief systems, and social contexts. This is particularly true for works related to traditional performing arts such as Nora, which are deeply rooted in spirituality and embedded with long-standing rituals, beliefs, and local wisdom. *Nora in Trang Province: Beliefs and Rituals* presents its content in two distinct modes of writing: prose, used to explain academic information and ritual practices, and verse, which appears in the form of poetic texts used in Nora performances. These different textual forms require the translator to adapt translation strategies accordingly, taking into account accuracy of content, preservation of cultural value, and reader comprehension. The goal is to convey both academic precision and artistic beauty effectively to English-speaking audiences.

Translation of Prose

Translating cultural texts from Thai into English is a complex process that requires a range of skills. Based on the analysis of the translation of *Nora in Trang Province: Beliefs and Rituals*, the translator employed various strategies to fully convey meaning and cultural value from the source language to the target language. These strategies can be categorized as follows:

1. Literal Translation

Literal translation is a strategy employed when the translator aims to maintain the highest level of accuracy and fidelity to the source text. Following the principles proposed by Newmark (1988), which the translator has studied and applied, literal translation does not imply a rigid word-for-word rendering without judgment. Rather, it involves preserving the meaning and structure of the original text as much as possible while ensuring that the result remains natural in the target language. A key principle guiding the translator is the careful evaluation of when literal translation is appropriate. This decision depends on the nature of the content, the purpose of the translation, and the expectations of the intended readership. In translating an academic work on Nora culture, literal translation proves particularly suitable in contexts where accuracy and consistency are essential.

Analysis of Translation through Examples from the Books

1) Translation of Academic References

Example from Chapter 1:

Thai source text (p. 2): (ส.พลายน้อย, 2544)

English translation (p. 2): (Playnoi, 2001)

In translating the reference “(ส.พลายน้อย, 2544)” as “(Playnoi, 2001),” the translator applied a systematic literal translation approach. This decision reflects the need for consistency and precision in academic referencing. The original citation format is preserved, with the only modification being the conversion of the Buddhist Era (B.E.) year to the Common Era (C.E.) year to align with international academic standards. This demonstrates that the translator did not translate mechanically but instead adapted the referencing system to meet global conventions while retaining all essential information. The conversion of the year is a necessary transformation to ensure that readers can understand and effectively use the reference.

2) Translation of Headings and Titles

Example from Chapter 2:

Thai source text (p. 46): ความสำคัญของพิธีกรรมโนราโรงครู

English translation (p. 29): *Importance of Nora Rong Khru Rituals*

Example from Chapter 2:

Thai source text (p. 47): ประเภทของพิธีกรรมโนราโรงครู

English translation (p. 29): *Types of Nora Rong Khru Rituals*

In translating the heading “ความสำคัญของพิธีกรรมโนราโรงครู” as *Importance of Nora Rong Khru Rituals*, the translator applied literal translation while preserving the semantic structure. “ความสำคัญ” is rendered as “Importance,” accurately retaining its core meaning. The preposition “ของ,” which indicates possession or relation, is translated as “of,” fulfilling an equivalent grammatical function in English. “พิธีกรรม” is translated as “rituals,” a term appropriate for academic discourse. For “โนราโรงครู,” the translator chooses transliteration (*Nora Rong Khru*). Although this is not a literal translation, it preserves the cultural specificity of the term, which cannot be adequately conveyed through direct translation. The same principle is consistently applied in translating “ประเภทของพิธีกรรมโนราโรงครู” as *Types of Nora Rong Khru Rituals*.

Conclusion

Literal translation is a valuable and important strategy in academic translation when used appropriately. Based on the experience of translating this book, the translator found several key advantages of this approach. First, it ensures accuracy and reliability. When applied in suitable contexts, readers can be confident that the information closely reflects the original text. This is crucial in academic writing, where even minor inaccuracies may lead to significant misunderstandings. Second, it promotes systematicity and consistency. Literal translation helps establish recognizable patterns, particularly in headings and recurring structures, making the text easier to follow and enhancing the credibility of the translation. Third, it improves efficiency. Literal translation generally requires less time than more interpretive or adaptive approaches, which is advantageous when working under time constraints or with large volumes of material, while still maintaining a high level of quality.

However, in translating this book, literal translation is not the sole strategy employed. Rather, it forms part of a broader set of translation strategies used to manage the complexities of cross-cultural translation.

2. Transliteration

Transliteration is a translation strategy in which words from the source language are carried over into the target language through phonetic rendering, without translating their meanings. This strategy is particularly important in cross-cultural translation, as it helps preserve the identity and authenticity of the source culture, as discussed by Newmark (1988). Transliteration is especially effective in dealing with *culture-specific items* that have no direct equivalents in the target language. This approach also aligns with Venuti's (2018) concept of *foreignization*, which emphasizes maintaining the cultural distinctiveness and “otherness” of the source text, allowing readers to genuinely encounter a different culture. Similarly, Berman (2021) argues that translation is not merely the transfer of meaning but must also respect the original form in order to preserve the foreignness of the text.

Analysis of Translation through Examples from the Books

1) Personal and Character Names

The transliteration of personal and character names preserves Thai cultural identity at a profound level. Names are not merely labels; they often reflect beliefs, values, and social backgrounds.

Example from Chapter 1:

Thai source text (p. 24): นางนวลทองสำลีศรีมาลา

English translation (p. 14): *Nang Nuan Thong Samlee Sri Mala*

Example from Chapter 3:

Thai source text (p. 114): พ่อศรีศรัทธา นางนวลทองสำลี แม่ศรีมาลา พ่อเทพสิงห์

English translation (p. 73): *Pho Sri Sattha, Nang Nual Thong Samlee, Mother Si Mala, Pho Thep Singhon*

In transliterating names such as “นางนวลทองสำลีศรีมาลา” as *Nang Nuan Thong Samlee Sri Mala*, the translator faced several challenges. One key challenge was managing the length and complexity of Thai names, which often convey honor, social status, or distinctive attributes.

Preserving this complexity allows readers to perceive these cultural nuances. The choice to transliterate “นาง” as *Nang* is particularly significant. While it could have been translated as “Lady” or “Mrs.,” retaining *Nang* preserves the cultural specificity of this form of address in traditional Thai contexts. In Thai literary usage, “นาง” carries broader connotations of femininity, honor, and status. Similarly, “พ่อศรีศรัทธา” is transliterated as *Pho Sri Sattha*. Using *Pho* instead of translating it as “Father” or “Mr.” maintains the cultural meaning of a respectful title for a male elder or figure of status, rather than implying a familial relationship.

2) Place Names and Geography

Transliteration of place names maintains their connection to geography and local culture, enabling readers to trace real-world locations.

Example from Chapter 1:

Thai source text (p. 25): เกาะสีชัง

English translation (p. 14): *Koh Si Chang*

Example from Chapter 3:

Thai source text (p. 123): เขาพับผ้า

English translation (p. 79): *Phab Pha mountain*

Different strategies are applied depending on context. For “เกาะสีชัง,” the translator uses full transliteration (*Koh Si Chang*), as it is a well-known island. Retaining “Koh” signals that it is an island while preserving its identity. In the case of “เขาพับผ้า,” the translation “*Phab Pha mountain*” combines transliteration and translation. The specific name “พับผ้า” is transliterated, while the generic geographical term “เขา” is translated as “mountain.” This hybrid strategy balances cultural preservation with reader comprehension.

3) Names of Performances and Cultural Arts

Transliterating the names of performing arts preserves cultural heritage that cannot be fully conveyed through translation.

Example from Chapter 1:

Thai source text (p. 1): โนรา

English translation (p. 1): *Nora*

Example from Chapter 3:

Thai source text (p. 105): โนราโรงครู

English translation (p. 79): *Nora Rong Khru*

Transliterating “โนรา” as *Nora* is a crucial decision, as *Nora* is a culturally specific performance with no direct equivalent in Western traditions. Translating it as “Southern Thai folk dance-drama” would dilute its uniqueness and potentially mislead readers into equating it with other forms. Similarly, “โนราโรงครู” is transliterated as “*Nora Rong Khru*,” extending the same principle to a more complex term. “โรงครู” refers to a specific concept within Thai performance culture, involving rituals of paying respect to teachers or masters. Transliteration preserves the integrity of this concept as a unified cultural unit.

4) Religious and Cultural Terminology

Transliteration of religious and cultural terms helps preserve their sacredness and spiritual depth.

Example from Chapter 3:

Thai source text (p. 123): ทวดหลักเขต

English translation (p. 80): *Thuat Lak Khet*

The transliteration of “ทวดหลักเขต” as “*Thuat Lak Khet*” addresses a complex belief system unique to Thai folk religion. This concept encompasses ancestral spirits, territorial guardianship, and ritual practices. Attempting to translate or simplify it may lead to distortion or loss of meaning. Transliteration preserves the conceptual integrity while allowing for further explanation in the main text or footnotes, enabling deeper understanding than a brief translation could provide.

The translator views consistent use of transliteration throughout the text as a way to create a distinctive reading experience. Readers are immersed directly in Thai culture rather than encountering it through a Westernized lens. The accumulation of transliterated terms builds an authentic cultural atmosphere. However, the translator also recognizes potential challenges. Transliteration may create difficulties in pronunciation, memorization, or comprehension, potentially distancing some readers. Therefore, it must be used judiciously and often supplemented with explanations or contextual cues. Consistency is maintained by applying the same transliteration method to recurring terms throughout the text, fostering familiarity and trust. Cultural significance is

also considered: terms central to cultural understanding are transliterated, while less critical terms may be translated or explained.

Conclusion

Transliteration plays a crucial role in cross-cultural translation, as it bridges cultures without compromising the uniqueness of the source culture. It presents other cultures in a respectful and authentic way, inviting readers to learn and understand rather than assimilating them into their own cultural framework. In a culturally diverse world, transliteration promotes intercultural understanding and respect. Preserving proper names, cultural concepts, and specialized terminology in their original form allows readers to appreciate the complexity and richness of other cultures. As demonstrated in the translation of this book on Nora, transliteration helps retain the Thai essence of the text, enabling readers to experience the beauty and depth of Thai culture. It is therefore not merely a technical strategy but a philosophical choice about how cultures should be represented and respected in translation.

3. Cultural Equivalence

Cultural equivalence is a complex translation strategy that requires a deep understanding of both the source and target cultures. According to Peter Newmark (1988), cultural equivalence involves replacing a cultural element in the source text with one that produces a similar effect in the target culture. Meanwhile, Mona Baker (2018) emphasizes that this process is not about finding perfect equivalence, but rather identifying points of similarity that can convey comparable meaning and emotional impact. The key principle of cultural equivalence is to prioritize cultural effect over literal meaning, aiming to provide target readers with an experience and understanding similar to that of readers in the source culture.

Analysis of Translation through Examples from the Books

1) Cultural Equivalence in Religious Concepts

Translating religious concepts is one of the greatest challenges in cross-cultural translation, as such concepts are often highly complex and culturally specific.

Example from Chapter 1:

Thai source text (p. 3): โนราเป็นการรำเพื่อบูชาเทพเจ้าคือ พระอิศวร พระนารายณ์ และพระพรหมในศาสนาพราหมณ์

English translation (p. 2): *Nora is a traditional dance performed to honor the gods Shiva, Vishnu, and Brahma in Brahmanism.*

In translating this sentence, the translator applied cultural equivalence by recognizing that English-speaking readers are generally more familiar with the Sanskrit-derived names of these deities. Thus, “พระอิศวร” is rendered as “*Shiva*,” “พระนารายณ์” as “*Vishnu*,” and “พระพรหม” as “*Brahma*.” While the Thai forms carry honorific and culturally embedded meanings, the chosen equivalents enable readers to connect the deities with their existing knowledge and better understand their roles within Nora performance.

Similarly, “ศาสนาพราหมณ์” is translated as “*Brahmanism*.” Although this term carries specific connotations in English that may not fully align with its Thai usage, it provides a recognizable reference point for readers, indicating a belief system associated with Brahmanical traditions.

Example from Chapter 4:

Thai source text (p. 155): วันพระหรือวันธรรมะสัณเฑาะ

English translation (p. 98): *Buddhist holy days, or the Buddhist sabbath*

The translation of “วันพระหรือวันธรรมะสัณเฑาะ” demonstrates a more complex application of cultural equivalence. The phrase “*Buddhist holy days*” offers a broad and accessible explanation, helping readers understand that these are religiously significant days. The addition of “*or the Buddhist sabbath*” provides a familiar reference for readers acquainted with the concept of the “*sabbath*” in Christianity or Judaism. However, the use of “*sabbath*” carries the risk of misinterpretation, as its meaning and practice differ from “วันพระ” in Buddhism. The translator acknowledges this limitation but adopts the term to provide a relatable conceptual anchor, assuming that the broader context will clarify the differences.

2) Cultural Equivalence in Social Status

Translating social status presents another challenge, as social structures vary across cultures.

Example from Chapter 1:

Thai source text (p. 29): สถานะทางสังคมของโนราใหญ่ จัดว่าเป็น "ผู้นำที่ไม่เป็นทางการของชุมชน"

English translation (p. 17): *The social status of a chief Nora is regarded as an “informal leader of the community.”*

In this case, the translation of “โนราใหญ่” as *chief Nora* reflects cultural equivalence by conveying hierarchy and social significance. The term “*chief*” suggests leadership and authority, aligning with the role of a senior Nora figure within the community. The phrase “ผู้นำที่ไม่เป็นทางการของชุมชน” is rendered as “*informal leader of the community*,” a concept familiar in Western contexts, referring to individuals who hold influence and respect without formal institutional authority. This helps readers understand the nuanced social role of Nora performers.

3) Cultural Equivalence in Units of Measurement

The translation of measurement units may appear straightforward but involves cultural considerations.

Example from Chapter 2:

Thai source text (p. 62): เขตเมืองอุดรปัญจากว้างถึงห้าร้อยพันวา

English translation (p. 38): *a city called Udon Binja, which stretched five hundred thousand fathoms in area.*

In translating “วา” as *fathoms*, the translator chooses a culturally equivalent unit rather than converting it into modern metric units such as meters. A “fathom” (approximately six feet) is close in value to a “วา” (approximately two meters) and carries a traditional connotation, particularly in maritime contexts. This choice preserves the traditional tone of measurement and aligns with the literary nature of the text. The phrase “*five hundred thousand fathoms*” also maintains a sense of grandeur and mythic scale presented in the original, which might be diminished if converted into modern units.

Conclusion

Cultural equivalence offers several important advantages in translation. First, it enhances readability and comprehension, allowing readers to quickly grasp meaning by connecting it to familiar concepts. For example, recognizing *Shiva* helps readers understand the religious context of Nora more effectively. Second, it builds a bridge between cultures by highlighting similarities and points of connection, reducing the sense of unfamiliarity and encouraging further exploration. Third, it enables readers to understand broader social and cultural contexts. Translating “โนราใหญ่” as “*informal leader*” allows readers to grasp both the social structure and the cultural significance of Nora within Thai communities. In sum, cultural equivalence is a valuable tool in cross-cultural

translation. It facilitates intercultural understanding and makes culturally rich content more accessible to global audiences while preserving essential meanings and effects.

4. Transposition (Structural Adjustment / Change of Word Class)

Transposition is a translation strategy that requires a deep understanding of the nature of both the source and target languages. In translating this book on Nora, the translator applied the framework proposed by Jean-Paul Vinay and Jean Darbelnet (2000), recognizing that structural adjustment is not merely a matter of handling grammatical differences, but a creative process of producing natural and effective communication in the target language. A key principle guiding the translator's decisions is the awareness that Thai and English differ in how they organize information and express relationships between ideas. Strict adherence to Thai structures may result in unnatural English, while excessive restructuring risks losing stylistic nuance or deeper meaning. Therefore, the goal of transposition is to enhance communicative effectiveness without altering the core meaning or the author's intent.

Analysis of Translation through Examples from the Books

1) Reordering Modifiers and Sentence Structure

Adjusting the position of modifiers is a common form of transposition in Thai–English translation due to structural differences between the two languages.

Example from Chapter 1:

Thai source text (p. 23): ฝ่ายนายไชยชายกระทาเมื่อรู้ความว่าจะต้องราชทัณฑ์จึงไหวตัวทันเลยหนีไปเสีย

English translation (p. 14): *Mr. Chai Chay Kratha, realizing he was about to face punishment, quickly escaped.*

The Thai structure follows the pattern: [Subject] + [embedded causal clause] + [main verb]

- “ฝ่ายนายไชยชายกระทา” (subject)
- “เมื่อรู้ความว่าจะต้องราชทัณฑ์” (causal clause)
- “จึงไหวตัวทันเลยหนีไปเสีย” (main verb)

In English, the structure becomes: [Subject] + [participle phrase] + [main verb]

- “Mr. Chai Chay Kratha” (subject)

- “realizing he was about to face punishment” (participle phrase)
- “quickly escaped” (main verb)

In translating “ฝ่ายนายไชยกระหาเมื่อรู้ความว่าจะต้องราชทัณฑ์จึงไหวตัวทันเลยหนีไปเสีย” as “*Mr. Chai Chay Kratha, realizing he was about to face punishment, quickly escaped,*” the translator employed structural adjustment at multiple levels to ensure clarity and naturalness in English. A key transformation involves the reorganization of information. In the Thai original, the structure presents “ฝ่ายนายไชยกระหา” (the subject) first, followed by the cause “เมื่อรู้ความว่าจะต้องราชทัณฑ์,” and finally the result “จึงไหวตัวทันเลยหนีไปเสีย.” In the English version, this sequence is restructured to begin with the subject, followed by the cause expressed as a participial phrase, and concluding with the main action. The use of “*realizing he was about to face punishment*” instead of a more literal rendering such as “*when he knew that he would be punished*” results in a more concise and natural sentence. The participial phrase is a common structure in English for expressing causal relationships and contributes to smoother readability. Furthermore, the translation of “ไหวตัวทันเลยหนีไปเสีย” as “*quickly escaped*” represents a significant structural adjustment. Rather than preserving every element of the original expression, the translator captures the core meaning of the action. The phrase “*quickly escaped*” effectively conveys both the sense of swift reaction implied by “ไหวตัวทัน” and the act of fleeing expressed by “หนีไปเสีย.”

2) Sentence Splitting and Combining for Clarity

Sentence segmentation is used to align with target-language writing conventions.

Example from Chapter 2:

Thai source text (p. 60): การประกอบพิธีกรรมตั้งบ้านตั้งเมืองใช้พื้นที่กลางโรงโนรา โดยโนราใหญ่นั่งบน
เสาดคล้า

English translation (p. 37): *The Announcement ritual takes place in the center of the Nora pavilion. The chief Nora sits on Sad Khla (a mat).*

In translating “การประกอบพิธีกรรมตั้งบ้านตั้งเมืองใช้พื้นที่กลางโรงโนรา โดยโนราใหญ่นั่งบนเสาดคล้า,” the translator applies structural adjustment through sentence segmentation. The original Thai presents multiple pieces of information within a single sentence, whereas the English version separates them into two sentences: “*The Announcement ritual takes place in the center of the Nora pavilion. The chief Nora sits on Sad Khla (a mat).*” The decision to split the sentence is based on the analysis that the source text contains two main ideas: the location of the ritual and the

position of the chief Nora. In English, presenting both ideas within one sentence may cause confusion, particularly when multiple prepositions and participial phrases are involved. The first sentence, “*The Announcement ritual takes place in the center of the Nora pavilion,*” provides the primary information about the ritual’s location. The second sentence, “*The chief Nora sits on Sad Khla (a mat),*” offers additional detail regarding the placement of the key figure. This separation allows readers to process the information more easily and to form a clearer mental image. The translation of “ตั้งบ้านตั้งเมือง” as “*Announcement ritual*” also represents an important structural adjustment. Rather than translating the phrase literally—which might not convey meaningful information in English—the translator chooses a term that communicates the function and nature of the ritual in a way that is accessible and understandable to the target audience.

3) Change of Word Class for Naturalness

The translation of “โนราในสมัยก่อนนิยมเล่นเรื่องนี้กันมาก จึงเรียกตัวละครที่เล่นเป็นพรานว่า ‘พรานบุญ’” as “*It is presumed that the Nora tradition previously included many performances of this story, leading to the character being called ‘Pran Boon’*” demonstrates a complex, multi-layered structural adjustment. A key shift involves changing “นิยมเล่น” (a verb phrase) into “*included many performances*” (a noun phrase construction). In Thai, “นิยมเล่น” conveys the idea of popularity or preference in performance. In English, however, “*included many performances*” expresses the same meaning more naturally and in a more formal, academic style. Additionally, the use of “*It is presumed that...*” instead of beginning with “โนราในสมัยก่อน” reflects a structural adjustment to align with academic writing conventions in English. This construction signals that the statement is an inference based on available evidence rather than an absolute fact.

Example from Chapter 3:

Thai source text (p. 190): ในปัจจุบันมีการพัฒนาปรับปรุงการรำเป็นแบบหมู่คณะเรียกว่า “การรำชุด” โดยใช้นางรำจำนวน 5–9 คน ต่อการแสดง 1 ฉาก

English translation (p. 120): *In the present day, the Nora dance has evolved into a group performance known as “Group Dance,” which five to nine dancers perform together in each scene.*

The translation of this sentence reflects structural adjustment for clarity and naturalness, involving the following changes:

Change of subject structure

Thai original: “มีการพัฒนาปรับปรุง” (no explicit subject)

English translation: “*the Nora dance has evolved*” (clear subject + active voice)

Change of word class

“การพัฒนาปรับปรุง” (nominalized action) → “*has evolved*” (verb)

“การรำ” (noun) → “*dance*” (noun functioning as subject)

“โดยใช้” (means) → “*where*” (relative clause)

Reorganization of information

- The Thai source text presents information in separate segments
- The English translation integrates the information into a cohesive sentence

The shift from “มีการพัฒนาปรับปรุง” to “*has evolved*” is particularly significant. The use of the present perfect tense appropriately conveys a development that began in the past and continues into the present. Moreover, “*evolved*” implies a natural and continuous process of change. The reorganization of information through a *where*-clause also strengthens coherence by clearly linking the number of performers to the performance format. The phrase “*where 5–9 dancers perform together in each scene*” enables readers to better understand the relationship between the number of performers and the structure of the performance compared to a literal translation.

Conclusion

Structural adjustment enhances naturalness and fluency in English translation. It allows readers to engage with the text smoothly without perceiving it as a translation, thereby improving communicative effectiveness. Reorganizing information and adopting structures appropriate to English reduce cognitive load and facilitate comprehension, enabling readers to understand the content more easily and efficiently. Although the form may change, the core meaning and relationships between ideas are preserved. Ultimately, structural adjustment is a powerful tool in cross-cultural translation, as it enables the production of texts that are natural, clear, and effective while faithfully conveying the original intent.

5. Amplification

Amplification refers to the addition of information not explicitly stated in the source text in order to enhance comprehension for target-language readers. This strategy requires careful judgment and discretion. In translating this book, the translator applies the framework of Vinay & Darbelnet (2000), recognizing that amplification is not the arbitrary addition of content, but rather a means of filling gaps in understanding that arise from cultural and contextual differences. A key principle guiding the use of amplification is the assessment of the target audience's background knowledge and expectations. English-language readers engaging with Thai cultural content often lack familiarity with specific concepts, objects, or rituals. Amplification therefore becomes an essential tool for making the text accessible and meaningful. It should be applied selectively—not to explain everything in exhaustive detail, but to provide the necessary information for understanding context, significance, and function.

Analysis of Translation through Examples from the Books

1) Use of Footnotes: In-depth explanation without disrupting the main text

Footnotes are an effective means of providing additional information while preserving the flow of the main text. Cultural terms can be retained in transliterated form and explained separately.

Example from Chapter 1:

Thai source text (p. 2): นาง

English translation (p. 2): *Nang*

Footnote: *Nang in Thai is used as an honorific or a formal title, primarily to refer to a woman of nobility, beauty, or importance.*

In translating the term “นาง,” the translator chooses to use the transliteration “*Nang*” and adds a footnote stating: “*Nang in Thai is used as an honorific or a formal title, primarily to refer to a woman of nobility, beauty, or importance.*” The use of a footnote in this case is justified for several reasons. First, “นาง” is a culturally complex term that cannot be fully captured by a single English equivalent. Translating it as “*Lady*” or “*Mrs.*” would result in the loss of important cultural nuances. Second, transliteration without explanation may lead to confusion for readers unfamiliar with Thai culture. Third, the footnote provides essential contextual information, helping readers understand both the usage and the significance of the term. Specifically, the footnote conveys three

key aspects: its function (an honorific or formal title), its target group (women), and its associated qualities (nobility, beauty, or importance). This information enables readers to recognize that when encountering the term “*Nang*” in the text, it refers to a woman of notable status or distinction.

Example from Chapter 2:

Thai source text (p. 63): เบญจางคประดิษฐ์

English translation (p. 39): *The Benjangkhapradit bow*

Footnote: *The Benjangkhapradit bow is a special type of bow that is more beautiful and intricate than a regular bow...*

In translating “เบญจางคประดิษฐ์,” the translator employs amplification in a slightly different form. The term is rendered as “*The Benjangkhapradit bow*,” accompanied by a footnote: “*The Benjangkhapradit bow is a special type of bow that is more beautiful and intricate than a regular bow...*” This approach aims to strike a balance between preserving cultural specificity and providing sufficient information for understanding. By retaining the original term through transliteration, the translator maintains its cultural identity, while the added footnote ensures that readers can grasp its meaning and distinctive characteristics.

2) Parenthetical Explanation: Immediate clarification

Parentheses are used when brief, direct explanations are sufficient.

Example from Chapter 2:

Thai source text (p. 53): จากนั้นโนราใหญ่ นำ “สาตคล้า” มาปูหน้าโรงโนรา

English translation (p. 33): *Following this, the chief Nora will use “Sad Khla (a mat)” to lay out in front of the Nora stage.*

Example from Chapter 3:

Thai source text (p. 101): เชี่ยนครู

English translation (p. 47): *Chian Khru (a ceremonial object used for rituals)*

In handling “สาตคล้า” in the sentence “จากนั้นโนราใหญ่ นำ ‘สาตคล้า’ มาปูหน้าโรงโนรา,” the translator chooses the form “*Sad Khla (a mat)*” instead of using a footnote. This decision is based on the nature of the information being added. When the additional detail is brief and straightforward, a parenthetical explanation is more efficient than a footnote. The phrase *(a mat)* provides the essential information needed to understand the action. Readers can immediately grasp what “*Sad Khla*” is and how it is used. This clarification helps them visualize the action and better understand

the steps involved in the ritual. A similar approach is applied to “*เนี่ยนครุ*,” which is translated as “*Chian Khru (a ceremonial object used for rituals)*.” This explanation provides two key pieces of information: the nature of the object and its function. As a result, readers are better able to understand both the context and the significance of the object within the ritual.

Example from Chapter 3:

Thai source text (p. 108): วิสุทธิเทวดา ได้แก่ พระปัจเจกพุทธเจ้า

English translation (p. 69): *Sublime Deities, this group includes the Paccekabuddhas (solitary enlightened ones).*

In translating “วิสุทธิเทวดา ได้แก่ พระปัจเจกพุทธเจ้า” as “*Sublime Deities, this group includes the Paccekabuddhas (solitary enlightened ones)*,” the translator employs amplification at a more complex level. This involves handling a highly specific religious concept that requires both accuracy and accessibility. The rendering of “พระปัจเจกพุทธเจ้า” as “*Paccekabuddhas*” reflects the use of an established technical term in Buddhist studies. However, the addition of “*(solitary enlightened ones)*” ensures that readers who are unfamiliar with this terminology can still grasp the core meaning. The phrase “*solitary enlightened ones*” conveys the defining characteristic of Paccekabuddhas—beings who attain enlightenment independently without teaching others—thereby making the concept more accessible while preserving its doctrinal significance.

3) Addition of Geographical Information

Geographical amplification helps readers situate the narrative spatially and connect it with existing knowledge.

Example from Chapter 3:

Thai source text (p. 123): ทวดอ่างทอง มีรูปร่างเป็นจระเข้ สืบสกลิตอยู่ที่น้ำตกอ่างทอง อำเภอสิเกา จังหวัดตรัง

English translation (p. 79): *Thuat Ang Thong, he appears as a crocodile, dwelling at Ang Thong Waterfall in Sikao District, Trang Province, southern Thailand.*

In translating “ทวดอ่างทอง,” the translator employs amplification to provide essential contextual information. The original text states: “ทวดอ่างทอง มีรูปร่างเป็นจระเข้ สืบสกลิตอยู่ที่น้ำตกอ่างทอง อำเภอสิเกา จังหวัดตรัง,” which is expanded in translation as “*Thuat Ang Thong, he appears as a crocodile, dwelling at Ang Thong Waterfall in Sikao District, Trang Province, southern Thailand.*” The addition of “*southern Thailand*” serves as an amplification strategy to enhance understanding for international readers. Identifying Trang as part of southern Thailand helps situate the location

geographically and allows readers to connect it with any prior knowledge they may have about the region. This added detail does not overload the text but provides necessary context for comprehension. Moreover, retaining the structured format of the location—“*Ang Thong Waterfall in Sikao District, Trang Province*”—helps readers understand Thailand’s administrative divisions. This can also support comprehension in other parts of the text where similar geographical references appear.

Conclusion

Amplification is a valuable strategy in cross-cultural translation. It bridges gaps in understanding and enhances accessibility, allowing readers to engage more fully with the text. In this translation, amplification enables readers to appreciate the richness, complexity, and beauty of Thai culture at a deeper level, while maintaining clarity and readability.

6. Interpretive Translation

Interpretive translation is one of the most challenging and complex translation strategies, as it requires not only a deep understanding of vocabulary and grammar, but also sensitivity to cultural context, social meaning, and implicit nuances. According to Lederer (2014), this approach is based on the *Interpretive Model*, which emphasizes conveying the intended *sense* rather than translating words or structures directly.

Analysis of Translation through Examples from the Books

1) Interpreting idiomatic expressions and character traits

Example from Chapter 2:

Thai source text (p. 48): เป็นคนสับปรັบ

English translation (p. 30): *someone who is unreliable, which means they are fickle, untrustworthy.*

The term “สับปรັบ” is a Thai idiomatic expression with complex meaning and no direct equivalent in English. The translator applies interpretive translation through the following process:

Step 1: Understanding the meaning

In Thai context, “สับสน” refers to a person who is inconsistent, easily changes their mind, unreliable, and lacking stability in decision-making.

Step 2: Detaching from the Thai linguistic form

The translator moves beyond the surface form of the word and focuses on its underlying meaning—specifically, a negative personality trait related to unreliability.

Step 3: Expressing the meaning in English

The translator uses “*unreliable*” as the core term and expands it with “*fickle*, *untrustworthy*” to capture the full range of meaning. Instead of forcing a direct one-word equivalent, this approach conveys the intended sense clearly and comprehensively for the target reader.

2) Interpreting concepts related to natural phenomena

Example from Chapter 2:

Thai source text (p. 49): เดือน 3 ไฟกา เดือน 5 ไฟลุ่มทุ่ง

English translation (p. 30): *Month 3 is fire from the earth, Month 5 is fire burning fields.*

This example requires interpretive translation grounded in an understanding of agricultural culture and traditional beliefs about nature. The translator first researched the context: “ไฟกา” refers to a phenomenon occurring during the dry season when the ground becomes extremely parched, sometimes producing heat or glowing effects from the soil. Meanwhile, “ไฟลุ่มทุ่ง” refers to the burning of fields after harvest or wildfires spreading across grasslands. Based on this understanding, the translator renders “ไฟกา” as “*fire from the earth*,” an interpretive expression that helps readers grasp the idea of fire emerging naturally from the ground. Similarly, “ไฟลุ่มทุ่ง” is translated as “*fire burning fields*,” which conveys the image of fire spreading across agricultural land. Through this interpretive approach, readers unfamiliar with Thai agricultural culture can better understand these phenomena. At the same time, the translation preserves the connection to seasonal cycles and agricultural practices, while also reflecting the environmental knowledge embedded in traditional Thai culture.

3) Interpreting spiritual and belief-related concepts

Example from Chapter 2:

Thai source text (p. 71): การประทับทรง หรือ “การจับลง” คือ ภาวะที่มนุษย์ถูกวิญญาณประเภทใดประเภทหนึ่งเข้าสิงร่าง

English translation (p. 44): *Possession, or “spirit entry,” refers to the state where a human body is inhabited by a particular type of spirit.*

This example illustrates a complex case of interpretive translation, as it involves spiritual concepts that differ significantly across cultures. The translator begins by analyzing the key term “การประทับทรง,” which carries a formal and sacred connotation. Etymologically, it derives from “ประทับ” (to reside, often used in reference to a monarch) and “ทรง” (an action associated with royalty), suggesting a dignified or elevated form of spiritual embodiment. The translator therefore renders it as “*possession*,” a term widely used in Western discourse on spirituality and religion. Meanwhile, “การจับลง” is a more colloquial expression referring to the same phenomenon. It conveys the idea of a spirit “*descending*” or “*taking hold*” of a person. The translator interprets this as “*spirit entry*,” emphasizing the act of a spirit entering the human body. The use of “*possession*” provides a recognized technical term for comparative studies of religion and spirituality, while “*spirit entry*” helps preserve the nuance of the vernacular expression. The explanation “*inhabited by a particular type of spirit*” further clarifies the state being described, ensuring that readers can understand the concept accurately.

Conclusion

Interpretive translation is both an art and a science that requires a high level of expertise. The translator must act simultaneously as a linguist, an anthropologist, and a communicator. When applied effectively, this strategy produces a translation that not only achieves lexical accuracy but also conveys the meaning, cultural depth, and intent of the original text in a comprehensive and accessible way.

7. Functional Equivalence

Functional equivalence is one of the most influential translation strategies in modern translation studies. According to the concept proposed by Nida (2021), this approach does not focus on preserving the original form or structure of the source text, but rather on producing an *equivalent effect* between readers of the source culture and those of the target culture. The key principles of

functional equivalence include a focus on the audience, achieving comparable understanding, adapting to context, and maintaining communicative function. The translator must primarily consider the target audience, ensuring that they experience a level of understanding and emotional response similar to that of the original readers.

Analysis of Translation through Examples from the Books

1) Handling Complex Religious Concepts

Example from Chapter 3:

Thai source text (p. 108): วิสุทธิเทวดา ได้แก่ พระพุทธเจ้า พระปัจเจกพุทธเจ้า และพระอรหันตชีณาสพ
ผู้ได้บรรลุนิพพาน

English translation (p. 69): *Sublime Deities, this group includes the Buddha, the
Paccekabuddhas (solitary enlightened ones), and the Arahants
(those who have attained Nirvana).*

This example illustrates the challenge of translating complex religious concepts. The term “วิสุทธิเทวดา” consists of “วิสุทธิ” (purity) and “เทวดา” (deities or divine beings). The translator renders this as “*Sublime Deities*” to convey a sense of elevated spiritual purity. The choice of “*Sublime*” instead of a more literal equivalent reflects careful consideration of the emotional and conceptual impact on English readers. For technical Buddhist terms, the translator adopts a combined strategy of retention and explanation. For “พระปัจเจกพุทธเจ้า”, the term “*Paccekabuddhas*” is used in accordance with established terminology in Buddhist studies, supplemented with the explanation (*solitary enlightened ones*) to make the concept accessible to readers unfamiliar with Buddhism. This clarification highlights the defining characteristic of Paccekabuddhas—those who attain enlightenment independently but do not teach others. Similarly, “พระอรหันตชีณาสพ” is translated as “*Arahants*”, another standardized term in Buddhist discourse, accompanied by the explanation (*those who have attained Nirvana*). The specific nuance of “ชีณาสพ”, which refers to the eradication of defilements, is incorporated into the broader and more accessible concept of attaining Nirvana. This allows English readers to grasp the essential meaning without needing specialized knowledge of complex doctrinal terminology.

2) Translating Lists of Ritual Objects for Clarity

Example from Chapter 3:

Thai source text (p. 101): สิ่งของที่ต้องใช้ในพิธีกรรมการเหยียบเสน ได้แก่ ฉี่ยนครุ ชันน้ำมนต์
รวงข้าว หินลับมีด แหวนแบบมีหัว เงินและทอง

English translation (p. 64): *The items necessary for the Sen treatment ritual include: Chian Khru (a ceremonial object used for rituals), holy water bowl, ears of rice, knife sharpening stone, ritual ring with a gemstone, silver and gold.*

This example from Chapter 3 illustrates the translation of a list of ritual objects, which presents the challenge of making culturally specific items comprehensible to readers unfamiliar with the source culture. In the Thai original, the list includes ฉี่ยนครุ, ชันน้ำมนต์, รวงข้าว, หินลับมีด, แหวนแบบมีหัว, เงินและทอง. The translator handles each item using different strategies depending on its nature and level of cultural specificity.

The term “ฉี่ยนครุ” is translated as “*Chian Khru (a ceremonial object used for rituals)*”, combining transliteration with explanation. This approach preserves the cultural identity and sacredness of the object while providing sufficient information for understanding its function. For “ชันน้ำมนต์”, the translator uses functional equivalence, rendering it as “*holy water bowl*”. By analyzing its components—ชัน (container) and น้ำมนต์ (holy water)—this translation allows readers to immediately grasp both the form and function of the object without additional explanation. The phrase “รวงข้าว” is translated as “*ears of rice*”, selecting terminology familiar to Western readers within an agricultural context. Although “รวง” may carry more specific connotations in Thai, “*ears of rice*” enables readers to visualize the object while preserving its symbolic association with abundance. The term “หินลับมีด” is rendered as “*knife sharpening stone*”, clearly describing its function. This descriptive translation helps readers understand both its physical characteristics and practical use, while also retaining potential symbolic meanings such as sharpness or readiness within the ritual context. For “แหวนแบบมีหัว”, the translator chooses “*ritual ring with a gemstone*”, adding the word “*ritual*” to clarify its ceremonial use and “*with a gemstone*” to convey the meaning of “มีหัว”. This ensures clarity and accessibility for the target audience. Finally, “เงินและทอง” is translated directly as “*silver and gold*”, as these items carry similar meanings and cultural value in both source and target cultures, requiring no further adaptation.

Overall, the translator employs a range of strategies tailored to each item, aiming to help readers understand both the function and significance of the objects within the ritual. This approach allows readers to form a clear mental image of the ritual while appreciating its cultural depth. The advantage of this strategy lies in its clarity and naturalness: the target text is easy to understand, preserves the communicative purpose, and enables readers to grasp the meaning immediately without needing additional research.

Conclusion

Functional equivalence is a highly effective strategy in cross-cultural translation, particularly when the primary goal is to ensure that target readers achieve a level of understanding and response comparable to that of the original audience. This approach requires deep knowledge of both cultures, strong analytical skills regarding the target readership, and the ability to balance accuracy with accessibility. When applied effectively, it produces translations that not only convey information but also create meaningful understanding and engagement for readers in the target culture.

8. Communicative Translation

Communicative translation is a strategy used when the translator aims to ensure that target-language readers clearly and accurately understand the meaning and intention of the source text. According to Peter Newmark (1988), communicative translation prioritizes the *effect* of the message rather than preserving the *form* of the original. Its key principle is effective communication: the translator may adjust structure, vocabulary, or even certain elements of the content so that readers in the target culture can fully comprehend the message. This strategy is particularly suitable when the source text contains idiomatic expressions, abstract concepts, or complex cultural contexts. It requires deep understanding at both linguistic and cultural levels. The translator must analyze implied meanings, the author's intention, and adapt the message appropriately for the target audience. The main challenge lies in balancing fidelity to the source text with communicative effectiveness.

Analysis of Translation through Examples from the Books

1) Conveying Concepts of Sacredness and Prohibition

Example from Chapter 5:

Thai source text (p. 181): ความเชื่อเรื่องครุหมอนราได้ตอกย้ำให้ผู้คนเข้าใจว่าครุหมอนราเป็น "สิ่งที่ถูกหวงห้าม"

English translation (p. 116): *This discourse reinforced the understanding that Khru Mo Nora was "something forbidden."*

This example illustrates the complexity of translating the concept of sacredness within a Thai cultural context. The phrase “ตอกย้ำ” carries more weight than simple emphasis; it implies a deliberate and sustained process of shaping understanding and acceptance within society. The translator renders this as “*reinforced the understanding*”, which conveys a sense of strengthening and solidifying a shared perception, aligning well with the original intent. The phrase “สิ่งที่ถูกหวงห้าม” presents another challenge due to its culturally nuanced meaning. In Thai, “หวงห้าม” does not merely mean prohibition; it implies something carefully protected due to its sacredness, involving both restriction and reverence. The translator chooses “*something forbidden*” to communicate the core idea of restricted access. Although this does not fully capture the depth of the original term, it effectively conveys the essential meaning to target readers. Additionally, the translator uses “*discourse*” instead of a direct equivalent of “ความเชื่อ” (belief). While “*belief*” may suggest an individual perspective, “*discourse*” reflects a broader system of thought that shapes social understanding. This choice aligns with the academic tone of the text and better represents the collective and socially constructed nature of the concept. Overall, this example demonstrates how communicative translation prioritizes clarity and reader comprehension, even if it requires adjusting or simplifying certain culturally embedded meanings.

2) Communicating Abstract Concepts in Contemporary Society

Example from Chapter 5:

Thai source text (p. 180): กล่าวอีกนัยคือ สังคมในปัจจุบันเป็นสังคมที่ไร้แก่น ไม่ยึดติดในอุดมการณ์ใด ๆ

English translation (p. 115): *In other words, contemporary Thai society is fluid and lacks adherence to any single ideology.*

This example from Chapter 5 presents a significant translation challenge, as it involves abstract sociological analysis. The source text states that contemporary society is “ไร้แก่น” and does not adhere to any ideology. Translating this requires a deep understanding of both sociological and philosophical concepts. The phrase “กล่าวอีกนัยคือ” functions as a discourse marker used to restate

or clarify an idea. The translator renders this as “*In other words,*” an equivalent expression in English that maintains coherence and continuity with the preceding discussion. The term “ไร้แก่น” is particularly complex. In Thai, “แก่น” refers to a core, essence, or foundational principle. Thus, a society that is “ไร้แก่น” suggests one that lacks a stable center or fixed set of values. A literal translation such as “*without a core*” or “*lacking essence*” would sound unnatural and ineffective in English. Instead, the translator uses the term “*fluid,*” which in sociological discourse conveys a sense of instability, adaptability, and constant change. This aligns well with the idea of a postmodern society characterized by shifting structures and meanings. The phrase “ไม่ยึดติดในอุดมการณ์ใด ๆ” is translated as “*lacks adherence to any single ideology.*” The word “*adherence*” effectively captures the sense of strong attachment implied by “ยึดติด.” The addition of “*single*” clarifies that the society does not commit exclusively to any one ideology, rather than suggesting a complete absence of ideology.

Furthermore, the translator expands “สังคมในปัจจุบัน” into “*contemporary Thai society.*” The inclusion of “*Thai*” specifies the cultural context, ensuring that readers understand the analysis as referring specifically to Thai society rather than society in general. This enhances both clarity and precision.

Conclusion

In both examples of communicative translation, the translator must interpret the source text across multiple dimensions. In the first case, understanding Thai religious and cultural notions of sacredness and restriction is essential, alongside anticipating how such concepts will be received by Western readers. In the second case, interpreting contemporary social dynamics requires familiarity with sociological discourse and the characteristics of postmodern society. The central challenge of communicative translation lies in balancing fidelity to the source text with communicative effectiveness. The translator must decide when to remain close to the original wording and when to adapt for clarity. At the same time, over-interpretation must be avoided, as excessive adaptation may distort the original meaning or the author’s intent. This approach grants the translator a degree of flexibility, but it also demands careful judgment. The translator must assess the target audience’s background knowledge and determine how much explanation or adaptation is necessary. When applied effectively, communicative translation enables complex ideas to be conveyed clearly and meaningfully across cultural boundaries.

9. Semantic Translation

Semantic translation is a strategy that prioritizes preserving accuracy and precision of meaning at a high level, following the concept of Peter Newmark (1988). Unlike communicative translation, this approach places greater emphasis on fidelity to the source text rather than adapting to the target audience. The key principle is to retain the semantic structure of the original as much as possible. The translator avoids interpretation or modification that might distort the original intent, instead focusing on conveying the full and exact meaning. This approach is particularly suitable for academic texts, legal documents, or any content requiring high precision. It demands a deep understanding of meaning at multiple levels—literal, conceptual, and symbolic—so that complex meanings can be rendered without losing essential elements.

Analysis of Translation through Examples from the Books

1) Translating Analysis of Social Progress

Example from Chapter 5:

Thai source text (p. 180): ในปัจจุบันสังคมไทยได้เจริญรุดหน้าก้าวสู่ยุคข้อมูลข่าวสารและเทคโนโลยีสารสนเทศ

English translation (p. 115): *Currently, Thai society has advanced into the era of information and communication technology, surpassing the industrial age.*

This example illustrates the challenge of translating an analysis of social transformation. The translator recognizes the importance of preserving each component of meaning. The phrase “ในปัจจุบัน” is translated as “*Currently*,” a direct and formal equivalent suitable for academic writing, chosen over alternatives like “*Nowadays*” or “*At present*” for its precision and tone. The term “สังคมไทย” is rendered straightforwardly as “*Thai society*,” maintaining clarity and specificity. The idiomatic phrase “เจริญรุดหน้า” conveys both development and rapid progress. The translator selects “*advanced*,” which effectively captures both aspects while also implying qualitative change rather than mere quantitative growth. The phrase “ก้าวสู่ยุคข้อมูลข่าวสารและเทคโนโลยีสารสนเทศ” requires careful handling. “ก้าวสู่” is translated as “*into the era of*,” expressing directed movement into a new phase. The word “ยุค” becomes “*era*,” reflecting a historically significant period. For “ข้อมูลข่าวสารและเทคโนโลยีสารสนเทศ,” the translator uses “*information and communication technology*,” an internationally recognized technical term that encapsulates the closely related concepts in the

source text. The addition of “*surpassing the industrial age*” is an instance of amplification. Although not explicitly stated in the original, it clarifies the implied transition from a previous era, helping target readers better understand the broader context of societal change.

2) Translating Scientific and Philosophical Concepts

Example from Chapter 5:

Thai source text (p. 182): กระบวนการคิดทางวิทยาศาสตร์ยึดถือเรื่องความมีเหตุมีผลเป็นหัวใจสำคัญ

English translation (p. 116): *The scientific method, which prioritizes rationality, demands empirical evidence and proof through scientific processes.*

This example presents a complex case of translation involving both scientific and philosophical concepts. The source text states that “กระบวนการคิดทางวิทยาศาสตร์ยึดถือเรื่องความมีเหตุมีผลเป็นหัวใจสำคัญ” which requires a deep understanding of the philosophy of science to translate effectively. The phrase “กระบวนการคิดทางวิทยาศาสตร์” is rendered as “*the scientific method*,” a crucial interpretive decision. While a literal translation such as “*scientific thinking process*” is possible, “*scientific method*” is a recognized technical term in academic discourse and carries a precise, established meaning. This choice enhances both accuracy and disciplinary appropriateness. The expression “ยึดถือเรื่องความมีเหตุมีผลเป็นหัวใจสำคัญ” poses another challenge. The verb “ยึดถือ” implies a firm adherence to or commitment toward a principle. The translator chooses “*prioritizes*,” which conveys importance, though it may not fully capture the sense of steadfast commitment embedded in the original. The term “ความมีเหตุมีผล” is translated as “*rationality*,” effectively encapsulating the idea of logical reasoning and the relationship between cause and effect. The addition of “*demands empirical evidence and proof through scientific processes*” represents a significant amplification. Although not explicitly stated in the source text, it clarifies what “*rationality*” entails within a scientific context. The word “*demands*” emphasizes the rigor and necessity inherent in scientific inquiry, while “*empirical evidence*” highlights reliance on observation and experimentation. The phrase “*proof through scientific processes*” further underscores systematic and verifiable procedures.

Conclusion

Semantic translation presents several challenges. First, it requires handling complex concepts that may not have direct equivalents in the target language, demanding careful choices to preserve precision. Second, the translator must balance fidelity to the source text with comprehensibility for

the target audience. While maintaining semantic complexity, the translation must remain accessible. Third, differences in cognitive frameworks and linguistic structures between cultures can necessitate additional clarification, as meanings that are implicit in one language may need to be made explicit in another.

10. Domestication (Adapting to the Target Culture)

Domestication is a translation strategy that requires refinement and a deep understanding of both source and target cultures. According to Lawrence Venuti (2018), domestication does not mean erasing the identity of the source culture; rather, it involves building a bridge between cultures so that readers can understand and engage with the text. The key principle is to strike an appropriate balance. Translators must carefully decide when to use terms or concepts familiar to the target audience and when to preserve foreign elements so that readers can still experience cultural difference. This process must consider the purpose of the translation, the readers' level of knowledge, and the cultural significance of the concepts being translated. The main challenge of domestication lies in avoiding cultural imperialism: the translator must ensure that adaptation does not make the source culture appear identical to the target culture or strip it of its uniqueness, while still enabling readers to relate the content to their own experiences.

Analysis of Translation through Examples from the Books

1) Handling the Concept of Charms and Sacred Objects

Example from Chapter 1:

Thai source text (p. 78): การประกอบพิธีกรรมนี้ผู้รับการประกอบพิธีกรรมจะต้องนั่งบนขันทองเหลือง ซึ่งมี 2 ใบ ใบเล็กจะวางหงาย ภายในบรรจุเครื่องรางของขลัง ได้แก่ เขี้ยวงู เขี้ยวเสือ เขี้ยวหมี หนังสือ หนังสือ

English translation (p. 48): *In this ceremony, the participant must sit on a pair of brass bowls. One smaller bowl is placed upright and contains amulets such as snake fangs, tiger fangs, bear fangs, tiger skin, and bear skin.*

In this example from Chapter 1, the translator renders the Thai term "*khrueng rang khong khleng*" (เครื่องรางของขลัง)—in the context of a Thai ritual involving objects such as tiger fangs or bear skin—as "amulets." The word *amulet* serves as a cultural bridge by evoking a sacred object intended

to ward off evil and protect against harm, a familiar concept in Western culture. Employing this strategy enables foreign readers to immediately grasp the functional role of these ritual objects without encountering communicative barriers. Furthermore, the translator adapts the sentence structure—such as translating "*khan thong luang 2 bai*" (ขันทองเหลือง 2 ใบ) as "*a pair of brass bowls*"—to ensure natural flow and alignment with English stylistic conventions. This approach to domestication successfully balances the preservation of the Thai ritual's core essence with providing target readers smooth and precise access to its meaning.

2) Translating Names of Plants and Natural Materials

Example from Chapter 3:

Thai source text (p. 127): แฉงทำมาจากใบไม้ เช่น ใบจาก ใบสาครหรือใบเตยน้ำ

English translation (p. 81): *Chaeng was made from leaves, such as palm leaves, sago palm leaves, or pandan leaves.*

This example illustrates the translation of plant names and natural materials that are culturally specific to Thailand. The source text states that "*chaeng*" is made from leaves such as nipa palm, sago palm, or pandan. Translating this requires both botanical knowledge and an understanding of how these plants are used within Thai culture. The term "แฉง" is retained as "*Chaeng*" because it refers to a specific cultural object with no direct equivalent in English. Attempting to translate it could result in a loss of specificity and cultural meaning. Retaining the original term preserves its identity while allowing room for contextual understanding. For the plant names, the translator applies domestication carefully. "ใบจาก" is translated as "*palm leaves*," using a familiar and accessible term for Western readers. Although "จาก" refers to a specific type of palm (nipa palm), the broader term "*palm leaves*" enables readers to visualize the material more easily. "ใบสาคร" is translated as "*sago palm leaves*," combining precision and clarity. While "*sago*" exists in English, it may not be widely recognized, so adding "*palm*" helps readers associate it with the previously mentioned "*palm leaves*," reinforcing comprehension. "ใบเตยน้ำ" is translated as "*pandan leaves*," a term already accepted internationally, particularly in culinary contexts. Since "*pandan*" is commonly used in global food culture, especially in Asian cuisine, it allows readers with some familiarity to make meaningful connections. Overall, this example demonstrates how domestication can be used selectively—retaining culturally specific terms where necessary while adapting others to enhance clarity and accessibility for the target audience.

3) Translating the Concept of Sacred Spaces

Example from Chapter 4:

Thai source text (p. 143): ‘หิ้งครูหมอนโนรา’ คือที่สถิตของครูหมอนโนรา

English translation (p. 91): *The ‘Khru Mo Nora shrine’ is the residence of Khru Mo Nora.*

This example demonstrates how the concept of a sacred space is handled in translation. The source text states that the “*Khru Mo Nora shrine*” is the dwelling place of the spiritual figure. Translating this involves complex religious and spiritual connotations. The term “หิ้ง” is translated as “shrine,” representing an appropriate domestication choice. While “หิ้ง” in Thai culture may have a broader meaning than “shrine” in Western contexts, the term “shrine” immediately conveys the idea of a sacred place used for worship and ritual. It is widely recognized in Christian and other religious traditions, making it accessible to target readers. The term “Khru Mo Nora” is retained in its original form to preserve cultural specificity. Translating it into something like “Nora Teacher Spirit” could dilute its cultural and spiritual significance. For “ที่สถิต,” the translator uses “residence,” a deliberate and nuanced choice. While the Thai term implies the dwelling of a sacred or spiritual presence, “residence” conveys a formal and respectful sense of habitation, appropriate for sacred entities.

4) Translating Concepts of Exchange and Ritual Practice

Example from Chapter 4:

Thai source text (p. 172): อาจใช้วิธีการ ‘ทอน’

English translation (p. 110): *The ‘ceremonial exchange’ method can be used.*

This example presents another translation challenge involving culturally specific practices. The term “ทอน” in this context does not refer to commercial reduction or discounting, but rather to a form of exchange embedded in spiritual and social practices. The translator must understand that “ทอน” involves symbolic giving and receiving, often connected to respect, reciprocity, and maintaining social or spiritual relationships. It carries ritualistic and cultural significance beyond ordinary exchange. The choice of “*ceremonial exchange*” reflects an effective domestication strategy. The word “*ceremonial*” emphasizes the ritualistic and sacred dimension, while “*exchange*” communicates the act of giving and receiving. Together, they convey that this practice is more than a simple transaction, as it is a meaningful, culturally embedded act.

Conclusion

In applying domestication, translators face several challenges. One key challenge is avoiding excessive adaptation that might make the source culture appear identical to the target culture, thereby erasing its uniqueness. Another challenge lies in balancing explanation with cultural exposure: too much adaptation may prevent readers from learning about the source culture, while too little may hinder comprehension. Domestication, therefore, is an art that requires deep cultural understanding and careful judgment. Its success lies in enabling readers to access and understand the source culture without losing its distinct identity. Ultimately, this strategy serves as a vital tool for fostering cross-cultural understanding and making translation a gateway to mutual respect and learning across linguistic and cultural boundaries.

11. Restructuring and Reorganization

Restructuring and reorganization are essential translation strategies in an age where information is abundant and readers demand clarity and quick accessibility. According to Nida (2021), restructuring is not merely about changing the form of presentation, but about rethinking how communication can be made effective for readers in a different cultural and contextual setting. A key principle of restructuring is recognizing that readers from different cultures have different expectations and ways of processing information. In Western cultures, particularly in academic writing, readers tend to expect clear structures, systematic organization, and explicit connections between ideas. Effective restructuring therefore requires a deep understanding of the purpose of the text, the target audience, and the conventions of writing in the target culture. Translators must be able to analyze which information is most important, determine the most logical sequence for presenting it, and establish clear connections to facilitate full and accurate comprehension.

Analysis of Translation through Examples from the Books

1) Restructuring Instructions and Procedural Steps

Example from Chapter 4:

Thai source text (p. 150): ขั้นตอนการจัดเครื่องเช่นไห้ว ไข่เสื่อกระจุดปูลาดบริเวณหน้าห้อง วางหมอน
จำนวน 1 ใบ และปูผ้าขาวทับบนหมอนและเสื่อกระจุด...

English translation (p. 95): *Steps for arranging the offerings as follows: lay a mat made of Lepironia in front of the shrine and place one pillow on the mat and cover it with a white cloth. Then place nine candles...*

This example illustrates the restructuring of detailed procedural instructions. The source text presents the steps in a continuous flow without clear segmentation. While this style may be acceptable in Thai, it does not align with the expectations of English readers, particularly in instructional contexts where clarity and ease of following steps are crucial. The translator addresses this by explicitly signaling the structure with the phrase “*Steps for arranging the offerings as follows:*” The addition of “*Steps*” and “*as follows*” prepares the reader for a sequenced set of instructions, aligning with standard English conventions for procedural writing. The information is then reorganized into clearly defined actions. The first step—“*lay a mat made of Lepironia in front of the shrine and place one pillow on the mat and cover it with a white cloth*”—groups related preparatory actions into a single unit. This does not omit details but instead organizes them into a coherent and manageable segment. The use of the connector “*Then*” in the following sentence (“*Then place nine candles...*”) establishes a clear temporal sequence. While the order of actions may be implicit in the Thai original, English typically requires explicit markers of sequence to ensure accurate understanding and execution. The choice of “*Lepironia*” instead of a more general term like “*reed mat*” reflects a balance between precision and clarity. Retaining the specific botanical term preserves accuracy, while the phrase “*made of Lepironia*” provides sufficient context for readers unfamiliar with the material.

Conclusion

Restructuring and reorganization make translated instructions easier to understand and follow. Clearly defined steps and appropriate connectors reduce confusion and increase readers’ confidence in carrying out procedures. This strategy also enhances the professionalism of the translation and aligns it with English writing conventions. As a result, readers find the presentation familiar and can process the information more efficiently.

12. Terminology Selection

Terminology selection is one of the most important translation strategies in academic work, especially when dealing with content related to religion, belief systems, and cultural arts. According to Cabré (2010), terminology selection is not merely about finding words with similar meanings, but

about constructing a system of meaning that aligns with the academic and cultural context of the target language. A key principle of this approach is recognizing that each term does not exist in isolation but as part of a broader terminological system. As a translator, one must consider whether the selected terms can accurately convey meaning within the relevant academic field and whether they are understandable to readers with some background knowledge in that discipline. The main challenge in terminology selection lies in balancing technical precision with readability. The translator must choose terms that are precise enough to communicate the intended meaning while not being overly complex for the target audience. In addition, maintaining consistency in terminology throughout the text is essential to avoid confusion.

Analysis of Translation through Examples from the Books

1) Religious Terminology

Example from Chapter 3:

Thai source text (p. 108): ศาสนาพุทธแม้จะเป็นศาสนาแบบอเทวนิยม แต่ไม่ได้ปฏิเสธการมีอยู่ของเทวดา

English Translation (p. 69): *In Buddhism, although it is an atheistic religion, it does not deny the existence of deities.*

This example demonstrates the translation of a complex and potentially debated religious concept. The source text states that Buddhism is “อเทวนิยม” (non-theistic), which requires careful interpretation. In religious studies, this term refers to a belief system that does not accept the existence of a supreme creator god, although it may acknowledge other forms of supernatural beings. The translator chose the term “*atheistic religion*,” which requires careful consideration. Technically, “*atheistic*” and “*non-theistic*” are not entirely equivalent; “*atheistic*” often implies the rejection of all gods, whereas “*non-theistic*” is more nuanced. However, in the context of comparative religious studies, “*atheistic*” is sometimes used to describe Buddhism due to the absence of a creator deity. The following clause—“*it does not deny the existence of deities*”—helps clarify this distinction and prevents potential misunderstanding. The translator’s choice of “*deities*” for “เทวดา” is appropriate in an academic context. The term “*deities*” is widely used in comparative religion and anthropology, offering a broad and culturally neutral reference that is not limited to any specific tradition.

Example from Chapter 3:

Thai source text (p. 108): “เทวดา คือกลุ่มของกายทิพย์ เชื่อกันว่าอยู่บนสรวงสวรรค์ ตามความเชื่อของ ศาสนาพราหมณ์”

English Translation (p. 68): *Deities are celestial beings believed to reside in heaven according to Brahmanical beliefs.*

This example demonstrates an extension of specialized terminology use. The source text states that “deities are a group of ‘กายทิพย์’ believed to reside in heaven according to Brahmanical beliefs.” This translation requires careful handling of multiple interrelated technical terms. The translation of “กายทิพย์” as “*celestial beings*” is both accurate and appropriate in an academic context. The term “*celestial beings*” is widely used in religious studies and anthropology to describe supernatural entities associated with heavenly realms. It is sufficiently broad to encompass the concept of “กายทิพย์,” which includes deities, celestial maidens, and other sacred beings. The choice of “*Brahmanical beliefs*” instead of simply “*Hinduism*” reflects a nuanced and precise terminological decision. The term “*Brahmanical*” is more specific and refers to a particular system of beliefs that emphasizes the role of the Brahmin class and ritual practices, rather than the broader and more diverse concept of Hinduism. This choice enhances academic accuracy and ensures that the translation faithfully represents the original meaning.

2) Anthropological and Religious Terminology

Example from Chapter 3:

Thai source text (p. 123): ทวดหลักเขต เชื่อกันว่ามีอยู่หลายองค์ มีรูปร่างเป็นคน เสือและงู

English Translation (p. 79): *Thuat Lak Khet, it is believed to be multiple entities with forms of humans, tigers, and snakes.*

The translation of “*Thuat Lak Khet*” presents a challenge in selecting appropriate terminology for a concept that has no direct equivalent in the target culture. The source text describes a sacred entity in local belief: “*Thuat Lak Khet is believed to exist in multiple forms, appearing as humans, tigers, and snakes.*” This requires careful handling of culturally specific spiritual concepts. The translator’s decision to use the term “*entities*” instead of alternatives such as “*spirits*,” “*beings*,” or “*deities*” reflects thoughtful consideration. “*Entities*” is a technical term commonly used in anthropology and the study of folk beliefs. It is broad and flexible, allowing it to encompass various types of existence without restricting form or nature. The term “*spirits*” might

imply incorporeal beings, which would conflict with the description of having physical forms such as humans, tigers, and snakes. “*Beings*” could be appropriate but often suggests sentient life forms, while “*deities*” might imply a higher divine status that exceeds the intended meaning. Therefore, “*entities*” is the most suitable choice to capture the complexity of “*Thuat Lak Khet*.” Additionally, the phrase “*multiple entities*” is used to render “มีอยู่หลายองค์,” adapting the expression into a natural and academically appropriate English structure. This phrase effectively conveys the idea of a single conceptual entity manifesting in multiple forms, aligning with the belief that “*Thuat Lak Khet*” can appear in different manifestations.

