

する村落風の構造物を描くことによって、タイ北東部の文化と生活様式の精髓を反映したグラフィック・アートを制作するとともに、日常生活で使用される品物を作品に取り入れた。それがかもし出すムードは、過去および現在においてすら北東部の庶民の生活に典型的にみられる希望や悲哀や儀式的感覚²⁹⁾を伝えている。

1989年、主要なグラフィック・プリント・アーティストのイティボン・タンチャロックは1968年以来確立していた方向を発展させ、その後のミクスト・メディア・シリーズにおいては³¹⁾、幾何学的形態と併せて、タイ絵画や仏足石で表現されている波から派生した、ポテヤトウンチャイの作品にみられるような波模様を用いるようになった。³⁰⁾

ターウォン・コ・ウドムヴィットは、1981～82年以降つねにミクスト・メディアに取り組んできた。1983年、彼は手製のサーン・ペーパーを用いて〈儀式〉シリーズに着手した。サーン・ペーパーの表面やきめは、1985年以降、彼の作品のエッセンスとなっている。³²⁾ サーン・ペーパーを用いたターウォンのグラフィック・アート作品は、1988～89年頃には円熟の域に達した。³³⁾ ターウォンは、サーン・ペーパーの空白、石、小枝、紐を巧みに統合して構図を一つにまとめているため、単に対象(物)を引き立たせる背景として空白を用いていた従来の一般的なやり方とは違って、対象(物)の要素があたかも空間構造の一部をなしているかのように見える。

ニバン・オラニヴェットも同様の方法で素材や対象を用いた。彼は1986年以降、サーン・ペーパー上の石と小枝の集積的パターンとして素材を使用するとともに、サーン・ペーパーの空白を利用して物に広がりをもたせて国際的に通用するやり方で形而上学的な意味を示唆することにより、自己のスタイルを確立した。³⁴⁾

1982年以降、イギリスやアメリカで教育を受けた何人ものタイのアーティストがコンセプチュアリズムのトレンドに沿って制作を行うようになり、この傾向は、1985年に開かれたタイのアーティストたちによる作品展「アメリカ体験のタイ的反映」で最高潮に達した。この展覧会の出展アーティストたちによるインスタレーション作品は、主として、1943年のジョセフ・コーネルと1965年のアンディ・ウォーホルの作品をベースとしていた。³⁵⁾ しかし、10年間アメリカに住んで学んだカモン・タサナンチャラーが、1980年にタイで開催された展覧会に出品したコンセプチュアル・アートはきわめて独創的且つ最も前衛的なものだった。1990年、カモンは〈ナン・ヤイ(影絵芝居)〉シリーズを携えて里帰りした。これは、伝統的な概念と構造の両方の側面を取り出し³⁶⁾、東洋のエッセンスを引き出して国際的なアートシーンに持ち出すべく、それらの側面を現代的な手法で処理したものだ。³⁷⁾

タイの価値観を具現したコンセプチュアル・アートは、モンティエン・ブンマの作品〈農園からの物語〉シリーズ(1989年)の中で登場した。彼はインスタレーションの手法を用いて、この地球上に住むわれわれの一員でもあるタイの農民のアイデンティティを表現したが³⁸⁾、興味をそそることに、その重要性はアジアに住む人間全体を包含するものとして拡大解釈できよう。

1990年に開かれた展覧会において、モンティエンの作品は、土着の社会の生活や宗教や信仰を、13世紀以来のランナー(北部)文化の中心地チェンマイなどのような都市環境のコンテキストの中で反映した、より直観的な作風となった。彼は平面を巧みに使いこなして文化のダイナミズムと奥深さを興味深く表現し³⁹⁾、時には、〈バンコクのヴィーナス〉(p.6, 挿図1)などに見られるように、豊かな都市社会を風刺する。この作品は、大都市のバラ色のロマンティシズムたる、建設現場の廃棄物で作られた。

1991年の半ば頃に新しい波が出現した。ウアサン・スイティケットは大規模な2つの展覧会を開いた。〈地獄(インフェルノ)〉シリーズでは、国立美術館に60点の作品が展示された。⁴⁰⁾ いずれの作品も、トライ・ブームの倫理的枠組みに拠って現代タイ社会における人間の罪の糾弾を表現したものだ。ウアサンは、現代社会についての社会批評を行うにあたって伝統的な倫理観を用いたタイ初のアーティストとみなされている。彼のもう一つの展覧会は、他の4人のアーティストと共同で開いた「プリント・インスタレーション」だった。展示された彼の〈コブラと農民〉シリーズは、国民に食物をあてがうために米を作る農民が、食物をあてがわれた側に裏切られる様を描いている。このシリーズのインスタレーションは、鑑賞者を取り巻く形で並べて、鑑賞者が自分を小さく感じら

