



Patravadi Mejudhon in Thai Performing Arts

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Abstract

Patravadi Mejudhon is recognized as an avant-garde female artist in the field of Thai performing arts because of her ingenuity in integrating her knowledge of the field and local culture with various international performing techniques from different periods. As a result, a variety of Thai contemporary performing masterpieces has emerged, shaping modern Thai theatre. Such masterpieces include plays, operas, vocal performances and Thai classical dances: Fon, Rum, Rabam and Ten. The revolution of Thai performing arts introduced by Patravadi Mejudhon has brought about a continual development of concepts and approaches to create unique styles of Thai dramatic works. Due to her outstanding role in transforming this field of art, Patravadi Mejudhon was named National Artist in Performing Arts (Plays and Cinema) in 2014. This article is a part of a doctoral thesis on Thai Dance. The main objective is to explore how Patravadi Mejudhon's masterpieces have influenced Thai performing arts.

Keywords: Patravadi Mejudhon, Thai Performing Arts, Female Performing Artist, Modern Thai Theatre, National Artist

Introduction

Patravadi Mejudhon, a Thai Female Performing Artist, has brought Thai performing art wisdom, which could be integrated with techniques and other national performing arts, into a new kind of art being influent to audiences and Thai performing art society. This academic article aimed to indicate the importance of the origin of arts and their results, through the study of Patravadi Mejudhon's biography and works as described below.

The origin of being a Thai Performing Artist began from Patravadi Mejudhon, born in the Singholaka family which was complete with economic and social statuses. Her sister was Supapan Pichaironarongsongkram, the third heir of the River Crossing Ferry business, Supatra Ltd. and Chao Phraya Express Boat Ltd. The Singholaka family has been close to the royal family since King Rama IV, the great grandparent generation. Patravadi's grandmother, Khunying Boonpun Singholaka, had served the Crown Princess Dara Rasmi. She had initiated the crossing ferry business in B.E. 2463. Patravadi's mother, Khunying Supatra Singholaka--the next heir, had served the King Rama VI. She had received the Forth King Vajiravudh's Royal Cypher Medal (Rama VI) and the title "Khun" when she was fourteen years old. Then in B.E. 2512, she had received the honorable title "Khunying" from the King Rama IX. Furthermore, she was the first female generation that graduated bachelor's degree in Law in B.E. 2482 from Faculty of Law, The University of Moral and Political Sciences, founded in B.E. 2477. Having been continued from Khunying Boonpun Singholaka' generation, her mother, she founded companies, Supatra Ltd., in B.E. 2506 and Chao Phraya Express Boat Ltd., in B.E. 2514. Her father, Professor Saard Mejudhon, was a granted student by the King Rama VII Foundation, and graduated Mechanical Engineering from Purdue University, U.S.A. He had come back to work at State Railway of Thailand in B.E. 2545, had been promoted as the Director General, Department of Industrial Works, and had been a special professor at Faculty of Commerce and Accountancy, Thammasat University (Mejudhon, 2018, pp. 10-11).



Figure 1 Mejudhon's Family. (Mejudhon, 2018, p. 27)



Figure 2 Sampan Boat. (Mejudhon, 2018, p. 15)

Family had been the base of being Thai for Patravadi when she was young. Her mother, Khunying Supatra Singholaka, usually took her to The National Theatre and encouraged her with learning Thai performing art from two teachers. The first teacher was Jaroonsri Pakdee (Jaron Passalak), teaching the male character. She had taught at Wang Suan Kulap, in the same generation with Teacher Lamun Yamakhup and Teacher Chely Sukhawich who had initiated the teaching methodology at The College of Dramatic Arts, The Fine Arts Department). The second teacher was Mom Luang Lek Kunchon, the full-time teacher at Rajini School and Wang Banmor. She had also taught the male character. In addition, Teacher Surang Duriyapaneet had taught singing (P. Mejudhon, interviewed, May 2, 2021). Teacher Sampan Panmanee was also one of the teachers of Patravadi, who had been the teacher and the famous director. Patravadi had performed Rabum Dao Wa Deung with her classmates. The performance was held in the era of teaching Thai dance through television, Channel 4 Bang Khun Phrom, which had been during B.E. 2498–2500. As a result, Thai performing art had been the Patravadi's first knowledge since young in which continued her creative works relating to being international.