3) Occult and Belief-Related Terminology

Example from Chapter 3:

Thai source text (p. 103): เพศหรืออาเพศ คือสิ่งที่เป็นมูลเหตุให้เกิดความเจ็บป่วยของบุคคล อาจเกิดจากทั้งวิญญาณฝ่ายดีและวิญญาณฝ่ายชั่วร้าย

English Translation (p. 66): ‘*Phet*’ or ‘*Aphet (bad omen)*’ refers to the cause of an individual’s illness, which may stem from either benevolent or malevolent spirits.

This example highlights the challenge of selecting terminology for concepts related to occult beliefs and supernatural causes of illness. The source text explains that “*Ped*” or “*Apet*” refers to a cause of illness that may arise from both benevolent and malevolent spirits. The translation must therefore handle a culturally specific and conceptually complex belief system that may not have direct equivalents in the target language. The translator chose to retain “*Ped*” and “*Apet*” through transliteration, preserving the cultural specificity of the original terms. At the same time, the addition of the explanation “(*bad omen*)” for “*Apet*” creates a balance between maintaining cultural identity and ensuring reader comprehension. The term “*bad omen*” is familiar in Western contexts and provides an accessible approximation of the concept. The translation of “วิญญาณฝ่ายดีและวิญญาณฝ่ายชั่วร้าย” as “*benevolent or malevolent spirits*” demonstrates the use of specialized terminology. The words “*benevolent*” and “*malevolent*” are commonly used in academic discussions of spirituality and supernatural beliefs. They convey clear and precise meanings: “*benevolent*” suggests goodwill and helpful intent, while “*malevolent*” implies harmful or destructive intent. Using these terms allows the reader to understand that, within the concept of “*Ped*” or “*Apet*,” illness may originate not only from harmful forces but also from well-intentioned or neutral spiritual influences.

This reflects the complexity of the belief system and provides valuable insight into the cultural logic behind such interpretations.

Conclusion

Terminology selection significantly affects the credibility and academic accuracy of a translation. The use of standardized academic terms enables the translated work to connect with existing research and scholarship within the same field. In addition, consistent terminology enhances coherence throughout the document. When translators apply a systematic and consistent set of terms, readers can follow the discussion more easily without confusion caused by multiple expressions referring to the same concept. Terminology selection, therefore, requires specialized knowledge and a deep understanding of terminological systems across disciplines. It serves as a crucial tool in elevating the quality of translation and ensuring effective communication within academic contexts.

13. Conceptual Equivalence

Conceptual equivalence is one of the most complex and challenging translation strategies, as it involves conveying ideas that may not have direct equivalents across cultures. According to Nida (2021) and Newmark (1988), conceptual equivalence is not merely about finding similar words, but about creating an equivalent understanding of the core meaning and function of a concept. A key principle of this strategy is recognizing that each concept operates on multiple dimensions, including semantic, functional, emotional, and cultural aspects. In translation, the translator must analyze the source concept across all these dimensions and then reconstruct the closest possible understanding in the target language. The main challenge lies in managing cultural differences: a concept may hold specific significance in one culture but have no direct counterpart in another. Therefore, the translator must creatively convey the essence of the concept using elements available in the target culture.

Analysis of Translation through Examples from the Books

1) Translating the Concept of Ritual Body Preparation

Example from Chapter 2:

Thai source text (p. 79): การแต่งพอก

English Translation (p. 49): *Adornment Ritual*

This example reflects a concept related to preparation for ritual performance. The Thai term “การแต่งพอก” requires deep cultural understanding. The translator analyzed the components: “แต่ง” refers to dressing or preparation, while “พอก” implies adding or applying elements onto the body. Together, the phrase denotes a process of bodily decoration and costume preparation. However, a literal translation such as “*dressing up*” or “*putting on makeup*” would fail to convey the ritualistic and sacred significance of the process. In the context of Nora performance, this act is not merely cosmetic but represents a transformation from an ordinary person into a performer endowed with spiritual power. The choice of “*Adornment Ritual*” demonstrates conceptual equivalence. The word “*Adornment*” carries broader connotations than simple dressing, suggesting careful and respectful decoration often associated with artistic, religious, or ceremonial contexts. The addition of “*Ritual*” is crucial, as it conveys the symbolic, structured, and sacred nature of the act. Together, the phrase successfully communicates the essence of “การแต่งพอก” as a meaningful and spiritually significant preparatory process.

2) Translating the Concept of Movement in Ritual Contexts

Example from Chapter 2:

Thai source text (p. 85): การเวียนแวน

English translation (p. 53): *Sacred circling*

This example from Chapter 2 illustrates a complex translation involving ritual movement with symbolic meaning. The original Thai term “การเวียนแวน” requires interpretation at both the physical and symbolic levels. The translator analyzed its components: “เวียน” refers to circular movement or rotation around a center, while “แวน” in this context does not mean “*glasses*” but relates to observing or inspecting. Combined, the term refers to a circular movement performed with a specific purpose. However, the meaning of “การเวียนแวน” extends beyond mere physical motion. In the context of Nora ritual performance, this movement carries deep symbolic significance. It is associated with the creation of sacred space, connection with supernatural forces, and acts of protection or empowerment. The translator therefore chose “*sacred circling*” using a conceptual equivalence strategy that requires both creativity and deep cultural understanding. The word “*sacred*” effectively conveys the spiritual and ritual dimension of the act. It was selected over alternatives such as “*holy*” or “*religious*” because it carries a broader meaning and is not confined to any single religious framework. Meanwhile, “*circling*” clearly expresses purposeful circular movement. Across many cultures, circular motion holds ritual significance—such as creating sacred space, invoking power, or offering protection. Readers familiar with ritual practices in various traditions can therefore relate to and understand the concept. The combination

of “*sacred*” and “*circling*” successfully communicates the core essence of “การเวียนวียน.” Although it is not a literal translation, it effectively conveys both the meaning and significance of the action within the context of Nora ritual practices.

Conclusion

Conceptual equivalence is a translation strategy that demands creativity, deep cross-cultural understanding, and the ability to analyze concepts across multiple dimensions. Its success depends on the translator’s ability to capture the essence or spirit of a concept and recreate an equivalent understanding in the target culture. As such, conceptual equivalence serves as a vital tool in fostering cross-cultural understanding and enabling readers to access and appreciate the meanings and aesthetic richness of concepts from other cultures.

14. Cultural Adaptation

Cultural adaptation is a translation strategy that is both complex and highly dependent on cultural sensitivity. According to Katan and Taibi (2021), the translator in this context is not merely a conveyor of meaning from one language to another, but also acts as a *cultural mediator* who bridges and explains cultural differences for the reader. The core principle of cultural adaptation lies in recognizing that meaning does not exist independently within words or concepts; rather, it is constructed and shaped by cultural, social, and historical contexts. Therefore, when transferring ideas from one culture to another, the translator must take into account the interpretive frameworks and experiences of the target audience. The main challenge of cultural adaptation is achieving a balance between explanation and allowing the reader to learn independently. Over-adaptation may result in the loss of the source culture’s uniqueness, while under-adaptation may lead to misunderstanding or confusion. Translators must therefore exercise careful judgment in determining the appropriate level of adaptation.

Analysis of Translation through Examples from the Books

1) Contextual adaptation for better comprehension

Example from Chapter 5:

Thai source text (p. 199): ปัจจุบันความนิยมวงดนตรีลูกทุ่งและละครโนราลดลง

English translation (p. 125): *Currently, the popularity of Thai folk music and Nora drama has decreased.*

This example demonstrates a different form of cultural adaptation. The original mentions “ลูกทุ่ง,” a distinctly Thai music genre that may be unfamiliar to foreign readers. A direct translation such as “*country music*” could lead to misunderstanding, as it might be interpreted as American country music, which, despite some similarities, differs significantly in musical style, themes, and sociocultural context. The translation “*Thai folk music*” represents an acceptable cultural adaptation. The addition of “*Thai*” clarifies that the reference is to identify a specific form of Thai traditional or popular folk music, rather than a generic or foreign genre. The choice of “*folk music*” instead of “*country music*” avoids cultural misinterpretation, as “*folk music*” broadly refers to music rooted in the lives and traditions of ordinary people and aligning more closely with the characteristics of *luk thung*. This adaptation allows readers to understand the broader context of cultural change in Thailand without requiring in-depth knowledge of the specific genre. At the same time, the translator retains “*Nora drama*” to preserve cultural specificity, as Nora is a unique traditional performance with no direct equivalent in Western cultures. The term “*Nora drama*” provides both authenticity and a basic functional description as a form of theatrical performance.

Conclusion

Cultural adaptation significantly influences readers’ comprehension and learning. In this example, readers gain insight into cultural changes in Thailand in terms they can understand. The use of “*Thai folk music*” enables readers to relate the concept to folk traditions in their own cultures, thereby appreciating the significance of the decline in traditional entertainment forms. In summary, cultural adaptation is a highly important and complex translation strategy that requires deep understanding of both source and target cultures, as well as the ability to balance fidelity to the original text with accessibility for the target audience. When applied appropriately, cultural adaptation can foster understanding, respect, and interest in the source culture, while also enabling readers in the target culture to access and learn from different cultural knowledge and experiences. It thus serves as a crucial tool in promoting cross-cultural understanding, cooperation, and a more interconnected and culturally aware world.

15) Structural Adaptation

Structural adaptation is a crucial translation strategy when dealing with differences in grammar and communicative patterns between the source and target languages. According to J.C. Catford (1965), structural adaptation is not merely about altering form to meet grammatical

correctness, but about creatively constructing new structures that can convey meaning effectively and naturally in the target language. The key principle of structural adaptation lies in recognizing that each language has its own nature and way of organizing information. Translators must be aware that adhering too closely to the source language structure may result in translations that feel unnatural or difficult to understand. Therefore, structural adaptation becomes an essential tool in producing high-quality translations. The main challenge lies in preserving the original meaning and intention while adjusting the form of presentation. Translators must have a deep understanding of key information, the relationships between ideas, and how to reorganize these elements clearly and coherently in the target language.

Analysis of Translation through Examples from the Books

1) Sentence restructuring for clarity and organization

Example from Chapter 2:

Thai source text (p. 86): ฉากแรกของบทจะเข้าสู่กลางวัน กล่าวถึงตอนจะเข้าสู่วันนอนหลับและฝัน เป็นลางร้ายว่ามีแร้งมากจิกร่างกาย มีไฟไหม้ถ้ำทองที่อยู่อาศัย หินในถ้ำหล่นลงมาทับร่างกายและเขี้ยวแก้วทั้งสองข้างหักออกมา

English translation (p. 54): The first scene of the Chalawan Crocodile story describes how the Chalawan Crocodile is sleeping and dreams of ominous signs. The dream involves vultures attacking its body, a fire burning down its golden cave, falling rocks crushing its body, and the breaking of its precious fangs.

This example demonstrates how to handle a sentence with dense and complex information. The original Thai sentence presents multiple layers of information in a single continuous structure: the identification of the scene, the main situation (sleeping and dreaming), and the detailed events within the dream. Rendering all of this information in one sentence in English would likely overwhelm the reader and hinder comprehension. The translator therefore chose to divide the content into two sentences. The first sentence—*“The first scene of the Chalawan Crocodile story describes how the Chalawan Crocodile is sleeping and dreams of ominous signs”*—establishes the context and introduces the main situation. This prepares the reader for the details that follow. The second sentence—*“The dream involves vultures attacking its body, a fire burning down its golden cave, falling rocks crushing its body, and the breaking of its precious fangs”*—organizes the dream’s details into a clear list. The use of the structure *“The dream involves...”* creates a strong connection to the

previous sentence, while the use of parallel structure enhances readability and helps the reader process and remember the information more easily. This restructuring also considers the rhythm and flow of English prose. Dividing the information into two parts creates a balanced pace—neither too rushed nor too slow—allowing readers time to process each segment before moving on. Additionally, the choice of the phrase “*ominous signs*” instead of a more literal translation such as “*bad dream*” or “*nightmare*” reflects sensitivity to tone and deeper meaning. The phrase “*ominous signs*” conveys a sense of foreboding and symbolic significance, aligning well with the nature of dreams in Thai literary tradition.

2) Combining and Splitting Sentences for Effective Communication

Example from Chapter 2:

Thai source text (p. 56): “การตั้งเครื่องคือการบรรเลงดนตรีเพื่อแสดงความเคารพและบอกกล่าวแก่ครูหมอนรธาของเจ้าภาพให้รับรู้ถึงการมาของคณะโนรา และเป็นการประชาสัมพันธ์ให้ผู้คนในชุมชนรับทราบด้วย”

English translation (p. 35): “Performing the instruments involves performing music to show respect and inform Khru Mo Nora of the host about the arrival of the Nora troupe. It also serves to publicize the event to the community.”

This example from Chapter 2 demonstrates different approaches to restructuring when the source text contains a long sentence with multiple pieces of information. The original Thai sentence is highly complex, combining a definition (“การตั้งเครื่องคือ...” / “*Performing the instruments is...*”), a main purpose (showing respect and informing), and a secondary purpose (publicizing the event). Handling such a sentence requires careful analysis of its information structure. The translator identified that the sentence contains layered meanings: (1) a definitional component, (2) a primary communicative purpose, and (3) an additional, secondary function. Presenting all these elements in a single sentence in English could potentially confuse readers regarding the relative importance of each function. Therefore, the translator chose to split the information into two sentences. The first sentence—“*Performing the instruments involves performing music to show respect and inform Khru Mo Nora of the host about the arrival of the Nora troupe*”—emphasizes the main and most essential purpose of the practice. The use of “*involves*” instead of “*is*” creates a sense of an activity with multiple components rather than a static definition. The second sentence—“*It also serves to publicize the event to the community*”—clearly presents the additional function. The phrase “*It*

also serves to...” signals that this is a supplementary rather than primary purpose, helping readers distinguish its relative importance while maintaining coherence between the two ideas.

This restructuring aligns with English academic writing conventions, which often prefer separating distinct ideas into different sentences for clarity. The use of the connector “*also*” ensures smooth cohesion and logical flow between the two statements. Overall, restructuring the sentence improves communicative effectiveness. In the source text, the reader must process multiple functions simultaneously within a single complex sentence. In the translation, the information is distributed more clearly, allowing readers to understand both the spiritual dimension (showing respect) and the social dimension (publicizing the event) of the ritual. Such structural adjustment contributes to a more professional and natural-sounding translation, consistent with target-language norms. It enhances readability, supports faster comprehension, and improves information retention. Ultimately, sentence restructuring is a key translation strategy that bridges linguistic and cultural differences, leading to clearer and more effective cross-cultural communication.

Conclusion

Cross-cultural translation is a complex process that requires a wide range of skills. Effective translation must take into account both linguistic and cultural dimensions. In translating the book “*Nora in Trang Province: Beliefs and Rituals*,” the translator is committed to maintaining a balance between fidelity to the original Thai text and making the translation accessible to readers in the target culture. In translating the prose passages, a total of 15 translation strategies were employed, each serving specific functions in addressing different challenges.

Literal translation and transliteration are important tools for preserving Thai cultural identity. In particular, transliterating names of people, places, and culturally specific concepts allows readers to experience the authenticity of Thai culture. At the same time, cultural equivalence and functional equivalence help bridge the gap between the two cultures, enabling readers to understand and relate the content to their own experiences.

Expansion through footnotes and parentheses is a key strategy for filling cultural knowledge gaps without disrupting the flow of the main text. This approach provides readers with necessary contextual information while maintaining readability. Structural adjustment and text organization further demonstrate the translator’s deep understanding of differences in communicative patterns between Thai and English.

Interpretive translation and communicative translation require advanced skills in grasping the true meaning of the source text and conveying it in an appropriate form for target readers. Meanwhile, the use of specialized terminology and conceptual equivalence helps maintain academic accuracy and establish connections with existing knowledge in the target culture.

Cultural adaptation and cultural adjustment highlight the translator's role as a cultural mediator who must balance preserving the authenticity of the source culture with ensuring accessibility for target readers.

In conclusion, translation requires a combination of multiple strategies. No single approach is sufficient on its own; rather, appropriate selection and integration depend on context and specific purposes. The success of translation is not measured only by linguistic accuracy, but also by its ability to foster understanding, respect, and appreciation of the source culture among target readers.

Translation of Poetry

The translation of poetry is a challenging and complex art, particularly when it involves conveying works deeply rooted in cultural traditions across linguistic and cultural boundaries. In translating the poems in *“Nora, Trang Province: Beliefs and Rituals,”* the translator faces the challenge of rendering poetic forms and ritual content that form the essence of Southern Thailand's Nora performance tradition. The translator employs a variety of carefully considered translation strategies, ranging from literal translation to preserve the accuracy of ritual information, transliteration to maintain cultural identity, and equivalence-based translation to recreate poetry that can convey the beauty and spirit of the original text. The analysis of these strategies helps readers understand the complexity and delicacy involved in translating artistic works, which require a balance between factual accuracy, aesthetic expression, and cross-cultural communicative effectiveness. The ultimate goal is to provide English readers with an experience that is as meaningful and complete as that of readers of the original text. The translation strategies used in the poetic sections of this book are as follows:

1. Literal Translation

Example:

Thai source text (p. 228): บทบาลีหน้าศาล

English translation (p. 141): *The Pali Verse in Front of the Shrine*

In this example, “บทบาลีหน้าศาล” is translated as “*The Pali Verse in Front of the Shrine*.” The translator uses literal translation by rendering each component directly: “บทบาลี” as “*The Pali Verse*” and “หน้าศาล” as “*in Front of the Shrine*.” This approach is used to preserve clarity and accuracy of the title without interpretation or modification of meaning, allowing readers to immediately understand that it refers to a Pali chant used in a ritual performed in front of a shrine or sacred altar. The use of literal translation here maintains the precision of cultural and ritual information, which is especially important in religious and ceremonial contexts that require high accuracy. Although some adjustments are made to ensure naturalness in English, the core meaning remains faithfully preserved.

2. Transliteration

Example 1:

Thai source text (p. 238): โนรา

English translation (p. 141): *Nora*

Example 2:

Thai source text (p. 236): เมขลา

English translation (p. 152): *Mekhala*

Example 3:

Thai source text (p. 228): บอกบาลีขานเภาว่าโนเนโนไน

English translation (p. 142): *The sacred verse I proclaim, With "No-Ne-No-Nai" I exclaim*

In translating culturally specific terms, the translator employs transliteration, as in the translation of proses, because these terms carry significant cultural meaning and have no true equivalents in English. For the term “โนรา,” transliterated as “*Nora*,” the translator chooses to preserve the original name because it refers to a distinctive Southern Thai performing art. Translating it as “*Southern Thai Dance*” or “*Traditional Performance*” would risk losing its unique identity and

might mislead readers into thinking it refers to a general form of dance or performance. Retaining “*Nora*” allows readers to recognize it as a specific and well-known traditional art form.

Similarly, For “เมขลา,” rendered as “*Mekhala*,” the translator views this as the name of an important character in Thai literature with a significant cultural role. To avoid losing the connection with the original literary source, the translator chooses to preserve the transliterated form, allowing readers to encounter unfamiliar cultural elements and learn about a different cultural tradition rather than adapting everything to Western familiarity. This decision helps maintain academic accuracy while also providing readers with the opportunity to acquire new vocabulary and concepts related to Thai culture.

Example 3 presents particular challenges because it involves elements that carry both linguistic meaning and musical significance. In the first line, “บอกบาลีขานเ,” the translator opts for a communicative translation as “*The sacred verse I proclaim*,” rather than transliterating the word “บาลี” (Pali). Instead, it is rendered as “*sacred verse*” to convey the idea of sacredness associated with Pali chanting in a way that is immediately accessible to English readers. Transliteration of “*Pali*” alone could obscure the intended emphasis on its ritual and sacred function. However, for “โนเนโนโน” in the second line, the translator chooses to transliterate it as “*No-Ne-No-Nai*,” enclosed in quotation marks. This is because “โนเนโนโน” functions as a vocal chant or rhythmic refrain specific to Nora performance. It does not carry a fixed lexical meaning, but it plays an essential role in establishing rhythm, musicality, and atmosphere. Transliteration helps preserve its original sound and performative quality, which is crucial for understanding the aesthetics of Nora. The use of quotation marks further signals that this is a direct vocal utterance rather than a conventional lexical item with semantic meaning. The word “*exclaim*” is also chosen to echo “*proclaim*” in the first line, helping to maintain a sense of sound patterning within the poem. Although the rhyme or sound correspondence is not identical to the source text, this phonetic linkage in English contributes to a more poetic effect rather than a purely prosaic translation.

Overall, this translation demonstrates a mixed strategy combining communicative translation and transliteration: meaning-focused translation is applied where semantic clarity is essential, while transliteration is used where sound, rhythm, and performative function are more important than lexical meaning.

3. Cultural Equivalence

Example:

Thai source text (p. 228): จะไหว้ครูเสียก่อน

English translation (p. 141): *To honor teachers with a bow*

The translation of “จะไหว้ครูเสียก่อน” as “*To honor teachers with a bow*” demonstrates the use of cultural equivalence within the context of a complex poetic text. The translator must address the concept of “*Wai Khru*,” a ritual that holds deep cultural significance in Thai society, particularly in the context of Nora performance arts. The decision to translate “ไหว้ครู” as “*honor teachers*,” rather than transliterating it as “*Wai Khru*,” is made in order to ensure broader accessibility for international readers. The term “*honor*” in English conveys respect, reverence, and esteem, which captures the essential meaning of “*Wai*” as more than a physical action, it is an expression of sincere respect and devotion. The addition of “*with a bow*” further helps readers understand the physical component of the action. Although a “*bow*” in Western culture is not identical to the Thai “*Wai*” gesture (which involves pressing the palms together and bowing the head), it nonetheless conveys a comparable idea of bodily expression of respect.

Within the context of Nora performance and poetic expression, “*Wai Khru*” carries a deeper meaning than ordinary respect. It is a ritual that connects performers to ancestral traditions and transmitted knowledge, functioning as both a gesture of gratitude and a spiritual invocation toward teachers and masters of the art. Translating it as “*honor teachers*” helps convey this spiritual dimension, as “*honor*” carries a more elevated sense than “*respect*.” The use of “*teachers*” instead of alternatives such as “*masters*” or “*mentors*” reflects a choice aimed at general comprehensibility, while still representing the role of knowledge transmitters. The translator also considers rhythm and fluency in the poetic structure, ensuring that “*To honor teachers with a bow*” remains concise, balanced, and suitable for poetic expression without losing essential meaning or aesthetic quality.

4. Transposition (Structural Change / Change of Word Class)

Example 1:

Thai source text (p. 228): กรกรายไหว้วอน นั้งขอพรเพา

English translation (p. 141): *I offer prayers with graceful stance, And ask the gods to guide my dance.*

Example 2:

Thai source text (p. 229): มาชุมนุมพร้อมกัน อรหันต์ทั้งหลาย

English translation (p. 142): *The holy devas then gathered near, Arhats rose to set things right.*

In translating the first example, “กรกรายไหวว่อน นั้งขอพรเทวา” as “*I offer prayers with graceful stance, And ask the gods to guide my dance,*” the translator applies structural adjustment to align the expression with natural English poetic conventions. In the source text, “กรกราย” is a verb describing elegant and graceful movement. The translator shifts its grammatical function into a descriptive phrase, “*with graceful stance,*” thereby changing it from a verb into an adjectival/prepositional structure. This transformation allows the meaning to be preserved while producing a more natural flow in English and creating a rhythm suitable for poetic expression. Additionally, the translator introduces the pronoun “*I,*” which is not explicitly stated in the Thai original, as subject omission is common in Thai. This addition clarifies agency in English. The phrase “ขอพรเทวา” (to ask for blessings from deities) is also expanded into “*ask the gods to guide my dance,*” making the action more context-specific and closely tied to the performance setting of Nora.

In the second example, “มาชุมนุมพร้อมกัน อรหันต์ทั้งหลาย” is translated as “*The holy devas then gathered near, Arhats rose to set things right.*” Here, the translator again restructures the sentence for clarity and readability in English. The first part shifts from an action-centered structure (“มาชุมนุม” – to assemble) to a subject-centered structure (“*The holy devas then gathered near*”), making the sentence easier for English readers to process. The second part adds interpretive expansion—“*rose to set things right*”—which is not explicitly stated in the source text but inferred from the narrative context. This addition helps clarify the implied purpose of the gathering. These adjustments demonstrate how transposition is used to improve coherence, readability, and poetic flow while maintaining the essential meaning of the original text for English-speaking readers.

5. Amplification

Example:

Thai source text (p. 228): ในทวีปชมพู ตรัสรู้ณที่

English translation (p. 141): *In old Jambudvīpa's hallowed ground, Where enlightenment was truly found.*

In translating “ในทวีปชมพู ตรัสรู้ถ้วนถี่” as “*In old Jambudvipa’s hallowed ground, Where enlightenment was truly found,*” the translator employs amplification in order to help English readers fully grasp the cultural and religious context embedded in the text. The most significant expansion is the addition of “old” and “hallowed ground” to describe “Jambudvipa.” In the Thai original, “ทวีปชมพู” refers to a concept in Buddhist cosmology that Thai readers with a Buddhist background would immediately recognize as the human realm in Buddhist cosmology. However, for international readers, “Jambudvipa” may appear as an unfamiliar proper noun without inherent meaning. Therefore, the addition of “old” highlights its ancient and historical dimension, while “hallowed ground” explicitly conveys its sacredness. Furthermore, the concept of “ตรัสรู้” (enlightenment) is rendered as “*enlightenment was truly found.*” The insertion of “truly” emphasizes the authenticity and supreme level of spiritual realization, helping readers understand that this is not ordinary knowledge but the highest form of awakening in Buddhist thought. The structure “*Where enlightenment was truly found*” is also chosen over a more direct rendering such as “*where complete enlightenment was attained*” in order to create a more evocative and atmospheric tone. The phrase “*was found*” suggests discovery and attainment of something profound and valuable, aligning with the Buddhist notion of enlightenment as a journey of seeking and realization. Overall, amplification in this example serves to bridge cultural gaps between Thai and Western readers. The translator recognizes that a literal rendering alone may result in superficial understanding; therefore, necessary contextual information is added to ensure that target readers can experience the text in a way that is both meaningful and culturally informed.

6. Interpretive Translation

Example 1:

Thai source text (p. 228): เรื่องราวยาวรี บาสิลึกลับ

English translation (p. 141): *These lengthy tales of mystery deep, In Pali texts their secrets keep.*

Example 2:

Thai source text (p. 228): อย่าฟังแต่เพราะ นุเคราะห์ตามฉบับ

English translation (p. 141): *Don't merely listen for the sound, But seek the wisdom to be found.*

In the first example, “เรื่องราวยาวรี บาสิลึกลับ” is translated as “*These lengthy tales of mystery deep, In Pali texts their secrets keep.*” The translator employs interpretive translation to convey not

only the literal meaning but also the implied sense and poetic atmosphere of the original verse. A key interpretive decision lies in rendering “บาลีลึกลับ.” Instead of treating it simply as a reference to the complexity of the Pali language, it is interpreted as referring to the hidden wisdom and profound meanings contained within Pali scriptures. The phrase “*their secrets keep*” therefore presents the Pali texts as repositories of ancient knowledge and mystery, reflecting a cultural attitude of reverence toward sacred scriptures. Similarly, “เรื่องราวยาวรี” is expanded into “*These lengthy tales of mystery deep*,” where the addition of “*mystery deep*” not only conveys length but also emphasizes depth, complexity, and a sense of intrigue embedded in the narratives.

In the second example, “อย่าฟังแต่เพราะ นุเคราะห์ตามฉบับ” is translated as “*Don't merely listen for the sound, But seek the wisdom to be found.*” Here, interpretive translation is used to convey the underlying philosophical message rather than a literal rendering. “อย่าฟังแต่เพราะ” is interpreted as a warning against being attracted solely by pleasant sound or surface beauty. “*Don't merely listen for the sound*” thus emphasizes the distinction between superficial perception and deeper understanding. The phrase “นุเคราะห์ตามฉบับ,” which is semantically ambiguous in the source text, is interpreted as “*But seek the wisdom to be found,*” highlighting the contrast between aesthetic enjoyment and the pursuit of deeper knowledge. This interpretation reflects Buddhist conceptual thought that distinguishes between form and essence, or appearance and true meaning.

7. Functional Equivalence

Example 1:

Thai source text (p. 229): ร้องเพลงโอชา สวัสดิ์สัตโต

English translation (p. 143): *To sing with joy in every town.*

Example 2:

Thai source text (p. 229): อะโหพุทโธ อะโหธัมโม อะโหสังฆะ ชัยโยยันตัง

English translation (p. 143): *O Blessed Buddha! Dharma true! The Sangha pure! We praise your might!*

In the first example, “ร้องเพลงโอชา สวัสดิ์สัตโต” is translated as “*To sing with joy in every town.*” The translator employs functional equivalence, focusing on producing an equivalent communicative effect for target readers rather than adhering strictly to the literal meaning of individual words. The decision involves omitting the Pali-derived expressions “โอชา” and “สวัสดิ์สัตโต,” which would likely be unfamiliar to most English-speaking readers. Instead of transliterating them,

the translator conveys the core communicative function of the phrase—namely, the expression of joy, celebration, and artistic performance. The resulting translation evokes a vivid image of joyful performance and the widespread dissemination of cultural expression, allowing readers to experience a similar emotional response to that of the source audience.

In the second example, “อะโหพุทโธ อะโหธัมโม อะโหสังฆะ ชัยโยยันตัง” is translated as “*O Blessed Buddha! Dharma true! The Sangha pure! We praise your might!*” This presents a greater challenge, as it involves translating a sacred Pali chant. Here, functional equivalence is achieved by recreating a comparable devotional and emotional experience in the target language. The terms “*Dharma*” and “*Sangha*” are retained in transliterated form, as they are already familiar to readers with an interest in Buddhism. Other elements are translated into English to produce an equivalent devotional impact. “*Aho Buddhō*” is rendered as “*O Blessed Buddha!*” using an exclamatory structure that conveys reverence and praise. “*Aho Dhammō*” and “*Aho Saṅghō*” become “*Dharma true!*” and “*The Sangha pure!*” respectively, emphasizing purity and authenticity. “ชัยโยยันตัง” is translated as “*We praise your might!*” to express collective admiration and reverence. The repeated use of exclamation marks helps recreate the rhythmic intensity and emotional force of chanting. Although the lexical forms differ from the original, the communicative function, expressing devotion and reverence toward the Three Jewels, is effectively preserved, enabling target readers to experience a comparable spiritual effect.

8. Communicative Translation

Example 1:

Thai source text (p. 230): สั่งให้จับตัว เชี่ยนส่งลงแพ

English translation (p. 143): *The king commanded she be seized, They whipped her, placed her on a raft.*

Example 2:

Thai source text (p. 249): เดือนสี่มาต่อเดือนห้า เสือมันมาล่าริมคลอง

English translation (p. 172): *When fourth month turns to the fifth in time, Tigers hunt by the cana's line.*

This example involves a narrative with dramatic content and intense emotional tone. In translating “สั่งให้จับตัว เชี่ยนส่งลงแพ” as “*The king commanded she be seized, They whipped her, placed her on a raft,*” the translator aims not only to convey descriptive meaning but also to

preserve the emotional force and rhythmic progression of events so that readers can fully experience the narrative impact. The source text is concise and fast-paced, reflecting a sequence of actions that unfold without mercy. The structure presents a clear progression—command → arrest → punishment → expulsion—compressed into short poetic units that create a sense of urgency and severity. This brevity is characteristic of Nora poetry, where significant events are often narrated in powerful, condensed language. In the translation, communicative translation is used to ensure clarity and emotional impact for target readers. “สั่งให้จับตัว” is expanded to “*The king commanded she be seized,*” where the addition of “*The king*” clarifies the authority behind the action, inferred from context. The verb “*commanded*” is chosen for its stronger and more formal tone compared to “*ordered,*” conveying authority and irrevocability. The phrase “เขียนส่งลงแพ” is divided into two actions, “*They whipped her, placed her on a raft,*” to clarify the sequence of punishment. “*Whipped*” directly conveys physical violence, while “*placed her on a raft*” preserves the image of forced removal in a concise form that maintains poetic rhythm. As a result, the communicative translation enables English readers to experience emotional effects similar to those of the source audience, including shock, sympathy, and an understanding of the severity of the punishment, even without familiarity with traditional Thai punitive practices.

In the second example, “เดือนสี่มาต่อเดือนห้า เสือมันมาล่าริมคลอง” is translated as “*When fourth month turns to the fifth in time, Tigers hunt by the canal’s line.*” The translator employs communicative translation to maintain narrative flow while adapting culturally specific temporal references (“เดือนสี่,” “เดือนห้า”) into a more universally understandable form. The imagery of seasonal transition and danger is preserved, allowing readers to understand both the setting and the tense atmosphere of the scene. The rendering of “เดือนสี่มาต่อเดือนห้า” as “*When fourth month turns to the fifth in time*” with the phrase “*turns to*” is used to express temporal transition more naturally in English, while the addition of “*in time*” helps create rhythmic balance suitable for poetic expression. This choice presents the passage of time as smooth and continuous. Meanwhile, the phrase “เสือมันมาล่าริมคลอง” is translated as “*Tigers hunt by the canal’s line.*” The verb “*hunt*” is chosen instead of a more literal “*chase,*” as it more precisely reflects the natural behavior of wild animals and strengthens the vividness of the imagery. Meanwhile, “*by the canal’s line*” is used in place of “ริมคลอง” to construct a clearer spatial image and to maintain a poetic rhythm suitable for the English verse.

Overall, communicative translation is applied in both examples to create an effective and engaging reading experience for English readers. Rather than adhering strictly to the source form, the

translator prioritizes the transmission of meaning, emotion, and atmosphere, enabling the poetic text to be fully accessible and appreciable in the target language.

9. Terminology Selection

Example 1:

Thai source text (p. 229): พระไตรโลก

English translation (p. 142): *Three Worlds Deity*

Example 2:

Thai source text (p. 230): ธรรมยุต

English translation (p. 144): *Dhammayut tradition*

In the first example, “พระไตรโลก” is translated as “*Three Worlds Deity*,” reflecting the challenge of selecting appropriate terminology to convey complex religious and philosophical concepts. The translator chooses “*Three Worlds*” instead of transliterating as “*Triloka*,” based on the consideration that English-speaking readers are generally more familiar with the term “*worlds*” than with Sanskrit or Pali-derived terms. “*Three Worlds*” clearly conveys the Buddhist cosmological framework, referring to the division of existence into the realms of desire, form, and formlessness. The addition of “*Deity*” further clarifies that this concept is not merely cosmological or geographical, but also carries a sacred dimension involving a divine or protective entity associated with the three realms. The choice of “*Deity*” rather than “*God*” or “*Spirit*” reflects a neutral religious term that can accommodate diverse belief systems.

In the second example, “ธรรมยุต” is translated as “*Dhammayut tradition*,” using a different strategy that preserves the original term while adding explanatory context. The retention of “*Dhammayut*” maintains historical and cultural specificity, as it refers to a distinct and well-established Buddhist monastic order in Thailand. Alternatives such as “*Dharma-holding*” or “*Orthodox sect*” are avoided due to their potential inaccuracy or oversimplification. Preserving the transliteration also allows interested readers to conduct further research. The addition of “*tradition*” provides essential contextualization, immediately signaling that this refers to an established system of beliefs and practices rather than a single concept. It also conveys continuity, cultural authority, and historical significance.

10. Poetry Translation – Analogical Form

Example 1:

Thai source text (p. 228): ยกหัตถ์ถึงตั้งนะโม จะไหว้ครูเสียก่อน กรกรายไหว้วอน นั่งขอพรเทวา

English translation (p. 141): *I raise my hands in reverence now,*

To honor teachers with a bow.

I offer prayers with graceful stance,

And ask the gods to guide my dance.

Example 2:

Thai source text (p. 228): แล้วจะตั้งสักเค เอเตภูมิมา ขอประกาศเทวา ช่วยสดับตรับฟัง

English translation (p. 141): *I call upon the deities,*

From highest realms to earth and seas.

May all divine beings hear my voice,

And in my humble plea rejoice.

In the first example, “ยกหัตถ์ถึงตั้งนะโม จะไหว้ครูเสียก่อน กรกรายไหว้วอน นั่งขอพรเทวา” is translated as “*I raise my hands in reverence now, To honor teachers with a bow. I offer prayers with graceful stance, And ask the gods to guide my dance.*” The translator employs analogical form (Holmes, 1988: 25–28), creating a poetic structure in English that corresponds functionally rather than formally to the Thai original. Instead of attempting to replicate Thai metrical patterns, the translator adopts English poetic conventions, specifically rhyming couplets, to achieve a comparable aesthetic effect. The AABB rhyme scheme (now/bow, stance/dance) enhances musicality, memorability, and emotional resonance, paralleling the rhythmic appeal of Thai verse. This structure allows the translation to function as poetry in its own right while preserving the ritual and devotional tone of the original. The translator also approximates a loose iambic pentameter rhythm to support oral readability, reflecting the performative nature of Thai poetry, which is often sung or recited. The use of “now” at the end of the first line strengthens the rhyme with “bow” and adds immediacy to the ritual action.

In the second example, “แล้วจะตั้งสักเค เอเตภูมิมา ขอประกาศเทวา ช่วยสดับตรับฟัง” is translated as “*I call upon the deities, From highest realms to earth and seas. May all divine beings hear my voice, And in my humble plea rejoice.*” Here again, analogical form is used to recreate the poetic and ceremonial function of the source text. The translation restructures the content into balanced poetic lines with internal rhythm and rhyme, ensuring that the English version maintains a similar sense of invocation and sacred address. Rather than preserving literal form, the focus is on producing an equivalent poetic effect, enabling target readers to experience a comparable aesthetic and

spiritual response. In this example, the translator also employs a more complex analogical poetic form by constructing symbolic relationships between celestial and terrestrial realms, using paired lexical choices such as “*deities/seas*” and “*voice/rejoice*” to create both euphony and layered meaning. Although “*seas*” does not appear explicitly in the source text, it is introduced to broaden the imagery of “เอเตภูมิมา,” extending the sense of invocation to all realms, including the oceans, thereby intensifying the scale and spiritual power of the call. The phrase “*May all divine beings hear my voice*” functions as a culturally appropriate English rendering of “ช่วยสดับรับฟัง,” using “*May*” to express supplication and prayer. Meanwhile, “*And in my humble plea rejoice*” adds an emotional dimension not explicitly stated in the original, suggesting a belief that divine beings respond positively and joyfully to the invocation.

Overall, the translation of poetry in *Nora in Trang Province: Beliefs and Rituals* reflects the complexity and refinement required in cross-cultural literary translation. The translator applies a wide range of strategies appropriately according to context, including literal translation for ritual accuracy, transliteration for cultural identity preservation, and cultural equivalence for conceptual understanding. Notably, functional equivalence is used to create comparable communicative effects, communicative translation to convey emotion and atmosphere, and analogical form to recreate poetic expression in English. The translator seeks to balance factual accuracy, artistic beauty, and cross-cultural communicability. This will enable English readers to access the ritual meaning, aesthetic qualities, and spiritual depth of Nora performance while preserving the identity and value of the Thai original text.

In conclusion

The translation of “*Nora of Trang Province: Beliefs and Rituals*,” which focuses on the traditional performing art of Nora, from Thai into English is a task that requires a deep understanding of both language and culture. In translating the five chapters, including the poetic sections, the translator applies various translation theories and strategies to effectively convey meaning while maintaining a balance between fidelity to the Thai source text and accessibility for target readers. The main strategies used include literal translation, applied when structures and meanings can be directly rendered; transliteration, used for culturally specific terms without English equivalents (e.g., “โนรา” as “*Nora*”) to preserve cultural identity; and cultural equivalence, which employs target-language expressions with similar meaning for easier comprehension. In addition, transposition is used to create natural-sounding English structures through changes in word order, sentence division, and grammatical categories. Amplification is applied by adding explanations or footnotes to clarify

culturally specific concepts, while interpretive translation is used when conveying underlying or implied meanings is necessary.

For the poetic sections, the translator adopts Peter Newmark's communicative translation approach, emphasizing the transfer of meaning and effect to target readers; Eugene Nida's theory of functional equivalence, aiming to produce a similar response in target readers as in source readers; and cultural translation theories (Baker, 2018; Newmark, 1988), which view translation as a process of cross-cultural mediation. Holmes's concept of analogical form is also applied to preserve poetic elements such as rhythm, sound, imagery, and meaning. In these sections, English poetic forms with rhyme are created, along with additional explanatory elements to enhance cultural understanding.

Translating culturally specific texts such as Nora performance literature requires both linguistic competence and cultural awareness. The translator must carefully balance fidelity to the source text with comprehensibility for target readers by integrating multiple translation strategies. These strategies collectively ensure that the meaning, cultural values, and aesthetic qualities of Nora performance are effectively communicated, while also aligning the translation with academic English conventions.

4. Applications in Academic Contexts

The translation of *“Nora in Trang Province: Beliefs and Rituals”* holds significant academic value in several respects. In particular, following Nora's inscription by UNESCO as an Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, the dissemination of knowledge about this important Thai folk performing art in English contributes to the global recognition and scholarly understanding of Thai culture.

4.1 Dissemination of Knowledge to an International Audience

This translation provides an expanded body of English-language resources on Nora rituals, which have been relatively limited. As a result, scholars and readers who are unable to access Thai-language materials can engage with important information about Nora. This aligns with Pym's (2014) view that translation plays a crucial role in the movement of knowledge across linguistic and cultural boundaries. International scholars can use this material for comparative studies of folk performing arts without relying on intermediaries such as interpreters or additional translated sources. The translation also contains detailed information on the history and development of Nora in Trang

Province, which is valuable for research in cultural anthropology and local history. Furthermore, the availability of such detailed information in English enables tourists and international readers to gain a deeper understanding of local culture.

4.2 Cross-Cultural Comparative Studies

This translation also serves as a resource for comparative cultural studies of ritual and folk performance traditions worldwide. In particular, it supports research on possession rituals and ancestor-related ceremonies, which are widely studied in anthropology and ethnology. It is especially useful for comparative studies of folk performance traditions in Southeast Asia and South Asia, regions that share historical and cultural connections. Scholars can use this material to analyze similarities and differences in ritual practices across cultures. Information on the syncretism of indigenous beliefs, Buddhism, and Islamic influences within Nora culture is particularly valuable for studies on multiculturalism and cultural hybridity in Southeast Asia, which are key themes in contemporary sociological and anthropological research.

4.3 Folklore and Anthropological Studies

The translation is beneficial for the study of folklore, as it reveals the structure and components of local myths and narratives. In anthropology and sociology, this work provides in-depth information on the transformation of knowledge transmission systems, from traditional “informal teaching” practices in the past to institutionalized education in the present. This reflects broader changes in social structures and the adaptation of folk culture. The translation is also valuable for scholars in anthropology, folklore studies, and the study of folk beliefs and religions, particularly in relation to beliefs about illness, healing practices, and animistic systems in local culture. Information on *Sen* illness and *Khru Mo Nora* illness, as well as traditional healing practices based on belief systems, can be used in studies of folk medicine and medical anthropology.

4.4 Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage

In terms of safeguarding intangible cultural heritage, this translation plays an important role in documenting and transmitting traditional knowledge so that it remains accessible and widely recognized. It aligns with UNESCO’s objectives in inscribing intangible cultural heritage elements. The documentation and dissemination of Nora knowledge in English contribute to the preservation of cultural heritage that is increasingly affected by social change and globalization. Making this knowledge accessible at an international level helps raise awareness and appreciation of its cultural

value. This translation also serves as a supporting document for UNESCO's framework on safeguarding intangible cultural heritage by preserving knowledge of beliefs and rituals that may otherwise fade in the context of globalization, ensuring that they remain available in an accessible and internationally understandable form.

4.5 Development of Translation Studies Education

The translation can be used as a case study for developing approaches to translating culturally specific texts, particularly those containing culture-bound terms and concepts. It demonstrates how to handle challenges such as ritual names, objects, and belief systems that have no direct equivalents in English. It is also suitable for teaching ethnographic translation and cultural translation in higher education, as it employs a wide range of translation strategies to address cross-cultural issues. Moreover, it can support teaching and research in linguistics and translation studies, especially in the translation of culture-specific vocabulary and the preservation of cultural context in academic texts. This makes it a valuable example of how cultural meaning can be maintained even when direct lexical equivalence is absent.

4.6 Cultural Tourism Studies

The translated material can also be applied to cultural tourism development and the preservation of intangible cultural heritage. It serves as an important source of information for promoting cultural assets in ways that may generate economic value while still maintaining their cultural integrity.

4.7 Adaptation of Folk Performing Arts in the Era of Globalization

This translation can be applied in various academic contexts, particularly in studies of cultural dynamics, the preservation of intangible cultural heritage, and the adaptation of folk performing arts in the era of globalization. It presents a concrete case of cultural negotiation between traditional beliefs, globalization, and technological change. In addition, it can be used in comparative studies of how folk performing arts adapt across different regions of the world, in order to identify appropriate strategies for preservation and development in contemporary contexts.

In summary, the translation of "Nora in Trang Province: Beliefs and Rituals" holds multi-dimensional academic value. It contributes to international knowledge dissemination, cross-cultural studies, anthropology and folklore, intangible cultural heritage preservation, translation studies,

cultural tourism, and research on the adaptation of folk performing arts in globalization. Overall, it not only expands academic understanding of Thai folk performance but also supports the global recognition and sustainable transmission of Thailand's valuable cultural heritage.

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English Translation of the Book

"Nora in Trang Province: Beliefs and Rituals"

Chapter 1

The Form and Elements of Nora

Nora, or Manora, is a traditional performing art from southern Thailand that has held significant cultural importance from ancient times to the present. It can be divided into two main aspects: 1) entertainment: Nora serves as a multifaceted entertainment form, encompassing music, dance, poetry, dialogue, and role-playing. It provides both worldly and spiritual lessons to its audience. 2) ritual: in southern Thailand, there is a strong belief in the spirits of ancestors and teachers who passed on knowledge in various fields, referred to as “Khru Mo” or “Ta Yai (ancestral spirits called Ta-Yai, literally meaning ‘grandparents’),” such as “Khru Mo Nora”¹ or “Ta Yai Nora.” Nora performances are an essential medium in rituals meant to honor these spirits.

History of Nora

The history of Nora, as it is known today, has been shaped by oral traditions and the research, analysis, and dissemination by scholars. As a result, various versions of Nora's origins exist. However, the most widely accepted version suggests that Nora originated in the royal courts of southern Thai kings in ancient times. It is believed to have been influenced by the civilization of southern India, which reached the Malay Peninsula and southern Thailand before spreading to other regions (Na Nakhon, 1980, cited in Busararat, 2013: 32). The foundational dance postures of Nora Chatri resemble the “Korna” poses found in the Bharata Natyasastra textbook and dance poses in the Inscription Stone at Borobudur. It also bears similarities to a type of Indian theater performed in ancient Bengal called “Yatra,” a traveling performance of the Gita Govinda story. In the ancient southern Thai version of Chatri, it was similarly a form of traveling theater, performing the Phra Suthon-Manora tale with three main characters. Some scholars therefore speculate that the term “Chatri” may have evolved from “Yatra” (Busararat, 2013: 32-33).

The term “Chatri” being referred to as “Nora Chatri” appears in the local literature titled “Nora Nibat Kam Karp,” which was written at Wat Matchimawat Temple in Songkhla Province in

¹ **Khru Mo Nora** refers to a master or teacher of the Nora tradition who is skilled not only in the dance but also in the ritualistic and spiritual aspects of the practice. The term “Khru” means teacher or master, and “Mo” refers to a healer or a wise person, often with deep knowledge of spiritual and cultural traditions. The term “Nora” refers to a traditional dance and dramatic performance originating from southern Thailand. It is often associated with spiritual and ceremonial purposes. (The translator)

1868. This text mentions a performance during the celebration of Phra Suthon and Nang² Manora. In one passage, it states: “*Manora Chatri sings the song of Meri, delights in the garden, dances while drinking, caresses and invites to sleep, steals medicine and travels, Meri is intoxicated.*” This indicates that even when performing stories unrelated to Nang Manora, the performance was still called “Manora Chatri” (Busararat, 2013: 5).

The tale of Manora (written as “Manora” in the original manuscript) is a very ancient story. A monk from Chiang Mai compiled it in a collection of stories known as the Panyasa Jataka, where it is called the “Suthon Jataka.” During the Ayutthaya period, this story was adapted into a theatrical performance. The character of Nang Manora is depicted as a Kinnaree, a mythical half-bird, half-woman creature drawing inspiration from ancient Indian culture. This story is not exclusive to Thailand; it is also found in the folk tales of Borneo and other nations, which are believed to have been influenced by Indian culture (Playnoi, 2001).

Nora is a traditional dance performed to honor the gods Shiva, Vishnu, and Brahma in Brahmanism. When Brahmanism spread to southern Thailand, it brought this form of performance with it. It is believed that Nora flourished and developed in Phatthalung, particularly in the Bang Kaeo area, with its development linked to communities around the Songkhla Lake basin. In provinces further from the lake, knowledge and practice of Nora gradually diminished. The spreading of Chatri or Nora Chatri (written as “Nora” in the original manuscript) to central Thailand and/or Bangkok occurred in three notable occasions: the first instance (1769) during King Taksin’s reign, when he led an army to subdue the ruler of Nakhon Si Thammarat; the captured ruler and performers were brought to Thonburi; and the second instance (1780) during the celebration of the Emerald Buddha, when King Rama I invited performers from Nakhon Si Thammarat to Bangkok. They competed with female performers from the royal court; third instance (around 1832) during the reign of King Rama III of the Rattanakosin Kingdom (Busararat, 2003: 79-81).

The purpose of performing Nora is quite similar to Indian classical dance. Chettee (1992: 19-20) noted that in southern India, ritual dances performed to honor deities are widespread and are called “Dasi Attam.” These dances were traditionally performed daily by temple dancers known as *Devadasis*. During religious ceremonies and festivals, these ritual dances would accompany processions of deity statues through the streets. If the dance took place within a temple, a special ritual pavilion called “Natya Mandapa” would be constructed for the performance.

² **Nang** in Thai is used as an honorific or a formal title, primarily referring to a woman of nobility, beauty, or importance. It is often translated as “lady” or “princess” depending on the context. (The translator)

The author concludes that Nora is a performing art influenced by Indian civilization, which spread to Thailand through the southern peninsula. Initially, it was believed to be popular among the upper classes before gradually spreading to various communities around the Songkhla Lake basin. The purpose of performing Nora, which includes honoring Khru Mo Nora, ancestors, and sacred entities, closely resembles Indian classical dance, which is performed to worship deities in Brahmanism.

History of Nora in Trang Province

Nora has long been a part of Trang Province. The author believes that it was introduced from Phatthalung through the migration of people. The first area in Trang Province where Nora took deep root was in Nayong District due to its proximity to the Phatthalung border. It then gradually spread to other areas within the province. The exact time when Nora arrived in Trang is not clearly documented. However, archaeological evidence shows the cultural influence of Nora in the art, such as the Nora-style Buddha statue at Phu Khao Thong Temple, Moo 1, Nam Phut Subdistrict, Mueang District, Trang Province.

According to the Thai News Agency (2020), the Nora-style Buddha statue was created in 950 CE during the time of Lord No and Nang Luead Khao. When they learned that King Sri Dharma Sokarach II of Nakhon Si Thammarat was preparing to renovate the Phra Borommathat Stupa, Lord No and Nang Luead Khao gathered all their wealth to offer as a donation for Buddhist merit, with the intention of placing it in the Phra Borommathat Stupa of Nakhon. However, upon arriving in Trang, specifically at Khao Chum Thong (now Phu Khao Thong Temple), they learned that the stupa had already been completed. Consequently, Lord No and Nang Luead Khao deposited all their treasures in a cave at Khao Chum Thong (Phu Khao Thong) and Khao Lak Chan in Nam Phut Subdistrict, Mueang District, Trang Province.



Figure 1.1 Nora-style Buddha statue at Phu Khao Thong Temple, Nam Phut Subdistrict, Mueang District, Trang Province, photographed on April 1, 2022.

Source: Yammai (2022)

Subsequently, two Nora-style reclining Buddha statues (Phra Non) were created to mark and protect the cave entrance, and several Nora-style Buddha statues were placed in various temples in Mueang District, Huai Yot District, and Nayong District. However, these statues were later destroyed, leaving only the Nora-style reclining Buddha at Phu Khao Thong Temple.

Based on the age of the Nora-style Buddha statue at Phu Khao Thong Temple, we can estimate that Nora's cultural influence in Trang Province dates back at least 1,000 years. This represents a significant period long enough to have deeply ingrained Nora's cultural influence among the people of Trang.

Records of Nora in Trang Province began to emerge during the Rattanakosin period. According to the study on the preservation of Nora art in Nayong District, Trang Province by Hutsachai et al. (2017: 127-128), it refers to the historical documents of the royal visit (to Trang), written during the reign of King Rama VI, as follows:

“Manora is very popular in this town. Chao Khun Ratsada mentioned that when he first became the governor of Trang, it was customary for men to seek the hand of a daughter. The parents would first ask two questions: whether the man knew Manora dance and whether he was a buffalo thief. If he did not know either, they would not agree to give their daughter away because the parents did not see how they could support a wife. Authentic Nora performers are highly skilled due to their agility and quick comprehension abilities. Hence, they make good Manora performers. Chao Khun Ratsada employed several of them and observed that they were very capable and efficient.”

“...In the evening, after dining, I watched a special Manora performance, which was held on the hill in front of the palace pavilion. The performance was organized in a temporary structure, and there were two leading performers, three skilled ones, two hunters, and a group of around 30 people including others. Despite the large troupe, the cost was only 2 baht. If it were a Bangkok-style drama, it would have been a lot more expensive, but Manora performance is cost-effective because performers don't need to purchase food; locals provide meals throughout their tour, treating them with the respect accorded to high-ranking nobles or officials. In the performance the previous night, there were two outstanding performers: one named Nai Khao and another named Nai Kling. Nai Khao was very agile and had recently resumed performing after a long hiatus, but he still performed excellently. Nai Kling, on the other hand, was very talkative. Chao Khun Ratsada recounted that when Nai Kling resigned from his position as village headman, he was asked by the royal department why he resigned. Nai Kling explained that being a village headman was no match for being a Nora performer. He said that he would not want any other position, not even as a district chief, governor, or city mayor, as being a Manora performer allowed him to do everything—

be it killing or whipping—just like a city official, but with the advantage that no one could replace him. He asserted that being a Manora performer was far superior...”

“On Friday, July 2, 1915, at 10 p.m., there was a special Nora performance by Khun Satthajaiphak (Sri Ngoen). Khun Sattha, named after Phraya Ratsadanupradit, was appointed with authority similar to that of past governors. He referred to himself as Khun Tha and was a Nora teacher throughout Trang Province. At that time, he had ceased performing, but this special occasion led him to bring his disciples and students, including Muen Wisetnajakit (Kling), to perform in celebration of royal favor. The performance featured the story of Phra Sang and lasted until nearly two watches of the night, concluding with a ceremonial dance and song of celebration.”

From the historical documents of the royal visit (to Trang), written during the reign of King Rama VI, it is evident that the history and conditions of Nora in Trang Province included notable figures such as Khun Satthajaiphak (Sri Ngoen), a renowned Nora performer, and Nai Khao and Nai Kling, who were skilled and capable Nora dancers. Being a Nora artist was considered a position of honor and prestige. When performing at any location, the local people would offer a warm welcome and take great care of them. Thus, Nora artists were seen as having considerable social power and could impose penalties on others. For this reason, men of that era commonly trained to become Nora artists. The cultural value of being a Nora artist was used as a measure of masculinity at the time, as illustrated by the saying: *“It was customary for men to seek the hand of a daughter. The parents would first ask two questions: whether the man knew Manora dance and whether he was a buffalo thief. If he did not know either, they would not agree to give their daughter away.”*

The author believes that a Nora artist is a person with significant knowledge in languages, magical spells, and possesses quick-wittedness and intelligence. Additionally, they have a broad social network, as they often form connections with local people wherever they perform Nora. Therefore, being a Nora artist is considered to provide sufficient potential to support a wife comfortably.

Hutsachai et al. (2017: 130-131) discuss the evolution of Nora in Trang Province during the later period when Nora Toem Ongseng (1930-1971) gained prominence. During this time, society shifted its interest towards movies and other forms of entertainment rather than Nora performances. In response, Nora Toem innovated by adapting novels into Nora performances and replacing the traditional Nora costumes with modern outfits. Subsequently, other Nora troupes began to follow this example. The distinguishing feature of Nora Toem was his ability to perform improvised poetry (Mutto poems), which contributed to his widespread fame throughout Southern Thailand.

The event known as “Nora competition” also became popular during this time. It involved competitions in various aspects such as dancing, poetry performance, and music playing.

Additionally, knowledge of occult practices was used to intimidate competitors, including practices like the Spirit Whipping dance, Lamob (spirit exorcism), and the use of spells. The goal of organizing Nora competitions was to provide entertainment and to encourage Nora troupes to compete and further develop their skills.

Hutsachai et al. (2017: 131) further state that the period following Nora Toem Ongseng was marked by the first economic crisis in Thailand (1975-1984). During this time, the stock market was opened for the first time, leading to a high level of unemployment, inflation, and economic downturn. As a result, many Nora troupes had to disband and return to performing in the traditional style.

This situation reflects the relationship between the economic system and culture. When people's living conditions become strained, they shift towards more economical lifestyles, limiting their spending to essential needs only. During this period, Nora performances were primarily confined to ritualistic ceremonies related to Nora school traditions, which were customary in society. The additional factor exacerbating the decline of the Nora industry was the rise of new forms of entertainment, such as television, radio, cinema, and film shows. As these new media became more prevalent, people shifted their attention away from Nora, leading to a reduction in Nora performances. Consequently, some Nora artists had to turn to other professions, and some troupes were forced to disband.

Since around 2007, the popularity of Nora and various forms of traditional performing arts has experienced a resurgence. This revival is attributed to the shift in Thai and Southern Thai society towards the "online society," where information is exchanged and entertainment is consumed through platforms like *Facebook* and *YouTube*. Additionally, this period saw government agencies, especially educational institutions, actively promoting the preservation and revitalization of traditional Thai culture. This social change has motivated a new generation to learn Nora dance and to share knowledge about Nora online, resulting in its resurgence in popularity today.

The development of Nora in Trang Province has experienced both periods of prosperity and decline in popularity, following the trends of social change. However, even during times of declining popularity, Nora did not disappear entirely from society. This is because there were groups of Nora descendants who respected and revered Khru Mo Nora, helping to preserve and pass down this tradition from generation to generation. Additionally, "Khru Mo Nora" continued to actively maintain and transmit their knowledge to students, challenging the changing social currents. For this reason, the author wishes to highlight the important Khru Mo Nora in Trang Province to honor their contributions for future generations.

Nora teachers in Trang Province

A Nora teacher refers to a person who imparts Nora knowledge to students. Generally, this term refers to a chief Nora artist. People in the South expect a chief Nora artist to be a person of good character, moral integrity, and worthy of respect and admiration. A study on the perspectives of Chief Nora following Buddhist principles in Songkhla, Nakhon Si Thammarat, and Phatthalung provinces from 1957 to 2007 by Aeksapang (2009: 79-80) found that the qualities of a chief Nora artist must include: 1) ethical virtue: having a sense of shame towards wrongdoing and fear of committing any immoral acts; 2) moral discipline: adhering to the Five Precepts; 3) respect for sacred objects: showing respect towards sacred images, Khru Mo Nora, and Hunters; 4) social conduct: engaging in charity, speaking kindly, contributing to public welfare, and maintaining consistency in behavior. The expectations for chief Nora artists or Nora teachers in Trang Province align with these findings.

There are several Nora teachers in Trang Province who are respected and have continuously passed on their knowledge to students. For this study, the author has selected four well-known Nora families that are widely recognized: 1) Nora Khun Thep - Nora Khun Tha, 2) Nora Fueang, 3) Nora Paen Khrueng Ngam, 4) Nora Toem Mueang Trang.

Nora Khun Thep - Nora Khun Tha

Nora Khun Thep and Nora Khun Tha were old-generation Nora teachers in Trang Province. They were siblings, as reflected in a verse that states, "*Khun Tha lives in Thung Mai, Khun Thep, the younger brother, lives in Ban Pho.*" Nora Khun Tha, originally named Khun Satthajaphak, was also known as "Sri Ngoen" and held the status of the elder brother. Nora Khun Thep, originally named "lat," was known as Khun Thepchatri, and held the status of the younger brother.

The Documentation and Archives Committee of the Organizing Committee for the Celebration of His Majesty the King (2001, cited in Yammai, 2013: 77-78) mentions Nora Khun Thep and Nora Khun Tha that Nora lat was the son of Nora Kaew, known for his good looks, beautiful dance, and melodious voice. Phraya Ratsadanupradit often featured Nora lat in performances and occasionally took him to perform in Phuket. Nora lat was even presented to His Royal Highness Prince Damrong Rajanubhab. Nora Sri Ngoen, on the other hand, was a teacher to many Nora artists across Trang Province. During King Rama VI's visit to Trang in 1915, Khun Tha had retired from performing Nora but brought his students and disciples to perform. At that event, "Muen Wisetnajakit" (Nora Kling) also performed. Nora Kling was initially a close associate of Phraya Ratsadanupradit and later became a village headman. Dissatisfied with the position, he resigned. The descendants of Khun Tha include Nora Chuay Koh Taew, who was a village headman of Koh Pia when it was still part of the Kantang District.