れるように企図されていた。⁴¹⁾

過去10年の間に、チェンマイ大学、チュラロンコーン大学、および少なくとも二、三の私立大学を含む、多くの高等教育機関が美術のコースを開設した。したがって次世代のタイには、歴史に基づいた概念に沿った教育を行うシルパコーン大学からアーティストが送り出されてきたこれまでと比べて、いっそうパラエティに富む作品を作り出すアーティストが生まれることになるだろう。同時に、シルパコーン大学にもチュラロンコーン大学にも、美術史や美術批評の教育(博士課程を含む)を西洋で受けた教授陣があり、過去20年間にわたって苦闘を続けてきた現代美術の発展を学問の立場から推進することに専心している。テレビ、ラジオ、出版物等のマスメディアも、美術の奨励・推進面で重要な役割を果たしている。したがって、将来のタイ美術の状況は、あとはアーティスト自身およびかれらの創作能力と責任感に委ねられている。

(翻訳:永井健三、校閲:斎藤泰嘉)

* 註は英文のNotes(p.31)参照のこと

Traditional Values in Contemporary Thai Art

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"To appease the lay man's anxiety, it is important to understand that if a Thai (or any artist belonging to a distinct ethnic group) does not purposely imitate works of foreign artists, he will always express, under any new style, the individuality of his race, which is formed by nature, temperament, climate, religion, atavistic feelings and thoughts, and other factors....

At the same time, we have not overlooked the fact that Western art embodies both the spirit of the modern age as well as characteristics of Asian, African, and native American art. Under the inquiring mind of the Westerner, the spatial understanding of the Chinese and Japanese painting, the warmth and vitality of Indian art, and the expressive works of Africa and America have been fused in a universal conception reflecting the universal human soul...

If sincerely expressed, a work done by a Thai, or by any other artist, must be different from one made by a European. The difference will correspond to the individuality of the race."¹

The above extracts were taken from "Contemporary Art in Thailand" written in 1959 by Prof. Silpa Bhirasri (C. Feroci), who is considered to be the father of modern art in Thailand. It was perhaps due to such thoughts, that when the Academy of Fine Arts, which later became Silpakorn University, was set up in 1933,² led by Prof. Silpa himself, it was prescribed into the syllabus that students were required to study Thai architecture, arts, and crafts each week.

In 1949, sixteen years after the introduction of Western-style art education, the first National Exhibition took place. It was then that works of art produced along the lines of Prof. Silpa's teachings had the opportunity to appear in public. Although the 2nd National Exhibition, held in the following year, was reviewed by M. R. Kukrit Pramoj (an intellectual and a politician) as consisting mostly of works which imitated the style of Western artists, lacking originality and any individual technique, Prof. Silpa defended the works by referring to certain influences considered to be universal.³

In all of the first fourteen National Exhibitions of Art (1949-63), the works of sculptor Khien Yimsiri have always appeared without fail. His acclaimed works were influenced by the classical Buddha images of the Sukhothai School (13-14th centuries) expressing subtle gestures through stable forms. Khien did not confine himself strictly to the traditional style, but used it as a source of inspiration since he was also skilled in producing international contemporary works. This can be seen for example, from the entry he submitted to the Tate Gallery of London in a competition under the title of "The Unknown Political Prisoner" in 1955. From entries submitted by up to 5,000 artists all over the world,⁴ Khien's passed into the final round of judging, and was selected to go on exhibit along with 146 other works, while the English sculptor Reg Butler took the top award.⁵

The integration of international style and traditional Sukhothai style resulted (with success) in sculptures of the modern Thai mannerism style around 1956-57, as can be seen in 'The Family' (1956), and 'Two Sisters' (1957), for example.

Two other sculptors who adopted the modern Thai style, were Chitt Rienpracha, who produced works mainly in the decorative art or craft tradition,⁶ and Sittidej Saenghiran whose portrait of traditional Thai lifestyle, unfortunately, is the only piece of work widely recognized.

