

# The Visible & Invisible in Thai Architecture Culture: The Problem of the Reduction & Discourses on Thai Architecture.

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## Abstract

The Visible and Invisible of Thai Architecture Culture concern with the fundamental problem of theory and concepts developed in contemporary Thai architectural culture.

Traditional Thai architecture is characterized as a high gable with elevated terrace, a floor, and a courtyard [1], thus, with this perspective; to be genuine traditional 'Thai' architecture is to be constructed within this framework. This notion is, however, needed to be re-thought, and re-defined whether it is enough in the development of contemporary Thai architecture. Since, architecture is a dynamic organization, through built form, which brings together human behavior, sociology, economics, social hierarchical order, etc. [2]. Architecture, therefore, cannot be valued merely at its formal representation. It is, itself, life, unfortunately that along the history of architectural development, architecture is mainly perceived merely as a formal representation and leaves out what have generated those particular built forms. Through this; architecture becomes static which leads to nowhere but a museum where is preserved for spectacles, and separated from everyday life. This phenomena has happened in the development of contemporary Thai architecture in which built form is perceived as passive given seperatecy from social factors which lends its body. Thus, many of contemporary Thai architectures have lost its connection, not with the past but, with its time.

This established notion is, also, found in most of the cultural studies in which culture is perceived as static and characterized as a symbol of the state or nation, which could not be changed. It becomes problematic since, as soon as culture is reduced to a merely representation, it loses not only its dynamism, but also its force and power.

This paper is mainly concentrated on the construction of 'Thai' architecture. Attention is given to:

- the social mechanism of the 'Thais' – the invisible,
- how the invisible effects the construction of architecture, and its organization – the visible, and finally,
- how architecture, and its organization, both the intangible (space, volume, proportion, scale etc.), and the tangible (form, wall, roof, floor, ornaments, material, etc.) functions in the construction of 'Thainess.'

This paper is, however, not intended to criticize, nor to put the question of (Thai) Architecture to the conclusion, but rather it is intended to re-think, re-question, and re-define how architectural functions might be, by deferring a thought to the other fields of knowledge to which it might introduce different notions to the development of theory and concept in contemporary Thai architecture.

Although the concentration is on the context of Thai, it is hoped to extend the discussion across the divided line between states and nations to the more broader sense which is what might be the development of theory and concept in architecture also, what architecture can do, to what extent do architectural academic and practices could bring about the value of its creation.

### **Keywords**

Built-in Control System

Social Mechanism of Thai

Thai Architecture

Thai Contemporary Architecture

The Visible

The Invisible

## Forward

Are there any other ways instead of asking what is 'Thai' in the development of theory and concept in Thai Architecture? [3]

In spite of looking for 'Thainess;' might it be more valuable to ask how architecture functions in society? [4]

What has been left out from the discussion of theory and concept in architecture, and in Thai architecture?

What is hidden in Thai architecture?

Traditional Thai Architecture is, normally, characterized by high gable; and including stilts and the typical space underneath the house for a traditional Thai house [5]. (figure1-3) These have been established rules for younger generations in the context of Thai architectural academic and practice.

What becomes problematic of this notion is that of a problem of the reduction. Architecture is generally valued through its formal representation. Thus, come the scale, proportion, rhythm, composition and the like, and are passed on effectively as convention, and tradition in architectural appreciation, and creation [6]. (figure 4) Architecture, however, is as much the outcome of social mechanism as it is aesthetic specificity. It is a process of thought as it is an aesthetic appreciation. It is created, and subjected to change accordingly to its time, and context. Therefore, predetermined by established rules as such, architecture loses, itself, life, and dynamism.

This phenomenon is analogous to most of the cultural development in Thai society. Social norms, believes, values are socially constructed; chosen by history; and not evolved naturally. In spite of its socially

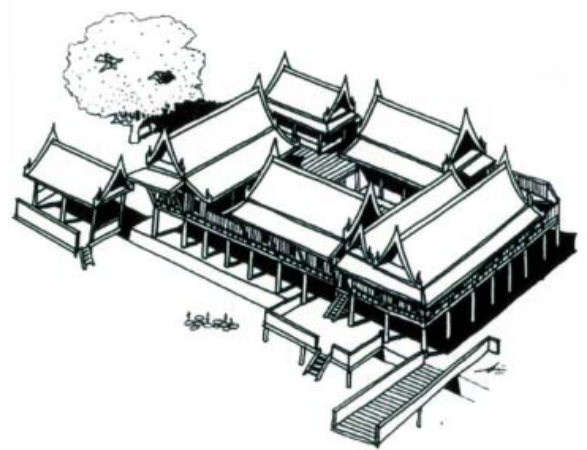


Figure 1 Traditional Thai house as normally conceived.



Figure 2 *Chan* (Elevated terrace) is one of the major architectural vocabularies to define 'Thai architecture'

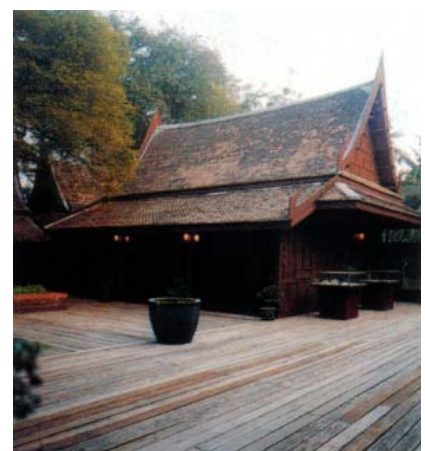


Figure 3 High Gable with veranda, one of the characters of traditional Thai architecture.