Patravadi had gained Western performing arts from studying abroad. Graduated in high school level from Micklefield School, Seaford, Sussex, England, Patravadi continued her vocational education as recommended by Associate Professor Sodsai Sodsai Pantoomkomol at Pasadena Playhouse, U.S.A. In the meantime, Patravadi also learned about design, makeup, and fashion modeling. She was also the stylist at Jocelyn Ryan Studio, Los Angelis. According to her education and experiences from time to time, Patravadi Mejudhon adjusted her own knowledge to become the new era of Thai performing arts, which will be described as follows.



Figure 3 Patravadi and Lex's Show Boat

Source: Woman of the River: 100 Years, Prosperity on the River
(Supatra Singholaka Foundation, 2020, p. 100)



Figure 4 "Patravadi Boat" from Woman of the River:

100 Years, Prosperity on the River
(Supatra Singholaka Foundation, 2020, p. 100)

Her first performance in which required courage and creativity was the first ferry of Chao Phraya River called Lex's Show Boat in B.E. 2507 (Mejudhon, 2018, p. 55). She achieved her first work when she was only sixteen

years old. Patravadi's first famous work was begun from the adaptation of the ferry of Khunying Supatra, her mother, named "Patravadi" to be a cruise. There was one driver and one female harbormaster, who worked extra from their own jobs. The chef was Mae Sawai, her close nanny. There was also one musician. The one who was responsible for everything was Patravadi Mejudhon by taking care of 10 foreign clients on the floating ferry and serving Cocktail Cruise foods (S. Pichaironarongsongkram, interviewed, July 15, 2021). The route started from Oriental Hotel to Memorial Bridge floating north through Wat Arun (Temple of the Dawn), near Wat Rakang where Patravadi's house was located, to view the beauty of the sunset with the sound of violin along Chao Phraya River in the evening (P. Mejudhon, interviewed, August 23, 2020). This business was held only on the weekend. It was successful and Partravadi wanted to expand her business because there was not Dinner Cruise business in Chao Phraya River at that time. However, the Lex's Show Boat had to be ended because Patravadi had to go to study in the U.S.A. Then, there were Dinner Cruise businesses in which were different from Cocktail Cruise that floated to view the sunset like Lex's Show Boat (S. Pichaironarongsongkram, interviewed, July 15, 2021). However, it was considered that Patravadi was the initiator of the floating dining business for visitors to have dinner and view the Thai lifestyle from both side of Chao Phraya River, which has been famous for both Thai and foreign tourists in the present.



Figure 5 A Film Poster of "Mai Mee Sawan Sam Rab Khun".
(Mejudhon, 2018, p. 88)



Figure 6 A Film Poster of "Nang Sao Mali Wan".
(Mejudhon, 2018, p. 84)

For dramatic performance work in B.E. 2516, "Mai Mee Sawan Sam Rab Khun", it was the first film Patravadi acted as the main character of a 40s woman. She performed with Parwarna Chanajit and Nard Poowanai. Patravadi was awarded the Golden Doll Award as a the excellent actress in which was consider the Thai Oscar Award. The award was given directly by the King Rama IX (Mejudhon, 2018, p. 101). Addressed by Warayut Milinthachinda (interviewed, June 23, 2021), in agreement wirh the state by Kittisak Suwanpokin (interviewed, November 24, 2020), Patravadi's being the main actress was the joint of the former and new main actress. This meant that Patravadi was not the type of a lady with neat and tidy characteristics like the former main actress, Pechara Chaowarach. In addition, in B.E. 2551, Ananroj Tungsupanich, the writer from Manager Magazine and "Krunghthep Mua Wan Wan" Column, Metrolife Magazine who was one of the fans of Patravadi since she came back from the U.S.A. to be a supermodel, stated that Patravadi's walking style has been new since she was the supermodel for Mom Chao Kraising Wutthichai. Her appearance and walking style differed from the former supermodel style, i.e., Patsri Bunnag. She was a tall thin lady with slender arms and legs in which was not general characteristics of Thai supermodel. Her walking style focuses on walking characteristics, i.e., arms stretching like



