

*The Analysis of History, Story and Narrative; A Case Study of Contemporary Performing Arts, “Jao Jan Phom Hom: Nirat Phrathat In-Khwaen”.*

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**Abstract**

Jao Jan Phom Hom: Nirat Phrathat In Khwaen by Mala Khamchan (Mr.Charoen Malaroj), is a famous Thai literature Awarded by The Southeast Asian Writers Award (S.E.A. Write Award) in 1991.

The literature imagined the portrait about sentimentality and emotion of an unfamiliar princess in an antecedent, which it never been found or record in history. The story is an elegiac poetry, which is a mixture of folk tales from northern and central Thailand, on a pilgrimage to the Golden Rock in Burma.

The researcher has adapted and presented the magnificent literature through the vision and forms of contemporary performing arts creature.

The theme of the performance narrate by the main character; Princess Jan, as a solo performance. It also emphasizes on insignificant of life related to the belief on Buddhism.

This creative research is the literature development to the contemporary performance, which retains on the history background and narrates through the story of the princess. The analysis of history, story and narrative will lead to the integration of the knowledge to create a contemporary performance.

Keywords: Performing Arts, Contemporary Performance, Playwright

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## **Introduction**

The word history comes ultimately from Ancient Greek, meaning "inquiry", "knowledge from inquiry" or "judge".

Throughout its 800-year history, Thailand can boast the distinction of being the only country in Southeast Asia never to have been colonized. Its history is divided into five major periods, following this;

### **1. Nanchao Period (650-1250 A.D.)**

Thais founded their kingdom in the southern part of China, which is Yunnan, Kwangsi and Canton today. A great number of people migrated south as far as the Chao Phraya Basin and settled down over the Central Plain under the sovereignty of the Khmer Empire, whose culture they probably accepted.

### **2. Sukhothai Period (1238-1378 A.D.)**

Thais began to emerge as a dominant force in the region in the 13th century, gradually asserting independence from existing Khmer and Mon kingdoms, called by its rulers "the dawn of happiness", this is often considered the golden era of Thai history, an ideal Thai state in a land of plenty governed by paternal and benevolent kings, the most famous of whom was King Ramkhamhaeng the Great (1237/1247 – 1317). However in 1350, the mightier state of Ayutthaya exerted its influence over Sukhothai.

### **3. Ayutthaya Period (1350-1767)**

The Ayutthaya kings adopted Khmer cultural influences from the very beginning. No longer the paternal and accessible rulers that the kings of Sukhothai had been, Ayutthaya's sovereigns were absolute monarchs and assumed the title Devaraja (god-king). The early part of this period saw Ayutthaya extend its sovereignty over neighboring Thai principalities and come into conflict with its neighbors. During the 17th century, Siam started diplomatic and commercial relations with western countries. In 1767, a Burmese invasion succeeded in capturing Ayutthaya. Despite their overwhelming victory, the Burmese did not retain control of Siam for long. A young general named Taksin (April 17, 1734 – April 7, 1782) and his followers broke through the Burmese and escaped to the East of Thailand. Seven months after the fall of Ayutthaya, he and his forces sailed back to the capital and expelled the Burmese occupation garrison.

### **4. Thonburi Period (1767-1772)**

King Taksin decided to transfer the capital from Ayutthaya to a site nearer to the sea which would facilitate foreign trade, ensure the procurement of arms, and make defense and withdrawal easier in case of a renewed Burmese attack. He established his new capital at Thonburi on the west bank of the Chao Phraya River. The rule of King Taksin was not an easy one. The lack of central authority since the fall of Ayutthaya led to the rapid disintegration of the kingdom, and Taksin's reign was spent reuniting the provinces.