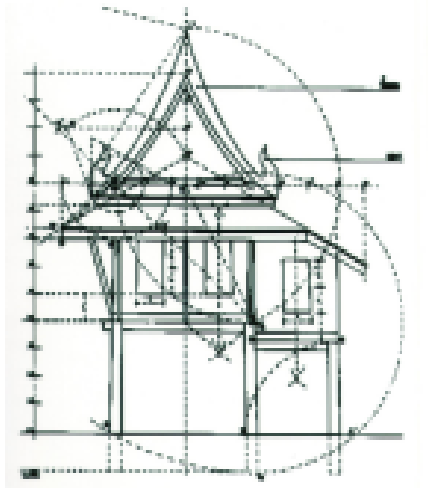


Figure 4 The analysis of traditional Thai house with geometrically description.

constructed, hardly do ones realize the social mechanism from which they are, nor do ones question their existence. Therefore, what are the unthought, what have been left out, and distorted are necessary to be examined in order for ones to understand first: the mechanism underlined those established values [7], and second: the function of architecture, and its organization; and be able to utilize those beyond conventions.

This is, also, applied to the development of an academic and practice of Thai architecture. What becomes natural in Thai architecture? What is the 'unthought' in the context of that particular Thai architecture? What has been left out from the discussion of Thai architecture? What is hidden in Thai architectural discourse; and from whom it is hidden? On the other hand, what is the invisible and visible in Thai architecture culture.

### Architecture and the Otherness

The development of contemporary Thai architecture is mainly focused on the fluidity, and

lightness of space. Basically found in most of the project descriptions are those of *'high pitched roof with common space at the center to maintain the fluidity, and lightness of Thai architecture ...'*; these descriptions, however, are all familiar; perhaps too familiar.

What have been left out in the development of these concepts? What is the 'unthought';? What is hidden in these architectural practices? What could be the otherness of an architectural practice?

Among of those, which are explicitly omitted, are human, political, and social issues - the invisible. Hardly are there discussions concerning of human beings [8] in relation to their time, and contexts. In addition, the rule of the governing has been always left out. Architecture, however, is part of a society, and related to social mechanism to which it is belonged. Consequently, there are rules of the governing constructed through architecture and its organization, for example, how to design a building and its component parts, what kinds of material should be used, and the like. Architecture and its organization, therefore, are not neutral. They are not functioned purely as a shelter; rather; they are as for sheltering as for embodying the power. This, however, has been hidden, distorted, and apparently forgotten.

In order to understand any phenomena better, one has to distance from what one is familiar with, since to dwell too long in the subject, one is easily drifted into that subject. Therefore, there is need of sometimes to depart from the subject, and put oneself in the place of 'otherness;' in order to read, and to perceive that subject in different point of view.

Thus, it is necessary for an architect to put his/herself in the place of otherness, to defer a thought to other landscapes of knowledge such as of those sociology, anthropology, politics, to name but a few; in order to explore the unthought, and to re-introduce, as well as to re-define the role of an architect and his/her work within society.

### Social Mechanism of Thais

One of the most pervasive of Thai cultural imperatives is the avoidance of social confrontation.

One is expected to mask one's emotions, particularly socially destructive ones like anger, hatred, and annoyance. Social harmony must be preserved. Thus, a friendly smile that often hides dislike, disagreement, distrust; a less than frank reply to avoid 'offence;' indefinite postponement rather than abrupt refusal [9].

Apparently, this notion is distorted from general depictions of Thai culture, which is the land of smiles, with calm, and quiet people. Not only has this image influenced the thought of the foreigners, but also the Thais, themselves. It is, as well, applied to the most of Thai studies including Thai architecture. Consequently that, as soon as there is accepted value without (re-)questioning, re-investigating, and redefining, any practice related to that value would lose its life, and dynamism.

'The avoidance of social confrontation' means that there is an established built-in control system to hold any overt conflict. Thai society is an interdependent society in which harmony has to be preserved, and social confrontation is to be avoided. There appears to be an unwritten agreement or unspoken words as to what one should or should not

do, and to what extent certain improper behavior, which is outside the norms of the community is permitted. This interdependent society is further developed to become a hierarchical social order at last [10].

This hierarchical social order is permeated through out Thai society. The dividing line in this social mechanism is not only that of a social status, but also that of gender, and seniority. This hierarchical social order is very strong in Thai society (figure 5-7); and in order to maintain and strengthen social order as such, there are innumerable methods developed through established values, social norms, and tradition as well as the creation of art, architecture, and culture. Thus, the value of an architecture is not neutral, it is the product of institution and society. What is underlined the creation of it is not purely as for aesthetic appreciation, but rather as for the instrumentalization of the power.