a butterfly when wearing long-sleeved shirt, Full Turn Walk, and Catwalk Style (A. Tungsupanich, interviewed, June 30, 2021). At that time, she had background knowledge from the U.S.A. when there was only Half Turn Walk Style. Patravadi addressed that several-round Full Turn Walk Style showed the fairness of long-sleeved clothes. Therefore, she was call “the Lady of Full Turn” (P. Mejudhon, interviewed, June 30, 2021). As a result, Patravadi had been the starter of this kind of walking in Thailand.

For the composition for acting performance, “Nang Sao Mali Wan” in B.E. 2516 had been written and performed by Patravadi herself which was the inspiration for making Thai films. She was determined to convey the concepts and practices in life that reflected the people at that age (P. Mejudhon, interviewed, January 7, 2021). The film has been written from the people around her, and it was successful so that there was a famous saying from the film: “Mali Wan Sa Yang”, or so easy for Mali Wan in English (K. Suwanpokin, interviewed, November 24, 2020). The main actress’ characteristics were never seen in any former films that were about being a high-society lady. The plot was about Mali Wan, a high-society lady since born but did not act like a noble one. Mali Wan lived carelessly and never obeyed her parents so that she ended her life with syphilis. This was considered the plot twist of Thai films main actress (P. Mejudhon, interviewed, January 7, 2021). In addition, Patravadi created new kinds of television drama; for example, “Tukta Sea Kaban (1976)” or a crazy doll in English. The drama was inspired by the story of Baby Jane told by Atcharapan Paiboonsuwan. Patravadi implied the story and create a main actress named Jeab, a girl with Intellectual Disabilities. The drama has been well accepted by the audiences in which Channel 3 has broadcasted for four times. It contains 18-minute-long advertisement which was so long that there was a rule of half-an-hour of drama and five-minute of advertisement. It was also considered as the first Thai Situation Comedy that resulted in several more situation comedies until now. Another outstanding situation comedy was “Prachachon Chao Flat (1979)” or flat people in English, which has been inspired by the story of Somchai Ninlawan’s life at Din Daeng Flat. This comedy has been analyzed by Surapone Virulrak as new for the entertainment field. More importantly, it was not only about the kind of entertainment as a situation comedy that Patravadi initiated in Thailand, such as “Tukta Sea Kaban (1976)” and “Khabuan Karn Khon Chai (1977)” or the gang of housemaids in English, Patravadi presented the situations and characters of poor people with the same or different lifestyles which were different from the former women-fight for men dramas (S. Virulrak, interviewed, June 10, 2021). Furthermore, Patravadi’s works emphasized the actors’ performances rather than the look, so there was no need to look good to be the main actors or actress. The examples were Khabuan Karn Khon Chai (1977), Channel 3, that the main actress performed by Ji (Atcharapan Paiboonsuwan) as E Eang; and Bon Thanon Sai Diew Kan, or on the same road in English, Lesson Phu Pitak Kuam Sa-ad, that the main actor performed by Game-Santi Suntiwechakul as Chupong. Game did not even notice that he performed as the main actor until the end of the shooting (S. Suntiwechakul, interviewed, July 15, 2021). It could be observed that there were not dramas about a cleaner where was Patravadi made. This concept was influent from the Western idea. As a result, Patravadi was considered being balanced between Thai and Western cultures (P. Mahasarinand, interviewed, June 18, 2021). She was considered the initiator of performing arts that reflected Thai lifestyles and society.