Unfortunately, further possible developments in modern Thai sculptures came to a halt consequently after the death of Khien in 1971, having thus existed only in the period considered to be of the first generation covering approximately the span of 14 years.

Nevertheless, in the 2nd and 3rd National Exhibitions (1950, 51), Sweang Songmangmee created controversies by submitting sculptures of nudes directly in the style of Western culture with elegant postures revealing flesh and blood which provoked strong criticism.⁷

Amid the success of modern paintings in the styles of Impressionism and Cubism created by Thai artists in the first generation (1959-64),⁸ paintings in the modern Thai style also increased in excellence. Works in this pioneering period evolved more around the realms of life, festivals in the Thai culture, and daily activities reflecting the spirit of simple folk communities such as in 'Songkran' (1956) by Chalood Nimsamer, or the witty side of Thai life, such as in 'Gathering Sugar-Palm Juice' (1957),⁹ compared to the formal pattern established in Thai mural paintings of the past.

Angkarn Kalayanpongsa on the other hand, chose to hold firmly onto ideals according to Thai traditions. His works were inspired by "Tri-Phum," a text on Thai Buddhist Cosmology,¹⁰ as expressed through the spirit of the Ayuthaya Art School (14-18th centuries).¹¹

Toward the end of the first generation, Damrong Wonguparaj presented a series of paintings in tempera which depicted scenes from a northern

village (1959), to express peace and tranquility. The series became archetypical in reaching the heart of the culture of his hometown where he was born.¹²

Around 1964, many artists in the later group of the first generation traveled to Europe for further education. Thus, between 1964 and 1974, artists who graduated from Silpakorn University did little to deviate from the norm in producing modern Thai paintings. One outstanding artist of this period was Pratuang Emjaroen. His works were not based on intellectual values, whether of the high culture of folk culture, but were independent of all conventional norms. He had used his skills in illustrations to give a new dimension to virtually all themes relating to Thai traditions, ranging from the life of Buddha, to the plough, lotus leaves,¹³ water, etc., as well as to landscapes and seascapes in the Romantic style, which communicates readily to observers of all groups. His works thus became successful in their own way.¹⁴

Movements in modern Thai painting began to resurface around 1974 and continued up to the present day under various encouraging factors such as the economy, the wide publicity and importance given to art through competitions and exhibitions, and educational support. However, over the 16 years of development (1974-90), works produced by the new generation of artists, or the third generation, appeared to be lacking in the imagination and essence which should be inherent in all works of art. Broadly, the works can be classified into 6 groups:

1. Those having Thai architecture as the main subject matter, or depicting activities emphasizing space in Thai architecture.
2. Those depicting mountains, forests, or oceans, based on scenes from Theravada Buddhist literature through the application of Thai motifs and traditional figures in the compositions.
3. Those portraying significant events inspired by, or based directly on, themes from Theravada Buddhist literature.
4. Those depicting religious rites or ceremonies taking place in the natural landscape with Thai architecture as the central subject of the compositions.
5. Those executed in a manner that is based on the patterns derived from traditional Thai mural paintings.
6. Those based on the theme of the mandala in Buddhism.

There are also however, other works that do not come under any of the above classifications. The first artist to stand out in this third generation appears to have been Preecha Thaothong, whose paintings from 1974 brought forward the spatial dimensions of classical Thai architecture through the interplay of the light and shade that fall upon walls and other building components. In 1979, he changed his subject matter and shifted into the 5th classification.

At the same time, between 1974 and 1982, two young artists, Surasit Souakong and Praiswan Dakliang, portrayed central classical Thai and northern (Lanna) Thai architecture or building parts of such, in oils and acrylics.¹⁵ Surasit expressed the atmosphere of the northern temples¹⁶ while Praiswan's paintings are representations of traditional objects. The works of these two artists sometimes claim to be in the modern Thai tradition, and sometimes in the contemporary category.

Between 1974 and 1977, Phong Senging depicted scenes from the life of river boat-house dwellers with a mood of serenity and intrigue, while Chalermchai Kositpipat painted in the traditional Thai style under a new framework to express the metaphysical dimensions of Buddhism. Panya Vijinthanasarn, on the other hand, incorporated surrealism into his Thai paintings,¹⁷ which thus seemingly appear to have received influences from artist Thawan Datchanee.