### **5. Rattanakosin Period (1782 - the Present)**

After King Taksin passed away, general Chakri became the first king of the Chakri Dynasty, Rama I, ruling from 1782 to 1809. His first action as king was to transfer the royal capital across the river from Thonburi to Bangkok and build the Grand Palace. Rama II (1809-1824) continued the restoration begun by his predecessor. King Nang Klao, Rama III (1824-1851) reopened relations with Western nations and developed trade with China. King Mongkut, Rama IV, (1851-1868) concluded treaties with European countries, avoided colonialization and established modern Thailand. He made many social and economic reforms during his reign. King Chulalongkorn, Rama V (1869-1910) continued his father's tradition of reform, abolishing slavery and improving the public welfare and administrative system. Compulsory education and other educational reforms were introduced by King Vajiravudh, Rama VI (1910-1925). During the reign of King Prajadhipok, (1925-1935), Thailand changed from an absolute monarchy to a constitutional monarchy. The king abdicated in 1933 and was succeeded by his nephew, King Ananda Mahidol (1935-1946). The country's name was changed from Siam to Thailand with the advent of a democratic government in 1939.

The study of history has been classified not only as part of the humanities, but also as part of the social sciences. It can also be seen as a bridge between those two broad areas, incorporating methodologies from both.

### **History background**

A case study of contemporary performing arts, “Jao Jan Phom Hom: Nirat Phrathat In-Khwaen” has history background on Central of Thailand and majority on history of Lanna Kingdom (13th - 18th centuries). The Lanna Kingdom (the kingdom of a million rice fields) covered most of Northern Thailand, it was ringed by high mountains, teak tree forests and well stocked rivers and its fertile valleys and plains were a rich source of agriculture.

The history of Lanna Kingdom can be traced to the reign of King Mengrai (1238-1311) who established the kingdom in the Northern of Thailand. In 1296, King Mengrai cooperated with King Ramkhamhaeng the Great (1237/1247 – 1317) of Sukhothai and King Ngam Muang (1238 –1298), of Phayao to choose an appropriate site for founding the capital of Lanna Kingdom. The present location of Chiang Mai was selected. It took about 4 months to complete the building task and, finally, it became the capital of Lanna Kingdom named Nophaburi Sri Nakorn Ping Chiang Mai which was later shortened to Chiang Mai.

Nophaburi Sri Nakorn Ping Chiang Mai / Chiang Mai became an important cultural and religious centre which remained so for several centuries. The city was laid out over roughly a square mile; temples were built – Wat Chiang Man, dates back to the early 14th century, and still remains; while Wat Phra Singh followed in 1345 – and the distinctive moat and bastions were added. The wealth of the kingdom left behind legacies, such as Wat Suan Dawk with its towering chedis and Wat Jet Yod, which was built for the Eight World Buddhist council in 1477. expanding east as far as present-day.

The greater Lanna Kingdom, reached its zenith under King Tilokarat (1548 – 1580). Lanna's power began to wane by the end of the 15th century and was repeatedly attacked by Lao and Burma whose troops and puppet lords occupied the area on many occasions.

In 1558, Lanna Kingdom was captured by King Bayinnaung (16 January 1516 – 10 October 1581), King of Toungoo Dynasty of Burma. In 1596, King Naresuan (1555/1556 – 25 April, 1605) of Ayutthaya seized Lanna Kingdom back from the Burmese. Later the kingdom fell to the hands of the Burmese again before King Narai (16 February 1633 – 11 July 1688) of Ayutthaya succeeded in its recovery. Ayutthaya took control of the town for 20 years. After that Chiang Mai was alternately ruled by the Burmese and became independent.

Between the 16th and 18th centuries Chiang Mai lacked effective leadership, which resulted in a series of invasions and occupations from Burma and Central Thailand, and control of the city remained elusive to the people of Lanna for over 200 years, despite multiple attempts to recapture it. At one point the city was even evacuated and nearly deserted. Control of Chiang Mai was briefly returned to the northern kingdom between 1727 and 1763, but was to be conquered by the Burmese one last time.