Figure 7 Patravadi in the Drama “Tukta Sea Kaban”.

Source: <http://info.gotomanager.com/photos/newsphotos.aspx?id=11250&pid=4016>



Figure 8 News about the Television Situation Comedy “Prachachon Chao Flat”.

Source: <https://www.dek-d.com/board/entertainment/3076975/>

In the other artists’ opinion on Patravadi Mejudhon, even though she has been grown up from the preservative family, she had much thought and lifestyle similar to Western culture. Ananroj Tungsupanich, close to the famous author Kritsana Asoksin (A. Tungsupanich, interviewed, June 30, 2021), addressed about Patravadi’s youth, new ideas, fashion leader for dressing that she was different from the others at that time. She sat with her legs crossed singing with piano sound at a hotel nightclub, which was not common seen at that time. Patravadi herself was not a singer, but Taworn Sopeamorn, the Montien Hotel administrator, hired her because she was a very famous star (P. Mejudhon, interviewed, June 30, 2021). Therefore, Kritsana Asoksin decided to go to Montien Hotel Nighclub in order to see her. Kritsana implied what she had seen about Patravadi as the raw material for writing a novel with the concept that Patravadi’s brither than fire. The novel was named “Fai Pai” or the lost of fire in English (A. Tungsupanich, interviewed, June 30, 2021). This can be concluded that even Patravadi’s real life was inspiring for performance of novel writing.



Figure 9 Patravadi’s Fashion.
(Mejudhon, 2018, p. 60)

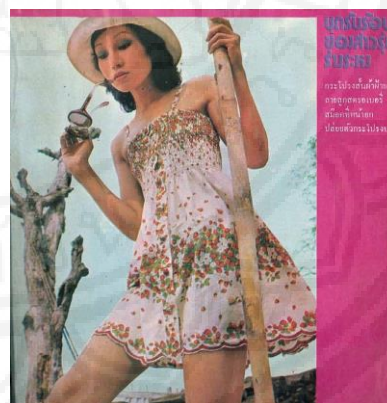


Figure 10 Patravadi’s Fashion.
(Mejudhon, 2018, p. 78)

For the performance of being a drama producer, Patravadi, speaking with Borisut Buranasamrit in 1976, was invited to be a drama producer for Channel 3 by Pracha Maleenont. Patravadi chose the novel of Kritsana Asoksin named “Fai Pai”. The plot and the main actress’ characteristics written by Kritsana Asoksin were from the characteristics of Patravadi. Therefore, after the contact with Patravadi for the novel, Kritsana gave the story to Patravadi to produce a drama without doubt. Patravadi was the producer, or called drama producer in the present, director, actress, and the drama scripts (Mejudhon, 2018, p. 108). From her work of being a director, she



changed the standard of the drama in which has been seen in the present from people telling the scripts to the actors beside the prop to the actors memorizing them instead (S. Virulrak, interviewed, June 18, 2021). Surapone Virulrak who used to work with Patravadi for the film shooting titled “Games” in 1976, in which Patravadi was the producing director, stated that scripts memorization has been started at Chulalongkorn University in 1964 by Associate Professor Sodsai Sodsai Pantoomkomol. However, the person who is influential for scripts memorization in the professional level in Thailand was Patravadi. Patravadi believed that it was common to memorize the scripts from what she was educated from Pasadena Playhouse, U.S.A., which was recommended by Associate Professor Sodsai Sodsai Pantoomkomol in 1964. Patravadi gave the reason why actors and actresses were supposed to memorize the scripts accurately, or called scripts accuracy, that it was for the interest of rehearsal before shooting so that the performance would be smooth. This was the cause that former actors or actresses rejected to work with her (Mejudhon, 2018, p. 108). As a result, it was in need to find new performers, i.e., Atcharapan Paiboonsuwan, Charas Fuangaromya, Kumtorn Tubkunlai, Yanee Tramothe, Panya Nirunkul, Maria Ketrakha, Warayut Milinthachinda, Mayuree Aisarasena Na Ayutthaya, Yanee Jongwisut, and Game-Santi Suntiwechakul, etc. At the beginning, there was the categorization of the performers based on the ability of scripts memorization; for example, Thai fairytale dramas on Channel 3 was the last group of drama in which there was still scripts telling and the performing fee was not very high. Later, the competitive Channel 7’s Thai fairytale dramas has cancelled scripts telling, so every performers had to memorize them (S. Kruekrongsuk, interviewed, March 10, 2021). Those were the results from Patravadi’s making performers memorize scripts in 1976.