Hutsachai et al. (2017: 42) state that the origins of Nora Sri Ngoen are unknown; it is only known that Nora Sri Ngoen first established a Nora troupe in Ban Kuan Na Kae, Tambon Ban Kuan, Mueang District, Trang Province. Nora Sri Ngoen was known for her graceful and beautiful dance, attracting many people who wished to become her disciples. Nora Sri Ngoen had an assistant for training students named Hunter Meng. Later, Nora Sri Ngoen moved her family to live in Ban Thung Mhai, Village 1, Tambon Thung Kai, Yan Ta Khao District, Trang Province. An important disciple of Nora Sri Ngoen was Nora Chum Kaewlek, who was her nephew. Nora Chum settled in Ban Nongchumsaeng, Village 10, Tambon Kok Saba, Nayong District, Trang Province, and established his own Nora troupe there. As Nora Chum had no sons, he taught his three nephews: Nora Jaroen Chaipetch, Nora Chob Chaipetch, and Nora Somboon Thinpan. After Nora Chum's death, Nora Jaroen, the eldest brother, inherited the Nora troupe from Nora Chum and named it "Nora Jaroensilp." Later, as Nora Jaroen aged, he passed the responsibilities to his son, Nora Prapan Chaipetch, and renamed the troupe "Nora Jaroensilp Pan-Pin Trang." Meanwhile, Nora Chob joined the Nora Jaroensilp troupe to gain experience and later established his own troupe named "Nora Chob Somjitpradit." Additionally, two other notable disciples of Nora Chum are Nora Klaew Kanjanaprom and Nora Klom Phrompetch.

Nora Fueang

The history of Nora Fueang, according to the account of Nora Srichan from Ban Na Mueang Phet, Sikao District, Trang Province, is detailed in the research work "Gender Mystifications through Signifiers in the Nora Rong Khru Ritual" by Yammai (2013: 78-79). The details are as follows:

In the past, there was "Yai³ Noo (Grandma Noo)," a resident of Nakhon Si Thammarat, who traveled to perform Nora dance in Trang Province. Due to her skill in both poetry and dance, she was well-received by the governor of Trang and the local people. At that time, Mr. Rung, a thief from Phatthalung, had fled from legal troubles and settled in Trang, where he married a local woman from Huai Nam Dam Village, Na Mueang Phet Subdistrict, Sikao District, Trang Province. Mr. Rung, having seen Yai Noo's Nora dance, admired it greatly and decided to practice the dance himself until he became proficient, eventually becoming another skilled Nora performer. Additionally, Mr. Rung was well-versed in magic and could perform the art of invisibility, which became widely known. As a result, many students came to learn from him, such as Nora Liem from Ban Khao Wiset, Khao

³ In Thai, **Yai** typically means biological grandmother, but it can also refer to any elderly woman as a term of respect. It conveys care for older women in the community, similar to "Auntie" or "Grandma" in other cultures. Additionally, "Yai" may be used in spiritual or ceremonial contexts to refer to ancestors or revered female figures. It is often used to show respect for elderly women, especially in rural settings. In rituals, it can also signify reverence for female spirits or ancestors. (The translator)

Wiset District, Trang Province; Nora Tang (father of Nora Toem, Mueang Trang) from Ban Khao Wiset, Khao Wiset District, Trang Province; and Nora Meuk from Ban Huai To, Sikao District, Trang Province. The next generation of students, who were the grand-students of Mr. Rung, included Nora Fueang from Ban Na Mueang Phet, Sikao District, Trang Province. Nora Fueang was a student of both Nora Liem and Nora Muek.

People in the local area of Na Mueang Phet Subdistrict and nearby regions said that Nora Fueang was an exceptionally skilled Nora performer, particularly noted for her unique dance style called “Tha Naad Phleng Thap.” This dance style blends graceful, elegant movements with energetic and swift transitions. Additionally, the performances of the “Swan Princess” role or “Nang Khee Nhon”⁴ (called “Sopha” in some places) were exceptionally captivating and pleasing to watch. Her students included Nora Srichan from Ban Na Mueang Phet, Nora Priap from Ban Kok Yang, Nora Kluean from Ban Nong Mhao, and Nora Mhon from Ban Bang Tao, among others.

Nora Paen Khrueang Ngam

Nora Paen Khrueang Ngam hailed from Ban Kok Sathon, Khuan Pring Subdistrict, Mueang District, Trang Province. The embellishing phrase “Khrueang Ngam” originates from her development of beautifully unique Nora costumes. She was sometimes referred to as “Nora Paen 7 loads” because she would need to transport seven loads of costumes when traveling for performances. In addition to her notable costume designs, Nora Paen Khrueang Ngam was recognized for her distinctive dance style. Her dance movements were characterized by grace and softness, including shoulder shrugs, body sways, and facial tilts in time with the music. Today, Nora Paen Khrueang Ngam’s dance style is still evident among her students. Another unique feature of her dance repertoire is the “dance to the rhythm of Pleng Thap and Pleng Ton.”

Nora Paen Khrueang Ngam was also renowned for her mastery of magical spells, which remains well-known to this day. In the past, during Nora performance competitions, there was often an element of magical contests. On one occasion, when Nora Paen Khrueang Ngam's troupe went to compete in Phatthalung Province, a student warned her that someone was plotting harm using black magic against them. Nora Paen Khrueang Ngam responded, “They can’t do anything to us. May any harm they intend come back to them.” It was reted that shortly thereafter, the rival Nora troupe experienced a problem: the lead dancer had a heavy menstrual flow that stained her costume and legs, making it impossible for her to continue performing.

According to the oral accounts of Nora Chaluay Koeddee, a former lead dancer of Nora Paen Khrueang Ngam's troupe, as reported in the research work “Gender Mystifications through Signifiers

⁴ Khee Nhon is a distortion of the word “Kinnara.” (The translator)

in the Nora Rong Khru Ritual” by Yammai (2013: 81-82), it is said: *“Pu⁵ Pan was adept in incantations and could cast love spells, but he consistently taught that one should never employ magical arts to harm others as it constitutes a transgression. The consequences of such actions would eventually come back to oneself, unless someone had already caused harm to us first, in which case we could retaliate. Pu Pan said that if one must retaliate, it should be done in such a way that it causes the other person real trouble.”*

This account illustrates teaching principles that embody beliefs in karmic law and artistic dignity. Specifically, Nora Paen Khrueang Ngam’s teachings are grounded in the principle of doing no harm to others. According to these teachings, the law of karma ensures that any malevolent actions involving black magic will ultimately return to the perpetrator. However, if someone else initiates harm first, despite no wrongdoing on the part of the artist, the Nora artist must defend their own dignity by using black magic in return, until the wrongdoer suffers sufficiently to bring them to tears over the resulting misfortune.

Students of Nora Paen Khrueang Ngam include Nora Sriwanna (Juk) from the Pan Trang troupe, Nora Sathian Preecha, Nora Long Noi Chaluaysilp (deceased, with students who continued the lineage including Nora Tawee Chitchonlathan, Nora Khrut from the Long Noi troupe, and Nora Song from the Tham Nong Silp troupe), Nora Pun Kamnoedsilp (deceased), Nora Wiratnoi from the Prom-Proy Juk Pan Trang troupe, and Nora Narong Aroonroj from the Phrom-Proy Juk Pan Trang troupe, among others.

Nora Toem Mueang Trang

Nora Toem Mueang Trang, originally named Mr. Toem Ongseng, was the son of Nora Tang from Ban Khao Wiset, Wang Wiset District, Trang Province. Nora Tang used to be frequently ill and in poor health. His father learned that Khru Mo Nora wanted him to train in Nora, so he sent Nora Tang to become a disciple of Nora Dech. Later, Nora Tang had a son, Nora Toem, whom he also taught Nora dance. When Nora Toem was about 16 years old, he demonstrated his skill in performing “Mutto poems” and competed against other Nora performers in Trang Province, such as Nora Fueang, Nora Liem, Nora Paen Khrueang Ngam, Nora Muek, Nora Kloi-Klaew, and Nora Yen, winning all the competitions. In 1933 (B.E. 2476), Nora Toem traveled to compete in Nora performances in

⁵ **Pu**, in Thai, does not always refer to a biological grandfather. It can be used to refer to elders or respected male figures, particularly in spiritual or ceremonial settings. It may also be used to address a wise or older person who holds a significant position in a community or family, regardless of direct familial relation. Additionally, in certain contexts, “Pu” is used to refer to spiritual or ancestral figures. In religious or cultural ceremonies, for example, it might be used to refer to a revered ancestor or a guardian spirit. (The translator)

Phatthalung and Pattani Provinces, where he competed against several troupes, including Nora Heng, Nora Puang-Pan, Nora Plaek, Nora Phrom, and Nora Wan, consistently achieving victory.

A historic Nora competition that is still talked about today occurred when Nora Toem was 18 years old. He competed against Nora Fueang, the most famous Nora performer of the time. She was known for her beautiful dance moves and melodious singing that no other Nora troupe could match. At that time, Khun Sutthinon Narakorn consulted with his associates to find a Nora performer for a competition at the opening of a new road. The meeting decided to choose Nora Toem to compete against Nora Fueang. It is said that both Nora troupes gathered supporters to cheer for their side to win. The result of the competition was that Nora Toem emerged victorious. On another occasion, Nora Toem competed with Nora Fueang at an annual event in Trang Province, celebrating the king's birthday in front of the Trang City Hall. During this event, the two Nora troupes engaged in a "Mutto poem" battle, and one memorable verse that resonated with people even today was:

Nora Fueang: *"If I lose to Nora Toem, the event will not be performed."*

Nora Toem: *"If I lose to Nora Fueang, I will pawn my costumes."*

Nora Toem's performance of "Mutto poems" in response to Nora Fueang was met with loud cheers from the audience. The verse were sharp and resonated well with the spectators, leading to Nora Toem's victory and earning him widespread recognition as "Nora Toem Mueang Trang" (Noonkaew, 2006: 23-27).

Nora Toem was both a scholar and an artist with innovative vision who respected tradition but was not constrained by ritual conventions that could limit artistic expression. He was bold enough to remove the Nora costume and switch to wearing a necktie and western attire. While Nora performances traditionally began with the Phrases "Phan Na" and "Si To," Nora Toem opted for more modern content, explaining:

"...Ancient styles I dance, but never in vain,

Most people see this truth quite plain.

*For Nora's life has come down through time's reign, Counting no less than five hundred
years' domain.*

But Nora of old times, they had to speak their part,

If not speaking, they'd paint their face with art.

The world keeps turning, changing from the start,

In these modern times, Nora transforms with global heart..."

Nora Toem's efforts to transform the Nora performance inevitably faced resistance from those adhering to traditional practices. However, his brilliance in improvisational "poems" with sharp, decisive, and impactful rhetoric won over both traditionalists and modernists, who eagerly anticipated his live performances. Later generations of Nora performers attempted to emulate Nora Toem, but none could match his level of skill (Ruangnarong, 2010: 122-123).

Students of Nora Toem included Nora Preecha Amnuaysilp, Nora Bamrunsilp from Trang Province, and Nora Somboon Thepsornsilp, among others.

In addition to the four Nora lineages from Trang Province previously mentioned, there is another group of Khru Mo Nora with less documented history but significant roles in transmitting knowledge to students across Trang Province. According to the study on the preservation of the Nora art in Nakhon Nayok District, Trang Province, by Hutsachai et al. (2017: 43), there are four additional Nora lineages: 1) Nora Klink Sangkarak: originally named Mr. Klink Sangkarak, he was from Phang Dan, Nakayad Subdistrict, Khuan Khanun District, Phatthalung Province, and later moved to Ban Sai Manow, Moo 1, Koksaba Subdistrict, Nayong District, Trang Province. Nora Klink's students included Nora Luean Sangkarak and Nora Nom Chaimongkol. 2) Nora Chuen Na Song: a student of Nora Pun from Ban Nai Rai, Koh Pia Subdistrict, Yan Ta Khao District, Trang Province. Nora Chuen established the Nora troupe named Nora Chuen Siangthong in Koksaba Subdistrict, Nayong District, Trang Province. His students included Nora Priam Ploensilp from the Chuen Siangthong troupe, Nora Jaidee Prasertsilp, Nora Boonrit Thuanthong Thawisilp, and Nora Somneuk from the Chuen Buntoengsilp troupe. 3) Nora Daeng Promkiaw: the son of Nora Kaew Promkiaw, a village headman during the reign of King Rama V. Nora Kaew originally came from Phatthalung Province and settled in Nayong District, in front of Phuttha Sihing Temple, Na Yong Nuea Subdistrict. Nora Daeng was a student of Nora Tang Ongseng (father of Nora Toem Ongseng). Due to his father's duties as a village headman, he had no time to teach him and sent Nora Daeng to train with Nora Tang. Nora Daeng's students included Nora Ladwipha from the Father Daeng troupe, Nora Plaek from the Luk Father Daeng Trang troupe, and Nora Lueannoi Thawisilp. 4) Nora Chuay (surname unknown): known only for having established a Nora troupe in Na Khao Sia Subdistrict, Nayong District, Trang Province. His students included Nora Sangwian, son of Nora Chuay (who later passed away, and was succeeded by Nora Prasit Sukkhum), Nora Somchet Chaipetch, and Nora Amnuay Chamroenrak.

The Legend of the Origin of Nora according to the Account of Nora from Trang Province

The following legend about the origin of Nora is recounted by Nora Srichan (Mr. Chan Todtaen) and is documented in the study on *Gender Mystifications through Signifiers in the Nora Rong Khru Ritual* by Yammai (2013, 93-97). The details are as follows:

There was a “Chai Chay,”⁶ named Mr. Kratha, he was from Ayutthaya, who traveled around performing a type of dance art. At that time, there was no specific name for it. Chai Chay Kratha continued his journey south while beating his drum. When the locals heard the sound, they told the children to go out and see what it was. The children went out but couldn't describe what they saw, as it was something unknown in their village. They reported back to the elders saying “Do Ma,” which is a southern dialect term meaning “something is coming from over there.” This implied that someone or something was approaching. From then on, the people began calling this dance “Do Ma,” which later evolved into “Nora.” The locals were very impressed with Chai Chay Kratha's dance skills.

In that era, there was the “Muang Khrung Sri Ayutthaya,”⁷ ruled by a king known as “Phraya Sai Fa Fad Na Luead Duead Dan”—a king with a benevolent nature but a quick temper. He had a queen named “Chanta Devi Sri Mala” and a daughter named “Nang Nuan,” who was raised mostly within the palace and rarely ventured outside. One day, Nang Nuan grew bored with the palace's confines and requested permission from Phraya Sai Fa Fad Na Luead Duead Dan to go out and see the world beyond the palace. The king granted her request and allowed her to go out accompanied by a palace lady-in-waiting.

When Nang Nuan went out to see the world beyond the palace, she happened to witness the dance performances of Mr. Chai Chay Kratha and became deeply enamored with the art of dance. Upon returning to the palace, she continued to practice and perform the dances she had seen, emulating Mr. Chai Chay Kratha without pause. The palace lady-in-waiting noticed Nang Nuan's unusual obsession with imitating Mr. Chai Chay Kratha's dances and she gossiped about this issue until it reached the ears of Phraya Sai Fa Fad Na Luead Duead Dan. The king then went to see Nang Nuan and confirmed the truth of the widespread rumors.

Phraya Sai Fa Fad Na Luead Duead Dan then summoned an astrologer to predict the cause of Nang Nuan's unusual behavior. After the astrologer examined the situation, he reported that Nang Nuan was not suffering from any abnormalities. She had merely become infatuated with the dance performances of Mr. Chai Chay Kratha, which led to gossip and criticism from the palace

⁶ **Chai Chay** is a colloquial expression used to describe a man who has no permanent residence, leading a carefree and enjoyable life. He relies on doing small jobs to earn a living by exchanging his work for food and sustenance from others. This term often carries a slightly negative connotation, suggesting someone who wanders without purpose or responsibility.

⁷ **Muang Khrung Sri Ayutthaya** is presumed to refer to an important city. It is possible that this specifically denotes Ayutthaya, the capital city of the Siamese people, or it may refer to other large cities, used colloquially as a Phra se meaning a major or significant city.

Nang-in-waiting and the general public. Upon hearing this, Phraya Sai Fa Fad Na Luead Duead Dan ordered the execution of both Nang Nuan and Mr. Chai Chay Kratha, as they had dared to tarnish his reputation. Mr. Chai Chay Kratha, realizing he was about to face punishment, quickly escaped. Nang Nuan, unaware of the impending danger, continued to live her life as usual and continued practicing her dances.

The order from Phraya Sai Fa Fad Na Luead Duead Dan to execute was opposed by the astrologer, who invoked concepts of sin and merit in his argument. This led the King to change his mind and command that Nang Nuan be set adrift on a raft with various supplies, as advised by the astrologer. When Nang Nuan learned that the King had ordered her to be set adrift, she willingly accepted her fate and boarded the prepared raft. At that moment, through divine intervention, Nang Nuan became pregnant with a prince.

When the time came to set the raft adrift, a fierce storm arose, carrying Nang Nuan's raft over the water and onto Koh Si Chang. Once Nang Nuan's raft had drifted to Koh Si Chang, she continued to practice her dance, emulating Mr. Chai Chay Kratha, using the reflection in the river as a substitute for a mirror. As time passed, Nang Nuan grew bored due to a lack of company. The gods, in response, transformed three stones into companions: a hunter, and two others named Nang Pian and Nang Pao. With these divine companions, Nang Nuan danced for them.

As ten months passed, Nang Nuan was ready to give birth. Nang Pian and Nang Phao assisted with the delivery. When the baby prince was born, it was a source of great wonder for Nang Nuan. Remarkably, the baby could speak three days and seven days after birth. As seven years went by, the young prince grew up and was able to dance just like Nang Nuan, thanks to her continued instruction. Additionally, he had the hunter as a playmate.

One day, the young prince invited the hunter to explore and play in the forest by the beach. They played until they were exhausted and fell asleep under a banyan tree by the shore. When the gods saw them asleep, they caused both of them to dream the same dream, revealing the true names of Nang Nuan, which was "Nang Nuan Thong Samlee Sri Mala," the young prince's name was "Thep Singhorn," and the hunter's name was "Pran Boon Na Thong." Additionally, the gods created musical instruments for their dance performance, including a Mhong (a type of gongs), a ching (the small cup-shaped cymbals), a Thap (a type of percussion), a drum, and a Pi (flute). Each instrument had a specific name: one "Thap" was called "Nam Ta Tok" (tears fall), and the other "Thap" was called "Nok Khao Khan" (the dove crows). The drum was named "Pheree Na Chak Loka" (a drum from the World), which was said to be very uplifting for the spirit. The Mhong and the Ching were made from organic wood or the Thamheng wood, which resembles a xylophone. At that time, both Mhong and Ching were referred to as "Nok Dong" (forest birds).

When the young prince and the hunter awoke from their dream, they shared their dream experiences with each other. It turned out that they had both dreamed the same thing. Additionally, the musical instruments that the gods had created were placed beside them. They quickly took this news to Nang Nuan and brought the musical instruments with them. They then enjoyed a lively performance, using the instruments to accompany their dance.

One day, a fisherman from Nakhon Si Thammarat accidentally wandered into the area of Koh Si Chang. Hearing the sound of music coming from the island, the fisherman became curious and decided to climb onto the island to investigate the source of the sound. He then came upon Nang Nuan and the young prince Thep Singhorn performing a dance accompanied by music, with the Hunter Boon Na Thong, Nang Pian, and Nang Pao playing the musical instruments. The fisherman watched the performance until it was finished and then returned to his fishing boat to go back.

In the city of Ayutthaya, Phraya Sai Fa Fad Na Luead Duead Dan, the ruler, organized a city blessing ceremony and wished to provide entertainment for the event. When the fisherman from Nakhon Si Thammarat learned of this, he traveled to present himself and informed the ruler about a remarkable performance taking place on Koh Si Chang. Phraya Sai Fa Fad Na Luead Duead Dan then ordered the fisherman to invite the performers to showcase their talents at the city blessing ceremony.

Upon witnessing the dance performance of Nang Nuan Thong Samlee Sri Mala and Prince Thep Singhorn, the people of Ayutthaya were astonished by its beauty and the exceptional skill. The news of the performance spread throughout the royal palace, reaching Phraya Sai Fa Fad Na Luead Duead Dan. He then personally went to observe the performance. Initially, Nang Nuan Thong Samlee Sri Mala performed first. Seeing this, Phraya Sai Fa Fad Na Luead Duead Dan commanded that Nang Nuan Thong Samlee Sri Mala be brought before him and inquired about her background, including who her dance teacher was and her lineage. Nang Nuan Thong Samlee Sri Mala revealed the truth that she was indeed Nang Nuan, the daughter whom Phraya Sai Fa Fad Na Luead Duead Dan had sent adrift years earlier.

In the next scene, Prince Thep Singhorn performed a dance, and his skill was found to be even more impressive than that of Nang Nuan Thong Samlee Sri Mala. Phraya Sai Fa Fad Na Luead Duead Dan then called Prince Thep Singhorn to sit on his lap, having learned that he was his own grandson. He bestowed royal attire upon him, including a royal headdress, a sash, ceremonial flowers, armlets for both upper and lower arms, and left and right shoulder sashes. He also suggested that Prince Thep Singhorn wear the phoenix wings or tail for added beauty, resembling a celestial being. Additionally, he presented a ceremonial cloth, known as the “Jear Bat” or the

hanging cloth. Phraya Sai Fa Fad Na Luead Duead Dan granted forgiveness and commanded that Nang Nuan Thong Samlee Sri Mala, Prince Thep Singhorn, and the three servants be allowed to return to live in the palace as before.

As for Mr. Chai Chay Kratha, who had fled from the royal punishment in Ayutthaya, encountered an Indian and invited him to perform dance in the Malay city. Eventually, his dance style became the basis for the “Mayong” dance form.

At that time, news of the pardon for Nang Nuan Thong Samlee Sri Mala reached Phraya Sai Fa Fad Na Luead Duead Dan. He hurried back to Ayutthaya to resume his performances there, adopting the royal attire that Phraya Sai Fa Fad Na Luead Duead Dan had bestowed upon Prince Thep Singhorn. Mr. Chai Chay Kratha’s performance space was constructed as a simple shelter with poles, a roof, and boundary barriers. He performed both day and night, and the name of the performance changed from “Do Ma” to “Nora Chatri” due to a variation in pronunciation. Additionally, he began wearing the royal headdress.

Mr. Chai Chay Kratha continued to perform Nora Chatri, but he felt a lack of spiritual grounding, which led to a sense of inner turmoil. He therefore turned to the memory of his ancestors—his parents and grandparents—as a source of solace. He established a ritual to honor their memory, which became the foundational practice of Nora Rong Khru⁸ ceremonies. This ritual included the “Lam Luek Mantra,” a chant that was performed through meditation and prayer, serving as a medium to connect the spirits of his ancestors with Mr. Chai Chay Kratha himself.

From the legend of the origin of Nora, the author summarizes the key points related to the beliefs and rituals of Nora as follows: Nora originated from individuals from other regions who transmitted it to the nobility in the southern region of Thailand. Subsequently, these nobles faced numerous hardships and supernatural events but managed to overcome them each time. They were later honored as “Royal Khru Mo Nora,” meaning prominent Nora practitioners with royal lineage. The notable figures in this honor include: Nang Nuan Thong Samlee or Mae Sri Mala, who is considered the founding Khru Mo Nora; Prince Thep Singhorn or Pho Khun Sattha, recognized as the chief Nora practitioner; Phraya Sai Fa Fad, who was honored as a Nora patron and teacher. The origin of the Nora Rong Khru ritual began with Mr. Chai Chay Kratha, who relied on the spirits of his ancestors

⁸ **Nora Rong Khru** refers to a traditional dance performance and ritual in Thai culture, specifically from the southern regions of Thailand, which is a part of the Nora dance tradition. “Rong Khru” translates to a “teacher’s hall” or “shrine,” which is a space or a ritual dedicated to the masters and teachers of the Nora dance, where performances take place to honor the spirits and seek blessings. It involves not only the dance but also rituals, offerings, and prayers to spirits or divine beings, particularly those related to the Nora tradition.

for spiritual guidance in performing Nora. He used Nora performance as a medium to conduct rituals honoring these ancestral spirits. The “Lam Luek mantra,”⁹ or spiritual chant, served as a channel for communicating with the spirit world. This method continues to be used up to the present day.

Structure and Roles of Members in a Nora Troupe

A Nora troupe refers to a group of individuals skilled in Nora who work together for the purposes of entertainment and ritual performance. The troupe can be divided into six positions: 1) chief Nora or Nai Rong; 2) Nang Ram or female dancers; 3) Luk Ku or musicians; 4) Pran; 5) Nang Thasi; 6) Mor Kob Rong/shaman.

Chief Nora

A Chief Nora refers to the head of a Nora troupe. This person is responsible for leading the Nora Rong Khru rituals. The Nora traditions of Trang Province specify five qualifications for a chief Nora: 1) must be male; 2) must be over 20 years old; 3) must have been ordained and undergone the ritual to become a chief Nora. Individuals who have had a wife before their ordination and ritual are considered “Nora Parachik,” in local terms, “Nora Rhachik”, meaning they have violated Nora traditions and will not be accepted by the people and Khru Mo Nora; 4) must possess thorough knowledge of Nora practices; 5) must receive “Hand Consecration”¹⁰ from a chief Nora only.

The social status of a chief Nora is regarded as an “informal leader of the community.” Therefore, for someone to transition from an ordinary person to a chief Nora, they must adhere to cultural frameworks that shape them into individuals with moral integrity, as well as worldly and spiritual knowledge. These attributes can be cultivated through ordination in Buddhism, while knowledge of occult practices can be learned from teachers within the community. A chief Nora is expected to follow certain practices known as “adhering to principles,” which are meant to cultivate spiritual strength within themselves. For example, they must avoid speaking ill of their parents, be grateful, and remain committed to their promises, among other principles.

⁹ **The Lam Luek mantra** is a traditional form of incantation or chant that is associated with the Nora dance and spiritual rituals. In Nora practices, “Lam Luek Mantra” is often used in ceremonies and performances to invoke spiritual energy, request blessings, or protect the participants. It is a sacred part of the ritual, intended to create a connection between the human realm and the divine, helping to channel energies or spirits during the performance. (The translator)

¹⁰ **Hand Consecration** refers to the transmission of knowledge and the right to perform rituals from a teacher to a student.

Nang Ram (female dancers)

A Nang Ram refers to a person who performs dance to entertain the audience and assists the chief Nora in conducting rituals. This role is relatively new; originally, a Nora troupe consisted of only two main characters: the chief Nora and the Hunter. In later periods, male Nang Rams were introduced because, historically, Nora performances required traveling on foot to various locations. Having women accompany the troupe was seen as an obstacle to travel, and societal attitudes of the time held that women should remain at home and not travel like men. These attitudes prevented women from participating in Nora performances. However, in the past few decades, these attitudes have relaxed due to competition and the development of Nora troupes. As a result, many troupes have adapted their performances to include women as regular Nang Rams. For example, the Nora troupe of Nora Toem, from Trang, features Nora Nu Win and Nora Nu Wad, who is Nu Win's wife, performing together on stage. Similarly, the Nora troupe of Nora Paen from Trang includes several female students as regular Nang Rams.

Hunter

A Hunter refers to a person who performs as a hunter and assists the chief Nora in conducting rituals. The performance of a Hunter is known as “playing the Hunter” and involves wearing a wooden mask resembling a male face, often painted red, gold, or black. The Hunter wears traditional Thai pants (Chongkraben) and a cloth belt (Pha khao ma). In the Swan dance, the Hunter carries a bag, the Naga's wreath, holds a bow, and keeps a “leaf of ching”¹¹ tucked under one arm.

The distinctive feature of the Hunter's performance is the walking, which must be in sync with the drumbeats. Both hands must engage in actions that amuse the audience. The persona of the Hunter is defined by a focus on worldly matters rather than spiritual ones, meaning that the Hunter often speaks in a nonsensical manner and aims solely to entertain with humor. Sometimes, the Hunter will tell jokes or stories with double meanings. The chief Nora is responsible for correcting any inaccuracies in the Hunter's performance. The interaction between the Hunter and the Nora is akin to a confrontation between worldly and spiritual issues, with the audience determining which aspect should be emulated in their own lives. A Hunter must be observant, quick-witted, and capable of turning their experiences into entertainment for the audience.

Nang Thasi

Nang Thasi refers to individuals who perform as painted servants and assist the chief Nora in rituals. Nang Thasi wears a wooden mask resembling a woman's face, typically painted white with

¹¹ **Bai Ching** is a type of leaf that resembles a Krapho leaf. The leaf is wide, and the young leaves can be used to wrap steamed rice cakes, while the older leaves can be used to provide shade and protect from rain.

various colors used for decoration. They dress in beautiful, vibrant clothing. Most performers of Nang Thasi are men, as they can portray certain roles without gender limitations. Historically, Nang Thasi performances were not very popular because male actors were reluctant to play female roles. The character of Nang Thasi imitates women from the southern region, characterized by articulate speech and a fearless demeanor.



Figure 1.2 The Hunter's Face, the headdress, and the Nang Thasi's Face, taken on April 4, 2022.

Source: Yammai (2022)

Shaman

A shaman, commonly referred to simply as “Mo,” is a person responsible for performing rituals related to superstition in Nora Rong Khru ceremonies. These include rites such as worshiping the spirit of the Nora pavilion, enhancing the fortune of performers, and protecting against malevolent forces.

A shaman must be a man with knowledge of magical spells, live according to moral principles, and strictly adhere to the rules set by his teachers. If a shaman fails to follow these guidelines, it is believed that his magical skills will “Plong” (diminish), meaning that the efficacy of his sorcery will decline and lose its power when applied.

A shaman must undergo the "Hand Consecration" ritual from a teacher to a disciple and must have been ordained as a monk. Commonly studied subjects include charm spells, invulnerability techniques, invisibility methods, herbalism, astrology, and rituals related to life events from birth to death. These rituals encompass practices such as child blessing ceremonies, ordination blessings, rituals to avert misfortune, house spirit worship, and offerings.

Luk Ku

Luk Ku refers to musicians who are part of a Nora troupe. Their role involves playing instruments, known locally as “tuning the instruments,” and “receiving the melody,” which means repeating verse after the Nora performers. The titles for Luk Ku are based on the type of instrument they play, such as “Thap player” (for those playing the Thap), “drum player” (for those playing the drum), “Mhong player” (for those playing the Mhong), “Clapper player” (for those playing the clapper), and “Pi player” (for those playing the Pi). Luk Ku are crucial to the Nora Rong Khru rituals as nearly every step of the ceremony requires musical accompaniment. Some Nora performances involve Luk Ku directly, such as the “Thap Dance” which combines Nora dancing with Thap drumming, or the “Pi Dance,” which is similar. These performances represent a significant development in Nora’s dance tradition and are important to preserve.

In the past, there was a position known as “Ta Suea Nora,” referring to a man who was infatuated with the dance of “Nora Hua Juk”¹² (a specific Nora performer) and would follow the Nora troupe to serve and attend to the Nora Hua Juk he admired, such as carrying or massaging them. Nowadays, a common local expression is “mad for Hua Juk,” meaning an obsessive infatuation, which originates from the behavior of Ta Suea who were enamored with Nora Hua Juk. However, the position of Ta Suea Nora no longer exists today.

Nora Musical Instruments

Nora musical instruments are primarily percussion instruments used to provide rhythm, similar to those in the Indian classical tradition. They include: Thap (Thon) - the most important percussion instrument in Nora music, responsible for maintaining the rhythm and leading changes in tempo and melody. Nora Thap comes in pairs with slightly different sounds, but is usually played by a single person. Thap 1 is equivalent to “attang, (a single-headed drum)” and Thap 2 is equivalent to “vittang (a double-headed drum);” Klong: it is a small drum used to accentuate the rhythm and complement the sound of the Thap. It is similar to “attavittang (a drum covered with leather all around).” Mhong: it is a pair of gongs with different pitches. The higher pitch is called “Mhong sound,” and the lower pitch is called “Mhung sound,” comparable to “khatang (a gong or cymbals, made of metal).” Ching: a supplementary rhythm instrument which is used to embellish the beat. Trae or Krae or Krap (clappers): it can be a single piece used to strike against the Mhong or a pair of pieces. There are also bundles of these instruments, called Krap Phuang (bunch of clappers), or several

¹² **Nora Hua Juk** refers to a male Nora performer who is in the childhood to adolescent stage. The distinctive feature of this performer is that he wears his hair in a topknot, resembling the hairstyle of ancient times.

pieces of bamboo or small metal wire tied together and struck, also referred to as “Trae.” This instrument has a unique style of rhythmic chanting called “Na Trae Song.” Pi: it is the only wind instrument in the ensemble. It is commonly played as an inner flute or sometimes as an outer flute, used alone and compared to the sound of “susirang (flute sound)” (Phongpaibul, 1999: 3,879). In Trang Province, cymbals are also used to accentuate rhythms and add a cheerful and melodious touch to the music.

Nora music performances can be categorized into three types: 1) prologue music: this is the first piece played before the performance. It begins to announce to the audience that the Nora show is about to start. It also serves other purposes, including showing respect and seeking blessings from the Thai music teachers to bring good fortune and morale to the Luk Ku (musicians). It is meant to invite deities and sacred entities to join the ceremony and grant blessings, to warm up and prepare before the actual performance, to tune and check the musical instruments, and to allow the chanters to adjust their pitch before the performance. 2) Music accompaniment for chanting with dance movements: this includes music for specific dance routines, such as the “Instructional dance” or “Si To” where the rhythm of “Na Trae” is used. For the “Teaching Dance” movements and the “Initial Dance” movements, the rhythm of Thap (Thon) music is used. It is also employed for chanting without dance movements, such as “Teacher’s Chant,” using the rhythm of “Na Trae” dance movements and the combination of “Na Trae” and Thap-Thon music. When inviting Khru Mo Nora, the rhythm of Choed is used. 3) Music for displaying dance skills: this includes rhythms used to showcase dance skills, such as the “Ko” rhythm and the “Thap-Pi” rhythm (which follows the dance movements) (Liangsomboon, 1999: 29-30).

Nora Costume

The Nora costume is essential for enhancing the grandeur of the Nora performance. It is divided into seven types: 1) Nora costume, 2) Serd (headdress), 3) lower garment, 4) Nub Plao (waistband), 5) Front cloth and Hanging cloth, 6) embellishment, and 7) Nora accessories.

The Nora costume is a beaded costume with intricate patterns. It is commonly adorned with designs resembling “Khanom Piek Poon” (marble-like patterns) and Thai patterns similar to the Krachang Ta Oi pattern. The Nora costume includes the following components: 1 piece of Panok (a rectangular beaded ornament worn wrapped around the torso at chest level), 2 pieces of Ba (beaded shoulder ornaments), 2 pieces of Ping Ko (triangular-shaped beads strung together, used as a pendant hanging from the front and back of the neck), 1 piece of Ping Sapok (made of multi-colored beads used to wrap around the hips), 2 pieces of Sangwan (a specific type of ornament worn as part of the costume), 1 piece of Soi Kho (the necklace adorned with beads), 1 piece of Phik Hong (a decorative accessory that resembles the wings of a swan). In the past, Nora costumes were made from small

ceramic tiles strung together and sewn onto fabric, with tassels along the edges of the cloth known as “Khrueang Bua.”

Serd: the Serd is a head ornament resembling a crown, with decorative elements on both sides and a top adorned with flower-like designs resembling “Kachang Ta Oi,” arranged beautifully. The Serd has a pointed top, and in Trang Province, it is common to place a glass bead at the very top of the Serd for added beauty and to ward off evil spirits by reflecting light from the bead.

Lower garment: traditionally, a type of cloth known as “Chongkraben,” which involves a complex wrapping technique that requires considerable time. Nowadays, ready-made versions are more common, but they still maintain a distinctive feature: a small tail about 3 inches wide at the back.

Nub Plao/Sanub Plao (waistband): this refers to colorful pants. In the past, Nub Plao specifically meant the cloth used only for covering the legs. Old Nora performances would refer to it as “leg pant.” Today, sports-style pants are often used as a modern substitute for Nub Plao.

Front Cloth and Hanging Cloth: the Front cloth, or “Nha Pha,” is a piece worn over the front of the Nub Plao, with three pieces in total. The hanging cloth consists of various colors, placed between the Front cloth pieces. The Hanging cloth enhances the beauty of the Nora costume, complements certain Nora dance moves, and provides coverage for the performer’s body.

Embellishment: these include bracelets or bangles and iron nails. The tips of the nails are adorned with materials such as elephant tails, coconut husks, ropes, or rattan, bent for aesthetic purposes in dance.

Nora Accessories: this is a set of nine pieces for chief Nora, including one Pink Ok (chest plate), one emblem of the guardian deity, two swallow wings, two upper arm adornments, two lower arm adornments, and one “Neng” or “Pan Neng,” a decorative piece.

Jia Cloth: another widely popular Nora costume item in Trang Province and nearby areas is the Jia cloth, made from colored fabric in a rectangular shape. It is commonly tied around the neck like a scarf. In the past, Nora beads were rare and expensive, so only essential Nora costume pieces, such as the Panok and Phik Hong, were worn. The Ping Ko was not used, leaving the neck area exposed and less attractive. To address this, colored cloth was adapted into Jia cloth. Some Nora troupes still use Jia cloth today to preserve traditional Nora attire.

Nora Pavilion

A Nora pavilion is the space where Nora Rong Khru rituals are performed. It is a temporary structure, typically set up in open areas. This practice aligns with a verse from the Teacher’s Chant by Koeddee (Interview, 2014), which provides the following information:

“...This place is spacious, suitable for setting up the Nora pavilion. This place is open, ideal for the Nora troupe’s performance. It is a suitable location for setting up the shrine, the ceremonial umbrella, and the ritual space. Three nights and two days will be the duration of the Nora pavilion. Do not question or disturb. If people comment, it is good; if spirits comment, it brings illness. This is what the performer fears most. Do not disturb the guardian spirits or the earth deity; let the beloved children offer their dance...”

“...Oh, this place is vast, a perfect spot for the Manorah stage,
This space is clear and wide, a place for the Nora dance to engage.
Here I seek a place to set the shrine, the ceremonial umbrella so high,
For three nights, two days, I tread with care, no need to ask, no need to pry.

The mouth that speaks in kindness, the mouth of spirits, brings a fever’s plight,
Oh, how the son of the world dreads the curse, in fear of that dreadful night.
Do not demand from the earth, do not speak, for my beloved one is near,
A prayer for the shrine, a sacred song, as I offer this humble prayer, sincere...”

In Trang Province, it is customary to set up the Nora pavilion facing west and with its back to the east. This orientation is primarily determined by the gable end of the Nora pavilion. The direction for entering and exiting the Nora pavilion is based on the belief in “Loi Whan” (“Whan” means the sun), which refers to the sun’s rise and set. If the Nora pavilion faces north and the back faces south, it is considered “crossing the sun,” which means obstructing the sun’s path. This is deemed inauspicious because the sun is considered a deity among celestial beings. Therefore, a Nora pavilion should not be oriented across the sun’s path. In Songkhla Province and neighboring areas, the convention is to have the Nora pavilion face north with the back to the south, while the gable end still faces east and west, similar to Trang Province. It is believed that the gap between the gable and the beam of the Nora pavilion serves as a spirit door, allowing spirits to enter and exit. Therefore, humans should not use the same entrance and exit as the spirits. Phongpaibul (1999: 6,689-6,691) mentioned that it is not preferred for the Nora pavilion to face west, as some Nora troupes believe this could lead to misfortune. Additionally, it is avoided to have the back of the Nora pavilion face sacred sites or revered places, as this is considered detrimental and inauspicious. Nowadays, this belief is nearly obsolete among Nora troupes.

According to the study on *the Ritual of Paying Respect to Khru Mo Nora in Trang Province* by Yammai (2019: 53), the components of the Nora pavilion are as follows: 1) pillars - there are 8 main pillars (excluding the parts extending to the dressing room); 2) boundary poles - wooden poles

or barriers surrounding the Nora pavilion to demarcate its area; 3) beams - horizontal beams used to enclose the Nora pavilion; 4) Chaeng (roofing material) - made from materials such as sago palm leaves, pandanus leaves, or palm leaves; 5) Palai - an extension added for a place where monks sit during ceremonies for the ordination of a chief Nora; 6) powder room or dressing room - partitioned with natural materials like coconut palm, though currently, more durable and private materials are preferred; 7) shrine – the sacred altar dedicated to the Nora master, used for placing offerings to Khru Mo Nora. In Trang Province, it is traditionally built to the height of the chest or abdomen, while in some other provinces, it is built to a height above the head.

The Nora pavilion in Nayong District, Trang Province, is uniquely characterized by the use of a “Ratchawat” (royal umbrella) placed above the entrance to the Nora pavilion. The Ratchawat is made from the pith of a zalacca tree and is rectangular in shape. It features the pith of the zalacca tree threaded into a design resembling an asterisk. This element is used to protect against various inauspicious influences.



Figure 1.3: The Nora pavilion, photographed from the Nora James Troupe, Trang Province, on May 11, 2022.

Source: Yammai (2022)

There are beliefs associated with constructing the Nora pavilion: “do not set up on Saturday, do not dismantle on Friday.” This means that the Nora pavilion should not be erected on a Saturday and should not be dismantled on a Friday. It is believed that violating these practices will result in misfortune. The construction of the Nora pavilion must use ropes or vines to secure it, and nails or wedges must not be used under any circumstances, as this is believed to bring bad luck and result in illness or other obstacles during the rituals. Additionally, when tying the poles and beams, they must not be crossed; doing so is believed to cause conflicts among participants. When laying mats

in the ceremonial area, they should be laid according to the direction of the flowing water, as this is believed to ensure smooth conduct of the rituals.

Traditions of Nora Performance

The traditions of Nora performance are categorized into three types: 1) dancing, 2) recitation of poems, 3) narrative performance

Dancing

There are four distinct types of Nora dancing: 1) Ko Dance (this type includes the Ko Song dance); 2) choreography (this involves creating new dance pieces or routines); 3) skill demonstration dance such as the Pi Dance, the Thap Dance, the Soft Body Dance, and the Headdress Dance; 4) ritual dance, such as the Spirit Whipping Dance and the Swan Dance. According to Koeddee (Interview, 2014), originally, there were 12 Nora dance poses, as described in the traditional verse of the Gumprat Twelve Poses.

Once more before I take my seat,
I'll dance the Nora with rhythms sweet.
Twelve graceful postures I'll perform,
For you to witness their classic form.

The first posture: Divine Worship high,
Second: Four-Faced Brahma nigh.
Third: Kanok Pattern shown,
Moving and shifting with grace well-known.

Fourth: Threading the Floral Garland fair,
Fifth: Splitting Bamboo at the shoulder with care.
Sixth: the Lotus Bud held tight,
Seventh: Blooming Lotus in light.

Eighth: Lotus Adorned with Leaves so green,
Ninth: Spider Spinning Web, serene.
Tenth: Lovers Side by Side recline,
Eleventh: Buffalo Horns define.

Twelfth: Nang Khee Nhon completes the art,
All twelve postures of Thai Nora impart."

Subsequently, the Nora dance poses evolved and expanded significantly, with variations emerging depending on the local traditions and the teachers who taught them.

The styles of Nora dance in Trang can be categorized into two types: 1) Male Dance Style: this style is characterized by vigorous, strong, and rapid movements in sync with the intense rhythm of the music. The stance is angular, and each movement is executed with agility and strength. Techniques such as finger flicking are used for added aesthetic appeal. This style is referred to as “rough dance”; 2) Female Dance Style: this style emphasizes smoothness and delicacy. Movements are executed with a gentle grace, with transitions between poses being continuous and fluid. The rhythm used for this dance is slower compared to the male style. A distinctive feature of this style is the use of facial expressions, including left and right glances or a subtle smile during the performance. This style is known as “refined dance.” In Trang, the Female Dance Style is more commonly seen than the Male Dance Style.

The unique characteristics of Nora dance in Trang include: Slow Dance Style (Nad Cha): this style, observed in Nora troupes from the Nayong District, features graceful movements performed slowly to match the beautiful and lively music. The dance is not overly loud or boisterous. Notable troupes performing this style beautifully include the Chob Somjit Pradit Silp troupe and the Charoen Silp Phan-Pin Trang troupe; Swift Dance Style (Luk Mai Sam or Thap Tone Dance): this style emphasizes agility with an exciting rhythm. The dance is performed to an engaging tempo and is popular among the Nora Fueang family in the Sikao District; Soeng Rhythm Dance: this is a dance style that continues from the Sap rhythm. It represents a newer development by incorporating the Soeng rhythm from Isan music into Nora dance movements. This style is seen in the Nora Paen Khrueng Ngam troupe.

The sequence of Nora dance poses in Trang is as follows: Sod Soi Mala, followed by the Mae Tha pose: this includes both standing and sitting dances, such as the “Nang Khee Nhon raising Flowers” pose and the “Side Curtain” pose; Luk Mai Sam Pose or Thap Thon Pose; Nad Cha (slow dance); Rabam Pose; Sap Pose; Nad Rew Pose (fast dance); and Final Pose. Some Nora troupes may incorporate additional unique dance steps between the aforementioned sequences, such as the Soen Rhythm Dance.

Recitation of poems

After completing a Nora dance, it is customary to continue with the recitation of poems. This includes both pre-composed poems and improvised ones, known as “Mutto poems.” The common types of poem recitation include four-line poems, six-line poems, Toy poems, and dramatic poems.

Gumprat is the performance of dance combined with poem recitation. The rhythm of Gumprat is fast-paced and exhilarating. A skilled Nora artist must recite the poems melodiously,

accurately, and in time with the rhythm, while clearly conveying the meaning of the poems through the dance movements. Successful Gumprat performances often elicit applause from the audience. Experienced Nora performers can execute multiple layers of Gumprat.

Reciting Poetry Performance involves reciting verse combined with the use of Nora dance movements to interpret the meaning of the verse through dance poses. The dance movements must align with the rhythm of the music. Poems used in the dance include: Teacher Appreciation verse, Instructional verse, Dance Teaching verse, Initial verse, Khun Tha verse, Mourning verse, Flower and Wheel verse, Chai Chay verse, Old Tiger verse, Plai Ngam verse or Chatthan Anathorn verse, and Gumprat for Young Mother verse, among others. In Trang Province, notable Nora poems include the Old Tiger verse, the Rawai Ravek verse, and the Sixth Month verse.

The Twelve verse involves reciting verse alternated with dialogue and performing roles according to the content of 12 tales, such as the stories of Phra Apai Mani verse, Yo Phra Klin verse, Khun Phaen verse, Golden Light verse, Thao Wirun verse, and Krai Thong verse. The purpose of the Twelve Verse is to be used in rituals and for entertainment.

Narrative performance

Performing stories, or “narrative performances,” involve role-playing based on newly created tales or stories. This type of performance was once highly popular in Trang Province. Nora troupes known for performing stories include the Nora Toem troupe, Nora Preecha Amnuaysilp troupe, Nora Paen Khrueng Ngam troupe, and Nora Khruennoi Daorung troupe. Narrative performances are usually staged last in a program. The purpose of these performances is to entertain. Popular stories for performance include: Phra Wetsandon, Phra Rot Meree, the Arab World’s Sweetheart, Carrying the Child after the Wife, Tears of the Duyong Fish, and Sang Thong, among others.

The performance of stories follows a tradition similar to that of Nang Talung (shadow puppetry), where the main character initially introduces the story and its problems. Subsequently, the clowns or comedic characters appear in the later scenes. In the early scenes, it is common to use verse to introduce the story before transitioning to dialogue.

The form of Nora, a traditional folk art form, is influenced by Indian civilization and has an elaborate origin story tied to the upper class. This has led to a sense of pride among those who inherit and revere it. Nora performances help unite people in the southern regions, providing both entertainment and spiritual satisfaction across generations. The elements of Nora represent a body of knowledge that has evolved from the essence of Nora itself, embodying various aspects of cultural prosperity accumulated and passed down by ancestors to the present day.

Chapter 2

The Grand Nora Rong Khru Ritual

The “Nora Rong Khru ritual” or “Nora Long Khru ritual” refers to the ceremonial worship of Khru Mo Nora (spirits of ancient Nora masters), ancestors, and sacred entities. It follows a specific set of procedures and originates from the integration of various local wisdoms within the community. This includes the construction of buildings, food preparation, craftsmanship, performing arts, music, vocal performances, literature, Buddhism, occult practices, moral principles, Brahmanic deities, local beliefs, oratory skills, family connections, community interactions, and community-based management.

Importance of Nora Rong Khru rituals

Nora Rong Khru rituals hold significance for individuals and the community in four key ways: 1) it is used to treat illnesses believed to be caused by Khru Mo Nora’s punishment; 2) it serves to pass on the tradition of becoming a Nora artist; 3) it is performed as an act of fulfillment of vows or promises; 4) it represents a cultural hallmark of the southern region.

The key factor that has sustained the practice of Nora Rong Khru rituals from ancient times to the present is “the belief in Khru Mo Nora.” According to Ruangnarong (2010: 250), the term “Khru Mo” refers to a foundational or ancestral teacher who initiates various branches of art and knowledge, such as Khru Mo Nora, Khru Mo Nang Talung, “Khru Mo Kahlo”¹³, and Khru Mo Herb. When a Khru Mo passes away, disciples believe that Khru Mo’s spirit continues to protect those who were once under their guidance. Therefore, respectful disciples will set up shrines in their homes to honor Khru Mo. Khru Mo’s role is to safeguard and bring peace to their descendants or students. If the disciples face hardships, Khru Mo may intervene by appearing in dreams, providing omens, or assisting through spirit possession, which some regions call “jab long” or “jab song.” Additionally, Khru Mo can help those suffering from troubles caused by supernatural forces, such as spirit possession, curses, or misfortunes.

Types of Nora Rong Khru Rituals

Nora Rong Khru rituals can be divided into two types: 1) the grand Nora Rong Khru ritual (also known as the Crocodile-Spearing ritual): this is the most comprehensive ritual, lasting for 3 days and 2 nights. The ritual begins on the evening of Wednesday and concludes on the evening of Friday. If Friday coincides with a Buddhist holy day, the ritual is postponed and will end on the evening of

¹³ **Kahlo** is a type of music that is currently used exclusively in funeral rites. It is believed that the music of Kahlo can guide the soul to the heavens. Popular pieces played include “Mon Lom Lok,” “Plai Kaew Plai Thong,” and “Thong Thom,” among others.

Saturday; 2) the minor Nora Rong Khru ritual or the Rong Kam Khru ritual): this is a condensed version of the grand Nora Rong Khru ritual. It lasts for 2 days and 1 night, starting on the evening of Wednesday and concluding on the evening of Thursday.

Custom Before Performing the Nora Rong Khru Ritual

Before beginning the Nora Rong Khru ritual, the host must present a “betel nut tray”¹⁴ to the chief Nora performer. This act is a “form of contract between the host and the Nora performer.” When the Nora performer receives the betel nut tray from the host, it signifies the official start of the engagement for the Nora troupe to conduct the Nora Rong Khru ritual. If a Nora performer accepts the betel nut tray but fails to fulfill the agreement, or if a host provides the betel nut tray but the Nora troupe does not show up on the agreed date, such actions are considered very serious. In the future, the person involved will lose trust within the community. In Southern Thai vernacular, such a person might be described as “someone who is unreliable,” which means they are fickle, untrustworthy. The breach of the betel nut tray contract is deemed a grave offense because it causes damage in terms of time, labor, and resources used in preparing the event. The betel nut tray serves as a form of informal contract, representing a societal agreement in Southern Thai culture. Additionally, it symbolizes the respect of the host towards the chief Nora performer and Khru Mo Nora of the troupe.

Once the chief Nora performer receives the betel nut tray, he must select a date for the Nora Rong Khru ritual. The days used for the ceremony are Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday, which can be either the waxing or waning phases of the moon. However, it must not fall on a “Taktin Day,” which is a day in the lunar calendar where the date matches the month number, such as the 4th waxing day of the 4th month, the 6th waning day of the 6th month, or the 9th waxing day of the 9th month. Such days are considered inauspicious. Currently, it is observed that some Nora groups do not emphasize the traditional dates for the ceremony but focus more on accommodating the host’s needs rather than adhering to traditional customs.

For selecting the month to conduct the Nora Rong Khru ritual, auspicious months are preferred, including months 2, 4, 6, 7, 9, 11, and 12 according to the lunar calendar. Months that are not favored for the ceremony are months 1, 3, 5, 8, and 10. Month 1 is avoided because it is the harvest season, which is not suitable for holding the ceremony. Months 3 and 5 are considered inauspicious due to the belief that “Month 3 is fire from the earth, Month 5 is fire burning fields.” This means that these months are during the dry season, with the heat in month 3 being compared

¹⁴ A **betel nut tray** is an offering tray for Khru Mo Nora. Inside the tray, it contains betel nuts, toasted rice, flowers, money, 12 sticks of incense, and 1 candle.

to fire from the ground, and month 5 being the time when farmers burn straw to prepare for the next rice planting season. This period often sees many fires in fields and farms, making it unsuitable for ceremonies. Month 8 is a time for the Buddhist Lent festival, and month 10 is associated with the Sart Ten festival, when it is believed that ancestral spirits, reborn as hungry ghosts, return to visit their descendants. Since the Nora Rong Khru ceremony is meant to honor only the spirits of ancestors with merit, performing the ceremony during this time might attract spirits of hungry ghosts. Once Khru Mo Nora and the host have finalized the day and month, they will proceed with preparations for the Nora Rong Khru ritual.

Nora Rong Khru Rituals on Wednesday

Preparation of the Instruments

Before the Nora troupe sets out from their home to perform the ceremony at a designated location, the chief Nora must first perform the preparation of the instruments. According to a study by Yammai (2019: 62) on Khru Mo Nora Worship Ritual in Trang Province, “preparation of the instruments” refers to the act of playing music to honor Khru Mo Nora before departing. This is done to inform and invite Khru Mo Nora to accompany the troupe on their journey. The author suggests that this practice has a hidden purpose: it is a strategy to ensure that the Nora troupe members check the readiness of their musical instruments and equipment before departure. It also serves to stimulate the troupe members, making them alert and prepared for the journey.

Beating Instruments for Offering to Sacred Entities

In Southern Thai beliefs, sacred entities include the spirits of certain people or animals, such as tigers, elephants, bears, snakes, and crocodiles, as well as spirits associated with nature, such as forest spirits, guardian spirits, and guardian spirits residing in stones, mountains, and trees. These sacred entities are considered to possess supernatural powers. The practice of venerating these sacred entities is akin to worshipping deities in Brahmanism, involving acts of supplication and reverence.

In the past, when a Nora troupe traveled through areas where sacred entities were believed to reside, they would stop to show respect by performing a dance or playing music as an offering. This practice is locally known in Southern Thai as “beating the instruments as an offering.” The musical rhythm used for these offerings is called “three tungs three taps three chaps three toengs” or “three chaps three toengs,” and is found only in Trang Province, particularly in the western part of the Trang River, including the districts of Kantang, Wang Wiset, and Sikao. The “three chaps three toengs” rhythm is an ancient style of Nora music that does not include the use of the Pi. The rhythm involves a coordination between drums with loud sounds (tung) and two Thap drums with sharp

and resonant sounds (chap and toeng). The accompanying music is controlled by the “Mhong” (a type of drum). An example of the musical rhythm is:

“Tung tung tungtungchap, tungtungchap, tungtung toeng,
tung tung tungtungtoeng, tungtungtoeng, tungtungchap”

The performance of this rhythm involves The changes in Nora's beliefs and rituals three rounds, with each round consisting of three repetitions. Each repetition ends with the “Choed”¹⁵ rhythm.

Performing the ritual of beating the instruments as an offering to sacred entities serves as a way to inform the community that a Nora troupe is currently passing through. In the past, Nora troupes traveled on foot from place to place, and they would exchange their dance performances for food. Therefore, performing this ritual was essentially a way for the troupe to request food. Even though modern Nora troupes no longer travel on foot to request food as the older troupes did, some still continue this ritual. It is believed that failure to perform it could result in punishment from the sacred entities. Meanwhile, some troupes have replaced the traditional practice with honking car horns as a form of greeting.

Yam Nok Chum Rang (At Dusk)

The Nora Rong Khru ritual begins on Wednesday around 5:00-6:00 PM, known as “Yam Nok Chum Rang (at dusk).” The author believes that there are three reasons for choosing this particular time: 1) in the past, people in the South worked on farms, fields, or gardens from early morning until evening. Starting the ceremony at this time aligns with the daily life of people back then. It allowed individuals to finish their farm work and then join the ceremony in the evening; 2) holding the ritual in the evening gave the hosts enough time to prepare necessary items. Additionally, since traveling to the Nora performance venue required walking, this timing was convenient for both the host and the Nora troupe; and 3) it is believed that the evening timing on Wednesday is considered an auspicious moment suitable for performing important rituals.

¹⁵ **The Choed rhythm** refers to the playing of music in a fast, rhythmic manner. It is used in situations where invoking the spirit of Khru Mo Nora to perform a possession ceremony or during important rituals. The rhythm of “Choed” creates a sense of intensity and solemnity.

Ritual of Paying Respect to Nang Thorani (Mother Earth)

When the Nora troupe arrives, the host must present “Chian Khru”¹⁶ to the chief Nora as a gesture of welcome. Following this, the chief Nora will use “Sad Khla (a mat)”¹⁷ to lay out in front of the Nora stage and then commence the ritual of paying respect to Nang Thorani (Mother Earth). This ritual is a sign of respect towards Nang Thorani, the earth goddess. During this ritual, three betel nuts and leaves, three incense sticks, and one candle are placed on the ground while reciting a chant to request permission from Nang Thorani and the guardian spirits. The chief Nora then blesses water to be sprinkled to drive away any malevolent spirits that might reside in the Nora performance space. When it is time to enter the Nora stage, the chief Nora, holding a headdress, will lead the troupe in a direction considered auspicious.

According to the study on the “Khru Mo Nora Worship Ritual in Trang Province” in Trang Province by Yammai (2019: 63-64), it is found that when entering the Nora theater, one must enter from the direction protected by the guardian angel of the day. On Wednesdays, entry must be from the north. The direction that is strictly prohibited is the west, as this direction aligns with the “Iron Spear” direction and is considered inauspicious. Entering the Nora theater from this direction may result in illness or obstacles. While the chief Nora is entering the Nora hall, they must recite prayers and remember the favors of “Four Mothers” for protection, which include: 1) Mother of Birth, 2) Mother Earth, 3) Mother of Agriculture, and 4) Mother Ganges. They must also recite prayers to invoke the four cardinal directions: Northeast, Southeast, Southwest, and Northwest to signal to the guardian angels that the Nora Rong Khru ritual is about to begin.

¹⁶ **Chian Khru** refers to a tray used for worshipping Khru Mo Nora. It contains betel nuts and leaves, puffed rice, flowers, money, twelve sticks of incense, and one candle.

¹⁷ **Sad Khla** refers to a type of mat made from the Kla plant. It is commonly used in various rituals, such as the Nora Rong Khru ceremony.



Figure 2.1: The Ritual of paying respect to Nang Thorani, photographed by the Manora Longnoi Chaluaysilp Sor Pan Trang Troupe, on May 22, 2013.

Source: Yammai (2013)

The main objective underlying the Nang Thorani ritual is to inspect and ensure that all equipment and supplies are in proper condition and not lost or misplaced during the journey. It also serves to check the stability and correctness of the ceremonial hall's construction. Once Nora performers are confident that everything is in good order, they will then transport and arrange the items in the ceremonial hall.

The Ritual of Worshipping the Spirit of the Hall

The first ritual performed inside the Nora pavilion is the ritual of worshipping the spirit of the hall. According to the study on *Khru Mo Nora Worship Ritual in Trang Province* by Yammai (2019: 65), it was customary in the past to conduct this ritual in the morning before the Nora troupe arrived. However, nowadays, it is conducted in the evening after the troupe has arrived.

According to the study on *Gender Mystifications through Signifiers in the Nora Rong Khru Ritual* by Yammai (2013: 109-110), the Nora pavilion's spirit post is believed to be the residence of the Phra Phum deity (the guardian spirits). Before performing the Nora Rong Khru ritual, the Nora must make offerings to this deity each time. It is believed that failing to do so could anger the Phra Phum deity and bring misfortune to the ritual. The list of Phra Phum deities involved in the Nora Rong Khru ritual includes Nang Hong, King Khruong Pali, Nang Thorani, Mekhala, outer Phra Phum, inner Phra Phum, Phra Phum Ban Dai, Phra Phum Chai Kha, Phra Phum Mae Yai Ok, Chao Huay Chao Nong, Chao Klong Chao Tha, guardian spirits, and forest spirits. Additionally, there is another group of Phra Phum deities believed to be the nine sons of King Khruong Pali and Miss Santha Thuk, who are the guardians of land on Earth and in the Himmaphan forest. They include: 1) Phra Chaimongkol,

guardian of residential areas; 2) Phra Naga King, guardian of fortresses and stairs; 3) Phra Tepen, guardian of animal pens; 4) Phra Chaisrop, guardian of granaries; 5) Phra Kontham, guardian of the ceremonial hall; 6) Phra Dhammahora, guardian of farmland; 7) Phra Waitat, guardian of sacred sites and temples; 8) Phra Dhammikkarach, guardian of plants and crops; and 9) Phra That Thara, guardian of water sources.



Figure 2.2: The ritual of worshiping the spirit of the hall, photographed by the Manora Longnoi Chaluaysilp Sor Pan Trang Troupe, Trang Province, on December 1, 2021.