### Architecture: the Empowering the Power

Historically, architecture is used to inspire, awe, and reinforce the institutional powers. This is applied, as well, to art, taboos, rituals, forms of the cities, etc. Architecture is a tool not only for marking the status, but also for exercising the power. In Thai history, there are established symbolic system values to separate those who govern from those who are governed. Rational, formal, monumental, highly refined motifs are common for the architecture of the monarchy. Certain architectural forms and vocabularies were reserved strictly for the king (figure 8-10) such as buildings two or more stories (*prasat*), square-plan buildings, normally with pyramidal roofs (*mondop forms*), square or octagonal prisms with rounded tops [11] (*Prang forms*), and the motif such as *Narai*. Moreover, royalty reserved certain materials such as teak for the construction of



Figure 5



Figure 6



Figure 7

Figure 5-7 The hierarchical social order is very strong in Thai society as reflected in the creation of art.

houses, and sandalwood was to be used exclusively by royalty [12]. Therefore, the visible which is an architectural expression through both its built form, and ornaments, plays a significant role in the developing, maintaining, and strengthening the control system which is the invisible.

In addition, the invisible, which is the control system, has been solidified through the visible, which is, an architectural expression. Historically, one particular characteristic of Thai and the Southeast Asian mainland states was the lack of manpower. The need for manpower is well illustrated by events of following each war between Thailand and the other states. The victorious side always carried off a large number of people from the conquered territory [13]. Thus, numbers of people undercontrolled was the indication of the power by which it is expressed through several methods, among of those are developed through the creation of art and architecture. Certain types of architecture work upon people by which they effect the way people perceive the world and the way they live within it. Architecture is, therefore, a part of the control system developed to generate the built-in control system in order to strengthen, and codify the power of the rulers. Although hardly do people see the rulers, they are conscious of the existence of rulers or more precisely of the ruling of the rulers.

Moreover, amongst the social status of Thai culture, strong, and influential is the family. Thai society is developed from an agriculture society; there is a necessity for the labors, both from the neighbors, and members of the family. Therefore, there is developed social tradition which members of the family live at the same house, or nearby even when they get married. Usually, sons would move out to the family of the bride; and the husband of the daughter would move in. This

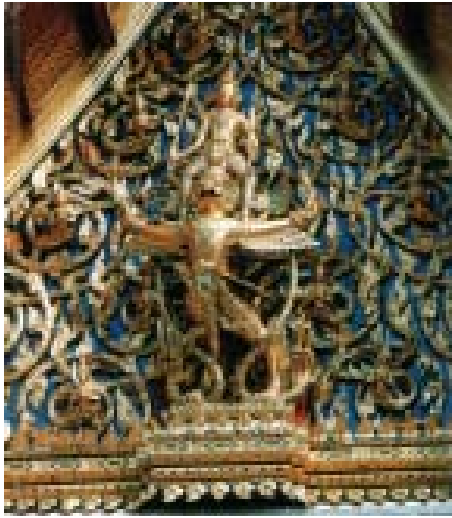


Figure 8

reflects most of the traditional Thai house organization which is a group of several houses linked together by *Chan* (elevated terrace). (figure 11-12)

This *Chan* is conceptualized from several studies of traditional Thai house as a meeting place for family, and for the ventilation purpose. The lightness, and free-plan are, also, considered as being developed to suit the climate, and geography of its location. (Figure13) Moreover, the floor is raised and it is conceptualized as a space to define the difference between the inside and outside.

However, human behavior, social norm, social belief, political status, cultural practice and the like could not be ignored. The visible, which are architectural vocabularies, and its organization, the location of *Chan*, the different floor height, the free plan, as well as the size, and location of each house, play a significant role in maintaining and strengthening the social mechanism which is the invisible, of Thai society. They are instrumentalized to codify social norm, and belief, as well as to maintain, and reinforce the interdependent social system.



Figure 9



Figure 10

Figure 8-10 Certain architectural form and vocabularies were reserved strictly for the king.



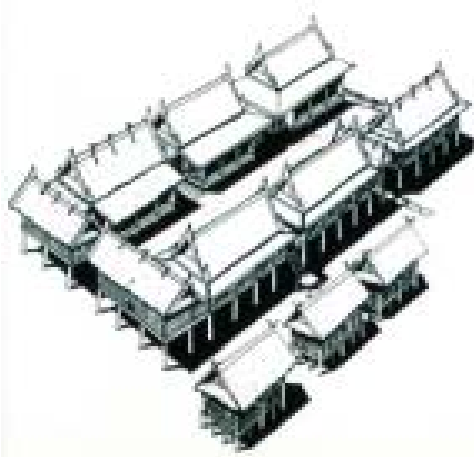


Figure 11 Most of the traditional Thai house character is a group of several houses linked together by *chan* (elevated terrace).

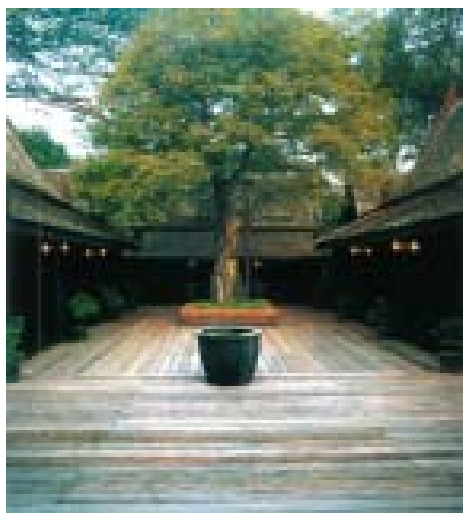


Figure 12 The organization of traditional Thai architecture, *chan* is located at the middle surrounded by group of houses.