For the performing arts about concert performances, the concert was not only about singing, but also being entertainers. In 1983, Patravadi initiated the new phenomenon of performing concerts with the style of One Women Show, from Broadway New York America, which was not only the concert for singing, but it was also the concert for performing. The concert’s title was “Khuen Nueng Kab Patravadi” or a night with Patravadi in English. This concert effected on several aspects of Thai performing arts because general concert at that time was held with the foreign performers. Her determination to perform the concert by herself caused many obligations such as limited time and difficulty to find a location, especially in the period when people liked to watch films or musical folk dramas. Some place has said that to hire unknown Patravadi, I rather hired Rod Stewart. It meant that no one bought the concert idea of Patravadi because Thai people were not interested in Thai artist. There would be no one watching or buying tickets (N. Kittiyakorn, interviewed, July 12, 2021).

According to those mentioned limitations, it was almost impossible for the concert to be held. Patravadi’s courage showed that she sent pictures and contents to every reliable news and public relations platform such as Bangkok Post, Bangkok World, The Nation, Lively, Look, famous Thai magazines, gossip news, etc. The sample was about the picture of rehearsal in New York with the contents about the concert director such as he loved Thailand and Thai dancing and he was half Portuguese, etc. This manifested that the contents of news at that time did not need to be something really about foreign things. Patravadi, as the daughter of Khunying Supatra Singholaka, was sponsored only by S&P by Patara Sila-On for the performers and staff meals; and Shell for the programme. All the rest were supported by Khunying Supatra Singholaka by asking Khunying Chansamorn Wattanavekin, the President of The Federation of Business and Professional Women of Thailand (BPW Thailand) for help, which she finally did (N. Kittiyakorn, interviewed, July 12, 2021). In the meantime, Warayut Milinthachinda was responsible for location and performance, including preparing for rehearsal, joining the

rehearsal, and performed. Backstage staff worked on changing clothes for Patravadi, which has never appeared in Thailand before (W. Milinthachinda, interviewed, June 23, 2021).



Figure 11 Picture from “Khuen Nueng Kab Patravadi” Concert.

Source: <https://youtu.be/izES3HySJIY>

The location for the concert was finally at The National Theatre, as desired by Patravadi. The ticket selling was announced in the evening. According to the contempt that there would be no one watching, in the morning of July 17th, 1983, the queue of people began in front of The National Theatre crossing the road and ended at Sanam Luang. Mom Rajwongse Somlap Kitiyakorn's car was broken because it took the tickets to the place, but the tickets were not sold until the selling time. Moreover, there was the phenomenon of “ghost tickets” (N. Kitiyakorn, interviewed, July 12, 2021). “Kuen Nueng Kab Patravadi” Concert, at The National Theatre, became the first concert of Thai artist that has been so successful that the rounds had to be increased from 4 to 7 rounds. There was also standing ovation to the performers in which there could be seen only in other countries after the performance ended. However, the audiences had standing ovation for Patravadi even during the performance, which meant the performance was well accepted. No one imagined that it would have been successful based on mentioned impossibilities. The concert resulted in the influential knowledge on Thailand concert performances, which would be described next.