Source: Yammai (2021)

Performing the Instruments

Performing the instruments involves performing music to show respect and inform Khru Mo Nora of the host about the arrival of the Nora troupe. It also serves to publicize the event to the community. The rhythm of the music played is the same as that used in the beating the instruments as an offering to sacred entities, which is the “three beats, three strikes (three chaps and three toengs)” rhythm.

The Opening and Preliminary Rituals

The Opening ritual involves beseeching Khru Mo Nora, deities, and sacred entities to protect and oversee the Nora troupe throughout the duration of the ceremony. The procedure is as follows: the chief Nora brings betel nut and leaves to inscribe three magical incantations. These are then rolled into a triangular shape known as “Mak Juk Ok” and placed on the drum, Thap, and Mhong. Following this, prayers are offered to the Triple Gem (Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha), a gathering of deities is called, and a small Satsadi verse is performed to invite Khru Mo Nora, deities, and sacred entities to assemble. Finally, the ritual is commenced with an invocation spell.

After completing the Opening Ritual, the chief Nora places the three betel nuts in different locations as follows: the first betel nut is placed on the roof to honor the deities and sacred entities in the air; the second is placed in the Thap to honor the music teacher; and the third is buried in the center of the Nora pavilion to honor the Naga deity. Some Nora troupes may also conduct a ritual to bury nine stakes and encircle the Nora pavilion with sacred threads during this period. Once the Opening Ritual is completed, the chief Nora hands over the musical instruments to the musicians to continue with the prelude.

The purpose of the prelude is to warm up the musicians before the ritual begins, to inform the public that the Nora ritual or performance is about to start, to honor the music teacher, to drive away any inauspicious elements from the Nora pavilion, and to allow the Nora performers to finish dressing in time. The music used for the prelude is “Pudcha Song,” a melodious and powerful piece. A notable feature of the prelude is that the Pi is played first, followed by the drums, then the Thap, the Mhong, the cymbals, and clappers, all played together until the end of the piece.

The Teacher’s Chant

The Teacher’s Chant (Kad Khru), or “Kad Rong,” involves reciting verse to praise the virtues of the teacher, narrating the myth of world creation by deities in Brahmanism, and beseeching deities and sacred entities for protection. The Teacher’s Chant is divided into four sections, each accompanied by musical performance, except for the “Chant A verse.” Each verse of the invocation has distinct characteristics as follows:

Teacher’s Chant Part 1: “Chant A Verse” (For details on the verse, see the appendix) addresses the virtues of Nang Thorani (Mother Earth), the fate of Nang Nuanthong Samlee, the mother of Khun Sattha, Khru Mo Nora, who had been abandoned, and the invitation for Khru Mo Nora to enter the Nora pavilion. The style of reciting this verse is slow, similar to the rhythm of an ox plowing a field, and is performed without accompanying music. Instead, the focus is on the beauty of the recitation itself.

Additionally, the recitation of Nora verse must begin with the word “O.” The author believes that this has two significant meanings: 1) the word “O” serves as a technique to match the pitch with the sound of Mhong. 2) The word “O” is part of the “Katha Dek On” (child’s charm spell), which is a charm incantation. Nora artists often use this spell to invoke compassion and affection from people. Therefore, starting the verse with “O” aims to evoke a sense of empathy and kindness in the audience.

Teacher’s Chant Part 2: “Na Trae Verse” (For details on the verse, see the appendix) discusses inviting Khru Mo Nora to come and protect the Nora troupe. At the end of this part of the invocation, there will be a “passing of the verse,” characterized by prolonging the sound “O”

according to the rhythm of the music. Passing the verse is a technique to implicitly signal to the musicians that this part of the invocation is concluding.

Teacher's Chant Part 3: "Rai Na Trae Verse" (For details on the verse, see the appendix) involves requesting permission to use the space from the Phra Phum deity (guardian spirits) and other deities. At the end, it includes the story of Phra Suthon and Manora. The rhythm of the recitation and the playing of the instruments will be faster than in Part 2.

Teacher's Chant Part 4: "Thap-Thon Song Verse" (For details on the verse, see the appendix) invites deities, sacred entities, teachers, and monks respected by the Nora troupe to join the ceremony. The rhythm in this part is faster than in Part 3. Before this part, some Nora troupes might invite the host to light oil lamps, victory candles, and candles on the shrine, as well as to light incense to inform Khru Mo Nora, deities, and sacred entities that the Nora Rong Khru ritual has begun.

After the Teacher's Chant is complete, the Nora troupe may perform "dramatic poems" to praise His majesty, the king, commend community leaders, and honor the hosts. These dramatic poem performances display the Nora's diverse talents, respect, and acknowledgment of the merits of various benefactors.

The Announcement Ritual

The Announcement ritual is the most important ceremony on Wednesday, as it officially declares to both humans and all types of spirits that the Nora troupe will use this ceremonial hall as the location for their rituals over the course of 3 days and 2 nights. Before performing this ritual, some Nora troupes may first perform dances in honor of Khru Mo Nora and complete all the "ceremonial dances" (dance and recitation of all verse). The verse used in these dances include: "Rai Na Trae verse," "Teacher Appreciation verse," "Instructional verse," "Dance Teaching verse," "Initial verse," "Gumprat for Young Mother verse," "Khun Tha verse," "Mourning verse," "Golden Light verse," "Be Tricked verse," "Man Praising verse," "Flower and Wheel verse," "Ka Nam Bird verse," "Old Tiger verse," and "Plai Ngam verse or Chatthan Anathorn verse" (the verse for paying respect to deities). (For details on the verse, see the appendix).

The Announcement ritual takes place in the center of the Nora pavilion. The chief Nora sits on Sad Khla (a mat), and in front of all the participants, various items are arranged for the ceremony, including: Tien Rai (candle array), the Hunter's Face, the Nang Thasi's Face, a headdress (Serd), women's cloth, men's cloth, oil lamps, a set of mirrors and combs, two sets of Khruang Chian Jong Rach (ceremonial items), reed grass, mushroom plant, Khed Mon grass, canal-bed sand, taro leaves, bitter orange leaves, and Entada rheedii seeds. Some troupes might also include sets of nine and twelve dishes of rice. During the ritual, the chief Nora invites the senior hosts to sit in a circle around the area as witnesses.

In the Announcement ritual, the chief Nora first makes offerings to Khru Mo Nora with coconut water and rice whiskey. Following this, they recite three ceremonial verse related to the Announcement ritual from the Twelve Verse for the ceremony. The selected verse include: “Thao Athit verse” (Verse of the Sun God), “Phra Bodhisattva” (Verse of the Bodhisattva), and “Phra Rama verse” (Verse of King Rama). In some Nora troupes, the verse of “Phra Rotsen (a character in a Thai myth)” may be used instead of the verse of “Phra Bodhisattva.”



Figure 2.3 The Announcement ritual photographed by the Nora Long Noi Troupe, Chaluaysilp, from the Sor Pan Trang troupe, on May 15, 2019.

Source: Yammai (2019)

The most important verse used in the Announcement ritual is the Thao Athit verse. It describes Thao Athit, who has a queen named Nang Chanthavee. Thao Athit established a city called Udon Binja, which stretched five hundred thousand fathoms in width. During the initial establishment, offerings were distributed to people, including various Brahmins who came to bless the occasion. In front of Udon Binja, there was the “Pap Praew” tree (a ceremonial tree) and markets arranged in two rows. Thao Athit also had subordinate cities, but the verse do not name them. They only described that the economic situation of the subordinate cities was as follows: “In Thao Athit’s subordinate cities, rice was expensive but fish was cheap. There was a tax collection system and people from various ethnic backgrounds lived there, including Indians, Chinese, Westerns, and Thais.” At the end of the verse, there is a section about paying respect to the teacher, which is incorporated into the Announcement ritual. Specifically, when reciting the verse about paying respect to the teacher, the host must hand over various items prepared for the chief Nora. Particularly during the verse that says, “*Provide medicinal roots and make offerings to the teacher and the revered teacher,*” the host will hand over the three prepared ceremonial leaves (Jong Rach) to the chief

Nora. The chief Nora then lifts them above their head while reciting a chant. The three leaves symbolize respect for the teacher, with the following meanings: Leaf 1 is for honoring the host's Khru Mo Nora, Leaf 2 is for honoring Khru Mo Nora of the troupe members, and Leaf 3 is for honoring the chief Nora. After the chief Nora completes the teacher's respect ritual with the Jong Rach, they will then recite the remaining two verse, completing the Announcement ritual.

The Teacher Reverence Ritual

The Teacher Reverence ritual is a formal act of respect towards Nora teachers. The teachers are categorized into four types: 1) World teacher: the Buddha; 2) Primary teacher: parents, 3) Khru Mo Nora; and 4) Nora instructor. The Teacher Reverence ritual is specific to the grand Nora Rong Khru ritual and is performed only once a day, on Wednesday. The Teacher Reverence is conducted after the Announcement Ritual is completed. On Thursday, it is performed in the morning, and on Friday, it is done before the Crocodile-Spearing ritual.

For the Teacher Reverence ritual, participants typically wear formal attire and must drape a piece of cloth over the left shoulder. This cloth may be a loincloth or one with beautiful patterns. The tradition of using a shoulder cloth is believed to be influenced by the attire of Brahmins or the ceremonial shawl worn by monks, reflecting cultural practices that have been influential in the southern region since ancient times.

The Teacher Reverence ritual is performed in the central area of the Nora stage. The preparation for the space includes Tien Rai (candle array), the Hunter's Face, the Nang Thasi's Face, a ceremonial headdress (Serd) symbolizing Khru Mo Nora, Chian Khru, a consecrated water bowl, and a bowl of flower and puffed rice grains.

The steps of the Teacher Reverence ritual are divided into 3 rounds. In each round, participants perform the Benjangkhapradit¹⁸ bow three times, then stand up and perform a Jeeb Nghai¹⁹ pose dance, extending their hands forward. Once standing upright with the body straight, the hands are gradually relaxed into a gesture of spreading fingers in a circular pattern. They then kneel

¹⁸ **The Benjangkhapradit bow** is a special type of bow that is more beautiful and intricate than a regular bow. The posture of this bow is designed to show the highest respect and is typically used in religious ceremonies or events of significance in Thai tradition. This type of bow is performed by lowering oneself in an orderly and precise manner, expressing deep respect for those who are being bowed to, such as teachers or individuals of higher age and honor. (The translator)

¹⁹ **Jeeb Nghai** is a specific hand gesture used in traditional Thai dance, where both arms are extended forward, fingers together, with the index finger and thumb touching while the remaining fingers are stretched out and spread like a fan. The wrist is then bent inward toward the body. This gesture symbolizes elegance and grace in Thai dance. (The translator)

down and bow to the floor again, repeating this three times to complete one round. After completing three rounds of bowing, in the final round, participants kneel and bow nine times, then lay flat on the ground waiting for the rice grains and flowers to be sprinkled and the consecrated water to be blessed by the chief Nora or a spiritual healer. The chant used during the sprinkling of puffed rice grains and flower petals and the blessing of consecrated water is the Chaimongkol Chant²⁰. The musicians play the Choed rhythm to accompany the chant, enhancing the solemn atmosphere. After the ritual, participants commonly eat some of the puffed rice grains used in the blessing, as it is believed to bring good fortune and enhance wisdom. Only the grains that are facing up are chosen. Once the reverence to the spirits is completed, participants then proceed to bow to Khru Mo Nora and the chief Nora of the troupe.

The rhythm of the music accompanying the Teacher Reverence ritual is divided into 2 rhythms: the Reverence rhythm and the Choed rhythm. The details of the Reverence rhythm are as follows:

“Toeng Toeng, Pap Pap, Toeng Toeng, Pap, Toeng Toeng
Toeng Toeng, Pap Pap, Toeng Toeng, Pap, Toeng Toeng...”

Performing Nora Dance to Showcase Skills

Performing Nora dance to showcase skills is the final scene of the Nora Rong Khru ritual on Wednesday night. According to the tradition, before the Nora dance performance, a preliminary poem is recited, known as “the Front Room poem,” or “the Front Curtain poem,” or “the Front Scene poem.” This serves as a subtle communication to the audience that the Nora performance is about to begin. It helps extend the time for the Nora performers to complete their dressing. The purpose is to demonstrate their skills through poetry, showcase their vocal abilities, and communicate various messages to the audience through the verse. The content of the Front Room poem typically includes themes of love, admiration of nature, and the history of Nora, among others. The melody of the recitation follows rhythms of the dramatic poems or the two Mhong poems,” which are sweet and pleasant to listen to. Once the Front Room poem is completed, the Nora performers will then come out to showcase their dance skills. If the performance time has not yet reached midnight, some Nora troupes might include an additional Hunter’s performance or engage in Mutto poem battles, testing the wit and intelligence between Nora performers and the Hunter.

²⁰ **The Chaimongkol Chant** (Buddhist Chant of Auspicious Victory) is a revered Buddhist chant in Thai tradition, often recited for protection, blessing, and the achievement of success. The chant is derived from the *Mahamangala Sutta* (The Discourse on the Greatest Blessings) of the Buddhist scriptures, which outlines the 38 qualities that lead to a blessed and victorious life. (The translator)

The Nora Rong Khru ritual on Wednesday night focuses on the importance of the rituals for requesting the venue, seeking blessings from spirits, and securing the space through the Announcement ritual. This is done in preparation for the important ceremonies that will take place on Thursday and Friday.

The Grand Nora Rong Khru Ritual on Thursday

The Ritual of Summoning the Masters

The ritual of summoning the masters begins at “Yam Dad Fah Roek” or at dawn. This ritual arises from the comparison of Khru Mo Nora with humans: just as people have various tasks and must travel to different places each day. This ceremony serves to notify Khru Mo Nora to remain in the Nora pavilion until the ceremony is complete and not to leave beforehand. After the summoning of the teachers, the chief Nora will praise Khru Mo Nora with the “Satsadi Yai” chant, which is a traditional Southern Thai teacher worship chant. Following this, offerings will be made.

Offerings for Khru Mo Nora include both food and non-food items.

The food offerings used in the Nora Rong Khru ceremony are categorized into five types: 1) Khao Sipsong²¹, 2) Khao Kao²², 3) rice with curry, 4) sacred bowls, 5) other foods.

Khao Sipsong includes both savory and sweet dishes, such as rice, spicy curry, clear soup, fruits, salad, fried fish cakes, fried fish, red and white desserts, Khanom Kho (a Thai sweet), and clean water. These are arranged in 12 small bowls and then grouped together on a tray with one candle and one betel quid. Khao Sipsong are offerings for Khru Mo Nora.

Khao Kao includes the same kinds of savory and sweet dishes as Khao Sipsong, but arranged in 9 small bowls. These are then grouped on a tray with one candle and one betel quid. Khao Kao are offerings for the deities and sacred spirits.

Rice with curry or rice water bowl consists of rice, curry, Thai sweets, fruits, and clean water, arranged together on a tray with one candle and one betel quid. Rice with curry or rice water bowl is used as an offering for ancestors.

²¹ **Khao Sipsong** is a traditional Thai ritual involving a set of twelve different types of food offerings, typically rice, that are used in ceremonies and rituals. The term “สิบสอง” (Sipsong) means “twelve,” referring to the twelve kinds of offerings. These twelve types of rice or food offerings are believed to symbolize completeness, prosperity, and blessings. (The translator)

²² **Khao Kao** refers to a traditional Thai ritual or offering that involves nine different types of rice or food offerings. The term “เก้า” (Kao) means “nine,” the number nine is considered auspicious and symbolic in Thai culture, often associated with prosperity, blessings, and good fortune. (The translator)

Sacred Bowl contains all the food items used in the Nora Rong Khru ceremony, including cooked rice, sticky rice, curry, Thai sweets, auspicious fruits, fried fish cakes, steamed fish cakes, fried dough, red and white desserts, Khanom Kho (a Thai sweet), fish with head and tail, bananas, sugarcane, beans, sesame seeds, milk, butter, puffed rice, flowers, and betel nuts. In the center of the Sacred Bowl, a large Khanom Kho is placed with one candle and three betel quids arranged around it. A ring with a head is used to secure the betel quids with the candle. The Sacred Bowl is placed on top of the Bai Sri Ton²³.

Other offerings include “Mhap Phong La”²⁴, rice whisky, red syrup, coconut water, bananas, sugarcane, auspicious fruits, auspicious Thai sweets, a pig’s head, gold-mouthed chicken (boiled chicken with gold leaf on its beak), boiled duck, boiled eggs, raw eggs, and optionally seafood.

Non-food offerings include 1) the Hunter’s Face and the Nang Thasi’s Face, 2) clothing, 3) Chian set, 4) a mirror and grooming kit, 5) scented powder, 6) Chong Raj, 7) Chian Khru, 8) Serd Rai Top (headdress), 9) Ceiling cloth, 10) Tian Rai (candle array), 11) Sad Mhon (pillow and mat arrangement), 12) oil lamp, 13) Bai Sri Ton, 14) Pap Praew tree, 15) victory candle, and 16) consecrated water pot

The Hunter’s Face and the Nang Thasi’s Face are symbolic representations of Khru Mo Nora. The Hunter’s Face represents the male Khru Mo Nora, while the Nang Thasi’s Face represents the female Khru Mo Nora.

Clothing includes Nora attire, Serd (headdress), and coupled cloth. Nora attire and the headdress are used to honor Khru Mo Nora, while the coupled cloth is used to honor ancestors. Typically, one set of women's clothing and one set of men's clothing are placed on the left and right sides.

²³ **Bai Sri Ton** is a traditional Thai ceremonial offering, often used in rituals or religious ceremonies to invite blessings, good fortune, and positive energy. The term “บายศรี” (Bai Sri) refers to a type of offering made from banana leaves, which is arranged in a cone shape, typically adorned with flowers, incense, and other sacred items. Bai Sri Ton specifically refers to a larger version of this offering, where the “ต้น” (Ton) means “tree” or “root,” indicating that the offering is a larger, more elaborate version of the typical Bai Sri. It is used in important ceremonies such as house blessings, the opening of new businesses, or ceremonies to honor spirits and ancestors. (The translator)

²⁴ **Mhap Phong La** refers to the arrangement of puffed rice cakes, “La (glutinous rice dessert),” and Baa (a type of sweet treat made with rice flour, sugar, and coconut milk, often steamed or fried) into a triangular pyramid shape. The arrangement is tied with red and white threads, accompanied by three betel quids and one candle. Additionally, three incense sticks are placed on top.

Chian set or betel nut preparation refers to two ceremonial tray containing tobacco, betel nut, betel leaf, red lime, which are placed, one on each side.

Mirror and grooming kit consists of personal grooming items used by Khru Mo Nora. It includes a mirror, glasses, comb, needles, thread, scissors, razor blade, sharpening stone, powder, and scented oil.

Chandra scented oil powder is a type of powder mixed with scented oil. It is used for anointing or applying to specific areas and serves as a fragrance for Khru Mo Nora and sacred objects.

Jong Rach is a cylindrical container made from pandanus leaves. Inside, it holds uncooked rice, three pieces of betel nuts and leaves, three Thai baht (Thai money), one candle, and a roll of white thread. Jong Rach is an important offering for honoring Khru Mo Nora in the Southern region.

Chian Khru is a tray that contains betel nuts and leaves, flowers, puffed rice, money, and incense sticks, each in quantities of twelve, along with one candle.

Serd Rai top refers to the top part of the Nora headdress, used exclusively during the grand Nora Rong Khru ceremony. It is placed on a banana stalk in front of the shrine, with twelve tops arranged. In some local traditions, the number of headdress tops corresponds to the specific year in the grand Nora Rong Khru ceremony is held. For example, if the ceremony occurs every nine years, then nine tops would be used.

Ceiling cloth, also known as “white Ceiling cloth,” contains betel nuts and leaves, puffed rice, flowers, and money, each in quantities of twelve. It is prepared for Khru Mo Nora. It is believed that Khru Mo Nora and sacred entities will reside within this Ceiling cloth.

Tien Rai (candle array) consists of nine candles arranged in a row. At the base of each candle, nine pieces of betel nuts and leaves are placed. The nine candles represent the nine celestial deities, which include Sun, Moon, Mars, Mercury, Jupiter, Venus, Saturn, Rahu, and Neptune.

Sad Mhon (traditional pillow and mat arrangement) is a mat made from pandanus leaves and a single pillow used to lay out on the shrine for placing various offerings.

Oil lamp is used to offer light to Khru Mo Nora and sacred entities, the oil lamp is crucial during Nora Rong Khru ceremony. There is a belief that the ritual of setting up the fire must not go out during the ritual, a practice likely influenced by Brahmanical customs. The deity of fire, Agni, is considered a deity that can communicate with other gods. Therefore, maintaining the fire continuously during the ceremony is of utmost importance.

Bai Sri Ton is a twelve-tiered Bai Sri placed at the central pillar of the Nora pavilion. In some regions, the number of tiers corresponds to the cycle of Khru Mo Nora ceremonies. For instance, if Nora Rong Khru ceremony is held every nine years, a Bai Sri with nine tiers will be used.

Pap Praew tree is a wooden post adorned with flower garlands made from beautifully folded colored paper. In the past, Nora practitioners in Trang Province used the Pap Praew tree in ceremonies, but it is no longer popular. However, it is still used in Phatthalung, Songkhla, and Pattani Provinces.

Victory candle is used to signify auspiciousness and must remain lit throughout the ceremony. To ensure it stays burning, a large candle is typically used as the victory candle, placed into a hole in a bamboo stick, and positioned near the Bai Sri Ton.

Consecrated water pot, a pot containing water, kaffir lime leaves, lime leaves, silver, and gold. For sprinkling the consecrated water, branches from the Chiang Phra tree (also known as black-chicken-leg tree or black-chicken-bone tree) or the branches of a male betel nut tree are used. These branches are wrapped with red and white unbleached cotton thread.

The offering ritual for Khru Mo Nora commonly include flowers, Nipa palm leaves, coconut leaves, or betel leaf. These are dipped into clean water, coconut water, red syrup, and rice whiskey in that order. The offerings are then sprinkled with these liquids while reciting incantations. After completing the offerings, the Nora group rests as needed, waiting for the next phase of the ritual later in the day.

Khru Mo Nora Invitation Ritual

The Khru Mo Nora Invitation ritual is the most important ritual on Thursday. The goal of this ceremony is to invite Khru Mo Nora to receive offerings and possess the medium, with the use of recitations and music as mediums for the invitation. The ceremony is conducted in the late morning, as it is traditionally believed to be the most auspicious time to honor the master. The ceremony takes place in the central area of the Nora pavilion. The steps of Khru Mo Nora Invitation Ceremony are as follows:

Begin by lighting incense and candles and placing them on all the offerings. Then, the chief Nora recites the “Teacher Appreciation Verse” and the Satsadi verse (details of the verse can be found in the appendix).

Possession, or “spirit entry,” refers to the state where a human body is inhabited by a particular type of spirit. The type of spirits can be identified based on the following symptoms. If the person feels a chill at the crown of their head and senses that their head is gradually expanding, followed by the chill spreading throughout the body, it is believed that the spirit entering is a “royal Khru Mo Nora,” such as Mae Sri Mala, Pho Thep Singhorn, Phraya Sai Fa Fad, or Pho Khun Sattha. If the chill is felt in the arms or the front of the shoulders, it indicates the presence of a secondary level Khru Mo Nora spirit, such as Pran Boon, Pran Thep, Pran Khong, Ta Mor Thao, Ta Luang Muang

Kaew Muang Thong, or Ta Kong Rach. It could also be a sacred spirit, such as Thuat²⁵ Suea, Thuat Ngu, Thuat Bodhi Tree, or Thuat Banyan Tree. If the chill is felt around the neck and spreads to the back, it suggests that the spirit is an ancestral spirit with significant merit. If the chill is felt below the waist, the spirit may be a lower-level spirit. Such spirits are not permitted to enter the Nora Rong Khru ceremony.

When Khru Mo Nora spirit begins to possess the medium, the medium will exhibit signs of excitement, trembling, and in some cases, tears may flow, and crying may occur. There may be numbness in the extremities, chills spreading across the body, particularly on the head, and a sensation that the body and its parts are enlarging. These symptoms may alternate and become increasingly intense. Allowing the mind to follow the rhythm of the music will accelerate the process of reaching a state closer to possession. The final symptoms before full possession include increased trembling of the heart, a sensation of something pressing against the chest, excessive tears, greater numbness in the body, and ultimately, the complete domination by Khru Mo Nora spirit. This condition is referred to as “possession.”

During the possession by a Khru Mo Nora spirit, the medium experiences a state of partial consciousness. This means they can remember some people, events, or actions, but they cannot control their actions. For example, they might want to sit still, but it feels as though a power is compelling them to stand up, dance, or speak in ways that are beyond their control. If asked questions beyond their knowledge, a force may compel them to answer on behalf of the spirit. It is believed that this power comes from the authority of Khru Mo Nora.

The accepted behaviors during possession must align with the experiences of the Nora and their descendants. For instance, if someone claims to be possessed by Mae Sri Mala but exhibits rough, masculine behavior, drinks alcohol, and smokes—while Mae Sri Mala is known to be a respectful and genteel Khru Mo Nora according to the experiences of the Nora and their descendants—such behavior will not be trusted and the person will be asked to leave the ceremony.

The language used by Khru Mo Nora during possession must be Southern Thai, as it is considered the original language of the ancestors. However, there is a belief among some groups that Pho Khun Sattha, when possessed, will speak in standard Thai. Nonetheless, in general Nora Rong Khru ceremonies, Pho Khun Sattha is rarely seen in possession.

When Khru Mo Nora possesses, the host will come to pay respects and ask various questions. This moment is considered good for family as it demonstrates the presence of ancestral lineage and

²⁵ **Thuat** refers to divine beings of a higher level than ordinary ancestral spirits. (The translator)

shows that the descendants have Khru Mo Nora and ancestral spirits protecting them. Therefore, feelings of reassurance, pride, and affection among family members will arise during this time.

The duration of possession by Khru Mo Nora should not be too long, as it is considered unnatural for a spiritual being to inhabit a human body for an extended period. This is because the human body is composed of the four elements: earth, water, fire, and air, and contains waste products.

When Khru Mo Nora leaves the possessed body, they will typically fall forward into a kneeling position. After Khru Mo Nora departs, some people may regain consciousness immediately, while others may fall asleep and need to be awakened. Once the possession ritual is complete, the next step is performing the Teacher Reverence ritual and a dance for Khru Mo Nora, known as “dancing for the shrine.” This dance is performed for Khru Mo Nora to observe.



Figure 2.4: A Khru Mo Nora during possession, captured by the Nora James Sanesilp troupe, Trang Province, on May 11, 2022.

Source: Yammai (2022)

The Ceremony for Elevating an Individual to a Nora Artist

In Thai society, there are various rituals for transitioning a person from an ordinary status to one with a distinct role, such as ordaining a layman as a monk, performing a hair-cutting ritual to mark adolescence, or initiating an individual as a medium through the “Khan” (Khandha) receiving ritual.

Similarly, the Nora tradition has its own ritual for elevating an individual from ordinary status to that of a Nora artist. The type of ritual performed depends on the age of the individual, with three ceremonies being available: 1) Sod Mai Sai Leb ceremony, 2) Cloth-Tying ceremony, 3) Serd Crowning ceremony.

The Sod Mai Sai Leb ceremony, where “Mai” refers to a type of bracelet (and “Leb” refers to Nora nails—the translator), is a ritual for admitting children aged approximately 5-12 years old into a Nora troupe. The process is as follows. The individual requesting the ceremony presents Chian Khru (a ceremonial offering) to the chief Nora, signaling their desire to become a disciple. The chief Nora then leads the applicant to sit on a white cloth in the center of the Nora performance area. Musicians play the Choed rhythm. The chief Nora chants invocations to invite Khru Mo Nora, deities, and sacred spirits as witnesses to the ceremony. The Trae stick (a ceremonial stick) is placed in the applicant’s hand, and a bracelet is threaded onto their wrist through this stick. Finally, Nora nails are placed as the last step of the ceremony. The applicant must recite the Teacher Appreciation verse, the Instructional verse, the Dance Teaching verse, the Initial verse, and perform basic Nora dance steps. The chief Nora both the recitation and the dance performance.

After successfully completing this ceremony, the participant must practice the Nora dance diligently, as they are now considered a Nora artist. When they reach the age of approximately 12-19 years, they must undergo additional ceremonies such as the Thread-in-Accoutrements ceremony or the Cloth-Tying ceremony.



Figure 2.5 The Sod Mai Sai Leb ceremony, photographed by the Nora Somboon Thepsornsilp Troupe, Trang Province, on August 25, 2016.

Source: Yammai (2016)

The Thread-in-Accoutrements or Cloth-Tying ceremony is a ritual that follows the Sod Mai Sai Leb ceremony. This ritual is suited for teenagers because it involves wearing a Nora costume weighing approximately 3-5 kilograms. The first step of the ceremony involves the participant presenting Chian Khru (a ceremonial offering) to the chief Nora to request initiation as a disciple. After receiving guidance and blessings from their parents, the participant returns to kneel and join their hands in prayer before the chief Nora. The chief Nora lights incense and candles on Chian Khru to inform Khru Mo Nora, deities, and sacred entities, inviting them to witness the ceremony. The participant then recites a Cloth-Tying prayer in Pali three times. After completing this, the chief Nora will inscribe magical symbols on the Nora costume and then drape a ceremonial cloth around the participant's neck. This step is known as "the Cloth-Tying ceremony."

Once the Cloth-Tying ritual is completed, the chief Nora returns the Nora costume to the participant to put on. After donning the costume, the participant returns to the center of the Nora pavilion to perform the Sod Mai Sai Leb ceremony. In this ceremony, the participant must sit on a pair of brass bowls. One smaller bowl is placed upright and contains amulets such as snake fangs, tiger fangs, bear fangs, tiger skin, and bear skin. The larger bowl is placed upside down over the smaller one. Both feet are placed on silver and gold plates, while the participant sits in a kneeling position with hands joined in prayer. The chief Nora then puts on the bracelet and the Nora nails in the same manner as in the Thread-in-Accoutrements ceremony. After completing the Cloth-Tying ceremony, the participant must undergo the Serd Crowning ceremony upon reaching the age of 20.



Figure 2.6 The performance of the Thread-in-Accoutrements or Cloth-Tying Ceremony, photographed by the Monora Samboon Thepsornsilp troupe in Trang Province on November 26, 2021.

Source: Yammai (2021)

The Serd Crowning ceremony is a ritual that elevates a person to become a full-fledged Nora performer. This ceremony can be performed for both male and female Nora practitioners. The initial steps of the ceremony are the same as those in the Thread-in-Accoutrements or Cloth-Tying ceremony. However, at the end of the ceremony, the crowning of the Serd (headdress) takes place. During this part of the ceremony, the Serd is suspended from the roof of the Nora performance hall by a sacred thread. The elder relatives of the person undergoing the ceremony must sit around them, holding the sacred thread. When it is time for the Serd to be placed on the person's head, the chief Nora recites the Satsadi verse while the musicians play the Choed rhythm. The chief Nora and the elder relatives then gradually lower the sacred thread, allowing the Serd to be placed on the head of the person receiving the ceremony.

In the case where a male Nora wishes to establish a Nora troupe and perform all types of Nora-related rituals, he must undergo “the grand Cloth-Tying ceremony” or “the Adornment Ritual” and meet the qualifications of being a Nora chief as described in Chapter 1.

The grand Cloth-Tying ceremony is commonly performed in the late morning on Fridays. The steps of this ceremony are detailed similarly to those of the Serd Crowning ceremony, but with the addition of inviting monks to chant and bless the occasion. During the Serd Crowning, three sacred threads are used: the first thread is held by the group of monks, the second by the chief Nora, the Hunter, and the shaman, and the third by the elder relatives. At the time of the crowning, all parties lower the sacred threads together to place the Serd on the person's head. Once the Serd is in place, the person undergoing the ceremony must recite verse and perform a brief Nora dance, similar to other rituals mentioned earlier.



Figure 2.7: The Serd Crowning Ceremony, photographed by the Somboon Nora Thepsornsilp Troupe, Trang Province, on November 26, 2021.

Source: Yammai (2021)

The grand Cloth-Tying ceremony is considered complete when it is followed by “the Crocodile Hand Crowning” performed by the chief Nora. The hand crowning signifies the transfer of rights and authority from the teacher to the student, meaning that in the future, the student will be able to perform all ceremonies because the teacher has bestowed the knowledge upon them.

After completing the grand Cloth-Tying ceremony, the individual must perform the “Three Temples, Three Villages Dance.” This involves traveling to three different temples and three different villages to showcase their dancing and verse saying skills to the community. While dancing in the temples, monks will chant and sprinkle puffed rice and flowers to bless the individual. In the villages, local residents typically come together to offer blessings and prepare food for the celebrant.

Another distinctive feature of the grand Cloth-Tying ceremony or the Adornment ritual in Trang Province is the “attire.” The person undergoing the ceremony must wear a loincloth beneath the Front cloth, which is a single piece of cloth. Additionally, they must attach “Lukpok cloth” to both sides of the waist. The Lukpok cloth is made from handkerchiefs rolled into thin, cylindrical shapes. Some groups may use trimmed coconut shells, wrapped in handkerchiefs to make the Lukpok cloth. At the back, around the hips, under Phik Hong (a decorative accessory that resembles the wings of a swan), they wear a Crocodile Tail Cloth. This is made from white fabric folded into a trapezoidal shape and sewn into twelve layers. After sewing, there are numerous small pockets on the cloth. These pockets are used to hold betel nuts and coins (one betel nut and one baht coin per pocket). The Crocodile Tail Cloth resembles the tail of a crocodile, and its purpose is to mimic the tail of the Chalawan crocodile. This is because, in addition to assuming the role of Krai Thong²⁶, the individual must also take on the role of the Chalawan crocodile. Thus, wearing the Crocodile Tail Cloth is a way to emulate the appearance of the Chalawan crocodile.

The process of elevating an ordinary person to become a chief Nora is complex and deeply rooted in beliefs and traditions, requiring cooperation from various social groups. Once an individual becomes a chief Nora, their crucial role is to assist fellow humans by using Nora dance as a medium of communication. Therefore, a chief Nora must conduct themselves as a virtuous person, in alignment with the expectations of the community.

The Twelve Verse and the Ritual Hunt

The Twelve verse involves reciting verse combined with dance and dialogue between the chief Nora and the Hunter, based on twelve literary narratives. During this ritual, individuals from outside who wish to fulfill vows may also join the hunt. People in the southern region often make vows to Khru Mo Nora because they believe Khru Mo Nora possesses great power and can bring about unexpected outcomes. Commonly, these vows address everyday issues such as job exams, education, lost belongings, or avoiding conscription. Typical offerings to fulfill vows include golden-

²⁶ **Krai Thong** is a legendary figure in Thai folklore. He is a skilled warrior with extraordinary abilities. He is called upon to confront and defeat the Chalawan crocodile, who has been terrorizing the people. (The translator)

beaked chickens, pig heads, clothing, and performances of the Ritual Hunt. After completing the Twelve Verse and the Ritual Hunt, the chief Nora performs a dance in honor of the Nora teacher before concluding the ritual activities during the day for that Thursday.

On Thursday nights, there are usually many people who come to watch Nora performances because it is an evening dedicated solely to entertainment, with no rituals or ceremonies interrupting the time. The format of Nora performances on Thursday nights is similar to that of Wednesday nights, but there are more performances and the addition of storytelling plays.

The Grand Nora Rong Khru Ritual on Friday

The grand Nora Rong Khru ritual on Friday follows the same format and sequence as Thursday's ceremony in the early stages. However, towards the end of the ceremony, there is a difference: the performance of the story of Krai Thong is extended until it reaches the part where Krai Thong defeats the Chalawan crocodile.

The Krai Thong Story

Krai Thong is a Thai literary work that Nora performers adapt for use in the grand Nora Rong Khru ceremony. The content details are as follows. The first scene describes Krai Thong going to seek magical knowledge from the monk instructor to use in defeating the Chalawan crocodile. After successfully learning the skills, Krai Thong returns to spread the news and gather supporters to help build a ceremonial hall for the ritual to defeat the crocodile. Subsequently, Krai Thong's companions set out to invite the monk instructor once again to help determine the auspicious time and request a place from the local guardian spirits. When the monk arrives at the ceremonial hall, he begins by performing the ritual of paying respect to Nang Thorani (Mother Earth) to request permission and then sprinkles consecrated water to ward off evil. At the end of the ceremony, the monk performs "the Invocation of the Spirit Ritual"²⁷ to enter Krai Thong's body for blessings.

²⁷ **The Invocation of the Spirit ritual** is a traditional Thai ritual that is performed to invite or call the **spirit** (ขวัญ, Kwan) of a person or an object back into its rightful place. The concept of **ขวัญ (Kwan)** in Thai culture refers to a person's soul or spirit, believed to be responsible for their physical and mental well-being. (The translator)



Figure 2.8: The Invocation of the Spirit ritual for Krai Thong, photographed by Nora Long Noi Chaluaysilp from the Sor Pan Trang troupe, on May 9, 2014.

Source: Yammai (2014)

The procedure for invoking the spirit is that Krai Thong will sit in the center of the Nora performance area, while his friends and the monk instructor will sit around him. The musicians will play the Choed rhythm. The monk instructor will bring a mirror and grooming kit, and light the candles and place them in position. The smoke from the candles is then waved towards Krai Thong, who will pass the smoke to his friends, who perform the same action. This ritual is known as “sacred circling”²⁸ and is performed three times to complete the ceremony.

After the priest finishes the “sacred circling” ritual, Krai Thong requests his friends to obtain a banana tree, specifically the Pang La banana tree or the Tanee banana tree, from the wealthy homeowner’s house. This tree will be used to make a raft for Krai Thong to use in his quest to defeat the Chalawan crocodile. Only banana trees that are dying—those that are fruiting and standing dead with yellowed leaves—are selected. Once enough banana trees are gathered, Krai Thong’s friends invite the wealthy owner of the “Tanee” banana grove to assist with the ceremony as well.

The next step involves Krai Thong performing a ritual to consecrate and sharpen the spear used to defeat the Chalawan crocodile. The unique aspect of sharpening the spear in the Nora Rong Khru Ceremony is the use of oil from eight different animals. As one of the verse states: “*Rub it with rhino fat, deer fat, elephant fat, pig fat, monitor lizard’s prey fat, and monkey oil.*”

²⁸ **Sacred circling** is a traditional Thai custom, typically performed in Buddhist rituals or during certain auspicious ceremonies. It involves the act of circling or rotating sacred objects in a clockwise direction. The custom is believed to symbolize the act of paying respect, gaining merit, and creating good karma. (The translator)

After sharpening the spear, Krai Thong and his companions proceed with the ritual of floating of the Victorious Krathong²⁹ to seek out the Chalawan crocodile. The victorious Krathong used in the ceremony is made from banana leaves and decorated with flowers to make it look beautiful. Inside, there are two small Krathongs: the first Krathong contains rice and fish with heads and tails, while the second Krathong contains drinking water. Before beginning the ritual, Krai Thong lights incense and candles, places them in the Victorious Krathong, makes a mental prayer, and then hands it over to the Hunter to float.

Floating the Victorious Krathong is that during the floating of it, musicians play the Choed rhythm, while the Hunter carries the krathong back and forth in time with the music. This rhythm symbolizes the Krathong floating with the current. The Krathong is then circled around the carved banana stem, representing the Chalawan crocodile. After completing three full circles, the Hunter places the Victorious Krathong on the head of the Chalawan crocodile figure to indicate to the audience that the Krathong has arrived at the crocodile's location. Once the Victorious Krathong floating by the Hunter is completed, the chief Nora performer switches roles from Krai Thong to that of the Chalawan crocodile.

The first scene of the Chalawan crocodile story describes how the Chalawan crocodile is sleeping and dreams of ominous signs. The dream involves vultures attacking its body, a fire burning down its golden cave, falling rocks crushing its body, and the breaking of its precious fangs. Distressed by the dream, the Chalawan crocodile recounts it to its grandfather, Thao Amphai. The grandfather predicts that the crocodile's fate is sealed, and it will soon meet its end. Terrified, the Chalawan crocodile begs for help, but the grandfather says he cannot assist due to the sins committed in a past life. In that previous life, the Chalawan crocodile had killed its grandparents, who have since reincarnated—its grandfather as Krai Thong and its grandmother as Nang Tha Pao Kaew. Upon hearing this prediction and noting the grandfather's refusal to help, the Chalawan crocodile becomes enraged, curses the grandfather, and destroys his dwelling in a fit of fury. The scene ends with the Chalawan crocodile and the grandfather severing their relationship.

When the Chalawan crocodile returns to the cave, it weeps and laments, worried about the impending fate. The crocodile's wives, Nang crocodile Lueam Laiwan and Nang crocodile Wimala, notice the distress and inquire about it. Upon learning the full story, Nang crocodile Wimala advises her husband to seek help from the deity who protects the cave. However, the deity responds that the troubles are resulted by past sins and cannot be alleviated. Hearing this, the Chalawan crocodile

²⁹ **Kratong** is a small floating vessel traditionally made from natural materials such as banana leaves, flowers, and incense. It is used during the Loy Krathong festival, which is celebrated in Thailand and other Southeast Asian countries. (The translator)

cries once more and quickly hides in the golden cave. The scene ends with the Chalawan crocodile's lamentation.

In the next scene, the chief Nora switches roles to become Krai Thong and invites his companions to observe the cloud patterns to predict whether they will be able to defeat the Chalawan crocodile that day. The clouds form shapes of Lord Vishnu, Garuda, and Lion King, and finally, the cloud forms the shape of a headless Chalawan Crocodile. Upon seeing these omens, Krai Thong and his companions immediately understand that they will prevail over the Chalawan crocodile. Krai Thong's friends then cheer with the Samla chant³⁰ for good luck. The scene of Krai Thong ends here, and the next sequence involves the Nora performance of the Swan Dance.

The Swan Dance

The Swan dance is a Nora performance based on the story of Phra Suthon and Manora, specifically focusing on the scene where the Hunter Boon captures Manora. In this performance, the Hunter Boon is portrayed by the Hunter, while the chief Nora and all the female dancers take on the roles of the Swan. In the Nora Rong Khru ritual, the term "swan" has the same meaning as "Nang Khee Nhon," which is a variation of the term "Kinnorn."³¹

One verse in the Teacher's Chant describes the seven siblings of Nang Manora: Nang Phim, Nang Patchara, Nang Srisurat, Nang Patcharada, Nang Chanchurhi, Nang Srijurha, and Nang Manora. In the Swan Dance performance, it is customary to use seven performers. According to the Nora verse, the seven kinnaris secretly escape from the city to play in the Anodat pond. They leave their wings and tails under a tree and enjoy playing in the water. This scene is accompanied by lively and cheerful verse, including "Ravairavek," "Khee Nhon Para," also known locally as Khee Nhon Sopha, and "Cha Nang Hong."

The Cha Nang Hong verse is used to summon the Swan to come down to the Nora stage to participate in the Swan Dance ritual. The verse is as follows:

Your wings are soft, oh sister, drift and fall,
Soft wings descend within the Nipa palm's call.
Why, with such beauty, do you have so many men,
Husbands and children, a never-ending blend?

³⁰ **The Samla chant** refers to a ceremonial chant or reverential shout used in dramatic performances. It is often used to indicate

triumph, celebration, or the arrival of an important figure or event in the performance. (The translator)

³¹ **Kinnorn** refers to a male mythical being in Hindu-Buddhist mythology, often depicted as a celestial musician or half-human, half-animal creature, similar to a nymph or spirit in other cultures. (The translator)

Flutter down in the Nipa palm's embrace,
Slowly drifting, oh swan, with elegant grace.
Your wings are soft, oh sister, drift and fall,
Soft wings descend within the Black Plum's thrall.

Why, with such beauty, do you have a Nora's hand?
A husband from a distant, strange land.

Flutter down in the Black Plum's embrace,
Slowly drifting, oh swan, with gentle grace.

Once the recitation of the Cha Nang Hong verse is completed, the next step is the "Swan Walk." This involves walking to the rhythm of the drums and Thap drums. The swan's walk resembles a stealthy, bird-like movement.

While the Swan is performing the recitation and walking, the Hunter Boon will take the offerings and various items outside the Nora stage to perform the "Entering the Area ritual." The purpose of this ritual is to seek blessings from the spiritual teachers and guardian spirits to successfully capture the Swan.

Once Hunter Boon has completed the ritual, he will carefully advance to the rhythm of the music to capture the Swan. During his approach, Hunter Boon will simulate hunting activities, shooting arrows alternately to the left and right. The arrows used are made of clay, shaped into small round balls, with three balls used in total. Other arrows are represented by candy. As Hunter Boon moves, children who come to watch the Nora Swan Dance often try to grab the candy from him, which creates a humorous scene.

When Hunter Boon arrives in front of the Nora stage, he recites a verse: "*Catch the Swan, capture her, whether I succeed or not, I don't know.*" He then proceeds to capture the Swan. At this moment, the musicians change the rhythm from the Swan Walk to the Choed beat, enhancing the mystical atmosphere of the Nora Swan Dance.

The Nora Swan dance was originally an entertainment performance, but over time, in some districts of Trang Province, the format of the performance has evolved to incorporate various beliefs, aiming to establish a sense of sanctity. For example, during the scene where Hunter Boon captures the Swan, some participants may exhibit signs similar to being possessed. It is believed that Khru Mo Nora temporarily come to possess to participate in this scene, a phenomenon known as "the Swan Ascending." This type of Nora Swan dance can be seen in the districts of Kantang and Sikao.

Before the Nora Swan dance, the shaman will place “sacred threads” on each of the swan performers. The sacred threads are made from red and white raw threads twisted together into a coil and then consecrated with magical spells to enhance their potency. It is believed that these sacred threads can protect against various dangers. Therefore, after the Swan Dance ceremony, spectators often come to request sacred threads from the Nora, which they use to create amulets for their children or to tie to their car’s rearview mirror for protection.

The Crocodile-Spearing Ritual

Before going out to spear the crocodile, Krai Thong performs a ritual to invite and pay respect to the teacher, seeking blessings for protection and guidance. He then takes the Mahachai spear (victorious spear) and a candle with him to go spearing the Chalawan crocodile. Krai Thong dances with the spear around the Chalawan crocodile three times before stopping to recite incantations and thrusting the spear into the crocodile’s heart. He also uses his foot to push the crocodile down, then dances back to the ceremonial hall. The specific position for spearing the Chalawan crocodile varies among different Nora groups in Trang Province. Some groups aim for the heart, others target the eyes, while some aim for the top of the head.

Once the Chalawan crocodile has been speared and fallen, the shaman performs a water-pouring ritual to dedicate merit to the spirit of the crocodile. The carcass is then carried away and disposed of far from the host’s house. There is a belief related to the bad luck associated with the Chalawan crocodile. For instance, after Krai Thong speared the crocodile, if the host does not dispose of the carcass properly, it is believed that the remnants, such as the banana pseudostems used to represent the crocodile, may sprout into new banana plants. At the same time, the host may experience sudden illness with no apparent cause. A story recounts that after Krai Thong speared the crocodile, the host did not dispose of the carcass properly. As a result, the banana pseudostems sprouted new banana plants, and the host fell ill unexpectedly. The family took the host to the hospital, where no abnormalities were found, and then consulted a shaman. The shaman suggested that the illness was due to the fact that the crocodile had not been fully dispatched. The family was advised to check the carcass again. Upon inspection, they found the shaman’s claim to be true. The family then made another vow to Khru Mo Nora, promising that if the illness was indeed caused by this issue, they would seek a speedy recovery for the patient and, once recovered, perform the Nora Crocodile-Spearing ritual again. The patient soon recovered, and the family arranged for a new Nora troupe to perform the ceremony as promised. Due to such beliefs, it is now customary to dispose of the crocodile’s pseudostems far from the home to avoid such incidents.

The author believes that the Crocodile-Spearing ritual has an intriguing superstitious significance: the Chalawan crocodile represents evil and misfortune. Therefore, performing the ritual

requires invoking Khru Mo Nora, deities, and sacred entities to protect the main Nora performer. The spear used for the ritual must be consecrated and inscribed with Khmer characters representing Lord Vishnu. This practice is thought to be based on the belief in the ten avatars of Vishnu in Brahmanism, where Vishnu incarnates to vanquish evil during times of global turmoil. Thus, the Nora incorporates this belief as a conceptual framework in their rituals to combat malevolence.

The Sen Treatment Ritual

After the Crocodile-Spearing ritual is completed, the next ritual is the Sen treatment ritual, which is used to treat a type of skin disease with incantations. Details of the Sen treatment ritual will be discussed further in Chapter 3.

The Story of Stealing of the Wife of Lord Kromsilp

The stealing of the wife of Lord Kromsilp is a performance presented by the Nora before the ritual of sending off deities and concluding the ceremony. The content of this piece describes how Lord Kromsilp and his wife are deeply asleep, unaware that thieves have sneaked into their home and eventually stole Lord Kromsilp's wife. This performance is well-loved for bringing smiles and laughter to the audience, as it features humorous scenarios and common domestic themes.

The significance of the story of stealing of the wife of Lord Kromsilp lies in its role in guiding the Nora Rong Khru ritual to its final stage. The characters of Lord Kromsilp and his wife represent various spirits who, having been satisfied with the offerings, fall asleep on the shrine in the ceremony space. The purpose of this performance is to prompt these spirits to awaken because the next stage involves the chief Nora leading the ritual to send all spirits back to their respective places.



Figure 2.9 The performance of Stealing of the Wife of Lord Kromsilp, photographed by the Nora Srichan Sanit Noi troupe, Trang Province, on September 11, 2015.

Source: Yammai (2015)

The Ceremony of Sending the Deities and Leaving the Stage

The chief Nora uses the recitation of verse combined with the chanting of spells to send off the deities who participated in the Nora Rong Khru ritual. Before sending the deities away, the chief Nora will recite a verse to “Nang O-Kra Chaeng Spirit” or “Chaeng Spirit,” which is the spirit responsible for guarding the Nora performance area. This spirit is requested to remain and protect the land where the Nora stage was set up. As a result, people generally avoid trespassing on this land out of fear of retribution from the Chaeng Spirit. Following this, the chief Nora recites the “Cha Khru Mo” verse, which are used to ask for blessings from Khru Mo Nora for the host and all the Nora troupe members. Once the “Cha Khru Mo” is complete, the “Pact Ending” ritual is performed. This ritual signifies the ending of the obligations and agreements between the host and Khru Mo Nora. If the chief Nora does not perform this Vow Redeeming Ritual, it is believed that in the future, Khru Mo Nora might demand the fulfillment of promises through punitive means, which could result in illness or misfortune. This is referred to as being “Bound by a vow.”

Before performing the ending of the vow, the person conducting the ritual must first chant protective spells to safeguard themselves. They then make a mental invocation using “Lam Luek

Mantra” to request the assistance of the teachers and deities in carrying out the ceremony. After this, they recite the Vow Redeeming spell while using a ritual knife to cut through the bundle containing the vow, which is then burned in a fire.

The next ritual involves sending off the deities and various spirits. The chief Nora cuts the Ceiling cloth on the shrine, removing three sections of the roof covering to create an opening for the deities to return to their celestial abodes. The author suggests that the practice of cutting three sections of the roof is modeled after a scene from the legend of Phra Suthon and Manora, where Manora, being taken for sacrifice, requested that three sections of the roof be opened. Once they were opened, she quickly flew away. Thus, cutting three sections of the roof symbolizes opening a path for high-ranking spirits to return to their original places. Subsequently, the ritual involves sending off the local guardian spirits by removing the ceremonial the Bai Sri Ton (a ceremonial flower arrangement) from its post and discarding it outside the Nora performance space. The chief Nora then cuts the ropes that were used to bind the Nora stage, signifying the “dismantling of the Nora stage.” During this phase, firecrackers are also set off to honor the high-ranking spirits, marking the conclusion of the Nora Rong Khru ritual.

Next, the chief Nora performs the “Lady Sparrow” to bid farewell to the Nora stage. The opening lines of the verse describe a sparrow with a loop, representing the constraints of family and wealth that prevent it from going anywhere. The conclusion of the verse states that the sparrow has finally let go of everything and is able to fly away. The significance of this verse is to demonstrate to the audience that attachment leads to suffering and that letting go brings greater happiness. According to Koeddee (Interview, 2014), the verse highlights the value of releasing attachments for a more content and liberated existence.

The Lady Sparrow

The Lady Sparrow takes to the skies,
Spreading her wings as she boldly flies,
She longs to soar across suffering’s sea,
But her eggs keep her bound, and she cannot be free.
To cross the ocean of suffering, oh dear sister,
The sparrow flies out from the eaves, wings a-twister,
Yet it cannot soar, though it yearns to be free,
For its chicks are still featherless, waiting to see.
To cross the swirling sea, oh dear sister,
The sparrow takes flight from the eaves, a bold blister,

Yet it cannot soar, though it longs to be free,
For its chicks are still weak, waiting patiently.
To cross the river, oh dear sister,
The sparrow flies out from the eaves, wings a-whisper,
Spreading its wings to cross the sea of fire,
Now it soars with ease, its heart's desire.
Let it fly across, oh beautiful one,
For the sparrow is free, its worry undone.

Once the farewell dance is completed, the host will offer betel nuts and leaves or money to redeem the land and various items used in the Nora performance from the Nora troupe. This local practice is known as “redeeming the goods”. It is believed that since the Announcement ritual, the land where the Nora performance took place has been considered the property of the Nora troupe. Therefore, upon completion of the ritual, the land must be redeemed.

After redeeming the goods, the chief Nora will lead the host in performing a water-pouring ritual to dedicate merit to spirits of various levels. The host is then instructed to distribute the offerings from the shrine to wandering spirits so that they may receive nourishment, just as Khru Mo Nora does. This practice reflects a compassionate attitude, extending not only to Khru Mo Nora but also to lower spirits.

The grand Nora Rong Khru ceremony is deeply embedded with hidden beliefs, leading to complex practices and detailed procedures. However, when examined, it becomes clear that the ultimate goal of these actions is “to show respect and reverence to all types of spirits.” The consequence for those within the Nora culture is that these practices foster a gentle disposition, an understanding of social hierarchy, and the ability to live peacefully with others.

Chapter 3

Beliefs in Nora Rong Khru Rituals

Belief is what an individual holds based on their knowledge, understanding, and experiences, or what they may have learned from others. When a person develops a belief about something, it becomes ingrained and leads to certain practices. These beliefs may be true or false. Beliefs can be categorized into three levels: social beliefs, group-specific beliefs, and individual beliefs.

Beliefs that appear in Nora Rong Khru rituals are categorized as group-specific beliefs and can be divided into three areas: 1) health beliefs, 2) spiritual beliefs, 3) weapon beliefs

Health Beliefs

In some Southern communities, there is a belief in the sacred power of Khru Mo Nora, who are thought to bestow either benefits or punishments upon individuals. This belief is a crucial mechanism that has helped maintain the existence of Nora traditions in society up to the present day. Examples of the benefits conferred by a Khru Mo Nora to those who show respect and reverence include: bestowing unexpected success in one's career, protection from various dangers, granting of fortune and wealth. On the other hand, examples of the punishments meted out by a Khru Mo Nora to those who disrespect, do not honor, or abandon the Nora traditions include: experiencing bad luck, ongoing family distress, contracting unusual or severe illnesses. Two specific illnesses believed to be caused by the actions of a Khru Mo Nora are: the Sen disease, the Nora Burning disease. Details of these illnesses are as follows:

Sen

“Sen” refers to a type of skin disease that is present from birth. It appears as raised, red, or black spots that do not cause pain or itching but are considered unsightly. It is believed that Sen is caused by the actions of the “Spirit of Sen” or by the power of Khru Mo Nora. It is thought that modern medical treatment may only provide temporary relief, with the disease often recurring. Consequently, some people prefer to have a chief Nora treat them through a method known as “Sen Crushing.”

Noosuwan (T. Noosuwan, personal communication, December 6, 2014) describes the origin of the Sen disease as follows:

“Sen originates from the legend of the Moon. At that time, the Moon desired to have a wife and set out in search of a celestial maiden. However, he found no one suitable because he himself was a deity with a pure and beautiful form. One day, the Moon encountered the daughter of Lord Thaksapachabodi and fell in love, deciding to propose to her. However, he was rejected because the Lord's daughter was reserved for higher deities, and the Moon's rank was not considered

appropriate. When the Moon realized that he would not succeed in love, he thought of abducting the daughter. But Lord Thaksapachabodi caught him and cursed the Moon with a skin disease characterized by raised, red, and repulsive spots all over his face.

When the Moon was cursed, he sought out someone who could cure this disease but found no one capable. The Moon then went to plead with Brahma for help. Upon learning the whole story, Brahma advised the Moon to go to Shiva, as only Shiva could cure the disease. Brahma had already given all the necessary medicinal ingredients to Shiva.

While the Moon was distressed about his appearance, it was the same time that Shiva was creating the human world using important medicinal ingredients given by Brahma, including *Entada rheedii* seeds, Elephant ear leaves, cogon grass, *Senna alata*, and Khedmon grass used in weaving. Shiva used the *Entada rheedii* seeds to create the earth, the Elephant ear leaves to create the sky, and the cogon grass, *Senna alata*, and the Khedmon grass to hold the earth together. As Shiva's creation of the world neared completion, the Moon disturbed the ceremony. Shiva, enraged, flew up and performed an intricate dance, then immediately stomped on the Moon's face with both feet. With Shiva's divine power, the curse of Lord Thaksapachabodi was lifted, and the Moon's skin disease was completely cured. Thus, Nora adopted this legend in the treatment of Sen, believing it to be the same disease that afflicted the Moon. The dance movements of the chief Nora are modeled after Shiva's dance, and the medicinal ingredients such as *Entada rheedii* seeds, Elephant ear leaves, cogon grass, *Senna alata*, and Khedmon grass, which are present in the ceremonial setting from the ritual of establishing a settlement, make the Nora Rong Khru ceremony complete in its treatment of Sen.”

The items necessary for the Sen treatment ritual include: Chian Khru (a ceremonial object used for rituals), consecrated water bowl, ears of rice, knife sharpening stone, ritual ring with a gemstone, silver and gold (Yammai, 2013: 145).



Figure 3.1 Sen disease on the ankle, photographed on May 16, 2019.

Source: Yammai (2019)

In the ritual for treating the Sen disease, the chief Nora will light incense and candles to ask for blessings from Khru Mo Nora. Then, the healer writes Khmer characters on the right big toe for treating men and on the left big toe for treating women. The shaman performs a chant to bless consecrated water infused with ears of rice, a knife sharpening stone, a ring with a gemstone, silver, and gold. Luk Ku (the musical ensemble) plays the Choed rhythm while the shaman places the silver and gold on top of the Sen area. Then, the gemstone ring is placed over the silver and gold. The chief Nora dips their big toe into the consecrated water and then steps on the ring while pointing with the right index finger at the Sen area and chanting a spell. The left hand will perform a circular dance move. The practitioner uses rice sheaves to sweep over the Sen area while chanting a spell. This process is repeated three times, and then the Sen treatment ritual is considered complete. The person suffering from Sen disease must continuously apply the consecrated water to the affected area for seven days, after which the Sen will miraculously disappear.

Nora Burning disease

Nora Burning disease is a condition believed to be caused by the punishment of Khru Mo Nora. It is characterized by chronic illness, a lack of appetite, weakness, and extreme emaciation, where the body becomes so thin that only skin and bones remain. The condition resembles being roasted or burned by fire until completely dried out, which is why it is referred to as “Nora Burning disease.”

Individuals who are ill due to being punished by a Khru Mo Nora believe that conventional medical doctors will be unable to identify the cause of their illness or provide treatment. Therefore,

the common method of treatment is to consult a fortune teller or spirit medium to determine the cause of the illness. This process is known as “finding the Ped.”

“Phet” or “Aphet (bad omen)” refers to the cause of an individual's illness, which may stem from either benevolent or malevolent spirits, or from the influence of supernatural forces, magic, or curses.

There are four reasons why a Khru Mo Nora might cause a Phet: 1) not showing respect or worship to Khru Mo Nora according to the traditions followed by ancestors; 2) not performing the required rituals as per the agreed-upon vows, 3) failing to fulfill promises or obligations agreed upon; 4) punishing someone to urge them to continue the legacy of being a Nora performer.

Once it is determined that the illness is indeed due to a Khru Mo Nora's punishment, the next step is often to have a chief Nora perform a “Hor Moey” act (making a vow). Hor Moey symbolizes the promise between humans and Khru Mo Nora. If the illness is truly due to punishment from Khru Mo Nora, the symptoms will miraculously improve within a short period after performing this ritual.

Lueanlan (C. Lueanlan, personal communication, December 16, 2014) shared his experience of being punished by a Khru Mo Nora, saying:

“In 2011, a Khru Mo Nora punished Nan (a pseudonym), who was studying at the university level. On the day of the incident, Nan returned from participating in a university activity. She experienced severe headaches and told her friends that the pain was so intense she could not attend the university activities and wanted to rest for a night. The next morning, when her friends did not see Nan at the university, they decided to visit her at her dormitory. They found Nan lying on her bed, appearing terrified. She was crying and speaking incoherently. That evening, Nan began to act out of control and started harming others. Her friends called to inform me so I could pick her up and take her home. Upon hearing the news, I contacted a local Nora medium whom I knew to check on Nan's condition before I could arrive.

Before the Nora medium went to see Nan, the medium prayed that if Nan's illness was due to punishment from a Khru Mo Nora, her condition should calm down upon the medium's arrival. Remarkably, when the Nora medium arrived, Nan, who had been in a violent state, suddenly became calm. Nan then bowed and paid respects to the Nora medium.

The Nora medium recounted the entire event to me, and I agreed with the explanation, but my husband did not believe it. That night, my husband and I decided to take Nan to a nearby hospital for treatment.

While being treated at the hospital, Nan's condition worsened. She began to exhibit increased delirium, was violent towards others, refused to eat, and would not sleep. However, the

hospital tests showed no abnormalities. I consulted with relatives about the situation and was advised to see a fortune teller. The fortune teller said that Nan was being punished by a Khru Mo Nora. Following this advice, my relatives and I performed a ritual to appease Khru Mo Nora. Remarkably, after about 2-3 days, Nan's condition gradually improved, and the doctors allowed her to return home to continue her recovery.