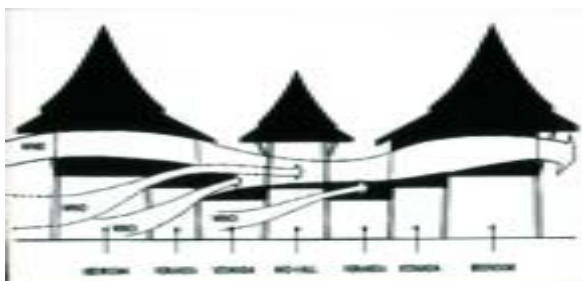


Figure 13 The lightness, and free-plan are, also, considered as developed to suit the climate, and geography of its location.

*Chan* is located at the middle of the house, and functioned as a place for meeting as well as for observing and curving the behavior of the members. The free plan is allowed through perception in which family members can see one another, and this develops the mechanism of built-in control system. (figure 14-15)

In addition, the difference of the floor level at *Chan* implies the different place for people with different social status; those who have the higher social status will occupy the higher space than those who are the lowers. Parents will sit higher than their children, and monks will occupy the place of the highest. (figure 16) It is a hierarchical social order that influences the building of such a space; and the space, as such, has codified and strengthened the social mechanism. Both influence, and mutate each other; this dialectical relationship of the invisible and the visible is pervasive in Thai culture through out the history of nation.

This architectural organization which is made to generalize, and exercise the built-in control system works inversely to that of the *Panopticon* concept developed by Jeremy Bentham, who argues that with this architectural arrangement, *'it makes it possible to perfect the exercise of power. It is possible to intervene at any moment and because the constant pressure acts even before the offences, mistakes or crime have been committed. Because in these conditions, its strength is that it is exercised spontaneously and without noise, it constitutes a mechanism whose effects follow from one another. —, it acts directly on individuals; it gives 'power of mind over mind'. This architectural schema makes any apparatus of power more intense; —, it assures its efficacy by its preventative character, its continuous functioning and its automatic mechanisms. This architectural mechanism*



is a way of making power relations function in a function, and of making a function functions through these power relations. [14]

Moreover, the built-in control system is strengthened, as well, by the materials of the house. (figure 17) The materials of traditional Thai house are mostly wood; and temporarily assembled including that of the floor, and partition. There is need of consciousness of any activities in the house, for example, ones should not step too harsh on the floor, otherwise the sound of the step would bother other members especially those of the elders. Apparently, the built-in control system - the invisible - is exercised, and inscribed through the architectural elements - the visible.

Wall is employed, with no exception, to strengthen, and to maintain the institutional power. The organization of the house, as well as the material which is a thin layer of wood, and temporarily assembled, even though ones shut themselves off from ones' surroundings, ones impossibly totally cut off from their environs, thus, in such a private space, ones still have to behave properly. Therefore, the invisible which is a social control system is permeated, and inscribed through the visible which is an organization of an architecture, and its vocabularies.

Furthermore, not only is the built-in control system developed through the existence of the wall, but also through ornament and decoration on the wall. Whereas the visible is the existence and the decoration of the wall, the invisible is the built-in control system, which is generated from the visible. The built-in control system is developed through the repetition of the visible. As mentioned earlier, the refine ornaments - the visible are instrumentalization of the rulers to state, and strengthen their power - the invisible. Similarly to

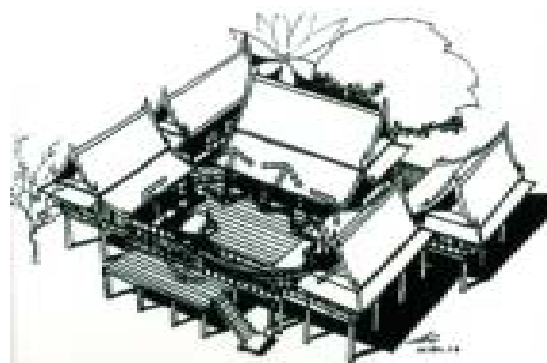


Figure 14 *Chan* is located at the middle of the house, and functioned as a place for meeting as well as for observing and curving the behavior of the members. The free plan is allowed through perception in which family members can see one another, and this develops the mechanism of self-control system.

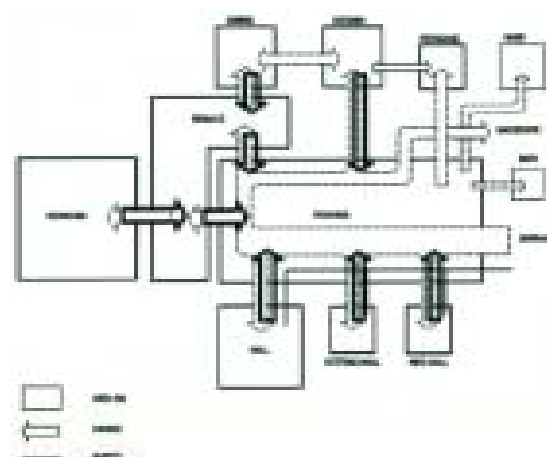


Figure 15 The analysis of traditional Thai architecture; the organization of architecture is functioned as part of a built-in control system. (compared to space accessibility and connection; the analysis of Ruitai Jaijongrak shown as dotted line).