Thawan Datchanee was a second-generation artist who attained the highest achievement in 1978 during an exhibition in Germany with his works, which drew references from the "Tri-Phum" text, Jataka tales, and Buddhist philosophy. His drawings were full of force and energy. Using the human form, unimaginable creatures and beasts intertwine to create a single body expressing greed and lust in the unending cycle of birth, life, and death.¹⁸

Prasong Luemuang began to receive recognition in 1987. His works portrayed life, festivals, rites, and living patterns reflecting the cultural identity of a specific ethnic community as the major theme. Prasong rejects neither the Lanna culture nor the modern day culture in which he lives,¹⁹ and thus became the first artist to succeed in executing works along this concept, as can be seen from his 'With Earth and Water,' series which went on exhibit at the River City Complex in 1989.²⁰

Thongchai Srisukprasert, whose works have only recently appeared

(1989-90), represents the dynamism of energy existing in the universe spinning itself about its centre, through the scheme of black, white, and gold. This type of work has certain appeal, but it has also become a typical art style so readily that by 1991, it seems as if he has entered into the microcosmic world where life moves at an inert pace.²¹

The Chinese are an ethnic group whose roles in the economics, politics, and culture of Thai societies have been clearly evident since 1350. Their culture had influenced the mural paintings of the Ayuthaya school and architecture of the Bangkok period (1824-51), but it only began to appear in contemporary art through the works of Chang Tang from 1960 until his recent death. The works of Chang were composed in a manner that left blank spaces for black brush strokes, as with expressionism. He produced both abstract works and self-portraits,²² which were essentially executed under the full consciousness of Chinese culture.

Kanya Charemsupkul returned to producing her works seriously once more around 1985-87. Picking up where she left off in 1972,²³ she continued with abstract work in black ink using brushstrokes on Sa-paper or with otherwise lithographic techniques, to create spatial structures with a Chinese/Japanese impression. 'Statement in Space' (1987) is an example in which the sense of brushstroke and blank spatial structure intimately relate with each other.²⁴

In 1989, she was still producing such works,²⁵ but in 1990, a new development took place when she started using colors. Gradually, contemporary works in tempera and water colors emerged and eventually ended up with a series of works in tempera on canvas which give the sense of being Southeast Asian, rather than Chinese or Japanese as in the past.

Graphic arts played a minor role to painting in the first and second generations, but in the third generation, they have become more important at the national, regional, and international levels. Especially at the international level, graphic arts with Thai traditional values may be classified as avant-garde.

Graphic arts with Thai values created by artists of the first and second generations were commonly based on the theme "impressions of life," whether it be the traditional way of life or life as interpreted from a Buddhist philosophy. The graphic works of Chalood Nimsamer between 1949-63 all reflect the "pensive mood (about life)" by depicting women in passive, contemplating postures.

Manit Phuaree on the other hand, depicted the lives of people with vitality, portraying them in such activities as the game Takraw or cock-fighting. His women, even if depicted alone arranging flowers, seem to want to speak out. His works began to be shown in 1958; however, he has not been seriously active since 1963.

Inson Wongsam successfully depicted the mystical side of life relating to architecture in the northern environment in the 1960s, but only for a brief period, while San Sarakornborirak presented life from the senile perspective, such as in 'Old Friends' (1963) and the heart-rending 'Realm of Matter' (1965).²⁶

In 1962, Prayat Pongdam introduced the metaphysics of life into his works. Depicting animals such as cats, buffaloes, and geckoes and other reptiles,²⁷ he represented various thoughts and meanings. In 1965-66, Pote Sangawong made woodcut prints to express the pains and torments of hungry ghosts (Preta) in Lokantara Hell according to the "Tri-Phum" text, by depicting the Preta rising from the depths of the oceans represented by infinite curls of wave motion.²⁸

Seventeen years later, artists began to look for other means of representing "impressions of life" rather than through the depiction of human beings. Pongdej Chaiyakut used an etching technique to produce 'Still Life No.28,' whose subject is a set of antique silverware in an old cupboard, suggesting the atmosphere of a highly sophisticated Thai lifestyle that has passed away. Then in 1987, Wijit Apichatkriangkrai produced graphic works reflecting the spirit of northeastern culture and lifestyle by depicting a village-like structure setting on a mound as if it were an island in space, and included objects or items used in daily activities. The mood created gives a sense of hope, sadness, and the rites of life²⁹ typical of the people of the northeast in the past and even today.