In 1774, King Taksin (April 17, 1734 – April 7, 1782) of Thonburi, who reestablished Thai sovereignty after Ayutthaya had been defeated in the war with Burma in 1767, realized the necessity of driving the foreigners out of Lanna Kingdom to prevent them from further attacking Siam (Thailand). He sent forces under Chao Kawila (1742 – 1816), the first ruler of the Chao Chet Ton Dynasty of Lanna Kingdom.

Following the capture of Chiang Mai, King Taksin of Thonburi appointed Chao Kawila as the city's viceroy. Under his leadership the city went from strength to strength, with the reconstruction (c.1800) of the monumental brick walls – that are mostly still standing – and the establishment of a river port at the end of, what is today, Thapae Road. During this period Chiang Mai entered into prosperous trade relations with Burma and China.

Lanna Kingdom formally became part of Siam in 1774 by an agreement with Chao Kawila, its then slowly grew in cultural, trading and economic importance to its current status as the unofficial capital of northern Thailand.

By the 1850s the British had a firm grip on Burma and the Bowring treaty – negotiated between the Siamese crown and British Consulate in Bangkok – gave British traders in northern Thailand extra-territorial rights for teak logging. Towards the end of the century this was to drive a wedge between Bangkok and Chiang Mai as the British constantly pressured the Royal Siamese Government to force compensation out of the impoverished Chiang Mai prince in return for lawlessness on the frontier. In fact in 1869, two years after the first missionaries arrived, some of their first Christian converts were clubbed to death, instigating a reaction from King Rama V (20 September 1853 – 23 October 1910) of Rattanakosin. Moreover, during the reign of King Rama V, Lanna or Chiang Mai became an administrative unit named Monthon. The last ruler of the Chao Chet Ton Dynasty in Lanna Monthon was Chao Keo Naovarath (29 September, 1862 – 3 June, 1939). When the Thai government

abolished this unit, Chiang Mai became a province in 1933, and, finally, Thai government appointed governor replaced Chao Keo Naovaratt in 1939.

As Siam modernised, Chiang Mai became less isolated from the rest of the Rattanakosin Kingdom that now controlled much of the area of present-day Thailand. Lanna had enjoyed a degree of autonomy, but with the arrival of a postal service (1883), and later telegraph and railway (1921), Chiang Mai found itself increasingly drawn into the politics of the entire country. Finally, after the bloodless revolution of 1932, Siam (it only became officially known as Thailand in 1949) ceased to be an absolute monarchy and Chiang Mai became a province of the country.

### **Kyaikhtiyo; the Sacred Pagoda in Lanna Legend.**



*Figure 1. Photo of Kyaikhtiyo ( from <https://asiaculture.info/culture-information/kyaiktiyo-golden-rock-pagoda.html>,2014.)*

The Kyaikhtiyo pagoda is one of the most ancient and celebrated of all pagodas in Myanmar. It is situated in the vicinity of Kyaikhto township, Thaton district.

The pagoda is said to have been built during the life-time of the Buddha over 2,400 years ago. The pagoda, about 15 feet high, is situated on a rocky mountain 3,615 ft. above sea level. It is built on a huge, almost egg-shaped, rounded granite boulder perched on the very summit of a projecting and shelving tabular rock, which in itself is separated several feet from the mountain by a rent or chasm, now spanned by a small foot bridge of iron and on the further side drops perpendicularly into a valley blow.

On the extreme verge of this sloping rock table, and actually over hanging it by nearly half, is perched this wonderful boulder, now completely gilded with gold, surrounded by the pagoda. By gently rocking the boulder a thread can be passed underneath; seemingly appears as if the additional weight of a few pounds, or a strong wind, would send it sliding down from the place it has occupied for unknown centuries watching over three thousand feet into the sloping valley beneath and we know what freakish law keeps it in its position.