Figure 16 The difference of the floor level at *chan* is implied the different place for people with different social status; those who have the higher social status will occupy the higher place.



Figure 17 Wood floor which is light and temporarily assembled, therefore, there is a need of consciousness to step on.

that of the ornaments, plays a significant role, the mural painting [15].

The Structure (the arrangement of the paintings) [16]:  
The hierarchical order: the markers of the status, identification of the power and reiteration of the power

The social hierarchical order is explicated by the composition, and the structure of the painting. In general, the murals are divided into three main parts which are upper, middle and lower. (figure 18) While the upper is depicted of the story related to the celestial world, the middle is the place of those belonged to high social status, such as the monarchy and the Lord Buddha, and the lower is the place for those of the ordinary (the lower layers of the celestial world). The Celestial Assembly is almost identical with that depicted in other monasteries. The celestial beings are in the gesture of adoration, apparently paying homage to the presiding Buddha image, or as if they had become to listen to the teaching of the Lord Buddha, who is symbolized by the main page in the Chapel.

The importance of the story, and the techniques are paid to those belonged to the celestial; Lord Buddha, the monarchy, and the rich. Human figures, including courtiers, groups of people in audience with the king, and royal personages are depicted in lively postures, each of which symbolizes dramatic emotion and movement. Softly curving lines are employed to represent the graceful gestures and movements. (figure 19) On the contrary, the gestures of '*tua kak*' which are the figures indicating ordinary people which are less important or not, at all, important are less detailed, and more informal gestures. (figure 20)

Moreover, the importance of the murals lies principally in their depiction of the human figures. The center of concern in each different episode is seen in the direction of attention, in the massing of groups, in the way the people are prostrating themselves, or in the direction to which the faces are turned. For example, the courtiers are depicted with their faces turning toward the king, who is naturally the hero of the episode and thus is seated on his throne in the palace at the center of the particular scene. (figure 21-22) The application of gold leaf is applied only at the palaces, the ornaments of royal personages, and the body of Lord Buddha. Only the place for the royal and the Lord Buddha is ornamented, and elaborately painted.

Explicitly, the mural paintings are functioned not only as the decorative, or the object of sacredness to pay the tribute to the Monarchy, and Lord Buddha - the visible, but also as a tool to reinforce the power of institution - the invisible. The surface of the wall is not merely a flat plane protecting and dividing spaces, but rather a medium. It is not purely a subject for an aesthetic expression, but rather a part of social mechanism.

#### Architectural Volume:

Not only does the power suffuse from the size, but also from the proportion of the building in relation to the scale of people. The monumental of the palace enforces the power of the king as does the small monastery (*bot*) with the large Buddha image to the sacredness of the religious. (figure 23) The magnificent Buddha image is placed in the very tiny monastery, when one goes into the monastery, one feels the power suffuses from the Buddha image. The ambiguity of the space, which is almost dark with the glittering from the

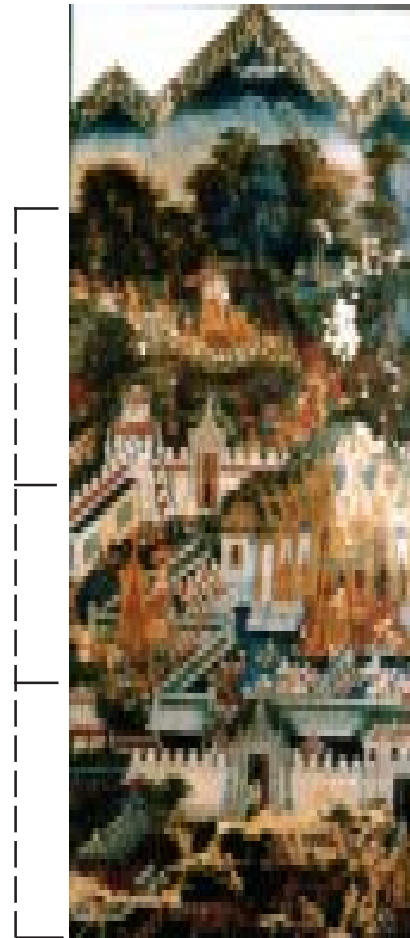


Figure 18 The murals are divided into three main parts, which are upper, middle, and lower. The celestial assembly is painted in the upper part in the register, and the lowest register represents the lowest layer of the celestial world.



Figure 19 For those employed high status; softly curving lines are employed to represent the graceful gestures and movements.



Figure 20 The gestures of 'tua kak' which are the figures indicated ordinary people are painted less details, and informal gestures.



Figure 21 Those who belong to the higher social status will occupy the higher place.

gold leaf, generates the feeling of the sacredness which maintains and strengthens the power of the religion.