Upon returning home, my husband spoke disrespectfully about Khru Mo Nora again. As a result, that night Nan disappeared from the house. My husband and I spent nearly the entire night searching for her. We eventually found Nan sleeping in the woods beside the house. She appeared terrified, as if she had seen something frightening. I comforted her until she calmed down, and then we brought her back home. That night, I called our relatives for advice. They suggested that if Nan recovered from her condition within 7 days, we should perform a Nora Rong Khru ceremony to apologize to Khru Mo Nora, as recommended by the fortune teller.

After 7 days, Nan's condition returned to normal. She became cheerful and had her usual sense of humor. Our relatives then cooperated to perform the Nora Rong Khru ceremony to apologize to Khru Mo Nora whom we had revered since our ancestors' time. After completing the Nora Rong Khru ceremony, Nan was able to resume her studies at the university as usual and graduated with a bachelor's degree, without experiencing any abnormal symptoms like before."

Chitchonlatharn (M. Chitchonlatharn, personal communication, December 6, 2014) recounted an experience related to being punished by a Khru Mo Nora as follows:

"Vee was an employee at a university. One day, while working, Vee suddenly fainted and collapsed. Colleagues quickly rushed Vee to the hospital, where doctors diagnosed him with paralysis affecting the lower part of his body. Vee remained hospitalized for nearly a month, but his condition did not improve. His relatives decided to take him back to their hometown. While at home, Vee's relatives consulted a spirit medium to check his fortune. The medium said, 'Vee is afflicted by a powerful curse.' When Vee's relatives heard this, they did not understand what 'a powerful curse' meant. The medium then explained that Vee was suffering from a punishment by a Khru Mo Nora. Khru Mo Nora was angry because Vee had abandoned and disregarded him. Vee's relatives were initially reluctant to believe this, as there had never been any mention of Khru Mo Nora in their family before.

After returning from the spirit medium's house, Vee's relatives consulted with the older members of the family. They later discovered that during Vee's grandfather's lifetime, numerous Nora Rong Khru rituals had been performed at his home. As the grandfather neared death, he instructed relatives in Nakhon Si Thammarat to take Khru Mo Nora because he did not want to burden his descendants. After the grandfather passed away, the relatives in Nakhon Si Thammarat,

who had taken Khru Mo Nora, kept him in a separate house, while their family moved to Bangkok. They only occasionally returned to the house where Khru Mo Nora was kept. This situation continued for over 60 years, and the newer generations of relatives were unaware that their family had once revered Khru Mo Nora.

Upon learning this truth, Vee's relatives consulted the spirit medium again. The medium advised them to set up a new shrine for Khru Mo Nora and to invite a Nora troupe to perform the grand Nora Rong Khru ritual as a form of apology. About three weeks after this, Vee began to regain movement in his legs and started walking, though not as before. Witnessing this miraculous improvement, the relatives promptly arranged for a Nora troupe to perform the ritual as promised.

On the day of the grand Nora Rong Khru ritual, a Khru Mo Nora named 'Nang Sri Mala' possessed one of Vee's relatives. Nang Sri Mala asked Vee and his family, 'Why did you abandon me, my child? Did I do something wrong?' As soon as Nang Sri Mala finished speaking, she cried sorrowfully, and Vee and his relatives also wept and apologized on behalf of the grandfather for having given Khru Mo Nora to another relative. Nang Sri Mala sprinkled consecrated water on Vee and told him that she did not wish to cause anyone pain because it was sinful, but she acted this way to prevent her descendants from forgetting their ancestors. Shortly after Vee and his relatives conducted the grand Nora Rong Khru ritual, Vee recovered from his paralysis and returned to work normally once again."

Although it cannot be proven by any specific tools whether the described conditions of illness are truly caused by the punishment of a Khru Mo Nora, what is clearly evident from these cases is the mutual reliance among family members and the psychological anchoring provided by Khru Mo Nora during illness. This support gives patients strength and hope that Khru Mo Nora will help them recover from their ailments. The role of Khru Mo Nora as a social support and the abstract values arising from these beliefs have become a guideline for living, fostering a sense of mutual care and concern within the community.

Spiritual beliefs

There are six types of spirits associated with the Nora Rong Khru ceremonies: 1) deities, 2) Khru Mo Nora, 3) ancestral spirits, 4) sacred objects, 5) Chaeng spirits (local spirits or deities), 6) Shin spirits (deities or spirits associated with specific traditions)

Deities

Deities are celestial beings believed to reside in heaven according to Brahmanical beliefs. They are responsible for overseeing the creation, preservation, and destruction of the world and the universe. Some well-known deities among Thais include: Shiva, Vishnu, Brahma, Ganesha, Agni, Ganga, Aumadavi, Indra, Mother Earth

In Buddhism, although it is an atheistic religion, it does not deny the existence of deities. According to Utha (2014: 182-183), Buddhist scriptures categorize deities into three types: 1) Conventional Deities, these include monarchs and great kings who rule their lands with righteousness and uphold the ten virtues of kingship; 2) Celestial Deities, these are deities residing in heavenly realms, ranging from the realm of the desire realm (kāmvācāra) to the realm of the Brahmas (brahmālokā); and 3) Sublime Deities, this group includes the Buddha, the Paccekabuddhas (solitary enlightened ones), and the Arahants (those who have attained Nirvana). The most familiar deities to the general public are the Celestial Deities. According to the Abhidhamma Sarattha Sangha scripture, Volume 2, deities are further classified into three categories: 1) Local Deities/Forest Deities--these deities dwell in natural settings such as forests and groves, with their abodes often found in the treetops. This group includes ten specific types: Arama Deities, Vana Deities, Ruksa Deities, Osadhi Deities, Tinna Deities, Vanapatti Deities, Sora Deities, Lada Deities, Pabbata Deities; 2) Sky Deities--these deities have their abodes floating in the sky above the earth and include celestial bodies such as the Sun, the Moon, planets, and stars; 3) Tree Deities--these deities reside in trees that have medicinal properties, such as the Terminalia tree and the Indian gooseberry tree.

In addition to the foundational beliefs of Brahmanism and Buddhism, which are crucial to Thai culture and Southern Thai culture, Islam has also flourished in more recent times, leading to a blending of cultural and religious beliefs. According to Chitchonlathan (K. Chitchonlathan, personal communication, October 6, 2011), an occult specialist from Trang Province, he describes the origin of deities and humans as follows:

“When Lord Shiva created the human world, He assigned Vesanu the task of being a celestial servant in heaven. Vesanu was to bring two types of living beings and place them on the earth, holding them in his two hands. Lord Shiva instructed Vesanu not to look inside the hands until he reached the earth. However, during the journey, Vesanu, driven by curiosity, secretly opened his right hand. As a result, a burst of light emerged in all directions, and this light took the form of a living being composed solely of the element of fire. Vesanu was very alarmed and quickly descended to the earth with the living being in his left hand and gently placed it down. The living being that was in the left hand turned into a human couple, with bodies composed of the elements of earth, water, air, and fire. The man was named Toh Adam, and the woman was named Toh Ahwa or Sithi Ahwa. The living being that appeared in the air and was made of the element of fire was a type of spirit known as the ‘Shin Spirit.’”

From the account of Khon Chitchonlathan, it is evident that the name of Lord Shiva from Brahmanism and the belief in the deity who created the world, combined with the names of the first male and female humans from Islam, have been integrated to form a local belief system.

Regarding the belief in deities in Nora traditions, it is observed that there is an acceptance and worship of deities that blend those from Brahmanic and Buddhist beliefs. This is evident in certain parts of the Nora Teacher Invocation, as detailed by Koeddee (2014), which provide the following information:

The Teacher's Chant, Part 1

"...Sit and recite the Gatha Rattana, seek protection in this sacred mantra.

Salute the Lady Swan of Khrung Pali, and honor Earth Goddess Mekhala.

Salute the Divine Spirit of the Land, for great fortune and victory grand.

Salute Phoshawatdee Thorani, the cool-hearted mother, gentle and mighty.

...Salute the Spirit of the Land and the Guardian Deity,

Salute Earth Goddess Mekhala, mighty and free.

Salute the Wind God who blows with might,

And the Ganges, inspiring hearts in light.

Salute the Fire God and the Goddess of Agriculture,

Who sets the sacred offering, blessings revealed.

Salute the Seven-Day Gods, may no harm draw near,

I worship the Lords of Wednesday and Thursday, with no fear.

Come, the Lords of Friday and Saturday stay by our side,

Walk with us, guide us, in you we confide.

Salute the fiery sun, invite it with grace,

The great father, shining, lighting our place.

Invite the cool Moon, and Phra Angkarn (the deity of Tuesday) in its might,

Continuing in sequence through the night.

Invite all deities, from the seven days they came,

All guardians and spirits, we call by name.

Salute the spirits of land, both near and far,

The foundation of our household, like a shining star.

Salute the outer and inner spirits in line,

And the roof spirit, protect us, divine.

Salute the stairway spirits, Lord Dung Sakorn so grand,

Tonight, Oh, tonight, Mother can't leave the land.

You have babies to care for, your love shining bright,

Lord Dung Sakorn, guard them through the night.

Tonight, stay close, protect the young ones so dear,
Come, Mother, come, and keep us near..."

The Teacher's Chant, Part 2

"...Salute the mighty brother, so powerful and true,
At this time, my respects, I offer to you.
Garuda, the bird, and giants in sight,
May all enemies flee and vanish from sight.
May all realms of the universe, far and wide,
Be covered, from cosmic layers to the world's side.
Salute Vesuvanna, the lord of wealth's grace,
And Suwannamoli, who venerates the sage's place.
To monks and the learned, I bow in respect,
To Lord Yama, may my devotion connect.
Salute the deities of land, officials too,
With utmost devotion, I offer my view.
Salute Indra, Brahma, Yama, giants tall,
Guardian spirits, Garuda, Naga, all.
Salute Lord Shiva, with gold and sapphire gleam,
Who set the earth and heavens in a grand dream.
He made the earth vast as a betel nut spread,
And the sky as wide as an elephant ear's thread.
He set the oceans, the Sindu River to flow,
And the Kirin and Sindorn mountains did grow.
He placed the Naga King, the sacred Meru to stand,
Guiding the wind, with divine power so grand.
He set the sun, the moon, the day and the night,
For the whole year, the months, and days in sight...
...Salute Vesuvanna, the golden friend,
Who oversees medicine, and remedies to mend.
May the medicine fall lightly, I humbly implore,
And request only a light punishment, nothing more.
Do not sprinkle the medicine, let it not stray,
As it may harm my kin and their path today.

Grant only light punishment, bless with your grace,
 I sit and recite, in this sacred space.
 Whether Lord Kosi or Lord Panta Asna shines bright,
 May your divine presence illuminate the night.
 Look through divine eyes, observe what we do,
 Are we digging wells or idols in view?
 See the offerings prepared, Nora dance in place,
 May the deity dwell, with blessings and grace.
 Watch the incense rise, candles burn with light,
 Blessings and wishes fill the day and night.
 Bless the young, the children in cradles so near,
 And the young prince sleeping, with blessings sincere.
 I sit and recite, hoping you hear from above,
 Indra praises, Yama smiles, with guidance and love..."

From the examples of the Teacher's chant, it is evident that the deities mentioned in Part 1 of the Teacher's chant are divided into two groups: those who protect and watch over the earthly realm and those who guard human destinies. These include: Nang Hong (a protective deity), Lord Khrung Pali (a guardian deity), Nang Thorani (Mother Earth), Nang Mekhala (a celestial being), Phra Barithiw (a deity of prosperity), Phra Phum Mahalaap (a deity of great fortune), Phra Phum Mahachai (a deity of great success), Phra Pai (the wind deity), Nang Kongka (the goddess of the Ganges River), Phra Phloeng (the fire deity), Mae Phosop (the goddess of agriculture), Phra Athit (the sun deity), Phra Chan (the moon deity), Phra Angkarn (the deity of Tuesday), Phra Phut (the deity of Wednesday), Phra Phruhassabodi (the deity of Thursday), Phra Suk (the deity of Friday), Phra Sao (the deity of Saturday), Deities of Guardianship (including both local and household deities)

In Part 2 of the Teacher's chant, the deities mentioned include those with various powers across different levels: the Great Garuda (a mythical bird deity), the Great Naga (serpent deities), Giants (mythical beings), Lord Wessuwan (a guardian deity of wealth), Rishis (sages or ascetics), Phra Phum Jao Ti (household guardian deities), Phra Indra (the king of gods in Hinduism), Phra Brahma (the creator deity in Hinduism), Phra Shiva (the destroyer deity in Hinduism), Lord Kosi or Lord Phanta (a name for Phra Indra).

The role of these deities in the Nora Rong Khru ritual is to protect and ensure the successful completion of the ceremonies. They are responsible for guarding against dangers from both human and non-human entities, preventing any interference or harm during the rituals.

Khru Mo Nora

Khru Mo Nora refers to the spirits of Khru Mo Nora, who have influence over the origins and continued existence of the Nora tradition. They can be categorized into three groups: 1) legendary Khru Mo Nora, 2) ancestors, 3) unspecified origins

The group of Khru Mo Nora in the legends of Nora's origins, also known as the royal Khru Mo Nora, consists of the spirits of individuals who lived during the era of Nora's inception. According to legend, this group was composed of high-ranking individuals with royal lineage. Therefore, these Khru Mo Nora are regarded as "noble spirits" and are believed to have dressed in royal attire. They are highly revered and respected by Nora artists of all eras. Notable figures in this group include: Phraya Sai Fa Fad (sometimes pronounced Phaya Sai Fa Fad in some regions), Pho Sri Sattha, Nang Nual Thong Samlee, Mae Sri Mala, Pho Thep Singhon

The group of Khru Mo Nora who are ancestors consists of the spirits of ancestors who were once involved with the Nora tradition. After their death, their descendants continue to venerate and worship them regularly. As a result, these spirits remain concerned for their descendants and are unable to be reincarnated. This group of Khru Mo Nora is commonly referred to as "Nora Grandparents" or "Ta and Yai." Examples include Nora Phriab from Ban Khok Yang, Nora Paen Khrueng Ngam, Nora Toem from Trang, Nora Fueang, Nora Muk, Nora Hmon, Nora Choo, Pran Nuam, Pran Boon. It is believed that these spirits are depicted as elderly individuals, dressed in white or traditional local garments.

The group of Khru Mo Nora whose origins are unidentified includes those whose names do not appear in the Nora creation myths and for whom there is no concrete evidence of their having been actual ancestral Nora figures. Despite this, they are venerated and passed down through generations. Some examples include Phraya Thom Nam, Phraya Lui Fai, Phraya Mue Lek, Phraya Mue Fai, Ta³² Luang Khong, Ta Pran Boon, Ta Mo Thao, Ta Khong Ratch, Chom Thao Chom Rong, Ta Luang Muang Kaew Muang Thong, Ta Mom Rong, Waen Thong, Waen Fah, Ta Pha Khao, Khun Hon, Phraya Hor, Khun Pran, Phraya Pran, Ta Phet Khong, Ta Pran Thep, Ta Khun Thong, Khun Pitak, Ta Khong

³² Ta, in Thai, does not always refer to a biological grandfather. It can be used to refer to elders or respected male figures, particularly in spiritual or ceremonial settings. It may also be used to address a wise or older person who holds a significant position in a community or family, regardless of direct familial relation. Additionally, in certain contexts, "Ta" is used to refer to spiritual or ancestral figures. In religious or cultural ceremonies, for example, it might be used to refer to a revered ancestor or a guardian spirit. (The translator)

Ratch, Ta Luang Nai, Ta Khun Kaew, Ta Khun Krai, Muen Wai Petchakat, Ta Pran Thao Na Thong, Ta Pran Thao, Ta Pran Kae, Ta Pran Pa, Ta Khun Lhat, Ta Muen Set, Ta Muen Jet Bong, Ta Khun Na, Ta Pran Mook Daeng, Ta Khun Hang, Ta Khun Bai, Mae Khaen On Nang Hong, Mae Kiw Hoen, Mae Thep Thida, Mae Sri Malai, Mae Kin Da Rhi, Mae Kin Da Rha, Mae Jai Wai, Mae Sampao, Mae Mao Klun, Mae Thep Thida, Mae Mhak On, Mae Sri Khongka, Mae Khaen Suay, Nang Chan Chu Rhi, Nang Sri Chu Rha, Mae Sri Dok Mai, Mae Chan Tip Chan Thep, Mae Jae, Mae Chan, Mae Ub, Mae Ob. It is believed that these spirits have different appearances. Some are described as tall and robust with pitch-black skin, wearing traditional Thai clothing such as a Chongkraben (a type of traditional Thai trousers), while others may appear more like ordinary people, dressed in a Pha Thung (a traditional Thai sarong) and adorned with beautiful ornaments.

People in the southern region believe that each Khru Mo Nora has a distinct personality and demeanor, similar to humans. To illustrate this understanding, here are some examples of Khru Mo Nora:

Phraya Sai Fa Fad, the legend of the origin of Nora describes Phraya Sai Fa Fad as a king and the father of “Nang Nual Thong Samlee” or “Mae Sri Mala.” He is also the grandfather of “Pho Khun Sattha.” Phraya Sai Fa Fad is known for bestowing Nora costumes upon Pho Khun Sattha, which have become the standard attire for Nora performers to this day. Phraya Sai Fa Fad’s presence is often depicted with the demeanor of an elderly person. He prefers to wear white clothing and uses a head covering to conceal his face, typically wearing a Serd (headdress). He often holds weapons such as a sword or a blade. His demeanor is stern and direct, but he is especially kind to young children. His favored offerings include toasted rice, flowers, and coconut water.

Mae Sri Mala, originally named Nang Nual Thong Samlee. Mae Sri Mala is considered the “pioneering Khru Mo Nora” because she was the first to introduce Nora dancing in the southern region and also taught the dance steps to Pho Khun Sattha, her son. Mae Sri Mala’s presence is characterized by her graceful and refined demeanor, and she speaks in a soft, melodious voice. When it comes to the authority of Mae Sri Mala, it is noted that those who are punished by her often suffer from severe illnesses, sometimes nearly fatal. This can include severe emaciation, extreme weakness, loss of appetite, or even insanity. As a result, Nora practitioners generally hold Mae Sri Mala in high respect and reverence.

Pho Khun Sattha, also known as Pho Khun Sri Sattha, is a revered Khru Mo Nora recognized as the “chief of all Khru Mo Nora.” This honor is attributed to Pho Khun Sattha because he received his name, attire, and position directly from Phraya Sai Fa Fad.

In all provinces of Southern Thailand, Nora Rong Khru ceremonies must always include the presence of Pho Khun Sattha. However, Pho Khun Sattha usually does not possess any individual. When it is necessary for him to do so, he manifests with a dignified and awe-inspiring demeanor.

Some Nora groups believe that “Pho Khun Sattha” is a title used to honor those who perform Nora dance beautifully. Therefore, there can be multiple Pho Khun Sattha figures, as seen in various Nora invocations or from the list of revered Khru Mo Nora passed down through generations, such as Khun Sattha Yaem, Khun Sattha Ram, Khun Sattha Kui, and Khun Sattha Nakhuea. Currently, a statue of Pho Khun Sattha is erected at Wat Tha Kae, Tha Kae Subdistrict, Mueang District, Phatthalung Province. Nora artists widely agree that Wat Tha Kae has been associated with Nora since ancient times. Every year, during the second week of the 6th lunar month, a grand Nora Rong Khru ceremony is held at this temple to honor Pho Khun Sattha and all Khru Mo Nora.



Figure 3.2 The statue of Pho Khun Sattha at Wat Tha Kae, Mueang District, Phatthalung Province, photographed on September 7, 2016.

Source: Yammai (2016)

Pho Thep Singhorn or Pho Thep Singkhon: Some Nora groups believe that Pho Thep Singhorn is the deity of Nora dance residing in heaven. Other groups think he is either the elder or younger sibling of Pho Khun Sattha, while some believe that Thep Singhorn is a divine being who has incarnated into the body of Pho Khun Sattha to take care of and assist him. People in the South refer to those with divine spirits or sacred beings watching over them as “people with guardians.” The author concludes that Pho Thep Singhorn is the same Khru Mo Nora as Pho Khun Sattha. When Pho Thep Singhorn manifests, he is characterized by a formidable and serious demeanor.

Khun Pran and Phraya Pran are the noblemen in the city of Phraya Sai Fa Fad. According to Noothong (1999: 749), when Phraya Sai Fa Fad forgave Mae Sri Mala, the noblemen came to express their congratulations by participating in the Nora dance. At that time, four noblemen joined in the festivities: Khun Wichit Budsaba, Phraya Kraiwongsa, Phraya Kondhanraja, and Phraya Haritanpanya. These four noblemen followed Thep Singhorn to perform Nora everywhere. Khun Wichit Budsaba and Phraya Kraiwongsa took on the roles of clowns, known as Pran, which led to them being called Khun Pran and Phraya Pran from then on. Additionally, Phraya Kondhanraja and Phraya Haritanpanya performed during Thep Singhorn’s breaks. Phraya Kondhanraja performed the water pouring ritual, while Phraya Haritanpanya performed the fire-walking ritual. Subsequently, these two were given the new names “Phraya Thom Nam (Lord Water Pouring)” and “Phraya Lui Fai (Lord Fire Walking).”

Additionally, in the Nora tradition, the term “Phraya” is used at the beginning of the names for certain Khru Mo Nora. Aside from Phraya Sai Fa Fad, Phraya Thom Nam, and Phraya Lui Fai, there are also Phraya Mue Lek and Phraya Mue Fai. It is believed that Phraya Mue Lek and Phraya Mue Fai are the same as Khru Mo Lek (“Lek” means “iron” in English), hence blacksmiths hold them in high regard.

One observation about the five Khru Mo Nora who have names starting with “Phraya” is that they tend to have rather fierce and stern personalities, making them objects of reverence and awe among their followers. For example, in the case of the Nora descendants in Ban Bin Yee, Khuan Thani Subdistrict, Kantang District, Trang Province, this family has revered Phraya Thom Nam for generations, dating back to their ancestors. During the Nora Rong Khru ceremony at their home, the hosts did not wish for the chief Nora inviting this particular Khru Mo Nora to possess, because they had previously encountered Phraya Thom Nam during a trance and found him to be very stern. Some descendants were so frightened that they cried. Therefore, for that Nora Rong Khru ceremony, they chose not to invite him to possess anyone. Nonetheless, the descendants of Phraya Thom Nam still continue to revere and worship this Khru Mo Nora according to the traditions of their ancestors.

Ta Muang Kaew Muang Thong, also known as Ta Muang Thong, is a Khru Mo Nora with great powers. He can inflict severe illness on those who show disrespect. Nora artists and followers hold

him in high regard and reverence. Nunkaew (2006: 169-170) states that the Teacher's chant of Nora Toem Mueang Trang describes Ta Muang Thong as follows:

“...Pay respects to Muang Thong, where Trang Canal flows wide, along the riverbank, where the waters do glide. Father's strength, his vigor, his courage so grand, turned into stone, like the strength of the land. The boat, once grand, now returns as stone, sinking in the canal, forever alone. At that time, they called it the Sampao Isle, or the Phetra Island, in the river's style...”

The verse describes the powers of Ta Muang Kaew Muang Thong, stating that he resides at the mouth of the Trang River Canal. If a boat passes by without showing respect, Ta Muang Kaew Muang Thong has the ability to curse it, turning it into stone and sinking it into the sea. Ta Muang Kaew Muang Thong is believed to appear as an old man, dressed in a sarong or traditional Thai pants, with a loincloth draped over his shoulder. However, some believe he appears as a young, handsome man with fair skin. When possessed, Ta Muang Thong is said to display a formidable and composed demeanor, appearing calm and dignified. He is often depicted wearing a Chongkraben (traditional Thai pants) with a loincloth draped over his shoulder, and he enjoys drinking alcohol and smoking Nipa leaves.

Ta Kong is a highly revered Khru Mo Nora. The Nora Invocation describes the legend of Ta Kong, stating that he, along with two friends—Chan Kra Yha Phom Mor and Phra Chit—engaged in an affair with a palace lady. This led to their execution by the riverbank. When possessed, Ta Kong is known for his fierce and solemn demeanor. He is said to have a frightening appearance, often binding multiple candles together and holding them in his mouth, which creates a menacing impression.

Pran Boon is the leader of Khru Mo Nora associated with the Hunter role. His name originates from a character in the tale of Phra Suthon and Manora. It is presumed that the Nora tradition previously included many performances of this story, leading to the character being called “Pran Boon.” Over time, Pran Boon gained widespread respect and became one of the revered Khru Mo Nora. According to the Nora origin legend mentioned in Chapter 1, Pran Boon appeared during the era of Nang Nual Thong Samlee and Pho Khun Sattha. He is widely honored and considered a significant Khru Mo Nora. When possessing, Pran Boon displays a humorous and boisterous demeanor, speaking bluntly and straightforwardly. He enjoys drinking alcohol and smoking Nipa palm leaves, often wearing the Hunter's Face, a Chongkraben, and a loincloth wrapped around his waist and shoulder.

Khun Hon or Phraya Hon cannot be definitively identified as either a single Khru Mo Nora or a group of Khru Mo Nora with expertise in astrology. However, it is commonly believed in Nora tradition that Khun Hon or Phraya Hon was a Brahmin in the court of Phraya Sai Fa Fad and served as an advisor to him. Followers of Khun Hon or Phraya Hon often refer to him simply as “Ta Khun Hon.” When possessed as Khun Hon, one displays a demeanor that is polite, kind, and deeply compassionate.

Ta Samrut is an elderly man who has abandoned his home to live a life of asceticism or study occult practices at a temple. Some people revere Ta Samrut as a Khru Mo Nora despite his lack of direct connection to Nora because he is known for his powerful magical skills. He is capable of healing various ailments and performing or defending against all forms of occult magic. Since certain Nora Rong Khru rituals and ceremonies require such expertise, some Nora artists choose to study these skills with Ta Samrut and regard him as a Khru Mo Nora in the realm of magic and spells.

Ta Mor Thao, also known as Pran Pa or a person who forages for wild goods, is revered with great respect, especially by those who work in the forests. It is believed that Ta Mor Thao is a skilled elephant hunter or an adept at powerful magic. Nora performers honor Ta Mor Thao as a Khru Mo Nora with a status similar to that of a hunter. Ta Mor Thao is considered to have significant supernatural power, and any wrongdoing by his followers is met with severe punishment immediately. When Ta Mor Thao possesses a medium, he is often seen wearing a white cloth wrapped around his head, chewing betel nut, and displaying a stern and authoritative demeanor.

Mae Khaen On, also known as Mae Khaen On Nang Hong, is a female Khru Mo Nora who is associated with the dancers. It is believed that Mae Khaen On was the caretaker of Nang Nual Thong Samlee when she was cast adrift, according to the Nora creation myth. When Mae Khae On possesses a medium, she is known for her playful and teasing demeanor with people, and she prefers beautiful attire. Some people refer to Mae Khaen On as “Nang Thasi.”

Deity Wan Tok is a group of Khru Mo Nora who are highly revered in Nakhon Si Thammarat Province and some districts of Trang Province that share a border with Nakhon Si Thammarat. Hongsa (S. Hongsa, personal communication, January 5, 2022) recounts that...

In the worship manual of Deity Wan Tok (Western Deities) from Nora Phua Pornsawan in Trang Province, it is mentioned that Deity Wan Tok consists of 12 female figures: 1) Mae Nuy – the principal wife and leader of the group, 2) Mae Thao Wan Khlon, 3) Yai Chi Hua Loen, 4) Mae Khaek, 5) Mae Thai, 6) Mae La Ong Kaew, 7) Mae La Ong Dam, 8) Mae La Ong Samlee, 9) Mae Sri Dok Mai, 10) Yai Chi Nok Wa, 11) Mae Tai Ka Luk, 12) Mae Khaen On. Originally, Deity Wan Tok resided on the island of Lanka (located to the west of Thailand), and later moved to Golden Mountain on Koh

Sichang. People invited them to the palace to stay with Phra Muang Thong. Deity Wan Tok prefers offerings of meat, eggs, and betel nuts and leaves.

Ancestor Spirits

Ancestor spirits, commonly referred to as “Ta Yai,” denote the spirits of ancestors from both the paternal and maternal sides who are not directly connected to the art of Nora. However, after their death, these spirits are believed to possess divine power and can protect their descendants. The presence of these spirits is often perceived through dreams, personal spiritual experiences, or supernatural events that indicate their continued existence. The belief in ancestor spirits shares similarities with the veneration of Khru Mo Nora: both involve setting up an shrine for the spirits and performing ceremonial offerings according to specific occasions. In modern Nora Rong Khru ceremonies, when conducting the rituals, the host will provide a list of ancestor spirits to the chief Nora performer, inviting them to receive the ceremonial offerings.

Sacred Beings

Sacred beings, also known as “Thuat,” refer to spirits that reside in nature, often taking the form of either humans or animals. For example: Thuat Lak Khet, it is believed to be multiple entities with the forms of humans, tigers, and snakes, residing at the Phab Pha mountain, which marks the boundary between Trang and Phatthalung provinces; Thuat Ang Thong, he appears as a crocodile, dwelling at Ang Thong Waterfall in Sikao District, Trang; Thuat Nilpat, he appears as an old man, residing in a cave at Wat Tham Iso in Huai Yot District, Trang; Thuat Sip Song Pak Nam, he appears as a crocodile, inhabiting the mouths of all rivers flowing into the Andaman Sea; Grandpa Chao Suwan, he appears as a sage, residing at the Tham Phueng dhamma retreat in Kantang District, Trang.

The significance of sacred beings is that they can be invoked to possess a medium to inquire about fate, life problems, health conditions, and to perform rituals to resolve various issues. Individuals who serve as mediums for these sacred beings often set up shrines within their homes for the sacred beings to reside, similar to the shrines for Khru Mo Nora. When the medium passes away, their descendants must continue to venerate and worship them without interruption. In modern times, during Nora Rong Khru rituals, it is customary to invite the spirits of these sacred beings to participate. Offerings are prepared, including fruits and meat such as raw eggs, boiled eggs, cooked chicken, and pig’s head.



Figure 3.3 The shrine of Thuat Lak Khet of the Pap Pha mountain, located at the border between Trang Province and Phatthalung Province. Taken on September 7, 2016.

Source: Yammai (2016)

In some communities, there is a belief that sacred beings are the spirits of local deities residing at specific places, with the duty to ensure peace and harmony within the community. If someone acts inappropriately or violates the rules, they may face punishment. For example, the story of Thuat Rubber Tree in Krok Yang Subdistrict, Kantang District, Trang Province, as described by Yammai (S. Yammai, personal communication, December 4, 2014), illustrates this belief.

“Thuat Rubber Tree is a sacred spirit residing in a large rubber tree in the middle of a rubber plantation. There are four spirits associated with this tree: Thuat Kaew Rahu, Thuat Kaew Prasit, Mae Kaew Si Thit, and Bang Daeng. Elders recount that on some nights, an orange-yellow light floats out from the rubber tree, believed to be the spirits of Thuat Rubber Tree inspecting the community’s peace and order. Consequently, people hold them in great reverence and fear.

A pivotal event that caused distress in the Kok Yang Village occurred when the owner of the rubber plantation contacted the authorities to request a grant for rubber plantation development. The authorities issued a directive requiring all rubber farmers to prepare their land for new rubber planting, mandating the removal of all trees growing on the land. This order forced the plantation owner to cut down the rubber tree where the spirits resided, despite opposition from the local residents. The process of cutting down the tree took almost half a day due to its enormous size and the manual sawing method used. Remarkably, as the tree was about to fall, it spun around several times before eventually toppling.

Shortly after the rubber tree was cut down, a series of ominous events began to occur in the community. Large numbers of cobras and king cobras appeared throughout the village, causing great concern among the residents. They speculated that this was because the landowner had cut down the sacred rubber tree of the village, and the bad omens began to manifest. Indeed, the community’s fears came true: the landowner’s daughter died under unnatural circumstances, with

blood flowing from her rectum without an apparent cause. Soon after, the landowner himself fell ill and died, and not long thereafter, another family member fell ill as well. The relatives began to believe the villagers' criticisms and sought the guidance of the spirit of Thuat To Sae, who is Thuat Suea. The spirit explained that the deaths and illnesses were a punishment from the sacred spirits for destroying the tree they once inhabited. The remedy was to build a temporary spirit shrine for the sacred beings and to plant a new rubber tree to replace the old one.

Upon learning this, the relatives built the temporary shrine and planted a new rubber tree. However, the new rubber trees withered and died each time they were planted. The relatives then invited Father Kae Hong, a monk from Wat Kok Yang, to plant the tree. After this intervention, the sick people in the family began to recover, and the newly planted rubber tree thrived and grew well. Today, the residents of Kok Yang Subdistrict hold an annual merit-making event during Songkran (Thai New Year) at the shrine near the rubber tree to dedicate the merit to the spirits of Thuat Rubber Tree. They also organize traditional performances such as shadow puppetry and Nora dance for the celebration."

The Chaeng Spirit

The Chaeng Spirit is a benevolent spirit that resides in the Nora pavilion. It is believed to have been present since the origins of Nora, during the time when Nang Nual Thong Samlee was cast adrift from the city. At that time, there was only Chaeng used to provide shelter to protect Nang Nual Thong Samlee from the sun and rain. Chaeng was made from leaves, such as palm leaves, sago palm leaves, or pandan leaves, stitched together simply. This story has been passed down through generations and evolved into a group of spirits known as the Chaeng Spirit. The role of the Chaeng Spirits is to protect Nora performers from malevolent spirits. This belief has led to the practice of using Chaeng leaves to cover the roof of Nora performance spaces, mimicking the shelter used by Nang Nual Thong Samlee. The appearance of the Chaeng Spirit is described in the Nora Farewell text, as detailed by Koeddee (L. Koeddee, personal communication, December 25, 2014).

...Saying, "Wait here, Nang O-Kra Chaeng, by the six posts,
Stay, my dear, Thongtaprao, though the man has left, he will return as most."
Saying, "Wait here, Nang O-Kra Chaeng, at the three sections wide,
Stay, my dear, Thongbangorn, though he's gone, he'll return with pride."
Saying, "Wait here, Nang O-Kra Chaeng, at the three corners near,
Stay, my dear, Thongngam, though the man has left, don't fear."
Saying, "In the evening, we'll play just one song, the evening's tune,
Stay, my dear, Thongkhukhen, though he's gone, he'll return soon."

Saying, “Wait here, the bee will leave the flower’s bloom,
Stay, my dear, don’t cry, though he’s gone, he’ll return to resume...”

From the verse, it is evident that the Chaeng Spirit or Nang O-Kra Chaeng Spirit resides at the pillars of the Nora pavilion. The Chaeng is used to thatch the roof, and after the Nora Rong Khru ritual is completed, the chief Nora recites verse instructing the Chaeng Spirit to guard the Nora pavilion grounds and promises to return again. This ritual creates a sacred discourse involving the Chaeng Spirit, as people believe that the area where a Nora pavilion is established becomes sacred ground. The land in that area is under the guardianship of Khru Mo Nora, with the Chaeng Spirit overseeing and protecting it. If the area is encroached upon, the Chaeng Spirit may impose punishment.

The belief in the Chaeng Spirit has led to the creation of a Nora ritual known as “Nora Beheading the Buffalo,” also referred to as “Nora Khao Ko.”

The term “Ko” means “forest.” The purpose of the Nora Khao Ko ritual is to make offerings to the spirit of the Chaeng. The steps of this ritual are similar to those of the Crocodile-Spearing ritual in nearly every aspect. The main difference is that in this ritual, a separate ceremonial space is constructed for the Chaeng Spirit, distinct from the Nora’s ceremonial space. At the end of the Crocodile-Spearing ritual, the chief Nora performs a verse called “Thorapi-Thorapa,” which recounts the story of King Pali killing a buffalo named Thorapi. During the buffalo beheading, the chief Nora marks a cross on the buffalo’s head with a sword and then cuts the rope tied to the buffalo’s nose, thus completing the ritual.

When selecting a buffalo for the ritual, it must be a male buffalo with ears as long as its horns and possessing desirable traits. In the past, the buffalo carcass was placed in a Ko or a forest, but since a Ko is no longer used, large branches are now piled to resemble a Ko. Around this makeshift Ko, some buffalo meat is skewered and planted, referred to as “7 haab of meat 7 kon of meat.”³³ When the Chaeng Spirit possesses a medium, it will run to the Ko and consume the buffalo meat.

³³ **Haab** is a Thai traditional unit of measurement for weight, **khon** is another traditional unit of measurement for weight, but smaller than “haab.” It essentially means having to carry 7 bundles of meat and 7 units of “khon”—something that’s very hard and labor-intensive. The phrase implies a task so difficult, it requires a lot of effort and resources to complete. It may also suggest the heavy responsibility or burden someone might face. (The translator)



Figure 3.4 The ritual of Buffalo Beheading, photographed by the Nora Samroeng Buntoengsilp Group, Trang Province, on January 8, 2021.

Source: Yammai (2021)

The Shin Spirit

The Shin Spirit, sometimes referred to as “Yin,” are a type of spirit found in the Southern Thai beliefs. This group is considered malevolent, possessing the power to punish humans to the point of death. However, some Nora practitioners, who wield powerful spells, are able to summon Shin spirits for various purposes. For example, they might summon Shin to harm enemies, enhance charm, or oversee and protect agricultural fields. The leader of the male Shin spirits is known as “Toh Adam,” while the female leader is called “Sittia Hwa.” There are also various types of Shin spirit followers.

Budsararat (1999: 2,053-2,055) describes the “Shin” as follows: Shin is a type of supernatural power that cannot be seen. It is a high-level spirit, not one derived from the spirits of deceased humans. Summoning, controlling, and maintaining Shin is very challenging because Shin is not afraid of any form of magic. Thus, chanting spells to summon Shin is not intended to instill fear but to seek friendship. Shin is categorized into five types: Shin of Sun, Shin of Water, Shin of Wind or Air, Shin of Fire, and Shin of Flowers.

Shin of Sun appears as a ball of light, similar to the beam of light emanating from a car’s headlights. Shin of Sun is a very powerful type of Shin. Those afflicted by this Shin may experience pale skin, emaciation, exhaustion, and ultimately death.

Shin of Water is A type of Shin resembling pond algae, believed to cause cold extremities, fluid accumulation in the lungs, abdominal swelling, and in severe cases, death

Shin of Wind or Shin of Air, this type of Shin is found in areas between two closely spaced mountains, where strong winds blow. Those affected by this Shin will experience chest tightness, vomiting, bloating, indigestion, and dizziness. It is commonly used to sabotage opponents during Nora or Nang Talung performances (shadow puppetry), as it can cause the competitor to experience these symptoms, making them unable to continue the competition. Using this Shin on someone is often effective and gives quick results.

Shin of Fire appears as a bright flame, similar to the Shin of Sun but smaller in size. Those affected by the Shin of Fire will experience intense heat in their body, as if being scorched by fire. They will be unable to sit or lie down comfortably and will feel restless.

Shin of Flowers has the special characteristic of emitting a fragrant smell. In ancient times, if people encountered a pleasant fragrance in an area where no flowers were present, it was believed to be the scent of the Shin of Flowers. It was considered important not to comment on this scent. It is said that in the past, Nora practitioners frequently used the Shin of Flowers to enhance their charm and allure, not with the intent to harm others but to increase their own attractiveness.

Shin comes in three levels: 1) high-Level Shin: Komen, Komes, Wealthy Brahma, Harsh Brahma, Ampa, Phra Vichai. High-level Shins are used for significant matters, such as eliminating enemies, which would involve calling upon Harsh Brahma, or for wartime, where Phra Vichai would be invoked. 2) Middle-Level Shins: Khun Prab, Khun In, Khun Shin, Khun Chian. These Shins can be called upon for any situation. 3) Low-Level Shins include the ghosts that inhabit mud holes, swamps, or dense forests, known by the names of Nai Hor, Nai Na, Nai Ma, Nai Mee, Nai Kong, and Nai Rak, “Nai Hor of the forest, Nai Kong of the wilderness, Nai Plak of the fields, Nai Rak of the earth.” Low-level Shins are easier to summon and are typically used to consume the flesh and bones of enemies. They tend to cause less severe effects, such as swelling around the ankles or other minor injuries.

A Shin shaman or someone knowledgeable in using Shin often keeps them at home, setting up a special room for them. Sometimes, Shin may quarrel with each other. Those who care for Shin must offer sacrifices every time they eat or drink anything. If they forget to make these offerings, Shin can cause harm. Shin can also harm the family of the caretaker if not properly looked after. Offering sacrifices to Shin is usually done on Tuesdays. Shin are typically used for the following purposes: 1) to guard against enemies who might attack, Shin can whisper warnings in advance so that precautions can be taken; 2) to deal with vengeful enemies who might retaliate, Shin can be used to consume the blood of the enemy until they die. It is believed that killing enemies by using Shin does not result in legal punishment; 3) to protect livestock. If a thief comes, Shin can show its power in various ways, such as hitting the thief, making the thief unable to find the entrance to the

house, or leading them astray; 4) to have charm and attraction in order to make people fall in love or be infatuated. This is often used in traditional performances like Nang Talung or Nora; 5) to sabotage opponents, such as placing Shin Water in front of an opposing Nang Talung theater to make the area cold, so people cannot tolerate sitting through the performance; and 6) to prolong treatment for patients, which allows the Shin shaman to charge more for their services. Generally, less harmful Shins like Shin of Wind or Shin of Water are used for such purposes.

To resolve Shin issues or treat someone harmed by Shin, the typical approach is to address the matter peacefully without threats of further harm. Shin are considered a high-level, mysterious power that is not afraid of magic or spells. Another method involves creating a “plong,” which means to render the Shin ineffective. This is done by mixing and grinding dog feces, wild boar feces, and otter feces together, then sprinkling the mixture around the affected area. It is believed that this can prevent Shin from causing further disturbance.

Beliefs about Weapons

The rituals performed in Nora Rong Khru ceremonies are deeply tied to mysticism and occult practices. It is believed that any mistake in these rituals can bring misfortune to the practitioner. Therefore, ancient Khru Mo Nora devised a method of self-defense for later generations of Nora performers by “carrying weapons” with them. It is believed that sharp weapons are protected by a deity named “Phra Petch Chalu Kan,” who is the guardian of all craftsmanship. This deity has the divine power to dispel spirits, evil entities, and various forms of misfortune. Thus, Nora weapons serve as both charms and practical tools.

In Nora ceremonies, both sharp and blunt weapons are used, totaling seven types: 1) Phra Khan, 2) sword, 3) Kris, 4) Shaman’s knife, 5) spear, 6) bow, 7) Naga’s Lasso. Each type of weapon has specific details as described below.

Phra Khan

Phra Khan is a pointed weapon with a short handle. In Southern Thai performing arts, it is commonly assigned to characters such as deities or kings. It is seen in performances like Nang Talung and Nora. In Nora, the Phra Khan is used when playing the role of a king in the Twelve Verse and during important ceremonies such as the Crocodile-Spearing ritual, the Sen Treatment ritual, the Vow Redeeming ritual, the Deity Sending ritual, and the Stage Leaving performance.

Nora Phra Khan is typically made from the Sang Khan wood, known for its tough and durable properties, or from a blend of metals. This metal is created by melting various types of iron together, such as nails used for coffin lids, iron from crematory pinnacles, ancient swords, and sacred nails. It is believed that these metals possess mystical properties and can be used as talismans.

Sword

The sword is a weapon used for chopping and slashing, suitable for face-to-face combat. In Nora Rong Khru rituals, the sword is specifically used during the Crocodile-Spearing ceremony. After Khru Mo Nora has stabbed the crocodile, a hunter is then tasked with cutting the crocodile. The Hunter must have a strong understanding of occult practices, as slicing the crocodile involves reciting specific incantations. It is believed that failing to recite the incantations correctly will bring misfortune to the person performing the slicing, leading to a gradual decline in their life over time.

The preferred areas to cut on the crocodile are the tip of the snout and the base of the tail, as these are the smallest and most manageable parts compared to the body. Each cut must separate the section completely; otherwise, the ritual is believed to be unsuccessful. If the cut does not fully sever the crocodile, it is believed that the Nora Rong Khru ritual will not achieve its intended outcome, and the host may have to perform the ritual again. This aspect is taken very seriously. The author believes that cutting the crocodile has psychological significance. The concept of being “severed or not severed” is crucial. When the Hunter successfully cuts the crocodile, symbolizing the mythical Chalawan, the human mind interprets this as the ritual being completed successfully, as Chalawan is considered dead. This brings mental peace, which in turn leads to physical well-being. Conversely, if the crocodile’s body is not fully severed, it causes mental anxiety and fear, as the saying “incomplete Nora performance” implies that the ritual is incomplete. This mental unrest can result in physical discomfort and potentially lead to illness. Therefore, to ensure the crocodile is cut as desired, several factors must be considered: the cutter must have a thorough knowledge of occult practices, possess good physical strength, choose appropriate cutting points suitable for their strength, and use a high-quality sword with proper weight, sharpness, and handle length suited to the user.

Kris

The Kris is a short weapon similar to a dagger with a double-edged blade. Kris blades can be either straight or wavy, with some having up to 19 waves. Each Kris blade is made from at least two types of metal, and to achieve a high-quality Kris, seven different metals are often combined. The Kris originated in India and initially did not have the wavy curvature but was made from the horn of a chamois. Some believe that the Malays were the originators of the Kris, originally made from tiger fangs, as the Malay region was once a dense forest with many tigers. Others believe that the Kris first appeared among Javanese people in Indonesia, where it was used by pirates. The Kris became a weapon used by the Thai people at an unspecified time in history. The French envoy, La Loubère, mentioned that King Narai of Siam bestowed a Kris to officials, worn on the left side of the waist for

convenience. Paintings from that era, such as those of Chao Phraya Kosapan, depict individuals dressed in Arabic Muslim attire and carrying a Kris (Ruangnarong, 2010: 268-270).

Kris is present in both the society and culture of Thailand. In addition to being a weapon, Kris serves as a symbol of masculinity and the status of its bearer, as some Kris are adorned with precious gemstones. Additionally, some people carry a Kris because they believe it can serve as a charm or an amulet.

Thai Buddhists and Thai Muslims in the South of Thailand believe that Kris possesses magical properties. For example, some believe that if a Kris is used to stab the footprint of someone, that person will die immediately. Some Kris are thought to be able to float and stab enemies at the will of their owner. At night, certain Kris are believed to disappear and reappear with traces of blood, or they can cause fire to appear wherever the Kris points (Ruangnarong, 2010: 271).

The author believes that the Kris became associated with Nora Rong Khru rituals through the belief in Khru Mo Nora and sacred figures from the Muslim tradition, who are referred to with the honorific “To” (meaning great-grandfather) such as To Dam, To Daeng, To Chen, To Mek, To Ahwa, and To Lamad. When these beliefs were integrated into Nora traditions, they created unique practices such as avoiding offerings that include Phok, presenting Muslim clothing, burning incense, and offering Kris. In addition to the religious beliefs surrounding Muslim Khru Mo Nora, it is observed that the veneration of these masters also stems from social relationships. For instance, some Nora practitioners who had learned spells from Muslim masters would invite them to receive offerings upon their death, similar to the way other spirits are honored.

Shaman’s Knife

The Shaman’s Knife plays a crucial role in Nora Rong Khru rituals, especially in actions involving “cutting” or “removing.” For instance, it is used in consecrating consecrated water to eliminate evil forces, cutting the neck of a chicken and the nose of a pig offered as the vow fulfilling to signify that the vow has been “severed” or the pact between parties has been dissolved. It is also used to cut the sacred thread in the Serd Crowning ceremony.

The most commonly used Shaman’s Knife is the Deuy Kai knife, which features a long, slender blade with a slight curve. The handle is typically made from auspicious wood, such as teak or tamarind. Some people prefer to insert powders of various woods into the handle, such as powder from protective woods, to signify “eliminating all dangers.”

The handle of the Shaman’s Knife is often crafted in the form of revered figures according to the user’s beliefs, such as hermits, Ganesh, or Phra Pidta. It is believed that these revered forms enhance the mystical power of the knife, making its use more effective. This belief has led to a

tradition of creating aesthetically pleasing Shaman's Knives, which not only enhance the user's spiritual value but have also become collectible art pieces cherished by amulet collectors.

Spear

The spear is a weapon used for combat at a distance, designed for thrusting or throwing at a target. Like the Phra Khan, the spear has a double-edged blade, but the handle is longer. In Nora Rong Khru rituals, the spear is used exclusively for stabbing the mythical crocodile, Chalawan. There are seven spears used for this purpose, each with distinct names and attributes. According to Koeddee (Interview, 2014), each spear has its own unique characteristics as described in the following verse.

“...Once finished, call for the Pichai Spear to enter the ceremonial hall immediately.

Each of the seven spears of our comrades has a different name:

The first spear is called Samak, with a handle carved with spells,

The second spear, Kor Tabuay, adorned with talismans that tells.

The third, Bai Takong, for precise strikes, sharp and strong,

Its handle crafted with power, where sharpness does belong.

The fourth is Patwa, linked with lightning's might,

A handle etched with spirit charms, a powerful sight.

The fifth, Jitta, pierces straight, aiming true,

A handle built to reach the mark, as only it can do.

The sixth, Jaturo Lohit, can pierce the stone,

Its might unbroken, power fully shown.

The seventh, Maha Chai, with bamboo in hand,

It strikes as sharp as through a stem, a fatal weapon, grand...”

The verse describe the names and mystical attributes of each spear, but in reality, spears numbered 1 through 6 are constructed quite simply. These spears are made from bamboo, carved flat, shaped to curve with a pointed tip to resemble a real spear. The handles are made from “Kla,” a type of plant with a round, smooth trunk commonly found in swampy forests or along water sources. In contrast, the seventh spear, known as Maha Chai, has a blade made of metal and features a handle made from bamboo or other auspicious woods.

Bow

The bow is a traditional weapon used by the Hunter. The bow itself is made from bamboo that is bent and shaped into a curve. The bowstring is crafted from rattan, and the quiver is a small rectangular basket, roughly the size of a thumb, woven from rattan as well, designed to hold the arrows. The arrows are made from clay, shaped into round tips, and left to dry thoroughly in the

sun. In the past, forest hunters commonly used this weapon for hunting, as the bow allows for shooting animals from a distance. The technique for shooting arrows involves slightly tilting the bow while drawing, as failing to do so can result in the arrow striking the shooter's hand, causing injury.

The bow is used exclusively in the Swan Dance ritual (the ritual of capturing the mythical swan). During this ceremony, as the Hunter approaches the Nora pavilion, they recite a spell and shoot three arrows. The first arrow is shot to the right of the Nora pavilion, the second to the left, and the third over the roof of the hall. The act of shooting the arrows is believed to serve two purposes: to clear a path for the Hunter to successfully capture the swan and to drive away any evil forces from the Nora pavilion.



Figure 3.5 The Hunter during the Swan Dance ritual, photographed from the Nora Srichan Sanit Noi troupe, Trang Province, on September 11, 2015.

Source: Yammai (2015)

The Naga's Lasso

The Naga's Lasso is another weapon used exclusively by the Hunter in the Swan Dance ritual. In this ceremony, the Hunter plays the role of "Pran Boon," whose task is to capture the swan or

Manora and present it to Phra Suthon. The swan is a mythical creature that cannot be caught with other weapons; it must be captured and bound with the Naga's Lasso. This is the origin of the Nora Dance ritual of capturing the swan.

In the past, the Naga's Lasso was commonly made from rattan, shaved thin, and woven into a rope. Nowadays, ordinary rope is generally used. The Naga's Lasso can be divided into two parts: 1) the rope head: this is characterized by a knot, tied using a specific technique known as "Nak Bas Knotting," and 2) the rope end: this part extends from the rope head and is approximately 6 meters long. To use the Naga's Lasso, the rope head is placed around the back of the swan's waist, and the swan is then made to spin around itself three times before turning back. Some believe that a Naga's Lasso that has previously captured a swan possesses mystical powers and can protect against evil forces. Consequently, it is sometimes requested from the Nora for use in binding the nose of a fighting bull to lead it into the bullfighting arena.

All weapons used in the Nora Rong Khru ritual must be carefully preserved, as it is believed that all such weapons have mystical properties. Therefore, they must be treated with respect, especially sharp weapons, which are considered sacred objects. Onmak (J. Onmak, personal communication, December 16, 2014) recounts that...

"...Both the spear and the sword have specific names. The sword is called 'Nora Nari,' and the spear is named 'Thao Khun Thong.' Before moving or cleaning them, it is essential to light incense and candles and make a formal announcement. Otherwise, it is believed that misfortunes may befall the family, such as illness..."

The value of the belief in the proper preservation of weapons used in Nora Rong Khru rituals is that it teaches respect for tools and equipment. Every time these items are used or stored, they are handled with care, which results in a longer lifespan for the tools and equipment. This practice is a form of moral teaching passed down through the discourse of the mystical and sacred nature of the weapons.

Today, science and technology have advanced rapidly, revealing some of the mysteries that were once feared by people in the past through reliable scientific processes. The new generation, which will play a crucial role in preserving Nora culture, is being educated to understand the natural world through scientific methods. Therefore, when the traditional beliefs in Nora Rong Khru rituals confront the scientific thinking of the younger generation, it leads to hesitation, doubt, and questioning between the two sides. A good solution to this issue is to adjust perspectives with understanding and mutual respect, recognizing that "both the beliefs in Nora Rong Khru rituals and scientific processes arose from human wisdom in different periods. Both serve to benefit society, and thus, both hold equal value as human wisdom."

Chapter 4

The Shrine of Khru Mo Nora and the Worship

The belief in Khru Mo Nora is rooted in the idea that Khru Mo Nora are a group of spirits with a way of existence similar to that of humans. They consume, reside, and can interact with each other or with humans. Therefore, descendants who respect and revere them must create a “Khru Mo Nora shrine” and must “perform rituals of worship” according to Nora traditions to ensure the well-being and tranquility of both Khru Mo Nora and their descendants.

Khru Mo Nora shrine

The “Khru Mo Nora shrine” is the residence of Khru Mo Nora. It is commonly placed in the most inaccessible area to prevent the daily activities of family members from disturbing the peace of Khru Mo Nora. The shrine is ideally oriented towards the north. If the space within the house does not allow this, it is permissible to orient the shrine towards the east. Other orientations are not preferred.

Precautions for installing the shrine include: do not place it on door or window frames as it might be exposed to sunlight, wind, or animals that could cause damage. Do not install the shrine in the bedroom of a married couple. Do not place it in the kitchen, near the bathroom, or attach it to the house’s pillar.

Components of Khru Mo Nora Shrine

A Khru Mo Nora shrine consists of four key components: 1) the shrine itself, 2) Chian Khru, 3) Ceiling cloth, 4) incense holder, candlestick, and vase



Figure 4.1 A Khru Mo Nora shrine, photographed on August 1, 2021

Source: Yammai (2021)

The “shrine” is commonly made from auspicious woods such as jackfruit wood, tamarind wood, teak wood, Siamese Rosewood, and Sabah salwood. There are four main types of shrines: 1) Ashram-Styled shrine which is elevated with four posts about 90 centimeters high, placed on the floor of the house; 2) Fak shrine or Bamboo-Woven shrine, which is made from woven bamboo and placed under the roof. This type is commonly found in the areas around the border between Songkhla, Phatthalung, and Nakhon Si Thammarat provinces; 3) Ceiling-Hung shrine, it involves tying a Ceiling cloth under the house’s roof and using a wooden platform to place the necessary items for Khru Mo Nora. This type is frequently found in some areas of Songkhla and Phatthalung provinces; and 4) Wall-Mounted shrine, it is similar to a Buddhist shrine, this type is attached to the wall and is commonly found in Trang province.

About 10 years ago, a new trend emerged in creating multi-tiered shrines, such as three-tier or five-tier shrines. This trend arose from the belief that Khru Mo Nora is a “spirit with great power,” and thus the shrine should reflect the master’s power appropriately. The advantage of this multi-tiered design is that it allows for convenient and attractive placement of offerings and makes cleaning easier.

The Chian Khru or Pan Khru is an offering tray for Khru Mo Nora. It contains betel nuts and money, puffed rice, and flowers, each in quantities of 12, and one candle is placed on the tray. The Chian Khru is placed on Khru Mo Nora shrine from the first day the shrine is set up.

The Ceiling cloth is a white rectangular cloth tied at all four corners, stretched above the shrine at an appropriate height. It must not obscure other offerings placed on the shrine and should be high enough to avoid the heat from incense and candles. The cloth contains betel nuts and leaves, money, puffed rice, and flowers in quantities of 12. In some areas, nails and Nora bracelets may also be included. When the offerings inside the Ceiling cloth wither, it is not customary to discard them but rather to replenish them with fresh items. Therefore, the Ceiling cloth must be securely tied to support the weight of these offerings.

Incense burner, candle holder, and vase: these are basic offerings that must accompany Khru Mo Nora shrine. In the past, people used cans or glass jars for the incense burner, candle holder, and vase. Today, ceramic or brass items are preferred due to their greater beauty and heat resistance.

Additional elements to the shrines may or may not be included such as the Hunter’s Face, the Nang Thasi’s Face, and a Serd (headdress). Additionally, some people choose to include other offerings based on their beliefs, such as small pillows for putting in front of the Hunter’s Face and the Nang Thasi’s Face, clothing, cosmetics (if Khru Mo Nora is female), drinking glasses, liquor glasses, coconut cups, and garlands.

Area in front of Khru Mo Nora shrine: it is customary to place a pillow on a mat made of reed and cover it with a white cloth, known as “Sad Mhon” (pillow and mat arrangement). This is done regularly to demarcate the area of Khru Mo Nora shrine and to serve a practical purpose during ceremonies.

Ritual of Setting Up Khru Mo Nora Shrine

The ritual of setting up Khru Mo Nora shrine involves inviting Khru Mo Nora’s spirit to reside on the shrine. This ritual demonstrates acceptance and reverence for Khru Mo Nora and marks the beginning of the worship practices that must be passed down to future generations. Once the shrine-setting ritual is performed, it is generally not dismantled or discarded, as it is believed that Khru Mo Nora represents the spirit of ancestors. Destroying the shrine is considered an act of disrespect towards the ancestors, leading to misfortune for the family lineage.

The ritual of setting up Khru Mo Nora shrine can be divided into two types: 1) the ritual performed by a chief Nora, and 2) the ritual performed by a local healer.

The ritual of setting up Khru Mo Nora shrine when conducted by a chief Nora is considered the most correct and appropriate practice. This is because the chief Nora holds legitimate authority and responsibilities according to Nora traditions. The ritual conducted by a chief Nora can be divided into two types: 1) the ritual with dance offering: this involves organizing a dance performance in front of the shrine. The sequence of this ritual is as follows: Khru Mo Nora Invocation, dance offering, reciting verse to invite Khru Mo Nora using the Teacher Appreciation verse and the Satsadi verse. At this stage, Khru Mo Nora will participate in the ritual. After that, offerings and performing are presented including the Teacher Teaching verse, the Dance Teaching verse, the Initial verse, the Khun Tha verse, and other verse in sequence. When it is time to invite Khru Mo Nora to the shrine, the chief Nora selects three out of the Twelve Verse for the ritual, such as the verse of Thao Atit, the verse of Phra Rotthasen, and the verse of Phra Rama. Khru Mo Nora is then invited to the shrine by placing the offering and other ritual items on the shrine and reciting accompanying incantations.



Figure 4.2 The ceremony of setting up a new shrine, photographed by the Nora James Saneh Silp troupe, Trang Province, on March 10, 2022

Source: Yammai (2022)

Afterwards, the chief Nora will recite verse to send off Khru Mo Nora and the deities, and perform the final ritual of pouring water to dedicate the merit. The procedures for setting up the shrine may vary depending on the Nora lineage and training, but the common goal is to invite Khru Mo Nora to reside on the shrine. 2) The second method for setting up the shrine involves having only the chief Nora perform the ritual by reciting the Satsadi verse and invoking Khru Mo Nora invitation verse to the shrine. This method is more cost-effective and time-efficient compared to the first method.

The ritual of setting up the shrine by a local healer involves having a local healer or a practitioner of occult sciences as the main officiant. This method is similar to the setup where only a chief Nora is arranged to recite the Satsadi verse and invoke Khru Mo Nora invitation. The practice of using a local healer is common in areas where a chief Nora cannot be found, or where the host has constraints related to time and budget. When choosing a local healer for the ritual, it is important to select one who specializes in auspicious ceremonies. Healers who deal with malevolent or harmful practices are generally not invited to perform the ritual of setting up Khru Mo Nora shrine.

Currently, some mediums or even certain monks volunteer to conduct the Nora shrine-setting ritual. However, these practices are not widely accepted within the Nora community, as the proper officiants for Nora-related rituals should be those who have previously undergone the chief Nora initiation or are highly skilled local healers with significant experience in ceremonial practices.

Arranging the Offerings in Front of the Shrine

The offerings used in the Nora shrine-setting ritual are the same as those used in the Nora Rong Khru rituals, which are detailed in Chapter 2. The following describes the method for arranging the offerings in the shrine-setting ritual, which should be done according to tradition to facilitate the ritual and enhance its appearance.

The arrangement of offerings starts from the area closest to Khru Mo Nora shrine and proceeds outward. Note that the terms “right” or “left” are based on the direction Khru Mo Nora shrine faces.

Steps for arranging the offerings as follows: lay a Lepironia mat in front of the shrine and place one pillow on the mat and cover it with a white cloth. Then place nine candles of the candle array on the pillow. Each candle’s base should have one set of betel nuts and leaves. Next to the candles, lay a coupled cloth. The men’s cloth should be on the right side and the women’s cloth on the left side. Use two sets of Chian offerings: one set on the right side near the men’s cloth and Later, the government introduced the other set on the left side near the women’s cloth. Place the mirror, comb, and scented powder on the left side, as these are offerings for the female Khru Mo Nora. In the center between the two pieces of cloth, place the Hunter’s Face and the Nang Thasi’s Face. The Hunter’s Face should be on the right side, and the Nang Thasi’s Face on the left side.