### **The Story of Jao Jan Phom Hom: Nirat Phrathat In-Khwaen**



Figure 2. Cover of the literature “Jao Jan Phom Hom: Nirat Phrathat In-Khwaen” (from <http://oknation.nationtv.tv/blog/bookinlove/2009/12/27/entry-1>, 2009.)

The literature “Jao Jan Phom Hom: Nirat Phrathat In-Khwaen” by Mala Khamchan (Mr.Charoen Malaroj), is a famous Thai literature Awarded by The Southeast Asian Writers Award (S.E.A. Write Award) in 1991.

The Southeast Asian Writers Award or S.E.A. Write Award, is an award that is presented annually since 1979 to poets and writers of Southeast Asia. The awards are given to the writers from each of the countries that comprise the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, though not all countries in ASEAN are represented every year. The award is sometimes given for a specific work by an author, or it could be awarded for lifetime achievement. The types of works that are honored vary, and have included poetry, short stories, novels, plays, folklore, scholarly and religious works.

Mala Khamchan (Mr.Charoen Malaroj) once gave an interview that he would like to write about the story of the unknown princess whom already lose her power but still believe in her status and faith.

The literature imagined the portrait about sentimentality and emotion of an unfamiliar princess in an antecedent, which it never been found or record in history. The story is an elegiac poetry, which is a mixture of folk tales from northern and central Thailand, on a pilgrimage to the Golden Rock in Burma.

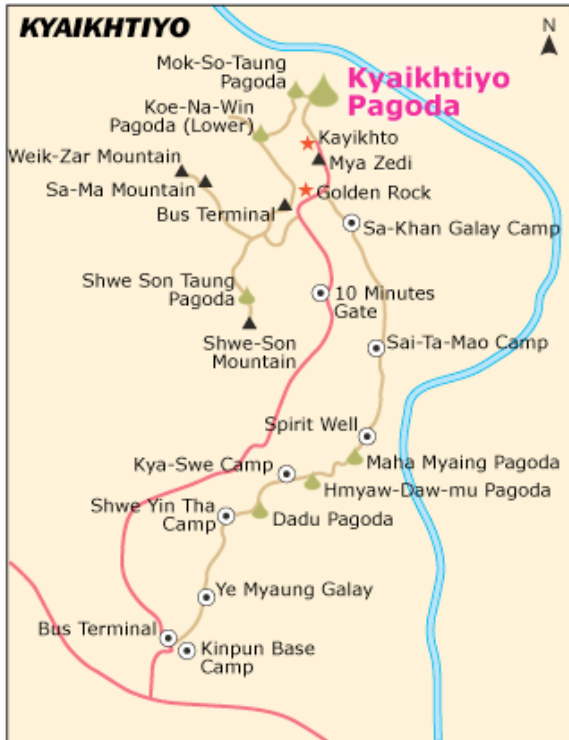


Figure 3. Map to Kyaikhtiyo (from [www.youmustsee.com/asia/myanmar/kyaikhtiyo-pagoda-myanmar.html#](http://www.youmustsee.com/asia/myanmar/kyaikhtiyo-pagoda-myanmar.html#), 2015.)

Princess Jan was a beautiful Lanna Princess. She traveled to worship the sacred relics of the birth, Phrathat In-Khwaen. She strongly believe to cut her adorable long her for worship. Their legends believe that if the hair can pass through the pagoda, the dream becomes true.

Princess Jan went to Phrathat In-Khwaen, sponsored and was companion by Pholeang, the ugly but rich man whom want to marry her.