There are several methods to instrumentalize matters surrounded with no exception of an organization of architectural form and vocabularies. As long as there is an understanding of the powers of the tangible which are wall, ceiling, floor, opening and the intangible, which are space, volume, and the like, in which:

**first** : they are relevant, interrelated, and cannot be thought as separated elements; and

**second** : those vocabularies cannot be thought as forms of conventional established values, but rather as subjects to change according to time and contexts, thus, for example, a wall might not be just a separation of space, but it could be a medium to mediate messages, the evolution of architectural thought and practice would be possible. None of these do need any spatial knowledge, or specificity philosophical thought, rather it needs only the attention to the ordinary; to the interconnection between matters. It needs the participation of the relationship not the separation. Therefore, an architecture to certain extents could not be thought in fragmentary which is not that separated from its context, nor fragmented within its organization. It is of those comprised to be an architecture which is significant. It is the organizational architecture, rather than the solidified one.

**Afterward:**

**Architecture: the everyday practice and organizational architecture**

This paper is not intended to endorse any concepts, nor is it to dehumanize human being to merely an object in the control system, but rather first,

to explore, to rethink, and to remind how effectively architecture, and architectural vocabularies as well as architectural organization could be effectively functioned, and second, to remind the otherness in architectural practice and theory.

On a positive side, the examples cited above offer models of the efficacious (architectural) production which present day architects might inadequately perceive. In addition, it is to remind an architect to be conscious of matters surrounded, to realize the invisible; this is not mentioned yet to an everyday life; the freedoms, joys, and diversity in which people always explore, redraw and redefine their space both consciously, and unconsciously; and not just in the unusual, but in the most ordinary [17]. None of any social control systems or knowledge are eternally valid; they are constantly re-evaluated, and re-examined. While both people, and social mechanism constantly re-territorialize, and redefine their space, architecture hold tight to their notions and concepts.

Finally, what are the unthought, what are the hidden, and distorted, are left to an architect to explore. There might not be the conclusion of the searching, nor might not it be one single answer, but the significant lies, not in the conclusion, but rather in the beginning which are the beginning to question, to persuade the thought, and to end the predetermined values.

#### Appendix A: The development and influence of Thai social mechanism

Thai social mechanism is developed from an agricultural society. By which it means that there are needs of labors to execute the work in the fields. These needs, however, is not only for working in the fields, but

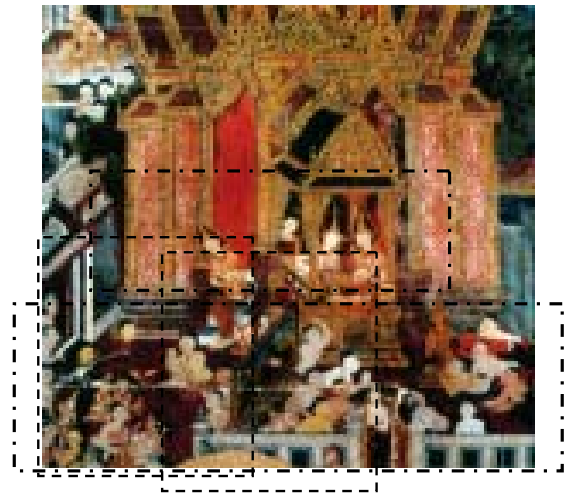


Figure 22 The center of concern in each different episode is seen in the direction of attention, in the massing of groups, in the way the people are prostrating themselves, or in the direction to which the faces are turned. The hierarchical social order is, as well, explicit in the painting. There are divided lines between those of celestial, and the lower; between women, and men.

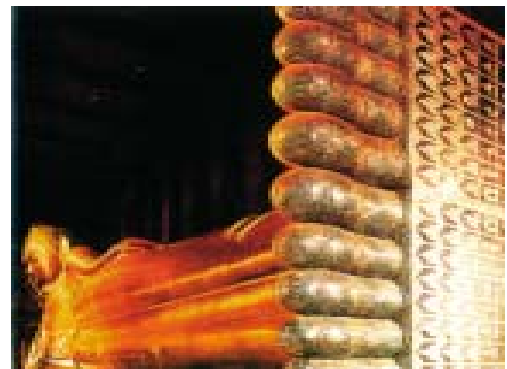


Figure 23 Small monastery (*bot*) with the large Buddha image, together with the glittering of the gold leaf emerged from the darkness of the room strengthen the feeling of the sacredness of the religious.



Figure 24 Thai society is an interdependent society. Numbers of labor forces are necessary to execute the work for example in the field, and



Figure 25 In the ceremonies, as well as

also for any tasks in community, such as to construct the house, to help in the ceremonies of the individual, or of the community. (figure 24-26) This relationship is developed to be an interdependent social mechanism in which there is a necessity to keep social harmony among the members of the community. Therefore, there are established rules, norms, given values as well as planning of the town, and architectures to serve needs as such.

In addition, Buddhism is among the most influential to Thai society. Central to Buddhism is the pragmatic idea that a certain kind of action generates a certain kind of consequence. The man who sows a certain kind seeds will reap them. Good actions generate *bun* or merit. Bad actions generate *bap*, which is demerit. This is taken together with the belief in reincarnation. Rebirth occurs because of *kama* which is the consequence of actions, the *bun* and the *bap* [18].