Patravadi never stopped at the regular knowledge for creating performing art works, so there were new knowledge for performing art subjects through working, strict practicing, and tidy directing like Broadway dramas, e.g., every posture was supposed to be in accordance with the music and lyrics. There was also the integration of music genre for the variety of feelings; for example, a Thai song named Chao Tui Yoo Nai, by Rongthong Thonglunthom, was integrated with Banjo sound to change into Country Western music style. The lyrics were also changed into English according to the version written by the great teacher Associate Professor Sodsai Sodsai Pantoomkomol, for the 1959 Miss Universe contest (Mejudhon, 2018, p. 127). At the concert, Patravadi chorused with Rewat Buddhinan and worked with Broadway professional team such as Arthur Faria, the director; Joel Whittaker and Randy Krik, the dancers; David Prouty, the music director; and Barry Arnold, the light and sound director. Knowledge gained from this concert has been improved to be the patterns in Thai performing arts by Patravadi.

Apart from going down on history for Thai concert, there were obviously new occupations in Thai performing arts circles; for instance, Barry Arnold later invested with Thai people to start light and sound business such as AV, and IMC & Partner companies. There was also the debut of many artists such as Rewat Buddhinan (guest



singer), Asanee Chotikul (guitar backup), Warayut Milinthachinda (corporation and backstage), and Nawarat Khomapat (Kitiyakorn) and Mom Rajawongse Somlap Kitiyakorn (public relations and sponsor supply). Noppol Gomarachun, son of Juree Ohsiri, close to Patravadi, and just graduated aboard; and Thongchai McIntyre, when he was not the artist yet and close to Warayut Milinthachinda, helped on selling tickets for Patravadi's next concert "Tam Jai Chan" in 1985 at MBK Hall. This concert debuted Thongchai McIntyre when Rewat Buddhinan has established GMM Grammy and signed a contract Rewat adapted the concert style by Patravadi into Thongchai McIntyre's concert, "Baeb Bird Bird Concert" in which was analyzed that the creative section produced Broadway-like and musical show was the themes for the concert. It was different from other concerts which there were only artists singing. Rewat Buddhinan's vision was to promote Thongchai McIntyre as a performance entertainer; and it was then successful (P. Piyatanasiri, interviewed, July 12, 2021). Furthermore, a dancer team was built by Patravadi to work for concerts and product exhibitions since 1987. Patravadi also made the first Thai musical drama for the opening ceremony of Thailand Cultural Centre in 1987. The drama was named "Keb Dao Duang Mai Pai Sai Fah" (Mejudhon, 2018, p. 127). The drama also applied dancing performance from Broadway in which Patravadi was proficient. Ronny, the dancer from New York, taught Thai dancers and inspired new dancers such as Peeramon Chomdhavat, Vassana Kansopon, and Nipon Wanmahin (Joe Bangkok Dance). Those people are considered the first group of dancer for Jazz Dance (M. Meejamrat, interviewed, July 12, 2021). Especially, Manop Meejamrat, the Silapathorn (2005), has also debuted from being Patravadi's dancer. It could be concluded that Patravadi inspired the occupation of jazz dancers in Thailand.



Figure 12 Poster of "Tam Chai Chan" Concert.
(Mejudhon, 2018, p. 142)



Figure 13 The Picture of
"Kuen Nueng Kab Patravadi" Concert.
Source: <https://youtu.be/izES3HySJY>