Figure 4.3 Arrangement of offerings in front of the shrine, taken on March 10, 2022

Source: Yammai (2022)

Mhap Phong La offerings are typically placed along the right side or across the front of the Hunter's Face and the Nang Thasi's Face. In the empty space in the center, place a sacred bowl. To the right of the sacred bowl, place Khao Sipsong; to the left, place Khao Kao. Then, separate this area with a curry rice bowl, arranging them horizontally. Next, arrange other types of offerings as follows: rice whisky, red syrup, coconut water, young coconut, bananas, sugarcane, and various auspicious fruits. Thai sweets, boiled pig head, golden-mouthed chicken, boiled eggs, raw eggs, and possibly boiled duck or seafood can also be included. When arranging the offerings, place savory items on the right side and sweet items and fruits on the left side. Chian Khru and the consecrated water pot should be placed at the front, close to the person performing the ceremony.

Care and Maintenance of Khru Mo Nora Shrine

Khru Mo Nora shrine is a sacred space within the home. People in the southern region are taught to respect and revere the power and sacred mystical forces of Khru Mo Nora. They must be cautious to avoid any actions that might disturb Khru Mo Nora, with violations often resulting in

punishment by elders. This training has led many younger generations to fear and lack understanding in properly maintaining Khru Mo Nora shrine. Therefore, the following content outlines the correct and appropriate ways to care for Khru Mo Nora shrine according to Nora traditions. It is divided into three guidelines: 1) maintaining Khru Mo Nora shrine, 2) rituals for worshiping Khru Mo Nora on Buddhist Days and Songkran, 3) annual offerings to Khru Mo Nora.

Maintaining Khru Mo Nora Shrine

The goal of maintaining Khru Mo Nora shrine is to ensure its cleanliness and orderliness. The foremost consideration is: “do not dismantle or move the Ceiling cloth and Chian Khru from the shrine.” These two items are symbols of Khru Mo Nora’s presence. Violating this rule is believed to result in punishment by Khru Mo Nora. Other actions, however, can be performed with the following guidelines.

Cleaning Khru Mo Nora shrine is typically done when it becomes very dirty, but it is not done daily, as it is considered disruptive to Khru Mo Nora. The preferred method involves using a clean white cloth or a clean cloth dampened with water to wipe and clean the shrine. If there is dust or cobwebs on the shrine, a feather duster can be used to remove them before wiping. However, using a broom to sweep the shrine is strictly prohibited, as it is deemed inappropriate. Flower vases and drinking glasses can be washed. If candle holders are heavily soiled with wax, the wax can be scraped off. For incense holders, if they are packed with incense sticks, which could be a fire hazard, the sticks can be removed and either burned, buried, floated on water, or left under a large tree, but it is not appropriate to throw them in the trash. If the betel nuts and leaves in the Chian Khru tray are excessively numerous, they can be dealt with using the same methods as incense sticks. Brass items like vases, candle holders, and incense holders are typically cleaned by soaking them in a solution of 2 tablespoons of monosodium glutamate and 1 cup of tamarind juice or another acidic fruit juice for about 2 hours. After soaked, they should be scrubbed with a clean cloth to restore their shine and cleanliness.

To clean the Hunter’s Face and the Nang Thasi’s Face, it is common to use a clean white cloth or a clean cloth dampened with water. After wiping, use cotton soaked in scented oil for a second wipe. The use of scented oil has the advantage of leaving a pleasant fragrance and a shiny appearance. This cleaning is typically done once a year, during Songkran Day. When the Hunter’s Face and the Nang Thasi’s Face are cleaned, special attention should be paid to the condition of the eyes and nostrils. It is crucial to ensure there are no cobwebs or foreign objects blocking these areas, as it is believed that failure to do so may result in Khru Mo Nora punishing the household members with eye or nasal ailments to highlight the issue.

For cleaning the area around the shrine, a broom can be used to clean and wipe the floor. The Lepironia mat, pillows, and white cloth regularly placed in front of the shrine can be washed or sun-dried to remove dust.

Tools and equipment related to Khru Mo Nora, such as Nora instruments and various weapons, are typically stored in a cabinet with a secure lid or placed in a box. If the items are too large, they are usually kept beside Khru Mo Nora shrine, according to the size and nature of the items. It is important not to store Nora instruments in the same wardrobe as the household members' clothing, as it is considered inappropriate to mix these different types of attire.

For fulfilling one's vow to Khru Mo Nora with things such as gold leaf and garlands, gold leaf can be applied to the shrine as appropriate, and garlands are commonly hung in one of the corners of the shrine. It is not customary to use nails to hang the garlands on the shrine. If offerings include clothing, some people place the clothes on the shrine but must be cautious about fire hazards from incense and candles. Therefore, some people prefer to remove the clothes from the shrine after the offering and store them in a chest or cabinet beside Khru Mo Nora shrine.

Daily activities should be avoided near Khru Mo Nora shrine, such as changing clothes, eating, or entertaining guests. It is important to regularly check and protect the shrine from pets that might climb and disrupt it. If the shrine is located in a room, doors and windows should be securely closed. If there are ventilation openings near the shrine, ensure that sunlight does not directly shine on the shrine and be cautious of strong winds that could damage the items on the shrine.

Those who honor and have faith in Khru Mo Nora should continuously maintain and check the order of the shrine, as it is believed that if Khru Mo Nora is well-cared for, Khru Mo Nora will bestow blessings and prosperity upon the family.

Worship Rituals for Khru Mo Nora on Buddhist Holy Days and Songkran Day

Buddhist holy days are specific dates determined by the lunar calendar for Buddhists to collectively engage in religious activities at temples. Each month features four holy days: the 8th day of the waxing moon, the 15th day of the waxing moon, the 8th day of the waning moon, and the 14th or 15th day of the waning moon. If individuals cannot attend temple activities, they may conduct religious practices at home by refraining from wrongdoing, performing good deeds, and purifying their minds. Some people believe that on holy days, deities in heaven gather in the divine assembly to listen to teachings. Therefore, holy days are significant not only for humans but also for deities. This belief is linked with Khru Mo Nora tradition, leading to specific practices for honoring Khru Mo Nora on holy days. It is believed by some that Khru Mo Nora is a celestial being residing in the first heaven, known as the "Catummaharajika Heaven." These beings are considered to have celestial abodes on Earth, similar to human living conditions, including needs for food, housing, and

communication, but with more refined and beautiful forms and artifacts. Since Khru Mo Nora is considered a deity, it is believed that he participates in the divine assembly along with other deities. Therefore, before Khru Mo Nora join the divine assembly, devotees commonly offer offerings to Khru Mo Nora. The process for making offerings to Khru Mo Nora on holy days is straightforward and can be done independently.

Devotees of Khru Mo Nora should prepare offerings, which include betel nuts and leaves, fresh flowers or flower garlands, coconut water, red syrup, and clean water. Rice whisky is generally not offered on holy days, as it is believed that Khru Mo Nora observes precepts on these days. The process for making offerings begins with lighting 12 sticks of incense and a pair of candles. Then, recite the Devotion to the Triple Gem chant three times, followed by the deity assembling chant. Next, make a prayer to present the offerings. An example prayer might be:

“By the power of our ancestors, Khru Mo Nora, such as Pho³⁴ Khun Sattha, Pho Ta Pran Boon, Ta Khun Kaew, Ta Khun Krai, Muen Wai Petchakat, Ta Muen Jet Bong, Ta Muang Thong, Ta Mom Rong, Mae³⁵ Sri Mala, Mae Sampao, Mae Mao Klun, Mae Khaen On, or any Khru Mo Nora whom our ancestors revered, whether known by name or unknown, today I offer you betel nuts and leaves, flowers, incense, candles, and other offerings. If I have made any mistakes, please forgive me today. But if you are pleased, please bless me and my family with peace and happiness, progress in our work, health, prosperity, and good encounters wherever we go.”

In addition to honoring Khru Mo Nora on holy days, some regions also observe rituals for Khru Mo Nora during Songkran (Thai New Year). The procedure is as follows: begin by cleaning Khru Mo Nora shrine and making offerings while requesting blessings. The ritual is similar to the practices on holy days. This practice reflects a deep sense of gratitude toward ancestors. When this trait is cultivated as a personal characteristic, the individual becomes cherished and respected within the community.

Annual Khru Mo Nora Offering Ritual

The annual Khru Mo Nora offering ritual is a ceremonial practice of making offerings to Khru Mo Nora according to a set schedule each year. The timing for this ritual varies depending on regional

³⁴ In Thai, the word “Pho” does not always refer to an actual biological father. In certain contexts, especially when used as a prefix, it signifies an honorific or respectful title that conveys a person’s high status or spiritual significance rather than referring to an actual father. (The translator)

³⁵ In Thai, the word “Mae” does not always refer to an actual biological mother. In certain contexts, especially when used as a prefix, it signifies an honorific or respectful title that conveys a person’s high status or spiritual significance rather than referring to an actual mother. (The translator)

customs. For example, in Phatthalung, Songkhla, and Nakhon Si Thammarat provinces, the preferred months are the 6th, 9th, 10th, or 11th according to the lunar calendar. In Trang province, the ritual is commonly observed in the 10th month and is referred to as the “Ritual for Setting Up Ancestors’ Shrine.” The choice of the 10th month in Trang is likely due to its alignment with the local lifestyle. During this period, people in Trang typically have more free time as their agricultural activities slow down. For example, rice farmers wait for their crops to grow, and rubber tappers face heavy rains that make rubber tapping difficult. Additionally, the 10th month coincides with the traditional merit-making festival known as Sart Thai, during which people make various traditional sweets such as Pong (rice puff), La (glutinous rice dessert), Baa (a type of sweet treat made with rice flour, sugar, and coconut milk, often steamed or fried), and Dee Sum (small ring-shaped fried rice flour dessert). These sweets are also used in Khru Mo Nora offerings, making this time particularly suitable for the ritual.

For the annual Khru Mo Nora offering ritual, it is customary to choose days of the waning moon, such as the 13th, 14th, and 15th nights. These days do not necessarily have to fall on a Thursday. The preferred time for the ritual is between approximately 9:00 AM and 11:00 AM, although it can be earlier or later, but it should not extend beyond noon.

The offerings used in the annual ritual are similar to those used in the Nora Rong Khru rituals and Khru Mo Nora shrine setup. In some areas, the quantity and types of offerings might be reduced, such as fewer sacred bowls, fruits or traditional sweets.

The annual offering ritual is usually led by an elder family member, a shaman, or a chief Nora. Before starting the ritual, the homeowner must place betel nuts and leaves in the Ceiling cloth and Chian Khru on Khru Mo Nora shrine. Then, incense and candles are lit at Khru Mo Nora shrine, and a sacred thread tied to the Ceiling cloth is drawn around the offerings. It is believed that “the sacred thread³⁶ (Sai Sin) acts as a bridge allowing Khru Mo Nora to enter the ritual space.”

Then, the homeowner distributes incense sticks to relatives and attendees of the ritual for use in their prayers and offerings to Khru Mo Nora. These incense sticks are then placed in the food offerings. Next, candles are lit and placed on the offerings.

³⁶ **Sai Sin** is a sacred thread used in Thai rituals for blessings, protection, and good fortune. It is tied around the wrists during ceremonies like ordinations, weddings, or house blessings. The thread symbolizes a spiritual connection to the divine and is believed to carry protective energy. (The translator)

The ritual leader performs the chant of Devotion to the Triple Gem (reciting 'Namo' three times) to show respect to the supreme teacher, the Buddha. They then focus their mind to communicate with Khru Mo Nora, calling them to join the ritual, a practice referred to as “reciting the Lam Luek mantra.” Following this, the leader recites the Satsadi verse. The author believes that “Satsadi” or “Saddi” shares the same meaning as “Saraswati,” the goddess of wisdom in Brahmanism. The Satsadi verse is an important ritual in southern Thailand. Historically, it was not only used for venerating teachers but also recited before sleep for auspiciousness.



Figure 4.4 Annual Khru Mo Nora Offering Ritual, photographed on October 2, 2021.

Source: Yammai (2021)

The Satsadi verse comes in various versions depending on the region, but all versions share a similar meaning: they are meant to praise and honor the virtues of teachers, ancestors, deities, and the Triple Gem (Buddha, Dhamma, and Sangha). To provide a better understanding and appreciation of the Satsadi verse, the author presents one version of the chant from the book *Writings of Praise and Traditional Chant of the South* by Noothong (1981: 33-35). The content is as follows:

Hail, hail, auspicious one,
Please come and dwell within me, son.
I humbly study teachings bright,
Speaking both in verse and light.
May all foes be swept away,
Let them vanish, fade and stray.
Hail, hail, prosperity,
May all suffering cease to be.

May wealth flow without delay,
 I bow to power, sacred, great.
 With hands together, placed with grace,
 Between my brows, I humbly place.
 I offer to the Buddha true,
 And bow to Metteya, revered too.
 I bow to the revered Sangha,
 As to the Buddha's Nirvana.
 To all teachers, wise and true,
 Who've taught me well in all I do.
 To sacred names and letters bright,
 To divine teachings, pure in light.
 The teachers have imparted deep,
 The knowledge that I vow to keep.
 May I not forget their grace,
 Including rice puffs, flowers' embrace.
 Everything is placed with care,

 Incense, candles, offerings rare.
 Betel nuts and leaves so fine,
 Perfumed oil, a sacred sign.
 All offerings are placed with care,
 Food and trays in reverent air.
 I honor the kind teacher true,
 Who's shown me paths of fortune due.
 I sit with caution, mind and speech,
 In every word and deed I teach.
 All that's taught to me, I keep,
 Verse and chants that guide so deep.
 Let this wisdom light my way,
 Enlightening me each passing day.
 Whenever the teacher speaks with grace,
 May I practice, in every place.

I honor the compassionate guide,
Who's taught me well, with love and pride.
I've honored my teacher, kind and true,
And also my mother, too.
My mother, who gave me birth,
In her womb, for ten months on earth,
She endured hardships, pain and strife,
Until the moment I came to life.
When I was born, she cradled me,
As her precious child, lovingly.
No ants or pests would come near,
No lice or fleas to cause her fear.
She bathed and fed me with such care,
Tying my cradle, soft and fair.
When I cried, she'd tend to me,
Offering rice and soup, patiently.
When I was ill, she'd worry deep,
Her love for me, a vow to keep.
The hardships my mother did bear,
Are known by all, beyond compare.
Heaven and earth, they bear the truth,
To her enduring love and proof.
I've honored my teacher,
with respect so true,
And now I bow, my thanks to you.
I honor my father, revered and kind,
Who raised me safely, heart and mind.
To both of my parents, I lift them high,
For their love and care will never die.
I thrived and survived, by their grace,
Blessed by their love, in every place.
May you both protect me, keep me safe,
Shield me from harm, with gentle grace.

No enemies near, no troubles to face,
May all adversities leave no trace.
 With ten fingers, I bow down,
To arahants in every town.
To the gods above, in heavens high,
May they protect me as I sigh.
To the ancient Buddha, pure and true,
Supreme in realms, beyond our view.
To the great teacher of the southeast,
Who in the southeast brings us peace.
To the southern Buddha, strong and sure,
Always steadfast, forever pure.
To the sage, the arahant, wise and grand,
Protector, guardian, with gentle hand.
To the western Buddha, full of grace,
Wisdom and love in every place.
To the northern protector, brave and bold,
Mighty and fearless, strong as gold.
To the northeastern arahant, divine,
Exalted, shining, bright as wine.
To the earth guardian, strong and revered,
In honor and strength, your power is cleared.
To the heavenly sage, so pure,
Shining with grace, so strong and sure.
To the guardian of all powers, grand,
Mighty protector, take my hand.
With all respect, I bow so low,
And lift you high, my thanks to show.
To my teachers, my parents, dear,
My aunts and uncles, ever near.
May they protect from harm and strife,
Guarding me through every life.
From calamities, misfortune, too,
I ask for blessings, pure and true.

Protecting from all dangers near,
From every calamity, far and here,
I invite the teacher, kind and true,
To come swiftly, to guide me through.
To guard against all misfortune's call,
And shield me from harm, big or small,
May the protection be strong and bright,
With blessings and radiance, pure light.
I bow to the teacher, wise and clear,
Who's imparted wisdom, ever dear.

With ten fingers, I place them with care,
Between my brows in prayer, so fair.
Offering incense and candles bright,
Tied into a garland, pure in light.
Betel leaves and nuts, arranged on a tray,
With a three-tiered Bai Sri, set for the day.
A mat is spread as a seat to rest,
With pure white cloth, in reverent quest.

.....
On the cloth, flowers so sweet,
Roasted rice and puffed rice, a treat.
Beautifully peeled betel nuts, in grace,
Silver and sesame seeds, a sacred trace.
To show reverence, respect, and care,
I bow to the teacher, with gratitude rare.
Morning and evening, I humbly pray,
Teaching me wisdom, in every way.
Teaching the ten mothers, so deep,
Thai script and laws that we keep.
The wooden board where I write,
Learning from the teacher, day and night.
May the blessings be strong and true,
Buddha's great blessings, shining through.

The blessings of Dharma, pure and bright,

The blessings of Sangha, full of light.

The teacher rests, the teacher teaches, the teacher instructs, the teacher learns, the teacher reads, and the teacher writes. Please accept the betel nuts and leaves, the offerings from the students.

After the ritual leader has completed reciting the Satsadi verse, the next step is to offer the offerings to Khru Mo Nora. At this stage, Khru Mo Nora might possess a medium. The ritual leader will present the Chian Khru offerings to Khru Mo Nora to show respect. Once the possession is complete, the final step is to return Khru Mo Nora to the shrine with a chant. Afterward, the chant for dismissing the offerings is recited, and the offerings are distributed among the relatives to share and eat. It is believed that the food offered to the teacher becomes divine food, and anyone who consumes it will receive blessings.

Worship Practices for Khru Mo Nora

The worship practices for Khru Mo Nora are the ways in which individuals related to Khru Mo Nora conduct themselves. The aim is to show respect and reverence to Khru Mo Nora and to uphold the dignity of the Nora tradition. These practices can be categorized based on the groups of people associated with Khru Mo Nora into three groups: 1) Nora spirit mediums, 2) Nora artists, 3) Nora descendants.

Worship Practices for Khru Mo Nora by Spirit Mediums

The Nora spirit mediums play a crucial role in Nora Rong Khru rituals and the family lineage, as follows: 1) they serve as intermediaries between the human world and the spirit world; 2) they have the authority to determine whether each ritual is conducted correctly and meets its intended purpose; 3) they provide guidance on how to live life and resolve various issues for family members; 4) they act as the spiritual center of the family lineage; and 5) they help ensure the continuation of the Nora tradition into the future, such as selecting family members to become Nora artists and determining the timing for Nora Rong Khru rituals.

In Trang Province, there is a perspective on the possession of Khru Mo Nora that during each ritual, Khru Mo Nora selects the spirit medium himself/herself. This could be either the same medium as before or a new one. In contrast, other provinces believe that once a Khru Mo Nora has chosen a person for possession, that medium should be used consistently until their death. However, both viewpoints converge on one point: Khru Mo Nora in each family lineage must choose only members of their own family to be possessed. If an outsider claims to be possessed by Khru Mo Nora of that lineage, they will not be recognized or accepted.

The expectations of descendants when a Khru Mo Nora possesses a medium are that the medium should be able to perceive both the past, present, and future. The medium should be able to solve life problems effectively, which will lead to acceptance and respect for the medium. In the past, there was a belief that only males of a certain age could serve as Khru Mo Nora mediums. However, this viewpoint has relaxed over time, and it is now common to see mediums who are female or younger individuals.

The organization of the hierarchy of Khru Mo Nora when more than one entity is possessing is based on the belief in the concept of the “Chief Khru Mo Nora (Khru Mo Hua Chueak)” or “Head Khru Mo Nora (Khru Mo Ton Chueak).” This refers to the principal Khru Mo Nora. Each family lineage may have a different chief Khru Mo Nora. The determination of which Khru Mo Nora is considered the head is not based on the rank or status of Khru Mo Nora as described in Nora creation myths, but rather on seniority and historical reverence passed down from ancestors. If a Khru Mo Nora has been revered since ancient times alongside the family, that master is considered the Head Khru Mo Nora. Other teachers who have recently been honored are considered subordinate Khru Mo Nora. Therefore, if there are suggestions or issues that need to be decided, the opinion of the Head Khru Mo Nora is generally given primary consideration.

The role of Khru Mo Nora’s medium has authority over family members through rituals and beliefs. Especially, mediums who have been tested through cultural processes and proven to be genuinely possessed by Khru Mo Nora gain significant reverence. As a result, the medium becomes the center of the family’s faith almost by default.



Figure 4.5 Khru Mo Nora possessing a medium to assist descendants, taken on March 19, 2021

Source: Yammai (2021)

Currently, there is a backlash against certain mediums, particularly those who are frauds exploiting public beliefs for personal gain. This backlash has affected the reputation of all mediums, including Khru Mo Nora. To maintain the dignity of Khru Mo Nora mediums, they should adhere to certain conduct and guidelines in their daily lives. This is to prevent tarnishing their image due to personal greed or accusations from others.

The conduct for worshipping Khru Mo Nora by mediums should adhere to basic moral principles of humanity, known as “precepts.” These precepts create peace and well-being for those who follow them. Mediums should thus follow the Five Precepts of Buddhism as a foundation for their daily lives: 1) not taking life, 2) not stealing, 3) not engaging in sexual misconduct with someone else’s partner, 4) not lying, 5) not consuming intoxicants. However, in practice, Khru Mo Nora mediums are still ordinary people and are not necessarily enlightened beings. Therefore, it is possible for them to occasionally lapse or deviate from these precepts. Nonetheless, Precept 4, which is about not lying, should be observed with the utmost strictness compared to the others. If a medium has a habit of lying, boasting, or exaggerating, others will not trust them during rituals involving Khru Mo Nora.

Mediums should show respect for other belief groups in society, such as deities in Brahmanism, gods according to Chinese beliefs, and local guardian spirits. This respect can be expressed through humble behavior or, if the medium does not believe in those particular beliefs, through appropriate conduct, such as avoiding disparaging remarks or mocking attitudes. The importance of this principle is to reduce any sense of “arrogance” that may arise in the medium’s mind. This is because people within the Nora cultural community often accord special respect to mediums. As a result, some mediums might become self-important, believing that they are superior due to the high regard from others. Such thinking can be harmful and might lead to cultural conflicts. Therefore, mutual respect between cultures can help prevent cultural conflicts.

Mediums should have a deep understanding of Nora rituals. They should be well-versed in the customs and traditions associated with Nora, know their own role and how to contribute positively to the Nora culture. Once the medium understands their responsibilities, they should avoid engaging in activities outside their duties. For example, it is currently observed that some mediums have been exploiting their role by performing rituals such as setting up shrines for Khru Mo Nora, conducting ceremonies for local guardian spirits, offering services like gold gilding (for good luck), conducting rituals to bless businesses, and offering sales of the Hunter’s Face and the Nang Thasi’s Face, all while making exaggerated claims for financial gain. Such behaviors are considered “deviations from traditional Nora practices.” A significant factor driving such behaviors is the

compensation for performing rituals, known as “fees” or “honoraria.” Therefore, Nora mediums should practice self-restraint and remain unaffected by material rewards or offerings.

In Southern Thailand’s folk beliefs and magical traditions, there’s a saying, “3 baht is essential for honoring the master,” meaning that anyone seeking the services of a knowledgeable practitioner of magic or a Khru Mo Nora should bring at least 3 baht as a token of respect. Historically, the fee was modest because it was believed that practitioners of magic had a primary duty to assist fellow humans, with monetary compensation being a secondary concern. However, with changes in society and the increasing importance of financial factors for people’s well-being, the customary fee for honoring the teacher has been adjusted to between 199 and 599 baht. Unfortunately, some individuals now charge excessively high fees, leading to a negative perception of the Nora profession as greedy. Additionally, higher fees have attracted fraudsters who exploit the trust of those who believe in Nora practitioners. This has resulted in social upheaval and could tarnish the reputation of Nora traditions.

In some cases, there have been individuals who falsely claim to be possessed by Khru Mo Nora to gain the trust of those who believe in Nora traditions. Such claims deviate from the original belief that Nora possession is an internal family matter. Using the name of Khru Mo Nora to exploit the faith of others for personal gain undermines the cultural foundation and diminishes the value of Nora beliefs, turning it into a tool for fraud.

The role of the spirit medium is crucial in the preservation or decline of Nora culture. Therefore, to ensure that Nora culture continues to be a cultural heritage for both the nation and the world, all spirit mediums should adhere to a moral framework, set an example for society, and cherish their traditions. They should not allow base desires to dominate their minds, leading them to engage in activities that harm Nora culture and society. A spirit medium who upholds moral standards is considered to be honoring Khru Mo Nora appropriately.

In addition, there are small traditional beliefs concerning the daily conduct of Nora spirit mediums that have been passed down through generations. For example, they should not pass under clotheslines or banana tree props, as this is believed to cause a decline in their supernatural powers. Others should not touch their heads playfully or walk over their legs. They should avoid spitting into any kind of waste. They should not consume food that has been used in offerings to lower spirits. They should have their own pillow, mattress, and other personal items, not sharing them with others.

Worship Practices of Nora Artists Towards Khru Mo Nora

Nora artists believe that if a Nora troupe honors and worships Khru Mo Nora well, the troupe will prosper. Conversely, if a Nora troupe does not show respect, it will face misfortune and may

not be able to sustain itself. Therefore, worshiping Khru Mo Nora is a practice that enhances spiritual power and provides emotional support, enabling Nora artists to overcome obstacles and achieve success. The worship practices of Nora artists are as follows.

Regularly show respect to Khru Mo Nora, such as by lighting incense and candles on holy days, offering annual sacrifices, and performing Nora Rong Khru ceremonies as scheduled. Regularly mention Khru Mo Nora's name before conducting ceremonies or embarking on long journeys.

Respect for symbols representing Khru Mo Nora: this includes items such as the headdress (Serd), the Hunter's Face, and the Nang Thasi's Face. When putting on these items, one must pray and make a statement both before and after wearing them. This encompasses all types of Nora-related tools, including musical instruments, costumes, and weapons.

Ensure that one's body, speech, and mind do not violate or belittle the authority of Khru Mo Nora. This includes refraining from mocking behavior, speaking disrespectfully about the authority, and making frivolous or impossible vows to Khru Mo Nora.

Nora tools and items should not be sold or pawned for money. If one no longer wishes to use an item, it is customary to pass it on to others free of charge. However, if the item is valuable, the "ceremonial exchange" method can be used, which is a form of transaction that avoids the terms "buy" or "sell," similar to how amulets are offered, where they are said to be "rented for worship."

Live within the framework of Nora customs with moral integrity. Follow the teachings of your mentors strictly, such as not bathing naked, avoiding verbal abuse or ridicule of benefactors including parents, teachers, the Triple Gem (Buddha, Dharma, Sangha), or deities. Be polite and respectful to elders, practice gratitude, and conduct oneself with credibility.

Ensure that customs, practices, magical texts, and various aspects of knowledge are preserved and not lost. Avoid introducing practices from other traditions that could negatively affect or corrupt the Nora discipline.

Continuously practice and refine performance skills to achieve mastery and deliver performances with full confidence. This is considered essential for upholding the honor and dignity of Khru Mo Nora and preventing any form of disrespect.

The Worship of Khru Mo Nora by Nora Descendants

Nora descendants are those who are descendants of Nora performers or are born into families that revere Khru Mo Nora. They are crucial to the Nora tradition because they drive the continuity of beliefs and practices related to Nora, ensuring its survival both in the present and future. This driving force can be categorized into three aspects: 1) they are responsible for inheriting and passing down Nora beliefs and practices from generation to generation; 2) they help in nurturing and

supporting the emergence of new Nora performers in society; 3) they foster the development of Nora mediums while also respecting and guiding the behavior of these mediums to adhere to moral standards in their roles and duties.

For instance, Mr. Ming and Mrs. Khian are a married couple who inherited the reverence for Khru Mo Nora from their ancestors. They have four children: Mr. Den, Mr. Dee, Miss Dao, and Mr. Doi. Mr. Den has a passion for Nora performance and requests permission from his parents to become a Nora artist. When Mr. Den turns 45, he undergoes the Cloth-Tying ceremony to become a chief Nora performer. After Mr. Ming and Mrs. Khian pass away, the responsibility of worshiping Khru Mo Nora falls to Mr. Den's family. As time passes, when Mr. Den also passes away, his son, Mr. Chaiya, takes over the role of Nora performer from his father.

In the order of Nora lineage, all the descendants of Mr. Ming and Mrs. Khian are considered equally as Nora descendants. Even though the shrine of Khru Mo Nora and the responsibilities for worshiping Khru Mo Nora are specifically assigned to Mr. Den's and Mr. Chaiya's families, all the descendants of Mr. Ming and Mrs. Khian are required to participate in Nora Rong Khru rituals and the annual worship ceremonies, at the home of Mr. Den or Mr. Chaiya. If the descendants of Mr. Dee, Miss Dao, or Mr. Doi are interested in training as Nora performers, they are permitted to do so, as they are considered to be born into the Nora lineage.

From the above example, the social value reflected in the belief in Khru Mo Nora is the enhancement of family bonds. The belief in Khru Mo Nora acts to keep relatives within the family connected and prevents them from becoming distant from each other. This is particularly important in the modern era, where people increasingly lead more private lives and may face challenges alone, leading to stress in daily life. Having family support during difficulties can help resolve issues, provide comfort, and offer encouragement, fostering mental stability. Therefore, all Nora descendants should take pride in their ancestors' creation of the Nora culture, which binds relatives together and represents a unique and distinguished form of performing art. To honor Khru Mo Nora, Nora descendants should adhere to the following practices.

Preserve the cultural identity to prevent its loss, including rituals, beliefs, and other related elements, by collectively conserving, revitalizing, promoting, and developing based on the Nora culture. Examples include establishing Nora clubs in each province, organizing academic conferences or practical training workshops related to Nora, advocating for Nora performing arts to be included in educational curricula, and developing craft products made from Nora beads. In contemporary times, there is a trend for the younger generation in the South to use the "standard Thai" in daily life, under the belief that it facilitates better communication with others. However, from a cultural perspective, this trend impacts the linguistic uniqueness of the South, making some ancient words

seem unfamiliar to the new generation. For example, the word “ploed,” meaning “wildly” and “deed-ting,” meaning “boisterous, typically used for animals” may become bizarre. When young people do not speak the Southern dialect and are unfamiliar with its vocabulary, they may struggle to understand the communication within traditional performances. Consequently, these traditional performances may lose popularity and gradually disappear from society. Therefore, it is essential to teach the new generation in the South to be proficient in both the standard language and the Southern dialect.

Perform rituals according to traditions and schedules, including the Nora Rong Khru ceremonies, annual offerings, and offerings on Buddhist holy days. If people in the community continue to pay attention to these rituals, the chances of Nora disappearing from society will decrease. This is because it contributes to the continuation of the beliefs that are fundamental to the rituals, and it supports and promotes the emergence of Nora artists, who are involved in performing these rituals. The presence of Nora artists ensures that the various aspects of Nora knowledge will continue to be preserved and passed down.



Figure 4.6 Nora descendants performing the annual offering ritual for Khru Mo Nora, photographed on September 27, 2015

Source: Yammai (2015).

The general view is that Nora descendants represent the Nora culture, as they are “people within the culture” who are directly influenced by Nora. Therefore, if Nora descendants conduct themselves as morally upright individuals who live peacefully with others, the Nora culture will also be esteemed and praised by the public. The moral principles reflected in Nora culture include: gratitude towards benefactors, unity within the group, truthfulness, adherence to good deeds (a

person who behaves well will, after death, have the merit to return to their descendants as an ancestral spirit), proper respect, and reverence for nature.

Humanity and culture support each other mutually. Although culture is created from human wisdom, once it is established and widely accepted in society, it becomes a guiding practice for humans. Culture serves as a framework of goodness that ancestors have devised and refined, leading to stability and the potential to cultivate human development in the path of virtue. The practice of worshiping Khru Mo Nora by mediums, Nora artists, and Nora descendants has a deeper purpose than just honoring Khru Mo Nora; it involves self-discipline to understand one's roles and responsibilities and to maintain constant awareness.

Chapter 5

A New Era for Nora in the Future

Nora originated in an agricultural society with abundant natural resources. People in this society interacted in a primary way, maintaining close familial bonds. The social system was not complex; customs and traditions were used more than laws to guide and regulate members of the community. Economically, the focus was on household production for consumption rather than trade. As a result, competition within the society was low, leading to a relaxed social environment where people lived contentedly and had time to develop the customs and rituals of Nora, passing them down through generations. Over time, Nora has deeply rooted itself in Southern Thai society. Meanwhile, the beliefs and rituals associated with Nora have also accumulated, evolving into a distinct form of performing arts.

The shifts in Thai society have followed global trends as science, technology, and new innovations from abroad have entered Thailand. This influx has caused changes in the lifestyle of the people. Specifically, as Thailand adopted an industrial system for economic development, the way of life of its people was “reorganized” to align with the industrial world. For example, time was converted into an economic asset, with working hours being quantified for compensation. People were encouraged to specialize through the educational system to meet the demands of the labor market. Urban societies emerged from the central and spread to regional parts of the country.

At present, Thai society has advanced into the era of information and communication technology. In this era, communication businesses and information tools greatly influence people’s lives in politics, economics, society, and culture. Society changes rapidly in response to the constant barrage of media. In other words, the contemporary Thai society is fluid and lacks adherence to any single ideology. To thrive in this environment, individuals must possess up-to-date information and be prepared for continuous changes.

The information provided indicates that “Thai society is a dynamic society,” continuously evolving with global trends and affecting all structures within it, similar to the movement of waves. Nora, being part of the cultural structure of society, is also impacted by these changes. This chapter will address the new phase of Nora in the future world, divided into two main topics: 1) changes in Nora’s beliefs and rituals, and 2) Nora’s new phase as an intangible cultural heritage of humanity.

Changes in Nora’s Beliefs and Rituals

The changes in Nora’s beliefs and rituals today can be divided into four aspects: 1) changes in the belief about Khru Mo Nora; 2) changes in the Nora Rong Khru rituals; 3) changes in Nora performance styles; 4) changes in the roles and duties of Nora artists.

Changes in the Belief About Khru Mo Nora

The belief in Khru Mo Nora is a crucial mechanism that has sustained the Nora tradition up to the present day. The journey of this belief through time has seen periods of both prosperity and decline. Nonetheless, the belief in Khru Mo Nora has enabled Nora to overcome various declines throughout the ages with the discourse of “the sanctity of Khru Mo Nora.”

In the past, people believed that Khru Mo Nora was sacred, and that one should not violate the authority of Khru Mo Nora under any circumstances, whether physically, verbally, or mentally. Anyone who disobeyed these rules would be punished by Khru Mo Nora. The discourse on the sanctity of Khru Mo Nora was passed down through oral traditions, teachings, and rituals. This discourse reinforced the understanding that Khru Mo Nora was “something forbidden.” As a result, anything associated with Khru Mo Nora, such as clothing, musical instruments, and ritual tools, was regarded with fear and avoided to prevent any interference, creating a gap between people and Khru Mo Nora. This gap is, referred to by the author as the “territorial authority of Khru Mo Nora,” created a boundary that only those recognized by Nora traditions could cross, such as chief Nora practitioners, shaman, spirit mediums, and elders in the family, were allowed to enter this authority. Others were strictly prohibited.

Currently, there is a shift in belief regarding Khru Mo Nora, evolving from a notion of “something forbidden” to “something cherished.” The author opines that this change in belief is driven by the advance of science, which is pushing old beliefs out of society. Science, by uncovering the secrets of nature, has ushered humanity into the “age of illumination.” The scientific method, which prioritizes rationality. Scientific knowledge can be integrated to tangibly improve human quality of life. As a result, the government promotes and instills scientific thinking among the younger generation. When the younger generation, educated with scientific thinking, also has the responsibility to carry on the traditional beliefs of Khru Mo Nora from their ancestors, “paradigm conflicts” arise. This creates a paradigm conflict where applying scientific methods to study traditional belief systems leads to fundamental contradictions in worldview, resulting in indifference, labeling Nora as outdated, or even accusing it of being superstitious.

The phenomenon described has become a new obstacle affecting the future transmission of Nora. Therefore, the belief in Khru Mo Nora needs to shift its image from something forbidden to something cherished. Currently, Nora artists, community sages, media organizations, educational institutions, and both public and private agencies are working together to campaign for a new understanding: “Nora is a heritage of ancestral wisdom passed down with the land. It represents the wisdom of the society that has been accumulated and transmitted through generations. The younger

generation has the responsibility to continue this legacy to preserve the honor and cultural identity of the nation.” This is achieved through activities promoting Nora-related learning, such as teaching Nora music, Nora dance, and Nora beadwork. The image of Nora, or even Khru Mo Nora, which was once considered forbidden, sacred, and powerful over humans, has been redefined as “the spirit of teachers and ancestors who assist those with respect and faith, enabling them to learn Nora more effectively and quickly.” With this new definition, Nora is now better understood by the younger generation, leading to a sense of cherishment rather than fear of Khru Mo Nora as a forbidden and oppressive authority. In other words, while people in the past feared the power of Khru Mo Nora, people today are taught to cherish and care for Khru Mo Nora as if they were a revered elder. This change in belief represents a compromise of Nora’s traditional values to align with the perspectives of modern times, while still maintaining the respect and veneration for Khru Mo Nora as before.

The redefinition of Khru Mo Nora’s meaning has led to the creation of symbolic representations of Khru Mo Nora as amulets for personal use, serving as psychological support. According to a study on *Tiny Hunter’s Face and Tiny Headdress: Cultural Capital Development to Cultural Products* by Yammai (2021: 98-103), it was found that Mr. Theuang, a craftsman (Mr. Prateuang Sajchabut), a local from Na Khao Sia Subdistrict, Nayong District, Trang Province, is a renowned maker of Nora headdresses in Trang Province. The tradition of making Nora headdresses began approximately 50 years ago when Mr. Theuang and his father, Mr. Saeng, developed their skills by studying the headdresses from Mr. Liab, a local craftsman from Khuan Pring Subdistrict, Trang Province. They continued to refine their craft, leading to a distinctive style. The characteristics of Mr. Theuang’s headdresses are as follows: 1) the headdress is tall, with an elegant long peak; 2) the headdress features four layers of scales, designed in Thai pattern resembling cane-eye motifs, arranged in four circular bands on the headdress; 3) the peak of the headdress has five segments, with a larger base and a tapered, pointed end; 4) the headdress is adorned with decorative patterns around its edges, resembling a rhombus; 5) the inside of the headdress is lined with sponge-like fabric to provide a snug and comfortable fit for the head; and 6) the top of the headdress is adorned with a glass bead, known for its shine and beauty. It is believed that the glass bead can ward off sorcery.

The idea for developing tiny Hunter’s Face and tiny headdresses originated with Mr. Theuang, a craftsman, and his sons, Kik and Kaek, also craftsmen. They aimed to diversify their work by expanding the types of products they offered. Previously, they had only made full-sized Nora headdresses, the Hunter’s Face, and the Nang Thasi’s Face used in Nora Rong Khru ceremonies. They decided to experiment with a new product, starting with the tiny Hunter’s Face, after an artist from the Nora Thong Bai Jai Dee troupe in Nayong District, Trang Province, named Nora Nok Noi,

requested a small mask to be used as a pendant amulet. This led them to create two small masks, approximately 2 centimeters in size. After a period of inactivity, they resumed producing these items more seriously around 2016.

In 2016, the demand for local amulets in the southern region grew significantly. Amulet producers, including spirit mediums, practitioners of occult arts, monk instructors, and artisans, began offering a wide range of amulets for purchase. Examples include the Nang Kwak Nora amulet from Monk Instructor Prasut of Wat Nai Tao, Trang Province, Khru Mo Nora's charm powder, the Pran Boon's Face mask from Wat Pradu Hom, Talay Noi Subdistrict, Phatthalung Province, and the Pran Boon's Face mask from Father Kaeo Chao Saeng in Wat Ban Trang, Pattani Province. During this time, Mr. Theuang, a craftsman's family began making tiny Hunter's Face alongside their tiny headdresses, distributing them for rent or sale both domestically in the North and internationally.

People increasingly seek to purchase tiny Hunter's Faces and tiny headdresses as symbolic representations of Khru Mo Nora. Some use the tiny Hunter's Faces as pendants or place them in front of vehicles as the protective amulets against various dangers, while the tiny headdresses are commonly displayed on Khru Mo Nora shrines. Currently, the price for a tiny Hunter's Face is 500 baht, while a wearable size costs 1,500 baht. The tiny headdresses are priced at 3,500 baht, and wearable headdresses range from 3,500 to 9,000 baht, depending on the quantity and type of materials used for decoration.

The author believes that the current shift in beliefs regarding Khru Mo Nora has led to positive outcomes. It provides an opportunity for those who were previously intimidated by the sacred discourse surrounding Khru Mo Nora to gain the courage to learn about Nora practices. This shift is beneficial for the preservation and development of Nora traditions in the future and also creates new avenues for employment by generating artistic works through tiny Hunter's Faces and tiny headdresses, which have gained national recognition.

Changes in Nora Rong Khru rituals

The Nora Rong Khru rituals follow established traditional practices. In Trang Province, there is a cultural value associated with these rituals: "do not perform beyond the teacher's instructions," meaning that the rituals should not deviate from what has been traditionally practiced by the teacher. Therefore, changes in the structure and process of Nora Rong Khru rituals in Trang Province are not prominently observed. Only minor details may have changed, which do not impact the core structure of the rituals.

In the past, Nora stages were typically made from locally available materials, such as wooden poles, palm leaves, and vines for roofing. Nowadays, these materials have become increasingly rare due to deforestation in the community. Consequently, there has been a shift to using tents for

roofing and ropes for binding the Nora stage instead of vines. However, the use of palm leaves for roofing is still maintained in accordance with traditional practices. In some areas of Trang Province, ready-made Nora stages with steel frames are now used. Nonetheless, these stages continue to preserve the essential components of the traditional Nora stage.

Customs for the first dinner of the Nora troupe is when the Nora troupe arrives at the Nora stage on Wednesday evening, there is a belief that they must first perform the Announcement ritual before they can have their first dinner. The author believes that this ceremony is a symbolic expression to communicate with both people and spirits that the Nora troupe has officially occupied the Nora stage as their residence for the duration of the rituals. Thus, if this ceremony is not performed, it is as if the Nora troupe does not yet have a place to stay, which is why the ceremony precedes the first dinner at the Nora stage. However, considering the historical community practices, food preparation was not as convenient as it is today. For instance, rice had to be pounded by hand, and purchasing goods at markets located far from the community required traveling by bicycle or bus. Cooking involved using a wood-fired stove. These factors contributed to delays in food preparation. Therefore, it became customary that upon arriving at the Nora stage, the Nora troupe would first perform the Announcement ritual. Only after completing this ceremony would they have dinner, which would be ready and timely prepared to coincide with the conclusion of the ritual.

In the present day, people's lives have become more convenient due to various modern conveniences, resulting in faster food preparation for the Nora troupe. Consequently, there has been a shift in practice: the Nora troupe now has their dinner first before performing the Announcement ritual. This adjustment allows the rituals to proceed continuously without needing to pause for dinner as was done in the past.

Historically, the Nora troupe performed the ritual to invite Khru Mo Nora, present offerings to Khru Mo Nora, and pay respects to the teacher during the early dawn hours of Thursday. However, some Nora troupes now conduct these rituals later in the day. The main reason for this change is that Nora performances and ceremonies on Wednesday nights typically conclude after midnight, leaving both the Nora troupe and the host exhausted. Waking up at 4:00-5:00 AM to prepare food for the ritual would lead to excessive fatigue. Therefore, the timing of these rituals has been adjusted to accommodate the troupe's well-being.

Changes in Nora Performance Styles

Currently, in Trang Province, the number of Nora troupes founded by younger generations has increased, leading each troupe to compete in enhancing their knowledge, skills, and performance styles, similar to market competition. This competition aims to attract audiences whose tastes in

Nora performances have evolved from the past. The changes in Nora performance styles today include the following details.

Changes in Dance Techniques: in the past, the fundamental technique of Nora dance was considered to be “having softness within firmness and firmness within softness.” This means that each movement change (transition between dance poses) had to exhibit strength and vigor, while the hand movements and the circular hand formations needed to be graceful and elegant. The dancer would dictate the rhythm of the music during each transition. Traditionally, a single dancer would perform each scene, which allowed the dancer to fully showcase their unique dancing abilities.



Figure 5.1 Nora group dance performance by the Department of Cultural Management, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Surattthani Rajabhat University, taken on August 15, 2019

Source: Yammai (2019)

In the present day, the Nora dance has evolved into a group performance known as “Group Dance,” which five to nine dancers perform together in each scene. For the performance to be beautiful, the dancers must move and change their poses in perfect harmony. As a result, the music performance must control the dancers, meaning the musicians count the beats of the music to coordinate the dance. When the music reaches the end of a phrase, the melody changes, and the dancers must also change their poses accordingly. This change in dance technique means that each dancer cannot showcase individual skills due to the rhythm of the music. However, the advantage is that the dance becomes easier and more visually synchronized.

Changes in Musical Instruments, it was found that in recent times, there has been an increase in the use of additional types of musical instruments in Nora performances. Originally, Nora music consisted of five instruments: the drum, the Thab (a type of percussion), the gong, the small cup-shaped cymbals, and the wooden rhythm clapper. Later, the Pi (a traditional flute) was added to

enhance the musical experience, as its distinctive, piercing sound resonates deeply with listeners' emotions. The Pi has thus become an instrument that complements the aesthetic emotions of people in southern Thailand and remains popular. Subsequently, more instruments were integrated into the ensemble. In Trang Province, cymbals are now used to create rhythmic breaks for musical beauty and to align with the traditional Nora dance movements of Trang. Additionally, the alto fiddle, the soprano fiddle, the flute, and the keyboard have been included, enriching Nora music with a clearer emotional expression. For example, the Two Mhong poem becomes more melodious when accompanied by the fiddles in sync with the rhythm. The music played to accompany the dance has been found to have changed from traditional Thai songs to more contemporary folk songs, in line with current trends.

Around 2015, a new phenomenon emerged in the Nora scene with the introduction of Western instruments, including the snare drum, Chae (a kind of cymbals), line bells, and cowbells, integrated into traditional Nora music performances.



Figure 5.2 Performance of Nora music with traditional and Western instruments, photographed from the Nora James Group, Trang Province, on August 15, 2019.

Source: Yammai (2019)

This change has led to two opposing viewpoints. The first viewpoint criticizes the change as it is believed to cause the Nora music to lose its traditional charm and mystical quality. The second viewpoint sees it as a vibrant and enjoyable adaptation that aligns with the musical tastes of the younger generation. Nora troupes that have incorporated Western instruments into their performances use a strategy of negotiation to reduce conflicts. They choose to use Western instruments only during performances aimed at entertainment, while continuing to use traditional instruments exclusively for ritual ceremonies. This approach has helped to reconcile differing opinions and ease tensions.

The performance for rituals, known as “dancing in front of the shrine,” has evolved according to current audience preferences. “Dancing in front of the shrine” involves dancing, reciting poetry, performances, and performing role-playing as offerings to Khru Mo Nora. Traditionally, Khru Mo Nora followed a set pattern for dancing in front of the shrine, adhering to the script of the poetry. This meant dancing in accordance with the verse, occasionally interspersed with humorous dialogues and role-playing segments. Consequently, the portrayal of dancing in front of the shrine was more focused on ritualistic purposes rather than entertainment.

Today, the practice of “dancing in front of the shrine” has evolved from its traditional form to include more humor and contemporary events in the performance to enhance entertainment. This change reflects the current audience’s preference for entertainment over ritualistic content. For instance, in the performance “the Tale of the Cormorant,” the story involves a character named Mr. Chai Chay, who learns the art of spear-throwing from a cormorant but is too embarrassed to tell others because his teacher is an animal. The Buddha, who has observed Mr. Chai Chay’s behavior, wants to test his character and asks about the origin of the spear-throwing technique. Mr. Chai Chay claims to have developed it himself. The Buddha then instructs him to demonstrate the technique, which results in Mr. Chai Chay accidentally injuring himself fatally. The Buddha uses this incident to teach that one should not disrespect the teacher’s grace, or else harm, like that experienced by Mr. Chai Chay, may come to them.

In the past, the technique for performing the Cormorant Tale in Nora performances focused on reciting poetry accompanied by dance, with occasional dialogues included to impart moral teachings to the audience. In contrast, contemporary Nora performances resemble short plays, incorporating poetry and dance along with dialogues, role-playing, and a significant increase in comedic elements compared to traditional performances. Some troupes may even dress in costumes mimicking characters from the poetry, such as depicting the Buddha by using traditional cloth or large fabrics to simulate monk robes.

Modern Nora performances often include direct, explicit humor, with a growing tendency to mimic the mannerisms of the third gender, moving away from the primary focus on conveying moral teachings. This shift is attributed to the fact that today’s audience has easier access to moral teachings and news through mainstream media, unlike people in the past. As a result, Nora has reduced its focus on moral instruction and placed greater emphasis on providing entertainment to alleviate the audience’s suffering. However, the ultimate goal of performance art remains to uplift the human spirit and improve society. Therefore, useful moral content and societal news should still be present in Nora performances and should not be entirely eliminated.

From the study on *Thai's Southern Folks' Tale Literature: Main Idea and Its Inheritance* by Noothong et al. (2013: 431-438), it was found that the changes in Nora performance styles can be categorized into two types: single-stage performances and competitive performances known as "Nora Competition."

Single-Stage Performances: before the 1920s, Nora theaters were constructed simply, with either 6 or 9 posts and thatched roofs, built at ground level without partitions. The performers were all male. The performance format was uniform across troupes, beginning with the opening of the theater, followed by the prelude and the Teacher's Chant. During the invocation, the performers, often children called "little Nora," would dress in the center of the stage. After the Teacher's Chant, the Nora performers would sit and prepare their nails while reciting the Trae verse (which differed from the verse during the Teacher's Chant).

Once the nails were done and the Trae verse was completed, they would continue with the Kraow and the Thap songs in sequence. The performance would then showcase various dance styles according to the time available, such as the Teacher's Song dance, the Mae Lai dance, the Young Woman Pose dance, the Soaring swan-like dance, the Soft Body dance, the Fast Song dance, the Reception dance, the Tiger Dragging Tail dance, and various combinations called "Combined Posture Dance." After the first Nora dancer finished their performance, the next Nora dancer, who was already dressed and waiting, would begin their performance in a similar manner, continuing until the chief Nora, who performed last and for the longest duration.

The performance of the chief Nora dancer begins with sitting and reciting the Trae verse. After that, they perform a segment that showcases both their singing and dancing skills. Following this, the performance often highlights various dance styles, such as the Mixed Pose Dance and the Soft Body dance. Then, they play different types of Gumprat (improvised dances), inviting earlier dancers to join. Popular types of Gumprat include Gumprat Kiao (flirtatious dance), Gumprat Chom (praise dance), Gumprat Bot Jing (serious dance), and Gumprat Kee Hok (dance with comic elements). These dances involve call-and-response singing and, if time permits, might include a segment called the Hunter performance, where a story is acted out based on excerpts from novels. The performance usually features the chief Nora dancer and the Hunter, with additional Nora dancers possibly joining in. Historically, the most commonly performed scripts included the Rahu Capturing the Moon story, the Rama and Mekhala story, and the Nari Phon story (tree bearing fruits in the shape of girls). After these three scripts became popular, Nora troupes shifted towards performing episodes from various epic tales, such as the Phra Rot Sen tale, the Phra Suthon tale, the Khun Chang Khun Phaen tale, the Phra Aphai Mani tale, the Sang Thong tale, the Janthakorop tale, the Laksana Wong tale, the Koh But tale, the Chaiyachet tale, and others. Additionally, some performances might include local

folklore, such as the On Thong story and the Mr. Boon story. The performance concludes with a farewell speech to end the theater session.

Around the 1940s, female Nora performers emerged, and Nora stages began to include curtains. This change led to alterations in Nora performances. Behind the curtain, spaces were set up for performers to rest and change costumes. The tradition of dressing in the center of the stage, sitting and putting on nail ornaments, and reciting the Trae verse was discontinued. Instead, a new custom developed where, before starting the dance, performers would recite the Gumprat or the Curtain Flirtation verse. After finishing, the drums would beat loudly, and the Nora performers would gradually part the curtain and begin their performance, showcasing various dance sequences. Afterward, they would sit and recite the Trae verse, perform the dances, recite the Gumprat and/or engage in Mutto poetry. This would be followed by a short dance before entering the stage again. The new Nora would then perform in the same manner. The final scene would feature the chief Nora dancer, who would perform the “singing, dancing” segment for a longer time than the others and might call upon earlier performers to join in. Following this, there might be a performance of the Hunter dance or the session might end after the chief Nora finished their performance.

This tradition continued until the period of Field Marshal Plaek Phibunsongkhram (1941-1947), when the government prioritized cultural policy. The government promoted nationalism and national culture through radio, newspapers, the civil service, literature, and performing arts across Thailand. Regulations were established to guide citizens on what was considered civilized and what was not, aiming to reform and standardize Thai cultural practices, particularly in theater and music. This effort was reflected in the issuance of the Royal Decree on Cultural Arts in Theater (1942) and the Royal Decree on Music, Singing, and Dubbing (1943), which set guidelines and principles for performers in these fields.

Many Nora troupes agreed that the government prohibited Nora performers from wearing the traditional Swan Tail costume, and those who defied this regulation were arrested. On one occasion, Nora Plaek Chanaban competed with Nora Toem Ongseng, at a performance in Sateng Mo, Songkhla Province, wearing beaded costumes and swan tails. Both troupes were arrested. During this period, many Nora troupes ceased their performances by default. Some troupes resisted, but the government did not strictly enforce the ban, so most Nora troupes continued to maintain the traditional practices. Some troupes adapted by switching to modern attire, wearing neckties and jackets for their performances. However, this costume change made it difficult to perform traditional Nora dance styles. Consequently, the performance approach was adjusted, with younger Nora performers continuing to perform in the traditional style to preserve customs, while the principal Nora performers, including the chief Nora, would recite the Gumprat and Mutto poetry. Notably,

Nora Toem, a troupe from Trang Province known for its improvisational poetry (Nora Toem had trained in poetry composition with Suea Chamnanphakdi, also known as Suea Donkan, a well-known poet from Songkhla in the 1940s), began focusing on this style and gained significant popularity among local audiences. This led other Nora troupes to imitate the style, creating a new tradition. Some troupes transitioned from performing poetry to acting out stories. The format of these performances changed significantly: they stopped performing the Hunter tale and began presenting modern, realistic-style dramas with raised stages, sets, lighting, and sound effects. After the popularity of Thai folk music increased post-1962, Nora troupes began incorporating Thai folk music into their performances. They started by playing the music first and then followed with performances by 2-3 Nora dancers. Later, the key Nora performers or chief Nora would perform poetry and then continue with story enactments.

During this period, traditional Nora dance experienced a significant decline. However, around 1971, a movement to preserve the traditional Nora style emerged in educational institutions. Phinyo Jittham invited Khun Uppatham Narakorn (Nora Phumdeva from Phatthalung Province) to revive the traditional dance. Since Khun Uppatham Narakorn had to teach groups of students, he adjusted the performance method to accommodate group dances. In this new approach, dancers performed together without singing the verse, and the singers did not dance. Synchronizing the movements and rhythms became crucial for ensuring coordinated group performances. Khun Uppatham Narakorn's teaching proved effective and gained widespread attention, leading to the emergence of a new Nora style focused on group performances. Initially, this style was popular only within educational institutions, such as Prince of Songkla University of Hat Yai Campus, Nakhon Si Thammarat Teachers College, Songkhla Teachers College, and various dance colleges. As the style gained broader recognition, professional Nora troupes began adopting it, incorporating group performances after the Teacher's Chant ceremony and then following with traditional Nora performances by the chief Nora.

Currently, the popularity of Thai folk music and Nora drama has decreased. Many Nora troupes have discontinued this style and returned to performing traditional Nora, but with a modern twist of combining troupes. When one troupe performs, the head of the troupe invites other Nora troupes with network connections to join in. The performance follows the traditional format: an opening ceremony, Teacher's Chant, followed by performances by younger Nora dancers, invited Nora performers, and the head of the troupe. When the head of the troupe performs, they often invite other guest Nora performers to join. The show typically concludes after the head of the troupe's performance, though some troupes might include a segment of the Hunter performance as part of their conservation efforts.

The Nora competition or the Nora contest was evidently popular during the reign of King Rama V, and it was referred to as “Prachan Chatri.” Nora contests were highly entertaining and exhilarating for both the Nora performers and the audience. For the Nora performers, it was an opportunity to showcase their skills, with a clear winner being determined. For the audience, it provided a rare chance to witness high-quality performances that were not commonly seen in single-troupe Nora shows. Since the competition aspect was crucial, each Nora troupe had to continually innovate and enhance their performance styles to remain engaging. Various forms of entertainment media were introduced to complement the performances, making the Nora contest a truly entertaining event for the audience.

In the past, Nora competitions were typically held at temples or government grounds, organized by prominent and respected individuals within the community. The Nora troupes selected for competition were expected to have comparable skill levels. If they were students of the same teacher, they often avoided competing against each other. Notable Nora troupes might organize competitions across several venues, showcasing their talents in multiple locations.

Originally, Nora contests were held during the daytime, starting around 8:00 AM and continuing until approximately 4:00 PM, with a break for lunch of about 1 hour. Nora troupes were required to arrive at the competition site a day in advance to select the location for their performance according to traditional guidelines. Once the location was chosen, the host would set up the stage. Early Nora stages were not elevated like ordinary performance stages. After setting up the stage, the Nora troupe would enter, guided by a shaman who would lead them through a specific direction to avoid the Iron Spear direction. The shaman would perform various rituals to protect against supernatural attacks from opponents, such as hanging protective amulets on the stage’s eaves in all eight directions, suspending them in the middle of the stage, and scattering rice around the stage to ward off malevolent forces. Once these rituals were complete, the troupe would begin by opening the stage, performing the pre-show, Teacher’s Chant, and presenting an initial performance known as the “Hand Dance.” This initial performance also served as a promotion for the upcoming competition.

After the Hand Dance performance, the shaman would hang a headdress in the middle of the stage and pray for the blessings of the teachers and ancestors of Nora, using divination to predict the outcome of the next day’s competition. This was done by “Pat Serd (spinning the ceremonial headdress)” and interpreting the direction it faced when it stopped spinning. If it faced the opposing Nora troupe, it was believed they would win. While resting in the stage area, the shaman would recite protective chants, cover the performers with a protective cloth, and ensure no one else slept in a way that might bring bad luck, which was believed to potentially cause defeat.

On the day of the competition, Nora troupes would wake up early to prepare. At 8:00 AM, the sound of the Tapon (a type of drum) would signal the start of the performance. The Nora troupe would begin with performing the pre-show rituals, followed by the Teacher's Chant. Then, the young Nora performers would go out to dance. After that, another Tapon signal would indicate that the chief Nora could begin their performance. If the chief Nora was ready, they would start dancing right away, although in some places, they might be required to dress in a different location, such as the abbot's quarters or the sermon hall. When the Tapon sounded, the villagers would help carry the chief Nora to the stage. Upon arrival, the chief Nora would perform the Spirit Whipping - Lime Crushing dance.

The Spirit Whipping - Lime Crushing dance (where the spirit refers to the spirit of the opposing Nora) is a ritualistic dance performed as part of a magical ceremony. The performance begins with the Choed rhythm played by the music. The shaman holds a vessel of consecrated water, a cane for beating spirits, three limes, and banana leaves or paper, leading the chief Nora out onto the stage. Upon reaching the center of the stage, the shaman chants incantations and inscribes symbols on the cane for beating spirits. They draw figures representing the opposing Nora and write their names on the banana leaves or paper, calling the spirits to possess them and inscribing protective spells. The banana leaves or paper are then rolled into a cylindrical shape, with the ends folded and tied in the shape of a sacred seal. While the shaman performs these rituals, the chief Nora dances around, showcasing their graceful movements. Once the shaman completes the sacred seal, it is placed on the ground in the center of the stage along with the cane. The Nora then performs the Chai Thong Hoi dance (a posture with the body arched backward and head hanging down) while trying to hold the cane with the mouth. After successfully taking the cane, they continue with the Ko dance. This is the same type of music used in Nang Talung (shadow puppetry) to elevate the figure of Lord Shiva. The Ko dance has an intense, vigorous style that is serious and awe-inspiring. After completing the Ko dance, the chief Nora stands by the symbol of the opposing Nora, stomps their feet, and strikes the symbol once. This process is repeated three times. During the ritual, the chief Nora prays for the demise of the opposing Nora. Once finished, all members of the troupe gather around the symbol, either sitting or standing in a solemn manner, and recite the "Anitja" chant (used by monks for funeral rites) in unison. The shaman then takes the cane for beating spirits, and the chief Nora continues with the Lime Crushing dance.

The chief Nora performs an incantation to summon the spirit of the opposing Nora into the limes. The limes are then presented one by one for the chief Nora to step on, aiming to crush them with their foot. This must be done with precision, as missing or failing to crush the lime is believed to result in defeat against the opponent. The performance involves crushing three limes, but some

Nora troupes may only crush two limes and throw the third lime into the opposing Nora's stage. Before throwing, the Nora will dance and point, causing the audience to separate in fear of being affected by the spell. Some Nora use tricks, such as hiding a colored powder in their hand, so that when they squeeze the lime, it appears to bleed red, creating a dramatic effect for the audience. The Spirit Whipping - Lime Crushing dance serves as a psychological tactic to intimidate the opponent and boost the morale of the Nora troupe during the competition.