One consequence of this belief is the notion that one's status and circumstances in this life depend upon the amount of *bun* or *bap* which one has accumulated in previous lives. Thus hierarchical positions in the organization of Thai society are the inevitable outcomes of these beliefs. Status differentiation is an accepted order. Being born into a noble family of wealth, or being given a position of high rank is the consequence of *bun* which the individual has accumulated [19].

Whereas the Buddhism is highly influential to social mechanism in Thailand, the monarchy has no less importance. Despite the political upheaval in the 1932, (the shifting from the absolute monarchy to the democracy with the monarchy under the law), the monarchy is still of the highest and respectful in Thai society and belief. Historically, Thailand, especially in

the early period, was characterized as political instabilities and power seizures as a consequence of both struggles with the other states, and those inside the state for the succession over the throne. Conflict was inherent to Thailand's traditional institution. Therefore, there was need to develop the stability of both political and social systems to codify the power. Numerous methods have been developed, among of which are constructed through an architecture.

Moreover, the social hierarchical order in Thai society is solidified by the social mechanism which is *sakdina*, and *prai* system. *Sakdina* (or 'dignity marks') literally means 'power over land'. This originally is stemmed from a status and, as such, is a form of social hierarchy [20]. The *sakdina* system serves primarily as an instrument to classify people on a social status scale, with the king at the pinnacle, a relatively small and elite upper class below him, and the masses at the bottom [21].

This hierarchical social order is very strong in Thai society. It influences the construction, and establishes values, social norms, convention, and traditions among of those are the creation of architecture.



Figure 26 In the construction of the house.



## Appendix B: the analysis of Thai architecture: the mechanism of built-in control system

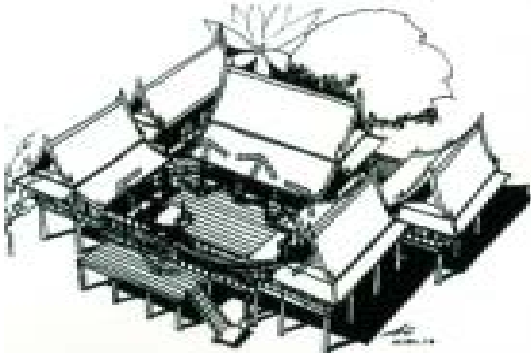


Plate I *Chan* is located at the middle of the house, and functioned as a place for meeting as well as for observing and curbing the behavior of the members. The free plan is allowed through perception in which family members can see one another, and this develops the mechanism of self-control.

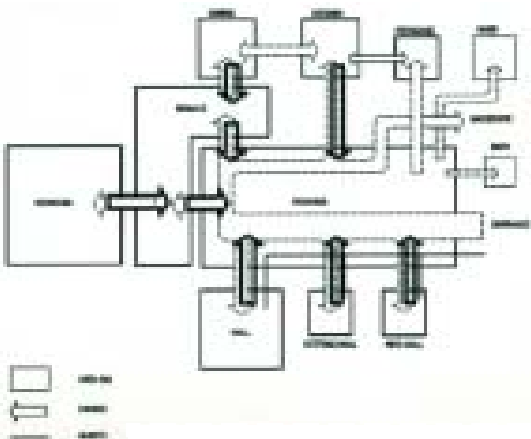


Plate II The analysis of Thai tradition architecture; the organization of architecture as part of a built-in control system. (compared to the analysis of Ruitai Jaijongrak; space accessibility and connection as shown in dotted line)

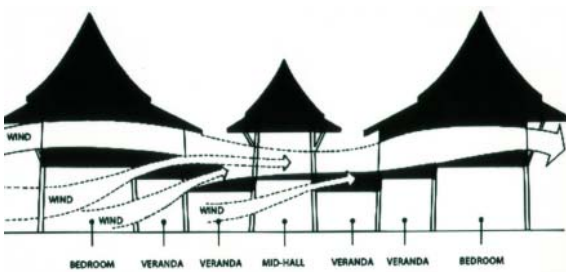


Plate III An analysis of the ventilation in traditional Thai architecture.