For the performing arts of building a modern theatre, Black May (1992) caused everything stopped including concerts or exhibitions. However, Patravadi never stopped creativity to create works. Therefore, she built a theatre near her house at the parking area in front of her office at Wat Rakang. The theatre was named Patravadi Theatre, the outdoor theatre. The performances at Patravadi Theatre initiated the reborn of modern musical drama when it had been gone from Thai community for 30 years. At that time, it was the era of Sawalee Pakaphan, Chalong Simasathien, Pha Ka Wa Li, etc. After the World War ended, there were some musical dramas. Anyway, when films came, musical dramas were faded away. Meanwhile, there were the musical drama classes at Chulalongkorn University and Thammasart University; so there were musical dramas again even though they were held in the universalities. Even if there were audiences from outside, they were still the works of the universities instead of public dramas (K. Suwanpokin, interviewed, May 18, 2021). Creation of performing arts of dramas consisting of various national techniques of performing, the main influence was Broadway style that Patravadi was proficient.



The performances were the integration with Thai performing arts and held at Patravadi Theatre (M. Meejamrat, interviewed, July 12, 2021). Musical dramas that included various techniques inspired from Patravadi were created to show at Patravadi Theatre (1992–2011) and Hua Hin Theatre (since 2009–present) could be compiled as follows.

1. Singha Krai Pop (1992), 2. Mae Siang Whan Kaban Neng (1992), 3. Talid Tid Tee (1992), 4. Rai Rum Thum Pleng (1993), 5. Juri in Concert (1993), 6. Inao–Chaora Ka Rock Opera (1993), 7. Ngoh Pa (1995), 8. Tripitaka (Verse 1) (1996), 9. Kong Khao Noi (1996), 10. Rue Fon Fah Ja Pen Jai Hai Charas (1996), 11. Ting Jak Ma Rak Gun The (1996), 12. Jintakam Ramayana, Sahassadeja Section (1997), 13. Khon Ruam Palung Harn, 2 stories, Sahassadeja Section (1998), 14. Bod Lakorn Khong Kru Thao (1999), 15. Interview with Si Sudachan (1999), 16. Roong Lung Fon (2000), 17. Helenium (2000), 18. Term Rak Hai Tem Roong (2001), 19. Pojamarn (2002), 20. Pratityasamutpada (Verse 2) (2002), 21. Mun Yoo Tee Kid (Verse 3) (2003), 22. Tripitaka 1 @Wat Boworn (2003), 23. Five Commandments (2003), 24. Eclipse (Verse 5) (2004), 25. Like Phan Mai Chala Wan (2005), 26. Roh Rak Loh Lilit Phra Lo (2009), 27. Eclipse @Hua Hin Theatre (2009), 28. Pojamarn @Bangkok Klui Klui (2009), 29. In Between Lakorn Kattathup @Hua Hin Theatre (2010), 30. Wiwah Phra Samut (2012), 31. Rocking Rama (2013), 32. Baital Pachisi (2014), 33. Samakkee Phet Khumchan (2015), 34. Ngoh Pa @Hua Hin Theatre (2016), 35. The Merchant of Venice (2018), 36. Concert in School 1 (2018), 37. Lilit Phra Lo 2019 (2019), 38. Concert in School 2 (2019), 39. Concert in School 3 (2020), 40. Broken Violin Sane Roi Rao (2020), 41. The Legacy of Chao Phraya River (2020), 42. Concert in School 4 (2021).