In 1989, Ithiphol Thangchalok, a major graphic print artist, developed the direction he had followed since 1968 of using wave patterns, as in the works of Pote and Thongchai,³⁰ deriving his inspiration from waves as represented in Thai paintings or replicas of the Buddha's footprints, combined with the geometric forms in his subsequent mixed-media series.³¹

Thavorn Ko-Udomvit had always worked with mixed-media since 1981-82. In 1983, he worked on the 'Ritual' series, using hand-made Sa-paper, the surface and texture of which has constituted the essence of his works since 1985.³² His graphic works on Sa-paper reached their

epitome around 1988-89.³³ Thavorn had the ingenuity of integrating blank planes of space on Sa-paper with stones, twigs, and strings in order to unify his compositions so that they seem as if the object elements were part of the spatial structure rather than using space merely as a background on which objects are featured, as was generally practised in the past.

Nippan Oranives used materials and objects in a similar way. He first developed his style in 1986 by using bands of subject matter in a collective pattern of stones and twigs on Sa-paper, and utilized blank spaces on the paper to give dimensions to the object that suggest metaphysical significance in an international way.³⁴

Since 1982, a number of Thai artists who received education in England and the U.S.A. began to work along the trends of conceptualism which came into full force in 1985 with the exhibition of works by Thai artists on "Thai Reflections of American Experiences." Installation works created by the participating artists were mainly based on the works of Joseph Cornell in 1943, and Andy Warhol in 1965.³⁵ However, conceptual works by Kamol Tassananchalee, who had studied and resided in the U.S.A. for 10 years, proved to be highly original and most avant-garde when they were brought back to Thailand for public exhibition in 1980. In 1990, he returned with the 'Nang-Yai (Shadow-Play Figures)' series, applied traditional concepts and structures³⁶ in a contemporary way in order to bring out the Oriental essence and place it on the international art scene.³⁷

Conceptual art embodying Thai values also appeared in the work of Montien Boonma in his 'Story from the Farm' series (1989). He employed the installation technique to express the identity of Thai farmers who also dwell among us on this planet Earth,³⁸ the significance of which may intriguingly be extended to encompass all those in Asia as a whole.

In the exhibition in 1990 his works became seen as more intuitively executed, reflecting the life, religion, and beliefs of indigenous communities in the context of urban environment such as Chiang Mai, which from the 13th century was the center of the Lanna (northern) Culture. He managed to use a flat surface to represent the culture's dynamism and profoundness with intrigue,³⁹ and at times satirizes the affluent society in works such as 'Venus of Bangkok' (1990, p.6, fig.1), which was created from urban effluents (construction) — the rosy romanticism of the metropolis.

Around mid-1991, a new wave emerged. Vasan Sithiket held two major exhibitions. In the 'Inferno' series, 60 works went on exhibit at the National Gallery.⁴⁰ Each piece represented a condemnation of the sins of Man in modern Thai society, making references to ethical frameworks in the "Tri-Phum" text. Vasan is considered to be the first Thai artist to use traditional ethical values in making a social commentary on contemporary society. His second exhibition was held jointly with 6 other artists in "Print Installations". His 'Cobra and the Farmer' series illustrates a farmer who produces rice to feed the nation being betrayed by the mouths which he feeds. The installations in this series were designed to surround the observer, and were large enough to make viewers feel small.⁴¹

Over the past 10 years, many institutions of higher learning also opened courses in Fine Arts, such as Chiang Mai University, Chulalongkorn University, and at least 2 or 3 private universities. It is therefore consequential that in the next generation, Thailand will have artists producing works in greater variety when compared to the past, when artists were molded out of Silpakorn University along the concept based on history. At the same time, a number of faculty members exist at both Silpakorn and Chulalongkorn Universities who received Western training in art history and criticism, some up to doctorate level, dedicating themselves academically to encouraging the development of contemporary art, which has been struggling over the past 20 years. The mass media such as television, radio, and publishing also play important roles in encouraging and promoting art. The state of art in the future will therefore be up to the artists themselves, their creative abilities, and their sense of responsibility.

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7. Viboon Leesuwat, *Contemporary Art in Thailand, Contemporary Art Exhibition Catalog*, River City Bangkok, 1984 (in Thai), p.18.
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タイ現代美術のニューフェイス
モンティエン・ブンマー展
土で描かれたパゴダ&コスモス

Contemporary Thai Artist
MONTIEN BOONMA
The Pagoda & Cosmos Drawn with Earth

編集

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