Following this, the chief Nora will continue with various performances, including dances and songs such as the Si To Phan Na dance, the Pleng Thap and Pleng Ton dance, the Gumprat Kiao dance, the Ritual Hunt dance, the Headdress dance, the Thap-Pi Dance, and the Soft Body Dance. These performances continue until noon, after which there is a break. During this time, the Nora performers will go out to meet people, perform and recite poetry to collect donations. The collected money is usually given to the host for communal purposes, but the host often returns part of it to the Nora troupe as a token of appreciation.

In the afternoon, the sound of the Tapon drum signals the continuation of the Nora dance competition until around 3:00 PM. At this time, another Tapon signal indicates that it is time for the judges to decide the outcome of the competition. During this period, each Nora troupe will present their most impressive performances, known as "Cha Rong," to attract as many spectators as possible from the opposing side. This is because the judgment is based on the number of spectators, with the troupe having the most audience winning. The judges are typically respected figures such as temple abbot, village headman, local elders, or teachers.

To succeed during the Cha Rong period, in addition to traditional Nora skills, other exciting performances are introduced, such as *Lot Buang* (passing through hoops), tightrope walking, sword balancing, *Phod Nai Thad* (curling up in a tray, which is part of the Nora's soft-body dance), *Kwid Tung Plai Makh* (doing acrobatics on a areca nut log), *Khab Krok* (holding a mortar in the mouth), *Khab Ruea* (holding a boat in the mouth), rolling on thorny palms, and other skills. The Cha Rong period is the most fun and exciting time, with spectators frequently switching between different stages. At around 4:00 PM, the drum signals the end of the performance. In addition to the prize money, there are special awards such as ceremonial water bowls and headdresses. However, the most valuable reward is the recognition and prestige gained from the audience's admiration.

From the 1960s to the 1970s, Nora competitions reached their peak popularity. At the same time, other forms of entertainment began to enter Southern Thai society. Many well-known Nora troupes started to adapt their performances to a stage play format and incorporated country music, reducing the time dedicated to traditional Nora performances. For example, they shortened

the Teacher's Chant), streamlined the singing and dancing, and introduced group dances where multiple performers would dance together.

During this period, Nora competitions still existed, with rules largely unchanged from before, but the use of occult practices decreased. From 1962 onwards, traditional performances evolved into a business venture, with intermediaries organizing shows and setting schedules for various competition venues. Special prizes such as diamond rings, cars, and large cash prizes were introduced to attract participants. Nora performance fees increased significantly, and advertising through radio broadcasts of folk performances became widespread. This led to heightened competition among Nora artists to modernize their performances and draw large audiences. As a result, new competition rules were introduced, beyond just counting the number of spectators. For instance, the winner was determined by the amount of product sponsorship support received. Nora troupes that collected more product endorsements would win (all product pieces were pooled together as prizes for the audience). This led to a surge in buying products to distribute to the public to support Nora troupes. Additionally, transport services for spectators on competition days and ticket sales became common. Nora troupes had to invest heavily to secure victories, shifting the focus from performance skill to financial and logistical aspects. As a result, many performances abandoned traditional Nora styles in favor of country band formats with backup dancers and comedy routines, or integrated Nora into more theatrical productions. This shift caused discontent among those who appreciated traditional Nora art, leading to a gradual decline in the Nora industry.

After the 1970s, a new format of competition emerged: the pairing of Nora with Nang Talung, which gained high popularity. The initiative for this type of competition was led by Nora Toem Ongseng, who initially paired with Nang Kan Thonglor and later with Nang Im Teng. These competitions were held at night, with Nora performing in the first half and Nang Talung in the second half. This format was designed more as a business venture to attract large audiences rather than focusing on competition between the pairs.

Later, the government introduced policies to revitalize traditional performing arts, including supporting Nora competitions. For instance, in Phatthalung Province, an annual grand festival was organized. There was an effort to focus on the quality of Nora performances, evaluating aspects such as costumes, music, dance, poetry recitation, plays and the overall performance, which reflected the unique characteristics of Nora. The judging panels consisted of experts in cultural affairs, leading to more structured and academic criteria for competitions. While these efforts helped preserve the traditional format to some extent, they did not significantly revive Nora. Besides the cultural agency-organized Nora competitions, events at festivals or amusement parks featuring Nora competitions have completely disappeared.

Changes in the Roles of Nora Artists

In the past, the establishment of Nora troupes was driven by the encouragement of relatives and the community. Most members of these troupes were related by blood or friendship. The management system of Nora troupes often followed a “family system,” valuing seniority with a chief Nora acting as the troupe leader and using an “informal teaching” method. This meant that if someone was interested in learning Nora dance, their guardian would bring them to offer Chian Khru to the chief Nora to become a student. The student would then live and work with the Nora teacher, helping with various tasks assigned by the teacher. During free time, the teacher would teach the student as appropriate. If there were ceremonial Nora performances or entertainment events, the teacher would invite the students to help with the logistics and setup. Students learned Nora traditions through observation and hands-on practice. Once students became proficient in the dance, they were allowed to perform in ceremonies or festivals.

This traditional learning method has the advantage of providing students with a comprehensive understanding of the Nora teacher’s practices. This includes the teacher’s thought processes, beliefs, troupe management, and behavioral expression according to Nora traditions. This encompasses various aspects of life such as eating, sleeping, bathing, dressing, and any activities both in private and public spaces. The duration for which students would learn from the Nora teacher varied: some would spend a short period, around 1-3 years, while others might stay with the teacher until marriage. As older students start their own families, new students typically join to take their place. This cycle has created a strong bond between Nora teachers and their students. Traditionally, Nora artists referred to their teachers as “father” or “mother.”

As Thai society advanced, the government implemented policies to ensure that all youth received education according to legal standards. If a youth did not receive the prescribed education, their guardians would be legally accountable. This shift led to the gradual decline of traditional Nora training methods, exacerbated by the societal trend towards “pursuing degrees.” The new generation was expected to conform to societal norms by being students in educational institutions, leaving traditional learning methods behind. As a result, interest in Nora dance training disappeared in Southern Thai society for a period.

Around 2007, the use of online media such as *Facebook* and *YouTube* to promote Nora performances began to gain popularity. This resurgence rekindled interest in Nora and led to initiatives encouraging the younger generation to learn Nora dance at both community and educational levels. Local Nora teachers, dance teachers, and various knowledgeable individuals have been involved in training new practitioners. Some people even self-learned through online media. As a result, many new Nora artists have emerged. However, the learning methods and practices of

traditional Nora have evolved, influenced by different values and social contexts, leading to distinct roles for traditional and modern Nora artists.

In the past, Nora artists had three primary roles: 1) they performed as folk artists, bringing joy and amusement to their audience; 2) they treated illnesses believed to be caused by supernatural forces; and 3) they conducted ceremonies related to people's lives in society, such as house blessing rituals, ceremonies for novices, and rituals to counter bad luck. It is noted that Nora artists were prohibited from performing any inauspicious rituals, such as preparing corpses, tying sacred threads, or conducting rites to avert disasters. This prohibition was based on the belief that engaging in such rituals could bring misfortune to the artist, diminishing their prestige and, in the long run, negatively affecting their Nora performance reputation. In local dialect, this decline in reputation is referred to as “khuang.”³⁷ In summary, traditional Nora artists not only needed expertise in performing arts but also in mystical practices to assist and support their community.

In modern times, beliefs in supernatural powers and certain rituals have diminished in society, leading to a decline in the role of Nora artists as spiritual healers. Additionally, knowledge of mystical practices, once reserved for family members, has been lost with the death of the older generation. Even if some knowledge was recorded in manuals, it cannot be effectively utilized without someone knowledgeable to explain its application. As a result, contemporary Nora artists now focus more on performing skills rather than mystical knowledge. Today's Nora artists are thus seen more as “folk performers” rather than “experts in mystical arts.”

This shift towards defining themselves as folk performers has led to the emergence of a new trend: “guest Nora performers.” Guest Nora performers are independent artists who are not affiliated with any specific Nora troupe. They accept performance engagements on a freelance basis, with performances lasting between 30 minutes to an hour. This allows them to work at multiple venues in a single day. This trend contrasts with the old practice where Nora artists were typically affiliated with a single troupe. Another factor driving this change is the ease and speed of travel and communication. Additionally, audience preferences have shifted towards entertainment value, focusing on enjoyment. Consequently, Nora artists who can meet these preferences—such as performing beautifully, reciting poetry melodiously, or providing humorous content—are often invited to perform with various Nora troupes as “guest Nora performers.”

³⁷ **Khuang** refers to a decline in reputation or prestige that could occur if a Nora artist performed inauspicious or taboo rituals, such as preparing corpses, tying sacred threads, or conducting rites to avert disasters. Engaging in these practices was believed to bring misfortune, which would negatively affect the artist's reputation and their standing in the Nora community, particularly in their performance abilities. The term “khuang” is used in local dialect to describe this loss of respect or status. (The translator)

Today, Nora troupes have streamlined their structure to include only one chief Nora artist, around 7 musicians and assistants, and 5-7 regular dancers. The role of the mystical healer has been significantly diminished, and in some troupes, this position is no longer present. When a troupe is scheduled for multiple consecutive performances, the chief Nora artist often coordinates with guest Nora performers to assist. This trend has further contributed to the rise of the “guest Nora performer” phenomenon.

For older generations, the value of performing Nora was to serve as a supplementary profession and to preserve cultural heritage. In contrast, the younger generation has developed a new value: treating Nora performance as a primary profession. Amidst the current economic fluctuations and increasing unemployment rates, some young people have started to view Nora as a viable career to support themselves and their families. There has been an increase in self-promotion and networking among Nora artists via online platforms, leading to greater recognition and collaboration among Nora performers across Southern Thailand. This has facilitated knowledge exchange and the creation of collaborative networks among Nora artists.

The shift in Nora artists becoming professionals has led to several positive outcomes. Nora troupes continuously improve and develop themselves, including advancements in costumes, music, dance techniques, and communication with audiences. These developments contribute to the prosperity of the Nora performing arts.

Wage rates are a direct result of treating Nora as a profession. Currently, income from Nora performances varies depending on several factors: 1) type of performance: for small Nora Rong Khru rituals lasting 2 days and 1 night, the fee ranges from 25,000 to 40,000 baht; for grand Nora Rong Khru rituals lasting 3 days and 2 nights, the fee ranges from 60,000 to 80,000 baht; for entertainment shows during festivals or merit-making events, the fee is approximately 15,000 to 25,000 baht per night. 2) Reputation of the Nora troupe: troupes with a high reputation can charge higher fees compared to general troupes. 3) Distance: if the performance location is far from the Nora artists' home, travel expenses will be added to the fee.

Nora artists also have additional sources of income beyond their performance fees. They receive tips from appreciative audiences and monetary gifts (honoraria) from clients for performing various rituals. It is evident that pursuing a career as a Nora artist is appealing both in terms of income and in promoting and preserving local cultural heritage.

A New Milestone for Nora as an Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity

On December 15, 2021, during the 16th session of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH), held via a full online meeting, it was decided

to inscribe “Nora” or “Nora, Dance Drama in Southern Thailand” on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity (RL). This decision was made under the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of 2003, established by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). Nora is recognized as the third intangible cultural heritage of Thailand by UNESCO (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2021).

Nora fulfilled all five criteria for inscription on the Representative List: 1) the heritage aligns with the characteristics of intangible cultural heritage as defined in Article 2 of the Convention; 2) inscription will enhance awareness of the significance of intangible cultural heritage, encourage the exchange of ideas leading to global reflections on cultural diversity, and demonstrate human creativity; 3) detailed and thorough safeguarding measures have been considered for the protection and promotion of the heritage; 4) the heritage to be proposed comes from the community, groups of individuals, or individuals who are most extensively involved, with the approval given based on independent understanding and awareness beforehand; 5) the heritage is present and maintained within the territory of the submitting State Party, already listed in the State Party’s intangible cultural heritage inventory, as defined in Articles 11 and 12 of the Convention (Tourism-Culture News Team, 2021).

The details in the presentation document for Nora’s inscription on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, as specified by UNESCO (Form ICH-02), are summarized by RYT9 News (2019) as described below.

Title of the presentation: Nora (Nora, Dance Drama in Southern Thailand)

Name of the community/ group/ individuals involved: in Thailand, there are five main Nora ancestral lineages in the southern region, which include: 1) Nora Phumdeva, 2) Nora Plaek Thakhae; 3) Nora Paen Khrueang Ngam; 4) Nora Toem-Win-Wad; and 5) Nora Yoke Thalenoi.

Area and scope of the presentation: in Thailand, there are 278 professional Nora troupes distributed primarily across four provinces surrounding the Songkhla Lake Basin, which include Phatthalung, Trang, Nakhon Si Thammarat, and Songkhla.

Criteria for consideration for presenting a candidate to the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity include: Criterion R 1 - the proposing country should demonstrate that “the item being presented aligns with the characteristics of intangible cultural heritage.” According to the Ministry of Culture, the details in the form specify that “Nora corresponds with the intangible cultural heritage in four aspects: oral traditions and expressions, performing arts, social practices, rituals, festivals, and traditional craftsmanship;” Criterion R 2 - the proposing country should show that “inscribing the proposed item will help to reaffirm and raise awareness about the importance of intangible cultural heritage and promote the exchange of knowledge, reflecting the

cultural diversity and human creativity on a global scale.” According to the Ministry of Culture, the form details state that “the implementation of this nomination will promote regional exchanges to enhance understanding of the similarities and differences in intangible cultural heritage.”

When Nora was declared an Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, the people in Southern Thailand, as the custodians and practitioners of Nora culture, should recognize its significance and collectively work to preserve and promote its continuity for the future. The author proposes the following strategies for preserving and promoting Nora: 1) preserve the core beliefs of Nora; 2) continue Nora Rong Khru rituals; 3) develop Nora for economic value.

Preserve the Core Beliefs of Nora

The fundamental belief underlying Nora is the belief in spirits, including ancestral spirits, Khru Mo Nora, deities, and sacred entities. Every type of ritual that has been devised and established as part of the Nora Rong Khru ceremonies is intended to honor these spirits. Therefore, to preserve and promote Nora, it is crucial to maintain this foundational belief by imparting knowledge and understanding to the community. Historically, people in Southern Thailand have believed that the spirits of ancestors are responsible for protecting and ensuring the prosperity and safety of their descendants. In turn, descendants are expected to show respect and gratitude by performing appropriate offerings and worship.

The author hypothesizes that before Nora emerged in the South, the leaders performing ancestral spirit rites were the elders of the family. Once Nora was established, the role of leading these rituals shifted to the chief Nora. The chief Nora is responsible only for honoring the ancestral spirits related to Nora or Khru Mo Nora themselves. Other ancestral spirit rites continue to be the responsibility of family elders or shamans. The author also suggests that Nora likely developed after the introduction of Brahmanism and Buddhism to the South. This is inferred from the incorporation of Brahmanic and Buddhist elements in Nora Rong Khru rituals, such as the Satsadi Yai and the Satsadi Noi chants and the use of mantras.

When Brahmanism and Buddhism spread to the South, their philosophies and knowledge concerning the world, the universe, and various spirits blended with the existing beliefs in ancestral spirits, resulting in a more structured culture. This is evident in Nora Rong Khru rituals, which include praise for the Triple Gem of Buddhism, Brahmanic deities, and ancestral spirits (Khru Mo Nora). Additionally, knowledge from Brahmanism and Buddhism has been adapted for use in these rituals, such as performing rites to honor the theater's guardian spirits, tying sacred threads, sprinkling holy water, and using Buddhist chants to enhance personal charm or protect oneself against evil spirits and demons.

It can be concluded that Brahmanism and Buddhism have significantly influenced and structured the ancestral spirit rites of the people in the South. Therefore, preserving the foundational beliefs of Nora requires maintaining both the principles and practices of Brahmanism, Buddhism, and the belief in ancestral spirits, as they all complement each other to form the Nora culture.

Continuing the Nora Rong Khru Ritual

The Nora Rong Khru ritual is a space where individuals express their beliefs and devotion to Khru Mo Nora, ancestors, deities, and sacred entities. The primary goal of the ritual is to honor these spirits with offerings of food and to ensure their happiness and contentment through Nora performances.

Currently, in Trang Province, the Nora Rong Khru ritual is still continuously practiced according to the scheduled commitments. This is because people continue to believe it is the duty of descendants to carry on this ritual from their ancestors. In other words, performing the Nora Rong Khru ritual has become a tradition within the community, especially among those with Nora lineage. However, it is observed that other beliefs have started to mix into the Nora Rong Khru ritual, such as invoking deities not originally part of Nora's traditional beliefs to participate in the ritual. The author believes that if these changes expand widely, the Nora Rong Khru ritual could transform into a "festival of deities," deviating from its original focus on Khru Mo Nora, deities, and sacred entities. Therefore, those involved in conducting Nora Rong Khru rituals should foster understanding by providing accurate information to the community to preserve the Nora Rong Khru ritual and prevent it from altering and losing its traditional essence.

Encouraging young people to learn and train as Nora artists and musicians is another way to sustain the Nora Rong Khru ritual. The individual factor is crucial for ensuring that Nora can continue to thrive in the future. Communities, local government agencies, educational institutions, and other stakeholders should organize activities that promote learning about Nora, such as practical workshops on Nora dance, Nora music performances, and Nora performance competitions. However, in promoting these activities, it is important to educate young people that Nora is not just a form of folk art but also a central element of the community's spiritual life. Therefore, learning about Nora should encompass both its performance aspects and its traditional practices in various dimensions, to ensure that future Nora artists are truly well-rounded.

Developing Nora for Economic Value

The future world will be marked by economic competition. About a decade ago, South Korea began to develop its "cultural capital into economic capital" by integrating aspects of its culture, such as food, language, and lifestyle, into entertainment media and presenting them to the global audience. As a result, the entertainment industry and related businesses generated substantial

revenue. Thailand, rich in cultural heritage, can similarly transform its cultural assets into economic value.

The development of Nora to achieve economic value has already been touched upon in discussions about changes in beliefs regarding Khru Mo Nora, the tiny Hunter's Face and tiny headdresses. Further examples of this development include transforming Nora beads into jewelry and integrating Nora with the tourism industry.

Currently, some artisans have begun to develop Nora beads into accessories such as hairpins, shoulder bags, necklaces, earrings, belts, and keychains. These products are both beautiful and modern. However, a common issue faced by Nora bead craftspeople is the market for these items. It has been found that the interested consumer base is still relatively small, primarily consisting of those who follow beadwork and have lower purchasing power. This has led to limited recognition of the products. Additionally, beadwork is a meticulous craft that requires time, precision, and dedication, making it a significant barrier to market expansion.

To address these challenges, the following strategies are suggested to promote Nora bead products: 1) authorities and private organizations should help by showcasing these products at international events to increase their visibility; 2) the fashion industry, beauty pageants, and prominent figures should incorporate Nora bead products into their attire. This can transform Nora beads into a form of "Soft Power," attracting more attention and interest, and 3) agencies involved in vocational skill development should encourage the creation of clothing from Southern Thailand's local fabrics, incorporating Nora bead products. This would help create a "new Southern Thai dress identity."

Nora performances can be developed to have economic value. Currently, Nora troupes are engaged in Nora Rong Khru rituals, entertainment shows at festivals, and opening ceremonies for various events. In the future, Nora troupes should collaborate with the tourism industry, such as hotels hosting international guests, to showcase Nora performances at welcoming receptions or other social events. This would promote Nora as an intangible cultural heritage of humanity, benefiting hotels by attracting culturally interested tourists and increasing the troupe's revenue. Additionally, Nora performers working with international audiences should develop their English language skills to communicate more effectively.

If the new generation can integrate Nora wisdom with modern lifestyles and livelihoods, the risk of Nora disappearing from society will decrease. This is because the culture will remain in use within the community and will continue to be necessary for people's lives. This approach represents "sustainable preservation of Nora."

The future of Nora may involve changes to fit contemporary times and tastes, which is natural according to the three characteristics of existence (Tilakkhana). However, throughout history, from the past until the present, Nora has endured and adapted to change because it is “a dignified performing art that adheres to principles of gratitude, responds to the beliefs and spirits of the community, and serves as a tool to promote love and bonding among family and society.”

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Appendix

Poems for Nora Rong Khru Rituals

The Pali Verse in Front of the Shrine

The Pali Verse in front of the Shrine is a type of poem used to recount the origins of Nora as well as the customs and practices of the Nora ritual. Bussararat (1999: 2,926-2,928) states that the content of the poem is as follows:

I raise my hands in reverence now,
To honor teachers with a bow.
I offer prayers with graceful stance,
And ask the gods to guide my dance.

I call upon the deities,
From highest realms to earth and seas.
May all divine beings hear my voice,
And in my humble plea rejoice.

I speak of tales from days of old,
When sacred stories first were told.
From when the ancient arts began,
In lands where Buddhist wisdom ran.

In old Jambudvipa's hallowed ground,
Where enlightenment was truly found.
These lengthy tales of mystery deep,
In Pali texts their secrets keep.

Don't merely listen for the sound,
But seek the wisdom to be found.
Traditions spanning countless years,
Passed down through time despite all fears.

My teacher blessed me with this skill,
His Pali verse guide me still.

He gave these words for me to learn,
That I might share at each turn.

I pray the Buddha grants me grace,
His teachings help me find my place.
His guidance fills my heart and mind,
That understanding I may find.

The sacred Pali verse I proclaim,
With “No-Ne-No-Nai” I exclaim.
All scholars who these texts have known,
Will recognize what here is shown.

If I compose as masters taught,
Like mighty elephants so fraught,
The Nora lineage I maintain,
As monks of old did once ordain.

When Three Worlds Deity was placed,
The crystal god stood deep in thought.
One thing remained that caused concern,
No dance to soothe the world was wrought.

No art to calm the suffering souls,
To bring them joy and sweet delight.
The holy devas then gathered near,
Two arhats rose to set things right.

These two approached the sacred throne,
Before the Lord they humbly bowed.
Accepting tasks as was decreed,
Their solemn vows were then avowed.

The Three Worlds lack those who can dance,
We pray you send the Dharma down.

To teach us five the sacred words,
To sing with joy in every town.

O Blessed Buddha! Dharma true!
The Sangha pure! We praise your might!
Success to all the holy ones,
As teachers past have shown the light.

The gods appointed human forms,
Their message never to forget.
I bow before my first teacher,
Whose lessons I shall not forget.

They chose the daughter of a king,
Sri Mala was her noble name.
She knew each step and graceful pose,
Each word and movement brought her fame.

She danced among the royal maids,
Within the palace walls so fair.
But rumors spread throughout the court,
That reached the king and trapped her there.

They claimed the princess had done wrong,
The king commanded she be seized.
They whipped her, placed her on a raft,
As currents bore her where they pleased.

Food and water they provided her,
As she drifted with the flow.
Fish surrounded, followed after,
Watching as she floated so.

The gods directed her to shore,
Protected by their sacred might.

In visions hidden, safe she dwelled,
In comfort through both day and night.

Then dancers came to honor her,
Performing for her day by day.
The deities gathered all around,
In countless numbers, so they say.

Gongs, cymbals, drums began to sound,
With pipes and all that music brings.
Like golden mountains they appeared,
Around the corners of her wings.

The lady kept her teachings closed,
Announced she would not share her art.
Without permission properly gained,
Her dance school would not start.

Following Dhammayut tradition,
On Wednesday, the ninth waning moon,
She bid us follow teacher's words,
Prepare the space and ready soon.

Pay homage to the sacred ground,
When birds return to nightly rest.
Spread mats and cushions all around,
With betel nuts and offerings blessed.

Entwined thread, flower garlands bright,
With incense, candles burning clear.
Pour water in the sacred bowls,
And chant the mantras all can hear.

The cooling spell to bring the rain,
With drums and pipes in sweet refrain.

Consecrated water gently sprinkled,
As blessings fall like gentle rain.

The Northern Lion's mighty power,
The ancient teacher has decreed.
Follow these northern traditions,
And lasting art will be your meed.

Step first with your left foot forward,
Never glance behind your back.
Chant "On-O, O-Pho, O-Mae, O-A, O-AE"
Around the track.

Recite the binding spell that drives
All evil spirits far away.
Write on betel, open the stage,
Perform the chest-touching display.

Cast the spell into the house,
Receive it back, let nothing fall.
Take the knife and tuck it close,
Hang the serpent on the wall.

The sacred snake will come alive,
Place it high upon the beam.
Offer the teacher the beating tools,
Chant "Namo Metta" like a dream.

Buddha's worship, reverence
These words we say without delay.
Proclaim the teacher's greatness now,
Then nectar sweet will come your way.

The heat awakens, rouses all,
The students dress in bright array.

They dance in sequence, as they've learned,
Following tradition's way.

For chief Nora, the grand performance,
Place the Serd upon your head.
Prepare Chian of betels, light the candles,
Then establish the Announcement ritual of homestead.

Recite the Twelve Verse,
All your troubles will take flight.
When performing the Announcement ritual,
Begin with Nora's verse right.

The Sun God and Northern Pinya,
Khee Nhon of Phala mountain high,
Then Phra Rot comes in sequence,
As all teachers gather nigh.

Complete the Twelve Verse,
Quickly note them one by one.
Invite the gods to come and dwell,
In offerings until you're done.

Nine cups within, twelve without,
New cloth placed in proper rows.
Nine candles arranged with care,
Where the sacred water flows.

Betel prepared with areca,
Soaked in fragrant waters pure.
Chandra scented oil powder and scented oil,
With incense that will long endure.

Large candles in their proper place,
Smaller ones to shield the flame.

The teacher warns at early dawn,
Keep the sacred fire the same.

If nine-tiered crowns you would prepare,
Nine baskets you must have in hand.
Arrange them all with proper care,
Just as the teachings now demand.

On Thursday morning, rise at dawn,
Before the sky turns white with light.
Raise high your call to teachers all,
As they approach in ghostly flight.

When all the teachers have arrived,
From every corner, near and far,
Present the offerings with care,
Upon the shrine both near and far.

When finished, bow nine times in full,
The teacher's hall with cloth adorned.
I'll tell you all the details now,
Of how the space should be transformed.

Tiger skins and bear pelts too,
With fangs and tusks of every kind.
Folding knives and sharpening stones,
And oil to keep the blades aligned.

Three coins must then be placed,
To cover the medium's bowl.
Find sand from rivers, fine and pure,
To fill the vessel's sacred role.

Adorn with pendants, chains, and gems,
With cloth that hangs in bright display.

The knowledgeable teacher comes,
Wearing his crown in grand array.

Prepare your students, left and right,
Then lead them forward by the hand.
They bow and prostrate as they come,
Following the teacher's command.

Clothe them properly, piece by piece,
While prayers to holy monks are made.
The teacher, skilled in sacred arts,
Passes on what must be conveyed.

Students left and right arranged,
Like arhats in their sacred pose.
They chant "Buddha, Dharma praise,"
As reverence in their manner shows.

"Hair, body, hair," they recite,
Moving forward, stepping back.
Then extinguish the red light,
Go and dress in fine attire.

Relations gather all around,
Sitting together in one place.
They meditate, faces east,
As fangs and skins support the bowl.

When auspicious time arrives,
Place the headdress and bind with thread.
Consecrate with sacred spells,
Keep harmful spirits far from head.

Shake and rattle, softly play,
Then invite the teachers down.

If ancestors do not descend,
Consider with furrowed brow.

When the invitation's done,
Begin the Swan verse.
Then the Hunter follows straight,
If ancestors still won't appear.

Pierce the eye socket gently,
While chanting "Sirome."
Students gathered all around,
Must not strike with force or glee.

If you must strike, strike true,
Passing through the belly clean.
This completes, my friends,
The teacher's ritual scene.

In addition to the Pali verse used in the Nora Rong Khru ceremony, there are many other poetic verse employed in the Nora Rong Khru ritual. Each verse is used at different stages of the ritual, depending on the specific step of the ceremony. According to an interview with Koeddee (Interview, 2014), the main verse commonly used by Nora groups in conducting the Nora Rong Khru ceremony are as follows (Note: the content of some verse may vary slightly depending on the Nora family lineage and their teachings).

Chant A

I come forth with joyful heart,
To the Earth Goddess, homage I impart.
Spreading wide my humble plea,
With reverence true, on bended knee.

My back becomes the sacred ground,
Where human footsteps may be found.
For all the people of this land,
I offer service as I stand.

The layers of dark soil below,
Then water's realm where currents flow.
The scattered sands so fine and light,
In nature's order, layer by night.

The Naga Lord with mighty scale,
Comes forth to speak without fail.
Answering with "No-Ne," "No-Nai"
In sacred harmony.

His voice arrives with measured pace,
Like oxen moving with steady grace.
Drawing plows across the field,
Where bountiful crops will yield.

The Cotton song, unforgotten still,
Though I depart, remember I will.
My dear companion left behind,
Your presence always on my mind..."

Teacher's Chant Part 1 (Na Trae)

The time is auspicious, the hour is right,
This moment is perfect in the divine light.
The time is propitious as I call with care,
For royal teachers to gather there.

The time is favorable for masters to come,
From their dwellings distant, to join as one.
We watch with patience, we sing with grace,
Moving forward slowly, at measured pace.

I cherish you, fair one with radiant skin,
Like freshly cast gold, pure from within.
Your grace extends through stem and leaf,
Your beauty complete beyond belief.

Truly perfect, none can dispute,
Your charm, dear one, none can refute.
Upon reaching the hall, I shall intone,
“Namo Itipiso Bhagava” is known.

I establish reverence for the worthy one,
Paying homage to unwholesome deeds undone.
I bow to the five Buddhas divine,
To the seven scriptures, so sublime.

May no enemies cause me distress,
Nor the four elements bring duress.
I revere the seven texts profound,
That within our bodies can be found.

I honor Vibhanga that formed our ears,
And Sangani that shaped eyes clear.
Dhatukatha molded the nose with care,
Through which I draw life-giving air.

Bukala Banyatti crafted the mouth,
So words of wisdom can travel south.
Yamaka formed the heart with skill,
Throughout the body, its presence still.

With three hundred bones in perfect array,
And blood in measure, the scriptures say.
Nine million hairs, precisely grown,
By Dharma’s wisdom, carefully sown.

With thirty-two teeth and nails complete,
I bow to the sacred texts so sweet.
That formed this life, this being here,
And sent me forth to appear.

Father, I'm born as human kind,
Most excellent state on earth to find.
The Dharma within my form does dwell,
As I sit and sing, its truth to tell.

I proclaim this always, never fail,
Each time I dance Manora's tale..."

Teacher's Chant Part 2 (Rai Na Trae)

Sit and recite the Gatha Rattana,
Seek protection in this sacred mantra.
Salute the Lady Swan of Khrung Pali,
And honor Earth Goddess Mekhala.

Salute the Divine Spirit of the Land,
For great fortune and victory grand.
Salute Phoshawatdee Thorani,
The cool-hearted mother, gentle and mighty.

I dance and perform upon your domain tonight,
Forgive my intrusion with heart so light.
When I spit betel juice upon your ground,
Hold not this act against me, I am bound.

Here the space is open, broad, and clear,
I request a place for Manora to appear.
A space for Chain offerings, for royal umbrellas tall,
A shrine for worship, a sacred hall.

For two nights and three days, my stage shall stand,
By my feet established, let none reprimand.
Words from humans bring fortune true,
Words from spirits bring fever anew.

Guardian spirits, please raise no objection,
Earth Goddess, grant me your protection.

I offer these words as I dance today,
Devotion through performance I display.

I, Nora dancer, perform in tribute now,
May no danger or harm come to my brow.
As Nora speaks sacred words in dance divine,
Raising hands both left and right in line...”

Teacher’s Chant Part 3 (Thap-Thon Song)

Both hands raised to my crowned head,
I bow, from left to right instead.
My hands positioned high above,
Like lotus blooms in reverent love.

I honor Buddha, master true,
The Dharma and the Sangha too.
To teachers who have shown the way,
My deepest gratitude I pay.

To mighty elders, great in power,
At this auspicious, sacred hour.
May Garuda and guardian might
Force foes and demons into flight.

Beneath the cosmos, every tier,
Through every realm both far and near,
I bow to all the worldly spheres,
Where sacred presence perseveres.

To Vessavana, lord of wealth,
To golden-headed sages’ health,
To monks who’ve studied ancient lore,
Lord Yama whom we all adore.

To guardian spirits of this place,
To department heads of sacred grace,

With heart intent, I bow my head,
With reverence my prayers are said.

To Indra, Brahma, Yama too,
To giants, birds of mighty hue,
To serpent kings with powers grand,
Whose strength protects this sacred land...

...“Om!” we chant with voices clear,
As deities gather, drawing near.
They circle round the Nora stage,
Like jewels that shine from age to age.

The gods have gathered, shining bright,
Like precious gems in radiant light.
I lift my prayers with reverent air,
To sacred powers everywhere.

To Thuat Khao Wang hill,
And Thuat Ang Thong until.
They float and drift into our space,
Bestowing blessings, bringing grace.

To forty-four prayer tables true,
That wander through the heavens blue.
To Thuat Lak Khet,
On the Pup Pha mountain’s throne.

To Thuat Rubber, the mighty tree,
Whose branches spread like canopy.
To Thuat Island Four and Thuat Island Five,
To Thuat Island Mak, now arrive.

Thuat Rock Elephant sits to my left side,
While Thuat Riam with pride.

Sits modestly upon my right,
In ceremonial dance tonight.

To Thuat Ngu on the hill,
To Shaman Gods and Nagas still.
To Mae Phochong, homage pay,
As I continue in this way.

To sacred spirits of Khao Ko Hong,
Circling in ceremonial throng.
To Lord of Phanom Wang I bow,
With reverence deep, I honor now.

To Golden Banyan on Koh Samui,
Where water strikes the shore nearby.
To Thuat Twelve Pak Nam of the stream,
In Trang where waters rushing gleam.

To spirits guarding streams and falls,
Through hollow caves where echo calls.
To Thuat Tiger, round of waist,
And Thuat Bear with fangs so sharp and chaste.

To spirits of the Golden Spire,
In Nakhon, gleaming like a fire.
To City Pillar Shrine revered,
In the city, long endeared.

To Toh Li Pang, Trang's domain,
Where Satun's boundaries remain.
To sacred powers in waters clear,
In every region far and near.

"Om Rum Maha Rum!" I call,
As sacred beings gather all.

Upon this stage they now convene,
As I invoke with faith serene.

The sacred ones I place on high,
As teachers gather from the sky.
To Great Father of Temple Chang Hai,
I call for Great Father Khlai.

To Great Father Sri Than of Temple Na Tham,
At this propitious time I am.
Requesting your divine presence here,
That you might bless and draw near.

To Great Father Jai of Temple Khao Kaew,
I clearly call to summon you.
To Great Father Duan, slender waist,
Of Temple Kok Yang, come with haste.

To Great Father Mang of Temple Nang Phet,
I call throughout the temple set.
To Great Father In of Temple Yan Sue,
I sit consulting here with you.

To Great Father Ngueam, join as one,
Like clustered flowers in the sun.
To Sleeping Buddha wearing a Nora crown,
at Phra Khuha in Golden Mountain Temple with great renown.

To Buddhas in the shrines and halls,
To Abbots whom devotion calls.
To sculpted, molded, cast divine,
I worship at your sacred shrine.

“Namo Buddhaya,” I proclaim,
The Triple Gems I now acclaim.

I bow to Buddhas large and small,
With reverence I honor all.

To Pu Paen, foremost teacher great,
Whose heart with mine does resonate.
To Pu Priap, ancient master wise,
The crown of Nora in our eyes.

To Nora Fueang, graceful one,
To Nora Toem, whose verse has won.
“Om Sitthi,” then “Sva Hom” I say,
As teachers bless my dance today.

“Om Sitthi,” then “Sva Ha” once more,
For strength as I perform this lore.
Wherever I dance, may power rise,
From left and right before all eyes.

The masters now have gathered near,
I chant the sacred verse clear.
Buddha, Dharma, Sangha praised,
As gods descend, my voice is raised.

The hour grows late, I now perceive,
As stars and moon begin to leave.
The time has come, the stage is set,
For Manora’s dance—the greatest yet...”

The Teacher Appreciation Verse

The virtue of my teachers flows like the Ganges wide,
Even as banks may dry, its waters never subside.
This sacred river endures, its end we cannot see,
Its blessings flow eternal, boundless as they may be.

With ten fingers raised high, in reverence I stand,
To praise the Buddha’s wisdom across this blessed land.

Though I observe the precepts, not yet pure in heart,
I bow before the Buddha before my prayers start.

I honor Lord Buddha and all divinities too,
Placing their sacred presence above my head in view.
Wherever I perform, may excellence be found,
May my movements please all who gather around.

I place them on my crown, above my humble head,
With devotion I bow each night before my bed.
I honor the great ocean, the ultimate sea domain,
Where Mekhala travels on the watery plain.

I revere Lord Sun with his radiant might,
And Earth Goddess whose strength supports us right.
O Mother, your gifts sustain my very being,
Your back becomes our foundation, all-seeing.

Countless thousands tread upon your sacred ground,
Yet you remain unshaken, steadfast and sound..."

The Teacher Teaching Verse

The teacher, O the teacher guides,
With graceful movements side to side.
The teacher shows how cloth to bind,
And how to wear the bracelets fine.

The teacher shows the headdress to place,
Then garland strings with gentle grace.
The teacher guides the bracelets' wear,
On left and right with equal care.

The movements to the left displayed,
Are worth five coins when well conveyed.

The movements to the right performed,
Five gold Tamlung they have earned.

Feet press against the pedestal,
While hands draw forth the golden light.
None can compare to your display,
In manner of the gods so bright.

Mouth chanting, hands in graceful form,
As Pho Khun Sattha has well decreed.
Perform your dance with utmost skill,
Lest wife and child be left in need.

When we are blessed with family dear,
Our elders' pride we'll never stain.
Pho Khun Sattha has thus proclaimed,
I bow in reverence once again.

Dance Teaching Verse

Teaching you, I teach the dance,
The shoulder-level stance advanced.
Then lowering with graceful ease,
At waist-level the movements please.

Extend outward with precise form,
Like mountain ranges they transform.
Raise high until it meets your face,
Like hanging flowers full of grace.

Now bring it down with gentle care,
The Spinning-Lamp pose to prepare.
Dance the Kanok pattern true,
Like drawings artists skillfully drew.

Dance the Spinning-Lamp with grace,
Like palm-leaf cutters in their place.
My form is beautiful to see,
As Buddha kept the demons free.

My figure graceful as can be,
Like Rama crossing over the sea.
Dance rising to the highest height,
Like Garuda in soaring flight.

Garuda spies the serpent near,
Spreads wings as battle time draws near.
Become the mighty Garuda form,
Seizing Naga in the storm.

Garuda snatches serpent swift,
Soaring through the heavens adrift.
I take on Hanuman's design,
Who burned Lanka with fire divine.

Embody regal deity grand,
Riding horses, chariots command.
Become the sage with walking staff,
Entering hermitage at last.

At palace corners, four sides tall,
Draw Brahma's face upon the wall.
My form now filled with longing deep,
Like Narayana's bow to keep.

My body now in perfect form,
Like Rama as his bow is drawn.
The arrow leaves the bow with might,
Striking mountains at great height.

The Initial Verse

Begin with the primary stance,
Then four-faced Brahma's sacred dance.
Perform the garland-threading pose,
Like flower strings that gently flow.

Execute the slow swinging form,
My jewel, let your partner rest.
Dance the mountain range position,
Lower arms to shoulder level best.

Perform the harmonious aligned pose,
My jewel, join side by side.
Dance with differing positions,
Then turn to form a rounded hill.

Perform the foreign walking style,
My jewel, like birds return to nest.
Dance the rabbit-viewing-moon pose,
The moon with royal parasol blessed.

Perform as Phra Rot throws a message,
My jewel, demons turn away.
Dance the Chu chai display,
Then gracefully enter the palace way.

The Dragon King calls forth,
My jewel, sovereign of the realm.
Dance the Khee Nhon pose compared,
See how the Khee Nhon pose is Photrayed.

Dance the posture of Lord Rama,
My jewel, drawing bow with skill.
Become the school of ocean fish,
Swimming in waters deep and still.

Lost completely in beauty' trance,
My jewel, with splendor bright.
Dance the tail-playing position,
Then the deer-leaping pose with might.

Dance enticingly with powder,
My jewel, apply it to your face.
Perform the golden swan pose,
Floating on water with gentle grace.

Become water-nymphs at play,
My jewel, in joyful delight.
Dance the tail-playing position,
Then the deer-forest-walking right.

Perform the royal Suriwong pose,
My jewel, with majestic might.
Dance the elephant-eating-grass form,
A charming, pleasing sight.

Perform as Phra Lak releases arrows,
My jewel, with graceful flee.
Dance the Khee Nhon dancing pose,
Then peacock-tail display with glee.

Create the crossed-leg posture for ladies,
My jewel, both beauties true.
Cast upward in three circles,
Then sit down in proper view.

Dance the three-stringed fiddle pose,
My jewel, change the melody.
Perform the monkey-fighting stance,
Then Chinese-drawing-thread with glee.

Dance the gibbon-climbing-tree position,
My jewel, leisurely and slow.
Perform as Mekhala teasing with her crystal,
Then lead into rhythmic flow.

These ancient dance positions,
My jewel, teachers passed to me.

The Gratitude Verse

I honor the benevolence of my teachers with grace,
I pay homage to the precious mentors who showed the way.
I first revere my instructors with deepest praise,
Who imparted knowledge to me day after day.

Having paid respects to my teachers complete,
I turn now to honor my mother dear.
My blessed mother who raised me with care replete,
Guarding and protecting me, keeping danger clear.

Mother nurtured me from infancy to grown height,
Her generous heart never allowing me to stray.
Through her grace I survived and came to light,
My dearest mother grew thin as she wasted away.

Mother slept with eyes closed before the dawn's first ray,
Fearing mosquitoes and gnats might disturb my rest.
She cherished and treasured me every single day,
Morning and evening, lulling me to sleep with songs blessed.

She hung my cradle, surrounded it with cloth shield,
Protecting me from dust that might descend.
Day and night she lay awake, never to yield,
Listening attentively for my cries to attend.

When my mother sat to partake of her meal,
Before she could satisfy her own hunger's call,

Hearing my waking cries with maternal zeal,
She would leave her food, coming to me above all.

Arriving, she would lift me with tender care,
Fearing I might fall from my fabric nest.
With her left hand she would hold me there,
Her right hand reaching for food at my behest.

Mother's virtue exceeds all description's art,
Each of us born should never treat this lightly.
Seeing her child feverish, she could not rest her heart,
My mother wept, sitting anxiously and nightly.

Who knew the time? She would ask of all,
Mother sat worried in every house she'd go.
Finding one who knew divination's call,
My child burns with fever like fire's glow.

The diviner told her after careful thought,
A Nora dance teacher's spirit has taken hold.
Hearing this, mother's joy could not be bought,
She bade farewell, returning home as told.

The Khun Tha Verse or the Thunder and Rain Verse

The verse begins with thunder's sound,
It rumbles with a might profound.
The earth below begins to tremble,
The Naga King transforms, we remember.

Upon hearing thunder's distant call,
She draws her cloth to cover all.
Such pity for her lonesome state,
Her husband far at distant gate.

The verse speaks of thunder's crash,
It breaks the silence with a flash.

She rests her chin upon her hand,
Her back against tree stump in the land.

Alas, the maiden pure and fair,
Will soon a widow's status bear.
Leaning back against the wood,
She weeps as thunder sounds through the wood.

The wind blows at the mountain side,
Through scattered leaves it does glide.
Love whom you will, but love with care,
Not like lost elephants in despair.

I do not wish to hear such tales,
Of precious maidens whose heart fails.
The tusker never forgets his home,
Nor does the herd forget to roam.

Rain falls heavily from northern skies,
Pouring down before our eyes.
Water channels downward flow,
Striking Chinese Emperor's mountain low.

It strikes beside the sleeping place,
Eroding toward the Foot island's base.
The Chinese Emperor's mountain tall,
Connects with Mount of Echoes' wall.

I am not foolish to follow you,
Like golden bull elephants often do.
The tusker never forgets his stall,
The herd remembers, dear one, all.

The Sorrow Verse

Sorrow, oh such sorrow deep,
As dewdrops from the eaves now weep.

They fall with gentle patter sound,
By evening, vessels overflow unbound.

Alas, the fate of humankind,
Some thin, some stout, as fate designed.
Some suffer grief and some despair,
Some waste away like those with illness bear.

Alas, the fate of humankind,
Like leaves that fall when age assigned.
Some grow thin though not from ill,
Some lose their wives while living still.

Alas, the fate of humankind,
Some husbands leave their wives behind.
All wealth and treasures fade away,
Nothing of value seems to stay.

Some lose their husbands, left alone,
With nothing but the hearth and stone.
Their bodies taken to be burned,
Then to the graveyard sadly turned.

They cannot climb to heaven's gate,
Caught in death's noose, a common fate.
Let us cut off our sorrows now,
Dispel all pity, this I vow.

Let us remove all discontent,
From friends whose faces show lament.

The Golden Light Verse

Oh, golden light of heaven bright,
You shine upon me at morning's height.

I shall draw the curtain white,
To shield from you, golden light so bright.

Oh, golden light of heaven fair,
You shine upon me at midday's glare.
I shall draw the curtain bare,
To shield from you, golden light so rare.

Oh, golden light of heaven deep,
You shine down as evening shadows creep.
I shall draw the curtain steep,
To shield from you, golden light so sweet.

Oh, golden light of heaven's glow,
You shine down as nightfall grows below.
I shall draw the curtain dark and slow,
To shield from you, golden light aglow.

The Loss Verse

Lost indeed, lost the way,
In this time, we've gone astray.
Lost the chance, my dear friend,
Like a horse that cannot mend.

In times past, not long ago,
Plays existed, though none would show.
Like a horse that's lost its speed,
Like a golden ship that cannot proceed.

The mahogany wood is joined with care,
To rubber wood, a fitting pair.
The golden shower wood stands tall,
Joined with red wood, over all.

The red wood sighs, a mournful tune,
Rice is costly, though harvest comes soon.

My brother tilled the fields before,
Rice grew heavy, bending to the floor.

Planting in mud where crabs would bite,
Carefully tending from morning till night.
The water rose and flooded the land,
The panicles swayed by unseen hand.

Buffalo wandered to feed on grain,
My brother rushed to the fields again.
Tears flowing steadily down his face,
All his labor, a fruitless chase.

Farming complete, yet nothing to eat,
Strength and effort meet defeat.

The Chu Chai Verse

O Chu Chai man who tends the field,
One hand guides buffalo, shoulder bearing plow unpeeled.
This buffalo, so stubborn and strong,
Let us coax it gently, move along.

Midday sun beats down with might,
Which path shall lead us to fields in sight?
The yoke placed upon the buffalo's neck,
While the sun's rays toward forest trek.

The wife who waits at homestead's door,
Takes up her knife, sits to prepare fish store.
She works with care for her husband dear,
When he returns, his heart will fill with cheer.

Preparing fish, my precious jewel so fine,
Small baskets here, larger ones in line.
When task complete, the woman fair,
Moves with grace to take her chair.

Stretching her feet with practiced ease,
She sits to spin cotton with expertise.
Aunt Sri, with motherly embrace,
Sets cotton wool in its proper place.

Feet push the wheel in rhythm true,
Spinning just enough, as one should do.
Her graceful feet move with such skill,
The sound like flutes and fiddles, sweet and still.

Aunt Sri, with nurturing hand,
Takes cotton wool, wrapping with command.
Creating beauty with focused face,
Round features carved with gentle grace.

Blessed child, precious as gold,
Fed by mother, comes to behold.
Round features carved with gentle grace,
Fed by mother, set in place.

The Jick and Chak Flower Verse

Lovely one, oh worthy of praise,
By now your charm deserves our gaze.
Love hidden in your fragrant cheek,
How many days might I your sweetness seek?

I've long admired the lotus fair,
Then turned to see another there.
With layered petals, tier on tier,
Still budding clusters, drawing near.

Jick Flower, oh Jack Flower,
Still speaking of love's sweet perfume.
Jick Flower I cherish true,
Though screw pine tempts me from you.

Your jasmine flower, my precious gem,
Spreads fragrance from its gentle stem.
I place it on the elephant's back,
For distant maiden down the track.

That distant maiden, far away,
I know not when she'll come my way.
Here I sit in contemplation deep,
As fifth month turns to sixth, I weep.

I suffer for I cannot claim you mine,
Who else could know this heart of mine?
I pity the bird's young offspring small,
That in the well did helpless fall.

Heavenly flowers of your breast,
How many blooms each day expressed?
I seek not, ask not for your hand,
No deception from me shall stand.

Heavenly flowers of your breast,
How many clusters daily rest?
I will not trick nor lead astray,
No false intentions in my way.

Heavenly flowers of your breast,
Bloom today, tomorrow fade at best.
Wasted effort in cultivation's art,
Strength spent watering from the start.

The treetop sways so carefully,
While insects gnaw relentlessly.
Wasted strength in watering done,
My heart's exhaustion has begun.

The Water Crow Verse

Behold that dark shadow in the deep,
Called water crow, hunting fish in its sweep.
Break off its fins and toss them high,
Swift as a human hand can fly.

Chai Chay glanced and caught the sight,
Then learned to play with skilled delight.
Grabbing spears in tumultuous throws,
Left hand casting, right hand close.

Lord Buddha looked and saw this feat,
Then called with voice both firm and sweet:
Chai Chay, O Chai Chay, I inquire,
This knowledge, where did you acquire?

To make a bird your teacher true,
Is this not shameful through and through?
Chai Chay responded with reverence clear:
This knowledge came to me, my dear.

Chai Chay was reckless in his ways,
Throwing spears as if in plays.
Throwing alone and catching too,
Until a spear his life withdrew.

The teacher called with saddened tone,
We cannot undo what has been shown.
The spear that took Chai Chay's life away,
Came from rejecting teacher's sway.

The Old Tiger Verse

Oh, I am restless for you, my dear,
Like the old folk singer drawing near.

The patient who escapes death's call
Gains strength when elders visit all.

Oh, I am restless for you, my sweet,
Like a fearsome tiger on his feet.
Walking with a steady, stalking stride,
Making townsfolk run and hide.

Oh, I am restless for you, my love,
Like a yellow tiger from above.
Though fangs may break and claws may fold,
Once I bite you, my grip will hold.

If they find my corpse at the city gate,
Who will be blamed for such a fate?
Oh, I am restless for you, my fair,
Like an aged tiger from Chaiya there.

I am neither sea tiger nor river beast,
But a field tiger, striped at least.
When fourth month turns to the fifth in time,
Tigers hunt by the canal's line.

Prowling, searching, watching keen,
At the bridge head, barely seen.
I will bite you deep into the mud,
Press you down where soil and water flood.

Though you may rise up from below,
The tiger's presence all will know.
Though fangs may break and claws may fail,
Once I bite, I will not bail.

Having bitten, I will hide my trace,
No one will know of the tiger's chase.

Parents searching for your soul,
Hundreds of years, without control.

Parents searching for your remains,
Find only empty house and pains.

**The Chatthan Anathorn Verse or the Plai Ngam Verse
(Magnificent elephant)**

At midday I finally entered the pavilion's space,
Plai Ngam following the herd to the familiar place.
Rolling, thrashing, with a thunderous cry,
Feeling lonely, gloomy, and forsaken under the sky.

Ta Mor Thao's eye spotted me there,
Leaving me longing, trapped in despair.
Tightly bound, the ropes holding fast,
No chance of freedom, my fate now cast.

The leather cord perfectly fits my neck,
None show mercy, no kindness to check.
When I lived freely in forest and hill,
I would lie down with comfort and goodwill.

With my trunk I'd break leaves so tender,
To make a soft bed for rest to surrender.
Rolling logs nearby to form a border,
Resting my noble head as if on an order.

At noon when the heat became intense,
I'd wake from slumber, my thirst immense.
Then invite the hundred-weight female near,
Let's bathe in the waters, cool and clear.

As evening approached with fading light,
We'd walk through the forest to clearings bright.

Upon arrival, she would stand in a ring,
Trunks intertwined in a sorrowful swing.

We lived in peace and joy every day,
But today brings hardship, I cannot stray.

The Satsadi Verse

O blessed one, most blessed one, I humbly invite my father to enter and dwell.
O blessed one, most blessed one, I humbly invite my mother to enter and dwell.
This child studies the teachings and recites the beautiful sacred verse.
May enemies never appear, may they vanish without traces.

May blessings flourish, may all suffering disappear,
May wealth flow uninterrupted, may victory draw near.
My ten fingers raised between my brows, reaching high,
Homage to the Buddha, I bow and glorify the future Buddha's sight.

I pay respect to the Sangha, aspiring toward Nirvana's state,
I honor teachers and masters who have guided my fate.
Homage to all letters, both consonants and vowels combined,
All numerals and scripts, both Khmer and Thai entwined.

The teachers have instructed me without hesitation or delay,
Teaching completely what I retain within my bodily clay.
The auspicious time has come, this moment is right,
The perfect hour calls forth the masters into sight.

At this auspicious time, I bow to Mae Sri Mala, the first teacher of note,
If I fail to pass, I cannot escape, even through passages remote.
I pay homage to Mae Sri Mala, the first teacher, and to the mother of Khun Sattha at Tha Kae,
Please smile upon us with favor, though you are elderly, I pray.

I honor Pho Khun Sattha of Tha Kae and Pho Thep Singhorn too,
If you truly love this child, bestow blessings and virtues anew.
I bow to Pho Thep Singhorn who has taught through generations,
The auspicious time is beautiful, the hour has reached its stations.

Whatever vows were made, with those offerings we comply,
Come now, Father, do not hesitate or delay, do not sigh.
The sacred thread serves as your bridge, which I have prepared,
Come now, enter the medium's body, as we have declared.

I have readied the canopy and curtains, medicines and offerings with care,
Soft mats and golden pillows have been arranged with flair.
Nine places and twelve rice offerings, with female and male cloth pairs,
Offerings await you, please accept these wares.

Ripe fruits your descendants have prepared as tribute,
A pig's head, many boiled chickens, arranged as a sacred tribute.
I invite the Khru Mo of this house to descend from their abode,
Come now, come play with us along this sacred road.

I am like a rice stalk, and you are like a sparrow in flight,
Come play with us, dance swiftly into our sight.
Dance to the drum's rhythm, step to the cymbals' sound,
Dance quickly among us, all masters surround.

Please descend, Father, we have prepared a medium to await,
Do not act like pigeons flying here and there at rapid rate.
Do not behave like monkeys wearing bark in evening's cool,
If you do not descend now, this large rice cake will be the dog's fuel.

If you do not come down today, this offering tray will be thrown to waste,
Do not act childishly, like teasing dogs with spice in haste.
If you do not descend today, for hundreds of years no offerings we'll make,
If I have erred, I seek forgiveness, after anger, reconciliation I seek..."

Glossary of Cultural Terms

A

Adornment ritual (การแต่งพอก): Another term for the Grand Cloth-Tying Ceremony, focusing on the special costume elements worn during this significant initiation.

Adhering to principles (ถือของ): Specific practices and restrictions that Nora performers observe to cultivate spiritual strength and maintain their connection to ancestral teachers.

Ancestor spirits (ผีบรรพบุรุษ): The spirits of deceased family members from both paternal and maternal sides who are believed to possess divine power and protect their descendants after death.

Ancestors (ตายาย): Deceased family members who are venerated and believed to maintain a spiritual connection with their descendants. In Nora traditions, these ancestors may become protective spirits of the lineage.

Annual Khru Mo Nora Offering ritual (พิธีกรรมเซ่นไหว้ครูหมอนร่าประจำปี): A ceremonial practice held annually to make offerings to Khru Mo Nora (Nora masters or spirits).

Announcement ritual (ตั้งบ้านตั้งเมือง): A crucial ceremony on Wednesday that officially declares to humans and spirits that the space will be used for the Nora Rong Khru ritual over the next three days, establishing spiritual territory.

Amulets/talismans (เครื่องรางของขลัง): Sacred objects believed to possess supernatural powers that can protect the bearer from harm or bring them good fortune.

Auspiciousness (สิริมงคล): The quality of bringing good fortune, blessings, and positive outcomes. Many Nora rituals are performed to generate auspiciousness for individuals, families, and communities.

Ashram-styled shrine (หิ้งแบบอาศรม): A type of Khru Mo Nora shrine elevated on four posts approximately 90 centimeters high and placed on the floor of the house. This design resembles a small pavilion or sanctuary.

B

Baa (ขนมบ้า): A sweet treat made with rice flour, sugar, and coconut milk that is steamed or fried. It is among the traditional offerings made to Nora spirits during ceremonies.

Bai Sri (บายศรี): A tiered ceremonial offering made from folded banana leaves and flowers, symbolizing the cosmic mountain. It serves as a focal point in many Thai rituals, including Nora ceremonies.

Bai Sri Ton (บายศรีตัน): A multi-tiered ceremonial structure made from folded banana leaves and decorated with flowers and other sacred items, placed at the central pillar of the Nora pavilion.

Bamboo-woven shrine (หิ้งฟาก): A Khru Mo Nora shrine made from woven bamboo slats, typically placed under the roof. This style is commonly found in areas around the border between Songkhla, Phatthalung, and Nakhon Si Thammarat provinces.

Betel nut (หมากคำ): Areca nuts wrapped in betel leaves, often with lime paste, used as offerings to spirits and deities throughout Thai ceremonial practices, including the Nora Rong Khru.

Betel nut tray (ขันหมาก): A ceremonial tray containing betel nuts, betel leaves, flowers, puffed rice, money, incense sticks, and a candle, used to make formal offerings to the spirits and to establish a ceremonial contract between the host and the Nora troupe.

Betel nuts and leaves (หมากพลู): A traditional offering consisting of areca nuts wrapped in betel leaves, often with lime. This offering is considered essential for communicating with spirits and showing proper respect.

Beliefs/traditions (คติความเชื่อ): The system of spiritual understandings and practices that guide behavior and ritual in Nora culture. These beliefs connect the visible world with spiritual dimensions and provide meaning to ceremonial actions.

Benjangkhapradit bow (การกราบแบบเบญจางคประดิษฐ์): A specialized form of prostration using five points of contact with the ground (forehead, forearms, and knees), performed during the Teacher Reverence ritual to show ultimate respect.

Bharata Natyasastra (ภรตนาฏยศาสตร์): An ancient Indian treatise on performing arts, considered the foundational text for classical Indian dance and theater. Nora dance postures show similarities to poses described in this text, indicating cultural connections between South India and southern Thailand.

Bound by a vow (ถูกเหมรย): The condition of suffering illness or misfortune believed to be caused by unfulfilled obligations to Khru Mo Nora spirits.

Brahma (พระพรหม): One of the three principal deities in Hinduism who are honored in traditional Nora performances. Their influence reflects the Brahmanical elements incorporated into Thai cultural practices.

Brahmanism (ศาสนาพราหมณ์): The religious traditions associated with Brahmin priests and Hindu practice that influenced Thai culture, including the Nora tradition. Many ritual elements in Nora derive from Brahmanical ceremonies.

Buddhist charms (พุทธมนต์): Sacred Buddhist incantations used for protection or blessing.

Buddhist holy day (วันพระ): Specific days determined by the lunar calendar (typically four days per month) when Buddhists traditionally engage in religious activities. On these days, devotees of Khru Mo Nora make special offerings believing that the spirits observe Buddhist precepts.

Buffalo Beheading ritual (พิธีกรรมโนราถีบหัวควาย): Another name for the ceremony where a buffalo is symbolically sacrificed as part of Nora traditions to honor spirits.

C

Candle array (เทียนราย): A specific arrangement of nine candles used in Nora rituals, typically placed on a pillow in front of the shrine with betel nuts and leaves at the base of each candle.

Catummaharajika Heaven (สวรรค์ชั้นจาตุมหาราชิกา): The first level of heaven in Buddhist cosmology, believed to be where Khru Mo Nora spirits reside. These celestial beings are thought to have abodes on Earth while maintaining connections to the divine realm.

Ceiling cloth (ผ้าเพดาน): A white cloth hung above the shrine, containing offerings of betel nuts, puffed rice, flowers, and money, believed to be where Khru Mo Nora and sacred entities reside during the ceremony.

Ceiling-hung shrine (หิ้งแบบผูกเพดาน): A style of Khru Mo Nora shrine that involves tying a ceiling cloth beneath the house's roof and using a wooden platform to place necessary ritual items and offerings. This style is common in some areas of Songkhla and Phatthalung provinces.

Celestial deities (อุปติเทวดา): Divine beings residing in heavenly realms, ranging from the desire realm to the realm of the Brahmas.

Ceremonies (พิธีกรรม): Formalized actions or series of actions performed according to prescribed order, typically for spiritual or cultural significance.

Ceremonies for novices (พิธีทำขวัญนาค): A ritual performed for young men before they enter monkhood.

Ceremonial dances (รำจับบท): The complete sequence of traditional dance movements and recitations that must be performed during the ceremony, each with specific cultural and spiritual significance.

Cha Nang Hong verse (บทชานางหงส์): A verse used to summon the Swan to descend to the Nora stage during the Swan Dance ritual.

Chant A verse (บทขานเอ): The first part of the Teacher's Chant, recited slowly without musical accompaniment, focusing on praising Nang Thorani and recounting the story of the mother of Khun Sattha (Khru Mo Nora).

Cha Rong (ชะโรง): The climactic performance segment during a Nora competition when performers showcase their most impressive skills to win audience approval.

Chaeng spirit (ผีแขง): A benevolent spirit that resides in Nora pavilions, believed to have been present since the origins of Nora dance. Originally associated with the palm leaf (chaeng) roof that protected the mythical Nang Nual Thong Samlee, these spirits now protect Nora performers from malevolent forces.

Chai Thong Hoi dance (รำไซทองห้อย): A specific dance movement characterized by the performer arching backward with their head hanging down, demonstrating exceptional flexibility.

Chaimongkol chant (บทชัยมงคลคาถา): An auspicious Buddhist chant recited during the blessing with holy water and rice grains in the Teacher Reverence ritual, believed to bring protection and success.