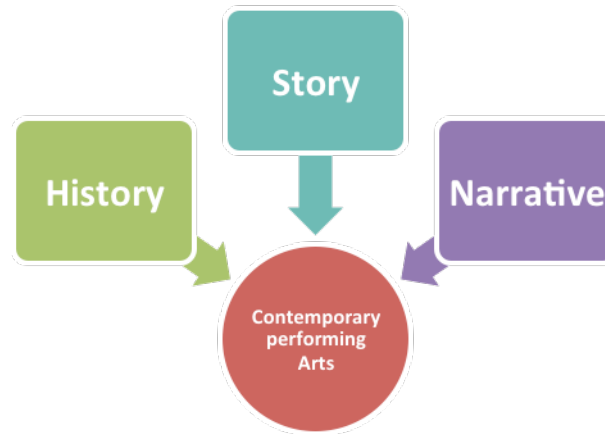
This trip was her learning process to understand what the true of life is.

### **Narrative**

A narrative or story is any report of connected events, real or imaginary, presented in a sequence of written or spoken words, or still or moving images, or both. Narrative is found in all forms of human creativity, art, and entertainment.

In cultural storytelling, a narrative can take on the shape of a story, which gives listeners an entertaining and collaborative avenue for acquiring knowledge. Many cultures use storytelling as a way to record histories, myths, and values. These stories can be seen as living entities of narrative among cultural communities, as they carry the shared experience and history of the culture within them.

**The integration of History, Story and Narrative to create the Contemporary Performing Arts, “Jao Jan Phom Hom: Nirat Phrathat In-Khwaen”**



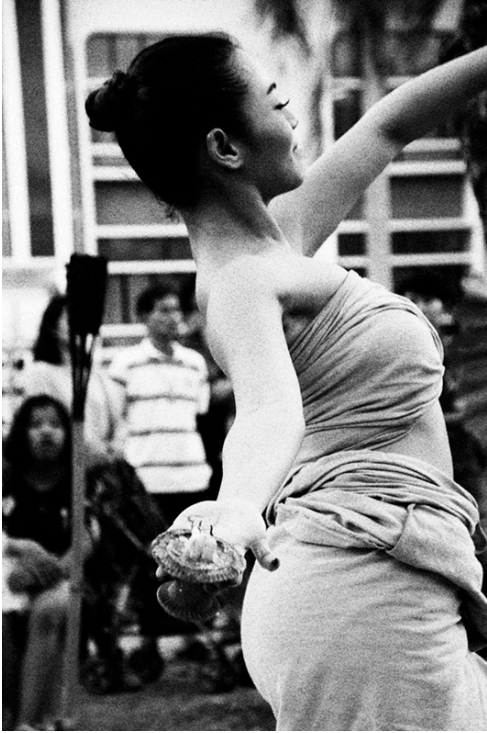
*Figure 4. The chart of The integration of History, Story and Narrative to create the Contemporary Performing Arts, “Jao Jan Phom Hom: Nirat Phrathat In-Khwaen” (from Mutjarin Ittiphong, 2016).*

From the chart of the integration of History, Story and Narrative to create the Contemporary Performing Arts, “Jao Jan Phom Hom: Nirat Phrathat In-Khwaen” (Figure 4) above, signifies that, from History of Thailand and Lanna Kingdom to the story of “Jao Jan Phom Hom: Nirat Phrathat In-Khwaen”, which narrated by Princess Jan as a solo performance can integrated and created the contemporary performing arts. The contemporary performing arts with those backgrounds were very powerful and can bring the theme/message to the audience.



*Figure 5. The Contemporary Performing Arts, “Jao Jan Phom Hom: Nirat Phrathat In-Khwaen” (from Gan Phittayakornsilp, 2016).*





*Figure 6. The Contemporary Performing Arts, “Jao Jan Phom Hom: Nirat Phrathat In-Khwaen” (from Gan Phittayakornsilp, 2016).*

For conclusion, this creative research, finally, is the literature development to the contemporary performance, which retains on the history background and narrates through the story of the princess. The analysis of history, story and narrative will lead to the integration of the knowledge how to create a contemporary performance.



*Figure 7. The Contemporary Performing Arts, “Jao Jan Phom Hom: Nirat Phrathat In-Khwaen” (from Gan Phittayakornsilp, 2016).*

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