For the performing arts of musical dramas, Patravadi Mejudhon adapted the concept “I’ll make Thai to be free”, which meant to adapted Thai things and Thai performing arts knowledge with free various performing techniques from the former one and to search for more international knowledge in order to create international works (K. Suwanpokin, interviewed, May 18, 2021). The sample of the works was the one that impacted on Thai society which mostly were Buddhism. It began with applying dharma as the main factor for the work. The work was Tripitaka in which not only applied the ancestor’s wisdom of singing to perform a drama, Patravadi also applied the Buddhist philosophy and Buddhist ordinance into the performance. This could be considered as a history of musical drama. Tripitaka has been questioned whether the theatre would be closed because of its inappropriate contents. This was because the Buddhism cycle was disordered according to some monks misbehaved and were accused; for example, Monk Winai La–ongsuwan (Phra Yantra) or Rak Rakphong, Santi Asoke, from the 113th Government Gazettes, Section 38A, p.18. Moreover, the drama was rather difficult to transfer the contents of what Tripitaka addressed. According to Patravadi’s like to learn and courage to present that has yet been done before, she decided to create this work from what’s unknown. There were two questions for searching. The first question was occurred after a study field in Japan. Patravadi has seen Japanese modern dance performances which was not Kabuki or Noh, called Butoh instead. This artwork was appeared after the Nuclear Bomb of World War II in Hiroshima, which people were poisoned by radioactive, so they changed. Therefore, there was a new aspect in Japan that was the ugliness was the beauty (P. Mejudhon, interviewed, June 5, 2020). According to the conversation with Katsura Kan, a Japanese director who created Kong Khao Noi work and was the Butoh Master, Patravadi understood the technique of Butoh in which showed the muscle and movement. The performers were concentrated like having meditation and moved by the choreography in which transferred as signals to convey the meaning through what were seen. The section question began during Patravadi’s meditation training. Her



daughter read Tripitaka and asked her what it addressed. Patravadi tried to understand by reading out loud which was also for fun. Therefore, she desired to read for other people to listen through the performance (Mejudhon, 2018, p. 149).

The interpretation based on Patravadi's idea was to apply the knowledge from Tripitaka to the performance by dividing into 2 sets: Five Hindrances to Happiness and the Codes of Monastic Disciplines. The performance employed Butoh movement technique. It finally came to the day of the performance which the important phenomenon of Thai drama became clearer. On September 5, 1996, the day of performance, Khunying Supatra Masdit, Director-General of Department of Religious Affairs, and the team attended. After the performance ended, Khunying Supatra Masdit granted 10,000 baht for Patravadi to make dramas about dharma. After the Tripitaka 1, there was an encouragement to create this kind of drama in the country. Patravadi also created works under the support of Dhrama Drama Foundation, since 2004, in order to continue the adaptation of Buddhist philosophy to be musical drama so that the audiences would understand more about Dhrama. The drama employed dharma as the contents such as Five Commandments, how to make merit, meditation, etc. There were also Dharma conversation and meditation by masters from Wat Bowonniwet Vihara and guest speakers, such as Vasit Dejkunjor and Sitra Phanasomburna (Mejudhon, 2018, p. 149). Tripitaka has been continuously made. Patravadi made several sections; for example, Paticca-samuppabana (Dependent Origination); Verse: Mun Yoo Tee Kid; Verse 4 (Five Commandments), Verse 5 Eclipse (Unawareness), etc. Patravadi continued making Buddhist philosophy works without the word "Tripitaka, Verse" (P. Mejudhon, interviewed, June 5, 2020).



Figure 14 Tripitaka Dharma Musical Drama.
(Mejudhon, 2018, p. 205)



Figure 15 The Ceremony of the National Artists Awards 2014.
(Mejudhon, 2018, p. 346)

Conclusion

Patravadi Mejudhon was raised up with Thai performing arts surroundings. With her determination of learning performing arts from various countries, there were works that reflected stylish creativity. Stylish creativity in this case meant the core knowledge to be employed as performing arts works, including performance, script writing, being a singer as an entertainer with Broadway style, being a drama producer, and creating theatre and Thai modern drama. It began with the concept of One of a Kind integrated with several national performing techniques in which reflected Thai society and culture from each period. In addition, several important persons for Thai performing arts have been debuted continuously. This was to encourage and acknowledge, like a "master". They all became the inspiration and model to develop Thai performing arts.

According to the outstanding and various works being as a long-term model, Patravadi Mejudhon was awarded as the National Artist in Performing Arts (Plays and Cinema) in 2014.



At the present, Patravadi School in Hua Hin still teaches the creation of Thai base to be contemporary, and how Patravadi Mejudhon was are still applied into the creation of Thai performing arts.

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