Chalawan crocodile (จระเข้ชาละวัน): A mythical crocodile character in Thai folklore who represents evil and misfortune, defeated by Krai Thong in traditional stories and Nora performances.

The Hunter performance (จับบ่ทอออกพราน): A theatrical segment depicting a hunting scenario, typically featuring the Hunter character from Nora tradition.

Chattri (ชาตรี): A traditional form of theatrical performance in southern Thailand, characterized by its traveling nature. Scholars believe this term may have evolved from the Sanskrit word “Yatra,” referring to traveling theater performances from ancient India.

Chandra scented oil powder (แป้งจันทร์มันหอม): A fragrant powder mixed with aromatic oils used for anointing sacred objects and as a fragrance offering to please Khru Mo Nora spirits.

Chiang Phra tree (black-chicken-leg tree) (ต้นเจียงพรา): A specific tree whose branches are used for sprinkling holy water during blessing rituals, typically wrapped with red and white unbleached cotton thread for ceremonial purposes.

Chian Khru (เจียนครู): A ceremonial object used in Nora rituals, particularly during healing ceremonies. It serves as a conduit for spiritual power during various ritual procedures.

Chian set (เครื่องเจียน): A ceremonial betel preparation set containing tobacco, betel nuts, betel leaves, and red lime paste, typically placed on both sides of the shrine as offerings.

Chief Khru Mo Nora/Head Khru Mo Nora (ครูหมอหัวเชือก/ครูหมอตันเชือก): The principal spirit among a lineage's Nora teacher spirits, whose authority supersedes others. This hierarchy is based on ancestral seniority rather than mythological status.

Chief Nora (โนราใหญ่): A master Nora performer who has completed the Cloth-Tying ceremony and is authorized to lead rituals and train others. They hold significant spiritual responsibility within the tradition.

Ching (จิ้ง): Small cup-shaped cymbals that provide supplementary rhythm and embellish the beat of Nora music.

Choed rhythm (จังหวะเชิด): A fast, rhythmic musical pattern played at significant moments in the ceremony, especially when invoking spirits of Khru Mo Nora for possession or during important rituals. It creates an atmosphere of intensity and solemnity.

Cloth-Tying ceremony (การผูกผ้าเป็นโนราใหญ่): The initiation ritual that elevates a Nora performer to the status of Chief Nora. This important ceremony, typically performed when the artist reaches maturity (often around age 45), confers both spiritual authority and responsibility.

Conventional deities (สมมติเทวดา): Human rulers like kings who are respected as divine due to their righteousness and adherence to the ten virtues of kingship.

Combined Posture dance (รำประสมท่า): A performance combining various dance techniques and positions into a comprehensive demonstration of skill.

Consecrated water bowl (ขันน้ำมนต์): A container of blessed water used in various purification and healing rituals, often containing sacred objects and infused with spiritual power through chants.

Consecrated water pot (หม้อน้ำมนต์): A pot containing blessed water, kaffir lime leaves, lime leaves, and symbolic silver and gold pieces, used for purification and blessing during the ceremony.

Coupled cloth (ผ้าคู่): Sets of men's and women's clothing placed on the left and right sides of the shrine as offerings to honor ancestors, typically consisting of one set of each gender's traditional attire.

Crocodile Hand Crowning (การครอบมือแทงจระเข้): A ritual transfer of authority from a master to a student, signifying that the student has received the knowledge to perform all Nora ceremonies.

Crocodile-Spearing ritual (พิธีกรรมแทงจระเข้): Aclimactic ritual element where a symbolic crocodile is ceremonially speared, representing triumph over obstacles or negative forces.

D

Dance Teaching verse (บทสอนรำ): Ceremonial verses that contain instructions about the proper techniques and movements of Nora dance, believed to be passed down from the ancestral spirits.

Dancing for the Shrine (การรำถวายหน้าศาล): A ritual dance performed in front of the ceremonial shrine to honor the Khru Mo Nora spirits after the possession ritual is complete.

Dancing in Front of the Shrine (รำหน้าศาล): A ritual dance performed before an shrine dedicated to the Nora spirits, serving as an offering and demonstration of respect to ancestral teachers.

Dasi Attam (ทาสีอัตตัม): A traditional ritual dance performed in southern India to honor deities. This practice shares similarities with Nora, suggesting historical cultural connections between the regions.

Dee Sum (ขนมดีซำ): A small, ring-shaped fried rice flour dessert traditionally offered during Nora rituals. These sweets represent the cultural continuity between everyday life and spiritual practices.

Deity (เทวดา): Divine beings in Thai religious cosmology, often derived from Hindu-Buddhist traditions, who possess supernatural powers and may assist or influence humans.

Deity Wan Tok (เทวดาวันตก): “Western Deities,” a group of female spirits highly revered in Nakhon Si Thammarat Province and neighboring areas of Trang Province.

Devadasis (เทวทาสี): Temple dancers in ancient Indian tradition who were dedicated to serving deities through dance and music. Their ritual performances have parallels in the ceremonial aspects of Nora.

Divine food (อาหารทิพย์): Food that has been offered to spirits during ceremonies and is believed to be spiritually transformed. After the ritual, this food is shared among participants and is thought to convey blessings when consumed.

Do Ma (โดมา): The original name for what evolved into “Nora.” In southern Thai dialect, it means “something is coming over there,” referring to how villagers described the approaching performance when they first encountered it.

Dramatic poems (กลอนหนัง): Poetic recitations performed after the Teacher’s Chant to praise royalty, community leaders, and hosts, demonstrating the Nora performers' rhetorical skills.

E

Ears of rice (รวงข้าว): Rice stalks used in ritual contexts, particularly during healing ceremonies. They may be used to sweep over afflicted areas while chanting spells.

Entering the Area ritual (พิธีกรรมเข้ามณฑล): A ceremony performed by Hunter Boon outside the Nora stage to seek blessings from spiritual teachers and guardian spirits before capturing the Swan.

F

Family lineage (วงศ์ตระกูล): The ancestral line of descent, particularly important in Nora tradition as performances and knowledge are often passed down through families.

Family system (ระบบครอบครัว): The traditional organizational structure of Nora troupes based on family relationships and seniority.

Father/Mother (พ่อ/แม่): Respectful terms used by Nora students to address their teachers, reflecting the deep bond formed during the intensive learning relationship.

Finding the Phet (การหาเพด): A diagnostic ritual performed by fortune tellers or spirit mediums to determine the spiritual cause of an illness.

Floating of the Victorious Krathong ritual (พิธีกรรมลอยกระทงชัย): A ceremony where a decorated floating vessel (krathong) is used to seek out the Chalawan Crocodile during the Krai Thong performance.

Four Mothers (แม่ทั้ง 4 องค์): Four revered female deities that Nora performers invoke for protection: Mother of Birth, Mother Earth, Mother of Agriculture, and Mother Ganges. They are remembered during the ritual entrance to the pavilion.

Front cloth and Hanging cloth (หน้าผ้าและผ้าห้อย): Decorative cloth pieces worn over the front of the costume and between panels, enhancing beauty and providing modesty.

Front Curtain poem (กลอนหน้าม่าน): Another term for the preliminary poem recited before the main dance performance begins.

Front Room poem (กลอนหน้าห้อง): A preliminary poetic recitation performed before the main Nora dance, serving as a subtle signal to the audience that the performance is about to begin and allowing dancers time to prepare.

Front Scene poem (กลอนหน้าฉาก): Another term for the preliminary poem that showcases the performer's poetic abilities and creates atmosphere before the main performance.

G

Gold-mouthed chicken (ไก่ปากทอง): A boiled chicken with gold leaf applied to its beak, presented as a high-status food offering to spirits during the Nora ceremony.

Grand Cloth-Tying ceremony (พิธีกรรมผูกผ้าใหญ่): An advanced ritual performed for male Nora performers who wish to establish their own troupe and perform all types of Nora-related rituals.

Grand Nora Rong Khru ritual (พิธีกรรมโนราโรงครูใหญ่): The most comprehensive version of the Nora Rong Khru ceremony that lasts for three days and two nights (from Wednesday evening to Friday evening). This is the complete form of the ritual with all traditional elements included.

Gratitude (ความกตัญญู): The virtue of recognizing and appreciating the benefits received from others, particularly parents, teachers, and ancestors. This is a foundational value in Thai culture and Nora traditions.

Great grandparents/Thuat (ทวด): A term for sacred spirits that reside in natural locations. These entities are more powerful than ordinary ancestor spirits and are often associated with specific geographical features.

Group dance (รำชุด): A modern innovation in Nora where multiple dancers perform simultaneously in coordinated movements, contrasting with the traditional solo performances.

Guest Nora performer (โนรารับเชิญ): A freelance Nora artist who is not permanently affiliated with a specific troupe but performs with various groups on invitation.

Gumprat (กำพรัด/กัมพรัด): An improvised dance or performance segment where performers demonstrate creativity and adaptability.

Gumprat Bot Jing (กำพรัดบทจริง): A serious, formal dance within the Gumprat tradition, focusing on traditional stories and themes.

Gumprat Chom (กำพรัดชม): A praise dance within the Gumprat tradition, featuring movements and lyrics that express admiration and respect.

Gumprat Kee Hok (กำพรัดขี้หก): A comic dance within the Gumprat tradition, featuring humorous movements and scenarios intended to entertain the audience.

Gumprat Kiao (กำพรัดเกี้ยว): A flirtatious dance style within the Gumprat tradition, featuring playful, romantic movements and themes.

H

Hand Consecration (การครอบมือ): The formal transmission of knowledge, authority, and spiritual power from a Nora master to a student, enabling them to perform certain rituals and lead ceremonies.

Hand dance (รำสาวมือ): A preparatory dance focusing on delicate hand movements and positions, often performed as a warm-up or demonstration of basic skills.

Harsh Brahma (พรหมโหด): A high-level Shin typically called upon to eliminate enemies.

Headdress/Serd (เทริด): The ornate crown-like headpiece worn by Nora performers, typically featuring multiple tiers of decorative elements and considered one of the most sacred items in a performer's costume.

Honoring local spirits (ไหว้ภูมิจำรง): A ritual paying respect to territorial spirits of a performance venue.

Hor Moey (ห่อหมอย): A ceremonial act of “making a vow” that symbolizes a promise between humans and Nora spirits. This ritual is often performed when seeking healing or protection from the spirits.

House Blessing ritual (พิธีไหว้พระภูมิบ้าน): A ceremony performed to bless and protect a home from malevolent forces.

Hunter (พราน): A character in Nora performances who uses various weapons to capture mythical creatures or combat spiritual entities.

Hunter’s Face (หน้าพราน): A ceremonial mask representing a hunter figure in the Nora tradition. It is believed to possess spiritual power and requires proper ritual handling.

I

Inauspicious rituals (พิธีกรรมอวมงคล): Ceremonies related to death or misfortune that traditional Nora artists were prohibited from performing to avoid diminishing their artistic power.

Informal teaching (การสอนแบบไม่เป็นทางการ): The traditional method of transmitting Nora knowledge through apprenticeship, observation, and hands-on practice rather than formal instruction.

Initial verse (บทปฐม): The opening verse recited at the beginning of a Nora ceremony, setting the stage for the ritual proceedings that follow.

Intangible Cultural Heritage (มรดกวัฒนธรรมที่จับต้องไม่ได้): Cultural expressions and knowledge that communities recognize as part of their heritage but exist in non-physical forms.

Invocation of the Spirit ritual (พิธีกรรมเชิญขวัญ): A ceremony to invite a person’s spirit (khwan) back to their body, performed to bless and protect them during significant rituals.

J

Jeeb Nghai pose (ท่าจีบหงาย): A traditional hand gesture used in Thai dance where the fingers form a specific shape while extending the hands forward, symbolizing elegance and grace.

Jia cloth (ผ้าเจียะ): A rectangular colored fabric worn like a scarf around the neck, originally used to enhance appearance when full beaded costumes were too expensive.

Jong Rach (จรงราช): A cylindrical container made from pandanus leaves, containing uncooked rice, betel nuts and leaves, money, a candle, and white thread, used as a key offering to Khru Mo Nora spirits.

K

Kad Rong (การภาศโรง): Another term for the ceremonial chant performed at the beginning of the ritual to invoke spirits and deities to the performance space.

Khab Krok (คาบครก): A skill demonstration where the performer holds a mortar in their mouth, showcasing jaw strength and balance.

Khab Ruea (คาบเรือ): A skill demonstration where the performer holds a boat model in their mouth, demonstrating strength and control.

Khao Kao (ข้าวเกา): A ceremonial food offering similar to Khao Sipsong but consisting of nine small bowls of food instead of twelve, presented to deities and sacred spirits.

Khao Sipsong (ข้าวสิบสอง): A ceremonial food offering consisting of twelve small bowls containing various savory and sweet dishes, arranged together with a candle and betel quid, presented to Khru Mo Nora spirits.

Khee Nhon Para verse (บทชี้หนอนพารา): A verse recited during the Swan Dance, also known locally as Khee Nhon Sopha.

Khuang (ขวาง): A concept in Southern Thai dialect referring to a decline in reputation or artistic power, especially for a Nora performer who violates traditional taboos.

Khun Chian (ขุนเชียร): A middle-level Shin that can be summoned for multiple purposes.

Khun In (ขุนอินทร์): A middle-level Shin used for general purposes.

Khun Prab (ขุนปราบ): A middle-level Shin that can be called upon for various situations.

Khun Shin (ขุนชิน): A middle-level Shin that serves as a general-purpose protective spirit.

Khun Tha verse (บทขุนธา): Specific ritual verses named after a character in Nora mythology, recited during ceremonies to honor Khru Mo Nora.

Kinnaree (กินรี): A mythical half-bird, half-human female creature from Hindu and Buddhist mythology. In the context of Nora, the character Manora is depicted as a Kinnaree, symbolizing beauty, grace, and the supernatural.

Kinnorn/ Kinnara (กัณนร/กัณนระ): A mythical hybrid entity in Hindu and Buddhist mythology, depicted as a half-human, half-bird celestial being associated with music, dance, and grace. While *Kinnara* serves as the gender-neutral or masculine umbrella term in Sanskrit and Pali, it specifically refers to the male counterpart of a *Kinnaree* (*Kinnari*).

Knife sharpening stone (หินลับมีด): A ritual object used in ceremonial contexts, particularly during the Sen crushing treatment ritual.

Ko Dance (รำเพลงโค): A vigorous dance style performed to a specific musical composition, characterized by powerful, assertive movements that demonstrate strength and skill.

Komen/Komes (โกเมน/โกเมศ): High-level Shin spirits invoked only for significant matters.

Krae (แกระ): Traditional Southern Thai wooden clappers used as percussive instruments to produce sharp, rhythmic beats; a regional variation of *krap*.

Krai Thong (นายไกรทอง): A legendary hero character in Thai folklore who defeats the Chalawan crocodile, portrayed in Nora performances during the Rong Khru ritual.

Kraow (เพลงกราว): A specific musical segment in a Nora performance featuring distinctive rhythms and movements.

Krap (กรับ): Traditional Thai wooden clappers or percussive blocks struck together or against other instruments to produce sharp, clear rhythmic beats.

Kris (กริช): A short, double-edged blade that can be straight or wavy. In addition to being a weapon, it serves as a symbol of masculinity and status, and is believed to possess magical properties.

Kru (ครู): Teacher or master; in performing arts contexts, it refers to both living instructors and ancestral master spirits who pass down artistic knowledge.

Khru Mo (ครูหมอ): Literally “teacher-healer,” this term refers to the spirits of ancestors and respected teachers who passed on knowledge in various fields. They are venerated during Nora rituals and considered protective spiritual entities.

Khru Mo Nora (ครูหมอนอรา): The ancestral spirits of deceased Nora masters who are believed to continue guiding and protecting current practitioners. They are specifically honored during Nora Rong Khru ceremonies.

Khru Mo Nora shrine (หิ้งครูหมอนอรา): A dedicated shrine in a home where representations of Nora teacher spirits reside and where offerings are made. It serves as a focal point for family worship and ritual communication with Nora spirits.

Khru Mo Nora shrine Setup Ritual (พิธีกรรมตั้งหิ้งครูหมอนอรา): The ceremonial installation and consecration of an shrine dedicated to Nora master spirits. This ritual establishes a sacred space in a household where offerings can be made and spiritual communication maintained.

Kwid Tung Plai Makh (ขวิดตุงปลายหมาก): An acrobatic demonstration involving balancing on or manipulating an areca nut log, requiring significant strength and coordination.

L

La (ขนมลา): A glutinous rice dessert used as an offering in Nora rituals, particularly associated with the tenth lunar month festival in Southern Thailand.

Lam Luek mantra (มนต์ลำลึก): A specialized form of meditation-based chanting used to establish spiritual communication with ancestral spirits during ceremonies.

Lamob (การละมบ): A spirit exorcism ritual sometimes incorporated into Nora performances, particularly in competitive settings. It demonstrates the performer's spiritual power.

Lady Sparrow verse (บทนางนกกระจอก): A farewell verse recited at the end of the Nora ceremony that uses the metaphor of a sparrow being freed from attachments.

Lepironia mat (เสื่อกระจุต): A traditional mat woven from Lepironia articulata reeds, used in front of the Khru Mo Nora shrine. This natural material is considered appropriate for sacred spaces.

Local deities/Forest deities (ภูมัญญ์เทวดา/ภูมเทวดา): Spirits that inhabit natural settings such as forests, groves, and specific trees. They protect these locations and may influence those who enter their territories.

Local healer (หมอบ้าน): A traditional practitioner of folk medicine or occult sciences who sometimes performs rituals related to Khru Mo Nora worship when a chief Nora is unavailable. These healers should specialize in auspicious ceremonies rather than dealing with malevolent practices.

Local wisdom/traditional knowledge (ภูมิปัญญา): Indigenous knowledge and practices developed within a specific community or region, reflecting their experience with the natural and social environment.

Loi Whan (ลอยหวั่น): A belief concerning the proper orientation of the Nora pavilion in relation to the sun's path, reflecting cosmological principles in Thai ceremonial architecture.

Lot Buang (ลอดบ่วง): An acrobatic performance where the performer passes their body through hoops or rings to demonstrate flexibility and skill.

Love spells (ทำเสน่ห์): Magical practices sometimes associated with Nora masters, believed to influence feelings of attraction or affection. Traditional Nora teachers often had knowledge of these arts but cautioned about their ethical use.

Luk Ku (ลูกคู่): Musicians who accompany Nora performances, playing traditional instruments and providing vocal responses to the lead performer's chants.

Lukpok cloth (ลูกพอก): Cylindrical attachments made from rolled handkerchiefs or wrapped coconut shells worn at the waist during certain Nora ceremonies.

M

Mahachai spear (หอกมหาชัย): The victorious spear used by Krai Thong to defeat the Chalawan crocodile in the ritual performance.

Mak Juk Ok (หมากจุกอก): Betel nuts inscribed with magical symbols, rolled into a triangular shape, and placed on musical instruments during the opening ritual, serving as a vehicle for spiritual communication.

Manora (มนิราห์): An alternative spelling for Nora, derived from the mythical half-bird, half-human female character that features prominently in traditional tales. The name connects the performance tradition to ancient folklore.

Manora Chatri (มนิห์ราชตรี): An alternative spelling of Nora Chatri, highlighting the connection to the mythical Manora character from traditional folklore.

Mae (แม่): Mother; also used as a respectful title for matriarchal figures or female spirit entities.

Mae Sri Mala (แม่ศรีมาลา): A high-ranking female Khru Mo Nora spirit who is known for her refined and gentle demeanor when possessing mediums.

Merit-making festival Known as “Sart Thai” (พิธีกรรมเทศกาลทำบุญสารทเดือนสิบ): A Southern Thai festival held in the tenth lunar month to make merit for deceased ancestors. This festival overlaps with Nora ritual schedules and involves the preparation of special foods that are also used in Nora offerings.

Mhap Phong La (หมักรับพองลา): A ceremonial food arrangement consisting of puffed rice cakes and traditional sweets arranged in a triangular pyramid shape, tied with colored threads and adorned with betel quids and a candle, typically placed on the right side or in front of the Hunter’s Face and Nang Thasi’s Face masks during ceremonies.

Mhong (โหม่ง): A pair of gongs with different pitches (higher “Mhong sound” and lower “Mhung sound”) used to establish rhythmic patterns.

Minor Nora Rong Khru ritual (พิธีกรรมโนราโรงครูเล็ก): A condensed version of the Nora Rong Khru ceremony that lasts for two days and one night (from Wednesday evening to Thursday evening), containing abbreviated versions of the main ritual elements.

Mirror and grooming kit (สำหรับกระจกแว่นหวี): A set of personal grooming items believed to be used by Khru Mo Nora spirits, including mirror, glasses, comb, needles, thread, scissors, and beauty items.

Mor (หมอ): Doctor or ritual specialist; a shamanic practitioner, healer, or ritual leader in traditional and spiritual ceremonies.

Mor Kob Rong / Shaman (หมอกบโรง / หมอไสยศาสตร์): A spiritual practitioner or ritual specialist in Nora traditions.

- **Mor Kob Rong (หมอกบโรง):** A senior ritual master who presides over the theater boundaries, ensuring spiritual protection for the performance area and overseeing sacred aspects of Nora ceremonies.

- **Shaman / Occult Practitioner (หมอไสยศาสตร์):** A practitioner skilled in esotericism and magic, who performs rituals to ward off malevolent spirits, neutralize negative energies, and provide general protective charms.

Mother Earth (แม่ธรณี): One of the Four Mothers, represented as Nang Thorani (the earth goddess), who is believed to witness human actions and provide sustenance.

Mother Ganges (แม่คงคา): One of the Four Mothers, the goddess of rivers and water sources, representing purification and life-sustaining water.

Mae Lai dance (รำทำแม่ลาย): A traditional dance sequence based on movements attributed to a legendary female performer named Mother Lai.

Mother of Agriculture (แม่โพสพ): One of the Four Mothers, the goddess of rice and crops who ensures fertility and abundance in agricultural production.

Mother of Birth (แม่บังเกิดเกล้า): One of the Four Mothers, representing the natural mother who gives birth, symbolizing origin and creation.

Musician (นักดนตรี): Performers who play traditional instruments accompanying Nora performances.

Mutto poem (กลอนมุตโต): Extemporaneous poetry composed and performed on the spot during Nora performances. Skilled performers like Nora Toem were known for their ability to create these impromptu verses in competitive settings.

Mystical practices, mantras (คาถาอาคม): Sacred incantations and magical knowledge used in Nora rituals.

N

Na Trae verse (บทหน้าตระ): The second part of the Teacher's Chant, inviting Khru Mo Nora to protect the troupe, accompanied by instrumental music.

Nad Cha (การรำนาคช้า): A slow, graceful dance style performed to melodious music, characteristic of certain Nora troupes.

Naga's Lasso (บ่วงนาคบาท): A special rope with a distinctive knot used exclusively for capturing mythical creatures like the swan/Manora in Nora performances.

Nang Chanchurhi (นางจันจุหรี): Another of the seven kinnaree sisters of Manora mentioned in traditional Nora verses.

Nang Crocodile Lueam Laiwan (นางจระเข้เลื่อมลายวรรณ): One of Chalawan Crocodile's wives in the traditional story performed during Nora ceremonies.

Nang Khee Nhon (นางขี้หนอน): A character role in Nora performance, representing a Kinnara (half-human, half-bird creature). The name is a local dialect variation referencing mythological beings.

Nang Kwak (นางกวัก): A female deity figure believed to attract wealth and customers, commonly used as a talisman by merchants and business owners in Thailand.

Nang Manora (นางมโนราห์): The main female character in the Phra Suthon and Manora tale, a kinnaree princess who is captured by Hunter Boon and marries Prince Suthon.

Nang Nual Thong Samlee (นางนวลทองสำลี): Also known as “Mae Sri Mala,” she is considered the original creator of Nora dance and is venerated as the “pioneering Khru Mo Nora.”

Nang O-Kra Chaeng spirit (ผีนางโอรกระแซง): A guardian spirit responsible for protecting the Nora performance area.

Nang Patchara (นางพัชร): Another of the seven kinnaree sisters of Manora mentioned in traditional Nora verses.

Nang Patcharada (นางพัชรา): Another of the seven kinnaree sisters of Manora mentioned in traditional Nora verses.

Nang Phim (นางพิมพ์): One of the seven kinnaree sisters of Manora mentioned in traditional Nora verses.

Nang Ram (นางรำ): Female dancers who perform for entertainment and assist in rituals. Historically, these roles were performed by men, as women rarely traveled with performance troupes.

Nang Srijurha (นางศรีจุฬา): Another of the seven kinnaree sisters of Manora mentioned in traditional Nora verses.

Nang Srisurat (นางศรีสุรต): Another of the seven kinnaree sisters of Manora mentioned in traditional Nora verses.

Nang Tha Pao Kaew (นางตะเภาแก้ว): A female character in the Chalawan folklore, believed to be the reincarnation of her maternal grandmother who had previously been killed by Chalawan.

Nang Thasi (นางทาสี): A character representing a female servant, typically portrayed by a male performer wearing a white mask with colorful decorations, who embodies the outspoken, fearless traits of southern Thai women.

Nang Thasi's Face (หน้านางทาสี): A mask representing a female character in Nora performances. Like the Hunter's Face, it is treated as a sacred object embodying spiritual essence.

Nang Wimala (นางวิมาลา): Another of Chalawan Crocodile's wives in the traditional story performed during Nora ceremonies.

Nari Phon story (บทนารีผล): A folkloric tale about a magical tree that bears fruit in the form of young women, often incorporated into Nora performances.

Natya Mandapa (นาฏยมณฑป): A special pavilion or stage constructed specifically for ritual dance performances, particularly in temple settings. It represents the sacred space where performers connect with deities and spirits.

Noble spirits (วิญญาณบรรดาศักดิ์): High-ranking spirits in the Nora pantheon, typically of royal or noble origins, who are believed to dress in royal attire and possess significant spiritual power.

Nora (โนรา): A sophisticated traditional dance-drama from southern Thailand that combines elaborate costume, rhythmic movement, music, and storytelling. Recognized by UNESCO as Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 2021, Nora performances serve both entertainment and ceremonial purposes.

Nora artist (ศิลปินโนรา): A performer trained in the traditional Nora dance-drama, who has undergone proper initiation and training. These artists are not merely entertainers but cultural practitioners maintaining spiritual traditions.

Nora bead (ลูกปัดโนรา): Decorative and sacred beads used in Nora costumes and sometimes crafted into products. These beads carry cultural significance and are associated with the artistic tradition.

Nora Beheading the Buffalo (โนราฟันหัวควาย): A ritual involving the symbolic beheading of a buffalo, representing the mythological story of King Pali killing a buffalo named Thorapi.

Nora Burning disease (ครุหมอโนราย่าง): A condition characterized by chronic illness, weakness, and extreme emaciation, believed to be caused by punishment from Khru Mo Nora spirits.

Nora Chatri (โนราชาตรี): The complete formal name for the Nora performance tradition, emphasizing its theatrical aspects. Historical documents indicate this term was used for these performances regardless of the story being portrayed.

Nora competition (โนราประชัน โรง): Competitive Nora performances where different troupes or performers showcase their skills against each other. These events feature contests of dancing ability, poetic improvisation, and sometimes magical knowledge.

Nora costumes (เครื่องทรงโนรา): The elaborate traditional attire worn by Nora performers, originally bestowed by Phraya Sai Fa Fad according to legend. These distinctive costumes include ornate beadwork and ceremonial accessories.

Nora dance (รำโนรา): The distinctive dance style of Nora characterized by intricate hand positions, graceful movements, and ritualistic elements.

Nora entertainment performance (การรำโนราเพื่อความบันเทิง): A form of Nora performed primarily for entertainment purposes rather than ritual significance, often featuring more contemporary elements and audience-pleasing content.

Nora grandparents/ Ta Yai Nora (ตายายโนรา): A term referring to the spirits of ancestral Nora performers who continue to watch over their descendants. They are regularly honored through rituals and offerings.

Nora Khao Ko (โนราเข้าเกาะ): A ritual where "ko" means "forest," involving offerings to the Chaeng Spirit. This ceremony is similar to the Crocodile-Spearing ritual but includes a separate space for the Chaeng Spirit.

Nora pavilion (โรงโนรา): A temporary structure built specifically for Nora performances, with careful attention to orientation, construction materials, and spiritual considerations.

Nora pavilion's spirit post (เสาภูมิโรง): The central post of the Nora pavilion believed to be the residence of the Phra Phum deity (guardian spirits) who must be honored before performing the ritual.

Nora Rong Khru (โนราโรงครู): A ceremonial Nora performance specifically conducted to honor teacher spirits and ancestors. This elaborate ritual may last several days and involves special offerings and dance sequences to pay homage to the spiritual lineage. It is considered one of the most important ceremonies in the Nora tradition, often performed to fulfill vows or address spiritual matters within a lineage.

Nora teacher (ครูโนรา): An experienced Nora practitioner who imparts knowledge to students, traditionally through a live-in apprenticeship system.

Nora troupe (คณะโนรา): A performing group dedicated to Nora performances, traditionally structured like a family unit with clear hierarchies and roles.

Nora-style reclining Buddha (พระนอนทรงเทริดโนรา): Buddha statues depicted wearing the distinctive Nora headdress, representing the integration of Buddhist and performance traditions in southern Thai culture. These statues provide archaeological evidence of Nora's long history in the region.

Nub Plao/Sanub Plao (หนับเพลลา): Colorful pants or leg coverings worn as part of the Nora costume, modernized from traditional designs.

O

Offer Chian Khru (ยื่นเจียนครู): A ceremony in which a prospective student is formally presented to a Nora teacher to request acceptance as a disciple.

Oil lamp (ตะเกียงน้ำมัน): A lamp kept continuously lit throughout the ceremony, believed to facilitate communication between deities and representing the sacred fire element in Brahmanical traditions.

Oral traditions (มุขปาฐะ): Knowledge, stories, and cultural practices transmitted verbally from generation to generation without written documentation.

P

Pang La Banana Tree (กล้วยพั่งลา): A specific type of banana tree used in Nora rituals, particularly those dying trees that are fruiting with yellowed leaves.

Panyasa Jataka (ปัญญาสชาดก): A collection of 50 Jataka tales compiled by monks from northern Thailand. This collection includes the Suthon Jataka, which became central to the Nora performance tradition.

Pap Praew tree (ต้นพื้แพรว): A ceremonial tree or wooden post decorated with colorful paper flower garlands, placed at the front of the ritual space to mark it as sacred territory.

Passing of the verse (การเลียบท): A technique used at the end of a chant section where the reciter prolongs the sound “O” according to the musical rhythm, signaling to musicians that this part of the invocation is concluding.

Phetd/Aphet (เพต/อาเพต): A “bad omen” or cause of illness, which may stem from either benevolent or malevolent spirits, or from supernatural forces, magic, or curses.

Performing Arts (นาฏศิลป์): The traditional Thai theatrical arts, of which Nora is a significant southern variant.

Performing Nora dance to showcase skills (การรำโนราเพื่ออวดความสามารถ): The final performance on Wednesday night where dancers demonstrate their technical prowess, artistic expression, and mastery of the traditional Nora dance forms.

Phod Nai Thad (พดในถาด): A contortion performance where the performer curls their entire body into a small tray, demonstrating extreme flexibility.

Phra Bodhisattva verse (บทพระโพธิสัตว์): One of the three ceremonial verses recited during the Announcement ritual, invoking the compassionate qualities of the Bodhisattva.

Phra Khan (พระขรรค์): A pointed weapon with a short handle used in Southern Thai performing arts by characters such as deities or kings. In Nora performances, it is used when playing royal roles and during important ceremonies.

Phra Petch Chalu Kan (พระเพชรฉลูภัณฑ์): A deity believed to protect sharp weapons, considered the guardian of all craftsmanship who can dispel evil entities.

Phra Phum deity (the guardian spirits) (พระภูมิเจ้าที่): Guardian spirits who protect specific locations and must be honored before any ceremony can take place in their domain. Failure to do so is believed to bring misfortune.

Phra Rama verse (บทพระราม): One of the three ceremonial verses recited during the Announcement ritual, invoking the virtues and powers of Rama from the Ramayana epic.

Phra Rotthasen verse (บทพระรถเสน): An alternative verse sometimes used in place of the Phra Bodhisattva verse during the Announcement ritual, referring to a character from Thai mythology.

Phra Suthon and Manora (พระสุธน-มโนราห์): Characters from a traditional Thai folk tale about a human prince and a kinnaree (half-human, half-bird) princess, used in Nora performances.

Phra Vichai (พระวิชัย): A high-level Shin invoked during wartime for protection and victory.

Phraya / Phaya (พระยา / พญา): A high-ranking aristocratic title or honorific reserved for nobility, local rulers, or exalted legendary figures and divine beings.

Phraya Lui Fai (พระยาลุยไฟ): “Lord Fire Walking,” a spirit who performs the fire-walking ritual during ceremonial performances.

Phraya Sai Fa Fad (พระยาสายฟ้าฟาด): A legendary king in Nora mythology who is considered the father of “Nang Nual Thong Samlee” and grandfather of “Pho Khun Satttha.” He bestowed the original Nora costumes and is highly revered. He is one of the royal Khru Mo Nora spirits who may possess mediums during ritual ceremonies.

Phraya Thom Nam (พระยาโถมน้ำ): “Lord Water Pouring,” a spirit who performs the water pouring ritual during ceremonial performances.

Pi (เป๋): The only wind instrument in traditional Nora ensembles, resembling a flute or oboe that provides melodic elements.

Pho (พ่อ): Father; used directly or as a respectful prefix for senior respected male figures and male ancestor spirits.

Pho Khun Sattha (พ่อขุนศรัทธา): A powerful royal Khru Mo Nora spirit who is believed to sometimes speak standard Thai rather than Southern Thai dialect when possessing mediums.

Pho Thep Singhorn (พ่อเทพสิงhorn): A respected male Khru Mo Nora spirit who is one of the high-ranking spirits invoked in Nora ceremonies.

Possession (การประทับทรง): The complete state where a human body is inhabited by a spirit entity, during which the medium experiences partial consciousness while their actions and speech are controlled by the possessing spirit.

Pu (ปู่): Paternal grandfather; frequently used to address senior male ancestors or revered protective spirits in traditional rites.

Pu Chao Suwan (ปู่เจ้าสุวรรณ): A sacred spirit appearing as a sage who resides at the Tham Phueng dhamma retreat in Kantang District, Trang Province.

Prachan Chatri (ประชันชาติรี): The formal term for Nora competitions, referring to public contests where Nora performers showcase their talents and compete for recognition and prizes.

Pran (พราน): The Hunter character in Nora performances who wears a distinctive red, gold, or black wooden mask and represents worldly concerns, often providing comic relief.

Pran Boon (พรานบุญ): A hunter character in Nora performances, particularly known for his role in capturing Manora in the Swan Dance sequence. Also a secondary-level Khru Mo Nora spirit.

Pran Khong (พรานคง): Another hunter spirit in the Nora hierarchy, also considered a secondary-level Khru Mo Nora spirit.

Pran Thep (พรานเทพ): A hunter spirit in the Nora tradition, considered a secondary-level Khru Mo Nora spirit.

Prayer/meditation (การอธิษฐานจิต): The mental focusing and communication with spirits during rituals, where participants concentrate their thoughts to convey respect and specific requests to Khru Mo Nora.

Preparation of the instruments (การยกเครื่อง): A pre-ceremony ritual performed by the chief Nora before departing for the venue, involving playing music to honor Khru Mo Nora and invite them to accompany the troupe on their journey.

Proper respect (สัมมาคารวะ): The culturally appropriate demonstration of reverence toward elders, teachers, and spiritual entities. This includes physical gestures, speech patterns, and behavioral codes that acknowledge hierarchical relationships.

R

Rai Na Trae verse (บทร่ายหน้าแด่พระ): The third part of the Teacher's Chant, requesting permission to use the space from guardian spirits and deities, with a faster rhythm than previous sections.

Rama-Mekhala story (บทรามสูร-เมขลา): A traditional narrative featuring the thunder god Ramasura pursuing the goddess Mekhala, often performed in Nora theaters.

Rahu Capturing the Moon story (บทราหูจับจันทร์): A mythological tale depicting the demon Rahu attempting to devour the moon, explaining the phenomenon of eclipses.

Ratchawat (ราชวัตร): A royal umbrella-like decoration placed above the entrance to the Nora pavilion in some regions, made from natural materials and believed to offer spiritual protection.

Ravairavek verse (บทราไวราเวก): A lively, cheerful verse recited during the Swan dance performance in Nora rituals.

Reciting poetry (ขับกลอน): The art of melodiously delivering poetic verses during Nora performances.

Reciting the Lam Luek mantra (ร่ายมนต์ลำลึก): The chanting of sacred verses to invoke and communicate with Nora teacher spirits, requesting their presence at the ritual. This specialized vocalization is believed to open a channel of communication between the human and spirit worlds.

Reciting the Satsadi verse (ร่ายบทสัสดิ): The performance of a special poetic verse that honors teachers, ancestors, deities, and the Triple Gem (Buddha, Dhamma, and Sangha). These verses are considered powerful invocations in Southern Thai traditions.

Redeeming the goods (ไถ่ของ): A traditional practice where the host offers betel nuts, leaves, or money to redeem the land and items used in the Nora performance, acknowledging that during the ceremony, these belonged to the Nora troupe.

Refined dance (รำเนียน): A smooth, delicate dance style featuring continuous, flowing transitions and subtle facial expressions.

Rice puff (ขนมพอง): A traditional sweet made from puffed rice, offered during ceremonies. Like other traditional sweets, it is prepared especially during the Southern Thai festival in the tenth lunar month.

Rice water bowl (ข้าวถวายน้ำจัน): An alternative term for the rice and curry offering presented to ancestors, emphasizing the inclusion of water as part of the offering.

Rice with curry (ข้าวถวายแกงถวาย): A ceremonial food offering consisting of rice, curry, desserts, fruits, and water arranged together on a tray, presented to ancestral spirits.

Ritual (พิธีกรรม): Formalized sequences of symbolic actions performed for religious or cultural purposes, often following traditional protocols handed down through generations.

Ritual Fees/honoraria (ค่าราช): The traditional payment made to ritual specialists or to honor spiritual teachers. Historically a modest amount (traditionally “3 baht”), these offerings acknowledge the transfer of spiritual knowledge and services.

Ritual Hunt (การออกพราน): A ceremonial performance where individuals fulfill vows made to Khru Mo Nora spirits, often involving hunting simulations.

Ritual of paying respect to Nang Thorani (Mother Earth) (พิธีกรรมทักนางธรณี): A ritual performed to request permission from Mother Earth before using the space for the ceremony, involving offerings of betel nuts and leaves, incense, and candles placed on the ground.

Ritual of setting up the shrine (พิธีกรรมตั้งหิ้ง): The ceremonial process of establishing a new Khru Mo Nora shrine, which involves inviting the spirits to reside in the shrine. This ritual marks the beginning of the worship practices that will be continued by generations of family members.

Ritual of summoning the teachers (พิธีกรรมชุมนุมครู): A dawn ritual performed on Thursday to request that Khru Mo Nora spirits remain in the pavilion throughout the ceremony rather than departing on their daily journeys.

Ritual of sprinkling consecrated water (พิธีรดน้ำมนต์): A purification ceremony using blessed water.

Ritual offerings (เครื่องเซ่นไหว้): The collection of items presented to spirits during ceremonies, which may include food, beverages, flowers, betel nuts, and other ceremonial objects. These offerings sustain the spirits and demonstrate respect.

Rong Kam Khru ritual (โรงคำครู): Another term for the Minor Nora Rong Khru ritual, literally meaning “supporting the teacher pavilion,” indicating a simplified version of the teacher worship ceremony.

Rough dance/Male style (รำหยาบ): A vigorous, strong, and rapid dance style with angular stances and sharp movements, traditionally performed by male dancers.

Royal Khru Mo Nora (ราชครูโนรา): The highest-ranking spirits in the Nora pantheon, considered to be the original masters of the art form. They include important figures such as Mae Sri Mala and Pho Thep Singhorn.

S

Sacred being (สิ่งศักดิ์สิทธิ์): Supernatural entities residing in nature, often taking human or animal forms. These powerful spirits are believed to influence human affairs and can be invoked to possess mediums to provide guidance or perform healing rituals.

Sacred bowl (ถ้วยขวัญ): A comprehensive offering bowl containing all food items used in the ceremony, with a large dessert (Khanom Kho) in the center and a candle surrounded by betel quids, placed atop the Bai Sri Ton.

Sacred Circling (การเวียนเทียน): A ritual where candle smoke is wafted toward participants in a circular motion, performed three times to complete the blessing ceremony.

Sacred object (สิ่งศักดิ์สิทธิ์): Items believed to possess supernatural powers or connections to spiritual entities, often used in rituals or for protection.

Sacred thread (สายสิญจน์): A white cotton string used in ceremonies to create sacred boundaries and connections. It is often tied to the Ceiling cloth and drawn around offerings, symbolically creating a pathway for spirits to enter the ritual space.

Sad Mhon (pillow and mat arrangement) (สาดหมอน): A ritual arrangement consisting of a pillow placed on a mat covered with white cloth, positioned in front of the Khru Mo Nora shrine. This demarcates the sacred space and serves a practical purpose during ceremonies.

Sari (ผ้าถุง): A specially wrapped cloth similar to the traditional Thai Chongkraben style, featuring a small distinctive tail at the back.

Satsadi Verse (บทสวดดี): A sacred recitation used to invoke and invite Khru Mo Nora spirits during ceremonial practices. This verse is considered essential for establishing spiritual communication with the ancestors and masters.

Satsadi Noi Chant (บทสวดดีน้อย): A minor sacred recitation performed during Nora rituals to invite and pay respect to ancestral spirits, heavily influenced by Brahmin and Buddhist traditions.

Satsadi Yai Chant (บทสวดดีใหญ่): A major traditional Southern Thai teacher-worship chant performed after summoning the master spirits. Influenced by Brahmin and Buddhist traditions, it serves to express profound praise, reverence, and honor toward the Khru Mo Nora spirits.

Sad Khla (a mat) (เสาดคลา): A special mat made from the Kla plant, used in various rituals including the Nora Rong Khru ceremony, typically placed in front of the Nora stage for performers to sit on during certain rituals.

Sen Crushing (การเหยียบเสน): A traditional treatment method for Sen disease where a chief Nora performer ritually steps on the affected area after various ceremonial preparations.

Sen disease (โรคเสน): A skin condition believed to be caused by spiritual forces, characterized by raised red or black spots. According to legend, it originated from a curse placed on the Moon deity.

Sen Treatment ritual (พิธีกรรมเหยียบเสน): A healing ritual performed during Nora ceremonies to treat certain skin diseases through incantations.

Serd (เทริด): The distinctive crown-like headdress worn by Nora performers, considered a sacred object that embodies the spirit of the dance. Before wearing it, performers must perform a ritual acknowledgment to the spirits it represents.

Serd Crowning ceremony (พิธีกรรมครอบเทริด): The ritual of placing the Nora headdress (Serd) on an initiate to elevate them to the status of a full-fledged Nora performer.

Serd Rai Top (headdress) (ยอดเทริดราย): The top ornamental part of the Nora headdress, used exclusively during the grand ceremony and arranged in sets (often matching the ritual cycle's periodicity) on the shrine.

Shaman (หมอไสยศาสตร์): A practitioner of occult arts who serves as an intermediary between the natural and supernatural worlds, often playing an important role in Nora rituals.

Shaman (หมอไสยศาสตร์): A spiritual practitioner skilled in communicating with spirits and performing magical rituals. In Nora traditions, shamans may lead ceremonies alongside or instead of Nora performers.

Shaman's Knife (มีดหมอ): A ritual knife used for “cutting” or “removing” in ceremonies, especially in consecrating holy water, cutting offerings, or cutting sacred threads during rituals.

Shin (ชิน): A high-level spirit or supernatural power that cannot be seen. Shin spirits are not derived from human souls and are difficult to control as they are not afraid of magical spells.

Shin spirit (ผีชิน): A type of spirit in Southern Thai belief systems believed to be composed solely of the fire element, created during the mythological formation of the world.

Shin of Fire (ชินไฟ): A type of spiritual entity that appears as a bright flame, causing intense bodily heat and restlessness in its victims.

Shin of Flowers (ชินดอกไม้): A spirit distinguished by its fragrant smell, traditionally used to enhance charm and attractiveness rather than for harmful purposes.

Shin of Sun (ชินแสงอาทิตย์): A powerful type of Shin that appears as a ball of light. Those affected by this Shin may experience pale skin, emaciation, exhaustion, and possibly death.

Shin of Water (ชินน้ำ): A type of Shin resembling pond algae, believed to cause cold extremities, fluid accumulation in the lungs, abdominal swelling, and in severe cases, death

Shin of Wind/Air (ชินลม/ชินอากาศ): Found between closely spaced mountains where strong winds blow. It causes chest tightness, vomiting, bloating, and dizziness, often used against competitors in performances.

Shin spirit (ผีชิน): A category of powerful supernatural entities in Southern Thai beliefs. Unlike spirits of deceased humans, Shin spirits are high-level entities that can cause harm but can also be summoned by practitioners with powerful spells for various purposes.

Shiva (พระอิศวร), Vishnu (พระนารายณ์), Brahma (พระพรหม): The three principal deities in Hinduism who are honored in traditional Nora performances. Their influence reflects the Brahmanical elements incorporated into Thai cultural practices.

Sitting dance (รำนั่งนั้ก): A specific Nora dance position where the performer sits while dancing, often performed during the opening sequences of a traditional performance.

Sittia Hwa (ลืทธิอะหว): The leader of the female Shin spirits in Southern Thai belief systems.

Skill Demonstration verse (บทกรว่วัดความสามารถ): A poetic recitation designed to showcase a performer's verbal abilities and knowledge of traditional texts.

Sky deity (อากาสัฏฐกเทวดา): Celestial beings believed to reside in the heavens, including personifications of celestial bodies like the sun, moon, and stars.

Soaring swan-like dance (รำคอนเหิน): A dynamic dance featuring elevated movements that give the impression of flight or floating.

Sod Mai Sai Leb ceremony (พิธีกรรมสอดไหมรุ้ใส่เล็บ): An initiation ritual for children aged 5-12 to become Nora performers, involving the placing of bracelets and special fingernails through a ceremonial stick.

Soft Body dance (รำตัวอ่อน): A dance style that emphasizes extreme flexibility, with performers contorting their bodies into challenging positions to demonstrate their physical capabilities.

Songkran Day (วันสงกรรนต์): The traditional Thai New Year celebration, which is also an important time for honoring Khru Mo Nora with special cleaning of the shrine and ritual offerings.

Sorcery/magical practices (ไสยศาสตร์): Traditional mystical practices believed to harness supernatural forces for various purposes, often integrated into Nora rituals.

Spear (หอก): A weapon used in Nora Rong Khru rituals exclusively for stabbing the mythical crocodile Chalawan. Seven spears with unique names and attributes are used in this ritual.

Spirit (วิญญาณ): The non-physical essence or soul, particularly of deceased individuals, that continues to exist after death and may influence the physical world.

Spirit entry (การจับลง): The initial stage of possession where a spirit begins to enter a medium's body, characterized by specific physical sensations like chills or tingling that indicate which type of spirit is coming.

Spirit medium (ร่างทรง): A person who allows their body to be temporarily possessed by a Khru Mo Nora spirit during rituals. Mediums serve as intermediaries between the human and spirit worlds and are typically family members of the Nora lineage.

Spirit of Sen (ผีเจ้าเสน): The spiritual entity believed to cause Sen disease, which must be appeased through proper ritual procedures.

Spirit possession (การประทับทรง): The phenomenon where a Khru Mo Nora spirit temporarily inhabits the body of a medium during rituals. Through possession, the spirit can communicate directly with family members, offering guidance and blessings.

Spirit Whipping dance (รำเชี่ยนพราย): A specialized dance performed during Nora competitions, believed to harness spiritual forces. It represents the performer's ability to control supernatural elements.

Spirit Whipping-Lime Crushing dance (รำเชี่ยนพราย-เหยียบลูกนาว): A ritual dance performed during competitions where a performer symbolically captures the spirit of their opponent in limes and crushes them underfoot as a magical tactic.

Spiritual healer/Shaman (หมอไสยศาสตร์): A ritual specialist who treats illnesses believed to be caused by supernatural forces.

Narrative performance (การแสดงนิยาย): Dramatic performances of narratives, usually staged as the final segment of a Nora program, featuring role-playing and both poetic and prose elements.

Story of stealing of the wife of Lord Kromsilp (บทลักเมียท้าวกรรมศิลป์): A humorous performance presented near the end of the Nora Rong Khru ceremony, symbolizing the need for spirits to awaken before being sent back to their realms.

Sublime deities (วิสุทธิเทวดา): The highest category of deities in Buddhist cosmology, including the Buddha, Paccekabuddhas, and Arahants who have achieved spiritual perfection.

Suthon Jataka (สุธนชาดก): One of the stories from the Panyasa Jataka collection, featuring Prince Suthon and Manora the Kinnaree. This tale forms the basis of traditional Nora performances.

Swan (นางหงส์): A mythical creature in Nora performances, representing the half-bird, half-human Manora who can only be captured with the Naga's Lasso.

Swan tail (หางหงส์): A decorative element of the Nora costume that extends from the back, resembling a swan's tail, adding to the majestic appearance of the performer.

Swan Walk (การเดินหงส์): A specific style of walking performed during the Swan dance, characterized by a stealthy, bird-like movement in time with the drums.

Sword (ดาบ): A weapon used for chopping and slashing in Nora rituals, particularly during the Crocodile-Spearing ceremony.

T

Ta (ตา): Maternal grandfather; used to address maternal male ancestors or ancestral spirits within the family lineage.

Ta Kong Rach (ตากงราช): A male ancestral spirit in the Nora tradition, considered a secondary-level Khru Mo Nora spirit.

Ta Luang Muang Kaew Muang Thong (ตาหลวงม่วงแก้วม่วงทอง): A secondary-level Khru Mo Nora spirit believed to reside at the mouth of the Trang River. He can allegedly turn disrespectful passersby into stone.

Ta Mor Thao (ตาหมอเต่า): An elderly male spirit in the Nora tradition, considered a secondary-level Khru Mo Nora spirit.

Ta Yai (ตายาย): Literally meaning “grandparents,” this term refers to ancestral spirits that are honored and invoked during traditional ceremonies. They represent the lineage of knowledge and protection passed down through generations.

Taktin Day (วันทักษินเดือน): An inauspicious day in the Thai lunar calendar when the date matches the month number (e.g., the 4th day of the 4th month). These days are considered unsuitable for performing the Nora Rong Khru ritual.

Tanee Banana Tree (กล้วยตานี): Another specific type of banana tree used in Nora rituals, particularly for making rafts in the Krai Thong performance.

Ta Yai Nora (ตายายโนรา): Ancestral spirits specifically connected to the Nora tradition. They are believed to watch over current performers and must be properly respected through ritual offerings and performances.

Teacher Teaching verse (บทครูสอน): Ritual verses recited during Nora ceremonies that contain instructions and teachings believed to originate from the Khru Mo Nora spirits themselves.

Teacher’s Chant (การภาศครู): A ritual invocation performed at the beginning of Nora performances to pay respect to teacher spirits and request their blessing and protection.

Teacher's Song dance (รำเพลงครู): A dance performed to music honoring the teacher spirits, typically featuring respectful, measured movements.

The Announcement ritual (พิธีกรรมตั้งบ้านตั้งเมือง): A crucial Wednesday ceremony that officially declares to humans and spirits that the space will be used for the Nora Rong Khru ritual over the next three days, establishing spiritual territory.

The Hunter's Chant (บทคำกลอนหน้าพราน): A specific poetic sequence performed by the Hunter character in Nora, invoking protection and success in the capture of mythical beings.

The Opening and Preliminary Rituals (พิธีกรรมเบิกโรงและโหมโรง): Initial rituals that begin the ceremony, including invoking deities and spirits, warming up the musicians, and establishing the sacred space for the performance.

The Swan dance (การรำโนราคล่องหงส์): A Nora performance based on the story of Phra Suthon and Manora, focusing on the scene where Hunter Boon captures Manora.

Thao Amphai (ท้าวอำไผ่): The grandfather of the Chalawan crocodile in the traditional story performed during Nora ceremonies.

Thao Athit verse (Verse of the Sun God) (บทท้าวอาทิตย์): The most important verse used in the Announcement ritual, describing Thao Athit (the Sun God) and his establishment of the city of Udon Binja, used as a spiritual blueprint for the ceremony.

Thap Song performance (ทำบทเพลงทับ): A performance segment featuring the Thab percussion instrument, with specific dance movements coordinated to its rhythms.

Thap/Thon (ทับ/โพน): The primary percussion instrument in Nora music, consisting of a pair of small drums with slightly different tones that lead the rhythm and tempo changes.

Thap/Thon Song verse (บทเพลงทับ-เพลงโพน): The fourth and fastest part of the Teacher's Chant, inviting deities, sacred entities, revered teachers, and monks to join the ceremony.

Three chaps three toengs (สามฉับสามเทิง): A shortened version of the traditional rhythmic pattern used in offerings, focusing on the sharp (chap) and resonant (toeng) sounds of the drums.

Three Temples, Three Villages dance (รำสามวัดสามบ้าน): A traditional tour performed by a newly initiated Nora master to showcase their skills at three temples and three villages, demonstrating their abilities to the community.

Three tungs three taps three chaps three toengs (สามตุงสามทับสามฉับสามเทิง): A specific traditional rhythmic pattern played on drums and percussion instruments during offering to sacred entities, characterized by specific sequences of sounds from different instruments.

Tiger Dragging Tail dance (รำเลื้อยลากหาง): A dance that mimics the movements of a tiger, with specific emphasis on flowing, dragging motions reminiscent of a tiger's tail.

Tiny headdress (เทริดจิ๋ว): A miniature version of the traditional Nora headdress that is created as an amulet or protective talisman, often worn as a pendant.

Tiny Hunter's Face (หน้าพรานจิ๋ว): A small version of the Hunter's Face mask, created for use as an amulet believed to provide protection to the wearer.

Toh Adam (โต้อัดัม): The leader of the male Shin spirits in Southern Thai belief systems.

Trae (แตร): A regional term for traditional wooden clappers used in Southern performing arts (such as Nora) to mark rhythm; synonymous with *krap* or *krae*.

Tree deities (รุกขภูมเทวดา): Spirits that inhabit trees with medicinal properties, serving as guardians of these powerful plants.

Triple Gem of Buddhism (พระศรีรัตนตรัย): The three central elements of Buddhism: the Buddha, the Dharma (teachings), and the Sangha (monastic community).

Thuat (ทวด): Great-grandparent; an honorific term for ancient ancestors or high-ranking spiritual predecessors venerated in lineage rituals.

Thuat Ang Thong (ทวดอ่างทอง): A sacred spirit appearing as a crocodile that dwells at Ang Thong Waterfall in Sikao District, Trang Province.

Thuat Banyan Tree (ทวดต้นไทร): A sacred spirit associated with the Banyan tree that may manifest during Nora ceremonies.

Thuat Bodhi Tree (ทวดต้นโพธิ์): A sacred spirit associated with the Bodhi tree that may manifest during Nora ceremonies.

Thuat Lak Khet (ทวดหลักเขต): A boundary guardian spirit believed to exist as multiple entities in the forms of humans, tigers, and snakes. This spirit resides at Pap Pha mountain, marking the boundary between Trang and Phatthalung provinces.

Thuat Ngu (ทวดงู): A sacred snake spirit that may possess participants during Nora rituals.

Thuat Nilpat (ทวดนิลพัทธ์): A sacred spirit manifesting as an old man who resides in a cave at Wat Tham Iso in Huai Yot District, Trang Province.

Thuat Rubber Tree (ทวดต้นยาง): A sacred spirit believed to reside in a large rubber tree. This spirit is associated with protecting communities but may punish those who harm its dwelling place.

Thuat Sip Song Pak Nam (ทวดสิบสองปากน้ำ): A spirit appearing as a crocodile that inhabits the mouths of all rivers flowing into the Andaman Sea.

Thuat Suea (ทวดเสือ): A sacred tiger spirit that may possess participants during Nora rituals.

Twelve verses (การจับบทสิบสอง): A collection of twelve sacred verses in the Nora tradition, from which three are typically selected for the shrine-setting ritual. These verses form an important part of the Nora ceremonial canon.

Two Mhong Poem recitation (ขับกลอนสองโหม่ง): A style of poetic performance accompanied by the rhythmic beating of two gongs (Mhong), demonstrating verbal artistry.

Tying sacred thread (ตราสังข์): A ritual involving the use of holy strings to bind or protect individuals.

V

Vesanu (เวสหนู): A divine servant in creation mythology who was tasked with bringing living beings to earth. His actions inadvertently created both humans and spirits.

Victory candle (เทียนชัย): A large candle symbolizing auspiciousness that must remain lit throughout the ceremony, typically secured in a bamboo holder near the Bai Sri Ton.

Vow Redeeming ritual (การตัดเหมรย): A ceremony that ends the obligations and agreements between the host and Khru Mo Nora spirits, performed to prevent future punishment.

W

Wealthy Brahma (พรหมทรัพย์): A high-level Shin associated with prosperity and wealth.

Worship practices (การปฏิบัติบูชา): The ceremonial practices and offerings performed to honor and venerate Khru Mo Nora spirits according to traditional customs. These practices include regular offerings of food, flowers, incense, and special prayers during Buddhist holy days.

Y

Yam Dad Fah Roek (at dawn) (ยามดาดฟ้าเร็ก): The early morning time when the sky begins to brighten, marking the traditional time for performing the ritual of Summoning the Teachers on Thursday.

Yam Nok Chum Rang (at dusk) (ยามนกชุมรัง): The evening time around 5:00-6:00 PM when birds return to their nests, marking the traditional starting time for the Nora Rong Khru ceremony on Wednesday.

Yatra (ยাত্রา): An ancient form of traveling theater from Bengal, India, which may have influenced the development of Nora. The term refers to a theatrical journey telling religious stories.

Young Woman Pose dance (ร่ำสาวท่า): A dance style mimicking the graceful movements and poses of a young woman, emphasizing elegance and beauty.

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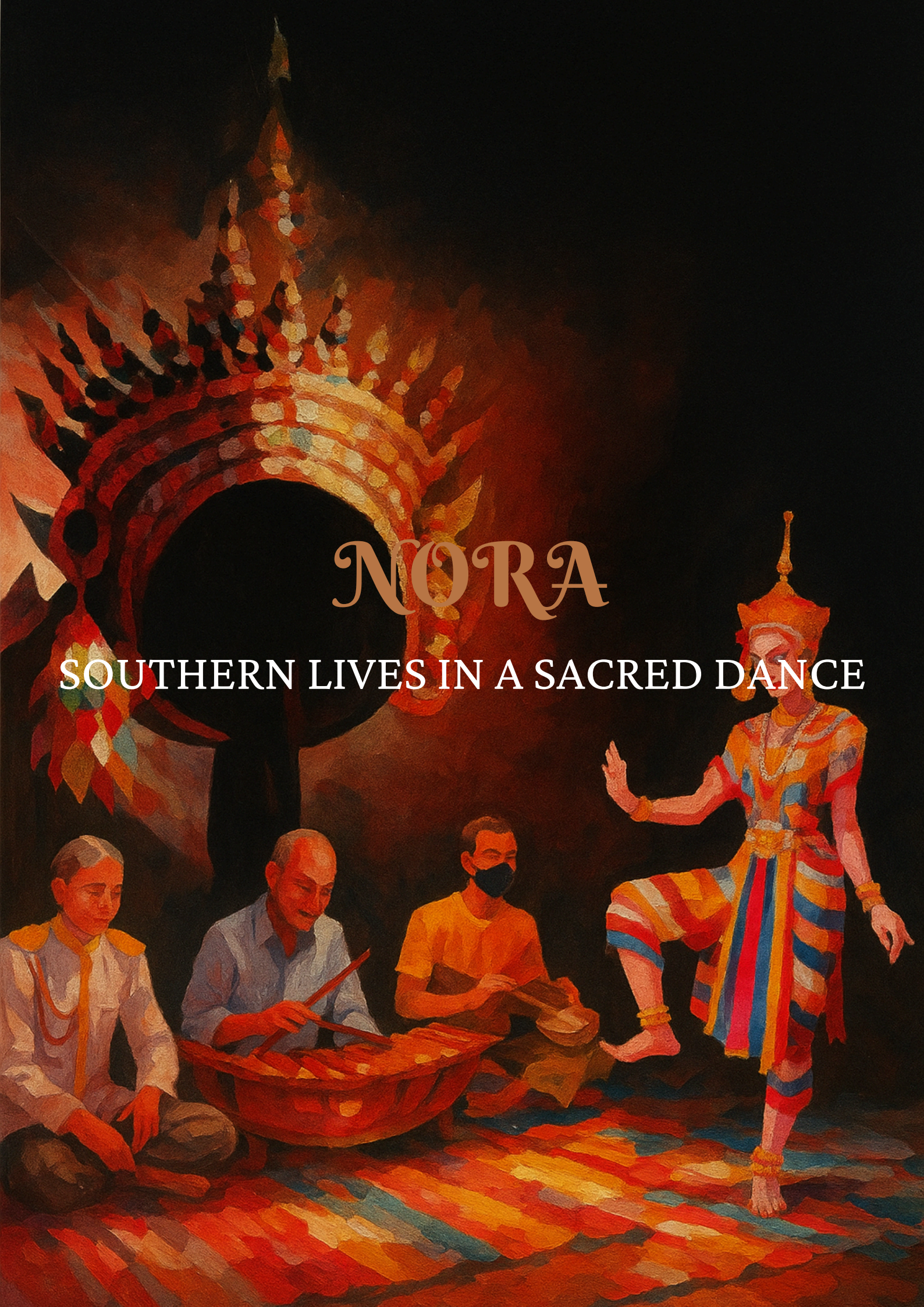
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