## References

- [1] This quality is widely accepted and established by many of respectful Thai architectural scholars. Among of those is Ruitai Jaijongrak in his book The Traditional Thai House (in Thai). private limited edition, Bangkok, 1979.
- [2] This particular issue regarding architectural development in relation to sociology, economics, social changes in Thai society has been pointed out in Vimolsiddhi Horayangkura ed. Al., The Development of Concept and Design in Architecture: Past, Present, and Future. Bangkok: Amarin Printing Group, 1993, and Vimolsiddhi Horayangkura, "The Architecture of Thailand: Change amid Continuity: The New Challenge," in Jon Lim (ed.), Transforming Traditions. Singapore: Unique Press Pte Ltd., 2001.
- [3] Although this question is posted for the evolution of Thai Architecture, such a question should be applied for the development of theory and concept in Contemporary Architecture in general.
- [4] 'Architecture' in this regard means of both the invisible (space, volumn, proportion, scale etc.), and the visible (wall, roof, floor, ornaments, material, etc.).
- [5] For more details on traditional Thai house see Rutai Jaijongrak. The Traditional Thai House (in Thai). private limited edition, Bangkok, 1979., Sumet Jumsai. Naga (in English). Bangkok, 1997. pp. 86, and Clarence Aasen, Architecture of Siam Thailand in Reflections on Thai Culture. Collected Writings, New York: Oxford University Press, 1998. pp.115.
- [6] This phenomena leads to the problem of authenticity which could be a significant problem to be addressed, as well.
- [7] The concerning of the value constructed is raised by numerous thinkers among of those is Edmund Husserl. In his book, The Origin of the Geometry, he investigated how geometry had been originated, and value constructed to become natural – *our interest shall be in the inquiry back into the most original sense in which geometry once arose, was present as the tradition of millennia, is still present for us, and is still being worked on in a lively forward development.– our human existence moves within innumerable traditions. The whole cultural world, in all its forms, exists through traditions. These forms have arisen as such not merelycausally; we also know already that tradition is precisely tradition, having arisen within our human space through human activity.*— Jacques Derrida. Edmund Husserl's Origin of the Geometry: an Introduction / Jacques Derrida. Translated, with a preface and afterward, by John P. Leavey, Jr. Reprint. Originally published: Stony Brook, N.Y. : N. Hays, 1978. pp. 158.
- [8] Human beings in this matter are those individual, not as universal, who shape, and are shaped by their environments.
- [9] William J. Klausner. Culture Conflict: Thailand in Reflections on Thai Culture. Collected Writings, Bangkok: Siam Society, 4<sup>th</sup> eds., 1993. pp.253.
- [10] See appendix A for more details of the influence of social mechanism of the Thais.
- [11] William J. Klausner. Culture Conflict: Thailand in Reflections on Thai Culture. Collected Writings, Bangkok: Siam Society, 4<sup>th</sup> eds., 1993. pp. 107.
- [12] Ibid. pp. 107.

- [13] Akin Rabibhadana. The Organization of Thai Society, and the Process of Change in the Early Bangkok Period 1782-1873. Southeast Asia Program, Thesis. Ithaca: Cornell University, 1969. pp. 21.
- [14] Jeremy Bentham's Panopticon quoted in Michael Foucault. "Panopticism" in Discipline and Punish. New York: Vintage Books eds., 1995. pp. 206-207.
- [15] Although, most of the mural paintings in this paper are focused on those painted during the early Rattanakorsin period in which the political system was still the absolute monarchy, as well as the hierarchical social position is still dominant, the strategy of the constructed institutional power is not different from that of the present day.
- [16] The descriptions of the following are taken mainly from No na Paknam. Puthaisawan Hall, Title: Mural Paintings of Thailand Series. Bangkokoran, 2<sup>nd</sup> eds., 1997. pp. 27-30.
- [17] There are many of the thinkers who pay attention to the concept of everyday life practice for example: Mary McLeod. "Henri Lefebvre's Critique of Everyday Life: An Introduction," pp. 9-29, Henri Lefebvre. "The Everyday and Everydayness," pp.32-37; both are in Architecture of the Everyday. eds. Steven Harris and Deborah Berk. New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1997; and Michael de Certeau in The Practice of Everyday Life. Trans by Steven Rendall. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984. pp. 90-130.
- [18] Akin Rabibhadana. The Organization of Thai Society, and the Process of Change in the Early Bangkok Period 1782-1873. Southeast Asia Program, Thesis. Ithaca: Cornell University, 1969. pp.16.
- [19] *ibid.* pp16-17.
- [20] Architecture of Siam: A Cultural History Interpretation. New York: Oxford University Press, 1998. pp. 106, also see Akin Rabibhadana. The Organization of Thai Society, and the Process of Change in the Early Bangkok Period 1782-1873. Southeast Asia Program, Thesis. Ithaca: Cornell University, 1969 for more details.
- [21] *Ibid.* pp. 106.

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- Figure 2 3 12 Nangnoi Sakdisri. The Royal House (Ruengruang). Bangkok: Muang Boran, 1998.
- Figure 5 7 8-10 Nangnoi Sakdisri. The Architecture of the Royal. Bangkok: Krungthep, 1984.
- Figure 6 20-21 No Na Pak Nam. Title: Mural Paintings of Thailand Series; Wat Phra Chetuphonwimonmangkararam. (in Thai with translation in English) Bangkok: Sriboon Printing Industry, 1994.
- Figure 7 16 19 26 No na Paknam. Title: Mural Paintings of Thailand Series Puthaisawan Hall. Bangkok: Dansutha Press, 2<sup>nd</sup> eds., 1997.
- Figure 18 22 The murals are divided into three main parts, which are upper, middle, and lower. The celestial assembly is painted in the upper part in the register, and the lowest register represents the lowest layer of the celestial world. (Source: No na Paknam. Title: Mural Paintings of Thailand Series; Wat Suthat Dhep wararam. Bangkok: Dansutha Press, 1<sup>st</sup> eds., 1996.
- Figure 23 35 The Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT). The Royal Kingdom of Thailand: Fifth Years of a Golden Reign. Bangkok: Eastern Printing. 1997.
- Figure 36 24-25 Yaowanuch Vespada, and Vanchai Tan. Rice...Thai Cultural Life. Bangkok: Plan Motif. 1998.